

**Strategic Planning Board 26<sup>th</sup> September 2013**

**Cheshire East Local Plan**

**Comments on White Moss being included as a Strategic Site.**

Alsager Residents Action Group (ARAG) has attended daily, the most recent Planning Inquiries. This means we have first-hand knowledge of the process, evidence and arguments used, and in particular the very effective and damaging strategies used by the Appellants legal representatives.

Any hint of inconsistency by Cheshire East's planners and politicians will be seized upon, by QC's and barristers, and used to significantly undermine your Local Plan.

At the two recent Planning Appeals for Alsager sites the Appellants Legal teams challenged the Sustainability of Alsager as a Key Service Centre.

Mr John Barratt, Appellant's Barrister at the Sandbach Road North Appeal, asked Cheshire East's principle witness, Mr Adrian Fisher, to confirm that Alsager failed to meet Cheshire East's own sustainability criteria for classification as a Key Service Centre.

***Mr Barratt stated that Alsager is unsustainable for employment, with a current shortfall of 300 jobs, and its infrastructure is unsustainable with some roads operating above capacity.***

***These facts were confirmed as being correct by Mr Fisher, who when asked "why Alsager had been included when it was not sustainable" responded by saying that "it had been popular with developers."***

**I ask you therefore; how can Alsager (unsustainable as a Key Service Centre) accommodate 900 dwellings at the White Moss site – a site which abuts our Town Boundary?**

**Equally, how can Alsager be expected to accommodate the 1000/1100 houses identified in our Town Strategy and Cheshire East Draft Strategy?**

**If White Moss were to proceed, it would mean that effectively the Local Plan was supporting the building of 2000 new homes in Alsager, an almost 40% increase in the size of our town. This does not take account of the additional current appeals and applications which will further exacerbate this problem to 3000 dwellings (60% growth).**

White Moss will have an Alsager address and use our meagre facilities (as intended for a Key Service Centre) ***but it will not work, because - our town is simply not sustainable for this vital role.***

ARAG does not support developments outside Alsager, as a matter of principle, but it is not surprising that some of the Parishes, around Alsager, have indicated

support for the White Moss proposal because it simply takes the pressure off their own immediate areas.

Finally, if the Strategic Planning Board is minded to ignore the arguments that I have just presented, and approve the inclusion of this site in the Local Plan, then you should at least recognise the cumulative effect that this will have on our town. You could at least (very slightly) ease the pressure on Alsager by reducing the proposed housing figure for the MMU site (which does not currently have a planning application) to the figure determined by the Inspector at the earlier Public Inquiry - and limit housing development on the MMU site to 150.