

## **Response To Save Macclesfield Green Belt On Protecting Local Green Belt**

### **David Rutley, Conservative Parliamentary Candidate (21 May 2017)**

Over the last 7 years as Macclesfield's Member of Parliament, I have worked hard to protect our much-valued Green Belt in and around Macclesfield, and given my support to the Save Macclesfield Green Belt group's campaign.

Like many residents and members of the Save Macclesfield Green Belt group, I continue to be very disappointed with the response to the proposed Cheshire East Local Plan by the Planning Inspector and the impact the Local Plan, which is now close to being finalised, will have on the Green Belt in Macclesfield and surrounding communities.

I made detailed representations to the Planning Inspector both in writing and at public hearings opposing the proposed Local Plan and feel strongly that it is a missed opportunity to focus future development on brown field sites in Macclesfield and to further assist in the regeneration of the town centre.

If re-elected, I would continue to press Cheshire East Council to clarify the final requirements for the number of houses to be developed in both Macclesfield and Poynton in the next stage of the Local Plan process relating to the Site Allocations and Development Policies document. As in earlier stages, I will be strongly making the argument to focus development on brown field sites and windfall development opportunities in Macclesfield, with no further encroachment on the Green Belt.

I would actively work with Macclesfield Town Council and Cheshire East Council to determine the feasibility of developing a Neighbourhood Plan for Macclesfield. I have recently spoken to a number of Macclesfield Town Council councillors regarding the creation of a Neighbourhood Plan for the town and would plan to have further meetings to explore this option in more detail. I would also urge the Town Council to take on additional professional resource to assist in making representations on behalf of the local community regarding the protection of the Green Belt in the months ahead.

Cheshire East Council needs to set out plans to show how the scale of the proposed housing development can be sustained in the years ahead. The Council must put forward clear infrastructure plans, and associated funding arrangements, that will be required for the town both in terms of highways and transport, and other public services to accommodate the proposed housing development. The linked challenge of air quality also needs to be more fully addressed.

More work also needs to be done to shape plans for the so-called "safeguarded" land for development in South West Macclesfield, which could be developed after 2030. The site must be protected from any speculative development before that date and only released for development once a clear need has been determined. A wider master plan and landscaping strategy also needs to be established for this land and adjoining areas in the near future to ensure that any future development, after 2030, is sympathetically developed and that clear green gaps are put in place adjacent to existing housing areas in Macclesfield.

Taking forward this important work would continue to be a clear priority for me, if re-elected. I would hold regular meetings with Cheshire East Council councillors and officers to review progress on these vital issues, and would look forward to continuing to work with the Save Macclesfield Green Belt group to take the steps needed to protect the Green Belt in the months and years ahead.