Dear Cheshire East Council Planning Team,

I'm writing as someone who has lived in Hale for most of my life, and who spends a huge amount of time out in the countryside around Ashley, walking my dog, cycling the lanes, and using the footpaths that link Trafford to Cheshire. This area is part of my routine and part of who I am. I know every bend, every stile, every quiet stretch where you can hear nothing but birds and the wind in the hedges. It's one of the last places nearby where you can still feel properly out in the countryside.

Because of that, I want to formally object to the inclusion of the 291-hectare land submission Around Ashley in the Cheshire East Local Plan / SHELAA.

Ashley sits in wash-over Green Belt, and anyone who actually spends time there can see why. It's the narrow green strip that stops Hale, Bowdon and Altrincham from blending straight into Mobberley and Knutsford. Once you lose that strip, the whole character of this part of Cheshire and Trafford changes forever. The land is open, farmed, and very obviously doing the job the Green Belt was created to do, stopping sprawl, and keeping a real countryside gap between two growing areas. It's not brownfield, it's not derelict, and it's not "Grey Belt" by any stretch.

Ashley is also completely wrong for large-scale development. There are no local services, no medical facilities, no shops, and barely any public transport. The train station has one train an hour at best, and with the new Cheadle station now approved, the Department for Transport has already said Ashley's service would likely drop to one train every two hours. That makes rail travel useless for new residents and pushes thousands more cars onto roads that are already narrow and dangerous. As a cyclist, I can say honestly: these roads cannot take more traffic. The bridges are tight, the pinch points are sharp, and you already have to ride with real care.

Independent soil surveys, including HS2's own show this is Best and Most Versatile farmland (Grade 2 and Subgrade 3a). In a time when food security matters more than ever, losing this quality of farmland would be a mistake we can't undo.

And then there's the landscape itself. The Bollin Valley, Tatton Parklands, Cotterill Clough, the ancient woodlands, the wildlife corridors, the listed buildings — these are places I walk past every week. They're part of the character of this area. Once they're surrounded by housing estates and new roads, they're gone in every meaningful sense.

For all these reasons, practical, environmental, and personal, I'm asking Cheshire East Council to classify the 291-hectare Ashley submission as Unsuitable and Undeliverable in the SHELAA assessment.

This countryside is one of the last green spaces we have left between Hale and Manchester. Once it's built on, it's gone forever.