

**STAFFORDSHIRE MOORLANDS LOCAL PLAN EXAMINATION**

**Matter: - LOCAL PLAN – CHEADLE MAP – POLICY C2**

**Hearing Statement from Ken Wainman**

**On behalf of: -**

**Mr & Mrs Harrison (Local Plan ID: - 995921).**

**SESSION 7 – MORNING, FRIDAY 12<sup>TH</sup> OCTOBER 2018**

**Matter – C2: Sport, Recreation and Open Space**

**- Cheadle Map**

**Issue: -**

**Designation of land to the east of Friars Court as Open Space.**

## **STATEMENT**

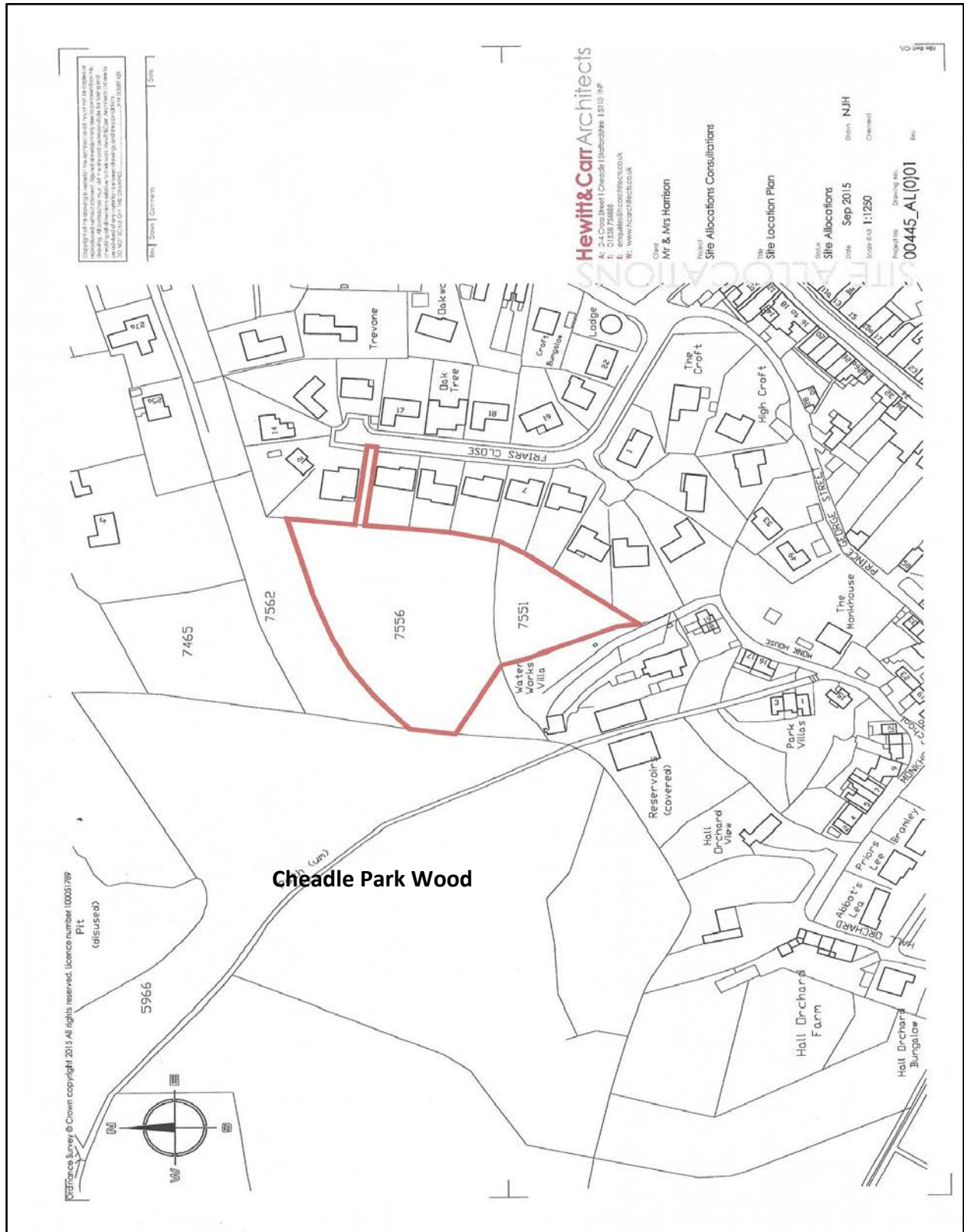
### **1. INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1. Mr and Mrs Harrison own land to the east of Friars Court. This land is designated as Open Space on the Cheadle map in Appendix 3 and is in the Green Belt. A map showing the land owned by the Harrisons' is contained in Appendix 1. To the west of the Harrisons' site lies Cheadle Park Wood which is identified as a site of natural and semi-natural value. However, the Harrisons' site is not part of the Wood and is separate from it. Appendix 2 contains a plan obtained from the internet which whilst not definitive indicates the area of Cheadle Park Wood.
- 1.2. Mr and Mrs Harrison contend that this land should not be designated as Open Space as it is private land used for recreation by Mr & Mrs Harrison and family for well over ten years. It contains a summer house and children's play-house. There is no public access.
- 1.3. The main access from Friars Court is permanently locked and there is a private footpath access from the rear garden of Mr and Mrs Harrisons' garden. These are the only two access points. The land is regularly mown by Mr Harrison. The grass is former farmland and was probably species poor semi-improved grassland based on the relatively low number of flowering herbaceous plants in the present sward. The site is mainly grassland but contains two mature hedgerows. The northern hedgerow marks the northern boundary of the site and there is an orchard planted by the Harrisons' in the southern part of the site. In the northern part there are occasional semi-mature trees amongst the grass. The site was originally put forward for exclusion from the Green Belt but disregarded by the Council and is not identified in the Council's research as having any ecological value.
- 1.4. Mr and Mrs Harrisons' written representation (ID: 995921) asked that the Open Space zoning on the Cheadle map be removed. The Council's response to the written representation was that the Open Space Study Update Report identified Cheadle Park Wood under the natural and semi-natural greenspace typology and that this site was identified by Cheadle Town Council following consultation.
- 1.5. Cheadle Park Wood I believe is Council owned, whereas Mr and Mrs Harrisons' land is not. The site is not identified in the Landscape and Settlement Character Assessment for Cheadle dated October 2008 as a Visual Open Space. There are no footpaths across the site, there are no recreational opportunities and the site is categorically not used by dog walkers.
- 1.6. The Green Infrastructure Strategy (May 2018) does not identify the Harrison's site as part of a Green Travel corridor; or as a known priority habitat.

- 1.7. I have recently emailed the Council asking for copies of the correspondence from Cheadle Town Council asking that the site is designated Open Space. Subsequent to the email I have spoken to one of the Council's forward planning team who informed me that there is no correspondence and that the Council do not have a map of the proposed site. I understand this is because the consultation referred to in the Council's response was an interview consultation carried out by consultants and the Council do not know if the site was specifically identified on a map by the Town Council.
- 1.8. I received an email this morning (20<sup>th</sup> September) from the Council's Forward Plans team that it would get in touch with colleagues in the leisure and recreation team and get back to me.
- 1.9. Cheadle Park Wood is identified in the Open Space Study Update report 2017 under the natural and semi-natural and semi-natural greenspace typology but the Harrisons' site is not part of Cheadle Park Wood. The two sites are in different ownership; one public one private. There is public access to Cheadle Park Wood but not to the Harrison's site. Cheadle Park Wood is identified in the Green Infrastructure Strategy (May 2018) as containing two priority habitats – acidic grassland and heathland/acidic grassland. However, no priority habitat is identified on the Harrisons' land. It is not a natural or semi-natural habitat.
- 1.10. Section 8 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) – Promoting Healthy Communities - includes policies on open space and Local Green Space. Paragraph 76 in the NPPF indicates that local communities should be able to identify for special protection green areas of particular importance to them. Paragraph 77 of the NPPF states that the Local Green Space designation will not be appropriate for most green areas or open space and sets out criteria for when the designation should be used.
- 1.11. Cheadle Park Wood satisfies all three criteria but the Harrisons' site does not. The land is not "demonstrably special" to the local community as it is not accessible or particularly visible to the public. The land does not hold a particular local significance; it is not of recreational, ecological or historic value and not especially beautiful. The Council have not demonstrated how the land meets the criteria other than to refer to the request from Cheadle Town Council and it is not clear that it has correctly identified the site the Town Council wanted protected.
- 1.12. In summary, it is contended that the site is incorrectly and mistakenly designated as open space and does not meet the criteria in the NPPF. It is not part of Cheadle Park Wood, there is no public access, it is in private use, it is of little ecological value and of little visual importance and of no historic value.
- 1.13. Suggested modification.

**Remove the Open Space designation from the land.**

**APPENDIX 1 – SITE LOCATION PLAN (not to scale)**



Matter: - Friars Court, Cheadle – Designation of land as Local Open Space

**APPENDIX 2 - PLAN OF CHEADLE WOOD PARK TAKEN FROM THE INTERNET (not to scale)**

