

[REDACTED]
Burscough,
Ormskirk,
Lancashire,
L40 [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

14th December 2011

Dear Ms Denning,

Please find enclosed a 'Petition for Debate', containing 1346 signatures. This includes 84 signatures from the E-Petition. There are a further 46 signatures that have been submitted directly to the Council which I now assume are in your possession, which will bring the total to 1392 signatures.

This petition was commenced following a Burscough Parish Council meeting held on 20th June 2011, where local residents voted unanimously against the West Lancashire Borough Councils proposed development options, named 'Option 1' and 'Option 2'. Local residents believe that these proposed developments will have a number of detrimental effects to the village and the environment. The concerns are listed in the petition as follows;

- i) Loss of Green Belt and agricultural land. The area of land identified by the Council for development is Green Belt land that is continually farmed. Once our Green Belt is lost to development we will never get it back. Areas such as these should be protected for future generations; after all, the intended purpose of Green Belt Land is to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open.
- ii) Loss of safety buffer between residential and industrial areas. The land identified for development currently acts as the safety buffer, its effectiveness proved when there was the recent explosion and fire on the industrial estate. Safety for residents would be severely compromised if this land is used for housing.
- iii) Further strain on inadequate infrastructure; roads, sewers, health services and schools. Burscough already has issues with flooding and the area of identified land has its own drainage problems. The sewerage system requires updating and an increase of residential properties would put it under increased strain. Health and dental provision is already oversubscribed in Burscough, as are the schools. There is mention in the plan that the development 'could' provide another primary school, a development of this size would definitely require another primary school, and also another secondary school. Residents are concerned that the development may not include any schools at all as it has not been guaranteed within the proposals.
- iv) Damage to the environment through pollution and loss of habitat. The proposal is a fifteen year plan. Burscough residents could be subjected to fifteen years of building

works, and the disruption and pollution the building works would bring. That is a child's lifetime. As previously stated, the area of land is Green Belt agricultural land, with hedgerows and surrounding trees containing a wealth of wildlife, developing this land would mean loss of habitat, resulting in eventual loss of wildlife.

- v) Devaluation of property. Residents have voiced real concerns that a development of this size would have an impact on the value of their homes and re-sale potential, both during construction and after.
- vi) Loss of identity as a village. The purpose of Green Belt land is to prevent urban sprawl. Building on this land would allow just that. The population of Burscough has already doubled in the last few years. Construction of the Heathfields Estate saw a huge rise in population and a development this size would do the same. The 'need' for housing in the local area is not future planning for the local community, in fact the birth rate in Burscough has been steadily falling over the last five years.
- vii) No guaranteed benefits for local residents. There is nothing within the development plans that would be of benefit to local residents. There are no plans for facilities or amenities for local residents to be included in the development, and as stated previously, there has not even been the guarantee of another school to accommodate the increased population. The only guarantee would be disruption to the village and its residents.

We therefore petition West Lancashire Borough Council to reject both of the proposed developments; 'Option 1' and 'Option 2'. It is understood that the Local development Framework is to be replaced by the Local Plan for West Lancashire but this petition is relevant to any proposed plan and should be regarded as direct responses in any consultation process.

As this is a 'Petition for Debate', I would appreciate the opportunity to present this Petition at a Borough Council meeting and await further information from you regarding this.

Yours Sincerely,

A black rectangular redaction box covering the signature of Mrs Gillian Bjork.

Mrs Gillian Bjork

Lead Petitioner