

# PROTECT OUR GREENBELT AND SAVE OUR VILLAGE

Name

Gerard White

Address

[REDACTED]

Address to:-

**Planning Officer, Local Plan, Planning, Policy and Programmes, Warrington Borough Council, New Town House, Buttermarket Street, Warrington, WA1 2NH**

The following statements are just a "short version" of my objections and concerns and more evidence can be found in the Burtonwood and Collins Green Action Group's file.

You cannot fail to see the open countryside and the Beauty all around you in Burtonwood and Collins Green. Feel the benefit of the fresh air and appreciate the value of a slow paced village life and tight community. All of that is under threat from a proposed development set to go ahead in 2020. Further developments are being proposed that could see our beautiful rural village evolve into an urban town. Below are some objections to the plan.

## (1) CONSULTATION

The proposals for the development are vague and unclear. Many residents didn't get letters and those that did were not addressed by name. The venue for the consultation was not accessible to all and the means to complain long winded and complicated. Communication and information is lacking and appears to be mainly online based, not everyone is online. Developers and planners have access to consultants and resources, we don't. It is a highly unequal and undemocratic process. The council have a duty of care to liaise with neighbouring authorities to determine overall effects of congestion and road safety. There is little evidence of this having happened.

## (2) INFRASTRUCTURE

Both hard infrastructure roads, bridges, railways etc and soft infrastructure- health, doctors, dentists, social services, education, parks and recreational facilities, law enforcement, emergency services and mental health will be affected by this and further proposed developments. Burtonwood and Collins Green do not have the infrastructure to support this development. Northern trust have said that if only 150 houses are approved the figure will be 'too limited to viably deliver the housing, open space, and, specific support for expansion of primary school facilities and primary care' In other words, no contribution to changing infrastructure unless more houses are approved. Which means longer waits for doctors, dentists, community nurse, counselling etc. School places in catchment areas no longer guaranteed.

## (3) GREENBELT OVER BROWNFIELDS

The release of greenbelt has not been adequately justified and the reasoning for not using brownfields is unacceptable. The council should be forcing development on brownfields or previously developed land before any greenbelt is released. The plan involves loss of versatile agricultural land which leads to loss of income for tenant farmers. The plan relies too heavily on representations and assurances from land owners and developers.

## (4) ENVIRONMENTAL—TRAFFIC— AIR POLLUTION

There appears to have been no assessment of traffic movement on Green Lane-Phipps Lane over a sustained period of time. The proposed entrance to the new development will be on Green Lane. Green lane is already critical for residents, children and parents on their way too and from school. With 160 houses comes approx. 320 more cars on the road at peak times. Couple this with other local developments and this is a recipe for

gridlock on our roads. Our children will be walking and cycling amongst this traffic which is not only physically dangerous but also has serious health connotations.

Warrington has one of the most congested road networks in the country. Air pollution in Warrington is already amongst the worst in the UK. The proposed access point to the new development is on green Lane opposite Burtonwood County Primary School. The increase in traffic on the lane will be immense. The pollutants in the air around our children and entering their lungs will massively increase. Children are more susceptible to pollutants than adults and exposure could cause or exacerbate ailments such as asthma and COPD. Adults are more susceptible to heart and lung disease and respiratory conditions such as emphysema.

**(5) LOSS OF WILDLIFE HABITATS**

Drastic loss of wildlife habitat (frogs, newts, toads, bats, woodpeckers, sparrows, starlings blue tits, foxes, rabbits and hares etc) is being treated like it doesn't matter. Britain has already lost half its wildlife, wildlife adds value and natural beauty to our environment and provides respite from everyday stresses. This development will decimate the local wildlife we love to watch.

I object to the proposed development plan on points 1-5

**Additional Comments**

See attached sheet

I agree to the above statements and reflect my views and those as coordinated at our local meetings that formulate our objections as to the proposed building plan.

Signed \_\_\_\_\_  
Date \_\_\_\_\_  
Telephone \_\_\_\_\_

**Letters of objection need to be with the Planning Officer before 5:00 pm on Monday 17<sup>th</sup> June 2019.**

## **Proposed Greenbelt development**

Burtonwood is a small relatively compact village of around 3,500 inhabitants set within a rural environment and its history can be traced back to the early 13<sup>th</sup> century. It has a very close-knit community with many of the inhabitants having lived their lives in and around the village, which enables it to maintain an environment where the people meet in a variety of community and church facilities and enjoy a wide range of social activities.

The potential developments proposed, as shown on the structure plan, will have the effect of totally changing and ultimately destroying the strong community ties.

Burtonwood is currently having a range of traffic calming measures implemented as a direct result of the increase in both speed and traffic volumes through the village, including the rising number of heavy goods vehicles coming from the M62. Any further increase with the construction of new houses will merely serve to exacerbate the situation and cause pollution which can only affect the residents and particularly the children whose schools are either on the main road through the village.

With regard to the current proposal for 160 homes with access on to Green Lane this is entirely unsuitable and impractical given the existing situation with regard to the road width and its proximity to the Green Lane Primary school. Traffic on this road is presently chaotic and further homes with potentially in excess of a further 250-300 cars using this as access will increase the dangers particularly to children and existing residents, including additional pollution which will have a direct bearing on the health of the children who are much closer to the level of the exhaust gases.

The current proposal suggests a development of 160 houses, I am not sure that this is justified and there is little if any evidence to support this. As the plan specifies a minimum number there is areal and grave danger that this will be used as a catalyst for further developments giving the developers carte blanche

The area currently proposed for development is also over an old mining area with the coal seams, and mine workings directly beneath it. In fact when the newer houses on Green Lane were built there was a restriction imposed by the planning authority that the houses should be built a minimum distance from the centre of the fields, which is why they are set back from the road, this was specifically because of the risk of subsidence from the coal mining activities.

Any increase in the road width of Green Lane would also involve the loss of a significant and mature hedgerow, trees and the wildlife.

The issues with Green Lane are also compounded and felt on Phipps Lane where again traffic and parking to accommodate both residents and children also mixes with the heavy goods vehicles using the industrial estate.

In summary the infrastructure (roads, drainage and services) is totally unsuitable to support any development in this area and will contribute to the destruction of Burtonwood as a village community.

## **Mining in Burtonwood**

Burtonwood has seen the rise and fall of coal mining over a number of years and within a short distance there were collieries at Clock Face, Collins Green and Bold.

By the early 1900's Bold colliery was producing over 2,000 tons of coal per day. However, the mining activities also had to contend with a major problem of a considerable amount of water in the mine workings. This was such an issue that it had to be pumped out and the volumes were such that it was routed (once above ground) to provide a drinking water supply for St. Helens.

Reference to the Coal Authority interactive maps clearly shows the extent of the mine workings which extend from Burtonwood up and across to both Collins Green and Bold. The activities extend from the M62 in the south to well beyond Collins Green in the north. A copy of the map is attached.

The fields are regularly ponded as a result of the high water table and it will require percolation tests to identify the drainage requirements particularly given that a SUDS system will be required.

These issues will all add significantly to the cost of development and it is difficult to see given the issues with all infrastructure and social needs, Green Lane traffic and the environmental impact how 160 homes will be capable of funding these improvements and requirements, hence the real and major concern that this development becomes the fore runner of further houses.

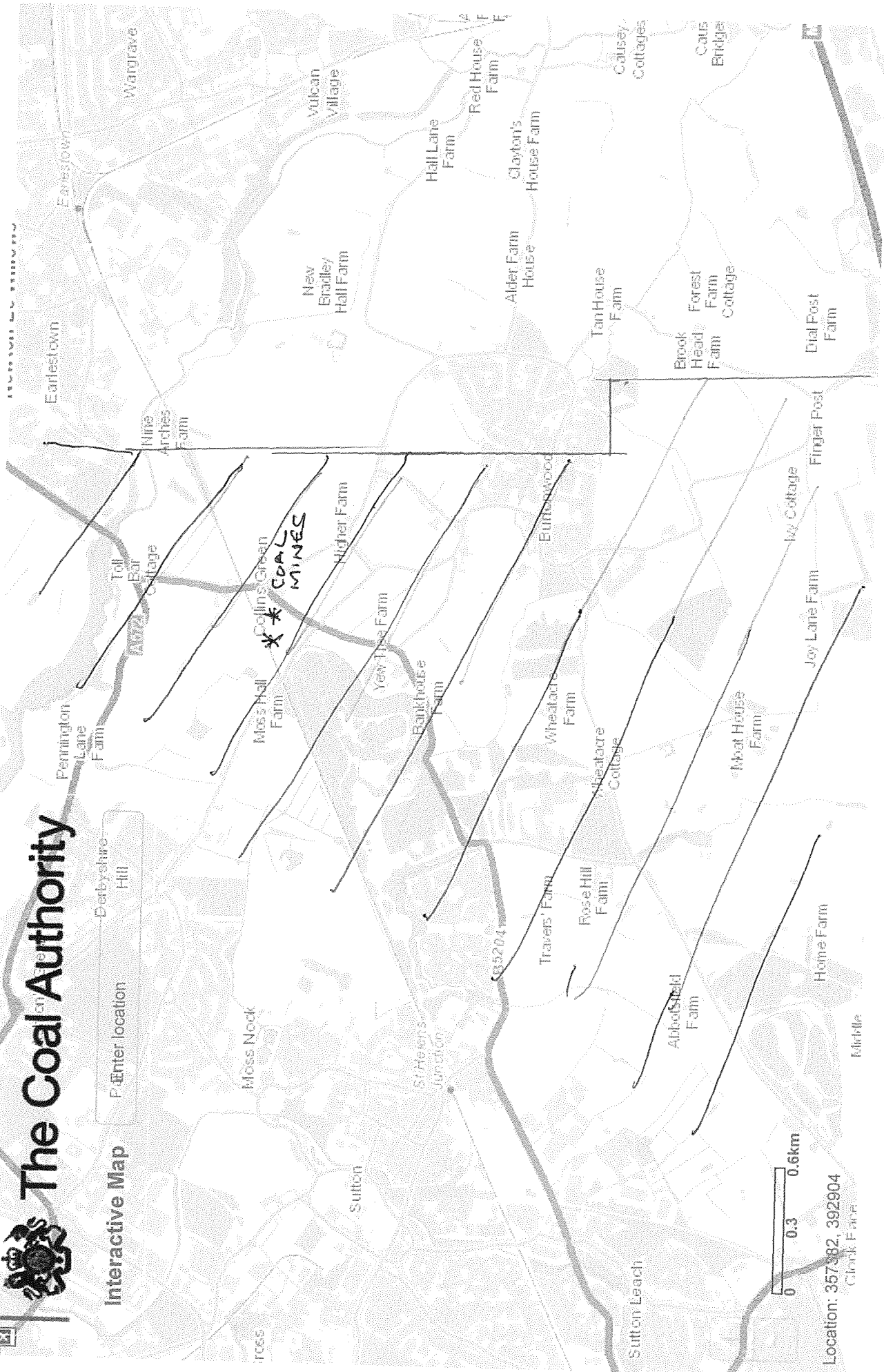


# The Coal Authority

Interactive Map

Enter location

Derbyshire Hill



Location: 357382, 392904  
 Clock Face

**Subject:**  
**Date:**

Re: Local Plan and Proposed Development of Green Belt Land in Burtonwood (Phipps Lane/Green Lane)  
17 June 2019 10:03:43

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We are writing to voice our concerns and objections to the proposed use of Green Belt land to expand Burtonwood village. There are several reasons we object:

- Firstly, we do not believe the information provided to each household was appropriate or adequate to provide an informed view.
- Having reviewed the proposed (initial) scheme for 160 houses, calls into question how much further expansion will follow (we are not assured that this development will be the only one to 2037 – the site adjacent; and the fields between Green Lane to Collins Green will be next – creating exactly what the Green Belt is designed to protect against – urban sprawl that conjoins villages).
- Resident have been told on numerous occasions that, ‘one site is being suggested by the council, that is the field at the junction of Green Lane and Phipps Lane. That this field is too large for the 160 houses proposed, so only half of it would be used, the balance being retained as Green Belt (letters received from the residents 11<sup>th</sup> June 2019 refer – signed by Councillor Mitchell and Councillor O’Neill). Our understanding however, and one that has been pointed out on several occasions, is that Site 1654 is comprised of TWO fields, the one being proposed for development, the other retained as Green Belt? There is consistently misleading information pertaining to the use of the terms site/fields.
- Green Belt land should (even by the governments own statement) be used as a means of last resort and only ever in exceptional circumstances – there are ample brownfield sites in and around Warrington.
- We hear that developers ‘don’t want to use brownfield/infill sites.’ Of course, they don’t, its hard work remediating land and they will provide smaller pockets of property – impacting on their profits. We all recognise that a nice open field will yield easier access and greater returns.
- Indeed – you must be aware that the Fiddlers Ferry Power Station will be closing completely by end March 2020, this area has not as yet been included in the Local Plan – but offers exactly what developers (& as Councillor Cathy Mitchell indicated at a recent Burtonwood surgery) require – a brownfield site large enough for a profitable development. Adopt Fiddlers Ferry site as it satisfies the key requirements, is on a good road network, large enough for the next ‘Chapelford’ style mix of residencies, including a school; shop; pub; medical centre?
- No assurance that the houses being proposed would satisfy the local need for affordable housing, our children and grandchildren want to stay within the village, but 3, 4 and 5 bed executive homes at £3-400k will be well out of their reach. A small proportion of residents ‘might’ be able to move up and release housing stock –

but this is not the answer.

- Access from Green Lane is proposed, this is a small country lane, speed restriction of 20 mph imposed and at either end of the school day is packed with parked cars. To the extent that residents and the community bus have struggled to get past. I'm pretty sure therefore that it could hinder access to emergency services. Is there a highways proposal to widen Green Lane? We believe this must be a prerequisite. Please advise the Highways Plan that supports this proposal.
- The roads into and out of Burtonwood are narrow, winding and in the main without footpaths, do these form part of the Highways Plan to upgrade to accommodate an increased traffic to and from the village? Traffic calming measures have already had to be introduced to accommodate the current traffic volumes. Please advise the Highways Plan that supports this proposal.
- We have two very part time medical facilities in the village, are there plans to increase this provision to accommodate an increased occupancy? Please advise.
- The Co-op is the only retail shop facility – ditto, will more shops be encouraged or be brought into any expansion deal? Please advise.
- Can the schools accommodate increased patronage? It may be that some of those from outside Burtonwood currently (we know several families travel to Burtonwood Community School already) are sacrificed in order to accommodate increased local demand? Please advise what impact this will have and any proposal on enrolment criteria to accommodate the new demographic.
- As an absolute minimum, there needs to be an extension to the consultation process, this would also allow WBC to consider the Fiddlers Ferry option to satisfy the increased housing obligation and to answer residents concerns around the proposal in Burtonwood indicated.

Regards,

Mr Gerald White; [REDACTED]