

To whom it may concern,

I would like to make the following observations and comments on the proposed Rossendale Local plan.

With regard to the overall plan, even with the reduction in the number of houses requested initially by Government, the increase in density of housing over the next 10 to 15 years, unless there is a vast input into the local infrastructure which is unlikely, is still far too many to be reasonable or manageable.

The roads and traffic system are already ridiculously overloaded and congested at peak times and the topography of the valley renders Rawtenstall a complete bottleneck from all directions with little or no opportunity to develop alternate routes even with the suggestion of an expensive gyratory system. The plan cannot be made sound in this respect.

The recent unreliability of utilities in our area also suggests that this area of infrastructure is literally crumbling and like our roads low cost short term fixes have been employed with no apparent plans for long term solutions.

The numbers of cars and people which this amount of housing would create would render the infrastructure of local services i.e. transport, Doctors, Dentists and Schools completely inadequate.

With particular regard to Loveclough where I live there are numerous proposed sites (H4, H5, H6, H7, H11, H12, H13, H17) producing around 375 houses with an estimated 750 extra vehicles all wanting access onto the A682 Burnley to Rawtenstall road, the **only** main arterial road. The existing junctions are already dangerous due to volume and speed of traffic in peak times and lack of visibility because of parked cars at other times, particularly in winter when, because of the inaccessibility of the steep valley sides, huge numbers of people leave their cars on the main road for days at a time.

I have personally have had near misses and have seen many which of course go unreported and so there are no reliable statistics. Our next door neighbour had a serious accident at the junction in the last year. The problems are compounded at this junction by huge articulated vehicles accessing the factory down in the village of Goodshawfold and there is another proposal for 7 houses right next to this junction!

There seems to be very little planned to increase employment areas and therefore growth to promote greater self-containment around Loveclough and Rossendale so the congestion to Manchester will continue to worsen.

The plan does include developing controversial Green Belt land but this proposal is towards the Manchester side of the bottleneck that is Rawtenstall and so does make some sense, though again the numbers are far too big. The argument to use countryside before Green Belt if, as with Loveclough, it is before the bottleneck, does not perhaps stacks up in this case.

There are 2 very large sites in Loveclough (H5 and H13) on directly opposite sides of the main road which together would form a vast housing estate, completely changing the nature of the area.

One of these sites around Loveclough Working Men's Club (H13) has already been approved for 80 houses with the developer now suggesting an increase to 105. This site was put through so quickly in advance of the inspectorate that people did not have adequate time to respond. The council did not meet the minimum consultation required and I would hope that the inspectorate will reconsider the validity of this decision and therefore it's inclusion in the local plan.

The council previously prevented (a decision at the time supported by Government) a development of 15 houses just down the road from this one which should have set a strong precedent as the council had spent 10 years undertaking to prevent development to the west of Burnley Road in Loveclough because of its value with regard to countryside, the visual amenity of open views from the road and hillsides, walks, the river valley and wildlife. Loveclough could not be considered a Key Service Centre as there are none and it is not suitable to be a major site which these 2 developments together certainly are. It would be destroying the very nature of the things that people want to visit as tourists or move here to experience!

I am particularly concerned by the proposal for 30 houses at Turton Hollow (H4) an area which has already been subject to a huge landslide/ subsidence which the council had to remedy. It is an extremely steep site with very poor vehicular access plus an industrial/employment site incurring massive steel carrying vehicles. It does not seem a suitable site at all.

Other concerns with all of the aforementioned sites are around issues such as has the amount of mining there has been previously in the area, subsidence, landslip and flooding risk. Have these been adequately considered? And has the damage to wildlife, flora and fauna which would seem unacceptable?

Developers are not interested in providing affordable housing and it seems little in evidence, as does provision for the elderly or disabled.

All of the above and the lack of planning around supportive infrastructures, in my opinion, render vast aspects of this Plan unreasonable and unmanageable.

Yours faithfully,

Mr Stephen Newton.