

Joint Statement by Local Groups in Fylde Borough

Declaration of Unsound Planning Consultation

We deplore the failure of Fylde Borough Council to present for consultation an evidenced and justified assessment of the number of new homes required for the period to 2030.

The housing requirement is the most significant factor in the Fylde Local Plan to 2030: Part 1 Preferred Options, on which the Council is consulting. But the strategic housing sites proposed for development are based on the contentious regional housing requirement which is now obsolete.

Government now requires councils to produce their own housing requirement. Three years ago the Council discarded an offer from local groups to co-operate in a critical review of its emerging evidence. Instead, it created a steering group of councillors who confidentially reviewed evidence and options. A significant proportion of these councillors disagreed so strongly with the Portfolio Holder responsible for producing the Preferred Options that they issued a Minority Report disowning the Preferred Options in its current form.

The Council's own housing requirement figure will not be produced until the final stage of consultation in March 2014. This will be just prior to presentation of a final draft to the Secretary of State in May/June 2014 and too late to make the major changes to land allocation and policies that would result from the reasoned justification of a significantly lower requirement than that currently assumed.

The exclusion of this most material factor from the current consultation so critically compromises the ensuing policy that we believe it renders this consultation phase unsound. We therefore call on Fylde Borough Council to suspend the current consultation and withdraw the Preferred Options until it is able to support it with its own declared housing requirement together with its related evidence and reasoned justification. An amended Preferred Options, together with the housing requirement, should only then be re-presented for public consultation.

This Joint Statement is supported by the following local groups:

- Campaign to Protect Rural England - Fylde District Group
- Concerned Residents Of Warton's Development (CROWD)
- Defend Lytham (DL)
- Fylde Civic Awareness Group (FCAG)
- Lytham St Annes Civic Society
- Queensway Environmental Defenders (QED)
- Save Wrea Green Action Group (SWAG)
- Staining Against Village Expansion (SAVE)
- Warton Residents Against Poor Planning (WRAPP)
- Wesham Action Group (WAG)