

The Rt Hon Ben Wallace MP



HOUSE OF COMMONS

LONDON SW1A 0AA

Received by  
Programme Officer  
10.12.18

Mr Mark Dakeyne  
Government Planning Inspectorate  
c/o Mr Tony Blackburn  
Programme Officer  
15 Ottawa Close  
Blackburn BB2 7EB

28 March 2018

Dear Mr Dakeyne,

I understand that you have been appointed as the Planning Inspector who will assess the validity of the Local Plan which has been prepared by Wyre Council. I understand that your principal task is to examine and test the 'soundness' of proposed development plans before these are approved as the basis for development within the Borough for the period up to 2031.

After meeting with residents from Inskip I am writing to you to bring to your attention concerns relating to the plans for the village. You will know that Inskip is an old rural settlement located close to the southern boundary of the Borough. It has a core settlement of 236 houses and is served by country lanes.

Local residents are concerned about the location and scale of the development which Wyre Council is proposing for Inskip. In November 2014 I am told that Inskip Parish Council considered local housing need in the Parish and recommended that no more than a 20% increase in core housing stock would be required within the lifetime of the new Local Plan.

The Parish Council proposed that this new development be located to the south and west of the village's only pub, the Derby Arms. This would make the pub more central in the village and improve its viability as a business. However, this proposal was rejected by Wyre Council principally due to the proximity of the North West Ethylene Pipeline which runs nearby. I am told this was despite assurances from the Health and Safety Executive that that unlimited housing could be built beyond a 125m boundary from the pipeline's location.

A fresh scheme was developed in respect of land to the north of Hodgkinson's Farm, a tenant farm complex in the centre of the village, close to the site of current housing construction activity in the village. This plan was in development and negotiation up until June 2015 when Wyre Council appears - without warning - to have switched the allocated site to a fresh agricultural field (referred to as SA1/13 within the Local Plan) north of the current settlement boundary.

Member of Parliament for Wyre & Preston North



I am concerned that the first formal notice given of Wyre's proposal to locate 289 new dwellings in Inskip was in the draft Local Plan published as recently as September 2017. The different forms of development – this being the dispersal plan – were discussed in the initial "issues and options" publication in June 2015 but no proposed housing numbers were given and it would be reasonable for local residents to assume that the Council would not propose the doubling of the number of dwellings in Inskip over a twenty year period. To only include these figures in the final stage of the development of the Plan is a great concern and has allowed residents very little opportunity to voice their opposition.

To propose the development of 289 new dwellings in Inskip in the period of 2011 to 2031 is unsustainable. There is no demand locally for such a significant number of new homes. Development on this scale will adversely alter the nature and character of the village and put pressure on the surrounding narrow, winding and undulating local country lanes. The lack of employment opportunities locally mean that any new residents will be required to travel beyond the village to secure employment.

I have also been concerned to learn from residents that Inskip with Sowerby Parish Council was not able to consult with residents on the development of the Local Plan as Wyre Council required details of their discussion to be kept confidential.

I know that you will have many matters to consider in arriving at a decision on the suitability of the Wyre Local Plan going forward. However, I would ask that within the process you weigh carefully the matters I have raised here.

Yours sincerely

**THE RT HON BEN WALLACE MP**