Alternative Options Consultation
Forward Planning
Ribble Valley Borough Council
Council Offices
Church walk
Clitheroe
BB7 2RA

Dear Sirs

Re: Options for meeting Housing needs in the Ribble Valley Borough

I can do no more than repeat all the same arguments which I submitted in my letters to yourselves dated 28th July 2011 and 7th August 2011, arguments which have subsequently been put forward by many others, both in writing and verbally at the open RVBC Planning meetings. Despite all the arguments proffered, no-one on the Planning Committee has actually ever answered any of the points raised, either in writing or verbally at the open Planning meetings, giving all who attended, the distinct impression that lip service was paid to the word “consultation” and votes were taken as though no one had even listened to the “opportunity” provided by the Planning Committee, to objectors.

The apportionment of the proposed number of new-build houses in Clitheroe, particularly at Standen, is totally disproportionate to the rest of the Ribble Valley, and will ruin Clitheroe forever. All the villages could benefit from some growth and this would, undoubtedly, breathe new life into such places with the chance of Schools remaining open, instead of being closed down, as well as the chances of increased commerce, starting with village shops/stores and the opportunity for young locals to remain in the place of their birth, instead of being forced out by unaffordable housing costs. I acknowledge that such an option would be more costly but would ultimately benefit the Ribble Valley as a whole by giving a greater balance than that which is now proposed.

I certainly foresee a radical change in constituents’ voting habits in future elections, both Local and National, following this period coming to the fore last July, but that will be little comfort to those who have to live with the results of a wrong decision. What a pity Councillors cannot be made responsible for their decisions!! I suspect the NIMBY vote would not be used so freely if they were to be held liable.

Enclosed: Further copies of my earlier letters detailed above
Alternative Options Consultation  
Forward Planning  
Ribble Valley Borough Council  
Council Offices  
Church walk  
Clitheroe  
BB7 2RA

Dear Sirs

Re: Options for meeting Housing needs in the Ribble Valley Borough

Further to my letter dated 28th July, there are two additional points I wish to make.

Reverting to local infrastructure, should Option 4 (Standen Hall Estate) be progressed, the additional pressure on Waste Disposal would create extra problems, bearing in mind that our landfill site has now been closed, as well as the nearest recycling site at The Petre Arms site in Langho, hence the existing recycling site at Henthorpe would not be able to cope with the additional volume of waste. In my opinion there would be vehicular gridlock at Henthorpe with the inevitable increase in Fly Tipping around our country roads as well as not inconsiderable costs of transferring the extra rubbish to landfill out of the Ribble Valley by RVBC.

My second additional point, based upon the same Option 4 premise, concerns the extra traffic generated by 1500 homes. Excluding any commercial or heavy goods vehicles servicing the new site, there could be in excess of 3000 extra private cars, in all probability nearer 4000 within the Clitheroe boundary. As parking in Clitheroe is already a problem, potential customers of the town’s smaller retailers would, in all probability, suffer from fewer customers spending at their businesses because of an inability to park in proximity to their shops. The only businesses who could gain would be the supermarkets, and even now, their car parks are at capacity with the probability that customers from Clitheroe would shop at out of town centres with adequate parking.

I reiterate the points made in my earlier letter and can only conclude that the adoption of Option 4 (Standen Hall Estate) would be a total disaster for Clitheroe and The Ribble Valley and that any major developments should be undertaken only when up-to-date factors are taken into consideration. I believe I am correct in stating that the statistics utilised in preparing the Options Document are over two years out of date and pre-date the economic downturn, the banking crisis and the current monetary crisis in the EU, as well as those suffered by many economies elsewhere in the World. No decisions should be taken without full updated information and consultation with all parties in The Ribble Valley.

Yours faithfully,

[Signature]

[cc: Nigel Evans M.P.; Mark Swarbrick (Clitheroe Residents Action Group); Cllrs Sue and Allan Knox] 
Cllr Christine Bartrop
Alternative Options Consultation
Forward Planning
Ribble Valley Borough Council
Council Offices
Church walk
Clitheroe
BB7 2RA

28th July 2011

Dear Sirs

Re: Options for meeting Housing needs in the Ribble Valley Borough

I wish to make the following points in response to your request for views on the various options recently proposed.

There should be no need for me to outline the current status enjoyed by residents of the Ribble Valley but, for the sake of putting forward a balanced argument, I will do so. The beautiful rural and semi-rural location, with desirable housing, balanced by, mainly, light industry presently contained in several purpose built industrial areas, works well without being unduly intrusive, making The Ribble Valley one of THE places to live, and this is reflected by the higher than average property prices. Historically it has been based upon agriculture, mainly dairy and sheep farming and this is still the over-riding impression gained when visiting the Ribble Valley. Unlike other urban sprawls, the majority of the Valley’s towns and villages do not encroach alongside main roads as these are “guarded” by farm land, giving residents a Natural break.

The excellent junior and senior Schools and, in particular, Clitheroe Royal Grammar School, attract families to our area, but these are all, almost, at full capacity with no prospect of enhanced site development to accommodate additional pupils in the majority of cases.

Our Health care facilities are stretched at present with the current population.

Our drainage and sewage treatment works (Clitheroe) were said to be near capacity a number of years ago and I am unaware of anything having been done to alleviate the situation.

Our roads are already under severe pressure with the volume of traffic, Whalley being near breaking point, and car parking is already inadequate with many town centre office and shop workers in Clitheroe utilising residential side streets.

Our Police service is under strain at the present time, particularly at night, with further cuts in the local force being expected. BEFORE considering any major options, such as those being proposed, the infrastructure of our towns MUST be fully and completely addressed.

The prospect of, potentially 3000 extra houses in the Ribble Valley would place an intolerable burden on existing facilities as outlined above and the thought of 1500 dwellings plus industrial use is not to be thought about in Option 4 on the South side of Clitheroe, does not bear thinking about. This is prime dairy farming land and, once developed, would be lost for ever, denying future generations the opportunity to live in an area not overpowered by urban development. This option, alone could bring anywhere from 4500 to 6000 additional residents to Clitheroe with a similar number of extra vehicles on our already overcrowded roads and streets.

If additional housing must be developed in the Ribble Valley, this should be spread throughout the Ribble Valley, in small parcels of development, utilising brown field sites wherever possible and any obligatory Industrial Developments must be concentrated alongside existing commercial developments and away from existing residential areas. OPTION 4 MUST BE DISCOUNTED.