Core Strategy Consultation,
Council Offices,
Church Walk,
Clitheroe,
BB7 2RA

6th June 2012

Dear Sirs,
This is a collective response from the 144 members of the Dilworth Community Voice, Longridge.

Re Core Strategy Consultation
Under the new Core Strategy the policy of G6 Essential Open Space which has given protection to land at 20-30 Dilworth Lane and behind 24-54 Higher Road for over 30 years is non-existent. There will no longer be any protection for Private Open Space and this will put all private land under greater threat of development.

The Core Strategy fails to recognise the importance of continuing to protect our private open spaces within our settlements and is therefore not legally compliant or sound as it does not offer any future protection to private land that has been consistently protected under Policy G6 Essential Open Space. Abolishing the said policy and not replacing it with adequate protection is neither justified or effective and is extremely negative and short sighted.

We require changes to Key Statement Paragraph 10.26. to include not just Public Open Space but also to include Private Open Space. All residential sites of any size should be included and not limited to sites over one hectare.

The suggested re-wording is as follows:
"Parks, Playing fields, informal open spaces, allotments and private gardens can all be of great importance to the character of a neighbourhood. Open Space is not just an amenity for public recreation but an important consideration in the conservation of natural and built heritage of the area. The Borough Council will refuse development proposals which involve the loss of existing public and private open space unless it does not compromise visual amenity, private recreation, the value of general openness and the character of the area".

Evidence to support this argument:
A Public Consultation on G6 Essential Open Space was instigated by the Borough Council in August 2011. Overwhelmingly the public response was for the retention of G6 Essential Private Open Space. This view was supported by the History Society, the Heritage Society, the Longridge Town Council, the Dilworth Ward Councillor, Nigel Evans MP and the Dilworth Community Voice.

Following planning applications to develop G6 Essential Open Space in Longridge, an Appeals Inspector visited 46 Higher Road on 24th February 2012. The Appeal Decision APP/T2350/A/11/2163951 stated that development would have a significant adverse effect on the visual amenity and character of the area. The shortage of housing land supply in the District does not outweigh the harm that would be caused. By failing to afford any future protection to private land, by scrapping a policy which has previously protected Private Open Space, the land will again be under threat of development and irreparable damage would be caused to the visual amenity and the character of the area. The Borough Council should also consider that private open space is often a bio-diverse haven for flora and fauna and a green lung in the heart of development.

We wish to be kept informed at every stage of the process involving the Core Strategy.