

Omega Enquiry – Omega Zone 8, St Helens

Elizabeth Lloyd

Bold Hall Nursery, Hall Lane, Bold.

My objection to the proposed development and loss of greenbelt land.

Bold is an ancient settlement the land was given to the Bold's after the Norman conquest people have been living here ever since. It's place in history is well documented and the Bold family still exist to this day.

Once a much larger area which included Burtonwood, Great Sankey, Clockface, Sutton and Farnworth as well as others. Over time especially since 1800s the area has slowly dwindled due to land sales, boarder changes and subsequent developments.

What we are left with has been under the protection of greenbelt laws and is very much cherished and loved especially by those living in the afore mentioned areas who come here regularly to enjoy the little bit of countryside we have left.

Great pride is taken in its rich history both locally and nationally many people have ties here and I often get contacted by people who want to know more about it's history, I am even in contact with people from overseas who have family connections here and are researching the area.

I was born and raised in this area and have seen development after development strip us of our green and pleasant land the devastation I have witnessed to the range and diversity of wildlife, that rightly calls this their home too is immense.

The little we have left should remain protected under laws that were created to do just that. We are the last guardians who have an opportunity to protect the legacy of Bold and what remains of it for the future generations to come. If this development on greenbelt land is permitted to go ahead then the rest of the greenbelt will go sacrificed to greedy developers who could use the many brownfield sites available to them. Little or no regard has been used so far as to the negative impact to those of us living in this area local people's views should count when the cost is so high.

So, what are we fighting to protect? A bit of grass, a few trees that no one will miss and provides no benefit to the community especially as it borders the M62?

We are making a stand for those who have no voice, the myriad of creatures that inhabit the area, we are fortunate to have a wide variety of birds, bats, even protected species like great crested newts, the flora and fauna, the eco system we are all apart of, the trees that filter the air we breathe taking in harmful CO2 and giving us back oxygen.

We are fighting for our health and wellbeing both mental and physical. We are standing for the countless people who enjoy walking, running, cycling and hacking in our beautiful country park, listening to bird song, spotting wildlife, observing wild flowers and plants for all those who benefit from the space to be alone if needed, immersing themselves in nature away from their busy lives and the troubles that beset us.

At a time when not just nationally but globally we have faced a health crisis we should not be taking away green spaces and the health benefits they bring to all of us. The area has long since been used regularly by the public but the rise in that number since the first lockdown is amazing so many more people have recognised how important it is to keep active and lead a healthier lifestyle, the park very much has become a lifeline to local people.

Studies have shown that spending just two hours immersed in nature greatly increases the amount of natural killer cells (white blood cells) we have thus helping us fight off viruses and illness, these effects can last up to four weeks. It significantly lowers blood pressure, reduces stress, regulates emotions, boosts working memory and improves overall wellbeing.

We need to protect local greenbelt for the health and wellbeing of local people.

The catchment area for those enjoying these benefits is huge I often meet people who have cycled or walked here using the footbridge spanning the M62 at this point the present development is visible but far enough removed not to encroach on their enjoyment of the area however, this will not be the case if the proposed development goes ahead.

I have already started to notice a decline in the quality of life on my side of the motorway from the impact of the current warehouses. Noise pollution is now an everyday occurrence that we have to live with, even during the night the noise of traffic can be heard. This was not the case a few years ago the sound of the motorway was barely audible but now the roar of traffic can be constantly heard (this is especially noticeable when there is no leaf on the trees during autumn and winter).

This is not due to traffic increase although that will play a part, as the traffic noise was still loud during all three lockdowns, but as an acoustic bounce back. Before the warehouses were built the motorway noise was dispersed and filtered down across both sides of the motorway but since the large warehouses went up the sound hits them and bounces back into the park area.

Does noise pollution and the impact this has matter? How does it affect us and apart from being a constant nuisance?

Recent research has shown that noise pollution stops trees from growing, birds and other wildlife cannot tolerate the sound it confuses their ability to communicate with each other, so they move out leaving areas depleted and thus slowly killing the trees.

People accessing the park to get away from their daily lives will not be able to enjoy the countryside atmosphere with the noise of a busy motorway drowning out the sounds of nature, or what is left of it. The whole area will be affected negatively and to the detriment of the physical and mental health of local people.

There is no positive upside to this development for people living here or in the surrounding areas, with increase noise, traffic and not to mention the terrible amount of litter created, we stand to lose dreadfully if this goes ahead.

I respectfully make a heartfelt plea and ask the inspector to consider the massive impact on the lives of those who live here this development will have. Unfortunately, councils and big business understand the price of everything but sadly the value of nothing, you cannot put a price on health.