

# FIONA BRUCE MP



HOUSE OF COMMONS

LONDON SW1A 0AA

Cllr M Jones, Leader  
Mr M Suarez, Chief Executive  
Mr A Fisher, Head of Planning  
Cheshire East Council  
Westfields, Middlewich Road  
Sandbach, CW11 1HZ

**By email and post**

Our Ref: C/13/4627C/FB/HC

*Please quote the reference on any correspondence*

6 January 2013

Dear Sirs

**PLANNING APPLICATION NO 13/4627C  
LAND OFF DUNNOCKSFOLD ROAD, ALSAGER, CHESHIRE ST7 2NW**

I write on behalf of residents of Alsager to ask that the above application be refused. Over the past few weeks very many of them have contacted me with their concerns about planning applications relating to sites in and around Alsager.

There is considerable strength of feeling that the Inspector's decision of late last year which indicated that the Five Year Housing Supply Plan put forward by Cheshire East was inadequate has resulted in a reaction on the part of Cheshire East Council to consider and indeed promote sites in Alsager for development, on a wholly disproportionate scale compared with other settlements across Cheshire East.

This is why, for example, residents consider there is now a proposal within the current Draft Local Plan for the development of White Moss Quarry – potentially up to 1,000 properties on that site alone. I cannot stress too greatly the strength of local objections to this proposal – a point I have made repeatedly to Cllr Michael Jones, and of which he is very much aware.

This proposal, when combined with others already in the public domain, has fuelled real anger within the Alsager community. Others include several

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hundred properties likely to be constructed at the former MMU site (the exact number yet to be determined, ideally 250, but potentially, and hopefully not more than, 350 – although I understand the developer is pressing for considerably more), the Twyfords site (335) plus 65 south of Crewe Road, both already approved and the recent approvals on Hall Drive (109) and Hassall Road (30) together with other current applications for greenfield sites at Hassall Road (a further 34), Close Lane (132) and Rhodes Field (110).

Most recently residents have written to me in number to express their severe concern about the above application for some 95 properties off Dunnocksfold Road to be considered this week and for which I understand Officers have recommended approval. The number, and addresses of residents who have contacted me make it clear to me that the majority are not residents who live immediately around this site but that they are community minded people with a genuine concern for the undue stress on local services and infrastructure which this and other developments will cause, not to mention the loss of a further greenfield site.

One writes to me that Alsager is to be subject to a 'massive overdevelopment...a key example of this would be the application to build up to 97 houses, on a greenfield site off Dunnocksfold Road, when within half a mile we have the MMU site which is much more suitable for development. Your Council initially rejected this application (on a number of grounds) only to receive the exact same application resubmitted which I now understand has been recommended for approval by the very same Council who rejected it – how can this possibly make sense and what has caused the change of mind?'

Another writes, 'This site is also not part of the Cheshire East Emerging Local Plan or our Town Plan, in fact it was specifically rejected in the Town Plan despite strong objections from Fiona Bruce MP, the Town Council, ARAG, and many residents, Cheshire East is promoting development on the White Moss and appears very reluctant to provide any protection from speculative development elsewhere in Alsager...Our existing infrastructure simply cannot support this kind of growth.'

Some write of, 'a minimum total of 1,679 dwellings, which exceeds the Local Plan proposals for Alsager by more than fifty per cent' (others calculate the potential figure as much higher). The overall view of residents who are, as I know, measured and reasonable people, is clear: 'It is accepted that all parts

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*appears to be a wholly disproportionate number of dwellings for such a small community.'*

There is deep offence felt that consents are now being granted – and indeed recommended for approval resulting in such consents being obtained - in an unplanned way, simply to make up numbers and, as has been the view for some time in other parts of my constituency, in particular Sandbach and Congleton, that the void created by the lack of a Local Plan has rendered Alsager vulnerable to applications by developers on areas such as Dunnocksfold Road which is as residents have informed me 'effectively open countryside,' having open countryside on three sides of the proposed site.

It is difficult to overstate the anger felt by the Alsager community. Whilst many residents can only voice their feelings, which are both strongly and widely felt, the Alsager Residents Action Group, which I am informed represents 'hundreds of Alsager residents' has gone to great lengths to provide, in a short time, a forensic and technical response to the proposed application 13/4627C Land off Dunnocksfold Road.

The purpose of this letter, - apart from to ask the Strategic Planning Board to take note of the depth of feelings which there now are in Alsager on this issue and which I have personal confirmation of not only through correspondence but also through individual surgery meetings with constituents and a number of public meetings in the town when residents' views have been very clearly expressed - is to ask for the Board to consider the Alternative Report on application 13/4627C produced by ARAG before making its decision on 8<sup>th</sup> January. I understand that this was submitted to the Council a short time ago and ask that every Member of the Board is furnished with a full copy for the relevant meeting.

Yours sincerely,

**Fiona Bruce MP**  
**Member of Parliament for the Congleton Constituency**  
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