

[REDACTED]

Rt Hon Robert Jenrick,
Communities Secretary

Dear Mr Jenrick,

I am writing to **object** to the Called-in St Helens local plan 2020-2035 which St Helens Council is minded to approve. Specifically the allocations in Bold ward 4HA, 5HA, 1EA & 1ES.

In 2009 and after years of hard work from a group of ex-miners, St Helens council and various agencies, 'The Dream' sculpture was unveiled within Bold forest park. This sculpture of the head of a nine-year-old girl dreaming was dedicated by the artist to the proud mining heritage of the town but more importantly the sculpture represented a better future for the town and what could be achieved in the post-industrial landscape. May 2009 was meant to be just the start of a regeneration of the area.

Dream has stood alone since 2009 when so many other opportunities to improve the area have been missed. It should be the jewel in the crown of the borough attracting visitors from far and wide much like the 'Angel of the north' or 'Another Place' at Crosby beach. In reality despite having 85000 visitors last year, it sits alongside a disused pub with insufficient parking for visitors and nothing in terms of hospitality for tourists.

I find it quite upsetting to think that this beautiful iconic sculpture, with similar cousins around the world, could shortly have a 42m high warehouse and 3550 houses within in its eyeline. In my opinion the area around the dream site should add to the visitor experience, not restrict the potential usages.

The Bold forest area action plan is the last chance we have of making a success of this multi-million-pound project. I firmly believe that the addition of a miners heritage/visitor centre, cafes, sufficient parking facilities, community hubs, cycle and bridleways, walking routes and even a hotel would transform this area and massively increase tourism revenue for the town. It would be great to see ex-miners giving talks to school children and keeping our proud heritage alive. Guided tours around the various areas of the park including important mining locations would be fantastic.

I would like to commend the Bold & Clock Face action group and Bold Parish council for their hard work to try and reignite the fires under the Bold forest area plan. It is a plan that not only secures our heritage but creates jobs in a sustainable, environmentally focused forest park.

I believe that the variety of jobs that would potentially be created would be preferential and have a much wider appeal than low paid warehousing jobs.



Gary Conley.

Former Miner and originator of Dream.