

## Christchurch residents fight plans for green belt homes

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Residents protest against plans for a development of houses at Marsh Lane in Christchurch

**WORRIED** Christchurch residents concerned about a potential 90-house development have joined forces to protest against the plans.

As part of [Christchurch Borough Council](#)'s Core Strategy, 90 homes have been proposed for the rear of Marsh Lane off Fairmile, land that is currently designated as green belt.

More than 400 objections have already been collected by the Marsh Lane Action Group, formed by concerned residents in reaction to the proposal.

Marsh Lane homeowner Steve Roberts, who has helped to organise the campaign said: "This is a huge statement of opposition from the residents this side of Fairmile Road, with something in the region of 90 per cent of people that we've spoken to wanting to sign up.

"In addition to our canvassing, there have been two other related campaigns going on, so the activity against this proposal really has been considerable."

Among many of the objections the residents have against the proposal, they are most concerned about the loss of the green belt, the impact on the SSSI (Site of Special Scientific Interest) and the poor vehicular access to the proposed development, as well as the increased risk of flooding as the proposed development site is a flood plain. As well as the objections, which are expected to reach more than 450, residents say the methods of consultation have not been good enough.

Mr Roberts added: "We feel that information about the proposal has not been widely disseminated, hence the need for residents to go around canvassing.

"We have been shocked at the number of people we've spoken to who hadn't heard anything about the proposals at all, especially as we're at phase three already apparently."

Many are also worried about the effect such a development would have on elderly and vulnerable residents living at the Bronte Trust homes in Marsh Lane with adverse comments also made about the appropriateness of the site for building, and the extent of the council's research about the state of the land.

Judith Plumley, head of community and economy at Christchurch Borough Council said: "We have tried our best to publicise the Core Strategy consultation so that our residents have had a chance to comment on the proposals for a second time."

She added: "There are still a number of issues to be addressed in relation to this proposal.

"The purpose of the consultation is to highlight the sort of concerns being raised by these residents and those concerns will be taken into account."