

London Rd Residents Group  
220 London Rd  
Blackburn  
BB1 7NA

22<sup>nd</sup> September 2016

Dear Sir or Madam:

As residents of the area we raise concern yet again with regards the failure to clean or manage the waste land at the rear of our properties. This land has been left in this condition for numerous years with little progress made in finding a long-term solution to the area.

We now face the situation that on a daily basis, youth gather at the rear of our properties smoking illicit substances and leaving discarded syringes and needles. As residents we are wanting immediate action from the registered land owners to tackle the issue of overgrown trees and shrubs in this unsecure land that results in the area open to frequent fly tipping and public nuisance. Further more we have now noticed a significant increase in the growth of the wild plant Japanese knotweed. As you well know this plant is included in part 2 schedule 9 of the countryside and wildlife act 1981. Further so, it is classified as controlled waste under the environmental protection act 1990. It is deemed to adversely affect the neighbourhood and thus is a breach of the town and country planning act. The lack of action taken by the council to manage this land and specifically tackle the growth of this plant has now resulted in our concern about potential financial losses to residents.

Japanese knotweed can cause extensive structural damage to a property as it can grow through tarmac and concrete and it can grow up to 20cm. It is very difficult to eradicate completely and the cost of dealing with it can be very high. If we intend to sell our property which is affected by the Japanese Knotweed this will have an impact on potential purchasers as they will need to disclose to the mortgage lender as the presence of the plant may affect the lender's decision as to whether or not to grant a mortgage on the property. We acknowledge the fact that we are going through very tough financial times with cut backs within the local council. However, priority must be given to ensuring both the law is not breached and risk to environment or neighbourhood is safeguarded. With changes to fortnightly bin collection, our concern is that this will further exaggerate the issues with regards fly tipping on this land. The land thus requires immediate action under the environmental protection policy of the council and to safeguard losses and potential liability claims. The matter has been raised historically with councilors on numerous occasions and has even had a site visit from Kate Hollern in the past.

We hope that a swift solution can be made to ensure the safety and well being of residents especially young children from this unsecure and hazardous wasteland. We look forward to an informed plan of action on this matter and would welcome an open forum meeting to discuss the long-term strategy. Please find attached names and signatures of residents involved in raising their concerns on this issue.

Kind Regards,  
Mr Maqsud Patel  
On Behalf of the London Rd Residents Group.