

This response specifically relates to; -

[R18/076 or SHLAA2901 – Land to the East of Crouchley Lane. Part of parcel of Land LY22'](#)

It was really disappointing to see that the owners have applied for the above parcel of land to be considered under the call for sites and would ask that you consider the following points in making an assessment for its removal from the green belt and inclusion in your 'preferred option' for outlying settlements.

### **Green Belt**

Our key argument revolves around the fact that according to the Council's own assessment our site makes a strong contribution to preservation of the green belt. To paraphrase George Orwell, all green belt is created equal but some green belt is more equal than others! Our sites sit's within one of 24 General Areas into which WBC have subdivided the borough's green belt. Just 5 of those 24 are assessed as making a strong contribution to the purposes of the green belt (most importantly preventing urban sprawl and encroachment into open countryside) and ours, GA8, is one of the strong contributors and the only one in this category bordering Lymm. The GAs have been further sub-divided into parcels and those have been assessed. Again, our parcel LY22 is judged to be strong. Berry's (on behalf of the landowners) have argued that site R18/076, 19% of LY22, makes only a moderate contribution but the Council have found that the site also makes a strong contribution. It's not an exaggeration to say that this site appears to be amongst the most valuable in the whole borough.

Many sites have been proposed for development in Lymm that make only a weak or moderate contribution. We estimate c.2000 houses worth. The Council's own profile for Lymm states that the 500 house target can likely be met without releasing any of the strong sites.

### **Landscape value**

One of the features that makes the site so valuable in green belt terms is its openness, lack of hard boundaries, combination of rolling countryside (low level vegetation) with dispersed tree lines at some distance. the British landscape is uniquely beautiful; there is nothing like it anywhere in the world and it is vital for our children and grandchildren that it is protected. The parcel (LY22) as a whole and site 2901, in particular, is stunningly beautiful and plays an important role in the wider landscape value and the qualities of the rural nature of Lymm village.



A group of residents have commissioned a specialist (submitted separately) and this assessment has established that the value and susceptibility of the Land East of Crouchley Lane is vulnerable to the effects of housing development and does not have the capacity to accommodate development of the nature under consideration. Rather than enhancement any potential housing proposal will result in the loss of a distinctive landscape feature and diminution of the historic settlement edge.

In terms of visual amenity the proposals are likely to result in significant visual change from the public highway in the immediate locality. Near views from the public footpath would be fundamentally affected with the introduction of built form in close proximity. In terms of distant views from the landscape to the south; receptors would experience clear views of the development extending down the southern slopes of the sandstone escarpment which is an important rural component in the wider landscape as well as for the setting of the historic village. This change would be fundamentally at odds with the establish interplay between the village and its rural hinterland.

### **Listed buildings**

The site crosses the important viewpoint of the St Mary's Church and in particular, the Grade II listed Lymm Water Tower. A well-used, much-loved public right of way crosses the site, with the bucolic setting of the site (and the parcel, as a whole), being the main reasons for the paths popularity. See figure 3 below. This right of way is an important resource to the community. The agriculture of the parcel is a balance of both pastoral and arable farming. This, added to the open rolling landscape, and the unrestricted views, creates a strong feeling of high landscape quality – all of which are extremely pleasing to the eye. This is especially so from the northerly aspect of site R18/076.



The site affords the only uninterrupted views of Lymm Water Tower. Development of the site would undoubtedly compromise the visual amenity associated with the tower and be certain to place it in a less sympathetic setting - its current setting is in effect little changed since the 19th Century.

### **Agricultural value**

The site's agricultural use is currently varied with wheat, potatoes, peas, barley, rapeseed, soya bean and sugar beet all having been planted in recent years. As well as being indicative of high quality agricultural land, this varied crop cycle adds to the visual amenity of the site and sense of connectedness with a natural landscape. The land is classified as Grade 3 which splits between 3a and 3b although we have not requested soil sampling it is patently obvious that the grading of this land which has carried crops for at least 50 years is much higher.



### **Amenity value**

A right of way crosses the site, used regularly by dog-walkers, ramblers, and runners and providing a more pleasant non-vehicular route to other amenities, such as Lymm Dam, than does Higher Lane.

### **Ecology**

No assessment has been made by the landowners, they have simply relied on the site's agricultural use to infer low ecological value. Residents' experience is, however, of bats, lapwing and hares all being seen on the site.

### **Highways & access**

Fundamental to residents' case is that the site is unsuitable for development by virtue of its strong contribution to green belt purposes and its other features outlined above. But the site has significant practical issues, in particular the lack of suitability of Crouchley Lane as the access point for a substantial housing development. A recent development at Lymm Rugby Club has been approved and due to commence soon.

Cont.

Concerns were raised at the planning stage about the road (Crouchley Lane). Although Berry's have included a picture of the junction of Crouchley Lane with Higher Lane which looks a good junction, within 200 metres or so the road drastically reduces in width, has a very uncompromising sharp bend and with the absence of yellow lines is a nightmare in terms of parking especially at weekends when events / matches are taking place.

Please see pictures below.



At the Junction of Crouchley Lane / Higher Lane is St Mary's Pre School. There will be an increased risk to those children arising from the increased volume of vehicular traffic any development will bring.

There will be issues of increased traffic pollution arising from cars at the junction.

Berry's report also refers to schools which are within a short walk from the site. It fails to mention that young children will have to negotiate crossing the A56 Higher Lane which at peak periods is extremely difficult.

We have always considered the A56 Higher Lane as the 'southern border' of Lymm and other than a row of houses along the most southern side there is nothing but fields and a farm beyond. We think the planning team should really consider strongly rejecting any building / development beyond this boundary.

### **Finally**

We have made a financial contribution to a number of specialist reports which will be submitted to you as part of a large group of residents living on Higher Lane / Manor Road / Crouchley Lane.

In addition to the points we have raised today I also wish to stress that we fully support the views included in these professional reports and ask that these also include part of our objections.

[REDACTED]