

Warrington Borough Council  
Planning Policy and Programmes  
New Town House  
Buttermarket Street  
Warrington  
WA1 2NH

Email [REDACTED]  
Direct [REDACTED]  
Mobile [REDACTED]  
Fax [REDACTED]  
Your Ref  
Our Ref

[REDACTED]  
29<sup>th</sup> September 2017

Dear Sirs

**Warrington Local Plan Review- Preferred Development Option: Representations submitted on behalf of Lane End Strategic Land Limited**

Cushman & Wakefield has been instructed by Lane End Strategic Land Limited (Lane End hereafter) to submit representations in relation to the current consultation on Warrington Borough Council's Local Plan Preferred Development Option.

**Background**

Lane End Strategic Land forms part of the Lane End Group, a company which identifies and promotes land opportunities across the North West and nationally, working in partnership with Registered Providers and Local Authorities to deliver successful developments and builds sustainable mixed and balanced communities with a sense of place.

Lane End own the interest of approximately 2.7 ha (6.7 acres) of land off Massey Brook Lane, Lymm.

The site comprises agricultural land and is located on the western edge of Lymm village, with access off Massey Brook Lane. The site was previously tied to the curtilage of a residential property – former Red Cott Farm and was used for grazing horses. Red Cott Farm has since been redeveloped as a Care Home – Cheshire Grange Care Home (Planning reference: 2008/12348) which was approved on 30<sup>th</sup> April 2008 and as a consequence the land to the south of Cheshire Grange Care Home has become redundant.

A copy of the location plan is provided as an addendum to this letter.

**Representations**

The subject of this representation is to make the Council aware of Lane End's development interests for land off Massey Brook Lane, Lymm, Warrington, and to provide comment on the Preferred Development Option for the Local Plan.

Crowley Associates on behalf of Lane End submitted a Call for Sites form on 5<sup>th</sup> December 2016. This

included a comprehensive supporting document and location plan. The Call for Sites information submitted confirms that the site off Massey Brook Lane is a sustainable site which is available, suitable and achievable for residential development and could deliver approximately 66 dwellings (based on an indicative net developable area of 2.2 hectares) within the first five years of the Local Plan period. The site has the potential to bring forward a range of house-types, including affordable homes, to directly assist the Council in meeting its significant housing need requirement over the plan period.

### **Local Plan Preferred Development Option**

Cushman & Wakefield has reviewed Warrington's Local Plan Preferred Development Option in the context of these development proposals and comments as follows:

#### **Housing Need**

Lane End agrees with the Council's proposed approach to determining the required housing need of 1,113 homes per annum on the basis that this aligns with the Council's economic growth aspirations as set out within the Cheshire and Warrington Devolution Bid, and that in order to deliver these growth objectives, the Council must release Green Belt land to meet the necessary housing requirements over the plan period.

#### **Strategic Objectives**

Lane End concurs with the Council's proposed Strategic Objectives. It is considered that W2, in relation to a proposed Green Belt release, is a critical objective for the Council in order to meet the local housing need. It is acknowledged that any Green Belt release should balance meeting the Council's housing needs whilst ensuring that the revised Green Belt boundary maintains the permanence of the Green Belt in the long-term.

#### **Green Belt Release**

It is considered that the Council has demonstrated that there are exceptional circumstances for releasing Green Belt land in line with Paragraphs 82 and 83 of the NPPF. The Preferred Development Option will ensure the delivery of sustainable development, supporting the needs of existing communities as well as meeting local housing need for existing and future residents in the Borough.

Lane End is in agreement with the Council that the most sustainable broad spatial option (Option 2) is to focus Green Belt release on sites which are adjacent to the main urban area, alongside some incremental growth in outlying settlements such as Lymm. This approach ensures that the permanency of the Green Belt can be maintained whilst at the same time brings forward land which is required to meet local housing need and support economic growth and local services/ amenities. This approach also enables the Council to deliver a number of smaller sites in the early part of the plan period, which could include land off Massey Brook Lane.

#### **Outlying Settlements**

The Council has confirmed that as yet there has been no assessment of individual sites within the outlying settlements at this stage of the Local Plan process. Notwithstanding this, the Council has undertaken a review of each of the Call for Sites in proximity to the settlements in relation to their basic characteristics and Green Belt performance. With regards to Lymm, the Council has noted that there is potential to bring forward up to 500 homes within the Green Belt in addition to 100 homes which are already identified within the SHLAA and are located within the existing urban area/ settlement boundary of Lymm. The Council notes

however that the Green Belt housing numbers for Lymm are indicative at this stage and final dwelling numbers will depend on more detailed assessments of potential development sites. There is scope therefore for this indicative figure to change.

Lane End considers that there is potential for a proportion of the existing identified SHLAA sites to not come forward within the plan period. For example,

- The recycling premises off Camsley Lane (SHLAA Reference: 1620) is subject to contaminated land issues;
- The MSBS Joinery Site, Star Lane (SHLAA Reference: 1720) has issues regarding contaminated land and site access;
- Rushgreen Road, Lymm (Land east of Thirlmere Drive, Lymm) (SHLAA Reference: 1545) presents contaminated land issues. Furthermore, it is classed as making a moderate contribution to the Green Belt and thus other sites which make less contribution to the Green Belt may be preferable; and
- Pool Lane/Oldfield Road, Statham (Land immediately surrounding Pool Farm) (SHLAA Reference: 1621) lies within Flood zones 2 & 3 and so is considered sequentially less preferable for development. All development options within Flood Zone 1 should be explored prior to sites in Flood Zones 2 or 3 being considered.

As such there is clearly a requirement for additional Green Belt land to be released to ensure local housing need can be met over the plan period.

It is noted that the release of Green Belt sites on the outskirts of Lymm will also need to be supported by investment in social and physical infrastructure, including primary school expansion. The Preferred Development Option for the 'Outlying Settlements' states that in order to deliver the proposed level of development, including 500 dwellings in the Green Belt adjoining Lymm, it will be necessary to expand existing primary schools and provide additional primary care capacity in Lymm.

The Massey Brook Lane site is within 350 metres of Cherry Tree Primary School, which has been identified as having good expansion potential<sup>1</sup> whereas other schools in Lymm are on constrained sites and/or are difficult to expand. As such the site is well-positioned to align with the catchment area of Cherry Tree Primary School when assessed against other Green Belt/ Call for Site submissions.

The site is less than 1 km from both GP surgeries in Lymm, whereas sites on the eastern edge of Lymm are 1.5-2 km from both surgeries. Lane End's site at Massey Brook Lane is thus clearly more sustainably located for access to primary care facilities.

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<sup>1</sup> Warrington BC (2017) Settlement Profiles – Outlying Settlements

### Site Appraisal

Whilst the Council has not yet undertaken an assessment of the individual Call for Sites submissions, Lane End, as part of these representations has undertaken its own assessment as set out in Table 1 below to assist the Council in considering the site as part of a future residential allocation.

<b>Residential Dwelling Total Submitted</b>		45 although the original Call for Sites submission was based on 65% assumption of net developable area and a smaller gross area of 2.35 ha. The site area has since expanded to 2.7 ha and we consider that given the site context, the developable area could be 80%. As such 66 dwellings could be accommodated on the site.
<b>Constraints</b>	Flood Zone 2	No – The site is within Flood Zone 1
	Flood Zone 3	No
	Green Belt	Yes
	TPO Issues	It is understood that there are no Tree Preservation Orders on or immediately adjacent to the site.
	Nature Designations	There are no nature designations pertaining to the site.
	Conservation Areas	The site is not within a Conservation Area.
	Statutory Listed Buildings	There are no statutory Listed Buildings.
	Locally Listed Buildings	There are no locally Listed Buildings.
	Area of Archaeological Assessment	No
	Scheduled Ancient Monument	No
	Strategic Road Network Access	A56 Booth's Hill Road
	Local Highway Access	Proposed access off Massey Brook Lane
	Access Comments	Scope for access off Massey Brook Lane – Lane End has full ownership of the site to secure the necessary access required.
	Neighbouring uses	Care home to the north with existing residential properties to the east. Agricultural/farm land to the west.
	Air quality management areas	No
Potentially contaminated land	No	
Hazardous Installation Zone	No	
Public Rights of Way	There are no PRoW running through or around the perimeter of the site.	

**Table 1:** Site Appraisal

### **Green Belt Assessment**

The site has been assessed as part of the wider parcel LY27 and the Council states that the wider parcel makes a moderate contribution to the Green Belt. The specific site is also identified within the Council's Additional Green Belt Assessment as site reference R18/036, and the Council notes that this too is considered to make a moderate contribution to the Green Belt. Cushman & Wakefield has reviewed this assessment on behalf of Lane End and notes as follows:

- *Purpose 1 – To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas*  
We strongly agree with the Council's assessment that the site makes no contribution given that the site is not adjacent to the Warrington urban area.
- *Purpose 2 – To prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another*  
Whilst we recognise the Council's conclusion that the site makes a weak contribution to this purpose, we would argue that the site makes no contribution to this purpose. As the Council state, development of the site would not reduce the perceived gap between Lymm and Warrington, and that the gap is already narrower in other places. Furthermore, and as the Council mention in their assessment, the M6 forms a strong separation between the settlements and is a natural barrier to preventing merging of the settlements. We therefore conclude that the site makes no contribution to this purpose.
- *Purpose 3 – To assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment*  
The Council considers the site to make a strong contribution to this purpose however it is Lane End's position that the site makes only a weak contribution.

The site is located on the edge of the settlement and adjoins existing built development to the north and east. As the Council notes there is existing development within the Green Belt to the west of the site. An established and mature hedgerow borders the site to the west which will prevent further encroachment in this direction. Whilst the site adjoins open countryside to the south, careful and sensitive masterplanning could create a strong and durable boundary, preventing any perceived encroachment to the countryside. Furthermore, the existing surrounding development and the site levels, with the site at a lower level to the A56 prevent any long line views of the site.

The site in itself is not considered to make a strong contribution to safeguarding the countryside, and we therefore conclude that the Council should re-appraise the site as making only a weak contribution to this purpose.

- *Purpose 4 – To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns*  
Lane End strongly agrees with the Council that the site makes no contribution to this purpose.
- *Purpose 5 – To assist in urban regeneration by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land*  
Lane End agrees with the Council that the site makes a moderate contribution to this purpose.

Overall, for the reasons set out above, we consider that the Council should re-appraise the site as making an overall weak contribution to the Green Belt.

It is also worth noting that the weak parcels which have been identified within the Green Belt Assessment for Lymm have not been submitted as part of the recent Call for Sites. This implies that there is a lack of willingness from the landowners to dispose of these sites for development, or from developers to develop the parcels.

We would emphasise that Land at Massey Brook Lane is available, suitable and deliverable. The apparent lack of interest in developing sites the Council has currently assessed as making less contribution to the Green Belt serves to emphasise the importance of this site and the strong contribution it can make towards supporting the Council in meeting their housing requirement.

### **Delivery Timescales**

The site is immediately available and presents no constraints to development. Lane End are committed to bringing forward the site and have commenced a suite of technical documents to demonstrate the site's suitability for development.

The site is clearly capable of making a significant contribution towards the Council's housing land supply through the release of a small area of Green Belt in a sustainable location. The proposed dwelling capacity of 66 dwellings means that the full allocation could be realised within the first 5 years of the Local Plan.

### **Conclusions**

As outlined above, our representations confirm that Lane End's land situated on Massey Brook Lane, Lymm is achievable and deliverable over the first five years of the Local Plan period. On this basis, Lane End is strongly in support of the Council's Preferred Development Option which seeks to accommodate some development within the outlying settlements, specifically 500 dwellings within the Green Belt surrounding Lymm. The site therefore presents a strong potential to align with the Council's vision.

As set out within the representations, Lane End notes that the site at Massey Brook Lane is capable of coming forward for a residential development providing approximately 66 dwellings, and can be delivered within the short-term. This will provide the Council with a high quality development in a sustainable location.

We respectfully request that Cushman & Wakefield on behalf of Lane End is kept informed as to the progress of the Warrington Local Plan Review, including being notified of any future opportunities to provide comments, so that Lane End can respond appropriately as required.

I trust that the above letter of representation is clear and comprehensive, however should you have any queries, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours faithfully,



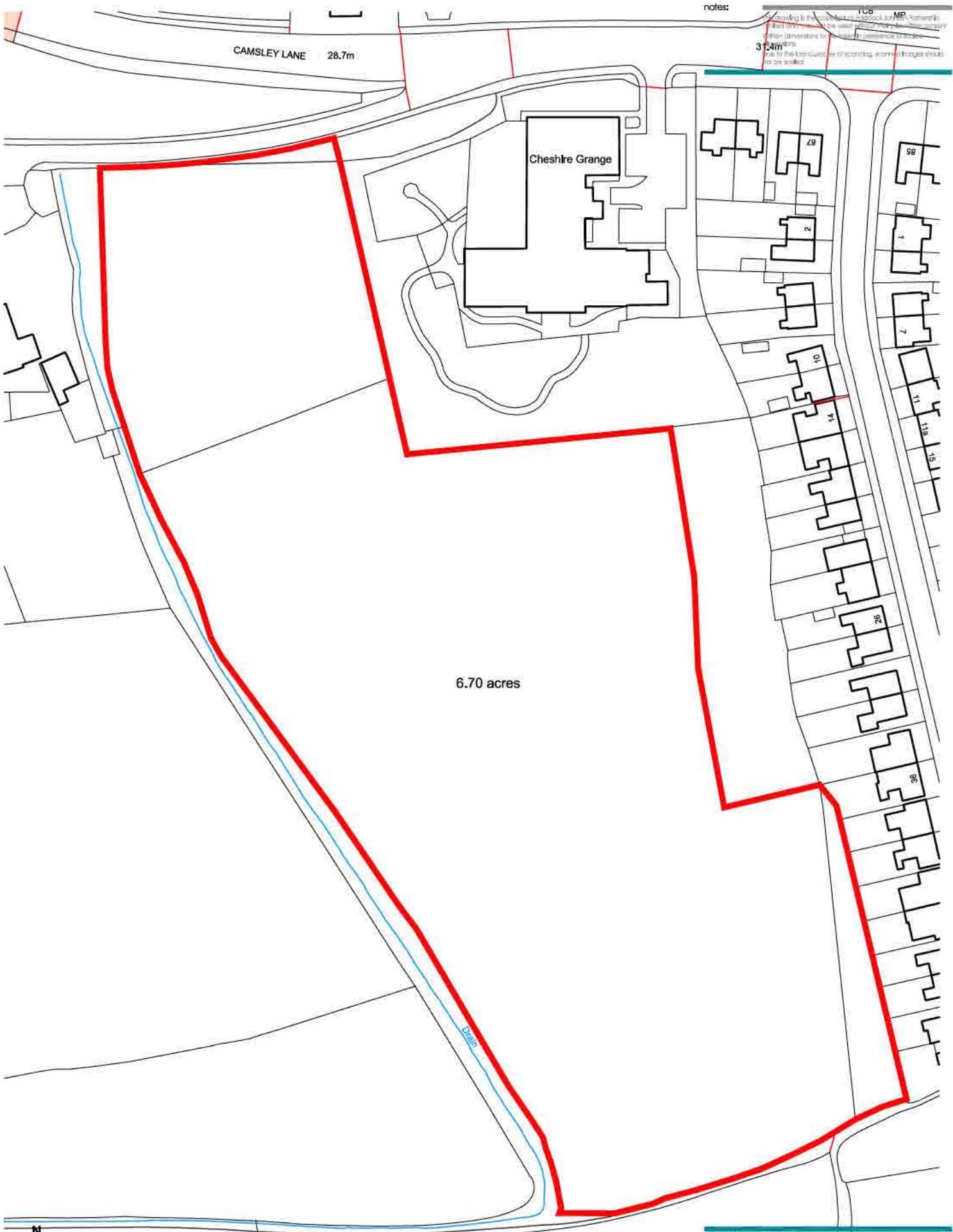


████████████████████  
████████████████████ Cushman & Wakefield Planning

Enc – Site Location Plan

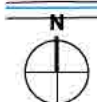
Call for Sites Submission





notes: TCA MP  
 3.2m  
 This is the boundaries of existing, planned changes should be scaled

6.70 acres



OS licence number 100007395

client: Lane End Strategic Land  
 project: New Housing Massey Brook Lane

drawing no: 17095-01  
 drawing title: SITE LOCATION PLAN

scale: 1:1250 sheet: A4  
 date: 29 Sep 2017 checked: SH

rev	date	description	by

status: **INFORMATION**

paddock johnson partnership architects  
 Studio 2, The Lyceum, Bath Street, Port Sunlight, Merseyside CH62 4UJ  
 t: 44(0)151 643 1234 f: 44(0)151 643 1656  
 info@paddockjohnson.com www.paddockjohnson.com



<i>For Office Use Only</i>	
Date received:	
Scanned /Saved:	
Plotted:	
Site Ref:	
SHLAA Site Ref:	

# 'Call for Sites'

## Warrington Borough Council Local Plan Review

### Call for Sites Registration Form

October 2016

**Please note this 'Call for Sites' is for five or more dwellings or economic development on sites of 0.25 ha (or 500sqm of floor space) and above, Gypsy, Traveller and Show People and Minerals and Waste sites.**

The identification of sites does not imply that the Council considers that the site is suitable for development, either now or in the future. It cannot be taken as representing either an intention to allocate these sites, or as a material consideration in the determination of a planning application.

Potential sites that have been identified will be further tested through the Plan-making process, including through the Spatial Distribution and Site Assessment Process, Sustainability Appraisal/Strategic Environmental Assessment, several stages of public participation and independent examination.

Please also note that all the responses and information received as part of the 'Call for Sites' will be published and made available for public viewing as part of the open and transparent Plan making process.

**NOTE:** Please read the accompanying guidance note [here](#) before completing this form and complete a **separate** form for each site that you are submitting to the Council.

***Please return your completed form and any accompanying supporting material to Planning Policy, Warrington Borough Council no later than 5.00pm on Monday 05<sup>th</sup> December 2016.***

By e-mail: [ldf@warrington.gov.uk](mailto:ldf@warrington.gov.uk)

By post: Planning Policy, Warrington Borough Council, New Town House, Buttermarket Street, Warrington, WA1 2NH

Should you require further advice and guidance on completing this form, please contact the Planning Policy Team by telephone on 01925 442841 or by e-mail to [ldf@warrington.gov.uk](mailto:ldf@warrington.gov.uk)

## (1) Your Details

Please provide your contact details and those of your agent (if applicable). Where provided, we will use your Agent's details as our primary contact.

	Your details	Your Agent's details	
Name	██████████	██████████	
Position	██████	██████	
Organisation	██████████	Crowley Associates	
Address	████████████████████	45 Carr Bank Lane	
	Town	██████████	Sheffield
	Postcode	██████████	S11 7FB
Telephone		██████████	
Email address		████████████████████	

## (2) Site Details

Please provide the details of the site you are suggesting. If you are suggesting more than one site, please use a **separate** form.

Name of site /other names it's known by	Land off Massey Brook Lane			
Address				
	Town	Lymm		
	Postcode			
Ordnance Survey Grid Reference	Easting : 367099	Northing : 386980		
Site area (hectares)	2.35ha			
Net developable area (hectares)	1.5ha			
What is your interest in the site? (please tick one)	Owner	<input type="checkbox"/>	Lessee	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Prospective Purchaser	<input type="checkbox"/>	Neighbour	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Other	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Please state: Developer/Promoter	

**Please Note:** It is essential that you provide a map showing the site's location and detailed boundaries for each submission.

**(3a) Proposed future use(s)**

Please indicate the preferred use that you would like the site to be considered for. Please also indicate any other uses you would consider acceptable. If you wish the site to be considered for a mix of uses, please tick all uses that apply.

	Residential	Gypsy & Travellers	Employment	Retail	Leisure	Other*
Preferred future use	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Alternative future use(s)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Potential Capacity	houses: 45	Number of Pitches:	SqM	SqM	SqM	SqM
	or flats:					
Employment Use Class (E.g. B1)						
* If "Other", please indicate which use(s):						
Potential Density	30dph					
	Has any design, viability, master planning work or other studies been undertaken for any proposed use?			Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	

**(3b) Proposed future use(s) - Minerals and Waste**

Details:

#### (4) Site Ownership

Please record the site ownership details. If there are more than three owners, please record the fourth owner, etc. on a separate sheet. Please indicate the extent of individual landholding(s) on the site map.

If you do not know who owns the site, please state so below.

	Owner 1	Owner 2	Owner 3
Name			
Address			
	Town		
	Postcode		

Or: I do not know who owns the site

Has the owner (or each owner) indicated support for proposed redevelopment?

Please also record these details for the 4<sup>th</sup> and subsequent owners (where necessary).

Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
No	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Don't know	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Are there any Restrictive Covenants & Ransom Strips affecting the site?	No		

#### (5) Market Interest

Please choose the most appropriate category below to indicate what level of market interest there is in the site:

		Any comments
Site is owned by a developer	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Site under option to a developer	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Enquiries received	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Site is being marketed	<input type="checkbox"/>	
None	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Not known	<input type="checkbox"/>	

## (6) Site Condition

Please record the current use(s) of the site (or for vacant sites, the previous use, if known) and the neighbouring land uses.

Current use(s)	Grazing (horses)	
Neighbouring Uses	Residential; Care Home	
If vacant	Previous use(s)	
	Date last used	

What proportion of the site is made up of buildings, and what proportion is (open) land?

Proportion covered by buildings	0	%	Proportion not covered by buildings	0	%
---------------------------------	---	---	-------------------------------------	---	---

If there are buildings on the site, please answer the following questions:

How many buildings are there on the site?		buildings
What proportion of the buildings are currently in use?	% in use:	%
	% derelict:	%
	% vacant:	%
Are any existing buildings on the site proposed to be converted?		

For the **parts of the site not covered by buildings**, please answer these questions:

What proportion of the land is currently in active use?		%
What proportion is <b>greenfield</b> (not previously developed)?	100	% (A)*
What proportion is <b>previously developed</b> and cleared?		% (B)*
What proportion is <b>previously developed</b> but not cleared? (e.g. demolition spoil, etc.)		% (C)*

\* A plus B plus C should add to 100%.

Please provide any additional comments on a separate sheet if necessary.

## (7) Constraints to Development

Please tell us about any known constraints that will affect development for the proposed use, details of what action is required, how long it will take and what progress has been made.

Please use a separate sheet where necessary to provide details. If using separate sheets, it would be helpful to make reference there to the particular constraint, e.g (7)(e) – Drainage.

	Yes, No or Don't know	Nature and severity of constraint *	Action needed, timescales and progress	Confirmed by technical study or by service provider?	
				Yes	No
a) Land contamination	No			<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
b) Land stability	Don't know			<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) Mains water supply	No			<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
d) Mains sewerage	No			<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
e) Drainage, flood risk	No			<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
f) Tree Preservation Orders	No			<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
g) Electricity supply	No			<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
h) Gas supply	No			<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
i) Telecommunications	No			<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
j) Highways	No			<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
k) Ownership, leases etc.	No			<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
l) Ransom strips, covenants	No			<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
m) Other (Please provide details)	No			<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>



## **(8) Site Availability**

*Please indicate when the site may be available*

Excluding planning policy constraints, when do you believe this site could be available for development?

Immediately Yes. (Note: to be “immediately available”, a site must be cleared, unless being considered for conversions.)

If not immediately, please state when it could be available:

If the site is not available immediately, please explain why – e.g. the main constraint(s) or delaying factor(s) and actions necessary to remove these:

## **(9) Any Other Information**

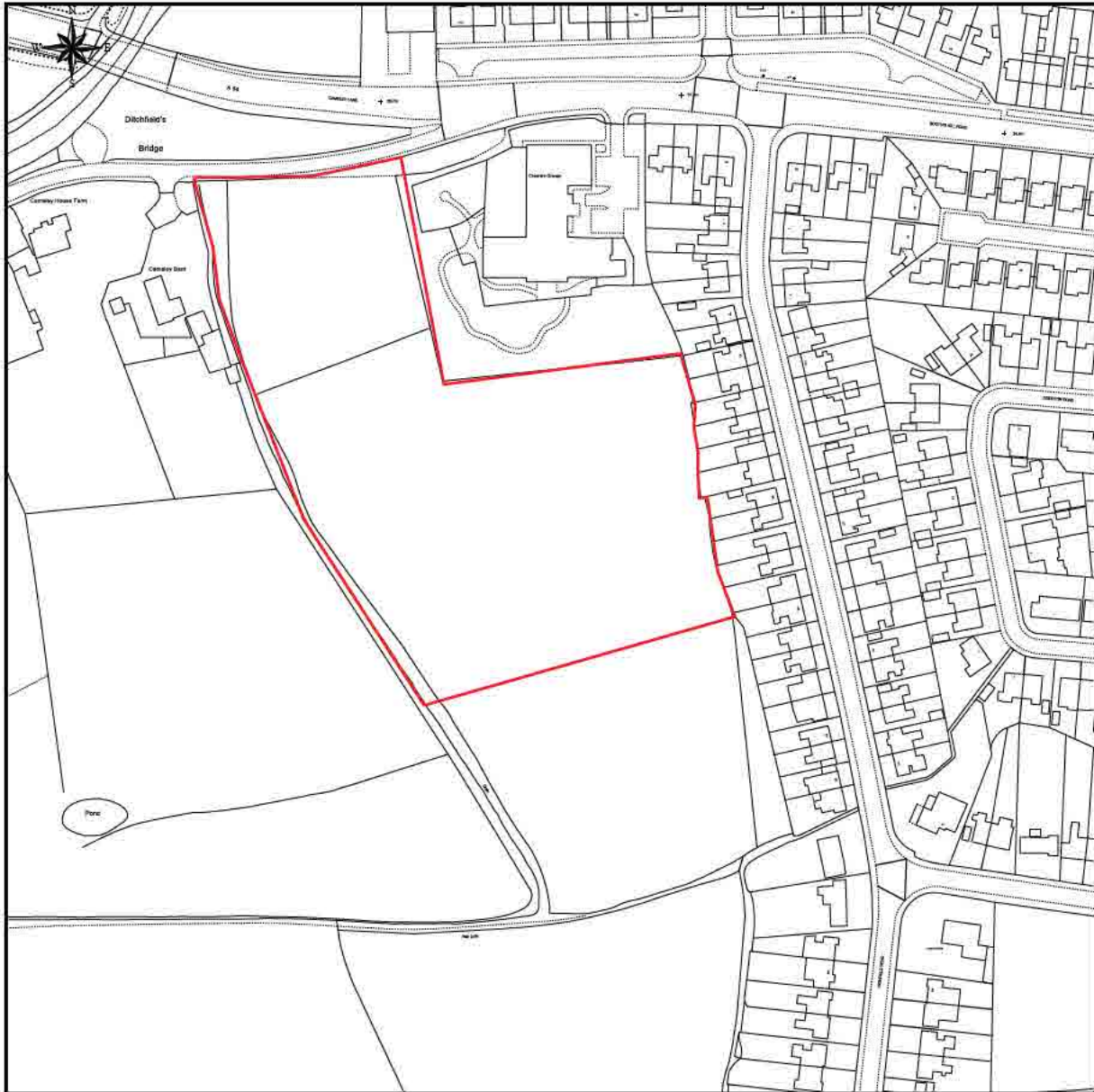
Please tell us anything else of relevance regarding this site if not already covered above that will ensure that it contributes positively to the achievement of sustainable development. Please use a separate sheet/s if necessary. Please see statement attached.

**Planning Policy– Warrington Borough Council,  
New Town House, Buttermarket Street, Warrington, WA1 2NH**

[ldf@warrington.gov.uk](mailto:ldf@warrington.gov.uk)  
01925 442841

This form is available in other formats or languages on request.

# Location Plan at Lymm (367099,386980)



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0m 25m 50m 75m 100m 125m 150m 175m 200m

Scale: 1:2500, paper size: A4

Warrington Call for Sites

Location Plan

Scale 1:2500

**WARRINGTON BOROUGH COUNCIL – CALL FOR SITES SUBMISSION**  
**LAND AT LYMM OFF MASSEY BROOK LANE**

**crowley associates**  
**PLANNING**  
[www.crowleyassociates.co.uk](http://www.crowleyassociates.co.uk)

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**Site referred to as: Land off Massey Brook Lane, Lymm**

**Easting: 367099, Northing: 386980**

Call for Sites Submission

By

**Crowley Associates**

on behalf of:

**Ashall Land Ltd**

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*Availability*

*Location/Community Infrastructure*

*Location/Transport Links*

*Impact on Environment/Landscape Character*

*Viability*

*Amount*

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## APPENDICES

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## 1. CONTEXT

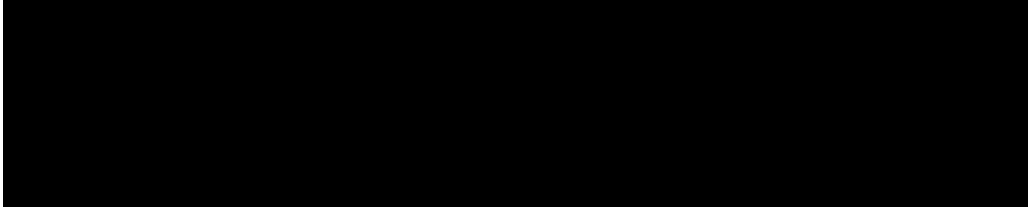
- 1.1. Following a High Court Challenge to the adoption of parts of the Warrington Local Plan Core Strategy (adopted 21 July 2014) the LPA's housing targets have been overturned; reference to the planned urban extension at the Omega Site has been removed; and the Green Belt boundary at Peel Hall has been quashed. The Local Authority's most recent Strategic Housing Market Assessment (Mid Mersey SHMA, January 2016) evidences the strong demand for housing and the Local Authority now accepts that it is not possible to meet Warrington's development needs within the existing urban area and on green field sites outside of the Green Belt.
- 1.2. In response Warrington Borough Council has launched a review of its Local Plan and in accordance with Regulation 18 of the Act has placed its consultation documents in the public domain. As part of the consultation process it has issued a Call for Sites.
- 1.3. This report, prepared by Crowley Associates on behalf of **Ashall Land Ltd**, seeks to promote **land west of Highfield Road and south of Massey Brook Lane, Lymm** (the "Site") for housing and provides an assessment of its availability, suitability and achievability in the context of existing adopted Local Plan and National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) objectives. The report concludes that the site is developable and requests that it be released from the Green Belt in order to enable it to delivery housing.

## 2. SITE DESCRIPTION INCLUDING RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

- 2.1. The Site encloses 2.35 ha of agricultural land and is located at the western edge of Lymm village with access off Massey Brook Lane. Its last lawful use was as land tied to/within the curtilage of a residential property referred to as Red Cott Farm and used (in association with Red Cott Farm) for grazing horses. However, the land containing the dwelling and associated outbuildings has been redeveloped in the last 5 years to deliver a care facility (granted consent under application reference: 2008/12348 with

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amendments/submission of detail signed off over subsequent applications), and the land has become redundant. It is now separated from the care home. It remains in the ownership of:



- 2.2. A site location plan is attached at **Appendix 1**.
- 2.3. The residential properties on Highfield Road border the eastern edge of the site with some residents having acquired an interest in the land, effectively extending their rear gardens (the registered title at **Appendix 2** refers). The eastern edge is bounded by a mature hedgerow, along which runs a watercourse (north/south) and which is considered to form part of the Borough's intermediate surface water management infrastructure. The Bridgewater Canal is located within 50m of the Site (to the north). No PROWs cross the Site. The land contained within the red line is Greenfield. The Site has not been assessed in the most up to date Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA 2016).

### **3. LOCAL PLAN POLICY/OTHER DESIGNATIONS**

- 3.1. The Site is located within the designated Green Belt. It:
- Does not contain any listed buildings
  - Is not located within the curtilage or the sphere of influence of any designated heritage assets (including Conservation Areas)
  - Tree Preservation Orders
  - Is within Flood Risk Zone 1
  - Is not subject to any other statutory designations



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## 4. IDENTIFIABLE CONSTRAINTS

- 4.1. The Site has no:
- Contaminated Land Issues
  - Ground Condition Issues
  - Site Access Issues
  - Infrastructure Issues
  - Amenity Issues
- 4.2. The Site has:
- Developer Interest

## 5. SITE ASSESSMENT

### *Availability*

- 5.1. The owners of the land have permitted Ashall Land Ltd to promote the Site. The land is available for immediate development and is free of ownership and tenancy issues. It can be brought forward at the earliest opportunity for residential development. Ashall Land Ltd has a track record of delivering planning permissions.

### *Sustainability – Location/ Community infrastructure*

- 5.2. The NPPF sets out a presumption in favour of sustainable development and encourages the fullest possible use of public transport, walking, and cycling and instructs local planning authorities to focus new development in locations which are or can be made sustainable.
- 5.3. The site is located 500m southwest of Lymm Village Centre with its associated facilities (Churches (catering for various denominations), community facilities (including a library), PHs, cafes, shops, P.O.). In terms of health care, there are three doctors' surgeries and a dentist located within 1km east of the site.
- 5.4. There are two children's nurseries and six schools located within 2.5km of the site:

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- Statham Community Primary School (550m north)
  - Cherry Tree Primary School (430m southeast)
  - Oughtrington Community Primary (2.54 km northeast)
  - Ravenbank Primary School (1.76km east of the site)
  - Lymm High School (2.4km east)
  - St Mary's Pre-School (1.39km south east)
  - Lymm Village Pre-School (1.37km northeast)

5.5. In addition, the site is well served by informal and formal open space including:

- Lymm Golf Club (1.32 km northeast)
- Lymm Rugby Football Club (1.41km southeast)
- Ridgeway Grundy Memorial Park (634m northeast)
- Lymm Lawn Tennis Club (956km east)
- Parkland off the Peppers (1.55km east)

5.6. According to the 2015 Open Space Audit, the wider Lymm Ward is well served by PROWs in the form of tow paths and trans pennine trails. An extract from the Open Space Audit showing the areas of formal and information open space located within access of the Site is attached at **Appendix 3**.

#### ***Sustainability – Location/Transport Links***

5.7. Warrington more generally is highly connected to the motorway and A road network, airports and the rail network.

5.8. There are bus stops located directly north of the Site on Massey Brook Lane and 300m east of the site at Barsbank Lane Corner on Church Road which combined provide regular and frequent bus services (numbers 5, 5E, 35 and 47) that run daily and on a half hourly/hourly timetable to Warrington, Altringham and Broomedge/Oughtrington. An aerial view of the site relative to the local bus stops is attached at **Appendix 4**.

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5.9. There is easy access from the Site to both the M6, the M56 and the wider A road and motorway network.

***Sustainability – Impact on Environment/Landscape Character***

5.10. The Site is not subject to any statutory landscape designations. The Local Authority produced a landscape character assessment in 2007 , and according to its findings the Site is located at the western edge of Landscape Area 3.C which is identified as Lymm, and which comprises a Red Sandstone Escarpment. The area is characterised by:

- *“smaller scale, more intimate rural landscape*
- *Luxuriant hedgerow trees with diverse range of species*
- *Rolling landscape*
- *Restricted views*
- *Strong feeling of high landscape quality”.*

5.11. The historic evolution and character of Lymm village (which contains a designated Conservation Area) is described with the assessment concluding that (from a landscape character perspective) the *“most characteristic feature of Lymm village is the valley in which it stands”*. The assessment goes on:

*“To the south of the village Lymm Dam has created a large recreational water body with a spillway into a steep-sided section of the valley known as the Dingle. The bridge over the spillway on Church Road is listed Grade II. In the centre of the village is the lower dam, from which the stream falls steeply into Slitten Brook. In all these features red sandstone is exposed, perhaps most dramatically near the lower dam where a cliff approximately 10m high stands behind adjacent cottages.”*

5.12. The Assessment confirms that *“nature of the landscape, with its luxuriance of hedgerows and hedgerow trees and more intimate landform, creates a less sensitive environment in which to absorb small scale development”*.

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<sup>1</sup> Warrington: A Landscape Character Assessment; Agathoclis Beckman Landscape Architects, 2007

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5.13. Landscape change recently experienced includes:

- Expansion of Lymm village
- Alteration from commercial to leisure uses on the Bridgewater Canal

5.14. The LPA's recommended Management and Landscape Objectives:

- Monitor existing hedgerows and hedgerow trees
- Encourage a rolling programme of new hedgerow tree planting
- Investigate and encourage the creation of new native woodland planting to provide continuous woodland links along Bradley Brook, Mag Brook and Kaylone Brook
- Encourage traditional management of ancient woodland
- Investigate the opportunities for extended footpath systems

5.15. The Site being as it is enclosed by mature hedgerows (albeit in need of management) contains one of the landscape features which is characteristic of the area. The land within comprises a relatively flat open greenfield site is too small to be considered viable as an agricultural holding, its last use was for the purpose of grazing horses. There are no topographical constraints. There are no long views of the site from the north or east and views towards the site from Massey Brook Lane are interrupted by the presence of hedgerows. Development of the site will inevitably result in change in the appearance of the landscape but there is nothing to suggest that development could not be delivered without being of detriment of the LPA's stated management and landscape objectives for the wider area.

### ***Sustainability - Viability***

5.16. The SHMA (2016) has confirmed that there is demand for housing in this location and indeed by the Local Authority's own assessment (undertaken as part of the CIL Viability Study), the majority of residential development in Warrington is viable. The Local

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Authority continues to adopt a long term view and it is determined to ignore extremes in the market.

- 5.17. There are no known abnormal costs associated with developing the site. There are no other known constraints to developing the site.

**Amount**

- 5.18. Based on an area of 2.35ha we consider the Site is capable of carrying upwards of 45 dwellings (based on an average developable area of 65%).

**6. GREEN BELT DESIGNATION – RELEASE**

- 6.1. The Site is located within the Designated Green Belt and in accordance with Paragraph 89 of the NPPF, new buildings in the Green Belt are considered to be an inappropriate form of development. Hence as it stands there is a presumption against the development of the Site for housing.

- 6.2. However, we note that the Local Authority, accepting that it is no longer possible to meet the Warrington’s development needs within the existing urban area and on green field sites outside of the Green Belt, will have to consider releasing land from within the Green Belt for development (including housing development).

- 6.3. We are proposing that our Site should be considered for release and it is therefore necessary to establish the level of contribution (none, weak, moderate or strong) that it makes to the role and purpose of the Green Belt.

- 6.4. Paragraph 80 of the National Planning Policy Framework (the NPPF) describes the purposes of including land within the Green Belt, as follows:

- To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built up areas;
- To prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another;
- To assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment;
- To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns; and

- 
- To assist in urban regeneration by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land
- 6.5. Using the methodology set out in the Local Authority's own Green Belt Assessment<sup>2</sup> (undertaken to determine whether the Borough's Green Belt Boundaries remain fit for purpose) we have tested the Site against the five purposes outlined.
- 6.6. It is worth noting that in its own assessment of the Green Belt, the Local Authority has also considered our Site for release albeit as part of a much larger parcel reference: LY27 (which extends from Highfield Lane to the east along Massey Brook land to Booth's Lane west and south). For reference an extract from the Green Belt Assessment indicating the extent of Parcel LY27 is attached at **Appendix 5**.
- 6.7. By the Local Authority's assessment, the wider site makes a **Moderate** contribution to the purposes of the Green Belt. By our own assessment, our individual Site makes a **Weak** contribution to the purposes of the Green Belt. Our position in this respect is set out in the following paragraphs.

*To Check the Unrestricted Sprawl of Large Built Up Areas*

- 6.8. With reference to the Local Authority's Green Belt Assessment we note the definition of Sprawl is taken to mean "*spreading out of building form over a large area in an untidy or irregular way*". Warrington urban area has been defined as the large built up area.
- 6.9. The Site is not connected to the built up area of Warrington and so makes no contribution to the purpose of checking unrestricted sprawl.

*To Prevent Neighbouring Towns from Merging into One Another*

- 6.10. For the purposes of the Green Belt Assessment, neighbouring towns were defined as the Warrington Urban Area and the settlements of Culcheth and Lymm.

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<sup>2</sup> Warrington Borough Council, Green Belt Assessment; Arup, 2016

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- 6.11. The site does could not be described as being an essential gap and development of it would not reduce the perceived distance between Warrington and the neighbouring towns identified. The M6 also acts as a natural barrier to merging. Thus by our own assessment the Site makes no contribution to the purpose of preventing neighbouring towns from merging into one another.

***To Assist in Safeguarding the Countryside from Encroachment***

- 6.12. This site is situated on the edge of settlement, and contains no built form. The boundary between the Site and the settlement which comprises the rear gardens to established residential properties would prevent further encroachment into the Site. Further encroachment beyond the Site north would be prevented owing to the presence of durable boundaries in the form of Massey Brook Lane. To the west is an established and durable hedgerow, which would contain encroachment in that direction. We accept the Site is open to adjoining countryside to the south, but with careful masterplanning a durable boundary could be established and the effect of the development and its perceived encroachment could be curtailed. By our own assessment the Site does not serve a beneficial use of the Green Belt which needs to be safeguarded. As an individual parcel it does not possess a strong degree of openness. We have concluded that the site makes a weak contribution towards the purpose of safeguarding the countryside from encroachment. In this respect we have departed from the Local Authority's conclusion in relation to the role the wider site (LY27) might have to play in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment.

***Preserving the Setting and Special Character of Historic Towns***

- 6.13. The Local Authority has decided that Lymm and Warrington should comprise historic towns for the purposes of the Green Belt Assessment. Although the Site is located adjacent to Lymm, the Conservation Area boundary is not within 250m of the Site boundaries and the Site does not cross an important viewpoint. We consider the Site has no role to play in this regard.



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***To Assist in Urban Regeneration by Encouraging the Recycling of Derelict and other Urban Land***

- 6.14. With reference Brownfield capacity within Warrington, only 4.67% of unconstrained land available for housing development is brownfield and the Mid Mersey Housing Market Area has 2.08% brownfield urban capacity. The Site makes a moderate contribution to purpose 5.
- 6.15. On the whole we conclude that the land makes a weak contribution to the Green Belt. Our findings depart from the findings of the Local Authority's Green Belt Assessment (as it relates to the wider site), which conclude that in the context of both the General Area Assessment and the individual parcel assessment, the wider parcel (LY27) makes a moderate contribution to the function of the Green Belt in this location. The Green Belt Assessment concludes that the parcels such as those which include the Site "*have the greatest potential to be considered for release*".

## **7. CONCLUSION**

- 7.1. The Site presents an excellent opportunity to deliver an extension to the western fringe of Lymm village. The Site is well located with access to public transport and within walking distance of schools, shops and other community infrastructure located within the settlement. The Site is capable of being developed sensitive to/in compliance with the wider objectives of the Local Plan and the NPPF in so far as they relate to matters of:
- Landscape character
  - Access and highway safety
  - Design (including scale, appearance, layout)
  - Amenity
- 7.2. In short the Site is capable of delivering sustainable development. We can confirm that Ashall Land Ltd is willing to undertake additional technical studies or assessments if so requested by the Local Authority.

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- 7.3. As part of the Local Authority's own assessment of the Green Belt and ahead of the Call for Sites, the potential for the Site to be released from the Green Belt (albeit as part of a wider parcel of land) has been considered. By the Local Authority's assessment, the wider parcel makes a moderate contribution to the Green Belt. By our own assessment the Site makes a weak contribution to the Green Belt and should be released.
- 7.4. The Site is immediately available and presents no constraints to development. Ultimately the Site is perfectly capable of making a significant contribution to towards Warrington Borough Council's housing land supply.
- 7.5. We would therefore request that the Site be released from the Green Belt and allocated for housing as part of the Local Plan Review.

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## APPENDICES

**Location Plan at Lymm (367099,386980)**



APPENDIX 2 – REGISTERED TITLE PLAN (NTS)



**APPENDIX 3 – EXTRACT FROM OPEN SPACE AUDIT SHOWING LYMM WARD**

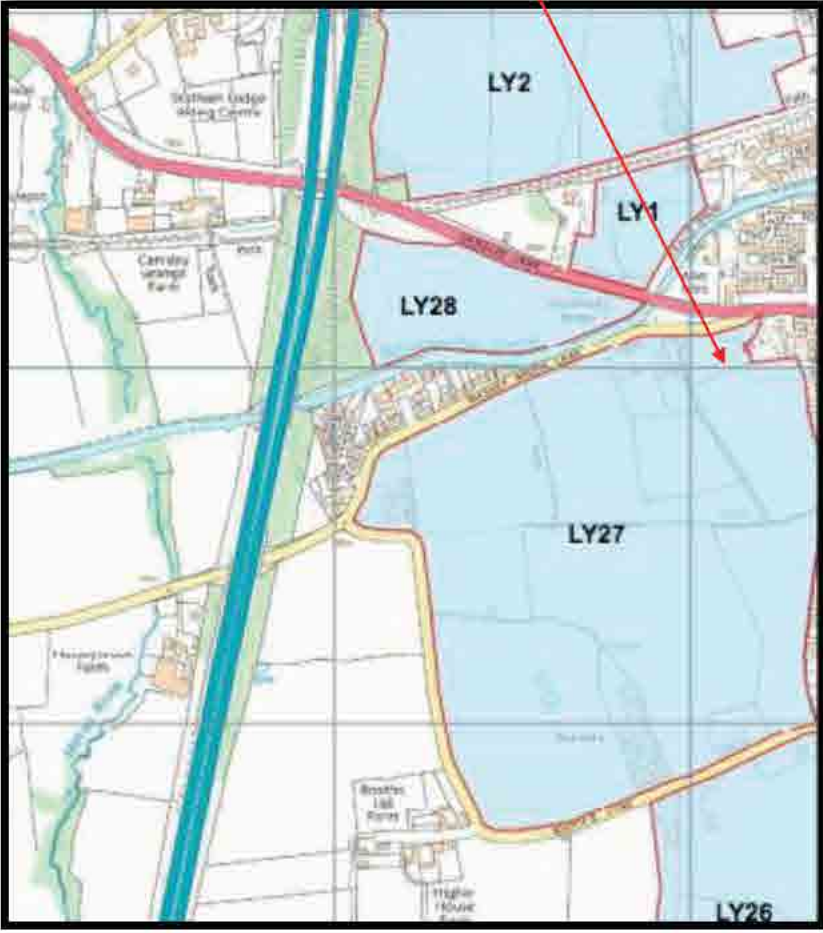


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**APPENDIX 4 – BUS STOPS PROXIMATE TO THE SITE**



**APPENDIX 5 – EXTRACT FROM THE GREEN BELT ASSESSMENT SHOWING PARCEL LY27**



The Site





*View west towards the Site along Massey Brook Lane from junction with Booth's Hill Road*



*View East from Massey Brook Lane along Site frontage*



*Care Home on site*



*Lymington Centre*



*Lymington Centre*



*Lymington Centre*

APPENDIX 7 – AERIAL VIEW OF THE SITE



**CROWLEY ASSOCIATES – 45 CARR BANK LANE – SHEFFIELD – S11 7FB**