

This response specifically relates to; -

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

It was a great surprise 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 site is 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.

### **Listed buildings**

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 graded 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. We have seen a wide array of wildlife on the site including bats, lapwing and other rare birds together with hare's rabbits badgers and foxes.

## **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.

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. This would present a real problem if vehicle numbers are to be increased by any future new development.

The report done by Berry's also refers to schools which are within a short walk from the site. It fails to mention that young children and their parents if accompanied, 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.



Please feel free to contact us on the above telephone number if you wish to discuss this response document or alternatively by mail to the above address.