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28 September 2017

EPP ref: 9314



By Post & Email: ldf@warrington.gov.uk

Dear Sir or Madam

Re: Warrington Borough Council Local Plan Preferred Development Option
Consultation – Watercress Farm, Thirlmere Drive, Lymm

Emery Planning are instructed by [REDACTED] to submit representations to the above consultation document. This follows previous representations in December 2016.

Our client's particular interest relates to land at Watercress Farm, Thirlmere Drive, Lymm. A location plan is enclosed for ease of reference. Separate representations have been made to the above document by this Practice.

The site

The site is located within the Green Belt as identified in the current local plan. It is approximately 0.49ha in size and could potentially accommodate around 15 dwellings based on a density of 30 dwellings per hectare. The land is bounded to the north, west and south by existing residential development. Agricultural land to the east is also being promoted for development. The existing properties to the north and west are within the defined settlement of Lymm. As the site is bounded on three sides by existing residential development, the site is well-contained and forms a highly logical urban extension to the settlement boundary.

Preferred Development Option Regulation 18 Consultation July 2017

Our client's site is located on the edge of the defined settlement of Lymm, one of the outlying settlements. The preferred development options document states at paragraph 4.72 that:

“4.72 The Council has decided not to progress to identification of specific development sites for the individual settlements at this stage of the Plan making process. The Council has however undertaken a review of each of the call for sites in proximity to the settlements in terms of their basic characteristics and Green Belt performance. This will provide part of the work necessary to confirm the allocation of individual sites in the submission version of the Local Plan.”

Whilst we note that individual sites are not being identified in Lymm at this stage, we do note the changes to the Green Belt assessment as a result of previous representations submitted and would like to take this opportunity to comment on those changes.

Green Belt Assessment

We consider that the site should be removed from the Green Belt as the site is very well-contained and logical urban extension; bounded on three sides by residential development. Its allocation would not harm the purposes of the Green Belt as it performs no Green Belt function, being bounded by development on three sides. It is in a highly sustainable edge of settlement location and given the need to release Green Belt land for development; the site should be allocated for residential development.

We note that the Green Belt assessment (October 2016) previously identified the site as forming a small part (west section) of parcel LY16. This was identified in the assessment as making a ‘moderate contribution’ to the Green Belt. However, this conclusion was when assessing the parcel as a whole and the land at Watercress Farm only formed a small section of that parcel.

We note that the site has now been re-assessed in the Green Belt Assessment (dated July 2017) and is now considered to make a ‘weak contribution’ to the Green Belt (reference R18/018).

The development of the site would not prejudice the objectives of including land in the Green Belt as defined in the NPPF. The Green Belt assessment states under ‘Justification for Assessment’ that:

“The site makes a moderate contribution to two purposes and no contribution to three. In line with the methodology, the site has therefore been judged to make a weak overall contribution. While the site makes a moderate contribution to safeguarding the countryside from encroachment due to its moderate openness and non-durable boundaries, it makes no contribution to checking unrestricted sprawl, preventing towns from merging or preserving historic towns. The site also makes a moderate contribution to assisting in urban regeneration.”

The development of the site would represent a logical rounding off of the urban area. The site is not physically constrained by flood risk, ecological issues or topography and has good access to Thirlmere Drive to the west and the surrounding highway network. The site is highly sustainable within walking distance of the centre of Lymm and is well related to local infrastructure, amenities, schools and convenience stores.

The site is available and suitable for residential development. Removal of the land at Watercress Farm from the Green Belt would not harm the purposes of the Green Belt and would provide deliverable residential development which would contribute towards the Borough’s housing requirement in the short term.

This concludes our representations. Should you have any queries, please do not hesitate to contact this office.

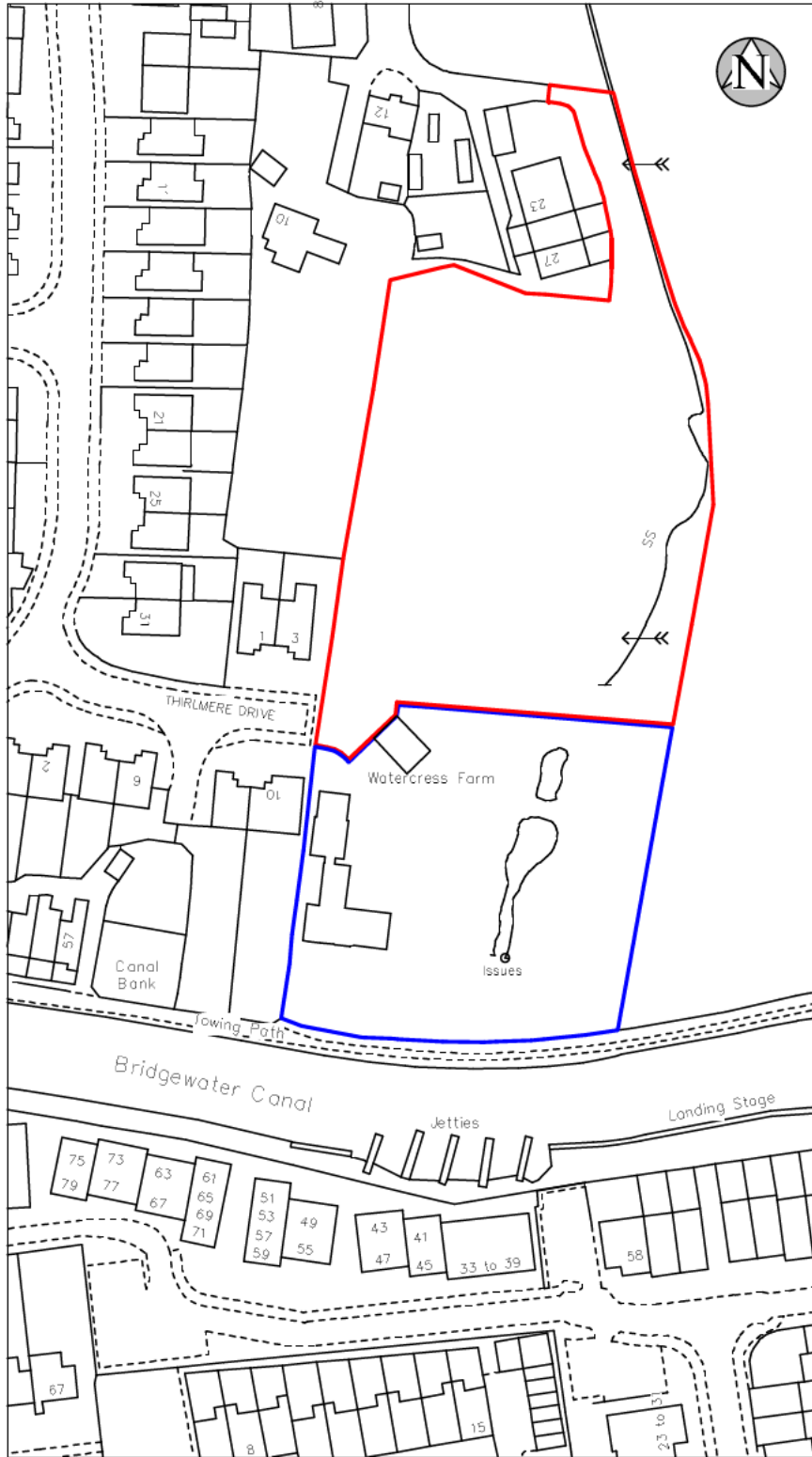
Yours sincerely
Emery Planning



Principal Consultant

Enc: Location plan

Cc: Client



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