

# **Green Belt Assessment Consultation: Response from Barrowford Parish Council**

## **Summary of Response Points:**

- 1. Quality of mapping in the assessment.**
- 2. Reasons behind the Green Belt Assessment**
- 3. Parcel P021 (off Carr Hall Road) factually incorrect statements and should be reversed.**
- 4. Parcel PA01 (west of Laund Farm) to become Green Belt to protect the setting of the Upper Carr Hall Conservation Area.**

## **1. Interpretation of Sites through the Included Mapping**

The consultation document is underpinned by the maps in the appendix to identify the exact locations. The identification of specific parcels of land in relation to the urban core is rendered almost impossible to those unfamiliar with local maps and very difficult to people with some experience of them. The user's difficulty is largely brought about by over emphasis of the parcels of Green Belt and reduction in the definition of the urban content of the maps. The removal of town, ward and major street names from the urban core mapping and the odd inclusion of the word Pendle does not help in identifying specific urban areas.

Barrowford Parish Council strongly suggests that more clarity is needed in the maps accompanying any future draft.

## **2. Factors Driving the Assessment of the Green Belt**

This re-assessment of the Green Belt has been forced on Pendle Council not so much in order to strengthen it but as a result of

- the need of the Local Plan to release more greenfield sites for development in more viable locations
- to address perceived shortages of greenfield sites within certain areas of both the M65 Corridor and the Rural Villages.

This is made clear from the following three paragraphs from the assessment.

2.9 The Green Belt within Pendle remains and still has an important planning policy function to play in the control of urban growth. However, it is evident that for Pendle to grow sustainably, areas of Green Belt will need to be released for development.

2.10 The principle of Green Belt release to ensure that the current housing and economic needs of Pendle can be met over the current plan period were established through the preparation and examination of the Core Strategy. The Inspector's report and the adopted Core Strategy are clear that areas of Green Belt will need to be released.

2.11 It is important that following any release of land from the Green Belt for development, that the new Green Belt boundary will not need to be altered at the end of the plan period, that the boundary is clearly defined and readily

## Agenda Item 6b

recognisable and that the broad areas of Green Belt around Pendle still contribute to the five purposes set out in the NPPF (paragraph 80).

The clear inference from these three paragraphs is that the aim is to reduce Green Belt within certain areas of Pendle to allow additional green field sites to come forward.

But the test is that exceptional circumstances must be proved to facilitate any removal. In our view:

- in the case of site PO21 this is clearly not met there is justification for the inclusion of site PA01 as a new Green Belt addition.

### 3. Identified Parcels of Land P021 and PA01

Barrowford Parish Council has serious concerns regarding the change of status of these two parcels and would like to see the recommendations for P021 reversed and the upgrading of Protected Status to Green Belt for site PA01.

#### P021:

This is described in the assessment as "largely comprising agricultural fields divided by small wooded areas and hedgerows, and incorporating a small existing residential development along Churchill Road to the north, the parcel has a semi-rural character. It is largely contained to the east and west by urban development, and to the north by the A6068. The A6068 would provide a barrier to further encroachment into the countryside to the north."

**Barrowford Parish Council comment: The description is a fair assessment of what is on the ground, but apart from road numbers and the mention of Churchill Road it does not identify the location of the site or the context of its relationship between different towns and villages within Pendle.**

**The lack of this clarity over its precise location renders the recommendations in Table 13 as both factually incorrect and the conclusion fatally flawed.**

Parcel Number	Retain / Remove	Commentary	Impact of Green Belt Release
P021	No longer contributes to overall Green Belt Function	The parcel forms an isolated gap to the south of the A6068 between the western residential edge of Nelson and the Lomeshaye Industrial Estate. Development in the parcel would not lead to the perception of urban sprawl. The parcel does not lie between two settlements and makes a very limited contribution to visual separation. Largely comprising agricultural fields divided by small wooded areas and hedgerows, and incorporating a small existing residential development along Churchill Road to the north, the parcel has a semi-rural character. It benefits from significant containment to the north, east and west. The A6068 may provide a stronger northern Green Belt boundary than that currently provided by Park Avenue.	Release of this Green Belt parcel would have minimal impact upon the wider Green Belt within this area of Pendle. The parcel forms an isolated gap between areas of development and therefore plays no role in containing sprawl or the merging of settlements. The surrounding Green Belt would not be compromised by this release and it would help to create a stronger boundary to the Green Belt, along the A6068.

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## Agenda Item 6b

### **The commentary in Table 13 contains several factual errors:**

1. Paragraph 1 of the commentary states that the parcel is an isolated gap between the residential edge of Nelson and the Lomeshaye Industrial Estate:

**This is incorrect. The residential edge referred to is the Westerly Edge of Carr Hall, Barrowford.**

2. Paragraph 2 states: Development in the parcel would not lead to the perception of urban sprawl. The parcel does not lie between two settlements and makes a very limited contribution to visual separation.

**This statement would be the case if the whole area was within Nelson but as it is a point of separation between Nelson and Barrowford the Green Belt is relevant. In our opinion field hedgerows and mature trees provide good visual separation from Carr Hall Road to the Lomeshaye Industrial Estate.**

3. Paragraph 4 states: It benefits from significant containment to the north, east and west. The A6068 may provide a stronger northern Green Belt boundary than that currently provided by Park Avenue.

**This again would be materially correct except for the errors that this is the Nelson/Barrowford Boundary and that it is not bordered by Park Avenue but Carr Hall Road, the oldest access route in Carr Hall.**

### **Impact of Green Belt Release**

This section states: "Release of this Green Belt parcel would have minimal impact upon the wider Green Belt within this area of Pendle. The parcel forms an isolated gap between areas of development and therefore plays no role in containing sprawl or the merging of settlements. The surrounding Green Belt would not be compromised by this release and it would help to create a stronger boundary to the Green Belt, along the A6068."

**This impact assessment is fatally flawed in its conclusion due the inaccuracies in the information assessed.**

**Parcel No P021 fulfils at least two of the four purposes of the Green Belt purposes highlighted on page 5 of the document.**

1. Check the unrestricted sprawl of large built up areas:

**This Parcel has adequately achieved this and in recent years has provided a buffer zone between the industrial estate and Barrowford.**

2. Prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another.

**Parcel P021 has in recent years prevented the merging of Nelson with Barrowford. This is critical, as for much of the adjoining boundary only the river and Victoria Park have provided separation.**

### **Boundaries:**

This site has strong boundaries on all sides and these are defined as:

**Westerly: The curtilage of the existing Lomeshaye Industrial Estate.**

**Northerly: The A6068 and Churchill Road**

**Southerly: Park Avenue and the track extending along the riverside to Lomeshaye Road.**

**Easterly: Carr Hall Road is a strong feature which has remained consistent for**

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## Agenda Item 6b

over a century.(appendix 1 extract from the 1910 OS Map)

### **Revision of Designation for P021:**

**Barrowford Parish Council believe that due the inaccuracies in the described location and the significance of site P021 as a separation of two distinct townships the conclusions reached in appendix 3 are both flawed and incorrect. We are confident that if the correct information had been used in the assessment then the same conclusions could not have been made.**

**Barrowford Parish Council feels that the onus to prove the exceptional circumstances required to remove Parcel P021 has not been met and that there is no valid reason to remove it from the Green Belt.**

### **Site PA01:**

This site is currently listed as Protected land. Along with the adjacent Trough Laithe Strategic Housing Site, the designation of this site has in effect enabled the growth of urban sprawl into what was once farmland and, with the approved business park below, will almost merge the once predominantly working class ward of Newbridge with the affluent mill owning area of Carr Hall Road. Site PA01 represents the last opportunity to prevent these two diverse areas merging.

Furthermore, Site PA01 falls within the designated Higher Carr Hall Conservation area and contains a Grade II listed farmhouse and would meet two of the four purposes of the Green Belt.

1. Check the unrestricted sprawl of large built up areas:

**This site would prevent unrestricted sprawl.**

2. To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns:

**Barrowford as the second oldest area within the M65 Corridor has significant historic areas worthy of preserving within their current setting and amenity. This is borne out by the fact that Barrowford contains four Conservation Areas, two of which are in Carr Hall and encompass virtually all the older buildings.**

**The context of the Higher Carr Hall Conservation Area being predominantly large detached dwellings set in significant grounds on the edge of farmland will be significantly diminished if modern housing schemes were allowed to creep up to the rear curtilages of these properties.**

**Site PA01 has good defined boundaries and would fulfil most of the tests for inclusion in the Green Belt. Barrowford Parish Council feels that given its location and potential role in meeting these criteria it should be included in the Green Belt.**

