

**Contact:**

**Representor:** Bayston Hill Residents Against BAY039

**Agent (if applicable):**

**Reference Number:** B-A063

Matter 22 – Shrewsbury Place Plan Area (policy S16) – **see MMs 110-121**–

BAY039 – Land off Lyth Hill Road, Bayston Hill

**Site Allocation – Land Off Lyth Hill Road, Bayston Hill,  
(BAY039).**

We are a group of villagers from Bayston Hill who are not planning experts but we are in the unique position of knowing our village. We are asking planning inspectors to remove BAY039 from the site allocation for Bayston Hill.

As there is a current application for 114 houses plus 4 self-builds, we would like to direct you to the signed report from 176 residents, submitted in response to this current planning application 24/00765/FUL submitted by Redrow Homes on 26.2.24. In addition, we would be grateful if you read a further 202 objections that have been recorded on the Shropshire Council planning portal. People simply do NOT spend their time navigating the highly complex Shropshire Council portal unless they have serious concerns. Furthermore, Included in the 202 objections are, the BHPC, CPRE, Shrewsbury Civic Society, Shrewsbury Friends of the Earth, Shropshire County Councillors,

Inspectors are minded to consider a range of questions when determining whether a site identified in the emerging local plan is viable or desirable and we feel we have a strong case to ask that this allocation be removed.

We, as villagers, have consistently tried to gain a straight answer to the question of why BAY039 was ever allocated. On 9<sup>th</sup> May 2024, the following question was asked of the Full Shropshire Council Meeting:

***“The development of the [Bayston Hill] village is constrained by the presence of the A49 running through the village and the major quarry to the east.”***

***On 18th November 2021, there was the following quote from a Cabinet Member in the Ludlow Advertiser: ‘Councillor Dean Carroll said there was a desperate need to cut the number of accidents on the A49 between Shrewsbury and the Herefordshire border south of Ludlow, which has been branded “one of the most dangerous roads in England.”***

***Over 100 Bayston Hill residents objected to, and Shropshire Council itself refused, a planning application for green belt/agricultural land to the West of Lyth Hill Road in 2017 (17/02561/Outline Planning Application), on several grounds, including that such development: ‘...would also result in the loss of higher quality agricultural land, contrary to the National Planning Policy Framework’***

***A further Planning Application (22/05284/FUL) was withdrawn, following large numbers of objections.***

*Residents from The Huntons have expressed serious concerns regarding flooding. Their report can be found on the planning portal, under comments, in the most recent application.*

*Can Shropshire Council please explain why the same land (BAY039- Emerging Shropshire Local Plan) has now been identified for 100 dwellings? I believe that Bayston Hill villagers deserve a full explanation as to how circumstances have changed so considerably that this could now be conceived to be a sustainable development, contrary to previous planning decisions and the wishes of so many local residents and Bayston Hill Parish Council.'*

The response received from Shropshire Council was as follows:

**'Response from Councillor Chris Schofield, Portfolio Holder for Planning and Regulatory Services**

*One of the key objectives of the Local Plan Review, currently at Examination, is to identify sufficient sustainable land to accommodate Shropshire's housing requirement to 2038. When adopted this would replace the majority of the current development plan for the area, which includes the SAMDev Plan. The 2017 application referred to in the question, on the Lyth Hill Road site in Bayston Hill, was refused on the grounds it was in an area designated as countryside against the SAMDev Plan, and therefore there is a presumption against development. However, contrary to the implication in the question, the site is not located in the Green Belt. In the emerging Local Plan, it is proposed this site is allocated for residential development and thus to be incorporated into the Development Boundary of Bayston Hill. Doing this would remove the site from its current 'countryside' location in policy grounds. The proposal to do this has been subject to significant site assessment and public consultation. The Council is aware of the current planning application on the Lyth Hill Road site and will be determining this application in due course with reference to both the current Development Plan for the area, which includes the SAMDev Plan, as well as any other material considerations.'*

As villagers, we feel that this response was wholly inadequate and not necessarily transparent. If inspectors examine the previous refusal much of the reasoning focused on the fact that this was agricultural land. We also believe that the reference to 'consultation', most certainly cannot possibly relate to the consultation conducted with villagers in 2017 as it was whole heartedly objected to for valid planning reasons. The only reason that we can possibly think has influenced this inclusion it that, on the passing (the previous landowner who fiercely protected this land) his family approached a land agent/developer who were more than happy to purchase this land knowing they could capitalise on it in the future. Of course, we understand that this made this land very attractive when Shropshire Council were considering their allocations for the local plan as a developer already owned it. However, does that make that land the best possible choice for land allocation? We believe it is not sustainable for the following reasons:

- **Local services-** We are a village that is the approximately the same size as the local town of Church Stretton, yet we lack many of the services afforded to that town. Our Primary School is oversubscribed and SC Learning and Skills have identified that 31 new Primary places will be needed if development is allowed, plus additional pre-school, SEND and post-16 places. Where will these places be found? One school, Oaklands, was closed in 2011 and is now a housing estate. In addition, villagers are finding it increasing difficult to obtain a GP appointment with many waiting 5 weeks or more and often being redirected to the surgery in a nearby village. The dentist has no further provision so many villagers have to go elsewhere for dental treatment.

- **Roads** – The village really is constrained by the fact that there are only two useable exits/entries to the village either via the A49 or Pulley Lane. This has not changed and yet the village continues to grow. This development, would inevitably lead to a huge increase in traffic and villagers using roads such as, Clarksfields, as rat runs during rush hour. Any children walking to school would not have a safe way to walk or cycle. The current application ,24/00765/FUL, has no consultation comments from SC Highways as they state that they are superseded by National Highways. However, we believe that Lyth Hill Road is controlled by SC Highways and they have a duty to conduct their own surveys and examine the nature of this very limited road. In addition, residents already report that Lyth Hill road is often used as a ‘race track’ at night with cars speeding up to Lyth Hill Country Park on a nightly basis. The further addition of 118 houses (the current proposal) would compound this problem further and result in significant noise and pollution for residents of Lyth Hill road and surrounding roads. This is unsustainable. Moreover, the earlier draft of the Local Plan (November 2018), highlighted the need for considerable traffic safety measures to be implemented on the A49- this has mysteriously disappeared!
- **Transport/active travel** –There is currently no timetabled regular bus service via Lyth Hill road and the current 27 bus is also under threat. There is absolutely no room for cycle lanes on Lyth Hill Road as it is a narrow road leading to a single lane track on the approach to Lyth Hill Country Park which begins at this site entrance. The park is also due to undergo enhancements which will also lead to increased traffic. It is inevitable that any footpaths will be unusable for much of the year due to the flooding and saturation of the ground in this area. Locals are well aware of this problem and it is increasing year or year due to wetter, milder Winters. These are no longer rare events!
- **Flooding-** We submitted a detailed report showing the flooding of The Hunttons, Beddoes Drive and Lyth Hill. However, other villagers report similar problems. The torrents of water cascading from the hill also leads to the flooding of Grove Lane and Yew Tree Drive. We cannot believe that adding a further 118 houses on that site could ever mitigate this and we have serious concerns regarding the impact of flooding in the future. We note that a report conducted by WHS for Redrow Homes (28.8.24), for the current planning application suggests some mitigation. However, as neither The Hunttons nor Beddoes Drive have been mentioned, we fear that such desk study reports will not stand the test of time.
- **Loss of countryside and agricultural land-** This land is higher quality agricultural land and yielded a heathy crop of oats, this Summer, 2024. Furthermore, SC Trees have objected to the current application due to the loss of T40 (cat B oak). SC Ecologist has also noted that the Ecological Impact Assessment will require improvement and further studies and we know that this area is rich in biodiversity and habitat. Also, the BNG assessment shows a loss of 14.55% in biodiversity units which can never be regained, in our opinion.
- **Archaeological interest-** It is well known that the Roman road to Wroxeter cuts through the village of Bayston Hill with significant finds at the site where Bestune Way was developed. As a result of the existence of a Roman building, that site had to undergo amendments. As far as we can determine, no serious archaeological surveys of this land, BAY039, have been undertaken.
- **Right Homes, Right Place-** The Shropshire ‘Right Homes, Right Place Survey’ revealed that the need for 5-bedded homes was very low priority for villagers with only 2 respondents requiring such a home, yet Redrow Homes currently plan to build seventeen 5-bedded homes on their off-the peg site plan! In addition, the village has already seen substantial development well beyond the current allocation on the *SAMDev* 5-Year plan. We believe,

that it is now time to reconsider the allocation for Bayston Hill as a whole. With developers' proposals not equating to housing needs. Furthermore, we believe that the village has adequate infill sites that could be utilised for sustainable development within the village, for example: The White House on Glebe Road, the derelict Jones' Garage and a derelict home on the Common, to name but a few.

### **In summary**

We, the villagers of Bayston Hill, do not sit conducting desk study surveys and modelling traffic on roads that we have never travelled on and never will, unlike those who have submitted such reports. However, we know the daily inconveniences of queuing at rush hour to exit from one of the only two exits from the village. We know the stress of waiting for a GP appointment for up to 5 weeks and often that appointment is redirected to a nearby village. We know that our primary aged children are unable to secure a place in the village school and we are forced to transport them to the villages of Conover and Dorrington on a daily basis. We know our bus service is woefully inadequate, unreliable and currently under threat. We know that we cannot get an appointment or even be considered for the waiting list at our village dentist. We know that our village is as large as the nearby town of Church Stretton, but with considerably less infrastructure. We also know that we are lucky. We live in a beautiful, friendly community and we have always opened our arms to new villagers. We know that we have access to the stunning Lyth Hill Country Park which is a haven for habitat and eco systems and is soon to receive a grant to improve accessibility. However, we also know that the proposed BAY039 is situated exactly opposite the start of that park, on a narrow winding track without pavements. A site with only one vehicular exit onto Lyth Hill Road. A site outside our current development boundary. A site currently growing the crops that we need, as humans, to survive. A site that could become the cause of future flooding as climate change wreaks its havoc. Therefore, we hope that you will listen to our concerns, take them very seriously and remove BAY039 from the Emerging Local Plan.