

Central Lincolnshire Local Plan Examination

Written Statement of Thomas Smith MRTPI

On behalf of Charles Pickering, Zodiac Developments Ltd

In relation to Site CL4521 - Land North of Old Gallamore Lane, Middle Rasen

This Written Statement is submitted on behalf of Charles Pickering of Zodiac Developments Ltd. We are unable to attend the relevant hearing sessions and are generally content to rely upon our previous representations to the submission draft of the local plan.

However, a number of the issues raised within those representations have been reiterated below insofar as they relate specifically to the Inspector's questions, and we respectfully request that these be given due consideration in the Examination process.

Issue 3f - Q34.

Is the approach to development in small and medium villages consistent with paragraph 55 of the Framework? Will there be enough growth in small, medium and large villages to help support sustainable rural communities? Is the Local Plan consistent with paragraph 55 of the Framework which states that to promote sustainable development in rural areas, housing should be located where it will enhance or maintain the vitality of rural communities.

AND

Issue 5d – Allocations in Large Villages – Policy LP52 Q11.

Are the allocations in the allocations in the Large Villages justified, effective and consistent with national policy?

Middle Rasen is identified as a Category 4 Large Village in the settlement hierarchy and, critically, as a discrete and separate settlement to Market Rasen. Therefore, to maintain and enhance its role in providing employment, retail, and key services and facilities for the local area, Middle Rasen should be a focus for accommodating an appropriate level of growth, in accordance with the spatial strategy set out in Policy LP2. Policy LP52 identifies site allocations within 20 of the 21 Category 4 Large Villages with each settlement at this level in the hierarchy typically accommodating in the range of 200-600 houses (average of 343 dwellings per Large Village), broadly commensurate with the services and facilities of each particular settlement as summarised below:

Bardney	73	Billingham	560	Bracebridge Heath	417
Branston	362	Cherry W'ham	373	Dunholme	324
Heckington	106	Heighington	50	Keelby	190
Metheringham	276	Middle Rasen	0	Navenby	203
Nettleham	237	Ruskington	54	Saxilby	221
Scotter	93	Skellingthorpe	562	Waddington	417
Washingb'gh	277	Welton	526	Witham St Hughs	1394

However, Policy LP52 does not allocate any housing to Middle Rasen. This is the only Category 4 Large Village to which no growth is directed in the plan.

This proposed approach does not accord with the plan's spatial strategy as it would not enable Middle Rasen to maintain and enhance its own role in providing employment, retail, and key services and facilities. Rather, Middle Rasen would stagnate and not realise any of the benefits of sustainable growth. Consequently, Policy LP52 is neither positively prepared, justified, nor consistent with the aims and objectives of national policy to support sustainable growth.

Issue 5a – General Questions Q1.

Was the site selection process robust? Were an appropriate selection of potential sites assessed? Were appropriate criteria taken into account in deciding which sites to select and was the assessment against these criteria robust? How was the red, amber, green scoring system in the Residential Allocations Evidence Report used to arrive at conclusions on the preferred allocations? Was any weighting given to particular criteria or scores? How was the Integrated Impact Assessment Score used given it is omitted from some site assessments? Was the previously developed status of land taken into account?

Whilst it is recognised that the focus of the Local Plan Examination is not on excluded sites, having regard to the specific example of site CL4521 (Land North of Old Gallamore Lane, Middle Rasen) it is clear that the red, amber, green scoring system has been fundamentally misapplied.

This is a site which scored red for Green Wedge and amber for flood risk, agricultural land classification, listed buildings and impact on the road network. Consequently, the site was not taken forward to the Integrated Impact Assessment.

However, having regard to planning appeal decision ref. APP/N2535/W/15/3139041 dated 18th April 2016, it is evident that residential development of the site would not result in demonstrable harm in relation to any of these issues and each of these should have been scored as green if assessed robustly.

Consequently, the assessment of this site against the criteria was evidently not robust, indicating that the site selection process needs to be reassessed.

Issue 15a – Green Wedges – Policy LP22

Q2. Are the Green Wedge designations justified, effective and consistent with national policy? Are there any significant factors that indicate that any sites should not have been designated?

Planning appeal decision ref. APP/N2535/W/15/3139041 dated 18th April 2016 considered the impact of the residential development of site CL4521 (Land North of Old Gallamore Lane, Middle Rasen) on the Green Wedge between Middle Rasen and Market Rasen in detail. The Inspector considered that *“the impact upon the character and appearance of the break would be limited [and*

was] not persuaded that there will be any actual or perceived sense of coalescence between Middle Rasen and Market Rasen”.

He concluded that “although there would be conflict with the policy, insofar as there would be residential development in a settlement break, in my judgment this must be tempered by the fact that this would have little impact upon the character and function of that break”.

Having regard to this detailed assessment by an independent Inspector, it is clear that site CL4521 should not be designated as Green Wedge and that rather, the Green Wedge between Middle Rasen and Market Rasen should commence at the River Rase which forms a long term defensible natural boundary.



Thomas Smith MRTPI

