

HEARING STATEMENT

MATTER 7 – HOUSING SITES

ISSUE 5 MEDIUM VILLAGES – POLICY S81

CENTRAL LINCOLNSHIRE LOCAL PLAN REVIEW

WL/FISK/001A – LAND NORTH OF CORN CLOSE, FISKERTON
(Questions Q29 to Q31)

NOVEMBER 2022

GRACE | MACHIN
PLANNING & PROPERTY

Introduction

1. This Hearing Statement has been prepared by *GraceMachin Planning and Property* on behalf of **Fiskerton Developments Ltd** who consider that the allocation of a greenfield site in Fiskerton (Land North of Corn Close) is unsound as it has been proposed as a single allocation on the edge of the Village, when a clear and obvious existing brownfield site in Fiskerton could accommodate new housing during the Local Plan Period thereby reducing the need for green field land take.
2. It is considered that for the Local Plan to be found 'sound' in relation to Fiskerton, the site proposed for allocation should be deleted and / or reduced in size & scale to a level which would be commensurate with a housing allocation also being identified at The Former Tanya Knitwear Site, Ferry Rd, Fiskerton, LN3 4HU.
3. It should be noted that in The Examination Documents – **EX006 – Appendix 7** 'Reasons for Selecting preferred options – Updated August 2022' (published 21 Sept 2022) on Page 52, reference is made to my client's site:

Site Ref: WL/FISK/002

Site Name/Address: Tanya Knitwear Factory, Fiskerton

Site Capacity: 29

Reason for Elimination: Location

Justification: Located in the countryside. Detached from existing built footprint of Fiskerton

4. In the same document (EX006) on Page 120, the justification for allocating Land North of Corn Close is simply:

The site is well connected to the existing village and the reduction in size retains the shape and character of the settlement. A site of this scale has the potential to provide additional services to the village.

(WL/FISK/001A Land North of Corn Close, Fiskerton - site for 122 new homes)

5. In the context of the above, the purpose of this Statement is to succinctly respond to the Inspector's 'Matters, Issues and Questions' (MIQs) in respect of:

Q29 – What effect will the allocation have on the rural character of Fiskerton? How has this been considered as part of the preparation of the Local Plan?

Q30 – What is the justification for the access being taken from Corn Close and Hall Lane? How have the effects of the highways network and safety been considered?

Q31 – How will development address the issue of low voltage power lines along the southern boundary of the site? Is it clear to decision makers, developers and local communities what is required to mitigate the impacts of development on this infrastructure?

Q29 – What effect will the allocation have on the rural character of Fiskerton? How has this been considered as part of the preparation of the Local Plan?

4. Our clients support ‘in principle’, the allocation of new housing in Fiskerton. It also supports making the very best use of, ‘brownfield’ or ‘previously developed’ land to maximise housing delivery across Central Lincolnshire. The efficient use of land targeted for new housing releases is supported.

5. Fiskerton is identified as a ‘medium village’ in the Central Lincolnshire Local Plan (CLLP) within an attractive countryside setting.

7. However, we consider that the development of a greenfield site which measures circa 8.13 Hectares (just over 20 ACRES) into a single large housing estate would have a severely detrimental impact on the rural character of Fiskerton.

8. From an examination of the **Sustainability Appraisal Report for the Central Lincolnshire Local Plan Proposed Submission Draft (March 2022) - Appendix 5.3: Sustainability Appraisal of Preferred Housing Site Allocations and Reasonable Alternatives Considered West Lindsey**, the only commentary we can find relating to the ‘landscape impact’ on the proposed allocation of land North of Corn Close is the following (see Page 216):

- *The site is not within a designated Local Green Space.*
- *The site is not within 200m of an AONB, AGLV or Green Wedge*

9. We consider that this does not represent a robust landscape assessment of what the real-life impact will be of the allocation on the rural character of the Village. The proposed allocation is a large one for the Village (population of only 1,200 recorded during the 2011 census) and any allocation of the land should be objectively and critically appraised following a robust LVIA (Landscape Visual Impact Assessment).

10. We would like to draw to the attention of the Inspector the broad and open views you have of the village when travelling South down Hall Lane and the expanse of the open field pattern in this

area. The proposed allocation (northern boundary) does not propose to follow an existing field boundary – it simply cuts through an open field ‘to line up’ with existing housing further to the West.

11. This method of ‘plan making’, from the sky or at a desk may appear ‘logical’ but from a landscape impact perspective we don’t believe it is and we are unsure how the CLLP planning policy team have robustly assessed this impact other than ‘ticking a box’.

12. To simply undertake a ‘tick box’ exercise on Local Green Space, AONB, AGLV and Green Wedge ‘designations’ appears wholly inadequate in this case considering the size of the allocation within the village context.

13. We are unsure what further landscape assessment has been undertaken in this case (by both the CLLP Team and site promoters) but we consider that the rural character of Fiskerton would be severely affected in a negative way. To find this allocation now ‘sound’ after we made Reg 19 Reps this year (2022) would be illogical in the minds of our clients who have sought to bring forward the redevelopment of their site to meet local housing needs (both open market and affordable homes).

14. The proposed allocation will be highly visible from the public footpath off Hall Lane to the North of the proposed allocation and we consider that this view is an important and key sensitive receptor from which any judgement of the site landscape impact on the rural character of the Village should have been (must be) assessed. The topography of the land is relevant as you look down to the Village (i.e., the land falls away from North to South). The topography of the land currently mitigates the visual impact, but this would be reduced as the proposed allocation’s northern boundary would have a much greater impact on the wider skyline and setting of the Village. We ask that the appointed Inspector’s considers this allocation landscape impact by walking the public footpath to the north of the proposed allocation

Q30 – What is the justification for the access being taken from Corn Close and Hall Lane? How have effects on the highways network and safety been considered?

15. From the SA* we have not identified any clear or definitive basis for access being taken from Corn Close and / or Hall Lane.

(*Sustainability Appraisal Report for the Central Lincolnshire Local Plan Proposed Submission Draft (March 2022) Appendix 5.3: Sustainability Appraisal of Preferred Housing Site Allocations and Reasonable Alternatives Considered West Lindsey)

16. On Page 217 under Section 13. Transport and Accessibility it states:

13.1 Access to services and facilities - There is no designated Village Centre in Fiskerton. The site is within 100m of a bus stop. Where possible provide new linkages for walking and cycling between new development and facilities outside of the site area.

13.2 Sustainable travel modes + The site is within 100m of a bus stop. New development should seek to maximise use of sustainable modes of transport and reduce reliance on private vehicles for short trips.

17. Hall Lane itself is a relatively narrow rural highway (single car width) and will require widening to allow access to and from the site.

18. The Corn Close access between existing bungalows will accommodate a significant amount of new traffic.

19. We are not aware of how the effects and impacts on the highway network have been considered and wish to contribute further on this matter following verbal presentations at the Hearing Sessions by the CLLP Planning Officers and site promoters.

Q31 -How will development address the issue of low voltage power lines along the Southern Boundary of the site? Is it clear to decision makers, developers and local communities what is required to mitigate the impacts of development on this infrastructure?

20. It is currently unclear what is required to mitigate the impacts of development on the low voltage power lines along the Southern Boundary of the Site.

21. We expect that an area of land will need to be sterilized from built development to allow access (i.e., a wayleave agreement would need to be in place). This would effectively reduce the net developable area of the site, thereby pushing new development further away from the Village (the Southern boundary) to its proposed northern boundary which will have the greatest impact on the rural character of the Village.

Conclusions

22. It is considered an unsound and ultimately a non-consistent proposition with National Planning Policy to allocate a greenfield site on the edge of Fiskerton when a brownfield site is available, suitable, and deliverable some 150m away from the proposed allocation.

23. The proposed allocation is entirely Grade 3 Agricultural land – i.e., productive agricultural land. Alternative previously developed sites that are suitable, available, and deliverable in Fiskerton should be prioritised to reduce agricultural productive greenfield land take.

24. The proposed allocation of a greenfield site in a medium village, and of a scale in the region of twice the remaining growth level is considered an unsound proposition which is inconsistent with National Planning Policy.

25. We respectfully wish the Inspector to consider the logic and planning policy basis of allocating a greenfield site of circa 122 units in this village. We consider it not to be a sound proposition and would not be good 'plan making'.

26. We seek either full de-allocation of housing site WL/FISK/001A - Land North of Corn Close or a very significant reduction in the housing number allocation of 122 and overall site area.

27. We ultimately seek (by way of a proposed 'main modification') the allocation of land at the very near previously developed Former Tanya Knitwear Site on Ferry Rd, Fiskerton for housing to meet the current un-met housing needs of this Medium Village.

28. Although, it is fully understood that this must come forward once the proposed allocation North of Corn Close, is found to be 'unsound'.

Nicholas J.F. Grace BA (Hons) DipTP MRTPI

Partner at *GraceMachin Planning & Property*

November 2022

GRACE | MACHIN
PLANNING & PROPERTY