

Examination of the East Lindsey Core Strategy and the East Lindsey Settlement Proposals Development Plan Document (DPD)

Inspectors' matters, issues and questions (MIQs)

Stage 1 – Core Strategy

26 May 2017

Note: The MIQs for Stage 2 relating primarily to the Settlement Proposals Development Plan Document and 5 year supply of housing will be made available separately. Some cross-cutting issues relating to both plans will be considered in Stage 1.

Abbreviations:

ADM – additional minor modification proposed by the Council

CS – Core Strategy

Framework – National Planning Policy Framework

Regulations – The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012

The Council's answers are in italics with any suggested modifications in red italics

Matter 4 – Settlement pattern (Policy SP1)

Context: Policy SP1 divides settlements into four types – towns, large villages, medium villages and small villages. Anything outside of these settlements is open countryside which includes hamlets and isolated groups of houses.

Main issue: Is the settlement pattern justified?

Questions:

1. Is the settlement pattern in Policy SP1 justified? Have settlements been appropriately categorised, including Tetford, Tetney, Croft, Goulceby and Orby?

The concept of using the services and facilities of a community as a means of comparing and grouping settlements has been used by the Council for many years. It is still believed to be a good starting point for plans. When the local plan was being drafted, it was decided that the issue should be looked at afresh. To this end, a workshop held on 20th February 2012, to which all elected members were invited. This began with a blank sheet of paper so that all approaches could be considered. Members discussed the previous methodology and considered that the overall approach was sound but wished to look again at the different types of community facilities included. Members had an open discussion during which they put forward the facilities that were felt important to community life and discussed the points

to be awarded to each. The points represent their relative importance across the community and reflect the likelihood of being used regularly by the community. For example, although public houses have a primary function that would not necessarily be used by the whole community, they are frequently used in rural communities as meeting places for clubs, societies and sports teams; offer somewhere for families to eat out; and some have taken on wider community roles offering services that are not available elsewhere in the village – e.g. the Pub is the Hub Scheme. Conversely, although Doctors and Dentists are (in theory) used by the whole community, some people can be many years without needing to use them and do not necessarily chose to use their local surgery, preferring to be registered elsewhere. Some of the elements in the assessment relate to services and facilities that exist in the village and others are more connected to infrastructure, such as mains drainage, which may reflect the capacity of a settlement to accommodate growth. Members also selected the thresholds between the different parts of the pattern.

Once the framework was established, the spreadsheet was populated with the services and facilities. There will always be settlements that fall close to the threshold, wherever it is set, but the Council believes that the pattern in SP1 represents an objective assessment of settlements and the role that they play. Five settlements are listed in the question above in reference to their category.

Tetford is listed in SP1 as a main village. Tetford does not have a large population and is located in the Lincolnshire Wolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). It is quite detached from the strategic road network and, as a result, it has managed to retain a number of services and facilities; including a doctor's surgery and primary school. The village provides a hub for the smaller communities and isolated dwellings in the southern part of the Wolds. The local food shop has closed, but the pub has started selling some grocery items and the village also retains a number of other services. Based on the level of services it has, the Council believes that Tetford is correctly identified as a large village. Due to its sensitive location in the Lincolnshire Wolds AONB, the Council has decided not to make a strategic allocation in the village, but its position as a large village will enable incremental development to come forward to support its role.

Tetney is also identified as a large village. The village has a small Spar store which is open 7 days a week; a primary school; a pub; and a bar and restaurant at the golf club (open to non-members). There are also other sports and leisure opportunities in the village. There has been suggestion of some doubt over the bus service operating to Grimsby. According to Lincolnshire County Council's interactive bus information map, service 50 calls at Tetney at a time that enables arrival in Grimsby bus station for 8.45am and departs from Grimsby Bus Station at 5.35pm to enable a return journey. This service operates Monday to Friday, so enables a commuter journey. Tetney does not have every facility that is awarded points, for example it does not have a doctor's surgery (the nearest one being at Holton le Clay approximately 4km to the west). However, the threshold for a large village is 46 points and Tetney scores 71, which the Council feels demonstrates that the village is in the correct category.

In common with a number of parishes in East Lindsey, Croft is a very large parish, with a number of clusters of dwellings spread around it and has part of the large village of Wainfleet All Saints extending into its southern boundary. Croft is identified as a medium village scoring 30 points, however there is an error in the table as there is only one church (two have been scored) and so the points should be 27. This sits just over the points for a small village (23). The facilities listed for Croft are not located in one cluster but are spread throughout the parish. The church, playing field, play area and village hall are located together; the public house is approximately 1.3km by road from this cluster on Croft Lane. The sporting facilities are largely in the part of the parish that abuts Wainfleet All Saints and relate better spatially to that village but are located in Croft parish. On the basis of the level of services in the Croft, it is felt that the settlement should not be categorised as a large village.

Goulceby is located within the Lincolnshire Wolds AONB. It is identified in the plan as a small village, scoring 12 points, which is right on the threshold below which it would be classified as a hamlet. Until 2012, Goulceby would have been a hamlet as the public house was closed and there was only the church and cemetery in the village. However, the pub reopened and included a local shop, along with other business diversification, and this increased the points to 12. The Council believes that Goulceby is correctly identified as a small village.

Orby is also identified as a small village, scoring 21 points; the threshold to be a medium village is 23. Orby's facilities are employment, village hall, church and cemetery, fishing lake and vet. Education and shopping is found in Burgh le Marsh, which is 2.5km (by road) to the south or Skegness, which is 8.4km (by road) to the south east. Public transport is by demand responsive service which must be booked more than two hours in advance of travel. On this basis, the Council believes that Orby is correctly identified as a small village.

2. What role did the settlement pattern have in determining the distribution of housing and employment development?

The settlement pattern is the starting point, in that it enables the Council to assess the relative levels of services and facilities in communities that may have a very different type and range. This then enables them to be grouped for the purposes of policy making. The options consultations carried out as part of the formulation of the plan assessed the relative merits of distributing growth across the different tiers of the settlement pattern.