SOUTH KESTEVEN DISTRICT COUNCIL LDF  
Submission Site Allocations DPD  
Examination  

Submission by the National Trust (Ref 217)  

Session 7  
LSC Allocations  

ISSUE –  
Policy LSC1 Sites  

LSC1a – Should the Policy impose restrictions in terms of building heights?  

A1. The Belton House and Park Setting and Policy document that has been adopted by the Council is relevant to this site at Barrowby. In particular the site is identified as being visible from Bellmount Tower (Fig 11). It is within an area where ground level is visible, but is more than 5km from Belton Park. As summarised in Table 2 major development in such locations ‘should not be tall’.  

A2. National Trust does not object to the development of this site but does consider that the height of development should be restricted to two storeys to reflect nearby development. Taller development would interpose between the existing development and the containing ridge line beyond in views from Belton.  

A3. The Trust’s experience of the impact from Belton of different roofing materials indicates that the use of recessive colours is particularly beneficial in reducing the visual impact of new development.  

A4. A modest addition can be made to Policy LSC1a to address this as previously requested by the Trust, i.e.:  

“Proposals for Sites LSC1a (and LSC1d) shall not exceed two storeys in height, roof materials should be recessive in colour (and appropriate native screen planting shall be introduced along the eastern edge of Site LSC1d) to mitigate the impacts of development upon the wider setting of Belton.”
LSC1b – Should allocation be deleted or reduced in size to protect heritage significance of Woolsthorpe Manor?

Introduction

B.1 National Trust’s principal concern regarding the LSC sites is LSC1b at Colsterworth. The Trust considers that the site should be deleted.

B.2 Attention is drawn to the Trust’s written submissions regarding housing provision generally in Colsterworth and no doubt these will be considered by the Inspector in his assessment of the DPD. For the reasons set out in those submissions the Trust does not agree that there is a requirement to allocate Site LSC1b for housing development.

B.3 Session 7 is concerned with the more detailed impacts of the development of individual sites and these are considered below.

Woolsthorpe Manor Significance and Setting

B.4 Woolsthorpe Manor will forever be associated with the astounding achievements of Sir Isaac Newton. He worked here in isolation on many of his most important discoveries. These achievements at Woolsthorpe were all the more remarkable for the isolated rural setting in which they took place. This historic significance is in danger of being further eroded by new development, especially development between Woolsthorpe and Colsterworth that diminishes the rural setting.

B.5 Woolsthorpe Manor is a 17th Century manor house, which is the birthplace and family home of Sir Isaac Newton. It was here, during the plague years of 1665 to 1667, that he formulated some of his major works. Within the orchard is a descendant of the world’s most famous apple tree.

B.6 The Manor currently attracts around 33,000 visitors each year for tours of the manor house itself, the grounds and the Science Discovery Centre. As a result of its pre-eminent place in the history of science the site also attracts some 1,500 educational visitors each year.

B.7 Apart from the Manor House itself which is a Grade I Listed Building, there are five other Grade II Listed Buildings within the overall curtilage. In addition to its ownership of the main Woolsthorpe Manor site the Trust is also the beneficiary of restrictive covenants on the fields to the east and north east of the Manor extending northwards from Water Lane along the west side of Old Post Lane almost up to its junction with Woolsthorpe Road.

B.8 In association with its work to assess conservation performance at its properties National Trust has recently assessed the extent of the visual setting of several of its Midlands properties, including Woolsthorpe Manor.
B.9 A plan is attached showing the outcome of the visual setting assessment work at Woolsthorpe Manor and identifying Site LSC1b.

**Adopted Core Strategy Policy EN1**

B.10 It is considered that Policy EN1 in the Core Strategy remains relevant and in particular that it is consistent with the subsequent National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) especially in respect of the environmental role in achieving sustainable development, the Core Principles and the approach to the Historic Environment.

B.11 Policy EN1 requires the assessment of all site allocations in relation to a set of criteria. In respect of site LSC1b criteria 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 10 and 14 are particularly relevant. It is not clear to National Trust how these criteria have been applied by the Council in the assessment of site LSC1b.

B.12 At the time that the Core Strategy was being prepared National Trust argued, including at the Hearing Sessions, that Colsterworth and Woolsthorpe should be treated as separate settlements and that the space between them should be safeguarded from encroachment so that their separate identities were maintained. It was to address such concerns that the Council added the words “and open spaces important to the character, setting and separation of built-up areas” to criterion 14 (SKDC Core Strategy Proposed Changes to Provide Clarification, 3rd February 2010).

**Harm to Significance**

B.13 Allocation is proposed of a site on the east side of High Street/Bridge End on the north side of Colsterworth. In part it would be situated behind the modest Bede Houses on the frontage and in part would extend up to the road frontage. Beyond Bede Houses the eastern frontage of Bridge End is undeveloped.

B.14 For those travelling to Woolsthorpe Manor via Colsterworth and High Street/Bridge End development would result in a reduction in the openness between the settlements along this route.

B.15 As viewed from Woolsthorpe Manor development would encroach upon views to the east and extend the built up area of Colsterworth onto open fields. The extent of those impacts would in part depend upon the amount of tree and hedgerow removal associated with development; however, it is anticipated that this will need to be reasonably substantial in order to provide suitable vehicular access including appropriate visibility splays. Furthermore there is a substantial linear block of woodland at the rear of Bede Houses within site LSC1b. As an inevitable consequence of tree and hedgerow removal built development is likely to be even more obvious in the setting of Woolsthorpe Manor.
B.16 Overall development of site LSC1b on the fringe of Colsterworth would diminish the rural character of the wider area, in particular as perceived from Woolsthorpe Manor.

B.17 The proposed eastern boundary of site LSC1b is an artificial boundary that does not reflect any established features, such as hedgerows or field boundaries. There is an inevitability that if development was permitted on site LSC1b that there would be subsequent pressure for additional development on the remaining, higher, land to the east which at present is part and parcel of the land under discussion. The threat of such development adds to the Trust’s concerns for the setting of Woolsthorpe Manor.

**Mitigation**

B.18 National Trust does not consider that the adverse impacts upon the significances of Woolsthorpe Manor can be adequately mitigated if the site is allocated for built development.

B.19 However, if, against the Trust’s wishes, the site is allocated then it is requested that controls are put in place to a) safeguard the existing wooded area behind Bede Houses, b) minimise the loss of frontage planting to High Street/Bridge End, and c) secure the retention of the land to the east of site LSC1b as open land in perpetuity.

**Conclusion**

B.20 Allocation of site LSC1b is considered to be contrary to the criteria set out in adopted Core Strategy Policy EN1.

B.21 Development on site LSC1b would have an adverse impact upon the setting of Woolsthorpe Manor and thereby upon one of its key significances. There would be direct visual harm as a result of the impact both upon views from Woolsthorpe Manor and on the approach from Colsterworth to Woolsthorpe. The likelihood of future development on land to the east exacerbates those concerns.
**LSC1d – Should the Policy impose restrictions in terms of building heights and boundary planting?**

D1. The Belton House and Park Setting and Policy document that has been adopted by the Council is relevant to this site at Great Gonerby. In particular the site is identified as being visible from Bellmount Tower (Fig 11). The southern portion of the site is within an area where ground level is visible from, and is between 2 and 5km of, Belton Park. As summarised in Table 2 such sites are exceptionally sensitive to major development and will normally only be suitable on flat ground.

D2. The site is situated on relatively high land close to Belton Lane which rises quite steeply on the approach from the east.

D3. National Trust does not object to the development of this site but does consider that the height of development should be restricted to two storeys to reflect adjacent development, and that appropriate screen landscaping should be utilised.

D4. Taller development would interpose between the existing development and the containing ridge line beyond in views from Belton.

D5. The Trust’s experience of the impact from Belton of different roofing materials indicates that the use of recessive colours is particularly beneficial in reducing the visual impact of new development.

D6. Provision of boundary planting would assist in softening the new edge of development and assist in reducing the impact upon views from Belton.

D7. A modest addition can be made to Policy LSC1d to address this as previously requested by the Trust, i.e.:

“Proposals for Sites (LSC1a and) LSC1d shall not exceed two storeys in height, roof materials should be recessive in colour and appropriate native screen planting shall be introduced along the eastern edge of Site LSC1d to mitigate the impacts of development upon the wider setting of Belton.”
The National Trust

Midlands Region

SKDC Site Allocations DPD
Hearing Session 7

Site LSC1b - Colsterworth and Woolsthorpe Manor setting

Extent of visual setting defined on site 16-11-12
Scale 1:20000
Date 17/10/2012
Centre = 494041 E 324432 N
User = Alan Hubbard

View up to ridge
Tail developments visible beyond ridge need assessment

Location of site LSC1b
Woolsthorpe Manor

NB Generally to the east and west of the property the views are contained by ridge lines, and to the south by existing mature trees - development beyond those ridge lines and trees would not impact upon the views from the Woolsthorpe Manor unless it is tall development that would be visible above those ridges.

Accordingly tall developments beyond the defined visual setting line also require assessment in terms of their potential visual impacts upon Woolsthorpe Manor.

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