Hearing Statement

Mrs J Shaw
South Kesteven Site Allocation and Policies DPD
October 2012
1. Introduction

1.1 This Statement has been prepared by Martin Stewart Herbert FRICS FAAV, Chartered Surveyor and Partner of Brown & Co LLP on behalf of Mrs J Shaw.

1.2 This Statement is submitted to the Examination into the South Kesteven Site Allocations and Policies Development Plan Document (DPD).

1.3 On behalf of Mrs J Shaw representations to the DPD Paper have been submitted throughout its gestation.

1.4 This Statement comments on the fact that our client’s site, shown as site SK/BIL/03 in the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment produced by SKDC, has not been allocated within the DPD document.
2. **Summary of Objection**

2.1 We maintain this site is available, viable and suitable. The site is shown edged red on the attached plan. Mrs Shaw also owns the property edged blue through which the access would be constructed.

2.2 As will be evidenced by the SHLAA documentation (see note below), it is accepted by the Council that this site is on previously developed land. This means it should be preferred in comparison to other sites under the Core Strategy Plan Policies (SK13) page 22. Please refer to Objective 3 and the third paragraph in policy SP1 which states ....

*In the settlements identified as Local Service Centres, preference will be given to Brownfield sites within the built up part of settlements (which do not comprise the nature and character of the village) and sites allocated in the Site Specific Allocations and Policies DPD.*

Also, please refer to point 4 of H1 in the Core Strategy (SK13) which states ....

*Plan for a modest level of development within the more sustainable villages identified as Local Service Centres to enable them to continue to function as Sustainable Local Centres.*

2.3 Billingborough is a Local Service Centre and development should be encouraged to supplement the employment base which exists and which may grow and also the local services.

2.4 There have been inconsistencies in the past in the SHLAA appraisal of this site.

2.5 By reference to Appendix 4 in the SHLAA 2009 Report (SK31), which identifies the SHLAA categories, under this the site is shown as both being available and suitable. In the Settlement Summary Table (Appendix 3) it also indicates that the site is available and suitable.

The test which it appears to have failed on is the viability for which there has been no explanation.

2.7 Having established in 2009 that the site was both suitable and available, this continued in the 2010 SHLAA (SK28), by reference to the categorisation of sites (Appendix 4), i.e. the site remained suitable and available. However, under the Settlement Summaries (Appendix 3), in direct conflict to what was said in Appendix 4, without explanation, the Council indicates that the site is not suitable. How can it be suitable and not suitable at the same time in the same document? Since then the Council have maintained that this site is not suitable.

2.8 Firstly, having established that the site is suitable, why has there been a change and there appears to be no logical explanation for this?

2.9 As alluded to by the Inspector in the Preliminary Hearings and leading up to the issue of the modifications to the DPD, there has been no subjective test on how sites have been allocated and evidence to support this. Although the policies have been changed, there
is still no evidence to show how some sites have been evaluated by reference to others in deciding what sites should be allocated. The allocations were decided, we believe, at a time when there was not a justifiable system in place to appraise fully and by comparison to others, the relative merits of the different sites. We contend that this site should be allocated.

2.10 We have in earlier representations commented on some of the other sites which have been allocated which for reasons indicated, are not we feel as sustainable and deliverable as this site. Many of the sites are within less favoured villages with a lack of employment opportunities. This site is close to the employment centre in Billingborough. The other sites proposed would have a much greater impact on the landscape, surrounds and the village. Many of the sites are more distance to the key services within the village. This site is very close to the main High Street and other facilities in the village.

2.11 This site already has buildings (redundant) within it and would make a very logical extension to the curtilage of Billingborough without an impact on the surrounding countryside. It would suit a lower density scheme facilitated by a private access from Pointon Road. The site has residential property on three sides and is well screened to the south by a mature hedge.

2.12 We understand there have been issues over the access to the site in the past. Whilst there may be issues to resolve for a higher density scheme, LCC Highways have been consulted and in June 2008 Chris Tideswell of LCC, after a site meeting with our client’s Architect, Mr Clive Wicks, confirmed that the location with a private driveway would be acceptable to serve 5/6 new dwellings plus the existing dwelling. It was acknowledged at the time that further work would be needed for a higher density scheme in view of the proximity of the junction of Pointon Road with Elizabeth Drive to the west.

2.13 Just commenting briefly on some of the sites which have been promoted:

LSC1A - Barrowby
This is very exposed and only has development on the eastern side. It is not particularly accessible to the services in the centre of the village and by comparison to the site at Billingborough, this would have a more significant impact and would be less desirable. It is also on a Greenfield site. It results in a significant extension to the building line of Barrowby.

LSC1C – Corby Glen
This is a significantly exposed site which is not in proximity to other built development. It is remote to the rest of the residential interests and the key services within this village. It is not within the core of the village and does not have good linkage to facilities and services. It is very prominent and is again a Greenfield site which should not be preferred to development in another LSC which has employment opportunities and by comparison to the site proposed at Billingborough, is on Brownfield land.
LSC1E – Harlaxton

Again this is:

1. Greenfield.

2. Away from the community facilities and services it is to support.

3. A much more prominent site in the landscape and we contend it is less sustainable.

LSC1D

This is a very exposed site and has other material considerations and landscape/heritage issues in relation to Belton House and the Belton House Setting Study (OD1). This was the subject of much comment under the GAAP Inquiry.

2.14 There has in the past been Developer interest in this site.
3. **Summary**

3.1 We have not seen any reason or explanation as to why this site is now classified as not suitable – we contend it is and it is deliverable and should be favoured in preference or to supplement other sites which have been promoted which are less suitable.

3.2 The Council have failed to deliver site allocations of sufficient quantities in the LSC’s, and to comply with the Core Strategy policies SP1, Objective 3 (Brownfield sites) and policy H1.

3.3 In order to make the DPD sound we contend our client’s land should be included within the Site Allocations at policy LSC either in addition to or in preference to other sites which have been allocated in the DPD document.