Dear Ms Waye,

SKDC SAP – ADDITIONAL MATTER – THE DYSFUNCTIONAL PLANNING SYSTEM AT SKDC

Our Chamber has in its representations made on 18th November 2011 set out its views on the matter of the dysfunctional planning system at SKDC.

We now provide in Appendix W 1 and W 2 supplemental material which updates that presented previously.

In W 1 it can be seen that SKDC misunderstands its own Core Strategy, to the detriment of Stamford.

On W 2 it can be seen that SKDC deliberately excluded consideration of Stamford Chamber’s proposals of 3rd December 2009, and excluded those with land interests in these areas from making presentations to Councillors. Furthermore, it appears that SKDC allowed its SAP policies to be formed by a cabal of self-interested landowners and SKDC Councillors, rather than by its own professional judgment based upon all the representations made.

This work by SCOT has shown that the proposed allocation of sites cannot be substantiated in terms of the Core Strategy because the SKDC has misunderstood and misapplied its own Core Strategy. Also because it has allowed its own professional judgment on behalf of all South Kesteven residents to be supplanted by others.

As a result, the methods used in the selection of sites for allocation renders the SAP unsound. It is not 'Justified' as:

A. The sites selections are not the most appropriate alternatives when considered against the reasonable alternatives.

B. One reasonable alternative, that proposed by SCOT, has not even been considered for inclusion in the selection process.

Stamford: The Finest Stone Town in England
We invite the Inspector to consider these points which we consider render the SAP unsound.

Yours sincerely,

Eg. Gilman

F E GILMAN
For Stamford Chamber of Trade & Commerce

01780 482 962 office
0796 833 5725 mobile

tony.gilman@btconnect.com

Stamford: The Finest Stone Town in England
Dear Ms Waye,

SKDC SAP – ADDITIONAL MATTER – APPENDIX W 1 – BYPASS/RELIEF ROAD

Officer Report S11/2300, sets out the Councils view of the Core Strategy policy in respect of the “relief road/ring road for Stamford”. On page 38 of the Agenda Pack, the following is stated (our italics):

"The Council’s Planning Policy Team has made the following comments in relation to the comments from Stamford Chamber of Trade and Commerce:

“SCOT have made a number of representations to the Submission Site Allocation and Policies DPD (SAP). These representations relate primarily to SCOT’s view that the route of an eastern relief road or town ring road should be protected and that the proposed development for the town should be located to facilitate the construction of this road, rather than on the sites which are proposed for allocation in the SAP. These representations have been submitted to the Planning Inspector and will be considered as part of the SAP examination over the coming months.

The matter of the relief road/ring road for Stamford and to 'safeguard' a line for such a road was considered in detail by the Inspector at the Examination of the Core Strategy in 2010. The Inspector concluded that as there was unlikely to be a commitment to such a proposal by either South Kesteven District Council or Lincolnshire County Council (through its Local Transport Plan (LTP)) and as no route had been agreed it was not appropriate to protect land for such a purpose. This is clear by the nature of the changes the Inspector made to the Core Strategy in this respect, i.e. there is no mention of the need to define and protect a route in either the policies or text. The Inspector also commented that she was not convinced that the likely scale and type of development anticipated for Stamford during the plan period would be capable of delivering such a scheme through developer contributions alone.

This situation remains unchanged. The current LTP makes clear that further work by LCC on a feasibility study into a bypass or relief road is on hold as it seems unlikely that funding for any major improvement will be available and that the focus will rather be on opportunities to improve sustainable travel in the town with funding through S106 agreements.”

Based on the above and the fact that this site would not directly affect the route of any possible relief / ring road it is considered that the application should be considered in line with the recommendations contained in the main agenda.

Stamford: The Finest Stone Town in England
We consider that the interpretation by the Council of its own policy is incorrect.

The Council is only focusing on the negative aspects of the consideration of the relief road by the Inspector Karen McCabe and that they have completely omitted to consider the positive aspects which are included in the Core Strategy. The following is a summary of the relevant issues:

CORE STRATEGY INSPECTOR’S REPORT     (BINDING ON SKDC)  
8th June 2010

3.26 Traffic congestion in Stamford has been identified as a critical issue in the spatial portrait, yet is not addressed in policy SP3. The Council has suggested adding to the supporting text, briefly analysing the causes of the problem and setting out how solutions will be sought through partnership working. This provides an adequate framework for identifying appropriate measures to address congestion and underpin site allocations and policies for Stamford in the SSAP DPD, particularly as I heard that the County Council has developed an up to date traffic model for the town. There is no need therefore to go further and include a detailed parking strategy. This change also carries forward the strategic planning commitment within the (now superseded) Lincolnshire Structure Plan 2006 7.14 to keep under review relief and access measures to protect the historic core of Stamford [RESP3].

3.27 This is a long standing issue, and there were proposals for a Relief Road in the 1990s which did not proceed. Since then the Stamford Chamber of Trade and Commerce (SCOT) has put considerable efforts into modelling and planning Relief Road schemes, which together could form a town Ring Road. It was put to me that the CS is unsound for not including an ‘in principle’ commitment to a Relief Road/Ring Road as a key part of a Stamford transport strategy.

3.28 However, while the current LTP [CD1] includes a feasibility study for a Stamford Bypass/Relief Road, I heard that this work is not currently progressing any further. Despite the work done on behalf of SCOT therefore, it does not appear to me that there is yet agreement by transport providers that a Relief Road or Ring Road is indeed an appropriate or deliverable solution to Stamford’s traffic problems. Moreover, given the focus within South Kesteven and Lincolnshire on supporting the growth of the subregional centres, it seems unlikely that such a scheme would be a priority for either Council. Although individual developments could contribute some elements of a Relief Road, I am not convinced that the likely scale and type of development anticipated for Stamford during the plan period would be capable of delivering such a scheme through developer contributions alone.

3.29 Even if I am wrong about this, the particular Relief Road/Ring Road proposal put forward by SCOT has not been subject to SA, nor, since Issues and Options stage has there been consultation about it in the context either of CS preparation or the adopted SCI. This adds weight to my conclusion that including this scheme within the CS even ‘in principle’ would not be justified or appropriate and indeed would undermine the soundness of the plan. It follows that including any ‘safeguarding’ of the line of a possible Relief Road would not be justified. However the CS does need to clarify the policy towards a future Relief Road for Stamford. I regard the Council’s suggested change as a reasonable summary of the position and endorse it to ensure effectiveness.

Stamford: The Finest Stone Town in England
SOUTH KESTEVEN CORE STRATEGY INSPECTOR’S REPORT
SCHEDULE 1
CHANGES REQUIRED TO MAKE THE CORE STRATEGY SOUND

5E
Sustainable Integrated Transport
New paragraph
After existing paragraph 3.3.5 add new paragraph (all subsequent paragraphs to be renumbered):

Stamford experiences problems from the presence of through traffic, increasing demand for access to the town centre with congestion and parking problems at peak periods, limited public transport services and constraints imposed by the historic road network and historic core of the town. The Council will work in partnership with the County Council, service providers and others to develop and implement measures to reduce traffic congestion and improve accessibility.

5F
Sustainable Integrated Transport Paragraph 3.3.6
Amend existing paragraph 3.3.6 to read:

Longer term schemes highlighted in the Second LTP, including the A15/A151 Bourne Bypass, the A16 Tallington Bypass and Stamford Relief Road(s), are unlikely to be deliverable before the end of the Plan period unless there is a major change in national funding or opportunities arise through development led proposals, provided that they can be shown to be consistent with the Plan’s overall Spatial Strategy.

ADOPTED CORE STRATEGY 05.07.2010 (Binding upon SKDC)

3.3.7 Stamford experiences problems from the presence of through traffic, increasing demand for access to the town centre with congestion and parking problems at peak periods, limited public transport services and constraints imposed by the historic road network and historic core of the town. The Council will work in partnership with the County Council, service providers and others to develop and implement measures to reduce traffic congestion and improve accessibility.

3.3.8 Longer term schemes highlighted in the Second LTP, including the A15/A151 Bourne Bypass, the A16 Tallington Bypass and Stamford Relief Road(s), are unlikely to be deliverable before the end of the Plan period unless there is a major change in national funding or opportunities arise through development led proposals, provided that they can be shown to be consistent with the Plan’s overall Spatial Strategy.

It therefore can be seen from the above SKDC misunderstands its own Core Strategy.

This work by SCOT has shown that the proposed allocation of sites cannot be substantiated in terms of the Core Strategy because the SKDC has misunderstood and misapplied its own Core Strategy. As a result, the methods used in the selection of sites for allocation renders the SAP unsound. It is not 'Justified' as:

A. The sites selections are not the most appropriate “strategy” when considered against the reasonable alternatives.

B. One reasonable alternative, that proposed by SCOT, has not even been considered for inclusion in the selection process.

Stamford: The Finest Stone Town in England
We invite the Inspector to consider these points which we consider render the SAP unsound.

Yours sincerely,

Eg. Gilman

F E GILMAN
For Stamford Chamber of Trade & Commerce
01780 482 962  office
0796 833 5725  mobile

tony.gilman@btconnect.com

Stamford: The Finest Stone Town in England
8 March 2011

Karen Sinclair
Planning Policy
South Kesteven District Council
Council Offices
St Peter’s Hill
GRANTHAM
Lincolnshire
NG31 6RZ

Dear Karen,

LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK FOR SOUTH KESTEVEN
PROPOSED SITE ALLOCATIONS & POLICIES DPD

I have been advised that a meeting, in which District Councillors are to be involved, is to take place in Grantham on 9 March 2010 in connection with the preparation of the above Development Plan Document.

It is understood that the purpose of the meeting is to enable presentations by each of the promoters of three ‘greenfield’ sites in Stamford which have been put forward for inclusion in the Council’s proposed Site Allocations and Policies DPD.

Please advise:

* whether such a meeting is to take place, and if so;

* if the purpose of the meeting is as outlined above, and if not; the purpose of the meeting;

* the nature of the meeting, (ie. committee, sub-committee, working group), and the authority under which it is being convened;

* whether the public and press are able to attend;

* if the meeting is to be held in private, how the principles of probity and impartiality are to be upheld in relation to any future involvement by the Councillors concerned in the preparation of the emerging Site Allocations and Policies DPD;

* whether the meeting is merely a ‘one off’, or the first in a series of similar meetings to which the owners/promoters of other suggested SA&P DPD sites will be invited;

* why there would appear not have been any publicity given relating to the holding of the meeting.

Yours sincerely

Eg. Gilman
Planning Policy & Partnerships

Mr F E Gilman
F H Gilman & Co
Uffington Road
STAMFORD
PE9 2HA

Your ref:
Our ref:
Please ask for:
Karen Sinclair
Direct line: 01476 406438
Email: k.sinclair@southkesteven.gov.uk

Date: 9th March 2011

Dear Mr Gilman

Site Allocation and Policies Development Plan Document (DPD)

Thank you for your letter of the 8th March 2011 concerning the above matter.

In response to the questions raised in your letter I can advise you that there will be a presentation on the 9th March 2011 to which Councillors and officers from South Kesteven and Rutland Councils have been invited.

This has been arranged following a request from representatives of one of the three large extension sites around Stamford to make a presentation to Members about their proposals. In the interests of fairness it was felt appropriate to extend the opportunity to make a presentation to the promoters of all three sites. Each of the promoters of the three large extension sites around Stamford will, therefore, make a short presentation on their sites and development proposals. Members and officers from Rutland Council have been invited to attend as one of the three sites falls within their Council’s administrative area.

The allocation of an urban extension site in Stamford will represent a major contribution to the delivery of the Local Development Framework and as such it is appropriate that the Members are informed about the proposals for the three sites. There will be no debate about the relative merits of one site against another and no decision will be made on the allocation of sites: that will be a matter for a meeting of the Cabinet later in the year.

I would make clear that the presentations to be given on the 9th March do not replace the detailed technical assessment of each site that is currently being undertaken by officers in the Planning Policy team. This assessment, together with the comments made in response to the public consultations on the potential development sites, will be reported to the Cabinet so that they have all the necessary information in order to make a fully informed decision when the allocation of sites comes before them.

Cont/...
This is not a formal meeting and will not be open to the public or press to attend. As it is not a formal meeting public notice of it is not required.

There are currently no further presentations planned relating to other locations/sites suggested for inclusion in the Site Allocation and Policies DPD.

Yours sincerely

Karen Sinclair
Planning Policy and Partnerships Service Manager