

**Matter SC5A**  
**Policy: H/1**  
**Sub-Policies: H/1:b H/1:c H/1:d & H/1:h**

**Representation Number 58156**  
**Representation Identification 16004**

**Written Statement Submitted by Robin Pellew**

## Examination of Submitted City and SCDC Local Plans 2014

### Matter SC5A Policy H/1

#### Written Statement submitted by Robin Pellew

Representation Number: 58156

Representation I/D: 16004

*Although invited to make a written statement specifically pertaining to Policy H/1:d, my objection applies to all new greenfield sites proposed in the Green Belt and is therefore common to Policies H/1:b, H/1:c, H/1:d and H/1:h*

#### 1. Preamble:

- a. The SCDC local Plan (Para 2.17, page 18) sets out the preferred development sequence. It identified development in villages as being the least preferred option in the sequence. Village development was also recognised as being the least sustainable option. This order of preference is confirmed in Policy S/6, Para 1.
- b. Policy S/2 sets out the SCDC Vision for the Local Plan, and includes Clause b., “to protect the character of South Cambridgeshire, including its built and natural heritage, as well as protecting the Cambridge Green Belt...”
- c. This commitment to protecting the Cambridge Green Belt is reinforced by Policy S/4. Para 2.30 confirms the NPPF requirement (Para 83) that the Green Belt boundary should be altered only in “exceptional circumstances”.
- d. The Written Ministerial Statement dated 17<sup>th</sup> December 2015 elaborates Para 88 of the NPPF to the effect that unmet housing need is unlikely to outweigh the harm to Green Belt except in very special circumstances, and that such circumstances must be clearly demonstrated for a Local Planning Authority to grant planning approval.

#### 2. Village Development:

- a. Policy H/1: Allocations for Residential Development at Villages, proposes residential development in six villages classified as Rural Centres and Minor Rural Centres. Three of these - Sawston, Histon & Impington, and Comberton - lie in the Green Belt
- b. Policy H/10: Rural Exemption Sites Affordable Housing, allows for local needs for affordable homes to be met in villages. The Policy states that “the affordable homes are secured for occupation by those in housing need in perpetuity”, and that where 100% affordable housing was not viable, “the minimum market housing necessary to make the scheme viable” could be included. CambridgePPF supports the general principle of this policy but proposes that Rural Exemption Sites should be subject to size constraints depending on the village classification.
- c. The proposed developments in the three Green Belt villages listed in Policy H/1 cannot by any stretch of imagination be deemed to be Rural Exemption Sites. The homes are to be largely market housing with the standard provision of affordable homes according to the size of the development.
- d. In the case of Sawston (Policy H/1:b and c), Histon & Impington (Policy H/1:d), and Comberton (Policy H/1:h), gives no justification for why these sites warrant the release of Green Belt. No explanation of the “exceptional circumstances” is presented. Indeed the analysis of the development requirements for these sites fails even to recognise that they lie in the Green Belt – there is no mention of “Green Belt” in the entire Policy H/1.

3. **Objection:**

- a. Development in these Green Belt villages, as proposed in Policy H/1, is unacceptable because:
- The sites in each village lie outside the Village Development Framework Boundary
  - No attempt is made to demonstrate the exceptional circumstances required for Green Belt release
  - The sites are essentially market housing with minimal affordable housing so are not Rural Exemption Sites
  - Green Belt sites form the least preferred option in the development sequence
- b. For these reasons, none of the sites identified in Policies H/1:b, H/1:c, H/1:d and H/1:h should be included in the SCDC Local Plan.

4. **Site Specific Issues:**

- a. **Sawston, Land North and South of Babraham Road (Policies H/1:b and H/1:c)**
- Sawston is a village of some 7,150 inhabitants. These two sites, plus the re-development of Dales Manor Business Park, will add some 540 additional dwellings, approx. 1,250 people. This represents nearly a 20% increase in the village population. Such expansion cannot be regarded as sustainable development.
  - Development on this scale is likely to overwhelm the local services and facilities as stressed by the representations from all the local Parish Councils.
  - The Green Belt in this area is important to maintain open land between Sawston and Babraham in accordance with the purposes of the Cambridge Green Belt.
  - Traffic on the Babraham Road, on the A1307 and A505 which are already highly congested during peak-hours, and in Sawston village will be made worse.
  - CambridgePPF supports the re-development of the brownfield site at Dales Manor Business Park (Policy H/1:a) but urges that the 200 new dwellings on this site represents the capacity that Sawston can comfortably absorb.
- b. **Histon & Impington, Land North of Impington Lane (Policy H/1:d)**
- It is difficult to accept the rationale for changing the Green Belt boundary for just 25 dwellings outside the village framework boundary. This looks like planning neatness to produce a nice straight edge to the village
  - The 25 new dwellings are not affordable homes for local community use so it is not a Rural Exemption Site.
  - The development would have an adverse impact on the rural appearance and character of area, including setting of Conservation Areas and Grade II Listed Buildings
  - The site is said to be liable to winter flooding
- c. **Comberton, Land at Bennell Farm (Policy H/1:h)**
- The site forms a western extension to Comberton Village, and will erode the open countryside between Comberton and Toft – preventing villages merging is a key Green Belt purpose.
  - Traffic on the B1046 is already already heavy during peak-hours. This development is opposite Comberton College where increasing traffic flow is to be avoided.
  - With 90 new dwellings, the development is on a scale that the local services and facilities will find hard to accommodate, as emphasised by the Parish Council.

5. **Alternative Sites:**

- a. A comprehensive list of brownfield sites should be drawn up by SCDC and priority should be given to the development of these sites over further Green Belt release

- b. The total provision of new housing of these three villages, 455 dwellings, could be replaced if development of the new settlements like Waterbeach Barracks could be advanced by just one year

Robin Pellew  
12<sup>th</sup> September, 2016

*Having presented this overview of village development in the Green Belt, I feel I have no further evidence to provide so I therefore decline the invitation to give oral evidence at the hearing.*

