

8. POLICIES FOR TRANSPORT AND COMMUNICATIONS

8.1 TC - GENERAL

Objections

See Appendix A23

Issues

- a. The plan should have a policy on rail freight and refer to level crossing issues.
- b. The proposed western rail loop.
- c. Would be appropriate to include a long term aim for a rail link to the port at Sutton Bridge?
- d. The Plan should support better road and rail public transport
- e. There is a need to include greater reference to public transport issues, with clear objectives for transport within the Plan.
- f. Reference should be made to the need for more cross-border bus services.
- g. The Plan should include greater provision for transport infrastructure, including improvements to the road infrastructure serving the port at Sutton Bridge.
- h. The aim of minimising the use of the private car is not realistic for the smaller villages.
- i. The reference to high levels of car ownership in para.8.4 should be deleted.
- j. The Plan should make reference to tree planting schemes in lieu of a reduction in use of the private car.
- k. Greater reference should be made to the conservation designations of the Wash when considering the port at Sutton Bridge.

Inspector's Reasoning and Conclusions

- 8.1.1 **Issues a-c.** Protecting particular sites and routes which could be critical in developing infrastructure for the movement of freight at the local level is a legitimate role for the Plan. But, since the objector has not identified any sites to safeguard for future rail freight use, I recommend no change to the Plan. If a site does emerge from the ongoing study into the feasibility of a freight interchange point in South Holland – referred to within para.8.8 of the Plan – it could be incorporated into the development plan at that time. In the meantime, I note that LSP Policy M10 already covers the topic of freight movement by rail so there is no need for its provisions to be duplicated unnecessarily within the Local Plan. As for ‘level crossing issues’, this is not a land use matter.
- 8.1.2 With regard to the matters raised in connection with the western rail loop, there is no proposal to close the existing Spalding rail station. The source of confusion appears to have arisen from a statement within para.2.43 under the heading of ‘The Longer Term’. I have recommended elsewhere that paras.2.41-2.44 be deleted. But, given this scheme remains a vision, with no certainty it will progress beyond that, there is no justification for its inclusion here either. The same is true of a long term aim for a rail link to the port at Sutton Bridge. In the absence of support from the railway authority there would not

appear to be any realistic expectation of its implementation within the Plan period. It would therefore be inappropriate to include a reference to such a scheme in the Plan.

- 8.1.3 **Issues d-f.** The Plan refers to the then current Local Transport Plan (LTP), which has now been replaced by the 2nd version. It would be sensible for the Plan to be factually updated to reflect the present position, including the transport objectives. Turning to issue d, I see no need for any change on this count. The Plan is consistent in this respect with the LTP and the LSP. The introductory paragraphs to this chapter do in fact support better road and rail public transport; within para.8.1, for example, where the themes of the LTP are reproduced and para.8.5, where active support for the provision and improvement of public transport is offered. Indeed, overall, I consider the Plan handles public transport matters satisfactorily, both by its implicit adoption of the themes of the LTP as its objectives, and elsewhere within the introduction to this chapter where clear support is expressed for the provision and improvement of public transport.
- 8.1.4 The Plan is, of course, principally concerned with the spatial implications of transport policies and proposals. If there is no local dimension to this aspect of the Plan worthy of reference, then it is not inappropriate to rely on policies within RSS8 and the emerging LSP. In any event, many of the matters raised by the objector – improved rail services, further town bus services and better late evening public transport – are outside the scope of a local plan and more appropriately dealt with through the LTP. The further suggested changes to paras.8.5 and 8.9 are unnecessary. Equally, the need for more cross-border bus services and more public transport to neighbouring towns out of working hours are operational matters that should be left to the LTP. They do not have direct land use consequences for the Plan.
- 8.1.5 **Issue g.** The objectors have suggested a raft of road, rail and air proposals. There is a scheme to safeguard the A1073 Spalding to Eye route for improvement that is included within the LTP. However, none of the other suggestions are. Whatever their individual merit, in the absence of a realistic expectation of implementation within the plan period, it would be unwise even to include a general statement referring to such schemes. With specific reference to the port at Sutton Bridge, I have already commented above upon the matter of a rail link to the port. It is not clear what road infrastructure the objector is seeking, although in the absence of any substantive reason to support this stance, I can see no justification to prohibit any expansion of the port. The development of Lincolnshire ports is supported by RSS8 and LSP Policy E8. In respect of the allocation for port related development made within the Plan under Policy EC1, that is subject to the caveat that “...highway considerations are satisfactory...”.
- 8.1.6 **Issues h-j.** With regard to minimising the use of the private car for those in smaller villages, the Plan paints a realistic and balanced picture of the current situation. For that reason I accept the reference at para.8.4 to “...high levels of car ownership...” in rural areas is appropriate to its context and should be retained. There is no difficulty understanding the meaning of this sentence and no need for insignificant changes. I do not underestimate the difficulties of improving accessibility and transport choice for residents, businesses and others within small rural communities. However, this is largely a matter for the LTP. On the matter of tree planting schemes, advocating such a measure within the Plan would not assist directly in the consideration of proposals for the development and use of land. As such its inclusion in the Plan is not appropriate. Landscaping of new development is addressed within the Plan by Policy SG18.
- 8.1.7 **Issue k.** Further reference to the nature conservation designation of the Wash is unnecessary within this chapter. The Plan is to be read as a whole and already makes adequate reference to nature conservation interests elsewhere. No change is therefore

necessary in response to this objection.

RECOMMENDATION

R.8.1. I recommend that the Plan be amended by updating the references to the Local Transport Plan in paras.8.1 and 8.2.

8.2 TC1 - SAFEGUARDING ROAD ROUTES

Objections

See Appendix A24

Issues

- a. The policy should be updated and reference to the A151 Weston by-pass removed.
- b. Additional text, as suggested, should be included within the Plan.
- c. Matters raised in connection with the A1073 Spalding to Eye Improvement (para.8.11)
- d. Matters raised in connection with a Whaplode / Moulton by-pass (para.8.12)
- e. Matters raised in connection with the safeguarded road route from the A151 to the B1172 (paras.8.13-8.14)
- f. Matters raised in connection with the potential road route from Monks House Lane to Spalding Road (para.8.15)
- g. Should the Plan continue to safeguard the road route through the Northern Expansion Area (para.8.17)?

Inspector's Reasoning and Conclusions

8.2.1 **Issues a-b.** The related objections under these issues were made to the FDD. The Plan has now been updated and reference to the A151 Weston by-pass removed. The Plan has been extensively re-written since the related objection was made to the FDD. The Plan's objectives have now all been gathered together within Chapter 2. Insofar as it can be considered an objection to para.2.39, I consider the suggested additional wording would add little to the Plan, especially as there is support already for other road users in objective 11.

The A1073 Spalding to Eye Improvement (Para.8.11)

8.2.2 **Issue c.** The A1073 Spalding – Eye Improvement is included within the LTP and thus rightly identified for safeguarding by Policy TC1. The Provisional 2nd LTP assumes a start date of February 2006 for this scheme [CD/LC/10]. Plainly, that is no longer the case. Even so, any requirement for consultation with relevant parties where it has not already been undertaken will be, or would have been, the responsibility of LCC as Highway Authority, not South Holland District Council. A reference to consultation in the Plan is therefore unnecessary. A related objection refers to the de-trunking of the A16 but does not make clear what consequences, adverse or otherwise, are envisaged from this action. In the circumstances I make no further comment.

The Whaplode/Moulton by-pass (Para.8.12)

8.2.3 **Issue d.** The related objections raise widely divergent views about the status to be

accorded to this scheme. For the objector who believes the Plan should acknowledge its low status at both paras.2.44 and 8.12, the recommended deletion of para.2.44 resolves the first concern and, in my view, PIC73 suitably addresses the second. The Plan now accurately reflects the status of the Whaplode/Moulton by-pass. It is as yet identified only for evaluation by the Provisional 2nd LTP as a longer term major road proposal in the period to 2030 for consideration for inclusion in the Full 2nd LTP. It would not be appropriate for the Plan to give it any higher priority at this time.

- 8.2.4 The suggestion is also made that since land in the ownership of LCC in Holbeach is earmarked for development, the LCC should contribute towards the cost of a Whaplode/Moulton by-pass scheme. However, since the by-pass scheme might not come to fruition, such a qualification would be unreasonable.

The Safeguarded Road Route from the A151 to B1172 (Paras.8.13-8.14)

- 8.2.5 **Issue e.** Some misunderstanding has arisen in connection with this proposal for at least one objector. It would appear the confusion arises from the vision for Spalding explored initially in the FDD and its accompanying diagrammatic “Potential Development Plan for Spalding”. If clarification is still needed, the safeguarded route is shown on Inset Map 15 and is effectively confined now to the Holland Park housing development. The route is proposed by the Council to secure a reduction in traffic using Hawthorn Bank and St John’s Road. Further detail is sought of the proposed road link through Holland Park. But PIC73 would now make explicit the relationship of the link road between the A151 and B1172 and the housing development at Holland Park. With regard to clarification of the timing of its construction, that is a matter best addressed through the development brief to be prepared to guide the development. No further change is necessary in response to the related objections.

The Potential Road Route from Monks House Lane to Spalding Road (Para.8.15)

- 8.2.6 **Issue f.** The text at para.8.15 fittingly describes the state of play with this potential route. This is just one of many schemes listed within the Provisional 2nd LTP as a longer term major road proposal. All, as yet, are identified only for evaluation for inclusion in the Full 2nd LTP. It would not be appropriate to include an illustration of a putative alignment – as the FDD did – or seek to safeguard a line for the road when the scheme is at such an early stage that there can be no confidence of its implementation within the lifetime of the Plan.
- 8.2.7 Consequently, there would be no necessity and no justification to allocate land for development in the Plan in order to provide a source of funding for this road. There has, to date, been no design or feasibility work of any sort undertaken in connection with what is only a possible road scheme. A unilateral reference to permitting unplanned development to support ‘other desirable transport aims’ would be quite inappropriate. The promoters of this route point out it would allow Spalding railway station to be moved to serve both Spalding and Pinchbeck. The Council rightly counters that this would not be without substantial disadvantage. But this is all simply speculation. It has no relevance to the Plan.
- 8.2.8 It has been suggested that the vision for the road be extended to include a link to Bourne Road north of Podge Hole. Such an extension is not supported by the Council. But, whatever its merits, it would be premature to include any reference to this as a scheme in the Plan for the reasons explained in the para.8.2.6 above.

The Road Route through the Northern Expansion Area (Para.8.17)

- 8.2.9 **Issue g.** It is my understanding that the alignment of the safeguarded route through the

Northern Expansion Area is not affected by the planning permission for the development of land on Pinchbeck Road. No change is necessary.

RECOMMENDATION

R.8.2. I recommend that the Plan be amended in accordance with PIC73.

8.3 TC2 - CYCLING, CYCLEWAYS

Objections

057/003	F	Long Sutton and District Civic Society
144/032	F	Councillor P M Walls
524/002	R	Tom Bray
654/026	R	Councillor P M Walls
681/001	R	Pinchbeck Parish Council
683/082	R	Spalding & District Civic Society
683/083	R	Spalding & District Civic Society
683/084	R	Spalding & District Civic Society
683/085	R	Spalding & District Civic Society
683/086	R	Spalding & District Civic Society

Issues

- a. The cycleway shown on the inset map for Long Sutton should be removed.
- b. Whether the wording within the Cycling, Cycleways section is adequate and appropriate.
- c. Additional cycleways should be identified and safeguarded in the Pinchbeck area.
- d. The Plan should include a commitment to replace the current Steppingstones Bridge and protect surrounding land from development to allow for future improvements to access.

Inspector's Reasoning and Conclusions

- 8.3.1 **Issue a.** The cycleway in question – originally shown within the FDD – is no longer shown on the Inset Map for Long Sutton.
- 8.3.2 **Issue b.** The related objection seeks a number of detailed changes to the wording of the text and policy. The Council has responded in part by advancing PIC74. I am satisfied this would adequately address the points raised in connection with paras.8.18 and 8.19, insofar as any change is necessary. The reference in para.8.20 to the deterrent effect of “...large volumes...” of traffic does not seem to me unreasonable. Certainly I do not support its deletion. Nor do I believe there to be any good reason to prefer the suggested re-wording of para.8.22 to that employed by the Council.
- 8.3.3 Further changes are also sought to the wording of Policy TC2. However, I consider the tone, thrust and content of the policy as written satisfactory. The revisions advanced by the objector would largely duplicate the effect of policies included elsewhere within the Plan, whose provisions do not require repetition in each subject policy as the plan should be read as a whole. This is the approach advocated in national guidance and one which I have sought to promote throughout this report. I think the wording employed by the Council appropriate and see no reason to favour the wording suggested, or as further amended, by the objector.

- 8.3.4 **Issue c.** The routes shown on the Inset Map for Spalding are in the majority of cases where the cycleway is segregated from road traffic. Except where part of the national cycle route network, I think that distinction should be maintained for cycleways shown on the Inset Maps. The only specific suggestion advanced in the related objections is to a potential route running along existing roads that are incapable of accommodating a separate cycleway. Accordingly, I do not favour such a route being shown by the Plan. I do not of course rule out other options coming forward in the future.
- 8.3.5 **Issue d.** The related objection makes a valid point about the importance of the Stepping Stones footbridge as a convenient non-vehicular access to the town centre from the north west sector of the Spalding. I am however advised that the bridge is the responsibility of the Highway Authority and so any decision on its future treatment would need to be pursued through the LTP. Including a 'commitment' in the Local Plan to secure its replacement would be wholly aspirational and serve no purpose. I see no need for a specific policy to protect the bridge, given the Council controls the land to the west of the railway and the land to the east would be subject to control under Policy EC13. Policy SG15 would also be relevant. This would enable a detailed evaluation of any proposal that comes forward to be made at the time. From what I am given to understand, the Council supports an improvement of the bridge and the matter is being pursued corporately.

RECOMMENDATION

R.8.3. I recommend that the Plan be amended in accordance with PIC74

8.4 TC3 - TELECOMMUNICATIONS

Objections

031/001	F	Railtrack Plc
074/001	F	Vodafone Ltd
144/034	F	Councillor P M Walls
254/001	F	Orange PCS Ltd
314/008	F	RSPB
314/026	F	RSPB
532/043	R	Fiona Forgham, Government Office for the East Midlands
574/028	R	Councillor Chris Brewis
685/010	R	English Heritage

Issues

- Additional wording should be included within criterion 1.
- The word 'large' should be replaced with 'new ground based' in criterion 3.
- Reference should be made to scheduled monuments and historic parks and gardens in criterion 5.
- The Policy should include a reference to mast sharing.
- Supplementary guidance should be produced to encourage mast sharing.
- The plan should protect the interests of the less privileged.

- g. The plan should make linkages between transport and telecommunications.
- h. Whether the plan should recognise the need to accelerate the extension of new communication modes.
- i. A full environmental assessment should be required for sites within designated nature reserves and additional safeguards included within criterion 5.
- j. Should the policy make reference to mitigation where it is not possible to locate antenna away from designated sites?
- k. Whether reference should be made to satellite dishes.

Inspector's Reasoning and Conclusions

- 8.4.1 **Issues a-e.** The Council has responded positively to a number of changes sought by objectors by amendments to the FDD. PIC75 and IC58, which I support, would satisfactorily address the issues. As for guidance on mast and site sharing, this topic is already covered in some detail in paras.66-73 of the Appendix to PPG8: *Telecommunications*. Given that, and the reasoned justification and policy wording within the Plan, I do not believe any real advantage is to be obtained by the preparation of supplementary planning guidance. I recommend no change.
- 8.4.2 **Issues f-h.** The purpose of the Plan is to set out the Council's policies and proposals for the development and use of land in the District. It properly addresses the land use implications of telecommunications development in Policy TC3. In its latest form, the policy is consistent with national guidance, as set out in PPG8; this is to facilitate the growth of new and existing systems, whilst keeping the environmental impact to a minimum and protecting public health. I therefore see no need for any change in response to these issues. I do not underestimate the importance of new communication modes, especially in a largely rural District. However, it seems to me this topic is already covered well enough by Policy E9 of the LSP.
- 8.4.3 **Issue i.** Whether any individual development project should be subject to an environmental impact assessment is a matter to be determined in accordance with the relevant Regulations. By definition, a statutory assessment can only be required where provided for by statute. A useful reference to this matter has already been made at para.3.40 by PIC19. For a proposal that would not require a formal assessment, its environmental impact would still be part of the normal consideration of a planning application. The option of seeking supporting information to amplify planning applications is also generally available to the Council. As for the additional wording suggested to criterion 5 – that "...there are no significant environmental impacts..." – sufficient safeguards already exist within other policies of the Plan. Policies EN1 and EN1A would be particularly relevant in this respect. In either case I see no need for the requested policy references to be included here.
- 8.4.4 **Issue j.** Any harm that would arise to other interests as a result of development where it is not possible to locate antenna away from designated sites would be a material consideration, requiring the advantages and disadvantages of the scheme to be weighed in the balance. Mitigation may well be a relevant factor in that exercise, but I think as it stands the policy better reflects national guidance without such an addition. No change is merited on this basis.
- 8.4.5 **Issue k.** The subject of satellite television dishes is covered extensively outside the Plan. Permitted development rights in respect of the erection of satellite and microwave antenna are explained in The Town and Country Planning (General Permitted

Development) (England) (Amendment) (No. 2) Order 2005. Policy guidance is found in paras.32-33 and 79 of the Appendix to PPG8. Additionally, a planning guide for householders on their installation has been published. The Council does not believe a separate policy on satellite dishes is required within the Plan and there is no reasoned argument before me to counter that view.

RECOMMENDATION

R.8.4. I recommend that the Plan be amended in accordance with PIC75 and IC58.

8.5 TC4 - ROADSIDE SERVICES

Objections

214/001	F	John H King (Securities) Ltd
317/001	F	Mrs F R Ostler
327/001	F	C Ostler & Son
517/001	R	Castle Building Ltd
518/001	R	I D Planning
592/001	R	CR Neaverson and Sons & Mr R Barton
598/002	R	Mr and Mrs J S Pond

Issues

- a. Is there sufficient provision for roadside services in the vicinity of the A16/A151?
- b. Is there is a need to allocate land at the north east quadrant of the A16/A151 for roadside services which outweighs the need to protect this area of open countryside?
- c. Is there a need for roadside services to the east and south of the A16/A151?
- d. Should the land to the east and south of the A16/A151 be included within the defined settlement limits for Spalding?
- e. Should the land at the south east quadrant of the A16/A151 junction be allocated for roadside services?
- f. Should land be allocated within the Plan for the expansion of the roadside services at the A17/Wisbech Road junction.

Inspector's Reasoning and Conclusions

8.5.1 **Issues a-f.** Roadside services provide facilities for refuelling and refreshment, and in some instances overnight accommodation. They meet a road safety need by giving drivers somewhere to stop and rest. However, as the explanation to LSP Policy M12 points out, their uncoordinated provision can be detrimental to visual amenity. It is thus important to strike a balance between the needs of motorists and the protection of the environment from unnecessary development. This applies particularly to the open countryside. Policy TC4 is aimed at protecting the open countryside from harmful development and is in line in this respect with national policy. PPS7: *Sustainable Development in Rural Areas* advises that the open countryside should continue to be protected for the sake of its intrinsic character for the benefit of all.

8.5.2 In broad terms the reasoned justification and wording of Policy TC4 have not been criticised. Rather, the objectors are seeking allocations for roadside services to be made

within the Plan, principally on land about the junction of the A16/A151 – in what I would regard as generally open countryside. The 1998 Adopted Local Plan had allocated land within the north east and south east quadrant of this roundabout junction, but these allocations have not been maintained within the current Plan.

- 8.5.3 Roadside services are aimed at serving the needs of motorists travelling within and through the District. They are not intended as destinations in themselves. I think it entirely reasonable then – in striking the appropriate balance I described above – that a need for this type of facility is demonstrated. LSP Policy M12 puts it slightly differently – advising that proposals for roadside services will be permitted only if, amongst other things, there is no current similar provision in the area.
- 8.5.4 Starting with the wording of the LSP, there are clearly services and accommodation to be had within Spalding itself. It is argued that these are inconvenient for motorists, although that is not a view I would share insofar as overnight accommodation is concerned. However, there is presently a petrol filling station and fast food restaurant at the junction of the A16/A151, within the north east quadrant of the roundabout. Planning permission has also been granted for the erection of a hotel, pub/restaurant, restaurant and drive thru' restaurant on land on the opposite side of Holbeach Road – within the south east quadrant of the roundabout. This is a full permission, dated 3 August 2005. The evidence from the promoter of this site suggested the scheme would commence in mid-2005, but no start on site has been made. Whatever the reason for the lack of progress in bringing the site forward for development – it has been suggested by others there may be access difficulties – I consider it too early to conclude that the delay indicates the services will not be provided.
- 8.5.5 Further afield, there is a petrol filling station and restaurant/fast food restaurant at the Sutterton roundabout on the A17/A16 – about 8 miles from the A16/A151 roundabout. Four miles on, to the north west – but outside South Holland District – there is a hotel at the junction of the A17 and A52. Again from the A16/A151 roundabout, roughly 8 miles to the east, there is a motel on the A17 at Fleet. A further 4 miles to the east, at Long Sutton, at the A17/A1101 Wisbech Road junction, there is a petrol filling station, hotel and restaurant. I note also that planning permission was granted in November 2003 for a development that included a restaurant/motel complex on this roundabout to the south of the A17, although to date only the fast food restaurant has been developed.
- 8.5.6 It has not been argued the distance between the existing roadside services on the A16/A17 as they pass through the District is too great; as indicated, for example, by a higher than normal occurrence of accidents attributable to driver fatigue. Nor is there any evidence, by way of queuing on the approach roads or lack of parking spaces at times of peak demand, to indicate the existing facilities are unable to cope with the need for the services they provide. Indeed, the objective of the 1998 Adopted Local Plan – “it would normally be reasonable to expect a driver to travel at least 12 miles along a trunk road route before finding a petrol filling station and related facilities” – would appear to have been met. On the information before me I am therefore satisfied the current level of services provides drivers with adequate opportunities to stop and rest, and refuel their vehicles.
- 8.5.7 With regard to overnight accommodation, a hotel development study prepared for the Council in 2002 advised that there are 5 hotels in other parts of South Holland outside of Spalding with a total of 146 rooms – that includes the 3 mentioned in para.8.5.5 above [CD/SH/46]. No evidence however has been put before me to demonstrate this number of rooms is insufficient to meet existing need. The hotel study was not directed towards the ‘roadside services’ sector of the market, but it does nonetheless contain some

relevant information on occupancy rates. It states that, "Hotels in the surrounding area appear to be achieving average annual room occupancies of a similar level to the main hotels in Spalding – around 60-65%. The exception is the Travelodge at Long Sutton, which is achieving higher occupancy levels (although not as high as would usually be expected from a Travelodge)." To my mind the inference to be drawn from this information is that current needs are being met by existing provision.

- 8.5.8 Overall, therefore, I have concluded that there is no lack of readily available roadside services for motorists in the District. And, there is nothing in the evidence before me to support the conclusion that there is a need for service facilities to include overnight accommodation in the District.

Junction of the A16/A151

- 8.5.9 It follows from my conclusions above that I consider there is sufficient provision for roadside facilities in District and that there is consequently no need to allocate land in the vicinity of the A16/A151 junction for this purpose. Planning permission has moreover been granted for a comprehensive range of facilities at the A16/A151 roundabout, to include the erection of a hotel. There is no substantive evidence to suggest the development of this approved site will not proceed.
- 8.5.10 That is not to say I rule out other roadside services at this or other locations within the District, but without any compelling information on need or safety grounds I see no justification to make any provision within the Plan. Any proposal that comes forward will need to be considered on its merits in light of prevailing strategic and local policies, and any other material considerations. I have been advised planning permission was refused by notice dated 13 April 2006 for a proposed motel facility within the north east quadrant of the A16/A151 junction. Nothing in that decision leads me to review my conclusions.
- 8.5.11 With regard to the effect of the various individual proposals on the character and appearance of the countryside in this area, it would in my opinion have been preferable to have confined development to one quadrant of land, where building had already taken place. However, since development exists and has now been permitted within two quadrants of the A16/A151 junction, further development on adjacent land would consolidate the harmful impact of development on land to the east of the A16 to the detriment of the rural character and appearance of the surroundings.
- 8.5.12 There is no merit in the contention that either of the 2 sites that flank the approved site in the south east quadrant of the A16/A151 junction should be included within the defined settlement limits for Spalding. While both parcels of land lie at the edge of the settlement, they are plainly divorced from the main built-up area to the east of the A16. They are quite rightly regarded as outside the Spalding settlement boundary.
- 8.5.13 I have already indicated that the land at the south east quadrant of the A16/A151 junction has planning permission for the erection of a hotel, pub/restaurant, restaurant and drive thru' restaurant. It is not a proposal but a commitment. I see no advantage to be gained by making any allocation within the Plan for specific uses upon individual sites. I have no information in any event that, in terms of Policy TC4, there is a demonstrable need for this facility. Nor is there evidence to demonstrate that some of the components of the approved scheme – those that would be considered main town centre uses by PPS6: *Planning for Town Centres* – have been subject to sequential testing. I recommend no change to the Plan.

A17/Wisbech Road junction

- 8.5.14 My general conclusions on need equally apply here. The suggestion that the adjacent Travelodge is frequently full is not supported by any evidence that would contradict the findings of the Council's hotel development study prepared in 2002 that the occupancy levels achieved at the Travelodge at Long Sutton are not as high as would usually be expected from a Travelodge [CD/SH/46]. Planning permission was moreover granted in November 2003 for a development that included a motel on land almost immediately opposite this site, by the McDonald's restaurant. There is no compelling evidence of a need for a particular type of family orientated facility in this location or what is now described by the objector as a motel/filling station/tourist restaurant, or a truck stop. Furthermore, the site comprises an open area of agriculture land, of entirely natural greenfield appearance. Development of the site would harm the open, rural character of this area of open countryside.
- 8.5.15 Reference is made in the response to the Council's statement to the combination of various leisure/recreational uses so I deal with that here. If intended as individual uses, there are policies within the Plan against which such projects could be considered. Even individually some of the uses could attract a large number of visits, but collectively that would undoubtedly be the case. PPG17: *Planning for Open Space, Sport and Recreation* advises that planning permission for intensive, mixed use sport, recreation and leisure facilities should only be granted where they are to be located in highly accessible locations in or adjacent to town centres, or in district or neighbourhood centres. This is not such a location; neither do I consider it can be regarded as highly accessible by means other than the car. I recommend no change to the Plan.

RECOMMENDATION

R.8.5. I recommend no amendment to the Plan.

APPENDIX A23

TC General - Objections

031/002	F	Railtrack Plc
031/006	F	Railtrack Plc
031/009	F	Railtrack Plc
059/002	F	Townswomen's Guild
096/002	F	Councillor Chris Brewis
096/007	F	Councillor Chris Brewis
198/008	F	Whaplode Parish Council
216/007	F	Mr Robert Congreve
220/002	F	Mr A J Congreve
253/003	F	Gedney Hill Parish Council
321/101	F	Spalding & District Civic Society
321/102	F	Spalding & District Civic Society
575/001	R	Sutton Bridge Town Council
654/027	R	Councillor P M Walls
683/080	R	Spalding & District Civic Society
687/023	R	Wash Estuary Management Group

APPENDIX A24

TC1 – Objections

031/007	F	Railtrack Plc
031/008	F	Railtrack Plc
096/011	F	Councillor Chris Brewis
097/049	F	Moulton Parish Council
128/004	F	Councillor Paul Espin
146/001	F	SUSTRANS
198/006	F	Whaplode Parish Council
532/004	R	Government Office for the East Midlands
573/002	R	Economic Development Strategy Task Group
574/027	R	Councillor Chris Brewis
580/001	R	Councillor Bettinson
617/001	R	J J Allen Esq
652/001	R	C Shallice
654/024	R	Councillor P M Walls
654/025	R	Councillor P M Walls
655/004	R	Broadgate Homes Ltd
664/007	R	Boston, Spalding & District Trades Union Council
681/004	R	Pinchbeck Parish Council
683/081	R	Spalding & District Civic Society