

**Fenland Local Plan Core Strategy
Matters and Issues for Examination
Proposals for Places
Matter 9- March (Policy CS9)**

Matter 9 / Representor 134 / Trevor Watson

**Further Statement by
Trevor Watson acting on behalf of 645 residents.**

1. Further to our comments made to Fenland District Council dated 9 April 2013.
2. We note that the District Council, at their Council meeting in January 2013, they deleted the North East Strategic Allocation due to the sound planning reasons the residents put forward as to why this was an unsuitable area for such large scale housing development.
3. There was overwhelming support from Council Members to delete this Strategic Allocation.
4. We made no further comment when the Core Strategy was revised for further public consultation.
5. We note that as a result of the further consultation, that only 5 residents objected to the deletion as opposed to 645 residents who objected to the original allocation along with about another 100 residents who objected via letter or email.
6. We also noted that 3 Agents, acting on behalf of land owners objected to the deletion but their main objections related to the legality/soundness of the District Councils decision to delete this area, rather than any sound planning reasons.
7. We also noted that 4 Agents agreed with the Councils decision to delete this allocation, stating this area was in the wrong location of the town, had infrastructure problems, etc. One Agent stated that whilst March was the second largest town in the District, the Core Strategy was proposing 38% of new housing growth for the District in this one town. and yet the town represents only 10.5% of past housing completions.
8. They obviously consider there is an imbalance of housing proposed for March, when compared to other towns in the District along with the infrastructure problems existing in the town, many of which are very difficult to improve.
9. A number of Agents agreed with relocating the North East housing to other more suitable sites south of the town or even elsewhere in other towns in the District, to help re-address the imbalance of proposed housing within the District.
10. We would wish to highlight an issue regarding housing densities. The former North East Strategic Allocation, envisaged "around 450 dwellings" on this 80 acre allocation. According to the Councils Housing Report 2013, it proposes housing densities of 12.6 dwellings per acre for future housing allocations. If that is the case, then the former North East allocation would have generated about 1,000 dwellings. Therefore, the District Council have to accommodate that number of dwellings elsewhere, and not 450 dwellings.
11. We would suggest that this amount of housing would be better relocated to other growth towns rather than elsewhere in the town. It would help reduce the pressure on both existing and future infrastructure services such as traffic, sewage/water issues etc. in March.

12. As residents, we continue to maintain that the proposed large scale housing for March is based upon aspiration from the Council and not on sound planning reasons as to what the town can accommodate in respect of both existing infrastructure problems and within any future improvements. It is not related to any future employment opportunities, and if allowed, would destroy the market town character resulting in the town becoming a "dormitory town" Creating housing growth of this magnitude in March for residents who then will travel to other employment centres outside the District is not sustainable, and more importantly, not what the majority of residents want.

13. Many of the existing problems that exist within the town have been caused by excessive housing growth in the past without the necessary infrastructure improvements taking place. This particularly relates to sewage and traffic issues

14. The town needs further housing growth but it has to be at a scale that is appropriate to the towns character and its infrastructure, both existing and what is reasonably achievable.

15. On a general note, we as residents, one of the key players in the formation of the future of our town, have found the Core Strategy document and its contents somewhat difficult to fully understand. The proposals in the Core Strategy frequently refer to other technical documents which in themselves are somewhat difficult to understand.. Under each set of proposals, within the Core Strategy there should have been a brief statement outlining how any infrastructure improvements would be achieved to help accommodate the proposed housing.

19 November 2013