

TO: SKDC PLANNING COMMITTEE

RE: OBJECTION TO ALLOCATION OF SITE SKPR-71 FOR DEVELOPMENT

FROM: SOFIA WELCH – LOCAL RESIDENT

DATE: 9TH APRIL 2024

Below I outline my reasons for objecting to development on site SKPR-71 under Regulation 18 – SKDC Draft Local Plan. I request that my points are fully considered as part of the current consultation, and I authorise you to share them as required with any interested party, including consultants.

AGRICULTURAL LAND; All 100% of site SKPR-71 is highest graded agricultural land. All other considered sites are a lower percentage or lower quality land. SKDC acknowledged at their meeting on 20/3/2024 that their preference is not to build on high quality agricultural land, and the higher graded land will be protected, if possible, in favour of allocating sites in the larger towns for development. SITE SKPR-71 IS NOT SUITABLE.

UNSUITABLE VILLAGE LOCATION;

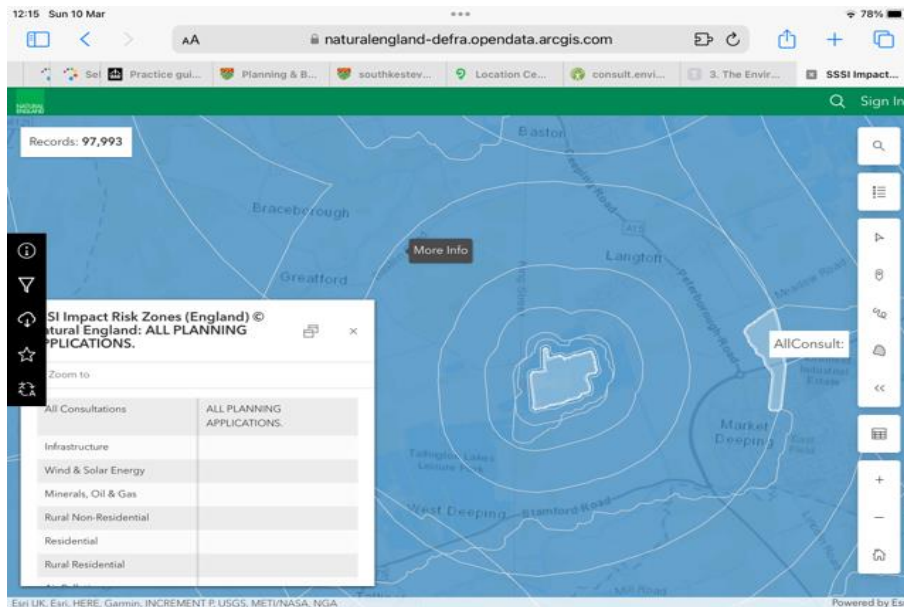
SKPR-71 is just 50 metres from 41 newly built homes in Teal Way, which despite being built in 2023, are omitted from the Plan Revision, but do contribute towards South Kesteven's new-housing-requirement numbers within the current Local Plan period. They add to traffic on already inadequate roads, and strain local services and facilities. Many remain unsold, partly because the location is unsuitable. They were the controversial subject of an open village meeting in 2023 which called for a Public Enquiry. The Dickens Close area has been detrimentally affected over several years by their controversial construction, allocation to refugees and regular, ongoing, remedial works to stretched services. The adjacent woodland and lake habitats have been severely damaged by the new housing and the SPA pipeline. **It is totally inappropriate to allocate for additional homes in exactly the same area, at the farthest end of a linear village, 1-1.5 miles from all the services and facilities which SKDC used to evaluate it's status as a 'larger village'.** The Teal Way development should be the final development to this small, rural and much damaged part of Langtoft within the current Plan Period. SITE SKPR-71 IS NOT SUITABLE.

CONSERVATION AND SUSTAINABILITY;

Within a few metres of the proposed site, there is a green area around lakes. Issues around sustainability, conservation and biodiversity apply here. A line of mature screening trees has already been felled at the Dickens Close / Stowe Road junction, and a large area of the deciduous forest directly opposite Dickens Close levelled to the ground, causing **severe damage to the natural habitats in that forest and around the lakes. That area is classified by Natural England and DEFRA as a SSSI, and site SKPR-71 falls within the Impact Risk Zone of that SSSI.** Important species, including newts, bats, geese and many species of migrating birds use this corner of Langtoft as a vital habitat. The villagers took steps last year to reduce the number of road kills, by putting up home-made signs at the Dickens Close / Stowe Road junction where families of birds cross Stowe Road into

the fields. Attached photo taken from Dickens Close, of the exact site SKPR-71 with thousands of resting geese. SITE SKPR-71 IS NOT SUITABLE.

Natural England / DEFRA, SSSI and it's Impact Risk Zone, covering the proposed site.



ANGLIAN WATER ISSUES;

Anglian Water's **SPA pipeline** has **devastated the landscape directly adjacent to Dickens Close and site SKPR-71, causing deep flooding** over the entire autumn and winter 2023/24. Photos attached taken on 23rd February 2024.



Two photos taken 23/2/2024 of the pipeline flooding adjacent to Dickens Close



The vast overspend on the unfinished SPA Pipeline is Anglian Water's priority. They now forecast a total project cost of £1.1 billion against an original budget of £400 million. The overspend has caused all work to cease with no completion plans in sight. The landscape of South Lincolnshire has been decimated – including at Dickens Close. This is a scandal as big as the HS2 disaster and the recent Thames Water financial collapse. It would be unwise of any Council to disregard this. **Anglian Water will not be investing in much-needed wastewater treatment upgrades, despite exceeding maximum capacity in our area which cannot support new development in rural villages where services are already limited. Site SKPR-71 is one field away from the sewage flooding around Greatford where the sewage pumps failed in the flooding of 2023-24. SITE SKPR-71 IS NOT SUITABLE.**

RESIDENTS' RIGHTS;

The **rights of the residents of Dickens Close to enjoy the peaceful amenity of their own properties have been severely compromised for a long time, due to the various intrusive developments outlined above.** Many paid a premium for the location, surrounded on three sides by green space. Teal Way and the SAP Pipeline have taken away two of those. Site SKPR-71 is all that remains. Those residents' rights should be considered by our elected representatives. SKPR-71 IS NOT SUITABLE.

QUARRIES;

SKPR-71 sits at the centre of a circle of quarries – some existing and some newly approved. King Street, West Deeping, Baston. In addition to the environmental damage to habitats and water quality, displacement and diversion is known to affect the water table in an area where the water table is already very high and there is multiple geographic interference. Engineering studies indicate that water tables around multiple quarry sites can rise significantly. Noise and air pollution already surround us from quarrying, and will increase with the newly approved sites, as will the enormous number of HGV movements on the already inadequate roads. SITE SKPR-71 IS NOT SUITABLE.

UNSUITABLE ROADS; The existing and planned quarries at both ends of King Street and Baston, which surround site SKPR-71, produce hundreds of HGV movements per day. **King Street is already an accident black spot, with no defined road boundaries, no road markings or lighting, too narrow in width, dangerous ditches, and very poorly maintained. It flooded and was closed at both ends and at the Stowe Road junction for a period of several weeks over winter 2023-24.** This included river burst flooding, surface / run off flooding and sewage flooding. SKDC's own gritting policy excludes King St and Stowe Road hence confirming that SKDC do not consider them to be priority roads. SITE SKPR-71 IS NOT SUITABLE.

UNSUITABLE ACCESS; Dickens Close itself is completely unsuited for any increased traffic. The **proposed access point is too narrow and borders directly two homes, who own the boundary fencing.** The width doesn't meet requirements for construction traffic or for the proposed number of homes. Eight existing driveways open into the very small Close, at dangerous points. In 2006, the number of homes built in Dickens Close was pushed to its upper limit, which now means that the **Close is too dangerous for any increase in usage.** High local car dependency would produce very significant traffic from any proposed development, which Dickens Close is not designed or equipped to accommodate. The **Dickens Close / Stowe Road junction is also not suitable. Traffic turning in would be blind to reversing cars from multiple driveways, within 6 metres of the junction.** Teal Way has already put additional traffic-strain on the totally unsuited roads at that end of the village. SITE SKPR-71 IS NOT SUITABLE.

FLOODING – all types;

Site SKPR-71 sits right at the centre of a small circle of **sites which were flooded for large parts of Winter 2023-24.** The devastation to homes and businesses was covered by National News outlets as the most serious in the country. Met Office flood warnings rose to Severe levels, indicating threat to life. Notably, **Waterside Garden Centre, Kate's Bridge, King Street/Stowe Road junction, Greatford and the surrounding fields, Tallington.** As well as the multiple **rivers breaching their banks,** there **was sewage flooding which spread through Greatford and across the fields to within one field of this proposed site. Failed flood / sewage defences** require investment for upgrading which Anglian water can not now provide – see next paragraph.

The failed Anglian Water SPA pipeline site adjacent to Dickens Close flooded in early Autumn 2023 with deep flood water remaining in place for many months. I attach above, photographs of those floods taken as recently as 23rd February 2024. As you see, they **reach within five metres of the existing Dickens Close houses and the proposed site.** Anglian Water failed to plan and to prepare sites where drainage was not sufficient, resulting in the decimation of the South Lincolnshire landscape and thus allowing us to see the result of any further construction at Dickens Close / site SKPR-71. As a result of their huge overspend, **Anglian Water is in crisis, and forced to reassign funds away from investment in waste-water treatment plants, which are already at full capacity, and other failing drainage defences against waste water and sewage.** A newly completed development of 41 homes at the west corner of Langtoft where there are minimal services or facilities has already caused problems for utilities, including water and waste water. Works and remedial works are frequent and ongoing, regularly affecting existing Langtoft residents. It is not appropriate to minimise the flood risks from any of the potential flood sources, at a site which has

been so affected by such serious and recent flooding events, as well as other water related challenges.

The draft site assessment excludes several other sites in Langtoft due to risk of surface flooding. As a village resident, I can attest to the worst surface flooding in Langtoft being at site SKPR-71. I would also question why more appropriate sites have been excluded prior to the much-needed SFRA.

A natural watercourse runs through the site, there is clear threat from ground water and run off and the water table is already known to be very high.

It is universally accepted that **climate change will continue to increase flooding risks, particularly at sites where there are additional man-made influences**, as outlined above. Eleven severe storms resulted in flooding this year alone, and that number is predicted to rise, annually. The demands on the Environment Agency to maintain rivers and drainage are reaching unsustainable levels.

SITE SKPR-71 IS NOT SUITABLE.

For all of the above reasons, I request that your current review takes into account the overall argument that the proposed site SKPR-71 is not suitable for further development in the current Plan period.

Sofia Welch

