

SKPR-123 Formal objection to the proposed development of SKPR-319 (SKPR-109 and SKPR-110)

Dear Planning Officer,

I am writing as a long-standing resident of Baston to formally object to the proposed expansion of the allocated site SKPR-319 (SKPR-109 and SKPR-110) Land Fronting Deeping Road, Baston – up to 283 Dwellings on land west of the A15, as promoted by Wates Developments under the Regulation 18 consultation, regarding the draft local plan.

A. Traffic and car ownership has been underestimated

Traffic on the two-lane A15 has markedly increased during the 27 years I have lived in Baston, in particular following the completion of vast new housing estates around Elsea Park to the immediate south of Bourne.

I have often found difficulty in driving out of Maltby Drive on to the A15, and not just at weekday peak periods.

Furthermore, the A15 crossroads often comes to a standstill. Adding a second junction off the A15 to serve the proposed new houses will greatly exacerbate the problem – while also creating hazards for pedestrians and cyclists (very regrettably, there is no cyclepath along the A15 between Baston and the villages either side).

2. It is also already difficult to cross the A15 from Baston Fields on foot during daylight hours: walking to the puffin (Pedestrian User-Friendly Intelligent) crossing on the opposite side of Greatford Road can also be problematic at many times of the day because of the restricted view on the A15 corner.

Wates Developments appeared to base its transport assessment on Lincolnshire's county-wide average car. ownership (1.33 vehicles per household), but in a village like Baston, two cars per household has been shown in practice to be more realistic, if only for the need of residents to access essential services in nearby towns as well as travelling to work.

3. Prospective plans published on behalf of Wates at <https://bastonparishcouncil.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/01/Boyer-Planning-obo-Wates-Developments-1.pdf> show an arterial road

through the proposed 283-home estate running from the A15 to Greatford Road.

The council's own Housing and Mixed Use Allocations consultation document refers to "Footway/carriageway widening/improvements along Greatford Road."

However, I say that widening Greatford Road would be a major injustice to owners of properties which front directly onto its pavement or nearby.

Furthermore, allowing through traffic on the arterial road through the proposed SKPR-319 would risk increasing not only the use of the village crossroads – which lacks a set of traffic lights in its own right – and worsening traffic flows along the adjoining King Street.

A raised and very straight Roman road, King Street has long been used as an alternative route by motorists who try to avoid congestion on the A15 on a daily basis: many drivers can be

seen using this road at speeds perceived to be well in excess of the national limit, there being no measure in place such as cameras to deter speeding. This road, which has a deep dyke running on the western side, has been the location of numerous serious accidents.

4. It is highly likely that families who potentially move into the SKPR-319 development might well decide that it is too far to walk their children daily to Baston Church of England Primary School, around three-quarters-of-a-mile to the eastern side of the village, but instead use their cars. The effect will be an increase in traffic along Main Street at school opening and closing times while exacerbating problems with parking.

5. Adding a sizeable volume of extra traffic from Baston to the A15 will impact on neighbouring villages like Langtoft, Thurlby and Northorpe, arguably to their detriment. None of these have traffic lights to regulate their crossroads, but pelican crossings.

B. Strain on infrastructure – and absence of it

1. The proposed SKPR-319 development, if completed, would increase the physical size of Baston by a third or even nearer 40%, making it akin to an isolated suburb of Peterborough or even a small town – without the necessary facilities to hand.

The medical centres at both Market Deeping and Bourne are already stretched to full capacity,

a situation which will worsen if the proposed new housing developments at both towns go ahead, unless these facilities are substantially expanded.

2. Wates' representation via its agent Boyer to the council lists two schools in Baston - yet there is only one, the Church of England Primary School which receives state funding and is therefore available to all. The other, one listed, Kirkstone House School, is a fee-paying establishment, and therefore not automatically open to all.

The representation reads as follows:

“SP2: Settlement Hierarchy; Representation Summary:

“Within Appendix 2 of the Settlement Hierarchy Assessment, Baston receives a total of 39 points, resulting in being 13th out of over 120 settlements which were being scored across the district. Following our assessment of Baston, this score should be increased to 48 through an additional 3 points for the place of worship (St John's Church), a further 3 points for a second primary education facility (Kirkstone House School) as well as an additional 3 points for the presence of secondary education in the village (Kirkstone House School). This would raise the position of Baston to being ranked 5th of the villages within the district.

“We agree with the overall methodology taken towards the large villages in South Kesteven, and the identification of Baston as a larger village in the district that is sustainable for future growth. However, the assessment should be updated to incorporate the additional facilities and services in Baston, which will see the village rank 5th in regard to services and sustainability of the settlements in the district. Where this is recognised, it would further justify the whole site's allocation, whilst bringing forward further benefits.”

I disagree with Wates' conclusion for several reasons.

Firstly, I submit that the inclusion of a private fee-paying school, which I understand is largely used by children outside Baston – and listing it as both a primary and secondary facility - presents an incorrect view of the services available to the general population of Baston who would not choose to pay school fees, and to my mind does not justify increasing the size of a country village by anything near the size of the proposed SKPR-319 development.

3. It is my understanding that Baston's Church of England Primary School is already well subscribed with currently few if any vacant places available, with little or no room to expand to accommodate the effects of an increase in the size of the village by at least a third. If this is the case, families who move into SKPR-319 would have to travel to schools in neighbouring

settlements – if of course any places are available there – adding further pressure on the A15 at peak periods.

C. Village character

I submit that increasing the size of Baston way beyond its natural growth would permanently damage its historic character as a Lincolnshire fen-edge village, and render it more akin to a suburban outpost of Peterborough (again without much necessary supporting infrastructure close to hand).

Building homes on SKPR-319 would mean the permanent loss of quality agricultural land, long a distinctive and productive feature of the village and its locality. Surely brownfield sites should be identified for building on first.

If built in its entirety, the proposed SKPR-319 development could pave the way for Baston eventually coalescing with Langtoft.

4. The need for housing

It seems that the demand for extra housing as part of the SKDC local plan has come about not because of genuine local need in the communities that it covers, but because of a policy by the current Labour Government (voiced by its deputy prime minister Angela Rayner) that is insisting on 1.5 million homes be built nationally as a principle.

This Government may last for another four years or maybe a shorter period, but the proposed SKPR-319 development would cause irrevocable damage to Baston's countryside environment and character.

I respectfully suggest that such a large number of homes should be accommodated in or next to sizeable communities where the necessary infrastructure is to hand – and where Baston needs homes as part of the natural growth of the village, infill pocket sites should be sought and used as and when they become available, as is the case at present.

The current Government has “net zero” carbon emissions as a core policy. Adding extra traffic to the 12-mile route into Peterborough or other destinations on a daily basis will not cut carbon emissions – quite the opposite.

Thank you for considering my representation.