

## Response to Mr Drabble's question

As chairman of the Growth, Infrastructure and Resources Scrutiny Committee I must advise the questioner that I was not involved in the production of the papers before us tonight. However, I have asked that the officers who were responsible provide a response which I will read out.

The Planning Policy team replied to Mr Drabble on 19th August 2019 regarding his comments as follows:

"Your concerns were forwarded to the consultant, subsequently, they re-visited the preparatory work undertaken during the preparation of the landscape sensitivity and capacity study of land around Whissendine.

The consultant responded they were happy with their assessment of Zone W2 in the report, of which site WHI/09A in the Draft Local Plan forms a part, is accurate and robust. The area that the Council has identified as WHI/09A is similar in character, landscape sensitivity and capacity as the majority of Zone W2 which is relatively extensive, extending along the western edge of the village. The report acknowledges the different characteristics of the southern parts of the zone, but in general Zone W2 consists of a number of small scale, relatively flat, regular, rectilinear paddocks separated by mostly tall dense hedgerows with hedgerow trees, where ridge and furrow is a distinctive feature.

The landscape character approach is used to assess landscape sensitivity and capacity to accommodate development. This considers the often complex interrelationships of natural, cultural, social, perceptual and aesthetic influences, together with consideration of settlement form and pattern, and landscape value.

The consultants when making their recommendation to the Council, have assessed landscape sensitivity and the capacity to accommodate development by using the landscape approach which considers often complex interrelationships of natural, cultural, social, perceptual and aesthetic influences, together with taking into consideration the settlement form and pattern as well as landscape value. All these factors were taken into account when prioritising land for potential development.

The report does acknowledge the presence of the well preserved ridge and furrow system around most of the village. In accordance with the Village Design Statement this should be preserved where possible – however, any new development on the edge of the village is likely to affect ridge and furrow to some extent which must be balanced with all other potential effects. For example, the report also acknowledges the main focal points within the village, being the windmill and Church tower, views to which should not be affected by new development.

A judgement has to be made in prioritising areas for potential development on the order that these could be brought forward for development, in landscape and visual terms. There is often little to choose between some zones in terms of overall landscape sensitivity and capacity, although the assessments may differ on the impact on specific criteria.

Zone W8 was assigned a slightly lower capacity due to its more open, exposed nature where new development would be on land above 125m AOD (the approximate height of land within WIN/09A) likely to create a new harsh built edge that would break the skyline, have an adverse impact on the setting of the village in the countryside and impact on sensitive views to the windmill and Church tower.

The assessment of overall landscape sensitivity and landscape value is similar for Zone W2 and Zone W8 (which incorporates WIN/02 in the Draft Local Plan) but on balance a slightly higher capacity is allocated for Zone W2 recognising the presence of mature trees and hedgerows (as referred to by yourself) which provide enclosure and would help to assimilate new development into the countryside limiting impact on the setting of the village. Mitigation should ensure that visual intrusion of new development within WIN/09A into the countryside is acceptable and key views are retained.

I hope you find this explanation helpful in understanding how the landscape capacity was considered and the landscape areas prioritised for development",

Assuming that the Local Plan proceeds to its statutory consultation and examination then Mr Drabble will be able to make representations as to the soundness of the Local Plan through the statutory consultation and, if valid, these will then be forwarded to the independent Inspector to consider.