

South East Lincolnshire Local Plan 2011-2036
Draft for Public Consultation (including site options for
development)
(January 2016)

SETTLEMENT BOUNDARIES BACKGROUND
PAPER



South East Lincolnshire
Joint Strategic Planning Committee



1.1 This background paper outlines the approach to settlement boundaries that has been included in the draft South East Lincolnshire Local Plan. The work is linked to the identification of the settlement hierarchy and the sustainability of settlements – a separate background paper¹ provides details on these strands of work. This background paper briefly describes the national and local policy background that has informed the definition of settlement boundaries. It also details the approach undertaken by the Joint Policy Unit in reviewing settlement boundaries, including the various workshops that were held with Members during 2014 to consider this work.

2.0 Policy Background

National Policy

2.1 National policy remains largely silent on any specific requirement for settlement boundaries. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) do identify the need for certain specific policy boundaries, with town centres for retail-planning purposes and Green Belt being the main areas that feature.

2.2 It therefore falls to local planning authorities (LPAs) to consider what is appropriate in terms of development within various settlements and the resultant need for specific boundaries around settlements.

Local Policy

2.3 Settlement boundaries feature in the extant local plans for Boston Borough (1999)² and South Holland District (1998 and 2006)³. Each of the plans has a number of policies (primarily related to housing development and development within the open countryside) that implicitly refer to settlement boundaries defined on the proposals maps for the relevant plan. The general intention of the policies was to guide development to appropriate settlements thereby promoting sustainable development patterns within Boston Borough and South Holland District.

3.0 Methodology

¹ The Spatial Strategy Background Paper can be accessed from the following website link -

² The Boston Local Plan (1999) can be accessed from the following website link -

<http://www.boston.gov.uk/index.aspx?articleid=3736>

³ The South Holland Local Plan (2006) can be accessed from the following website link -

<http://www.sholland.gov.uk/environment/plandev/localplan/South+Holland+Local+Plan+2006.htm>

Settlement Hierarchy

- 3.1 The development of the South East Lincolnshire Local Plan (the Local Plan) has afforded the opportunity to consider existing settlement boundaries within the extant local plans. The work has direct links to the emerging spatial strategy for the Local Plan including an assessment of the settlement hierarchy and the sustainability of individual settlements. The work undertaken on deriving a new settlement hierarchy is briefly described below.
- 3.2 The approach to deriving an amended settlement hierarchy is set out in full in the previously-mentioned Spatial Strategy Background Paper. In summary settlements were considered within a classification covering Sub-Regional Centres, Major Service Centres, Minor Service Centres (previously Service Villages) and Other Service Centres and Settlements. **NB:** Outside of these four tiers of settlement, the rest of the Local Plan area is designated as 'Countryside'. As well as tracts of open countryside, this area includes a variety of smaller settlements and other developments. A separate policy approach applies to development proposals for sites situated in the Countryside.
- 3.3 In order to inform developers and the community as to where the settlement is defined as opposed to the Countryside, it was considered that having a settlement-boundary line provided the clearest approach.

Settlement Boundary Definition

- 3.4 It is important to note at the outset that the purpose of settlement boundaries is to define where particular Local Plan policies apply. In effect, they are defining where the Countryside policy (which covers the majority of the Local Plan area) ends and where other policies relating to Sub-Regional Centres, Main Service Centres, Minor Service Centres and Other Service Centres and Settlements start. Consequently, a settlement boundary is **not** intended to include all the buildings within the immediate vicinity of the settlement. This means that a settlement boundary does not necessarily include all the dwellings and other developments that may be locally regarded as part of a given settlement; and this is often because there is a discernible open gap between the main body of the settlement and an outlying property.
- 3.5 For the Sub-Regional Centres, Main Service Centres, Minor Service Centres and Other Service Centres and Settlements, each settlement boundary has been defined having regard to the following guidelines:
 - a) The settlement boundary encloses the main built-up area (or areas, in the case of a few settlements) of the town or village.

- b) The settlement boundary also encloses:
 - i. areas of amenity and/or recreational open space, the appearance and character and/or use of which is worthy of protection; and
 - ii. sites with planning permission for development situated on the edge of the main built-up area.
- c) In general settlement boundaries have been defined using discernible features on the ground (e.g. a road-line or drainage ditch), most of which will be mapped. It should be noted that a land-ownership boundary does not necessarily form a good definition for where a specific approach to planning policy for development should apply.

3.6 To aid decisions on defining settlement boundaries for those settlements categorised as Other Service Centres and Settlements, the Joint Policy Unit undertook an internal consultation workshop with Members of the South East Lincolnshire Local Plan Steering Group (SELLPSG) to consider and agree potential changes to settlement boundaries. The briefing note sent out in advance of the workshop and a note of the workshop proceedings are attached as Appendix 1 of this background paper.

4.0 Conclusion

4.1 The output from the review of settlement boundaries is a series of maps setting out the proposed boundaries that will be consulted upon in autumn 2015.

Appendix 1

Notes from South East Lincolnshire Local Plan Steering Group - Workshop 5 (held on Friday, 17 October 2014)

Briefing Note for Workshop 5:

Other Service Centres and Settlements – Boundary definition/review

At Workshop 3, held on 4 July 2014, the Steering Group agreed a revised 'settlement hierarchy' for South East Lincolnshire on which to base more detailed work on the Local Plan.

As part of this work, the Steering Group proposed a review of each of the smaller settlements in the settlement hierarchy, defined as 'Other Service Centres and Settlements', to assess potential for infill development and where the settlement boundary might be defined.

For the purposes of the site survey work the previously or currently defined settlement boundaries from the SHDC or BBC Local Plans were used as a starting point.

Please note, as there are over 40 settlements to consider it is impractical to discuss every settlement in detail. So, for the purposes of this workshop, several issues for discussion will be highlighted so that the Steering Group can consider whether the general policy approach for these smaller settlements needs to be refined.

Examples of the issues will be illustrated by reference to maps of the settlements at the Workshop and Members are invited to consider whether they would like any particular settlement to be discussed.

Broad issues for discussion:

No boundaries - settlements considered too small, isolated, with poor services and/or no infill opportunities:

- Algarkirk
- Frampton Church End
- Gedney Dawsmere
- Langrick Bridge
- Nene Terrace
- Throckenholt
- Tongue End

Retain boundaries but with significant changes – removal of boundary for part of settlement **or** potential for change where non infill development would be encouraged:

- Fleet Church End
- Frampton West
- Holbeach Hurn
- Lutton & Lutton Gowts
- Saracen's Head
- Shepeau Stow
- Amber Hill*
- Fosdyke*
- Freiston*
- Holbeach Drove*
- Holbeach St. John's*
- Holbeach St. Mark's*
- Swineshead Bridge*

* These are the settlements which raise issues of a potential boundary definition which might result in non-infill development. It is intended to have more in-depth discussion on these settlements.

Retain boundaries but with no, or minor changes and minimal opportunities for infill development:

- Benington
- Gedney Black Lion End
- Gedney Drove End
- Gedney Dyke
- Haltoft End
- Holland Fen
- Hubbert's Bridge
- Kirton End
- Kirton Holme
- Leverton
- Little Sutton
- Leake Commonside
- Moulton Seas End
- Northgate West Pinchbeck
- Surfleet Seas End
- Sutton St. Edmond
- Weston Hills (Austendyke)
- Weston Hills St. Johns
- Whaplode Drove
- Whaplode St. Catherine
- Wrangle Common
- Wyberton Church End

Note of Workshop 5 Discussion

3. Other Service Centres and Settlements – Boundary definition/review (led by Chris Holliday)

- Members commented on potential confusion about the role of settlement boundaries. Following further discussion, it was agreed, firstly, to **retain** those settlements (i.e. Algarkirk, Frampton, Church End, Gedney Dawsmere, Langrick Bridge, Nene Terrace, Throckenholt and Tongue End), which had been proposed for deletion from the proposed list of Other Service Centres and Settlements and, secondly, to **retain** their existing settlement boundaries (as defined in current local plans).
- There was discussion on a second group of Other Service Centres and Settlements i.e:
 - Fleet Church End
 - Frampton West
 - Holbeach Hurn
 - Lutton & Lutton Gowts
 - Saracen's Head
 - Shepeau Stow
 - Amber Hill*
 - Fosdyke*
 - Freiston*
 - Holbeach Drove*
 - Holbeach St. John's*
 - Holbeach St. Mark's*
 - Swineshead Bridge*
- Agreement was reached on accepting the proposed approach in respect of the settlements without an asterisk, i.e. remove part of the boundary where considered inappropriate; except for Holbeach Hurn, where an additional boundary would be created in addition to another stretch being lost.
- Of those settlements with an asterisk, it was agreed that each of Holbeach Drove, Holbeach St John's, Holbeach St Marks and Fosdyke would have its boundary reviewed in order to provide an opportunity for a small-scale affordable housing development.
- It was agreed that no amendments would be made to the boundaries of the third and final group of Other Service Centres and Settlements, i.e:
 - Benington
 - Gedney Black Lion End

- Gedney Drove End
- Gedney Dyke
- Haltoft End
- Holland Fen
- Hubbert's Bridge
- Kirton End
- Kirton Holme
- Leverton
- Little Sutton
- Leake Commonsides
- Moulton Seas End
- Northgate West Pinchbeck
- Surfleet Seas End
- Sutton St. Edmond
- Weston Hills (Austendyke)
- Weston Hills St. Johns
- Whaplode Drove
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- Wyberton Church End