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Please see attached.

18th July 2012

Dear Sirs

Response to Further Proposed Changes (6th set) to the submission draft core strategy

We write further to the recent round of amendments regarding the core strategy and in particular Fairburn's current status as a designated service village ("DSV".)

We do not wish to repeat previous arguments which are clearly set out in writing and have been made at previous hearings over the course of the last 18 months. However, we do wish to respond to the Council's Position Statement dated 7th June 2012.

In particular paragraph 8 is of significance to Fairburn's position regarding the core strategy and its current classification as a DSV. In response we make the following points:-

1. *The evidence presented in the Council's Background Paper 5 and Background Paper 6 recognises that local services were an important factor in giving weight to the designation of Fairburn as a DSV.*

We believe the council are attempting to dilute the tests used within the background papers. Local services were not just an important factor they were the *fundamental* factor in the Council's reasoning behind which villages across the reason are to be classified as DSV's. To now attempt to go behind their evidence base, in what appears to be a desperate attempt to try and skew the results, is disingenuous. It was decided by the Council that the scoring criteria for the background papers was the fair, reasonable and definite way of determining which villages should be classified as DSV's. Now, just because the result fails to provide the Council with their desired outcome does not mean that they can depart from it.

2. *Access to public transport has already been considered as poor and requires improvement.*

Under the Background Papers there is no regard paid to how a village can be *turned* into a DSV. The Background Papers were used to establish which villages *are* already DSV's and consequently which DSV's could sustain growth. Better transport, a shop, a post office, a school and a doctor's surgery could be implemented in every single village or hamlet to elevate it to the status of a DSV but this was not part of the task set under the core strategy. The potential to improve amenities in a secondary village was not part of any criteria. Selby District Council is again attempting to introduce new concepts in a desperate attempt to skew the results. The task was always to identify which villages *are* DSV's and plan the strategy around these DSV's. If the Council deviates from this path then the entire core strategy will proceed without an ounce of certainty. The people of the district must know where they stand for the next 15 years and allowing a village to be a DSV because certain things might be improved (where are the promises that they will be) is not good enough. In an age of austerity where funding is not readily available there is no guarantee whatsoever that Selby DC will be able to deliver and spent the money required to ensure the level of housing in Fairburn is sustainable. If affordable homes are to be built in the DSV's, which is the intention, decent transport has to be in place already.

3. *The original assessment in Background Paper 5 (sustainability assessment of rural settlements) and Background Paper 6 (village growth potential) provide the consistent and most appropriate basis for defining DSVs.*

Agreed. The mathematical and methodical approach in the background papers is the only fair approach which should be taken. Subjectivity has no place in a scheme where houses will be built that will affect peoples' lives. The scoring criteria within these background papers provide certainty and there should be no deviation from them.

4. Whilst recognising that the Post Office / Shop has since closed this could be seen as a temporary result of the current economic climate and other shops may well open. The assessment also recognised that the village requires improved bus services.

This point is very woolly. Even if the economic climate picked up there is no single building in the whole of Fairburn which is in a position to house a shop. The previous shop has been converted into a house and Fairburn has absolutely no retail units available. Something would need to be built. This statement informs us that at no time has anyone surveyed the area. It is a statement made by someone sat in an office who has no understanding of what is actually happening on the ground.

In terms of the bus service, if affordable housing is built a decent bus service will be essential for these people. The problem is that the proposed number of houses will not provide the bus company with enough people to warrant a new bus service. The demand in terms of the numbers using the service is likely to be low but the need for this small number of people living in affordable housing, who will not have cars, will be high. Without a decent service they will not be able to afford to leave the village. Consequently, any service would have to be heavily subsidised which would be a waste of taxpayers' money when affordable houses could be built in other DSV's that already have decent transport links.

5. 8.5 New evidence was put forward at various stages by third parties relating to water infrastructure capacity which have been dealt with by Yorkshire Water.

Yorkshire Water continues to deny that there is a problem when clearly there is. It is believed that they are adopting this position because of the high cost of fixing the aged drainage system in Fairburn. There are no guarantees in place that any improvements will be made and this is further good reason to ensure Fairburn is not classified as a DSV.

6. The Council and third parties also agreed on bus services (see other submissions to the EIP).

See point at 4 above. I do not believe there is the appetite to provide a proper bus service in Fairburn. This is again nothing more than an attempt to resolve the fact that when the scoring criteria is properly applied Fairburn is a least sustainable village. In any event, letters, over the years, have been sent to local bus operators explaining how Fairburn needed a better bus service. No responses from any of the bus companies have been received.

7. 8.6 Whilst accepting that Fairburn is a marginal settlement in terms of the assessment and other evidence submitted to the EIP, the Council takes the view that this is why it should be a DSV on balance because the status provides the opportunity to identify appropriate future growth for both housing and employment development to support and expand local services, through positive planning in line with the NPPF.

This is also a very woolly point. According to the background papers you are either a DSV or you are a Secondary Village. We submit that this is the correct approach as there should be no shades of grey when defining this list. This issue is too important to allow for any uncertainty. The mere fact that they concede that Fairburn is a marginal village that requires

certain improvements to be made to it to ensure it meets DSV status is reason enough to classify it as a Secondary Village.

It also states that by providing the opportunity to identify appropriate future growth for both housing and employment development it will be able to improve local services. However, isn't this is the wrong approach to be take. The services should come first and then the development. Every hamlet and village would qualify as a DSV if more housing and employment were implemented first and then the local services of that particular village could then be improved. The amenities have to be present first to ensure it is right to develop a village and this was clearly the thinking behind the background papers. To change direction now does not provide any confidence that this core strategy will be executed properly by Selby DC. It introduces uncertainty.

The phrase "employment development" is also baffling. Employment opportunities are minimal in Fairburn - it is a commuter village. There are probably less than a dozen jobs within the village envelope.

8. 8.7 Paragraph 70 of the NPPF says that planning policies should guard against the unnecessary loss of valued facilities and services particularly where this would reduce the community's ability to meet day-to-day needs. Paragraph 55 of the NPPF says that to promote sustainable development in rural areas, housing should be located where it will enhance or maintain the vitality of rural communities.

These are two references cited with completely no reference as to how they apply to Fairburn.

In terms of losing valued facilities and services the school numbers are at a sustainable level for years to come and numbers have in fact increased over the last few years. There is no shop to lose or a post office to lose. There is no doctor's surgery to lose and so we are meeting our day-to-day needs without these amenities. This is because, like many other secondary villages, we are a commuter village.

Additional housing therefore will not enhance sustainable development. It will clearly hinder the vitality of Fairburn's rural community because of the lack of amenities.

Conclusion

This is another poor attempt at Selby District Council trying to find something that fits what they want, which is development to take place in places where the cheapest land is available to purchase i.e. Fairburn. It seems that they continue to push for Fairburn to be a DSV regardless of how that will affect the residents. Instead of taking on board the Inspector's comments and amending the core strategy to reflect his views they have continued to run poor arguments in a final attempt to get what they want, not what the people of Selby DC want. The hope is that albeit the decision to exclude Fairburn from the DSV list *may* incur additional expense for Selby DC in the short term, because amendments to the strategy will need to be made, the Inspector still makes the correct final ruling in September and rules that the Core Strategy is void because Fairburn is not to be classified as a DSV.

With the amount of evidence we now have within the body of all the documents submitted for the Core Strategy we can clearly see that should a final decision by Selby DC result in Fairburn being classified as a DSV then it will be a Judicially Reviewable decision of which we will take advice but the likelihood is that legal proceedings will need to be issued.

Finally, we confirm that we support Roy Wilson's position regarding this particular stage of the Core Strategy and also refer you to his previous submissions which are all supported by Fairburn Parish Council.