Q1.2 Is there substantive evidence to demonstrate that the Public consultation carried out during the plan-making process failed to comply with the Council's Statement of Community involvement?

The consultation which took place in September/October 2018 consisted of a number of notices placed on lamposts along Crabgate Lane, which is the road which runs directly opposite the proposed building site Ref 165/186. As a result of numerous telephone calls to the Planning Department, 456 residents then put together a petition, 203 signed standard letters, and 27 sent in individual letters of objection with everyone giving their name and address. I personally handed in the petition and letters, and specifically asked if the residents would be contacted by the Council. I was assured they would be contacted at relevant stages of the process, and at no time was it mentioned that only residents who had communicated by email would be informed.

Section 1.4 of the SCI states that it is important that ALL sections of the community are given the opportunity to take part in the planning process, so decisions can take account of the range of community views, and reflects the concerns of the people affected by them. NPPF Para. 155 also states that a wide selection of the community should be proactively engaged. S 3.25 of the SCI states Government guidance states that the Council should consult with hard to reach groups and S3.26 of the SCI states that the Elderly are one of these groups.

Subsequent notifications from the Council have failed to engage with the many residents who made objections back in 2018, and only 6 people were notified in September/October 2019, in order to be allowed to participate in the Hearing sessions. It now appears that due to resource constraints, the Council can only send electronic letters via email, and only to those residents who have previously sent in an email who are on the Council's database. Therefore, I believe that the Council failed to comply with the Statement of Community involvement, as they have not communicated with the elderly residents of this area.

Q1.3 Was the plan shaped by early proportionate and effective engagement with Communities, local organisations, business, infrastructure providers and operators, and statutory consultees?

Many residents are elderly, and are not computer literate, so would not be able to communicate electronically. Also, even if they did see a notice in the local paper (and not everyone buys a weekly paper) they would assume that they had already made their views known via a letter or by signing the petition. Unfortunately the Council makes the assumption that everyone has access to technology, and by using the website and social media articles, they have an expectation that everyone is able to be kept informed through this medium – which is not the case. Therefore, once again, I do believe that the Council's plan making process failed to comply with the Council's Statement of Community involvement, as it is not inclusive and has failed to meet the required standards, by not taking into account that many elderly residents are not able to access the necessary information other than to receive a letter through the post from the Council.

For a Council who state they place great importance on effective community involvement, it appears that the existing process is biased towards Builders and Developers, and discriminates
against the elderly who do not have access to technology.

Even after being told that they had never seen so any objections to a proposal, the Council chose to ignore the wishes of the Community as stated as a requirement in S1.4 of the SCI, and went ahead with proposed building land of Site 165/186 by proposing to remove green belt status, and in the knowledge that there is also a flood risk on this land.

Q1.12 Is there any substantive evidence to demonstrate that the public consultation carried out during the plan-making process failed to comply with the Council's Statement of Community involvement or legal requirements.

Could the Officer please investigate what actions were taken subsequent to the Consultation back in September 2018 to inform residents of Skellow?

Q4.1 Were all reasonable options for meeting identified development

How was this decision made to include the land at Skellow Site Ref 165/186, when the Council were aware of the Flood risk and major opposition to the building on this Green Belt land?

Q4.3 Would development on each of the 8 housing allocations removed from the Green Belt promote sustainable patterns of development?

Land off Crabgate Lane Skellow North A1 Site Ref 165/186

In answer to this question it would not promote sustainable patterns of development in this particular area by developing these two sites, because of the following reasons:

Green Belt purposes NPPF 134 sets out 5 purposes that the Green Belt serves, 4 of which are relevant to the Borough:
1. To check the unrestricted sprawl of a large built up area,
2. To prevent neighbouring town merging into one another,
3. To assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment,
4. To assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land.

Urban Sprawl
By changing the use of this land and building 300 properties on it, the existing estate (Grange Park) which butts up to this land consists of 600 houses and bungalows. There are also two other estates which also butt up to this estate - The Oaks and Bridgewater Park - which contain another 160 houses. This all then merges into the main village of Skellow, which forms a huge conglomeration of houses. Therefore, to build on these sites, does NOT prevent urban sprawl, but exacerbates it as these estates are already merged, and to create a new development of a further 300 houses could only create further sprawl.

The residents of Skellow, Carcroft and Adwick have seen the disappearance of many fields/common land for housing/factories/HGV operating sites to such an extent that there are no boundaries to identify each individual village. There is no evidence that any risks/issues have been raised, any impact assessments or of any positive investment which benefits the residents of the area.

Why is this being allowed to continue?
Retention of Green Belt Land
Throughout the policy it refers to “appropriate locations”. If this proposed building goes ahead - by far the biggest development of its’ kind in the borough - on land that has repeatedly flooded over last winter and for many years prior to this, it would have a devastating effect on the existing estate. The land is prone to surface water flooding as it flows down the fields from Barnsdale Bar due to the gradient of the land. On the Gov.uk website for long term flood risk information, site 186 is clearly shown as a medium flood risk. The Council is well aware of this and have had numerous complaints from residents who have suffered flooding on Crabgate Lane and into the gardens of the residents beyond. Therefore this location is not appropriate for building, and should not be removed from Green Belt within the Local Plan.

The term “demonstration of clear local community support” means there should be a pre-application consultation exercise at the point of submitting a planning application. There was a consultation by the Council back in September 2018, to ascertain the views of the residents in regard to leaving this area of land as proposed building land in the Local Plan. 750 objections were made from the residents of this estate, but this seem to count for nothing, as this land remains in the Local Plan as proposed building land! So there is no evidence to support this, as the community made it very clear their objections to this proposal.

It also states that the extent of Green Belt will be retained except in “very special circumstances” and could be, for example, where there is a clear demonstrable need for a development, not foreseen by the Plan, that brings significant sustainable development benefits and is consistent with the national planning policy in the NPPF. However, the reasons given below, document that this does not meet this criteria of sustainable development benefits.

Emissions
The village of Skellow falls into the category which is identified as the most deprived area of Doncaster. Statistics provided by Public Health England clearly states that existing negative environmental issues are contributing to the poor health of residents within our area. The exception rate for COPD and Asthma sufferers of all ages, are some of the worst in Doncaster, and COPD is undoubtedly made worse by the air quality.

The CO2 emissions from the A1 are known to be extremely high, due to the huge volume of traffic. When coupled with the fact that traffic is constantly queuing because of the sheer volume or consequent accidents which occur on a very regular basis on the stretch of road between Redhouse and Barnsdale Bar. The DMBC purport to support clean air, but this would be a total contradiction if this proposal to build right up to the A1 goes ahead. Even if tree planting is used, the residents of this new estate would suffer from CO2 emissions which would be detrimental to the health of the residents. A survey carried out in the last few years by the DMBC to monitor CO2 emissions was carried out, but the employee of the Council was told to put the monitor in the trees in order to reduce the readings of emissions!

Dangerous access to A1

In order to enter the A1 there are only 2 feeder roads: Crabgate Lane onto the B1220 and Green Lane which is north of the proposed site. Both entrances onto the A1 are extremely short slip lanes and are not long enough to cope with more than one vehicle at a time, which then results in a back-log onto the B1220 and Crabgate Lane. Both are very dangerous access roads, due to the fact that large lorries come over the brow of the hill just before the slip lane at excessive speeds. An increase in vehicles – potentially 300 to 600 - as many houses now have two vehicles, would only increase the possibility for even more accidents on this stretch of the A1. There are no plans to make alterations to these slip-lanes by Highways England, and the proposal to widen the A1 which has
been mooted since the old Unitary Plan back in 1990, has been thrown out yet again. New crash barriers have been fitted along this stretch of the A1. Therefore, the situation can only get much worse with an increase of vehicles.

Resources: Education and Health
This extra housing would be unable to promote sustainable patterns of development in an area which is already overstretched in regards to local resources. Some residents have been informed that there are insufficient places for siblings of children who attend the local Comprehensive School, Outwood Academy, and are forced to travel to the other side of Doncaster for their education. The same applies to Owston Skellow Middle School. Both schools are struggling to service the existing population of Skellow, and would not be able to cope with an influx of a potentially large number of children as a result of this new building proposal.

The Great North Medical Practice is the only Doctors Surgery providing a service to the residents of Skellow, Carcroft an Burghwallis, and it is getting very difficult to even obtain an appointment. The Doctor situation is very fluid, and some are now only working on a part time basis, which, again, has a damaging effect on medical services for the existing population. So to add another 600 people into the equation, plus potentially another 600 children, 1200 in total, it would therefore be impossible to sustain the aforementioned resources and provide a good standard of social services for the residents.

Creation of new jobs

The Council suggest that development would be created as this would promote employment for the residents of the area. However, the majority of activity is based around Carcroft Common, which is a high flood area – and land which is only good for Lorry parks and transporters. The roads, especially the B1220 which was not designed for heavy vehicles, runs through the very busy village of Skellow. The road is unable to cope with the volume of huge lorries travelling through the village from the A1 at the present time, and would be made much worse if more of this traffic is allowed. This kind of development does not bring any new jobs into the area for the local community because of the nature of this type of work, and only creates more potential for serious accidents to occur due to any increased volume of large vehicles passing through the village.

Where does Skellow fit in to the Council's response regarding all the problems if this land is changed from Green Belt to Building land?

Q4.4 How would development on housing allocations removed from Green Belt affect the purposes of including land in Green Belt?

This would greatly reduce the amount of Green Belt land in this area. The Plan states that they will readily create recognisable Green Belt boundaries at four of the housing locations, however this does not include the area North of A1 Skellow186/165. Yet more evidence of a “North-South divide in the borough, where the Council constantly give preference to areas of South Doncaster to the detriment of the Northern area. Obviously they do not intend to create further Green Belt land in our area.

Why is this? Where does Skellow fit in to the Council's response?

Q4.5 Would they ensure the proposed boundaries around the housing allocations removed from GB using physical features?

Even if they put trees to line the boundaries, this will not stop the excessive omissions produced
from the volume of vehicles travelling on this stretch of the A1. There is no evidence to show that they would reduce the omissions as much as they would be necessary. There is wildlife in this area, with Deer, many birds including Buzzards, and Bats.

How could these be protected?

Q4.6 The Plan states that they will make compensatory improvements to Green Belt - however, yet again there are no plan for the area north of the A1. Country park at Rossington – yet again we are the poor relations!

Why is this?

Q4.7 Improve environmental quality and accessibility of the remaining Green Belt.

How can building 300 extra houses, which means an influx of at least a further 600 people and if they have 2 children on average, this adds another 600 – 1200. It is not feasible that the environmental quality with at least 1 car per household, and we know that many now have 2 cars which is an addition of a possible 600 cars, improve the environmental quality?

How does the Council intend to address this?

Q6.13 Are the development requirements set out in Policy 51 aimed at improving and promoting strong, vibrant and healthy communities justified and will they be effective?

Are there any development proposals to consider and assess healthcare infrastructure?
Are there any proposals for additional school places in the area?

Q6.14 Is the approach to the provision of education facilities in association with residential development set out in Policy 53 part B clear, such that it will be effective?

Noise and pollution affecting housing developments in Policy 55 sets out require. Part B deals specifically with noise pollution and paragraph 13.20 states accompanying Noise annex will be applied and have regard to what is set out in Appendix 11.

Q14.4 Are Policies 57 and 58 consistent with National Policy and would they be effective in ensuring that development is safe from the risk of flooding and would not increase flood risk elsewhere?

Is the approach to site 165/186 which is deemed as medium risk as set out in policy 58 part C consistent with National policy and justified?

What are the decisions regarding continuously building on land that is known as a flood risk?

Sue Mosley
on behalf of the residents of Five Lane Ends, Skellow.