



REPORT TO:	Planning Policy Committee
DATE:	16 th February 2023
SUBJECT:	East Lindsey Local Plan Settlement Pattern
PURPOSE:	To provide an update on the discussions at the meeting of this Committee on 17 th February 2022 and to agree the methodology for the Settlement Pattern in the Local Plan.
KEY DECISION:	N/A
PORTFOLIO HOLDER:	Councillor Tom Ashton
REPORT AUTHOR:	Kay Turton
WARD(S) AFFECTED:	The Settlement Pattern will affect all wards.
EXEMPT REPORT?	<i>No</i>

SUMMARY

A Member Workshop was held on 2nd November 2021 to review the services and facilities to be included in the methodology to establish the Settlement Pattern of the East Lindsey Local Plan, along with the points awarded. Members will recall receiving a report to the 17th February 2022 meeting of this committee setting out the changes that the Member Workshop had proposed. However, there were some outstanding issues to be resolved, particularly in relation to how points were awarded for employment.

The recommended methodology is to now calculate the employment points in the same way as they were for the current plan, but with a higher payment threshold for those business which would count towards the points, to reflect their employment potential. The information used to establish the strategic road network points has changed and can no longer be relied on so it is recommended that this element is removed from the scoring criteria. In the light of the changes, the thresholds between the different tiers in the Settlement Pattern have also been recalculated, based on the list of services and facilities previously used to determine where the thresholds lay.

RECOMMENDATIONS

That the changes to the East Lindsey Local Plan Settlement Pattern methodology, set out in paragraphs 2.6 – 2.10 of this, report be supported.

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

The proposed changes represent the most robust, objective method for assessing the East Lindsey Local Plan Settlement Pattern

OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

Other options for assessing the employment element of the Settlement Pattern were considered at the meeting of this Committee on 17th February 2022.

Consider basing the Strategic Road Network on A and B roads.

Do nothing – continue to use the existing methodology used to create the current settlement pattern

1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1.** A key element of the East Lindsey Local Plan (ELLP) is a Settlement Pattern categorising villages as either Large Villages, Medium Villages or Small Villages. This underpins the growth strategy for the district. This is based on a points system reflecting the level of services and facilities in these communities. As part of the review of the ELLP the methodology behind this, what scores points and how many points, is being refreshed.
- 1.2.** A Member Workshop was held on the 2nd November 2021 to look at this in detail and the recommendations of the Workshop were reported to Planning Policy Committee at its meeting on 17th February 2022. However, there were some outstanding issues, primarily how the points for employment were determined. This report seeks to conclude the review of the Settlement Pattern methodology.

2. REPORT

- 2.1.** A Member Workshop was held on 2nd November 2021 to review the services and facilities, and points awarded, to be included in the methodology which establishes the Settlement Pattern of the Local Plan. Members will recall receiving a report to the 17th February 2022 meeting of this committee setting out the changes that the Member Workshop had proposed.
- 2.2.** It was agreed to:
 - combine the Commuter and Shopper Bus services and award 4pts for a once a day scheduled service, where this allows enough time to do business in a town.
 - join the Little and Great Carlton's together, now that a segregated footpath has been installed.

- increase Doctor points from 2 points to 4 points
- add a Pharmacy to the list for 4 points
- add Public Electric Vehicle Charging Point to the list alongside Petrol Filling Stations and award the same points (i.e. 2 points)
- delete Vets

- 2.3.** At the workshop, Members had also discussed alternative options for scoring for employment in settlements. One of the reasons for this was that the data behind the points previously awarded for Large Employer is no longer available. Several suggestions were made to find a way of encapsulating both the range of employment in a settlement and the number of potential employees in a business, however no conclusion was reached at the Workshop.
- 2.4.** The various scenarios suggested at the Workshop were tested and presented to the 17th February 2022 meeting of this Committee. There was discussion about the scenarios, and possible alternatives, but no conclusion was reached.
- 2.5.** Officers have continued to look at this issue, and potential data, and have concluded that the only reliable source of data is that for the non-domestic rates collected by the Council; although this does not concern itself with the number of people employed. Looking at the types of business paying higher levels of non-domestic rates, there is potential for a loose correlation between those businesses and the number of employees, albeit that this will vary from sector to sector. The recommended methodology is to now calculate the employment points as they were for the current plan, but with a higher payment threshold for those business which would count towards the points. This is a variation of one of the suggestions put forward at the Member Workshop and the February meeting.
- 2.6.** The previous methodology included all businesses paying over £1k, but this draws in many business premises that are unlikely to employ people, or at least have very few employees. One suggestion was that the methodology be adjusted so that only businesses paying over £10k are factored in, to reflect the size and employment potential of these businesses. After a broad look at the types of businesses this would cover, it was agreed that this would broadly represent the larger employers in the District. A few large employer (such as schools, public houses) just fall below this threshold but their presence is already recognised through them scoring as a community facility. Infrastructure projects, such as telecommunications and sewage treatment works, that pay over £10k and don't employ anyone on site have been removed from the assessment.
- 2.7.** The employment points have always sought to establish the presence of a range of business types, to provide choice of employment and accommodate different skills within a community. Therefore, as with the previous pattern, businesses have been divided into 8 categories and to score the Employment points, there have to be 5 or more categories of qualifying businesses present.
- 2.8.** Another issue/change in the background data used has come to light , this time in relation to the Strategic Road Network. Previously, Lincolnshire County Council's gritting routes were used to establish this. However, in recent years this has become much more extensive, to the benefit of many more communities in the District. Because of this, using this data to establish the Strategic Road Network would include many more

settlements scoring, and this means that it no longer provides sufficient differentiation between settlements for assessing the Settlement Pattern. In light of this, and with no clear rationale for keeping this part of the scoring in, it is recommended that the Strategic Road Network element of the scoring is removed from the criteria.

- 2.9.** The final issue to consider, after the changes that have been made above, is if there is a need to change the thresholds between the different tiers in the Settlement Pattern. The original methodology listed the facilities that would be needed to qualify for each of the categories. These were:

Large Village – points equivalent to a food shop; a primary school; employment; a public house; a post office; a village hall; a playing field; a commuter bus service; 2 non-food shops; a place of worship; mains drainage and being on the Strategic Road Network (*strategic road network was removed from the calculation and there is no longer a differentiation between types of bus service*).

Medium Village – points equivalent to a food shop; a public house; a post office; a village hall; a recreation facility (playing field or children’s play area); a shopper bus service and mains drainage (*there is no longer a differentiation between types of bus service*).

Small Village – points equivalent to a place of worship; a village hall; a pub and a sports club.

- 2.10.** These have been recalculated, to establish revised thresholds, based on the points awarded to different services and facilities in the revised methodology. This has led to a reduction of 4 points in the threshold between Large and Medium villages (due to the Strategic Road Network being removed), an increase of 1 point between Medium and Small Villages, and no change to the points threshold between Small Villages and Hamlets.

- 2.11.** The Settlement Pattern has been redrawn, taking into account all the changes made – from the Member Workshop, the revisions to the methodology behind the Employment Points, the removal of the Strategic Road Network from the scoring, the reassessment of the thresholds between the tiers and the changes to services and facilities over time on the ground. The settlement pattern would change as follows:

	2018 Local Plan Settlement Pattern	Revised Settlement Pattern
Large Villages	24	22
Medium Villages	39	19
Small Villages	38	46

Table 1

- 2.12.** The table shows that this had led to a reduction in the number of Large and Medium Villages, and an increase in Small Village – there has been a commensurate increase in the number of Hamlets; although these are not listed in the Plan as the term covers any named group of dwellings smaller than a Small Village. There has been some movement between the tiers, with some settlements moving to the tier above and some moving to the tier below, so the reduction in numbers is not simply a case of villages moving to the tier below.

- 2.13.** This would represent a significant reduction in the number of Medium Villages in the Plan. However, it should be considered that Members have previously expressed a wish

to see a greater proportion of growth in the Medium Villages, and the ones now included in that category represent settlements with a wider range of services to support such growth. Many of the villages that would become Small Villages under this methodology do not contain a large number of dwellings and have few facilities with which to support a significantly growing population.

3. CONCLUSION

- 3.1.** There are many ways for how the employment points in the Settlement Pattern methodology could be assessed, including different levels of non-domestic rates payments and different ways of considering the range of employment in a settlement. However following detailed assessment of these, it is considered that the approach set out in paragraphs 2.6 and 2.7 represent the most appropriate method to encapsulate both the employment potential and the range of businesses in a community.
- 3.2.** Different methods of establishing a strategic road network could be considered. However, most settlements are not a long drive time from major routes through the district and it is considered that inclusion of this does not bring significant benefits in term of assessing the District's settlements in terms of growth.
- 3.3.** The final aspect of the report is the recalculation of the threshold between the tiers in the Settlement Pattern. It is considered that the lists in paragraph 2.9 are still representative of the level of services to be expected in each tier of the Settlement Pattern and the points/thresholds have been recalculated accordingly.

EXPECTED BENEFITS TO THE PARTNERSHIP

The Local Plan assists the Partnership in all its priorities.

IMPLICATIONS

SOUTH AND EAST LINCOLNSHIRE COUNCIL'S PARTNERSHIP

No direct implications. The outcome of the report will inform the review of the East Lindsey Local Plan.

CORPORATE PRIORITIES

The Local Plan assists the Partnership in all its priorities.

STAFFING

None

CONSTITUTIONAL AND LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004

Town and Country Planning (Local Planning)(England) Regulations 2012

DATA PROTECTION

None

FINANCIAL

None

RISK MANAGEMENT

Any risks have been highlighted and

STAKEHOLDER / CONSULTATION / TIMESCALES

None prior to committee.

REPUTATION

None

CONTRACTS

None

CRIME AND DISORDER

None

EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY/ HUMAN RIGHTS/ SAFEGUARDING

None

HEALTH AND WELL BEING

None

CLIMATE CHANGE AND ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

The outcome of the report will affect the distribution of development and so potential future travel patterns across the district

ACRONYMS

None

APPENDICES

None

BACKGROUND PAPERS

No background papers as defined in Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972 were used in the production of this report.'

CHRONOLOGICAL HISTORY OF THIS REPORT

Name of body	Date
<i>Planning Policy Committee</i>	<i>17th February 2022</i>

REPORT APPROVAL

Report author:	Kay Turton (ELDC)
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Approved for publication:	Councillor Tom Ashton (ELDC)