

Design and Access Statement

Proposed residential development (outline) on land to the rear of no. 21 Peterborough Road, Crowland, Lincolnshire.

1. Introduction

1.1 The need for a Design and Access Statement is required by Section 42 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

1.2 It has been prepared in accordance with DCLG Circular 01/2006 to inform and accompany our **OUTLINE planning application** for residential development on land to the rear of no. 21 Peterborough Road, Crowland, Lincolnshire on behalf of Mr T Speechley, the freehold owner of the land.

1.3 The application seeks to reserve all matters for future consideration, save **means of access** (which is submitted in detail).

1.4 An **illustrative Layout Plan** has been prepared to accompany the planning submission to demonstrate that a development of the type proposed (circa 13no. dwellings) can be satisfactorily accommodated on this site.

1.5 The submission is also accompanied by a **Tree Survey** and a short **Highways Report**.

2. Assessment

2.1 Physical Context

2.1.1 The application site extends to some 0.59 hectares and lies within the **Defined Settlement Limit** of Crowland as shown on the Proposals Map comprising the adopted South Holland District Council Local Plan (2006).

- 2.1.2 The application site presently constitutes a private grassed area that has been in the ownership of the Applicant for a significant number of years. The extent of the site is more particularly shown on the **Location Plan** and **illustrative Layout Plan**, both of which are submitted to comprise part of the formal application documentation.
- 2.1.3 With regard to surrounding land use, the site is primarily bound by existing residential development, save an area of underused Open Space¹ abutting part of the site's western boundary. A number of trees form the physical site boundary to the north, south and particularly to the west where they are more significant and mature in nature. The main body of the site is bound to the east by a mixture of residential boundary treatments.
- 2.1.4 Vehicular access and egress to the site is presently derived via an existing access track between nos. 15 and 17 Peterborough Road. This application however proposes a new vehicular access road to serve the development directly off Peterborough Road on land to the south of no. 21 Peterborough Road, which also lies within the Applicant's control. The **illustrative Layout Plan** shows the details of the new access road.
- 2.1.5 Although the application is made in outline form, the **illustrative Layout Plan** identifies how the site *could* be developed with circa 13no. dwellings. The site's ultimate development would however not be bound by this layout, which could be altered accordingly at the Reserved Matters stage or should adjoining land (e.g. the under-used playing field to the west) come forward for development in the future.
- 2.1.6 The site is evidently located within a **highly sustainable area** being within walking distance of a range of services and facilities in Crowland, an '**Area**

¹ As allocated on the Proposals Map comprising the adopted Local Plan (2006).

Centre' second only to the town of Spalding in the Council's Settlement Hierarchy. There are also bus stops directly outside the site which provide frequent and regular bus services to the larger settlements of Spalding to the north and Peterborough to the south.

- 2.1.7 Accordingly, the proposed residential development relates extremely well to the existing developed area.

2.2 Social Context

- 2.2.1 The proposal for residential development would complement the predominantly residential use in the immediate vicinity and is therefore considered the most suitable use for the site. The **illustrative Layout Plan** amply demonstrates that the site can satisfactorily accommodate around 13no. dwellings whilst maintaining an acceptable relationship with adjoining properties in terms of the usual amenity issues etc. Clearly, detailed relationships between proposed and existing dwellings will be thoroughly addressed through any subsequent Reserved Matters submission.

- 2.2.2 It is considered that the development of this site for residential purposes will usefully contribute towards the supply of housing in Crowland, an **'Area Centre'** as defined in the adopted Local Plan. The application shows that the site could be suitably developed with a mix of house types and sizes, which would collectively assist in meeting the need for (and providing) a choice and mix of high-quality homes in the District.

- 2.2.3 Crowland has a good range of services and facilities, as well as local employment opportunities, which provide for a sustainable settlement and act as a focal point for the surrounding rural areas. This proposal will provide for a significant influx of families who will inevitably help support and sustain the existing shops, services and local facilities within the settlement. For further retail/service

requirements, the settlement is served with good public transport connections to nearby larger centres, such as Spalding and Peterborough. Access to a wider range of services and employment in those centres is thus readily available by means of transport other than the private car.

2.3 Economic Context

2.3.1 The proposed residential development will bring employment opportunities to the area during the period of construction, providing employment opportunities to local tradesmen in the area. Whilst not a permanent level of employment it should nonetheless be welcomed as the construction industry seeks to exit a period of demise brought on by the recent recession.²

2.3.2 A development of new housing in this area of Crowland will not only provide a much needed boost to the local construction industry but there is also an important economic implication insofar as future residents of the dwellings will bring additional spending power into the local economy. This will no doubt help support and sustain the local shops and businesses in the area.

2.3.3 Moreover, Section 143 of the Localism Act 2012 stipulates that local planning authorities may have regard to local finance considerations, so far as material to the application, which include sums that a relevant authority has received, or will or could receive, in payment of Council Tax for instance.

2.4 Planning Policy

2.4.1 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that the determination of applications and appeals under the Planning Acts should be in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

² David Ritchie, the Chief Executive of Bovis Homes, once indicated that every house built generally creates 4.5 new jobs (Independent, October 2010).

2.4.2 Until such time as the proposed South East Lincolnshire Local Plan³ emerges to a point where it can be afforded any weight, the fundamental planning policy background against which the proposal should be assessed is the **adopted South Holland Local Plan (July 2006)** and its *saved* policies. The relevant *saved* Development Plan policies that are most pertinent to the consideration of this development proposal are considered to comprise the following:

Adopted South Holland Local Plan (July 2006)

2.4.3 **Saved Policy SG3 – Settlement Hierarchy** identifies the settlement of Crowland as an ‘Area Centre’ central to delivering the Council’s Spatial Strategy.

2.4.4 **Saved Policy SG15 - New Development: Facilities for Road Users Pedestrians and Cyclists** identifies the need for the development proposal to provide safe and convenient access to and within the site for all highway users. New roads, cycleways and footpaths are required to reflect the anticipated nature of future traffic and the character of areas to be served.

2.4.5 **Saved Policy SG17 – Protection of Residential Amenity** is permissive of development proposals that would not cause material harm to residential amenity through overlooking, overbearing/overshadowing or noise.

2.4.6 **Saved Policy HS4 – New Housing in Spalding and the Area Centres (Other Towns and Donington) (Non-Allocated Sites)** is permissive of residential development on suitable sites within Area Centres, including Crowland, subject

³ A single Local Plan by a partnership involving South Holland District Council, Boston Borough Council and Lincolnshire County Council.

to the site being within the Defined Settlement Limit and that the site constitutes brownfield land.⁴

2.4.7 **Saved Policy HS8 – Affordable Housing** identifies the requirement for the provision of a minimum of one third of the residential units as affordable housing on residential development sites of three or more dwellings, or sites of 0.1 hectares or more.

2.4.8 **Saved Policy HS11 – Open Space in New Residential Developments** requires proposals for residential development to make provision for open space in accordance with the Council's adopted standards of not less than 14% of the gross site area. In the event that on-site provision is not possible or the site is adjacent to or in close proximity to a sufficiently sized area of existing open space a financial contribution is necessary for provision off site or for the enhancements of existing open space.

2.4.9 **Material Considerations**

National Planning Policy Framework

2.4.10 **Paragraph 196** establishes that the planning system is still plan-led and therefore applications for planning permission must be determined in accordance with the development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The National Planning Policy Framework is a material consideration in planning decisions.

⁴ On the matter of 'brownfield land' the policy sub text states that, 'Such development will be restricted to brownfield land unless it can be demonstrated that no suitable brownfield sites are available and that any proposal for the development of greenfield sites would not result in the loss of important open spaces or harm the character and/or appearance of either the immediate locality or of the settlement in general'.

2.4.11 The NPPF advocates the **presumption in favour of sustainable development**, *which should be seen as a golden thread running through both plan-making and decision-taking*. In this respect, **paragraph 14** states for decision-taking this means,

- *‘where the development plan is absent, silent or **relevant policies are out-of-date**, granting permission unless:*
- *any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole; or*
- *specific policies in this Framework indicate development should be restricted.’ (our emphasis)*

2.4.12 **Paragraph 17** identifies 12 core land-use planning principles that should underpin both plan-making and decision-taking, including the need for planning to, *‘proactively drive and support sustainable economic development to deliver the homes, business and industrial units, infrastructure and thriving local places that the country needs’*.

2.4.13 **Paragraph 19** states that, *‘The Government is committed to ensuring that the planning system does everything it can to **support sustainable economic growth**. Planning should operate to encourage and not act as an impediment to sustainable growth. Therefore significant weight should be placed on the need to support economic growth through the planning system’*. (our emphasis)

2.4.14 **Paragraph 47** confirms that in order to boost significantly the supply of housing, local planning authorities should *‘identify and update annually a supply of*

*specific deliverable⁵ sites sufficient to provide **five years worth of housing against their housing requirements with an additional buffer of 5% to ensure choice and competition in the market for land. Where there has been a record of persistent under delivery of housing, local planning authorities should increase the buffer to 20% to provide a realistic prospect of achieving the planned supply and to ensure choice and competition in the market for land***’ (our emphasis).

2.4.15 With regard to the need to deliver a wide choice of high quality homes, **paragraph 49** firmly states that applications for residential development, ‘*should be considered in the context of the **presumption in favour of sustainable development***’ (our emphasis). The same paragraph goes on to state that, ‘*Relevant policies for the supply of housing should not be considered up-to-date if the local planning authority cannot demonstrate a five-year supply of deliverable housing sites*’.

2.4.16 **Paragraph 215** of the NPPF states that, ‘*Following 12 months from its publication due weight should be given to relevant policies in existing plans according to their degree of consistency with this framework (the closer the policies in the plan to the policies in the framework, the greater the weight that may be given)*’.

3. Involvement

3.1 Whilst there have been no formal pre-application discussions with the Local Planning Authority prior to the formal submission of the application, full regard has been afforded to prevailing local and national planning policies and the specific circumstances pertaining to the site.

⁵ To be considered deliverable, sites should be available now, offer a suitable location for development now, and be achievable with a realistic prospect that housing will be delivered on the site within five years and in particular that development of the site is viable.

4. Evaluation

- 4.1 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that the determination of applications and appeals under the Planning Acts should be in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
- 4.2 With regard to the delivery of the Council's Spatial Strategy, the settlement of Crowland is identified as an '**Area Centre**', second in the settlement hierarchy only to the main town of Spalding.
- 4.3 In the absence of any formal land-use allocation on the application site, the development proposal falls to be assessed against the requirements of ***saved* Policy HS4** as a '*windfall site*'.
- 4.4 Significantly, the site lies within the **Defined Settlement Limit of Crowland**, as identified on the Proposals Map comprising the Development Plan and therefore complies with the first policy criterion.
- 4.5 The second criterion of *saved* Policy HS4 requires the site to constitute brownfield land.⁶ The application site is Greenfield. However, owing to the date of the Development Plan and the time that has lapsed since its policies were last saved in 2009, those remaining policies need to be considered within the particular context of **paragraph 215 of the National Planning Policy Framework**,⁷ - that is to say, **the NPPF assumes precedence**.
- 4.6 **Paragraph 49** of the NPPF requires housing applications to be considered in the context of the presumption in favour of sustainable development. It advises that

⁶ unless it can be demonstrated that no suitable brownfield sites are genuinely available.

⁷ Which was published 2012 and thus post-dates the Development Plan, adopted some 6 years previous.

relevant policies for the supply of housing should not be considered up-to-date if the Council cannot demonstrate a 5-year supply of deliverable housing sites.

- 4.7 Prior to the submission of this planning application, discussions with Gary Alexander, Planning Policy Officer, confirmed that the Council is able to identify only 2.9 years supply of specific deliverable sites. The Council is thus **unable to demonstrate a 5-year supply of deliverable housing sites**⁸ and therefore [with regard to the NPPF] does not have an up-to-date Development Plan.
- 4.8 In order to attempt to provide the 5-year supply of housing sites, the Council will rely on housing development to take place on Greenfield sites within and beyond Defined Settlement Limits.
- 4.9 Given the above, and the advice of paragraph 49 of the NPPF, any conflict with that part of the second criterion of Policy HS4 should be significantly if not wholly diminished.
- 4.10 Owing to the lack of both an up-to-date Local Plan and a 5-year housing land supply, the NPPF assumes precedence and the provisions of **Paragraph 14** are engaged.
- 4.11 Paragraph 14 of the NPPF sets out the *presumption in favour of sustainable development*, which for decision making means approving development proposals that accord with the development plan without delay; and where the development plan is absent, silent or relevant policies are out of date, granting permission unless either any adverse impacts of doing so would “significantly” and “demonstrably” outweigh the benefits, or specific policies in the NPPF indicate development should be restricted (our emphasis).

⁸ With a further requirement for an additional buffer of 5% or, in the case of South Holland District Council, 20% owing to its record of persistent under delivery of housing.

- 4.12 The NPPF and the absence of a 5-year housing land supply are both **significant material considerations** in the determination of this application.
- 4.13 The application site is within an **eminently sustainable location within the Defined Settlement Limit of Crowland⁹** with access to a wide range of community facilities and services that are all in walking and cycling distance from the site as well as local employment opportunities and good transport connections, which provide for a sustainable settlement that acts as a focal point for the surrounding rural areas. For further retail/service requirements, the settlement is served with **good public transport connections** with nearby larger centres, such as Spalding and Peterborough and a bus stop is positioned within close proximity of the site frontage on Peterborough Road. Access to a wider range of services and employment in those centres is thus readily available by means of transport other than the private car.
- 4.14 The presumption in favour of sustainable development therefore requires in this case that planning permission should be granted, unless the adverse impacts would **significantly and demonstrably** outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the NPPF taken as a whole, or there would be conflict with specific policies in the NPPF. It is crucial to emphasise the phrase '*significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits*' of paragraph 14 of the NPPF as this indicates that a proposed development might be acceptable even where there is *some* adverse impact.
- 4.15 Owing to the site's location to the rear of the existing residential properties on Peterborough Road, as well as the relatively flat site topography, the application site is not prominent and is not particularly noteworthy in terms of any

⁹ within which new housing should be concentrated.

contribution it makes to the wider character of the area. The site's development for residential purposes will thus not have any adverse impact on the visual amenity of the area.

4.16 Moreover, the ***illustrative Layout Plan*** shows that the site can satisfactorily accommodate around 13no. dwellings without having any material harm to residential amenity through overlooking, overbearing/overshadowing or noise etc. The development proposal therefore complies with the requirements of ***saved Policy SG17***.

4.17 It is also considered to be an appropriate level of development reflecting the general pattern and density of development in the immediate vicinity. At the same time the *illustrative* layout takes full account of the results of the **Tree Survey** by retaining (and protecting through the construction phase) the mature trees which form the boundary to the site and which are features that will readily assimilate the development immediately into its setting.

4.18 Turning to the issue of access (which is to be determined as part of this outline application), the proposed highway has been carefully designed to incorporate a 4.8 metre wide access with 2 metre wide footways on both sides and a junction visibility splay of 2.4 x 43 metres. Moreover, whilst *illustrative* in nature, the internal layout of the development identifies sufficient space for an adoptable-sized turning head.

4.19 It is respectfully submitted that the access detail (which is further clarified in the **Highway Report** submitted with the application) is entirely suitable to serve the development proposed without any detriment to highway safety and therefore enables the matter of access to be determined at this outline stage. In providing a safe and convenient access to and within the site for all highway users the

proposed development evidently complies with the requirements of ***saved*** **Policy SG15** of the Local Plan.

4.20 With reference back to **paragraphs 14 and 49** of the NPPF, the loss of this Greenfield site would clearly not **significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits** of this sustainable and logical form of development. Consequently, the site's development for residential purposes is therefore considered to be perfectly acceptable in principle.

4.21 The site is considered to be readily and easily **deliverable and developable** owing to its size and due to it being free of any identified constraints to development. The granting of outline planning permission will therefore facilitate the efficient development of the site and, in doing so, realistically and meaningfully assist the Council in its efforts towards meeting the continuous 5-year supply of housing land¹⁰ and will usefully contribute towards the Council's future growth requirements for the settlement of Crowland.¹¹

4.22 Moreover, the proposal particularly responds to the third Core Planning Principle¹² [as well as the overall thrust of the NPPF] which states that planning should, ***'proactively drive and support sustainable economic development to deliver the homes, business and industrial units, infrastructure and thriving local places that the country needs'*** (our emphasis).

¹⁰ Whilst limiting the need for consequent development in the open countryside as land is allocated through the new South Lincolnshire Local Plan as it evolves.

¹¹ An 'Area Centre' key to delivering the Council's Spatial Strategy.

¹² Paragraph 17 of the NPPF.

4.23 As a wholly policy compliant development proposal, the application should be **approved without delay**¹³ in accordance with the requirements of the NPPF which advocates a clear **presumption in favour of sustainable development**.

4.24 Matters relating to the requirement for affordable housing provision and open space provision/contribution can be adequately secured via planning condition/obligation.

5. Design

5.1 Use, Amount, Scale and Layout

5.1.1 Outline planning permission is sought for the **residential development of the site**. The details of scale and layout will constitute matters set out within a Reserved Matters application to be subsequently approved.

5.1.2 Nevertheless, the **illustrative Layout Plan** submitted to accompany this planning application demonstrates that the site can readily accommodate proposed development (circa 13no. dwellings) without giving rise to any problems relating to overlooking, loss of privacy etc. Such a **scale** of development is entirely commensurate with the character of the surrounding ‘*residential*’ locality and other developments similarly approved and constructed in the village (e.g. Crawford Gardens and Oak Square).

5.2 Landscaping

5.2.1 Landscaping is one of those matters which is reserved for subsequent approval.

5.2.2 It is proposed that the existing boundaries comprising mature trees [particularly that forming the western boundary] will be retained in any Reserved Matters Layout. In addition, a further landscaping scheme will need to consider the

¹³ As firmly encouraged in the Ministerial Statement ‘*Planning for Growth*’ (2011) and paragraph 14 of the NPPF.

provision of additional planting throughout the development in order to help assimilate the development into its setting.

- 5.2.3 The proposed landscaping details will constitute a matter to be subsequently approved within a Reserved Matters application and can, at this stage, be adequately secured by way of a **standard landscaping condition**.

5.3 Appearance

- 5.3.1 The appearance of the development is reserved for future consideration. However, it is envisaged that the development will be to a high-quality standard in terms of appearance, picking up on any features prevalent in the local vernacular if, where and as appropriate.

- 5.3.2 That said, there is no prevailing house type, style or design of the existing dwellings in the immediate vicinity and thus no overriding need to conform to a particular appearance in the future Reserved Matters submission. The development of the site in the manner proposed will be seen within the urban context.

6. Access

- 6.1 Access is the only detailed matter to be determined at this outline stage. The **illustrative Layout Plan** submitted to comprise part of the formal application documentation shows the detail of the pedestrian and vehicular access, which is derived directly off Peterborough Road on land to the south of no. 21 Peterborough Road.

- 6.2 The proposed access road has been designed up to adoptable standard and lies entirely on land within the Applicant's control. The access specifically comprises a 4.8 metre wide access road, 2no. 2 metre wide footways either side and junction visibility splays of 2.4 x 43 metres in either direction.

- 6.3 Owing to the **Site Layout Plan** being for illustrative purposes only, the site's eventual development would not be bound by the layout submitted. If necessary, any Reserved Matters submission could also make [access] provision for any adjoining land (e.g. the under-used playing field to the west) should it come forward for development at any point in the future.
- 6.4 The layout shown provides adequate off-street parking within the individual plots, albeit only illustrative at this stage.
- 6.5 Please also refer to the **Highways Report** prepared by ADC Infrastructure submitted to comprise part of the planning application.

7. Conclusions

- 7.1 **The Applicant wishes to make the site available for development at the earliest opportunity in order to realistically and meaningfully assist the Council in its efforts towards meeting the continuous 5-year supply of housing land and will usefully contribute towards the Council's future growth requirements for the settlement of Crowland.**
- 7.2 **It is considered that the proposed development comprises an entirely acceptable form of development on a site free of any identified constraints to development which lies within the Defined Settlement Limits and an eminently sustainable location. The application has been is submitted wholly in accordance with the provisions of the prevailing Development Plan (where necessary) and the requirements of the NPPF, the latter of which clearly advocates an automatic presumption in favour of sustainable development.**