Littleworth Drove, Deeping St Nicholas

Design and Access Statement

January 2025

Client: W D Branton

Project: Proposed rural exception site of affordable housing

Project no: 615

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1.0 Introduction

1.1

This Design & Access Statement accompanies an outline planning application by W D Branton for up to twenty four affordable homes on land to the north-west of Littleworth Drove.

1.2

The proposal seeks to develop the site to provide an affordable housing residential scheme comprising of up to twenty four houses/ bungalows together with associated parking and private amenity space. The proposal at its heart aims to create an affordable, sustainable high quality development that will contribute to the settlement of Deeping St Nicholas.

1.3

This statement forms part of a series of reports and documents submitted in support of the planning application.



Image Showing the Position of the Proposed Site in Relation to the Settlement of Deeping St Nicholas

2.0 Planning Policy Review & Material Planning Considerations

2.1 The Need for Housing

There is a substantial need for affordable housing within the South Holland District. About 282 new affordable homes per annum are required which equate to around 60% of the overall annual housing need. This application is a direct response to this established housing need and in particular the housing need of Deeping St Nicholas.

The 2021 South Holland Housing Needs Assessment (HNA) estimates an annual net requirement of 7 properties for affordable/ social rent between 2020 and 2036, along with an annual need of 5 properties for affordable home ownership during the same timeframe.

Prior to this submission of this application significant consultations were undertaken to establish specific housing need in Deeping St Nicholas as well as a preferred mix of units for the site. The mix and tenure proposed within this scheme replicates the desired mix outlined by Council Officers.

2.2 National Planning Policy Framework 2024

Paragraph 8 sets out the three aspects of sustainable development, which includes economic, social and environmental objectives. The social objective includes a requirement '***to support strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by ensuring a sufficient number and range of homes can be provided to the needs of present and future generations***'. The environmental objective includes a requirement to make '***effective use of land***'.

Plans and decisions are required to apply a '***presumption in favour of sustainable development***'. This is set out in paragraph 11. For decision taking this means:

C) 'approving development proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan without delay; or

D) where there are no relevant development plan policies, or the policies which are most important for determining the application are out-of-date, granting permission unless:

i. the application of policies in this Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a clear reason for refusing the development proposed; or

ii. 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.

Paragraph 39 states that '***local planning authorities should approach decisions on proposed development in a positive and creative way***', and that they '***should seek to approve applications for sustainable development where possible***'.

When deterring applications, paragraph 48 states that '***applications for planning permission should be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material indications indicate otherwise***'.

Paragraph 61 states that '***to support the Government's objective of significantly boosting the supply of homes, it is important that a sufficient amount and variety of land can come forward where it is needed, that the needs of groups with specific housing requirements are addressed and that land with permission is developed without necessary delay.***'

Paragraph 63 requires local policies to recognise the need for the variety of housing needed for different groups in the local community, including '***those who require affordable housing,…'***

Paragraph 82 states that '***in rural areas, planning policies and decisions should be responsive to local circumstances and support housing developments that reflect local needs.***'

Paragraph 73 states that '***to promote sustainable development in rural areas, housing should be located where it will enhance or maintain the vitality of rural communities. Planning policies should identify opportunities for villages to grow and thrive, especially where this will support local services. Where there are groups of smaller settlements, development in one village may support services in a village nearby.***'

Paragraph 85 requires significant weight to be given to '***the need to support economic growth and productivity, taking into account both local business needs and wider opportunities for development.***'

Paragraph 89 states that planning policies and decisions should **'...recognise that sites to meet local business and community needs in rural areas may have to be found adjacent to or beyond existing settlements,..'**

Paragraph 110 states that '***The planning system should actively manage patterns of growth in support of these objectives. Significant development should be focused on locations which are or can be made sustainable, through limiting the need to travel and offering a genuine choice of transport modes. This can help to reduce congestion and emissions, and improve air quality and public health. However, opportunities to maximise sustainable transport solutions will vary between urban and rural areas, and this should be taken into account in both plan-making and decision-making.***'

Paragraph 124 states that planning decisions '***should promote***

an effective use of land in meeting the needs for homes and other uses.'

Paragraph 124 states that planning policies and decisions should promote and support the development of under-utilised land and buildings.

Paragraph 135 sets out requirements for planning policies and decisions, which regard to the design of new development. This states that decisions should ensure certain design fundamentals are achieved which include ensuring that developments are '***visually attractive as a result of good architecture, layout and appropriate and effective landscaping***', are '***sympathetic to the local character… while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation or change.***', '***optimise the potential of the site***', and '***create places that are… inclusive, accessible and which promote health and well-being, with a high standard of amenity for existing and future users'***.

Paragraph 161 states that '***the planning system should support the transition to a low carbon future in a changing climate.***'

2.3 South East Lincolnshire Local Plan (Adopted 2019)

The South East Lincolnshire Local Plan 2019 (SELLP) outlines the need for housing across the District and broadly supports sustainable development in line with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) through the following policies:

- *Policy 1: Spatial Strategy*
- *Policy 2: Development Management*
- *Policy 3: Design of New Development*
- *Policy 4: Approach to Flood Risk*
- *Policy 5: Meeting Physical Infrastructure and Service Needs*
- *Policy 6: Developer Contributions*
- *Policy 7: Improving South East Lincolnshires Employment Land Portfolio*
- *Policy 8: Prestige Employment Sites*
- *Policy 9: Promoting a Stronger Visitor Economy*
- *Policy 10: Meeting Assessed Housing Requirements*
- *Policy 11: Distribution of New Housing*
- *Policy 12: Reserve Sites*
- *Policy 13: South West Quadrant Sustainable Urban Extension*
- *Policy 14: South of the North Forty Foot Drain Sustainable Urban extension*
- *Policy 15: Vernatts Sustainable Urban Extension*
- *Policy 16: Holbeach West Sustainable Urban Extension*
- *Policy 17: Providing a Mix of Housing*
- *Policy 18: Affordable Housing*
- *Policy 19: Rural Exception Sites*
- *Policy 20: Accommodation for Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople*
- *Policy 21: Houses in Multiple Occupation and the Sub-Division of Dwellings*
- *Policy 22: Replacement Dwellings in the Countryside*
- *Policy 23: The Reuse of Buildings in the Countryside for Residential Use*
- *Policy 24: The Retail Hierachy*
- *Policy 25: Supporting the Vitality and Viability of Boston and Spalding Town Centres*
- *Policy 26: Primary Shopping Frontages*
- *Policy 27: Additional Retail Provision*
- *Policy 28: The Natural Environment*
- *Policy 29: The Historic Environment*
- *Policy 30: Pollution*
- *Policy 31: Climate Change and Renewable and Low Carbon Energy*
- *Policy 32: Community, Health and Well-being*
- *Policy 33: Delivering a More Sustainable Transport Network*
- *Policy 34: Delivering the Boston Distributor Road*
- *Policy 35: Delivering the Spalding Transport Strategy*
- *Policy 36: Vehicle and Cycle Parking*

Clearly not all policies are relevant to this particular proposal and most policies should be read and considered as part of the overall Adopted Plan as a whole. With that in mind the most relevant policy to the proposals is Policy 19: Rural Exception Sites which states **'Proposals for housing sites situated outside, but adjoining the defined settlement boundaries identified in Policy 1 will be permitted where the following criteria are met;**

1. **the scheme would meet an identified local need for affordable housing, Starter Homes or specialist housing that cannot be met within the settlement boundaries;**
2. **The scale of the development would be in-keeping with the role and function of the settlement; and**
3. **Pre-application engagement with the local community**

has been undertaken to the satisfaction of the Local Planning Authority.

Meeting housing needs in relation to affordable housing in the District is seen as a significant challenge and Policy 19 seeks to address this by providing a framework to consider sites outside of the settlement boundaries identified in Policy 1 of the Adopted Local Plan.

These proposals meet all the criteria of Policy 19 outlined above and have been the product of pre-app application discussions with the District Council.

2.4 Pre-app Advice from the Council

Pre-app discussions were undertaken with the Districts Housing Strategy and Enabling Officer as well as Planning Officers. These discussions have shaped the mix and tenure of the proposals as well as the basic design principles for the site.

Alongside these discussions the Parish Council were also consulted and their response is included within the separate Community Engagement Statement.

2.5 Conclusion

This planning application seeks to meet direct housing need by providing twenty four affordable homes on a site adjoining the current settlement boundary. Significant pre-app consultations have been undertaken and the scheme in its current form reflects those discussions.

The proposed development would not bring any notable adverse impacts, as we have explained throughout this document. However, it would bring clear social, economic and environmental benefits. We respectfully request that planning permission should be granted without delay, in accordance with the presumption in favour of sustainable development.

3.0 The Development in Context

3.1 Settlement Character Assessment

Deeping St Nicholas is rural village, located between the settlements of Spalding and Market Deeping. The village has developed in a linear pattern along the main road of Litleworth Drove with no clearly defined village centre. Over time secondary roads off Littleworth Drove have developed and they similarly reflect linear ribbon development. More recently larger housing schemes have developed and these reflect a more loop road and cul-de-sac type arrangement.

The site itself, lies off Littleworth Drove which is the main road through Deeping St Nicholas. Whilst the village is some 6.2 kilometres long there is a general feel for the more concentrated built up area and the site abuts the built up form to the north-east extents of the village.

The character of the local area is predominantly residential with some small scale commercial uses. Littleworth Drove is a mix of 2 storey houses and bungalows interspersed with commercial uses. The village convenience store, Church and Farm Shop are a within walking distance along Littleworth Drove.

Adjacent to the application site is Campains Lane a residential road that leads to a farm holding. Very recent development is apparent along this road.

A key historical driver for the village has been the rail line connecting Spalding and Peterborough. This runs centrally through the village and some railway architecture is still apparent within the village.

3.2 Materials

Deeping St Nicholas displays a range of materials throughout the settlement. Red/ buff facing brickwork and white/ cream render are prevalent. Roof materials are a mix of slate, terracotta pantiles and concrete tiles of varying colours. Construction materials appear to be have been chosen based on the popularity of the material at the time of construction rather than any particular historic context.



View of Site From Littleworth Drove



View of Existing Dwellings on the Northern Side of Littleworth Drove

Chimney's are present in Deeping St Nicholas. Chimneys are seen as important details at roof level, and fortunately many buildings have retained their original chimney's.

3.3 Architectural Detailing

The details of the majority of the buildings within the centre of Deeping St Nicholas are very simple with little detailing of note.

3.4 Boundary Treatments

Boundary treatments are a mix of fence type treatments alongside hedges. Most dwellings along Littleworth Drove have a frontage boundary treatment which is often a hedge or screen fence. Some key buildings have low level walls and gates.



Post Second World War Housing Along Littleworth Drove



Existing Bungalows Along Campains Lane



Deeping St Nicholas Church



Recent New Housing Constructed Along Campains Lane



Existing Bungalows Along Littleworth Drove



Existing Houses along Campains Lane Adjacent to Site

4.0 Proposed Development

4.1 Use

The scheme will be an affordable housing scheme delivery twenty four homes.

5.2 Amount

The proposals will consists of twenty four houses and bungalows which follows the form of domestic houses in close proximity to the site.

5.3 Layout

The proposed layout of the site is designed to create visual excitement by enhancing the appearance of the site. Currently when entering Deeping St Nicholas from Spalding the view is of the rear fences of properties to Campains Lane. The proposals directly deal with this view by creating landscaped open space fronting new frontage development. Vistas are improved and a new 'gateway entrance' is created into Deeping St Nicholas.

The layout of the proposals create linear ribbon development fronting a road following the form of existing development grain to Deeping St Nicholas.

5.4 Scale

The proposals consist of 2 storey houses and single storey bungalows in a domestic scale.

5.5 Landscaping

Given the sites location on the edge of the settlement it was felt that the current vista could be significantly improved and to that end a landscape buffer is proposed to the northern and eastern boundaries which would incorporate shrub and tree planting.



Extract From Site Layout

Internally the new house will have hedgerows to their frontage and the road will be tree lined along with the provision of marginal planting to the new SuDS pond.

5.6 Amenity Space

The new homes will be provided with private gardens commensurate with their size which will allow for general amenity space to the occupiers.

5.7 Appearance

The design philosophy underpinning the proposals aims to ensure that the development has a clear affinity with the sites location on the edge of the settlement and in particular seeks to create its own place as a new ‘gateway’ feature to the village.

5.8 Access

The principle access to the site is by way of a new adopted road off Littleworth Drove.

Access to the principle entrance of the homes will be provided with a level threshold.

Artists Impression

6.0 Conclusions

This proposal for a rural exception site of twenty four affordable houses meets a clear housing need within the District and within Deeping St Nicholas itself. The proposed design visually improves the entrance to Deeping St Nicholas and significantly enhances the setting of the site.

On that basis it is felt that the proposals meet the aspirations of the NPPF and the SELLP in delivering homes which respond to local need and the current and future requirements of Climate Change.

The architecture within the proposals is of a high level responding directly to the site, its proposed occupants and their need to have a modern energy efficient building.

Given the above it is felt that the application should be approved without delay.

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