Applegate Homes (Lincs) Ltd

Robert Doughty Consultancy

Design and Access Statement Including Heritage Impact Assessment
Erection of 9 Two-Storey Dwellings and Associated Infrastructure
Land off Fleet Road, Fleet Hargate, Spalding

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. This Design and Access Statement has been prepared by Robert Doughty Consultancy Ltd on behalf of Applegate Homes (Lincs) Ltd to accompany a Full Planning Application for the erection of up to 9 dwellings and associated infrastructure on land off Fleet Road, Fleet Hargate.

1.2. The site has the benefit of a detailed, extant permission consisting of an outline permission (LPA ref H05-0585-17) and a subsequent Approval of Reserved Matters (LPA ref H05-0835-21) for the erection of 10 dwellings.

1.3. This extant permission represents a fall-back position that would be implemented in the event that this latest application is not approved and, therefore, represents a material consideration of considerable weight in the decision-making process.

1.4. The application is supported by a Flood Risk Assessment, which considers the impact of flooding in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

2. SITE AND SURROUNDINGS

2.1. The application site is a largely self-contained parcel of overgrown agricultural land, which is roughly rectangular and extends along the northern (rear) boundary of existing development that is accessed from Old Main Road. The site has an open frontage to Fleet Road (B1515) and there is some landscaping which partly defines the northern boundary, with the remainder of the agricultural field beyond. Further north there is the A17.

2.2. The Fleet Hargate Conservation Area includes the historic core of the settlement and the application site, which also lies outside the settlement boundary.

3. PLANNING POLICY

The Development Plan

3.1. Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 states that, "If regard is to be had to the development plan for the purpose of any determination to be made under the Planning Acts the determination must be made in accordance with the plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise."

3.2. The Development Plan for the purposes of this application is the South East Lincolnshire Local Plan (the 'Local Plan'). Notwithstanding the fact that the site lies beyond the settlement boundary as set out in the inset plan for Fleet Hargate, the presence of an extant permission for the development of the site represents a material consideration of significant weight.

3.3. The following policies are considered to be of relevance in the determination of the application.

3.4. Policy 2: Development Management, is a positive policy and sets out that sustainable development will be permitted where the size, scale, layout and design amongst other criteria are acceptable.

3.5. Policy 3: Design of New Development, proposals will demonstrate how the following issues will be addressed, sense of place and enhancing designated and non-designated assets, the provision of storage for refuse, residential amenity and new landscaping amongst other criteria.

3.6. Policy 4: Approach to Flood Risk, new development should be accompanied by a site-specific Flood Risk Assessment.

3.7. Policy 29: The Historic Environment, proposals should reinforce local distinctiveness, mitigate against any negative impact on the townscape.

4. DESIGN AND ACCESS INCLUDING HERITAGE IMPACT ASSESSMENT

HERITAGE IMPACT

4.1. Fleet Hargate Conservation Area includes the majority of Old Main Road, together with some development in depth along the northern side. The application site has an extant planning permission for 10 detached units.

4.2. The closest Listed Building is the Bull Public House to the south of the application site, the car park for which has been redeveloped for housing. 'Laurel House' and the 'Laurels' lies to the south east of the application site, again, on Old Main Road.

4.3. The application site has a frontage to the B1515 leading onto the A17 and lies behind development fronting Old Main Road with an open boundary to the countryside to the north. Arguably the application site relates more to the countryside than it does to the village and, having regard to the nature of the proposal with gaps between the dwellings, there will be a lack of intervisibility between the conservation area and

the development. The former car park to the Bull Public House has been redeveloped with relatively dense two-storey development, which reduces any relationship between the application site and the Listed Building. Equally, the relationship with 'Laurel House' and 'The Laurels' is significantly reduced, having regard to the, again, relatively new development off a private drive immediately to the north.

4.4. The significance of the conservation area is essentially that of Old Main Road. Once onto the B1515, the character of the area is markedly different and is characterised by both open countryside and the A17. Although the proposal once completed will form part of the character of the conservation area, there will always be a significant difference with regard to the relationship between the two.

Use

4.5. The application site has an extant permission for the erection of 10 two storey dwellings and, therefore, although the site lies beyond the 2019 settlement boundary, the extant permission is a material consideration of considerable weight. When outline planning permission was granted in 2017, the National Planning Policy Framework was in place and, although the local planning authority did not have a five-year housing land supply, the proposal at that stage still had to amount to sustainable development.

4.6. The existing development to the south of the site is exclusively residential and, therefore, the proposal will complement the existing use.

4.7. The proposed use of the site for residential development is, therefore, acceptable in principle having regard to the extant permission for 10 dwellings.

Amount and layout

4.8. The proposed development is for up to 9 two-storey dwellings and there is an extant permission for 10 on the same site area.

4.9. The application site is essentially a relatively thin rectangle with the point of connection to the public highway only possible at the western end onto the B1515. This ultimately leads to a linear form of development with a roadway west to east serving all 9 dwellings.

4.10. During the consideration of the reserved matters application, the council introduced a guidance note on refuse collection and the use of private

drives. Whilst not planning policy, it was considered to be a material planning consideration and links back to local plan policy 2: Design of New Development.

4.11. The extant permission was amended during its consideration to provide an adopted highway, including the necessary footway to serve the development. This resulted in an adoptable road and footway 106m long plus an adoptable turning head. The impact on the character of the development was considerable and resulted in a road dominated development, to the detriment of the character of the Fleet Hargate Conservation Area. The amendment was made to the reserved matters application in order achieve an approval and preserve the outline planning permission.

4.12. This current proposal therefore incorporates an adopted road plus turning head measuring 62m serving the first 3 dwellings (plots 1,2 and 3) and the remaining 6 dwellings (plots 4-9) served by a private drive. Plots 7, 8 and 9 are beyond the 30m refuse carry distance from the end of the adopted road, albeit that plot 7 is within 30m from the proposed refuse store. The layout is, therefore, compliant with the refuse guidance, other than for the last 3 plots, however, the overall improvement to the layout and the impact on the conservation area is considerably improved with the reduction in the road width and design, and, therefore, complies with Local Plan policy 2. The private driveway will be constructed such that it will accommodate the weight of a fire tender.

4.13. Although the refuse guidance is considered to be a material consideration by the local planning authority, Local Plan policy 2 deals adequately with layout and design of new development. Ultimately, if the shape of the site were such that it facilitated the ability to have a private drive of no more than 30m long for 6 dwellings, there would still be an area dedicated for the collection of refuse for these 6 dwellings, the same as shown on our proposed layout.

4.14. Under Section 72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, the local planning authority has a duty to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the conservation area. It does not follow, therefore, that

the implementation of the refuse guidance should be at the expense of the legal requirement to consider Section 72 of the Act.

4.15. The proposed roadway also fronts open countryside to the north (to ensure best solar gain from south facing elevations for the dwellings) and, therefore, presents a less urban character to the edge of the settlement.

Scale

4.16. The existing development to the south of the application site is almost exclusively two-storey. There is a range of detached, semi-detached and terraced dwellings within the immediate part of the conservation area, with development both at the back edge of the carriageway and set back. The smaller in scale terraced and semi-detached housing is evident in small groups along Old Main Road, with the majority of the rest of the settlement consisting of detached dwellings of various ages and styles.

4.17. Away from Old Main Road, the side roads are narrower and there are also informal private drives serving more recent development. The proposal reflects the varied scale and character of development within the conservation area. Examples of the existing scale can be seen below.



Looking east along Old Main Road



Looking at more recent development on Mayfair Close leading off Old Main Road.



Looking from the B1515 at more recent development with the application site in the left of the photograph.

4.18. The scale of the proposal with two detached dwellings on the B1515 frontage will reflect that which exists immediately to the south, and the remaining dwellings to the east within the site create a similar grain of development to that seen along Old Main Road with a fairly loose form.

Landscaping

4.19. There is some limited planting at the north western corner of the site, and this will be retained.

4.20. The reduction of the length of adoptable road and the associated width, results in the ability to plant closer to the private drive, which, in turn, further reduces the urban appearance of this edge of settlement site.

4.21. We have shown a native hedgerow along the northern side of the drive and tree planting outside individual dwellings where distances from front facades permit and shrub planting along the B1515 frontage.

Appearance

4.22. The two-storey dwellings include chimneys, segmental brick arches over windows, reconstituted stone cills, dentil courses to eaves and simple casement windows, all of which can be found in the conservation area.

4.23. The designs create their own sense of place, whilst taking reference from the principal features seen within the conservation area.

4.24. When the reserved matters were granted, a palette of materials was approved, and we have largely followed these, with a mixture of red and buff brick and red and grey roof coverings.

Access

4.25. The proposed access is in the same location as that approved as part of the reserved matters application.

4.26. There is good visibility in either direction onto the B1515 and the 62m length of adopted road into the site incorporates a turning head with the necessary dimensions.

4.27. The private drive will be constructed to a standard that will accept the weight of an emergency vehicle and there is a turning head towards the end of the drive to ensure all vehicles can enter and leave the site in forward gear.

4.28. Each dwelling has the required number of parking spaces and, where garages serve as one of the required number, these are oversized in accordance with the local plan specification.

5. OTHER MATERIAL CONSIDERATIONS

5.1. The site is largely unimproved grassland and has little ecological value.

5.2. The development will connect into the existing foul sewer on the B1515.

5.3. A Flood Risk Assessment has been commissioned in support of the application and this concludes that the site is safe from flooding and will not cause flooding to other land uses or users.

6. CONCLUSIONS

6.1. The application site has the benefit of an extant permission for the erection of 10 two storey dwellings and, therefore, notwithstanding the location of the site beyond the settlement boundary, the principle of development is acceptable having regard to the fallback position.

6.2. Having regard to the linear nature of the site and the means of access at the western end onto the B1515, the resultant layout reflects this character. The impact on the conservation area and the countryside beyond has been reduced by the incorporation of a longer length of private drive. This has the effect of presenting a less urban appearance to this edge of settlement development.

6.3. The proposal complies with the district council's refuse guidance, other than for the carry distance for the last three dwellings. The private driveway will still be constructed to accommodate the weight of an emergency vehicle and also incorporates a turning head.

6.4. The external appearance of the dwellings has been designed to ensure there is no detrimental impact on the character of the conservation area and the development as a whole will screen the rear of the properties along the northern side of Old Main Road. The proposal has less than a significant impact on the designated heritage assets and there is a wider public benefit in the provision of housing in accordance with policies in the local plan.

6.5. The proposal is compliant with the design and flood risk policies in the local plan and is acceptable in all other respects.