PLANNING, DESIGN & ACCESS STATEMENT

LAND NORTH OF FLEET ROAD, HOLBEACH

ON BEHALF OF

MR & MRS P. McCARTHY AND MR & MRS C. GIBBONS

MAY 2016

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 This Planning, Design & Access Statement has been prepared by John Martin & Associates on behalf of Mr & Mrs P McCarthy and Mr & Mrs C Gibbons in support of an outline planning application with all matters reserved for residential development, on an area of land north of Fleet Road, Holbeach which extends to approximately 0.48ha.

Site Plan



1.2 The outline planning application is supported by the following documents:-

- Topographical Survey
- Flood Risk Assessment
- Illustrative layout

1.3 The requirement for the preparation of a Design & Access Statement is set out in the Town & Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015 as the proposal is identified to be 'major development' as defined by the Order. The contents of this Statement has followed the requirements set out in national guidance and includes assessment of the site and surroundings, relevant development plan policy and evaluation of the site and the proposed development.

2. APPLICATION SITE AND SURROUNDINGS

2.1 The application site forms a broadly rectangular shaped area of land which is located to the north of Fleet Road (B1515) on the eastern edge of the built up area of Holbeach approximately 750m from the town centre. There is existing residential development to the east, west and south of the site with agricultural land to the north. The site area forms part of the larger field to the north, although the land to the north is in separate ownership and does not form any part of the planning application.

2.2 The site area is relatively flat as confirmed by the topographical survey and has been subject of arable cultivation in association with the more extensive area of farmland to the north. The site boundaries are defined to the south by a drainage ditch, tarmac footway and Fleet Road; to the east by a conifer hedge and to the west by a fence alongside the property

known as 'Eastfield'. The northern site boundary is at present defined by a series of 'marker pegs'.

2.3 There are a set of overhead electricity cables located toward the western site boundary which run in a north - south direction across the site.

2.4 To the southern side of Fleet Road, opposite the site there is residential development in the form of a linear development of detached dwellings which have individual vehicular accesses on to Fleet Road.

3. PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

3.1 In conformity with Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 the planning application will need to be determined in accordance with the policies of the Development Plan unless other material considerations indicate otherwise.

3.2 The Development Plan currently comprises of the South Holland Local Plan 2006.

3.3 Consideration should also be had to the content of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) which is a material consideration in all planning applications and to any other relevant policy guidance and Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD).

South Holland Local Plan 2006

3.4 The relevant policies of the Local Plan are considered to be the following:-

3.5 **Policy SG3: Settlement Hierarchy** – Holbeach is identified as an Area Centre the role of which would be to '*continue to provide housing, employment and commercial development to support their roles as service centres for surrounding rural areas*'.

3.6 **Policy SG4: Development in the Countryside** – provides for new development which is essential in the proposed location and cannot reasonably be accommodated within the defined settlement limits.

3.7 **Policy HS4: New housing in Spalding and Area Centres** – proposed new housing will be focussed within the defined settlement limits.

3.8 **Policy HS7: New housing in the Open Countryside** – confirms that new housing will only be permitted where:

- It is proven to be essential to meet the needs of agricultural, forestry or other workers and complies with policy HS12, or
- The proposal is for small scale, rural exception affordable housing that complies with Policy HS9

3.9 **Policy HS8: Affordable Housing** - states that on residential development sites of three or more dwellings, or sites of 0.1 hectares or more, the Council will require the provision of a minimum of one third of the residential units as affordable housing on the site**.**

National Planning Policy Framework

3.10 Relevant national planning policy is set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and in particular Paragraph 13 states: ***'The National Planning Policy Framework constitutes guidance for local planning authorities and decision takers both in drawing up plans and as a material consideration in determining applications'***

3.11 Para 14 states that: '***At the heart of the NPPF is a presumption in favour of sustainable development which should be seen as a golden thread running through both plan-making and decision-taking'***

For* decision taking *this 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 planning permission unless: any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits when assessed against the policies of the Framework taken as a whole'***

3.12 Para 17 sets out the core planning principles which should underpin both plan-making and decision-taking.

3.13 Para 47 confirms that*:* ***'to boost significantly the supply of housing local planning authorities should …..identify and update annually a supply of specific deliverable 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…..***

3.14 Para 49 adds that: ***'Housing applications should be considered in the context of the presumption in favour of sustainable development. 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'.***

3.15 Paras 186 & 187 relate to decision taking, in that ***'local planning authorities should approach decision –taking in a positive way to foster the delivery of sustainable development'***

3.16 Para 216 states that: from the day of publication, decision-takers may also give weight to relevant policies in emerging plans according to a number of caveats including:

- ***the stage of preparation of the emerging plan (the more advanced the preparation, the greater the weight that may be given)***

Emerging Plan Policy

3.17 The Draft South East Lincolnshire Local Plan 2011-2036 (SELLP) was published in January 2016 for a six week period of consultation.

3.18 The settlement of Holbeach is proposed as a Main Service Centre in the Spatial Strategy of the draft plan, where new development would be focussed to help retain existing facilities or help meet service needs of other local communities.

3.19 The Draft SELLP proposes a total of 1,340 dwellings be provided in the settlement of Holbeach over the plan period.

3.20 The relevant draft Local Plan policies on new housing provision in Holbeach are particularly positive however the Draft SELLP is at a very early stage in its preparation with a Submission Plan now envisaged in Autumn 2016. Limited weight can be attached to its policies at the present time.

5 Year Housing Land supply

3.21 The SELLP website contains monitoring information including:- ***'The 5 Year Housing Land Supply Assessment for South Holland District as at 31st March 2016'*** as evidence in support of the Draft SELLP. Table 1 below sets out the most up to date position regarding the 5 year supply of deliverable housing sites:-

TABLE 1 – 5 YEAR SUPPLY OF DELIVERABLE HOUSING SITES – SOUTH HOLLAND DISTRICT

Housing requirement 2011 - 2036	10,750 (430pa)
Housing requirement 31/03/2011–31/03/2016	2,150
Completions 31/03/2011-31/01/2016	1,231
Shortfall in completions to 31/03/2016	919
Housing Requirement 31/03/16 – 31/05/21	2,150
+ Shortfall (919)	3,069
+ 20% Buffer	614
Total Requirement 31/12/15- 31/12/2021	3,683 (737pa)
Deliverable Housing sites 31/03/16-31/03/21	2,151 **(2.92 yrs)**

3.22 Table 1 confirms that on the basis of the most up to date housing monitoring information as at 31st March 2016 the South Holland District Council are unable to demonstrate a 5 year supply of deliverable housing sites in accordance with the NPPF 47. NPPF 49 therefore applies in that: ***'Housing applications should be considered in the context of the presumption in favour of sustainable development. 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 sites'.***

3.23 The interpretation and meaning of NPPF 49 in respect of *'relevant policies for the supply of housing'* has been subject of a range of judicial opinion in the Planning Court. However in the most recent Court of Appeal decision (March 2016) in the conjoined appeals Suffolk Coastal District Council v Hopkins Homes Ltd and SSCLG and Richborough Estates LLP v Cheshire East Borough Council and SSCLG [2016] EWCA Civ 168 the Court ruled that such *'relevant policies'*

are not confined to policies that provide positively for the delivery of new housing, in terms of numbers and distribution or the allocation of sites but that the concept extends to plan policies the effect of which is to influence the supply of housing land, by restricting the locations where new housing might be developed.

3.24 Where in the context of NPPF 49 relevant policies are not up to date then a planning application for residential development falls to be determined in accordance with NPPF 14 and the presumption in favour of sustainable development.

4. CONSTRAINTS AND OPPORTUNITIES

4.1 The proposal takes into consideration the following constraints and opportunities relevant to the site and its surroundings:

Constraints

- Potential for any visual impact arising from development on the character of the surrounding area
- Satisfactory access being obtained to the Fleet Road
- Existing drainage ditch along the site frontage
- Overhead electricity cable
- Open views to the north

Opportunities

- Gateway location on the edge of the town
- An appropriate scale, form and character of development which respects the location and character of the site
- Undergrounding of overhead electricity cable
- The opportunity for additional landscaping within the site and along the site boundaries.
- Enhancement of the biodiversity within the site area

5. PRE-APPLICAION ADVICE

5.1 The applicant has received pre-application advice from South Holland District in their letter dated 22nd January 2016. That advice confirmed the policy position in respect of the site being outside the Holbeach Development Boundary and the approach toward new residential development in that context.

5.2 The pre-application advice refers to NPPF 49 in that housing applications should be considered in the context of the presumption in favour of sustainable development.

5.3 In conclusion the advice states that: '***it is suggested that an outline application be submitted for residential development, accompanied by supporting evidence demonstrating that the site is in a sustainable location'***.

6. THE PROPOSAL

Use & Amount

6.1 The outline planning application proposes a residential development with the illustrative site layout indicating the potential of up to 13 detached and semi-detached dwellings in a linear form of development. This form of development seeks to mirror the existing residential development on the southern side of Fleet Road.

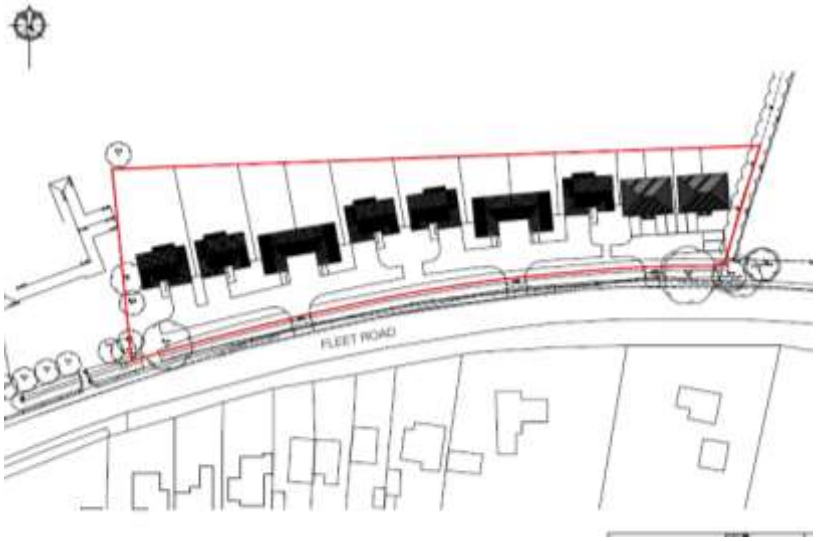
Scale

6.2 The proposed dwellings would be two storeys in height which acknowledges the scale of the residential properties in proximity to the site, particularly the existing dwellings on the southern side of Fleet Road.

Appearance

6.3 The illustrative site layout has been prepared having due regard to the respective constraints and opportunities presented by the site and its surroundings. In particular reference is had to the provision of satisfactory accesses to Fleet Road and the provision of a proportion of affordable housing.

Illustrative Site Layout



Access

6.4 Three individual access points are proposed onto Fleet Road, which will serve private drives of no more than 5 dwellings. The widths of the respective accesses are 4.5m with visibility splays of 2.4m x 65m which are in accordance with the standards required by the Lincolnshire Highways.

Landscape Strategy

6.5 A key aspect of any proposed landscape strategy will be the retention and enhancement of the existing trees and hedges where possible and the provision of additional planting along

the northern site boundary to assist in reducing any potential visual impact from the proposed development on the surrounding landscape.

7. SUSTAINABILITY

7.1 At the heart of the NPPF is a presumption in favour of sustainable development. The three dimensions of sustainable development are identified in the NPPF as economic, social and environmental roles. The proposed residential development of the site is therefore considered against each of those three dimensions.

7.2 Holbeach is a market town which benefits from a range of social, retail and community facilities, in addition to which the town has a number of industrial/business parks providing employment opportunities. The site is located immediately adjacent to the built up area of the town, approximately 750m from the town centre of Holbeach. There is an existing tarmac footpath along the site frontage which extends into the town centre. The walking time between the site and the town centre is approximately 10 minutes which is considered to be a reasonable maximum. Fleet Road has a standard carriageway width for a 'B' class road and is subject to a 30mph speed limit along the site frontage and into the town centre and as such is considered to be suitable for use by cyclists.

7.3 There are a number of existing bus stops along Fleet Road, with the nearest being located opposite Rowan Close approximately 250m from the site. As such this is comfortably within the 400m walking distance recommended in the Institute of Highways & Transportation's Guidelines for Planning for Public Transport in Development (IHT 1999). The closest bus stop to the site is used by the 5051 InterConnect service which operates a full weekday and weekend service between Kings Lynn- Holbeach- Spalding.

7.4 The site is therefore considered to be very accessible to Holbeach town centre by all modes including walking, cycling and bus, which is in accordance with a core planning principle of NPPF 17 which seeks to actively manage patterns of growth to make the fullest possible use of public transport, walking and cycling.

7.5 In terms of an economic role the proposal supports the Government aim as set out in the NPPF (47) '*to boost significantly the supply of housing land*'. The proposed development will generate jobs through the construction activity with consequent positive impacts for the local economy during the construction period. In the longer term the additional residents are likely to have jobs and generate economic activity through the general use of local services and facilities and the purchase of goods and services in the local area.

7.6 In respect of a social role the development would make a positive contribution to meeting the housing needs and requirements of the District including the provision of affordable housing. The site is available for immediate development and would deliver early housing completions to assist in meeting the identified shortfall in the 5 year supply of housing sites within the District, in accordance with a fundamental aim of national planning policy which is to boost the supply of housing.

7.7 In terms of the environmental role the proposed development will provide additional landscaping within and on the boundaries of the site to provide visual containment to the site area.

7.8 The NPPF confirms that these roles should not be undertaken in isolation and therefore to achieve sustainable development economic, social and environmental gains should be sought jointly and simultaneously. The proposed development has been shown to have considered and met these roles.

8. SUMMARY

8.1 The application site adjoins the existing built up area of the town.

8.2 The most up to date housing land supply information, as at 31st March 20165 indicates that South Holland District can demonstrate less than a three year supply of deliverable housing sites.

8.3 The NPPF 49 confirms that the relevant policies for the supply of housing are considered not to be up to date where a local planning authority cannot demonstrate a five year supply of deliverable housing sites.

8.4 The application therefore falls to be determined against the NPPF 14 and the presumption in favour of sustainable developable.

8.5 There are no identified technical or environmental constraints to the residential development of the land.

8.6 Satisfactory vehicular accesses can be provided from Fleet Road to serve the site.

8.7 The site is within a reasonable walking distance of the town centre. There are existing bus stops within close proximity to the site from which there are regular weekday and weekend services to Spalding and Kings Lynn.

8.8 The illustrative site layout has been prepared having reference to the character of the site and surroundings which have established the respective constraints and opportunities.

8.9 The site offers the opportunity for a sustainable residential development in accordance with the three dimensions of sustainable development as set out in the NPPF to enable delivery of a small infill housing site which will assist toward meeting the shortfall in the five year housing supply in the District.