

**PROPOSED RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT AND FARM SHOP AT LAND OFF MAIN
STREET, GEDNEY DYKE, SPALDING, Lincs, PE12 0AJ (IN OUTLINE)**

PLANNING AND SUSTAINABILITY REPORT

REPORT PREPARED FOR

**MR ADAM CUNNINGTON
C WRIGHT & SON (GEDNEY) LTD
WHITEHOUSE FARM
GEDNEY DYKE
SPALDING
LINCOLNSHIRE
PE12 0AJ**

Report Prepared By

**BRIAN BARROW BSc (Hons) MRICS
Managing Director
Old Market Office
10 Risbygate Street
Bury St Edmunds
Suffolk, IP33 3AA**

Tel: 01284 753271

Email: brian.barrow@acorus.co.uk

March 2017

1. INTRODUCTION

This report has been prepared at the request of Mr A Cunnington of C Wright & Son (Gedney) Ltd, Whitehouse Farm, Main Street, Main Street, Gedney Dyke, Spalding, Lincs, PE12 0AJ to outline the facts considered relevant to a proposed residential development and farm shop (in outline) on land off Main Street, Gedney Dyke, Spalding, PE12 0AJ.

2. BACKGROUND

Whitehouse Farm, Gedney Dyke extends to over 200 hectares of land within the Gedney Dyke area. The farm business specialises in growing asparagus and daffodils which are supplied across the whole of the UK.

Planning permission was applied for and refused for the proposed development of 7 residential properties on land off Main Street, Gedney Dyke in August 2016 and the Local Planning Authority considered the site unsustainable with no real facilities, in particular facilities needed for everyday life.

The Local Planning Authority also considered the Flood Risk Assessment to be inadequate and that an archaeological assessment was required.

This application seeks to address these concerns.

3. PROPOSAL

The proposal is for a small residential development with a farm shop/general stores on land off Main Street Gedney Dyke, which is central within the village.

It is proposed to develop 8 detached dwellings of similar sizes to the dwellings in the vicinity to complement the street scene.

The shop will be located to the west of the site with parking opposite. The shop would stock all basic everyday requirements as well as a range of seasonal fruit and vegetables.

A survey has been undertaken of village residents to ascertain likely demand and support for a farm shop (contained at Appendix 1). Of the 48 responses 18 households indicated that they used a farm shop on a daily basis with 25 households using one on a weekly basis. When asked how often local convenience stores are needed 19 responded daily and 22 responded weekly which suggested a wider range of products would be attractive.

Comments on the survey from households included – great idea, requirement also by neighbouring villages, coffee shop required, there was an offer to staff the shop, fresh produce required, coal required, fresh dairy products required, newspapers and local produce required.

The proposed residential development would help in the funding of the farm shop and create additional households who would most likely make use of its facilities. Being central within the village the farm shop would be easily accessible by all and would hopefully become a focus for the village.

Access would be off Main Street with an open grassed area/play area to the front of the development. Tree planting would mitigate the impact of the development to the east and west. An existing access off main road will lead to the farm shop. Parking provision has also been included directly opposite the shop for easy access.

4. PLANNING POLICY

National planning policy is contained within the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). The thrust of the Framework is to achieve sustainable development and confirms at **paragraph 7** that there are three dimensions to this aim:

- ***an economic role*** – contributing to building a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right type is available in the right places and at the right time to support growth and innovation; and by identifying and coordinating development requirements, including the provision of infrastructure;
- ***a social role*** – supporting strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by providing the supply of housing required to meet the needs of present and future generations; and by creating a high quality built environment, with accessible local services that reflect the community's needs and support its health, social and cultural well-being; and
- ***an environmental role*** – contributing to protecting and enhancing our natural, built and historic environment; and, as part of this, helping to improve biodiversity, use natural resources prudently, minimise waste and pollution, and mitigate and adapt to climate change including moving to a low carbon economy.

At **paragraph 17**, the Framework confirms that there are 12 core planning principles, which are:

1. Building a strong, competitive economy,
2. Ensuring the vitality of town centres,
3. Supporting a prosperous rural economy,
4. Promoting sustainable transport,
5. Supporting high quality communications infrastructure,

6. Delivering a wide choice of high quality homes,
7. Requiring good design,
8. Promoting healthy communities,
9. Protecting Green Belt land,
10. Meeting the challenge of climate change, flooding and coastal change,
11. Conserving and enhancing the natural environment, and
12. Conserving and enhancing the historic environment.

Section 6 deals with delivering a wide choice of high quality homes as follows:-

47. *"To boost significantly the supply of housing, local planning authorities should:-*

- * use their evidence base to ensure that their Local Plan meets the full, objectively addressed needs for market and affordable housing in the housing market area, as far as is consistent with the policies set out in this Framework, including identifying key sites which are critical to the delivery of housing strategy over the plan period;*
- * 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% (moved forward from later in the plan period) 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% (moved forward from later in the plan period) to provide a realistic prospect of achieving the planned supply and to ensure choice and competition in the market for the land;*
- * identify a supply to specific, developable sites or broad locations for growth, for years 6 – 10 and, where possible, for years 11 – 15;*
- * for market and affordable housing, illustrate the expected rate of housing delivery through a housing trajectory for the full range of housing describing how they will maintain delivery of a five year supply of housing land to meet their housing target; and*
- * set out their own approach to housing density to reflect local circumstances."*

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.

To be considered developable, sites should be in a suitable location for housing development and there should be a reasonable prospect that the site is available and could be viably developed at the point envisaged.

49. *"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."*

50. *"To deliver a wide range of high quality homes, widen opportunities for home ownership and create sustainable, inclusive and mixed communities, local planning authorities should:-*

- * plan for a mix of housing based on current and future demographic trends, market trends and the needs of different groups in the community (such as, but not limited to, families and people wishing to build their own homes);*
- * identify the size, type, tenure and range of housing that is required in particular locations, reflecting local demand; and*
- * where they have identified that affordable housing is needed, set policies for meeting this need on site, unless off site provision or a financial contribution of broadly equivalent value can be robustly justified (for example to improve or make more effective use of the existing housing stock) and the agreed approach contributes to the objective of creating mixed and balanced communities. Such policies should be sufficiently flexible to take account of changing market conditions over time."*

55. *"To promote sustainable development in rural areas, housing should be located where it will enhance or maintain the vitality of the rural communities. For example, where there are groups of smaller settlements, development in one village may support services in a village nearby. Local planning authorities should avoid new isolated homes in the countryside unless there are special circumstances such as:-*

- * the essential need for a rural worker to live permanently at or near their place of work in the countryside; or*
- * where such development would represent the optimal viable use of a heritage asset or would be appropriate enabling development to secure the future of heritage assets; or*
- * where the development would reuse redundant or disused buildings and lead to an enhancement to the immediate setting; or*
- * the exceptional quality or innovative nature of the design of the dwelling. Such a design should:-*
 - be truly outstanding or innovative, helping to raise standards of design more generally in rural areas;*

- *reflect the highest standards in architecture;*
- *significantly enhance its immediate setting; and*
- *be sensitive to the defining characteristics of the local area.*

Paragraph 28 supports a prosperous rural economy by supporting the sustainable growth and expansion of all types of business and enterprise in rural areas through the conversion of existing buildings and construction of well designed new buildings as well as promoting the development and diversification of agricultural and other land based rural businesses.

Relevant Policies within the South Holland Local Plan 2006 are as follows:-

SG1: General Sustainable Development

Planning permission for development will be granted where the Council is satisfied that the proposal is consistent with the principles of sustainable development, and where:

- 1) *the quality of life for residents is unimpaired or enhanced;*
- 2) *reasonable measures have been taken to conserve energy and natural resources; and*
- 3) *South Holland's essential character and main environmental assets are not damaged.*

SG2 – Distribution of Development

All proposals for development must be located having regard to sustainable development principles. They should:-

- 1) *adopt a sequential approach which gives priority to the use of previously developed land and buildings within defined settlement limits,, then to greenfield land within defined settlement limits and finally to land adjacent to defined settlement limits;*
- 2) *make efficient use of land;*
- 3) *ensure that, wherever possible, development is served by a choice of transport modes including existing public transport or by improvements to public transport infrastructure linked directly to the development and the existing highway network; and*
- 4) *ensure that the development is acceptable in terms of traffic generation and road safety in the surrounding area.*

HS11 – Open Space in Residential Developments

"Proposals for residential development shall make provision for open space in accordance with the Council's adopted standards of not less than 14% of the gross site area."

EC11 – Farm Shops

"Proposals for farm shops will be permitted subject to all of the following criteria being met:-

- 1) The sale of produce to be public remains an ancillary operation to the main function of the farm;*
- 2) The proposal does not affect the viability of existing accessible local shopping facilities;*
- 3) Existing farm buildings are used where possible, or the proposed shop and buildings should relate well to the existing farm buildings."*

5. PLANNING COMMENTS

5.1 General

Planning permission was applied for and refused for the proposed development of 7 residential properties on land off Main Street, Gedney Dyke in August 2016 as the Local Planning Authority considered the site unsustainable with no real facilities.

The proposal is for a small residential development with a farm shop on land off Main Street Gedney Dyke, which is central within the village.

It is proposed to develop 8 detached dwellings of similar sizes to the dwellings nearby to complement the street scene.

The shop would meet the needs of the village and stock all basic everyday requirements as well as a range of seasonal fruit and vegetables.

5.2 Policy Evaluation

The Local Authority has under delivered consistently for a number of years with the number of new homes fallen considerably short of the required level over at least the last 6 years.

The target of 430 was used for the years 2011/12 to 2016/17 in the Local Plan which has been used to measure delivery. Over the last 5 years there has been a shortfall of 1,121.

The Council's overall target over the next 5 years period has been estimated to 4, with a supply of deliverable housing sites of 2,864, a shortfall of 1,121 equating to only a 3.25 year supply.

A 5 years supply of deliverable housing sites **cannot** be demonstrated therefore the relevant development policies cannot be considered up to date.

Paragraphs 49 and 55 of the National Planning Policy Guidance therefore takes precedence so. The NPPF clearly recognises the need to boost housing supply in rural as well as urban areas. It not longer seeks to protect the countryside for its own sake but rather supports "thriving rural communities" within it (paragraph 17), whilst balancing the social, economic and environmental needs.

Housing on a particular site must also be shown to be deliverable in line with the footnote 11 of the NPPF:-

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. Sites with planning permission should be considered deliverable until permission expires, unless there is clear evidence that schemes will not be implemented within five years, for example they will not be viable, there is no longer a demand for the type of units or sites have long term phasing plans.

The proposals can be delivered on the subject site as it is available, being owned by the applicant. It is also arguably sustainable being within the village boundary and can be achieved comfortably within the next 5 years.

An assessment of any adopted policy to which the proposal is contrary and why in sustainability terms the proposal should proceed contrary to the development plan is required.

The NPPF is clear that if a council cannot demonstrate a five year housing land supply, then in deciding housing applications, local planning authorities must defer to the NPPF.

Para 55 of the NPPF relates to dwellings in the countryside and although examples are given as to what constitutes special circumstances, the list is not exhaustive. Also this para mentions that development in one village can help support services in nearby villages.

The farm shop is supported in Paragraph 28, a policy which supports the sustainable growth and expansion of all types of rural businesses as well as diversification of agricultural businesses.

5.3 Farm Shop

The Gedney Dyke village shop closed approx. 2 years ago, with the nearest shop to the village now being at Fleet Hargate, 2 miles away, due for closure.

A survey was undertaken of the village in January 2017 to ascertain whether local residents would support a farm shop. Comments received suggested demand also for convenience goods.

This survey has had a very positive response with 48 householders returning the questionnaire. The results are contained at Appendix 2.

In summary 29 households indicated that they need local convenience goods on a daily basis, with 22 on a weekly basis, 4 occasionally and 3 never.

On this basis it would appear that a farm shop, and in particular a convenience store would be welcomed by local residents and supported.

Comments from local residents included that the shop is a great idea, any shop would be used by neighbouring villages and a coffee shop would be welcomed. In particular residents outlined that the following items would be welcomed in particular to be available from the farm shop - fresh produce, fresh dairy products, quality local produce, newspapers and coal.

The shop would be useful, particularly to those residents who do not have access to a car for travelling to the nearby village to pick up day to day convenience goods.

The shop will provide employment and also socially benefits the visit by adding another focal point to the village whereby residents can meet up.

In addition to benefitting the village as a whole, the farm shop will also enhance the viability of the farm. The shop would be funded by the development of the proposed dwellings.

5.4 Sustainability

There are three strands of sustainability, economic, social and environmental.

Gedney Dyke currently has limited facilities in the form of a public house and a village hall. The development of the farm shop will enhance the facilities in the

village and will mean that many residents will not need to travel for day to day items, thus reducing car usage. The nearest shop at the present time being approximately 2 miles away in Fleet Hargate, which is due for closure.

Gedney Dyke is also well located in terms of other facilities in that there is a primary school in the neighbouring village of Lutton and health care facilities including a doctor's surgery and dentist in Long Sutton and Holbeach, only 3 and 4 miles away respectively. Holbeach also has many other facilities including schools, public houses, restaurants, shops and a sports club.

The market towns of Spalding, Wisbech, Kings Lynn and Boston are within easy reach with employment opportunities.

The village benefits from demand responsive (dial up) bus transportation which provides flexible routing to both Holbeach and Long Sutton for access to wider shopping and transport facilities. Currently there are also school buses running daily through the village.

The village has just benefitted with the installation of a new play area for children within easy access of the proposed development.

This application scores highly as it will provide housing which is needed, reference the 5 year supply, provide employment during the conversion process and provide a knock on effect to local businesses.

The shop in particular is sustainable providing a much needed facility within the village, which will also provide employment and aid social integration.

Overall the proposal as a whole is sustainable.

APPENDIX 1

4 January 2017

Dear Sir/Madam

FARM SHOP – GEDNEY DYKE

As a local farm business we specialise in growing Asparagus and Daffodils which are supplied across the UK.

We have been looking at diversifying the business and are considering opening a small farm shop in the village. The shop would supply our produce seasonably and other vegetables plus possibly a range of convenience items.

We would like to ascertain likely demand and would appreciate it if you could fill in the short questionnaire overleaf.

Please return your form either

by hand to C Wright & Son (Gedney) Ltd Farm Office

or

post to:

C Wright & Son (Gedney) Ltd
Whitehouse Farm
Main Street
Gedney Dyke
Spalding
PE12 0AJ

or

by e-mail to info@c-wright.co.uk

APPENDIX 2

results of survey

	how often shop for fruit / veg	how often visit farmshops	how often use gedney dyke shop	how often local convenience needed	
daily	16	9	18	19	
weekly	31	21	25	22	
fortnighly	1	6	2	4	
occasionally		4	3	3	
no		8			
	48	48	48	48	

COMMENTS INCLUDED : GREAT IDEA, REQUIRED ALSO BY NEIGHBOURING VILLAGES, COFFEE SHOP REQUIRED, AN OFFER TO STAFF IT, FRESH PRODUCE REQUIRED
COAL REQUIRED, FRESH DAIRY PRODUCTS REQUIRED, NEWSPAPERS, QUALITY LOCAL PRODUCE REQUIRED