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Church Street, Holbeach

Supporting Planning Statement

Erection of 19 dwellings and
associated works

Studio 11 Architecture & Seagate
Homes

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Pink Planning
47 Coriander Drive
Hampton Vale
Peterborough
PE7 8NX

www.pinkplanning.co.uk

info@pinkplanning.co.uk

1. Introduction

- 1.1 This Supporting Planning Statement accompanies a planning application for the erection of 19 dwellings and associated works on land at Church Street, Holbeach. The scheme comprises 13 market and 6 affordable dwellings with a mix of 1, 2 and 3-bed units.
- 1.2 The applicant, Seagate Homes, is committed to providing a high quality sustainable development that will preserve and enhance the special character of Holbeach. The scheme has evolved in response to site constraints, planning officer comments, public feedback and professional input.
- 1.3 The Council is currently unable to demonstrate a 5 year supply of deliverable housing sites. In this context, local planning policies relating to the supply of housing are considered to be out of date and the principle of residential development is acceptable subject to other material planning considerations. This planning application responds to the significant shortfall.
- 1.4 This report evaluates the proposed development in the context of local and national planning policy. It is considered that the development accords with all relevant planning policies and there are no material considerations which warrant a refusal of planning permission. The application should therefore be granted planning permission without delay, in accordance with the presumption in favour of sustainable development as set out in the NPPF.

2. The site and surrounding area

- 2.1 The application site comprises approximately 0.48 hectares of land located on the western side of Church Street in Holbeach. The site is in a sustainable location south of the main town centre and within the defined settlement limit.
- 2.2 The area surrounding the site is a mixture of agricultural, residential and commercial uses. Church Street is a mix of residential and commercial uses with single and two storey dwellings, and three storey shops with apartments above. Directly opposite the entrance to the site is The Exchange, a public house that is currently vacant. A caravan site and bowling green are located to the north and a care home to the west.

- 2.3 The site is currently occupied by a number of vacant industrial buildings, associated with a former builder's yard.
- 2.4 Part of the site adjoins Holbeach Conservation Area and there is a Listed Building located opposite the entrance to the site on the eastern side of Church Street.
- 2.5 The Environment Agency's Flood Zone maps indicate that the majority of the site is located within Flood Zone 1, with only the westernmost part within Flood Zone 2 (medium risk of flooding).
- 2.6 The site has excellent public transport accessibility. Within approximately 6 minutes walking distance, bus stops provide access to a range of services including: 505 (weekday service between King's Lynn-Holbeach-Spalding), 6067 (local weekday service between Holbeach-Tydd St Mary) and NG01 (local weekday service to Spalding). National rail services are accessible from Spalding which is approximately 20 minutes by car, allowing access to the East Coast Mainline, London and beyond.

3. The proposed development

- 3.1 The scheme proposes to deliver 19 new dwellings, making efficient use of the land at a density of 39 dph. This density reflects the site's edge-of-centre location whilst respecting the density of surrounding development. In total, 6 of the dwellings will be affordable (32%), with a mix of smaller 1, 2 and 3-bed units as shown on the plans which accompany the application.
- 3.2 The dwellings are predominantly arranged as two-storey semi-detached properties. The simple layout respects the urban grain of existing development and facilitates continuous street scenes which are typical for a traditional small town setting. The design approach mixes a simple, traditional architectural style with appropriate modern detailing and a limited palette of materials to create a cohesive sense of place.
- 3.3 Vehicular and pedestrian access to the site would be via Church Street. Sufficient car and cycle parking has been accommodated onsite to meet the requirements of Policy SG16 of the South Holland Local Plan 2016.

- 3.4 New landscaping will enhance biodiversity, clearly define public and private areas and improve the appearance of this vacant industrial site in accordance with Policy SG18 of the South Holland Local Plan 2016. Where possible existing mature landscape features have been retained as part of the design. Private amenity space is provided for each dwelling, with additional recreational facilities available at Carters Park and elsewhere throughout Holbeach.
- 3.5 Further details on the proposed development can be found in the accompanying documents including: Design and Access Statement, Transport Statement, Flood Risk Assessment and Sustainability Statement.

4 Planning history

H09-0979-14 – Demolition of existing buildings within former builder's yard and construction of new medical centre – Approved

H09-1549-05 – Extension of existing offices at 72 Church Street – Approved

5 Planning policy context

National Planning Policy Framework 2012

Achieving sustainable development

Core planning principles

- 6 Delivering a wide choice of high quality homes
- 7 Requiring good design
- 8 Promoting healthy communities
- 10 Meeting the challenge of climate change, flooding and coastal change

South Holland District Local Plan 2006

- Policy SG1 General sustainable development
- Policy SG2 Distribution of development
- Policy SG3 Settlement hierarchy
- Policy SG7 Energy efficiency
- Policy SG13 Pollution and contamination
- Policy SG14 Design and layout of new development
- Policy SG15 New development: facilities for road users, pedestrians and cyclists
- Policy SG16 Parking standards and new development
- Policy SG17 Protection of residential amenity
- Policy SG18 Landscaping of new development
- Policy EC3 Existing Employment Areas/Premises

6.2.2 Although the proposal would involve the loss of an industrial site, this use has now ceased and the opportunity has arisen to redevelop the site with a more compatible use in this predominantly residential area – housing. The proposed development is therefore in accordance with Policy EC3 of the South Holland Local Plan. Furthermore, the provision of 19 dwellings would make a valuable contribution to meeting the urgent need for new housing in the district.

6.2.3 For the reasons described above, it is considered that the principle of residential development in this location is acceptable.

6.3 Character, appearance and design

6.3.1 The site is currently occupied by extensive areas of hardstanding and utilitarian industrial buildings that were associated with the former builder's yard. A new well-designed residential development as proposed would enhance the character and appearance of the locality and Holbeach Conservation Area in accordance with Policy SG14 of the South Holland Local Plan. Further discussion on design can be found in the accompanying Design and Access Statement by Studio 11 Architecture.

6.3.2 A single access road runs through the centre of the site and provides access to all proposed dwellings. This layout allows an efficient use of the site. In addition, the predominant use of semi-detached dwellings successfully reflects the character and appearance of the local area.

6.3.3 To maximise energy efficiency, the building fabric will be highly insulated and airtightness will be improved beyond current Building Regulations. Each home will be provided with 100% low energy lighting and high efficiency gas central heating. Future installation of solar water heating and/or photovoltaic panels is also supported. It is therefore considered that the proposed development accords with Policy SG7 of the South Holland Local Plan, which requires new developments to maximise energy efficiency.

6.3.4 Sufficient open space is provided within the site to meet the requirements of Policy HS11 of the South Holland Local Plan 2006.

6.4 Highways and parking

- 6.4.1 Junction alterations to Hall Gate/Church Street will be required to facilitate the new adopted road and these alterations have been discussed and agreed with Lincolnshire County Council Highways at pre-application stage. Further information can be found in the accompanying Transport Statement, which confirms that the proposed development is acceptable in highway safety terms.
- 6.4.2 Sufficient car and cycle parking has been accommodated onsite to meet the requirements of Policy SG16 of the South Holland Local Plan 2016.

6.5 Residential amenity

- 6.5.1 Policy SG17 of the South Holland Local Plan 2006 seeks to protect the residential amenity of existing residents in relation to overlooking, privacy, overbearing, overshadowing, noise nuisance and pollutants.
- 6.5.2 The proposed dwellings are modest in scale and have been carefully orientated so that they will not give rise to any residential amenity issues to existing dwellings such as overbearing, overshadowing, overlooking or privacy. Furthermore, the proposed residential use will have a lesser impact on residential amenity than the former industrial use in relation to noise nuisance and pollutants.

6.6 Flood risk and surface water drainage

- 6.6.1 A small part of the site is located within Flood Zone 2. A site-specific Flood Risk Assessment has been undertaken and submitted with the application. This assessment demonstrates that the development is acceptable in flood risk terms.
- 6.6.2 The Environment Agency raised no objections to H09-0979-14 subject to finished floor levels being set 300mm above ground level. A similar condition can be applied to the present development if required.
- 6.6.3 It is proposed to discharge surface water from the development via a Sustainable Drainage System.

6.7 Other issues

6.7.1 Matters including ecology, archaeology, foul drainage and contamination can be addressed if necessary through the imposition of standard conditions.

6.8 Presumption in favour of sustainable development

6.8.1 At present, the Council is unable to demonstrate that it has an adequate five year supply of land for housing¹. Therefore, as set out in paragraphs 47 and 49 of the NPPF, all Local Planning policies relating to the supply of housing must be considered out of date and housing applications assessed in terms of the presumption in favour of sustainable development².

6.8.2 Paragraph 7 of the NPPF, identifies three dimensions to sustainable development: economic, social and environmental. The proposed scheme has been developed from the offset with these sustainable principles in mind.

- **Economic benefits:** the proposal would attract payment from the New Homes Bonus and Community Infrastructure Levy contributions; future residents would pay council tax; and construction and trade jobs would also be created. Future residents of the new homes would support the services and facilities of Holbeach and the wider area. The loss of a vacant employment site (a use which sits uncomfortably within the surrounding residential uses) is considered to be acceptable given the extensive benefits of the scheme.
- **Social benefits** relate to supporting strong, vibrant and healthy communities. The mix of new dwellings would be attractive to the market, delivering choice to the community including 6 much needed affordable units. The scheme is readily accessible by public transport, walking and cycling to local shops and services within Holbeach, and future residents would enhance the vitality and viability of the local economy.
- **Environmental benefits** would be achieved through the replacement of existing hardstanding with residential gardens, soft landscaping and new tree planting, increasing biodiversity and alleviating the impacts of climate change. The character and appearance of the area would be improved through the regeneration of a vacant site on the edge of the town centre.

¹ South Holland District Council 5 year housing land supply assessment (as at 31st March 2016)

² Defined in paragraph 14 of the National Planning Policy Framework 2012

The new dwellings would be highly energy efficient and have excellent sustainability credentials.

- 6.8.3 It is therefore concluded, based on the overall balance of considerations, that the proposal would be a sustainable development in the context of the NPPF. Further information can be found within the Sustainability Statement.
- 6.8.4 This report has considered the development in relation to specific policies of the Local Plan and has found no adverse impacts or other material considerations that would outweigh the benefits of this application.

7 Conclusions and recommendation

- 7.1 The proposed development is in a highly sustainable location and provides a rare opportunity to redevelop a previously developed site in an area of low flood risk within the Area Centre of Holbeach.
- 7.2 At the present time, South Holland District Council has a housing land supply of only 2.9 years with a shortfall of 1,532 homes. Therefore, under the terms of the National Planning Policy Framework, this application is to be determined in the context of the presumption in favour of sustainable development. The proposed scheme would deliver new housing and contribute to a more robust five year housing land supply. Significant weight should be given to this benefit. Additional weight should also be given to the social, environmental and economic benefits of the scheme as discussed within this report and the other supporting documents.
- 7.3 In summary, this Supporting Planning Statement has outlined how, on balance, the proposed development is considered to constitute sustainable development under the terms of the NPPF, and the requirements of all other relevant policies within the Local Plan are met. The application should therefore be approved without delay.

