

**DESIGN, ACCESS AND PLANNING STATEMENT**

**FULL PLANNING APPLICATION**

**FOR CHANGE OF USE  
FROM A RESIDENTIAL DWELLING  
TO A CHILDRENS CARE HOME**

**AT**

**29 WISBECH ROAD  
LONG SUTTON  
SPALDING  
PE12 9AG**

**Prepared by**



**January 2022**

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

This application proposes the change of use of existing residential dwelling to a childrens care home at 29 Wisbech Road, Long Sutton, Spalding.

## **2. THE PROPOSAL**

The planning application seeks to obtain permission for the following:

- Change of use of a detached residential dwelling to a children's care home

The proposals are for the change of use from a residential dwelling to a children's' home. The property would be reconfigured by changing the existing integral garage into a games room with the removal of the garage door and the addition of a new window. Extension of the existing small bathroom into the existing garage to provide a larger downstairs bathroom. The ground floor dining room, kitchen and lounge would remain.

To the first floor, the existing 4 bedrooms and 1 bathroom would remain, and a small office would be added by dividing the existing hallway space.

Externally, a post and rail fence is proposed to the front boundary of the property and secure fencing (likely to be achieved under permitted development) is to be erected to the property boundaries.

The care home would be for 3 children, and 6 staff would be employed to care for the children with 24-hour care and supervision provided 7 days a week. The aim of such a facility is to simulate a family dwelling, with the children experiencing the average family arrangement by attending the local schools and experiencing the local facilities. Each child would have their own individual bedroom and the living spaces and private garden would be shared just like the average family home.

## **3. THE SITE AND LOCATION**

The site is located at number 29 Wisbech Road, a detached residential dwelling to the west of Wisbech Road, to the southeast of Long Sutton as shown below.

The dwelling is set in a generous plot and has the advantage of a long, gravelled drive with ample off-street parking.



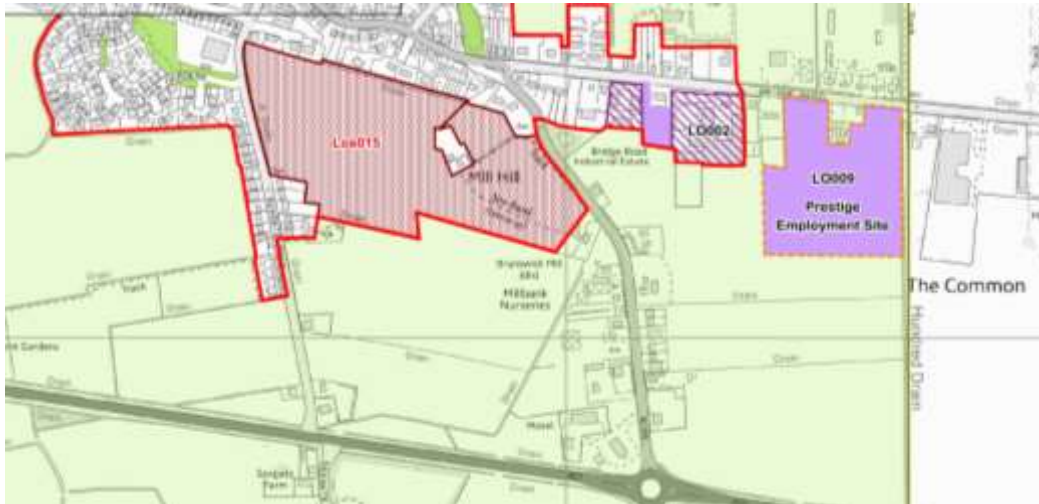
*Aerial view of the site. (Google maps 2022).*



*Street view of 29 Wisbech Road. (Google Earth 2022).*

The property is just outside of the settlement boundary for Long Sutton, therefore classed as being within the countryside, however, Long Sutton is less than half a mile to the north and this can be described as a semi-rural location.

There are a large number of dwellings in a linear arrangement and a very short walk from the site are facilities such as a petrol station with shop and coffee shop. Therefore, although the location is defined as the countryside, it is well served by facilities and close to Long Sutton.



*Extract of inset map for Long Sutton (SELLP 2011 – 2036).*

The South East Lincolnshire Local Plan states that ‘In the Countryside development will be permitted that is necessary to such a location and/or where it can be demonstrated that it meets the sustainable development needs of the area in terms of economic, community or environmental benefits.’

The proposed site for the childrens’ home is just outside the settlement boundary of Long Sutton, Long Sutton is classed as a main service centre within the Spatial Strategy.

## **PLANNING POLICY**

### **National Planning Policy**

National planning guidance and Local planning policy dictates the principle of development and the features of the dwelling houses proposed and associated works on the site.

### **The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF 2021)**

It sets out Central Government’s planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied.

**Paragraphs 7 and 8 define the commitment to sustainable development based on three dimensions:**

“An economic objective – to help build a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right types is available in the right places and at the right time to support growth, innovation and improved productivity; and by identifying and coordinating the provision of infrastructure;

“A social objective – to support strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by ensuring

that a sufficient number and range of homes can be provided to meet the needs of present and future generations; and by fostering a well-designed and safe built environment, with accessible services and open spaces that reflect current and future needs and support communities' health, social and cultural well-being; and

"An environmental objective – to contribute to protecting and enhancing our natural, built and historic environment; including making effective use of land, helping to improve biodiversity, using natural resources prudently, minimising waste and pollution, and mitigating and adapting to climate change, including moving to a low carbon economy.

This is followed by a commitment to a presumption in favour of sustainable development. Paragraph 11 states that "for decision-taking this means:

c) Approving development proposals that accord with the 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 11 states that for 'plan making' this means:**

Plans and decisions should apply a presumption in favour of sustainable development.

a) plans should positively seek opportunities to meet the development needs of their area, and be sufficiently flexible to adapt to rapid change;

b) strategic policies should, as a minimum, provide for objectively assessed needs for housing and other uses, as well as any needs that cannot be met within neighbouring areas, unless:

- i. the application of policies in this Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a strong reason for restricting the overall scale, type or distribution of development in the plan area; 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.

**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 84 (Supporting a prosperous rural economy)** states that 'Planning policies and decisions should enable:

- a) the sustainable growth and expansion of all types of business in rural areas, both through conversion of existing buildings and well-designed new buildings;
- b) the development and diversification of agricultural and other land-based rural businesses;
- c) sustainable rural tourism and leisure developments which respect the character of the countryside; and
- d) the retention and development of accessible local services and community facilities, such as local shops, meeting places, sports venues, open space, cultural buildings, public houses and places of worship.

**Paragraph 85** 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, and in locations that are not well served by public transport. In these circumstances it will be important to ensure that development is sensitive to its surroundings, does not have an unacceptable impact on local roads and exploits any opportunities to make a location more sustainable (for example by improving the scope for access on foot, by cycling or by public transport). The use of previously developed land, and sites that are physically well-related to existing settlements, should be encouraged where suitable opportunities exist.'

**South East Lincolnshire Local Plan 2011 – 2036 adopted March 2019**

**The Local Plan Policies deemed relevant to this application are:**

**01 Spatial Strategy  
02 Development Management  
03 Design of New Development  
04 Approach to Flood Risk  
17 Providing a Mix of Housing  
36 Vehicle and Cycle Parking  
APPENDIX 6 Parking Standards**

**Also relevant is the National Planning Policy Framework 2021**

## **THE PRINCIPLE OF DEVELOPMENT**

### **Policy 1 – Spatial Strategy**

Long Sutton is classed as a Main Service Centre within the Spatial Strategy.

### **Part D - Countryside**

The rest of the Local Plan area outside the defined settlement boundaries of the Sub-Regional Centres, Main Service Centres, Minor Service Centre and Other Service Centres and Settlements is designated as Countryside. In the Countryside development will be permitted that is necessary to such a location and/or where it can be demonstrated that it meets the sustainable development needs of the area in terms of economic, community or environmental benefits.

### **The Justification for the Change of Use:**

When taking into account the specific circumstances of this application, this is already a well established C3 dwelling in a cluster of dwellings which already bolster and support the local facilities.

The Council is asked to consider that the proposed use as a children's care home would not cause a harmful conflict with the Spatial Strategies overall intentions nor undermine the objectives of the Local Plan. The proposal creates the overall effect of a busy family home and it is the applicant's intention for the children to utilise facilities in the local area, such as schools, sports clubs, shops, parks and leisure centres and the proposal would provide employment opportunities for professional carers.

The Council is asked to consider that this is already a C3 dwelling and it is perfectly possible for a large family to reside in this dwelling (which is directly comparable to the proposed change of use), and the sustainability argument would equally apply to this continued domestic use.

Occupants of this dwelling would be equally as likely to require the use of motorised forms of transport to access services and facilities due to the nature of the site. The site does however benefit from nearby services which can be accessed on foot; the site as such is not in any way an isolated inaccessible location.

### **The Principle - Conclusion:**

The Council is respectfully asked to consider that the principle of this change of use is acceptable in policy terms. The need for such facilities for children is great and this kind of family home' set up for disadvantaged children, often with disabilities and additional care needs is considered to be a successful and effective form of care.

The actual physical use is not dissimilar to that of a busy family home. In terms of sustainability, the change of use proposed is no different to its current C3 use. The children in this care facility would use the local schools, shops and leisure facilities much

like any family in this dwelling, therefore there is no additional harm or pressure but a distinct advantage would be the continued support of local facilities which brings prosperity to this semi-rural location.

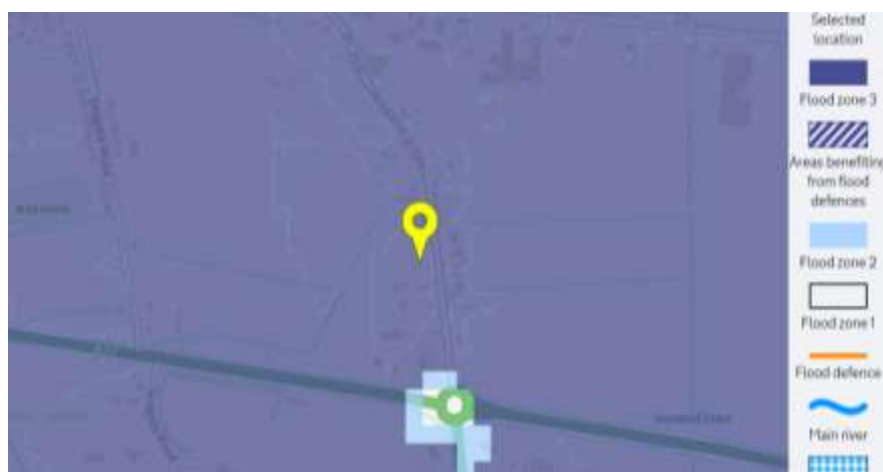
**On balance, the Council is asked to consider that the principle of this change of use is acceptable: the overall intention of the applicant is for the home to function as similar to a normal family unit as is possible, the site is already a domestic dwelling and all impacts of the Change of use are directly comparable to a dwelling, the proposals are overwhelmingly positive.**

### **OTHER MATERIAL PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS**

#### **Flood Risk:**

Much of the land within the Local Plan area is at significant risk of flooding and this will increase with climate change. It is important that the Plan provides a robust response to this issue and at the same time facilitates appropriate development to continue in a way that is resilient to the potential consequences of flooding.

Change of use of existing buildings will be supported providing they do not pose an increase in risk to people. A Change of use that would result in self-contained ground floor residential accommodation in areas of hazard rating 'danger for some', 'danger for most' and 'danger for all' will not be supported. In these areas unrestricted access to a habitable room above the flood level and an emergency evacuation plan will be required.



*Environment Agency Flood Map for Planning (2022).*

The above map from the Environment Agency Flood Maps for Planning demonstrates that the proposed location for the childrens' home is within a Flood Zone 3.

However, the Council is asked to take into consideration that the property is already in

use as a residential property. The change of use proposed is directly comparable to this established use; all sleeping accommodation will remain on the first floor and the care of the children as a 'family home' results in no increase in risk in terms of flooding.

The Council is asked to consider that the foul drainage would be as existing and there would be no significant difference than if the property were to continue to be used as a family home. With regard to surface water drainage there are no apparent concerns with the dwelling now and the front lawn and gravelled drive area does not create any surface water run off due to the largely permeable surfaces.

The change of use proposed to a children's home respectfully does not increase any flood risk issues elsewhere and remains safe for residents as much as a family dwelling.

### **ACCESS AND HIGHWAY SAFETY**

Access is as existing and there is ample space for parking and private amenity space. The gravelled driveway can comfortably accommodate 4 cars and the expanse of lawned area means that if the demand for parking on site were ever increased, then additional spaces could be provided. With the proposed change of use being comparable to a large family, the parking area is considered to be sufficient to allow safe access and egress in a forward gear, whilst providing sufficient off street parking spaces for carers.

### **LANDSCAPING**

The garden area front and rear is already attractively landscaped and enclosed to the rear. The change of use would maintain this typical family garden use resulting in no adverse changes to the visual depiction of this domestic amenity space.

### **RESIDENTIAL AMENITY**

The Council is asked to consider that the change of use to a small care facility for children, is intentionally designed to simulate a family dwelling.

The needs of the children are paramount children placed in this kind of care are reviewed against stringent Ofsted requirements to ensure that this kind of environment is most suited to the individual child to ensure a high standard of care and future progress and stability.

This review process ensures that children placed in this facility are best placed for this 'family style' care. Only 3 children at a time will benefit from this facility with care provided constantly with 6 staff available for around the clock supervision.

The Council is asked to consider that in terms of impacts on amenity and neighbours, there shall be no difference to that of a family home with children. Only children suited to this kind of facility shall be placed here and there is nothing to suggest that there would be an increase in noise impacts for neighbours to that of a family home.

The vehicle movements from the care staff would also be comparable to that of a family home when you consider that on average a home can have 2-3 cars.

Based on the above the Council is asked to consider that the Change of use accords with the principles of Local Plan Policy, in particular Policies 2, 3 and 30 and the principles contained in the Framework which afford protection to residential amenity.

## **6. CONCLUSIONS**

The proposed change of use from a residential dwelling to a childrens' care home creates very little in the way of harm.

The Council is asked to consider the benefits of the proposal and the little difference in impacts it creates to that of its existing established C3 use.

On balance it is considered to accord with Policies 1, 2, 3 and 36 (incl. Appendix 6) of the South East Lincolnshire Local Plan, as well as the National Planning Policy Framework (2021).

It is hoped that the proposals can be supported and approved by South Holland District Council so that this much needed care facility can be provided.