Proposed residential development at Westmoreland Road, Moulton



Planning Statement

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STUDIO11
architecture

Contents

		Page
1.0	Introduction	2
2.0	The Site and Surrounding Area	3
3.0	Planning History	4
4.0	Proposed Development	5
5.0	Planning Policy & Guidance	6
6.0	Conclusions	12

1.0 Introduction

1.1 Ashley King (Developments) Ltd is an established local house builder specialising in first time buyer and modest family homes throughout South Holland, Fenland and West Norfolk.

1.2 This Planning Statement accompanies a full planning application by Ashley King (Developments) Ltd for the development of a site off Westmoreland Road, Moulton.

1.3 The proposal seeks to develop the site to provide a private and affordable residential scheme comprising of thirty nine 1, 2, 3 and 4 bedroom homes, together with associated parking, private and communal amenity space. The proposal at its heart aims to create an affordable, sustainable high quality development that will contribute to the settlement of Moulton.

1.4 This statement forms part of a series of reports and documents submitted in support of the planning application.



2.0 The Site and Surrounding Area

2.1 The application proposals relate to the development of land off Westmoreland Road. The site itself is situated off both Westmoreland Road and Broad Lane, a main route into Moulton with links to the village centre.

2.2 The site is currently agricultural 'Greenfield' land laid to crop with a site area of 1.92 hectares. Access to the site is gained from Broad Lane with a pedestrian access off Westmoreland Road.

2.3 To the east the site currently borders residential housing and the settlement boundary as defined in the Local Plan 2006.

2.4 To the north and west the site abuts agricultural fields with a drainage dyke defining the site boundary.

2.5 To the south the site fronts Broad Lane which provides pedestrian, cycle and vehicular links to the village centre.

2.6 The area surrounding the site is predominantly residential use with a Primary School to the west of the site closer to the village centre. Westmoreland Road and Broad Lane are predominantly residential in character and largely comprise of single and two storey dwellings.

2.7 The application site is outside the conservation area for Moulton and not within the visual curtilage of any Listed Building.

2.8 Moulton is identified as a 'minor service centre' within the district and as such the application site benefits from access to a full range of local services and facilities.

2.9 Bus routes pass the site on Broad Lane and provide services to Spalding, Peterborough and Boston. Both Peterborough and Spalding have their own train stations which provide easy access to London in the south and Edinburgh to the north via the east coast mainline.

3.0 Planning History

3.1 There is currently no planning history to the application site.

3.2 To the wider area around the site over recent years applications for infill development between existing dwellings and on existing 'Brownfield' sites have been approved.

4.0 Proposed Development

4.1 The evolution and detailed design criteria of the proposed development is set out in more detail in the accompanying Design and Access Statement. The proposed development is a combination of site constraints, planning officer comments, feedback from the general public and experienced knowledge from local development professionals.

4.2 The proposal seeks to develop the site to provide a residential scheme comprising of thirty nine 1, 2, 3 and 4 bedroom homes, together with associated parking, private and communal amenity space. The proposal at its heart aims to create an affordable, sustainable high quality development that will contribute to the settlement of Moulton.

5.0 Planning Policy & Guidance

5.1 This section provides a comprehensive review of the development of the site in relation to the National Planning Policy Framework and the current South Holland Local Plan. Whilst it is accepted that the new South East Lincolnshire Local Plan has not been adopted, it must be seen as a key relevant document to decisions within the South Holland District.

National Planning Policy Framework

5.2 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) sets out the Government's national planning policies for England and is the basis for local and neighbourhood plans. Council's can produce their own distinctive local and neighbourhood plans that suit the needs of their communities but the National Planning Policy Framework must be a material consideration in all planning decisions.

The core element to the National Planning Policy Framework is a '**presumption in favour of sustainable development'**, This core element should be reflected in local and neighbourhood plans.

5.3 ***Ensuring the vitality of town centres*** –The NPPF notes the importance that residential development plays in the continued growth and prosperity of town centres;

'…recognise that residential development can play an important role in ensuring the vitality of centres and set out policies to encourage residential development on appropriate sites' (NPPF, Paragraph 23)

These proposals seek to provide Moulton with the opportunity to grow in a sustainable way by providing homes for couples and families which in conjunction with the promotion of sustainable transport methods will ensure and enhance the continued use of the facilities available within Moulton.

5.4 ***Promoting sustainable transport*** – The Government recognises the important role that transport plays in facilitating sustainable development and does recognise that policies and measures will vary depending on different communities and will vary from urban to rural areas.

The application site is on the outskirts of Moulton but it's close proximity to Spalding and its associated public transport links is key to the sustainable nature of the proposed development. Access via public transport and/ or cycle routes to Moulton centre, Peterborough and Spalding allowing easy access to employment, shopping, leisure, education and other activities is also seen as key to the sustainable nature of the proposed development. The opportunity for residents to walk, cycle and use public transport to access facilities is to be promoted, with the use of cars being discouraged. It is however accepted that the South Holland District is predominantly rural and therefore it is likely residents will wish to own a car.

5.5 ***Delivering a wide choice of high quality homes*** – The NPPF sets out the basic policy which is the core basis for the concept of the development of this site;

'Housing applications should be considered in the context of the presumption in favour of sustainable development.' (NPPF, Paragraph 49)

'To deliver a wide choice 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 with children, older people, people with disabilities, service 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 polices should be sufficiently flexible to take account of changing market conditions over time.' (NPPF, Paragraph 50)*

The national trend for first time buyers is that it takes many years to save up for a deposit for a home and mortgage's are increasingly hard to obtain. The majority of 'would-be' first time buyers either accept that they will live in private rented accommodation for a large part of their life, continue to live with their parents into middle age or are lucky enough to be eligible for 'affordable' housing in its various forms.

The proposed development is deliberately designed to offer a private market housing solution to this problem by making the new homes affordable to own to residents. The proposed housing mix, tenure, type and ownership all fit an established current market need. The provision of these homes would offer an alternative private housing solution that would reduce the burden on current 'affordable' housing schemes.

5.6 ***Requiring good design*** – The Government attaches great importance to the design of the built environment and recognises it as a key aspect of sustainable development. Well designed areas to live and work contribute positively to making better places for people. However, planning authorities should not over prescribe design elements and detailing which could stifle innovation and good design;

'Planning policies and decisions should not attempt to impose architectural styles or particular tastes and they should not stifle innovation, originality or initiative through unsubstantiated requirements to conform to certain development forms or styles.' (NPPF, Paragraph 60)

The proposed development seeks to embrace high quality design by providing a scheme with simple architectural detailing that reflects both Moulton and the edge of settlement position of the application site.

5.7 ***Meeting the challenge of climate change, flooding and coastal change*** – Dealing with the challenge of climate change, providing resilience to the impacts of climate change and delivering renewable/ low carbon technologies is key to the delivery of a sustainable developments.

The site is located within Flood Zone 1 and as such is not at risk of flooding, however a full site specific Flood Risk Assessment for the application site has been submitted as part of this application.

Given that the application site is not within a high water demand area it is not proposed that water conservation methods are incorporated within the homes to restrict water use beyond the current Building Regulation standards.

It is also proposed that rather than automatically incorporating renewable technologies a 'fabric first' approach is taken which by using higher levels of insulation and better workmanship in construction will provide the completed homes with a reduced energy demand.

5.8 ***Conserving and enhancing the natural environment*** – The natural environment is key to creating high quality places for people to live and work. Developments that enhance the natural environment should be encouraged.

The proposed development seeks to respond by retaining existing landscaped areas where possible and providing new landscaped spaces to enhance the natural environment and attract wildlife.

5.9 ***Conserving and enhancing the historic environment*** - The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) sets out the Government's aims for local authorities in relation to the conservation and enjoyment of historic environments.

As the application site is on the edge of the village and outside the conservation area it is felt the proposed scheme will not have an adverse affect on the historic environment of Moulton.

South Holland Local Plan 2006

5.10 In line with Government requirements South Holland District Council have produced the Local Plan which outlines how the district is expected to grow, in a sustainable way up to and beyond 2021. It should also be noted that South Holland District Council are currently preparing the South East Lincolnshire Local Plan which will supersede the existing Local Plan upon its adoption. Currently the South East Lincolnshire Local Plan is in the 'consultation' stage and unadopted.

It is however recognised that this document is seen as a key local planning policy and the NPPF does give significant weight to emerging local plans;' *The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) clarifies the position on the status of emerging plans. It states:*

From the day of publication, decision makers may also give weight to relevant policies in emerging plans according to:

- *the stage of preparation of the emerging plan (the more advanced the preparation, the greater the weight that can be given)*
- *the extent to which there are unresolved objections to relevant policies (the less significant the unresolved objections, the greater the weight that may be given); and*
- *the degree of consistency of the relevant policies in the emerging plan to the policies in this Framework (the closer the policies in the emerging plan to policies in this framework the greater the weight that may be given).*

In accordance with NPPF paragraph 216, the policies contained within this draft plan will be used (alongside the 2006 Local Plan, the NPPF and other material considerations) in determining planning applications, especially where it contains 'new' policy not currently found in either the 2006 Local Plan or the NPPF, and especially so if there are insignificant unresolved objections to such new draft policy.

5.11 ***Policy SG1 General Sustainable Development*** – In accordance with the NPPF the South Holland Local Plan seeks to approve sustainable development where possible.

Policy SG1 States:

'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.

The Local Plan policy recognises that by influencing development it can have significant influence on how well the aims and objectives of the Local Plan are achieved. To that end policy identifies that the majority of development should be in the most sustainable locations. Spalding being the largest town within the district is seen as the most sustainable settlement followed by the towns of Holbeach, Long Sutton, Sutton Bridge and Crowland. The new South East Lincolnshire Local Plan follows the same principles of the settlement hierarchy within the South Holland District and confirms that Moulton is defined as a Minor Service Centre within the district.

As such it is felt that the application site and the proposed development is in a sustainable location given its good public transport links together with easy access by walking or cycling to the village centre. The close neighbouring town of Spalding offers employment, educational and recreational facilities for the residents of the development.

5.12 ***Policy SG2 Distribution of Development & Policy SG3 Settlement Hierarchy*** – It is accepted that as Moulton is identified as a Minor Service Centre, therefore a sequential approach should be taken to development within the settlement in accordance with the Local Plan policy.

Given that the Local Plan 2006 is approximately 8 years into its adoption it is fair to say that most existing sites (both Brownfield and Greenfield) within the defined settlement boundary have been developed. Indeed given that there is not a 5 year housing supply within the South Holland District the need for new housing is a priority. Current figures indicate an immediate short fall of housing supply of 1,938 dwellings. This is supported by evidence contained within the South Holland *Housing Land Supply Assessment* (2014).

On that basis it is felt that a meaningful development of proportionate size to the settlements hierarchy, on the edge of the defined settlement limits is acceptable. The proposed development makes efficient use of land and offers residents a choice of transport methods without the need to use their car.

5.13 ***Policy SG7 Energy Efficiency*** – The Local Plan 2006 seeks on sites of 10 dwellings or more a minimum 10% provision of renewable energy production.

More recently the Government has carried out its Housing Standards review and concluded that Energy Efficiency measures within new dwellings should be monitored by the Building Regulations and not by district Planning Authorities. It is therefore felt that compliance with Part L 2013 of the Building Regulations is sufficient. It should be noted that new dwellings built in accordance with Part L 2013 are approximately 31% more efficient than those built to Part L 2006.

5.14 ***Policy SG11 Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDS)*** – The development will seek to have a two pronged approach to Surface Water drainage. Where possible all surface water will be drained via infiltration methods. Should percolation be poor then surface water will be stored on site and attenuated ready for discharge into the adjacent drain to the west of the site. Both options are subject to technical design and approval by Anglian Water.

5.15 ***Policy SG12 Sewerage and Development*** – All new dwellings will be connected to the mains foul drainage system.

5.16 ***Policy SG13 Pollution and Contamination*** – The site is currently agricultural land laid to crop and as such is not identified as land at risk of contamination.

5.17 ***Policy SG14 Design and Layout of New Development*** – A detailed analysis of the development form, layout and design is outlined with the Design and Access Statement. In general terms however the layout and design of the proposals is specifically designed to reflect both the vernacular architecture of Moulton and the sites location on the edge of the settlement.

High quality design is key to the proposals and it is felt that the development will make a positive contribution to its surroundings and Moulton as a whole.

5.18 ***Policy SG15 New Development: Facilities for Road Users, Pedestrians and Cyclists*** – All new roads and footways within the development will be designed in accordance with the 'Lincolnshire Design Guide for Residential Areas' and the County Council publication 'Development Guide on the Transport and New Development Issues in Lincolnshire'.

5.19 ***Policy SG16 Parking Standards in New Development*** – All new dwellings will be provided with a 200% car parking provision together with private gardens which allow the future provision of cycle storage should residents wish.

5.20 ***Policy SG18 Landscaping of New Development*** – Again a detailed analysis of the landscaping within the scheme is outlined within the Design and Access Statement. Landscaping is considered to be key to the overall design of the development and as such existing landscape features have been retained where possible with new landscaping to the perimeter of the sites creating new wildlife corridors and habitats. Landscaping within the site is carefully considered and is deliberately designed to define public and private spaces.

5.21 ***Policy HS1 The Housing Requirement*** – Policy HS1 states:

'Provision will be made for 3170 additional dwellings to be permitted in the District between 2004 – 2021 to comply with the Structure Plan housing requirements, of which 2730 will be in the Structure Plan urban areas and 440 will be in the Structure Plan rural areas.'

The new South East Lincolnshire Local Plan takes this a step further and suggests a minimum allocation of 350 dwellings within the service villages for the period 2011 – 2031. However, this figure does not take into account the more current *Housing Land Supply Assessment* and its conclusion of the current shortfall of housing within the South Holland District.

It is felt the these proposals would make a significant contribution to housing need, by creating a meaningful development which

positively contributes to its surroundings, Moulton village and the District as a whole.

5.21 ***Policy HS6 New Housing in Group Centres (Non-allocated Sites)*** – Policy HS6 seeks to encourage the use of existing Brownfield sites and infill sites within the defined settlement limits to provide limited growth in Group Centres. Moulton is defined as a Minor Service Centre in accordance with Local Plan 2006.

Whilst it is accepted that the application site is outside the Defined Settlement Limits of Moulton, and Moulton is defined as a Minor Service Centre within the district it does abut the existing settlement and given the limited availability of alternative sites within the Defined Settlement Limit it is felt that the positive attributes of the proposed development outweigh the negative aspects of developing outside the current Defined Settlement Limit. Especially in light of the shortfall in the current housing supply within the South Holland District.

5.22 ***Policy HS8 Affordable Housing*** – In accordance with Policy HS8 it is proposed that 13 affordable dwellings are provided in a mix of 70% rented accommodation and 30% intermediate dwellings.

5.23 ***Policy HS11 Open Space in New Residential Developments*** – In accordance with Policy HS11 14% of the overall site area will be provided as Public Open Space. It is intended that this open space is maintained by a Management Company that will be funded by the residents of the development.

6.0 Conclusion

The proposed residential development on this site has been carefully formulated. This site makes good use of land and significantly contributes to meeting housing need within Moulton and the South Holland District. It scores highly in respect of meeting current policies within the South Holland Local Plan together with the emerging policies within the new South East Lincolnshire Local Plan.

The Planning Statement demonstrates the acceptability of the scheme in all respects, subject to conditions and a Section 106 Agreement to deliver affordable housing. The Design and Access Statement provides the design justification for the proposal.

The proposed development would make an important contribution to the strategic housing supply and deliver a sustainable pattern of development in a way which will respect the character and appearance of the locality and create a high quality, attractive residential environment.

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