

Town & Country Planning Act 1990 (As Amended)
Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004

PLANNING STATEMENT

AND DESIGN & ACCESS STATEMENT

ON BEHALF OF MINSTER PROPERTY GROUP

Development of 37 Affordable Dwellings and 4 Self-Build Plots

Land East of Surfleet Road, Pinchbeck

Ref: SM_0188_R_01
LPA: South Holland District Council
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1.0 Executive Summary

- 1.1 This Planning Statement accompanies and supports the planning application submitted on behalf of Minster Property Group for the development of 37 no. affordable dwellings and 4 no. self-build plots on land east of Surfleet Road, Pinchbeck.
- 1.2 The application site currently comprises arable agricultural land adjoining the east side of Surfleet Road, in a predominantly residential area. The site is allocated for housing development with reference Pin019 under Policy 11 of the Local Plan and is located within the adopted settlement boundary of Pinchbeck.
- 1.3 The development comprises a total of 41 no dwellings, comprising 37 no. affordable homes and 4 no. self-build plots, along with private gardens, estate road, private drives, parking areas, open space, landscaping, an attenuation basin, and a pump station.
- 1.4 Following a description of the application site in Chapter 2 of this statement and full details of the proposed development in Chapter 3, a summary of relevant planning policy and material considerations, including national planning policy, is provided in Chapter 4. A detailed policy assessment of the scheme is provided in Chapter 5, with conclusions set out in Chapter 6.
- 1.5 The assessment at Chapter 5 demonstrates that the proposed development achieves a very good standard of design and will result in a high-quality development which will provide an attractive place to live for future residents as well as making a positive contribution to local character, particularly by virtue of the design emphasis on open space and landscaping throughout the site, tree-lined streets, and the provision of a strong green frontage to Surfleet Road.
- 1.6 The principal material consideration identified is the urgent need for the provision of affordable homes in the district. Compared to an identified annual need for 282 units, in recent years there have been only 67 completions per year on average. This equates to a crisis in the supply of affordable housing, with an increasing shortfall which requires urgent intervention through the delivery of affordable housing proposals.
- 1.7 The assessment concludes that the proposals are fully in accordance with the policies of the development plan and attract significant additional weight by virtue of the key material considerations. The scheme is therefore found to be entirely suitable for the granting of planning permission.

2.0 Application Site & Planning History

- 2.1 The application site comprises a roughly rectangular area of land extending to approximately 1.75 hectares in area. The site is adjoined along its western boundary by Surfleet Road, and along its northern and southern boundaries by the curtilage of existing residential properties. The eastern boundary is enclosed partly by the curtilage of another residential property, and partly by agricultural land occupied by large-scale greenhouses. The site is currently accessed via a private lane leading from Surfleet Road to the west, which also provides access to the nearby Zyon UK site.
- 2.2 The site currently consists of arable agricultural land which has been intensively farmed. The eastern boundary is enclosed by a substantial alder tree line. The western boundary with Surfleet Road is partly open and partly enclosed by a mature hedgerow. Boundary treatments to existing residential properties enclosed the northern and southern boundaries.
- 2.3 The site is located within the settlement boundary of Pinchbeck as set out on Inset Map No. 2 of the South East Lincolnshire Local Plan 2011-2036 Policies Map. The site is not subject to any other specific designations. Two areas of Recreational Open Space designated under Policy 32 of the Local Plan are located immediately to the south and southwest of the application site.

Cultural Heritage

- 2.4 The application site is not located within a Conservation Area. The nearest Listed Building is the Grade II listed Manor Farmhouse on Langhole Drove, approximately 0.5km to the west and entirely separated from the site by intervening development.

Flood Risk

- 2.5 The application site is located within an area of Flood Zone 3a which includes the whole settlement of Pinchbeck and most of Spalding, according to the Environment Agency Flood Map for Planning.

Development Plan Allocation

- 2.6 The application site is allocated for housing development in the South East Lincolnshire Local Plan 2011-2036 under reference Pin019 within Policy 11. The site area is given as 1.69 hectares and the site capacity as 34 units.

3.0 Description of Proposed Development

- 3.1 The proposed development comprises 37 no. affordable homes and 4 no. self-build plots, for a total of 41 no. dwellings, along with private gardens, estate road, private drives, parking areas, open space, landscaping, an attenuation basin and a pump station.
- 3.2 The following drawings and reports are provided in order to define the proposals:

Planning Drawings

- Drawing 20050 0100-P02 Site Location Plan
- Drawing 20050 0101-P02 Existing Site Layout
- Drawing 20050 0102-P03 Proposed Site Layout
- Drawing 20050 0103-P03 Material Distribution Plan
- Drawing 20050 0200-P02 Housetype AA - Plans & Elevations
- Drawing 20050 0201-P02 Housetype AAA - Plans & Elevations
- Drawing 20050 0202-P02 Housetype AB - Plans & Elevations
- Drawing 20050 0203-P02 Housetype AB - Plans & Elevations
- Drawing 20050 0204-P02 Housetype CC - Plans & Elevations
- Drawing 20050 0205-P02 Housetype DD - Plans & Elevations
- Drawing 20050 0206-P02 Housetype EE - Plans & Elevations
- Drawing 20050 0400-P01 Indicative Street Elevations

Supporting Documents

- BS5837 Tree Survey prepared by CBE Consulting
 - Ecology and Protected Species Survey prepared by Tim Smith
 - Flood Risk Assessment and Drainage Strategy prepared by Civilstix
 - Transport Statement prepared by Civilstix
- 3.3 The proposed layout is arranged in a wide T-shape providing strong frontages and clear desire lines for all users. The use of private drives has been kept to a minimum and a good provision of living space and external amenity space has been provided to each plot, whilst still ensuring that the full capacity of the site to provide affordable homes has been utilised.
- 3.4 The scheme has been designed to achieve an attractive, green neighbourhood character, with extensive public landscaping, tree planting including tree-lined streets,

maintaining and enhancing the existing green frontage onto Surfleet Road, and providing strong, attractive frontages throughout the site. A varied materials palette has been employed, using three distinct material combinations, in order to provide variety and visual interest throughout the development.

3.5 The proposed developable area including residential plots, estate road and external hardstanding extends to approx. 7,330sqm. The scheme includes approx. 2,750sqm of public open space, including 1437sqm amenity greenspace, a 327sqm area for children's play (LEAP), and 986sqm of incidental greenspace and public landscaping. These figures exclude the attenuation basin (1,340sqm) which in practice will also contribute functional open space. The remainder of the site area is occupied by private gardens.

3.6 Based on the gross site area of 1.75 hectares and proposed amount of 41 no. dwellings, the scheme achieves a residential density of 23.4 dwellings per hectare.

3.7 The scheme proposes the following housing mix:

Housetype	Code	Area (sq m)	Quantity
2B4P House	A	75	13
2B4P House	B	78	4
3B5P House	C	85	14
4B6P House	D	102	2
1B2P House	E	55	4
3B5P House (Self-Build Plots)	F	~92	4
Total			41

3.8 Car parking spaces are typically provided to the fore of plots and between dwellings in order to maximise the benefits of natural surveillance. The total car parking provision is 82 spaces (200%). Each plot is provided with secure covered storage for two bicycles, along with bin storage and refuse collection points where appropriate.

3.9 Existing trees and hedgerows on the site boundaries have been retained wherever possible, as set out in the accompanying Tree Survey. Additional tree planting is indicatively shown along the western and southern boundaries and within the proposed Public Open Space and landscaping areas throughout the site. Refuse collection points are indicated for those plots located along the proposed private road.

4.0 Relevant Planning Policy

Legislative background

- 4.1 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that applications for planning permission must be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

The Development Plan

- 4.2 The current adopted development plan comprises the policies of the South East Lincolnshire Local Plan (adopted March 2019).

South East Lincolnshire Local Plan (Adopted March 2019)

- 4.3 Policy 1 sets out the spatial strategy for the plan area. It identifies Pinchbeck as a Main Service Centre, stating that *“within the boundaries of the Main Service Centres...development will be permitted that supports their role as a service centre for the settlement itself, helps sustain existing facilities or helps meet the service needs of other local communities.”*
- 4.4 Policy 2 deals with development management. It sets out criteria for the determination of planning applications, including size, scale, layout, density and impact on amenity, trees and local character, quality of design and orientation, sustainability, access, services and infrastructure, impacts on adjoining land, drainage and flood risk, ecological and heritage impacts, and impacts on mineral resources.
- 4.5 Policy 3 sets out criteria for assessing the design of new development, including sense of space and relationship with the site context, landscape character, accessibility, cycle and bin storage, lighting, crime prevention, sustainability and low-carbon energy technologies, residential amenity, flood risk and sustainable drainage, the use of locally sourced building materials, water efficiency and biodiversity.
- 4.6 Policy 4 sets out the policy approach to flood risk within the plan area. It sets out the circumstances in which development in higher flood risk area may be permitted, in accordance with the sequential test and exceptions test set out in national policy. The supporting text at paragraph 3.5.4 confirms that *“sites allocated in the Local Plan are deemed to have passed the sequential test and no further evidence in respect of this will need to be submitted at planning application stage,”* while a site-specific flood risk

assessment will still be required to demonstrate that the development will be safe for its lifetime, taking into account any proposed mitigation measures.

- 4.7 Policy 5 and Policy 6 together provide the basis for developer contributions to be secured in respect of required infrastructure provision which cannot be met on-site for major developments. Policy 6 sets out a range of potential contributions, including transport, education, open space, sports facilities, and healthcare. All requested contributions must have regard to the viability of the proposed development.
- 4.8 Policy 10 sets out the overall assessed housing requirements for the plan area, including a requirement for a net increase of 11,681 dwellings over the plan period, or 467 dwellings per annum, in South Holland District.
- 4.9 Policy 11 sets out in detail the proposed distribution of new housing on allocated sites. The application site is allocated under reference Pin019, Land east of Surfleet Road, with the site area given as 1.69 hectares and capacity given as 34 units.
- 4.10 Appendix 5 of the Local Plan sets out details of infrastructure requirements for housing allocations in Pinchbeck. For all sites, potential requirements are identified for education and healthcare. Surface water is expected to be dealt with on-site through SUDs, while sufficient capacity is identified for sewage treatment and water resources. In respect of allocation Pin019, it is noted that the site has no major archaeological issues, that a frontage footway linking to Oldham Drive would be required, and that it is unlikely that significant flood mitigation will be required.
- 4.11 Policy 17 deals with housing mix, stating that *“the provision of new houses will seek to meet the long-term needs of the Plan area in order to maintain and provide mixed, inclusive and sustainable communities.”*
- 4.12 Policy 18 deals with affordable housing and identifies a substantial level of need across the plan area. On sites in South Holland 25% of units will be sought as affordable on schemes of 11 or more dwellings. Beyond this the shortfall is expected to be met through sites proposed by developers specifically for affordable housing (18.2) and Rural Exceptions Sites (18.3) under Policy 19.
- 4.13 The latest evidence on affordable housing need is set out in the Strategic Housing Market Assessment Update (March 2017). The SHMA identifies a net need of 282 additional affordable homes per annum in South Holland. However it has been reported that only 67 affordable units were completed per year on average between 2016/17 and 2020/21, and that in the year 2020-21 there were only 103 completions, indicating that a significant shortfall has already built up against the SHMA requirement.

- 4.14 Policy 32 deals with community, health and well-being, stating that development should protect and enhance existing public rights of way, and create environments which discourage crime, encourage health eating and local food growing, demonstrate good accessibility to all users, facilitate walking, cycling and public transport, and facilitate community use.
- 4.15 Policy 35 deals with the delivery of the Spalding Transport Strategy, including the Spalding Western Relief Road (SWRR). It states that financial contributions towards schemes within the STP will be sought from allocated and non-allocated major housing developments in Spalding and Pinchbeck, including allocation Pin019 which relates to the application site.

The National Planning Policy Framework (“the NPPF”) July 2021

- 4.16 The latest version of the NPPF was published on 20 July 2021. It sets out the Government’s overarching planning policies relating to both plan-making and decision-taking. It is applicable to the determination of planning applications both in that development plan policies which are not in accordance with relevant policies in the NPPF are considered to be out-of-date – causing the Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development to be engaged – and as a principal material consideration in its own right.
- 4.17 Paragraph 11 of the NPPF establishes the Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development. For the purposes of decision-taking this means *“approving development proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan without delay,”* or, *“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,”* of relevance to these proposals, *“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.”*
- 4.18 Section 5 of the NPPF sets out policy relating to the delivery of housing. It reiterates the Government’s objective of *“significantly boosting the supply of homes”* to meet the needs of all groups including the need for affordable housing.
- 4.19 Paragraph 125 addresses housing densities, and states that *“where there is an existing or anticipated shortage of land for meeting identified housing needs, it is especially important that planning policies and decisions avoid homes being built at low densities, and ensure that developments make optimal use of the potential of each site.”*

4.20 Section 12 of the NPPF deals with design in new developments. Paragraph 30 states that planning policies and decisions should ensure that developments:

- a) will function well and add to the overall quality of the area, not just for the short term but over the lifetime of the development;
- b) are visually attractive as a result of good architecture, layout and appropriate and effective landscaping;
- c) are sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation or change (such as increased densities);
- d) establish or maintain a strong sense of place, using the arrangement of streets, spaces, building types and materials to create attractive, welcoming and distinctive places to live, work and visit;
- e) optimise the potential of the site to accommodate and sustain an appropriate amount and mix of development (including green and other public space) and support local facilities and transport networks; and
- f) create places that are safe, inclusive and accessible and which promote health and well-being, with a high standard of amenity for existing and future users; and where crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine the quality of life or community cohesion and resilience.

4.21 Paragraph 131 notes that trees make an important contribution to the character and quality of urban environments, and states that *“Planning policies and decisions should ensure that new streets are tree-lined.”*

Self-build and Custom Housebuilding Act 2015

4.22 Schedule 2A of the Self-build and Custom Housebuilding Act 2015 (as amended) imposes a duty on local planning authorities to grant planning permission for sufficient serviced plots to meet the demand for self-build and custom housing within their authority area. The duty is a significant material consideration in the determination of planning applications involving self-build plots.

5.0 Assessment of Proposed Development

Principle of Development

- 5.1 The principle of residential development on the site is established by housing allocation Pin019 set out under Policy 11 of the Local Plan. The allocation gives a site area of 1.69 hectares and a capacity of 34 units. The current proposals are based on a more accurate site area of 1.75 hectares. On that basis the indicated capacity of 34 units would produce a density of 19.4 dwellings per hectare, which would not represent an efficient use of land. The proposals for a total of 41 dwellings equates to a density of 23.4 dwellings per hectare, which is considered to be acceptable and to represent an efficient use of land when taking into account policy requirements for on-site open space and technical requirements for drainage infrastructure.
- 5.2 Appendix 5 to the Local Plan sets out infrastructure requirements for the site allocation, and specifically identifies that a frontage footway linking the scheme to Oldham Drive to the south would be required. The required footway link is incorporated within the proposals.
- 5.3 For these reasons it is concluded that the proposed development accords overall with the terms of the Local Plan allocation, and complies fully with Policy 1, Policy 10 and Policy 11 of the development plan in respect of the principle of development.
- 5.4 The proposals are for 100% affordable housing, except for the provision of 4 no. self-build plots. There is a significant identified shortfall in the delivery of affordable housing in the plan area, with only 67 completions per annum on average in the period 2016/17 – 2020-21 compared to the annual requirement of 282 completions per annum set out in the SHMA. This equates to a crisis in the availability of affordable housing provision in the district. The effects of the COVID-19 pandemic are expected to further drive up the need for affordable housing, in a context where delivery through Local Plan allocations and windfall sites is already failing to meet demand by a significant margin.
- 5.5 It is clear that the development plan does not currently make sufficient provision to meet affordable housing need within the plan area. The provisions of NPPF paragraph 11.d are therefore engaged, and policy directs that planning permission should be granted unless any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies of the NPPF as a whole.

- 5.6 The urgent need for the delivery of additional affordable housing in the district represents a principal material consideration in support of the principle of the proposed development, alongside the presumption in favour of sustainable development established by national policy.
- 5.7 For these reasons it is concluded that the principle of the proposed development is clearly established.

Design & Local Character

- 5.8 The proposals have been designed to achieve the best possible assessment against the Building for a Healthy Life standards, whilst maintaining a viable and deliverable development. The design is considered to result in an attractive neighbourhood environment which will provide a great place to live for future residents and a positive contribution to local character. The use of a varied materials palette with a range of distinct materials combinations, as set out on drawing 20050 0103-P03, will provide variation and visual interest throughout the site. There is an emphasis on creating a green environment with extensive landscaping throughout the site, with continuous tree lined streets and open space integrated in the scheme to maximise its use and enjoyment by residents. The existing green frontage of the site has been maintained and enhanced, respecting the local vernacular in respect of urban grain and dwellings set back from Surfleet Road, which will result in a positive contribution to local character.
- 5.9 For these reasons the scheme is considered to accord strongly with the relevant requirements of Policy 2 and Policy 3 of the Local Plan, and with the requirements of national policy in respect of design.

Residential Amenity

- 5.10 The scheme provides well proportioned living spaces and external amenity space to each plot, with appropriate separation distances and orientation of dwellings to ensure privacy and avoid any issues of overbearing or overshadowing between units. As a result, the scheme achieves a very high standard of residential amenity for future residents.
- 5.11 An acceptable separation distance between side elevations of approx. 23.2m is demonstrated on the southern boundary of the site adjoining existing dwellings, while a back-to-back distance of 27m at the closest point, and garden depth of approx. 15m from Plots 31 – 37 ensures an acceptable relationship with the adjoining residential property.

Open Space & Landscaping

- 5.12 Local Plan Policy 32 indicates a requirement for 1,335sqm of amenity greenspace and 178sqm provision for children and young people, based on maximum occupancy for the scheme of 178 persons. The scheme exceeds these requirements with the provision of approx. 1,437sqm of functional amenity greenspace on the southern part of the site, and an area of approx. 327sqm for children's, expected to be provided through a Local Equipped Area for Play (LEAP) in the area indicated on accompanying drawing 20050 0102-P03. Approximately 986sqm of additional incidental greenspace and public landscaped areas is also provided throughout the site. The total provision of open space on the site equates to approximately 15.7% of the gross site area.
- 5.13 Whilst these figures exclude the area of the proposed attenuation basin, it should be noted that in practice the basin will be planted appropriately to ensure that it forms an attractive green biodiversity feature which will contribute positively to the surrounding open space.
- 5.14 In addition to the provision of on-site open space, the site is also located in close proximity to two designated areas of Recreational Open Space, and is within a 10 minute walk (750m) of the public right of way along the River Glen, providing access to an extensive network of semi-natural greenspace.
- 5.15 Indicative landscaping is set out on the accompanying Proposed Site Layout Plan, demonstrating significant provision of public landscaped areas and tree planting throughout the site. It is anticipated that full details of proposed planting and maintenance of landscaping areas will be secured via planning condition.
- 5.16 It is therefore found that the proposals fully comply with the relevant requirements of Policy 2, Policy 3 and Policy 32 in respect of open space and landscaping.

Flood Risk & Drainage

- 5.17 The application site is located within Flood Zone 3a. The Local Plan confirms that the evidence of the sequential test is not required due to the existing housing allocation on the site. The application is supported by a site-specific Flood Risk Assessment, which demonstrates that the development will be safe from flooding in its lifetime, subject to the incorporation of flood mitigation measures as follows:
- Finished floor levels set at a minimum of 0.6m higher than estimated flood levels;
 - Implementation of the proposed SUDs surface water strategy; and

- Provision of an Emergency Flood Plan to remain in place for the lifetime of the development.

- 5.18 The proposed surface water drainage strategy is set out within the FRA. The strategy confirms following the results of ground investigations carried out in November 2021 that infiltration discharge of surface water is not feasible. An attenuation basin to a suitable specification is therefore proposed on the southern part of the site, with sufficient capacity to accommodate a 1:100 year event plus 40% allowance for climate change. Foul water from the development will connect to the existing Anglian Water foul drainage system in the vicinity of the site. Appropriate maintenance and management arrangements are also set out in the report.
- 5.19 It is confirmed that the recommended mitigation measures and drainage strategy will be implemented as proposed, and may be further secured by the use of planning conditions. On this basis it is considered that the proposals are acceptable in respect of flood risk and drainage and therefore comply with the relevant requirements of Policy 4 of the Local Plan and Chapter 14 of the NPPF.

Access

- 5.20 There is an existing vehicular access on the northern boundary of the application site, connecting to a private lane leading from Surfleet Road to the west. It is proposed that this access will be stopped up by the provision of residential units in that area of the site, and a new vehicular and pedestrian access created directly onto Surfleet Road approximately central to the development.
- 5.21 The application is supported by a Transport Statement which provides a technical assessment of the proposed junction. The TS demonstrates that the proposed junction meets the required highway design standards. The anticipated trip rate of the development is found to result in a negligible effect on the surrounding highway network.
- 5.22 The TS also demonstrates that the provision of car parking and cycle storage is acceptable, and that the site has a very good level of accessibility for pedestrians and cycle users, with bus stops located within 240m of the site access providing frequent services into Boston and Pinchbeck, where national public transport access is available via rail.
- 5.23 It is therefore concluded that the proposals accord with the relevant requirements of the development plan in respect of access and transport matters, including the relevant criteria under Policy 2, Policy 3 and Policy 32 of the Local Plan.

Ecology & Biodiversity

- 5.24 The application is supported by an Ecology and Protected Species Survey which provides an assessment of the existing status of the site and sets out recommendations where appropriate for ecological mitigation measures. The recommendations comprise:
- Retention as far as possible of the existing boundary hedgerows;
 - Provision of native trees and shrub species beneficial to wildlife;
 - Planting of the attenuation basin with an appropriate wetland-inundation wildflower mixture;
 - Precautionary measures for nesting birds during the construction phase;
 - Provision of up to two pole-mount bat roosting boxes on the eastern boundary; and
 - Provision of hedgehog holes on internal residential boundaries and external boundaries to the site.
- 5.25 It is confirmed that these measures will be incorporated within the development. For the avoidance of doubt, a Scheme of Ecological Enhancement Measures could be secured via planning condition, or details could alternatively be required to accompany the landscaping condition details.
- 5.26 Due to the existing low level of biodiversity value on the majority of the site due to its existing use as actively farmed arable land, the development proposals, incorporating the measures set out above, are expected to achieve a clear biodiversity net gain.

Developer Contributions

- 5.27 It is noted that the Local Plan indicates potential requirements for financial contributions towards local infrastructure, including in respect of education, healthcare and transport including schemes set out under the Spalding Transport Strategy. Any requested contributions will be considered in the context of the viability of the proposed development.

6.0 Planning Balance & Conclusions

6.1 This report has provided an assessment of the proposed development of 37 no. affordable dwellings and 4 no. self-build plots on Land East of Surfleet Road, Pinchbeck against the relevant policies of the development plan alongside material considerations including the National Planning Policy Framework.

6.2 The key conclusions relevant to the determination of the proposals are as follows:

- The principle of the proposed development is established by virtue of the allocation of the site for housing under reference Pin019 and its location within the settlement boundary of Pinchbeck;
- The development achieves an excellent standard of design which will make a positive contribution to local character and will create an attractive green neighbourhood, whilst avoiding any unacceptable impacts on the amenity of existing or future residents;
- The scheme includes very good provision of on-site open space, including suitable provision for children's play, and an attractive landscaped environment with tree lined streets which will incorporate ecology measures to achieve an enhancement to local biodiversity;
- The site benefits from a good standard of accessibility for pedestrians and cyclists, with local services within close walking distance and regular bus services to Spalding, Boston and wider transport connections; and
- The development will directly address the critical shortfall in the availability of affordable homes in the district, which currently equates to a severe crisis with the annual requirement increasingly outstripping the annual number of completions.

6.3 It has been demonstrated that the scheme accords fully with the development plan. The identified material considerations, in particular the critical shortfall in the availability of affordable homes in the district, lend very significant additional weight in favour of the proposals. For these reasons, it is concluded that the proposed development is entirely suitable for the granting of planning permission.