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Planning Statement for a full planning application for industrial development at Benner Road, Pinchbeck, Spalding (Includes Design and Access Statement)

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town planning



landscape architecture



architecture

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. This Planning Statement has been produced to support a full planning application for the construction of 11 industrial units (Use Classes E, B2 and B8) on land at Benner Road, Pinchbeck, Spalding.

1.2. The application site is expected to be retained in a single ownership and the units will be rented to individual businesses, which will allow for the ongoing maintenance of roads and the shared surface water drainage system.

1.3. The application site is undeveloped, but is within an area of employment and commercial businesses, and is allocated as a "Proposed Main Employment Area", part of the 34.6ha remaining development land at the Wardentree Lane site allocated under Policy 7 of the South East Lincolnshire Local Plan (2019).

2. THE PROPOSAL

2.1. The development is for eleven business units (Use Classes Use Classes E, B2 and B8) in three terraces. All 11 units will be 216m^2 (GEA) each to serve the needs of local businesses.

2.2. The development will be accessed from Benner Road.

3. THE SITE

3.1. The site is an "L" shaped area of open grass land within the Main Employment Area allocated under Policy 7 of the South East Lincolnshire Local Plan.

3.2. The southern boundary follows the boundary of a neighbouring industrial premises. The eastern boundary follows a hedge line along Shackbolt Lane (a single track lane that, despite being an adopted highway, is not in regular use). The northern boundary follows a fence line adjacent to Wardentree Lane. A line of trees follows the fence line and are to be retained as part of the development. The short boundaries to the north east follow the boundary of another business premises and the western boundary runs along Benner Road. The site is almost level, with only slight variation in ground level.

3.3. The site is, as expected in this location, surrounded by other commercial buildings including business uses and a supermarket.

3.4. A single access would be taken from Benner Road.

4. PLANNING POLICY AND MATERIAL CONSIDERATION

National Planning Policy Framework

4.1. The National Planning Policy Framework 2019 (NPPF) sets out Central Government's planning policies for England and how these are to be applied.

4.2. The delivery of sustainable development is the key to, and at the heart of the NPPF, as set out in paragraphs 7-10. Paragraph 8 sets out three overarching objectives to achieve sustainable development: an economic, a social and environmental objective. Paragraph 9 explains that these objectives should be delivered through the preparation and implementation of plans and the application of the policies in the Framework. Planning policies and decisions should play an active role in guiding development towards sustainable solutions, but, in doing so, they should take local circumstances into account to reflect the character, needs and opportunities of each area.

4.3. Paragraph 11 of the Framework states,

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

4.4. The paragraph 11 presumption applies to sustainable development and so the first question is always "is this development sustainable?". To answer that question, the proposal must be judged against the relevant paragraphs in the NPPF.

4.5. The three overarching objectives of the planning system referred to, in Section 2 of the NPPF, are interdependent and need to be pursued in mutually supportive ways (so that opportunities can be taken to secure net gains across each of the different objectives):

"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."

THE DEVELOPMENT PLAN

4.6. Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 states that, "If regard is to be had to the development plan for the purpose of any determination to be made under the Planning Acts the determination must be made in accordance with the plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise."

4.7. The Development Plan for the purposes of this application is the South East Lincolnshire Local Plan (2019). There is no Neighbourhood Plan covering the Spalding/Pinchbeck area.

South East Lincolnshire Local Plan (2019)

4.8. The South East Lincolnshire Local Plan (2019) (Local Plan) was adopted in 2019 and replaced all policies from the earlier South Holland Local Plan.

4.9. The Local Plan sets a spatial strategy for the distribution of growth and allocates sites for different development necessary to deliver new homes and investment.

Policy 1: Spatial Strategy

4.10. Spalding is identified as a "sub regional centre", which, as the most sustainable settlement in the district, is the most sustainable location for growth. The site itself is within a Main Employment Area identified in the Local Plan and, as such, accords with the spatial strategy for South East Lincolnshire.

Policy 2: Development Management

4.11. This policy sets out the criteria against which applications will be assessed, including: detailed design; access arrangements; infrastructure capacity; impact on neighbours in terms of noise, odour, disturbance or visual intrusion; sustainable drainage and flood risk, impact on natural and historic assets; and, the loss of mineral resources.

4.12. The proposed business units are in one of the main employment areas identified in the Local Plan. The scale and design of the proposed units, in terms of type and size is appropriate to the location: will not impact on the amenity of neighbouring uses and will have access to appropriate infrastructure.

Policy 3: Design of New development

4.13. Requires all development to create distinctive places, through the use of a high-quality design and layout.

4.14. This proposal provides business uses for rent in an area identified for business units. The units have been designed to a high standard, using a mixed pallet of materials to provide an attractive environment.

4.15. All the units face onto the road serving the site and, as such, will provide an active and attractive frontage to the new road. The rear of the units back on to existing buildings.

4.16. Retention of the open frontage along Wardentree Lane, together with the existing trees, will allow glimpses of activity within the site, rather than views of long, blank rear walls.

Policy 4: Approach to Flood Risk

4.17. A Flood Risk and Drainage Strategy has been provided to support the application. This demonstrates how the site, which like much of the wider employment area is at potential risk of flooding, can incorporate measures to be taken to mitigate the impact of flooding. The Strategic

Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) for the area concludes that, in the event of a breach of the main flood defences, the site could be subject to flooding up to 50cm above ground level. The represents a worst-case scenario of flooding up to 3.75m AOD. Due to the size and shape of the site and the existing ground levels, it is not possible to raise the floor levels of all the units to this height, whilst allowing for vehicular and pedestrian access to the buildings at suitable gradients. The main floor level is proposed to be set at 3.45, with flood resilient measures employed up to 4.45m AOD, which will limit the impact of any potential flood. More sensitive uses (offices, reception and toilets) within the buildings will be set at 3.75m, with ramp access provided to these areas from both within and outside the individual units, which will place them above the maximum flood level identified in the SFRA.

4.18. Surface water drainage can be provided on site using either permeable sub base, cellular crates or an attenuation pond, or a combination of all three. The layout provided with the application indicates the use of cellular crates.

Policy 7: Improving South East Lincolnshire's Employment Land Portfolio

4.19. The site lies within a Main Employment Area which is reserved for B1, B2 and B8 uses. Delivery of these units will contribute towards the overall delivery of this employment site and contribute towards the need to provide 10,300 jobs across the South East Lincolnshire area. The Employment Land Technical Paper (2017), prepared to support the Local Plan, identifies the need to provide units that are capable of accommodating small and start-up businesses to encourage "home grown" employment and entrepreneurship. As such, all employment sites are expected to accommodate small businesses, should the demand arise.

4.20. The type and scale of development proposed is, therefore, appropriate in this location.

5. DESIGN AND ACCESS

Context and Layout

5.1. The site is embedded within the main employment area on Wardentree Road, Spalding. An "L" shaped site with frontages to Wardentree Lane and Benner Road, it is enclosed on all sides by business uses, although there is a Morrisons supermarket on the other side of Benner Road.

5.2. The rear of the site follows Shotbolt Lane, which, although having the appearance of a country lane, runs between business units. The surrounding buildings are one and two storey high commercial buildings, but they are set in generous plots surrounded by car parks, service yards and grassed areas.

5.3. The Wardentree Lane frontage will not benefit from any new access, but the alignment of the buildings will retain an open frontage, rather than provide a blank rear face of units, and will afford some views of activity occurring within the site.

Design

5.4. The units are single storey, commercial buildings with a high internal clearance to allow for flexible uses by different occupants. The scale of the development is similar to other units in the immediate area. Scale and massing of the units is increased by terracing units in groups of three or four. The units accord will complement and enhance the surrounding built environment.

Ecology

5.5. The site is a grassed area within a modern industrial area and is allocated for business use. There are no notable ecological habitats within the area. The nearest potential interest is provided by the trees and hedgerow along Shotbolt Lane, and this will be untouched.

Highway Safety

5.6. This proposal will be accessed from Benner Road, which serves the wider employment use and can support the wider development to be provide in that location.

5.7. The proposed site access is of a similar arrangement to the access to Neil Brown Engineering, which is close to the access to Spalding Building Supplies. There are no recorded concerns with that junction

arrangement. Informal discussions have been undertaken with Officers of the Highway team at Lincolnshire County Council and they have indicated that they do not expect to object to the proposal on the grounds of Highways Safety.

Heritage Statement

5.8. The site is not within a Conservation Area, and there are no listed buildings or other notable heritage assets in proximity to the site. The development will not impact on the Historic Environment.

Landscape and Boundary Treatment

5.9. The site is surrounded by industrial development on all sides. Its setting is formed of commercial buildings, in a mix of business and retail uses, and, as such, is not in a landscape setting.

5.10. The Wardentree Lane frontage benefits from some existing trees and a fence line, these will remain unaltered, as will the hedgerows along Shotbolt Lane.

Flood Risk and Drainage

5.11. The allocated site is subject to the same flood risk as the neighbouring properties.

5.12. As an allocated site, the sequential test set out in the NPPF and Planning Practice Guidance has already been met.

5.13. A Flood Risk Assessment and Drainage Strategy has been prepared and submitted to support the application.

5.14. The assessment draws on the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment for South East Lincolnshire, which indicates the site, in common with the surrounding area, is at risk of flooding up to 50cm in depth in the event of a breach. In a worst-case scenario, this represents flooding up to a depth of 3.75m AOD. Providing access to the buildings makes it impractical to raise all floor levels to this height. We propose, therefore, to set the workshop floors at 3.45m, which allows for a suitable gradient for vehicles to approach the building from the road, with sensitive uses within the building (reception, office, toilets, etc) set above 3.75m. Flood resilience measures will be incorporated in the workshops to a height of 4.45m AOD.

5.15. The site can be drained by the use of permeable subbase, cellular crates or attenuation basin or a mixture of all three. The design assumes the use of cellular crates, but the detailed drainage strategy can be agreed prior to commencement of development.

5.16. The proposed development would benefit from greater flood protection and mitigation measures than the existing development and will be provided with an appropriate form of surface water drainage. The proposal will not increase flood risk off site.

6. CONCLUSION

6.1. The scale and location of development is in accordance with Local Plan Policy 1: Spatial Strategy and Policy 7: Improving South East Lincolnshire's Employment Land Portfolio. The development of smaller industrial units will meet the accommodation needs to support small businesses and entrepreneurship in the area in a location that is identified as a main employment area within the Local Plan.

6.2. The proposal is supported by a Flood Risk Assessment, which has informed the form and layout of development. The use of increased floor levels, flood mitigation measures and surface water attenuation measures ensure that the development can be justified in this location.

6.3. The physical scale, form and appearance of the development reflects that of other buildings in the area. The quality of design will ensure that the proposed buildings will enhance the area.

6.4. There will be minimal to no impact on the natural and historic environment: and no detrimental impact on the amenity of neighbouring businesses.

6.5. The development will not have a detrimental impact on highway safety.

6.6. The application is Sustainable Development in conformity with the up to date Development Plan and the NPPF and, as such, should be approved without delay.

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A design consultancy specialising in Town and Country Planning, Landscape Architecture and Architecture

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