Development Management
South Holland District Council
Priory Road
Spalding
Lincs

8th January 2021

Dear Sir / Madam,

OUTLINE PLANNING APPLICATION – proposed residential development for up to two dwellings

We are pleased to submit an outline planning application for residential development of up to two dwellings and associated works. The application is submitted in outline with all details reserved for subsequent approval.

The 0.1hectare application site is currently vacant and, as landowner, our wider landholdings at Aberdale Nursery comprise a horticultural business from which we have recently retired. The site is located on Burr Lane, which has recently established a planning precedent for small scale residential development, thus reinforcing it as a sustainable location which is in close proximity of Spalding town centre and well positioned for the strategic highway network and onward connections via the A16. It is also in close proximity to the existing and planned expansion of the Lincs Gateway development which will reinforce this part of the town as a prominent location for economic development.

Merits of the Proposal

The development of this vacant site at Aberdale Nursery provides the opportunity to create an attractive small scale residential development in a quiet, accessible and sustainable location close to Spalding and also to the 'Links Gateway' project. The proposed units would provide a semi-urban / rural living environment which is a different offer to the majority of units allocated through the South East Lincolnshire Local Plan (SELLP) on large urban extension sites and thus fulfils a housing need that is largely not already catered for.

The site has a functional relationship with neighbouring residential units and the principle of new small-scale residential development on Burr Lane has been well established in recent years. The proposed development is considered to be in line with the SELLP in the context of circumstances, as set out in policy 1, whereby development in the countryside would be permitted given its ability to meet the sustainable development needs of the area, as explained further below.

The site is accessed immediately off Burr Lane, from which it is proposed a new vehicular access would be created, subject to approval of reserved matters details. To the east is the wider landholding of Aberdale Nursery, as noted above, the horticultural use of which has now ceased but greenhouses and an existing bungalow remain present. To the west is a newly constructed residential dwelling and to the south is an existing dwelling and further new residential development in the form of three new units.

The site is not subject to any significant constraints and as set out above is well related to existing residential development along Burr Lane. Importantly, the development would represent a significant visual improvement to the current state of the site. The site is redundant and thus has not been effectively maintained and would benefit from improvement through small scale development to better consolidate the built development along Burr Lane.

The location of the site is in reasonable walking and cycling distance to Spalding town centre and the local facilities at 'Little London' are in close proximity and are easily walkable / cyclable. Whilst formal footpath provision is limited to that along Barrier Bank / Cowbit Road, it is clear that this is not seen as a limiting highway factor for residential development along Burr Lane given the precedent established by at least four recent residential permissions adjacent and opposite to the application site.

The proposed development, as illustrated on the indicative layout submitted in support of the application, is intended to follow the linear, frontage type of development that is characteristic of units along Burr Lane, allowing for an element of set back and potentially frontage parking. This form of development would be in-keeping with the semi urban-rural character of Burr Lane and would ensure the units are appropriate within their context.

Planning Evaluation

In accordance with Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, the proposal is to be determined in accordance with the development plan unless other material considerations indicate otherwise. Whilst under the South East Lincolnshire Local Plan (SELLP), the site is outside the settlement limits of Spalding, Policy 1 of the SELLP which sets out the principles of the of the spatial strategy for steering new development to the most sustainable locations while protecting the character of the countryside, is considered to provide a supportive context for the application.

Policy 1 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. Furthermore, the SELLP indicates that infill and speculative applications, and also rural exception sites, will contribute to the housing requirement, thus there is an acknowledgement that sites outside of the proposed allocations will be permitted to meet the housing need.

The proposed development is considered to meet the sustainable development needs of the area taking account of the following three components:

Economic needs – following the retirement of the landowners and the cease of trading of Aberdale Nursery, the proposed development will provide an element of replacement employment in the form of construction activity, albeit of a limited scale. This is beneficial in comparison to the site being left vacant. The site's location in close proximity of 'Links Gateway' also means that there is the potential for the units to support this prominent economic hub.

Community / social – Spalding is a sub-regional centre and has a large number of services and facilities. The site is in close proximity to the town centre and, whilst not within the settlement boundary, this is considered beneficial in terms of the housing offer the site can provide. It is important for South Holland to have a varied housing supply and housing offer. This particular semi rural/ urban location has the ability to provide larger plots in an edge of town location which is a different offer to the majority of urban extension allocations around Spalding. It is considered that there is demand for this type of plot / unit, particularly in light of the other adjacent recently constructed dwellings along Burr Lane. Thus, the units have the benefit of this location, whilst having ease of access to the amenities in Spalding town centre. The site is in a much more sustainable location than other more rural and isolated countryside sites or sites in smaller service centres which would require travel to Spalding for higher-order needs. The site also has the added benefit of proximity to the strategic highway network, meaning access to larger urban areas such as Peterborough, can be achieved without exacerbating town centre traffic.

Environmental – the site is currently vacant and would benefit from clearance and development to improve its visual appearance. The construction of two additional units in this location would aid the transition along Burr Lane to a more residential environment, already being established by the recently developed dwellings. The proposed development would also mean the site would be subject to positive landscape and drainage interventions (subject to reserved matters details) providing environmental betterment.

Summary

Notwithstanding its location outside the settlement limits, the development would therefore support Spalding as a sub-regional centre and contribute towards the local housing requirement, providing a housing offer not necessarily met by alternative sites.

The above demonstrates that the proposals meet the sustainable needs of the area in providing economic, social and environmental benefits and thus the application accords with Policy 1 of the SELLP. In this context, the benefits of the development would demonstrably outweigh any adverse impacts and the principle of development is considered acceptable. In accordance with the National

Planning Policy Framework and presumption in favour of sustainable development, in light of the above, it is considered there is a favourable policy context for the approval of the application.

The site is well related to existing residential development and would provide a natural extension to the residential environment along Burr Lane, for which a planning precedent has already been well established.

Flood Risk and Sequential and Exceptions Test

According the Environment Agency's Flood Risk Map for planning, the application site is located in Flood Zone 3 and therefore will need to be subject to the sequential and exceptions test.

Further detail on this is provided in the submitted Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) submitted in support of the application. Large parts of South Holland are within this same flood zone and as is demonstrated by the majority of allocations in the SELLP, it is not possible to locate development on sites of lower flood risk to meet the housing requirements of the area. It is considered that there are no known available sites in this location which would provide for the same type of housing offer, in areas of lower flood risk.

An assessment of the development to meet the sustainable development needs of the area is provided above and demonstrates that the proposals should pass the exceptions test in contributing towards the SELLP housing requirement.

Importantly, the proposed development would incorporate any necessary mitigation required to address the residual flood risk of the area, including floor levels, as set out in the accompanying FRA.

Design and Access

As the application is submitted in outline with all matters reserved for subsequent approval, no detailed information is provided on design or access. The indicative layout provides an illustration as to how the two units could be positioned, in keeping with other units along Burr Lane. The plots are reasonably sized and do not represent over-development of the site, allowing for suitable on-plot parking and well-proportioned private amenity space. It is considered a single access could serve both units, subject to reserved matters. The principle of private drives onto Burr Lane is already well established.

Subject to discussions with the Local Planning Authority at reserved matters stage, the design of the units could be undertaken to align with the recent neighbouring development, if considered appropriate to help establish continuity.

Given the precedent set by all of the recent applications along Burr Lane, there is considered to be a supportive context for this application.

The application comprises:

- Covering Letter
- Forms and notices
- Site Location Plan / Red line boundary
- Indicative Layout / Block Plan
- Flood Risk Assessment
- Appropriate Application Fee

We trust that the attached information allows you to validate and determine the application as soon as possible.

Should you require further information, please do not hesitate to contact myself. I look forward to hearing from you at your earliest convenience.

Yours faithfully,

Helen Pearson-Flett
Email: hflett@davidlock.com