DESIGN & ACCESS STATEMENT

Client: The Trustees of the Estate of Horace Andrew deceased

Project: Residential development, Locksmill Farm, Cowbit Road, Spalding, Lincs (incorporating adjacent Travel Stop Motel)

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INTRODUCTION

The proposal is for 26 no. new dwellings and public open space provision to the south of Spalding, just south of the former railway line. The site is currently an agricultural holding (Locksmill Farm) plus the adjacent motel (Travel Stop Motel). The application is for outline planning permission with all matters reserved except 'access' (matters reserved to be 'appearance', 'landscaping', 'layout' and 'scale'). The site is located within a flood risk zone and reference should be made to the Flood Risk Assessment and the engineer's drainage strategy which form part of this application.



Entrance to Locksmill Farm from Cowbit Road



Travel Stop Motel, Cowbit Road

Locksmill Farm was acquired by the Andrew family in the early 1930's. It was taken over by Horace Andrew in 1950 who ran the farm in conjunction with his mother. Following his mother's death in 1966, No. 50 Cowbit Road (Locksmill Farm) was sold. Horace continued to farm until his retirement in the 1970's. At this point he sold the agricultural land, retaining just 3 acres and farm buildings. Southfields, Cowbit Road, which backs on to the farm, remained Horace's home until his death in September 2016. Southfields has now been sold, leaving the residual of the estate.

No. 50 Cowbit Road (Locksmill Farm) became known as The Stables Motel and more recently became known as the Travel Stop Motel. The owners of the Travel Stop Motel decided to put it up for sale in 2015 and it was on the market with Brown & Co estate agents for a year. However, no offers were received and the property was taken off the market. The owners are keen to sell the property as it is no longer economically viable as a hotel and they have had no success in selling the property.

The fields are not large enough to be economically viable for modern farming methods / machinery. The site is surrounded by a mixture of built development on all sides apart from a small section to the north-east corner which further inhibits its use for commercial agriculture. It is not considered that an industrial / commercial use is appropriate given the proximity to adjacent housing. The site has unfortunately attracted some anti-social behaviour including vandalism and the dumping of rubbish.

The Locksmill Farm site (including the Travel Stop Motel) is, therefore, brought together in this application as it is considered that the two combined sites offer a more positive proposition as a single residential development than either site on its own. This can provide a more cohesive development and provide a much improved frontage to Cowbit Road and the River Welland.



Field looking west towards existing housing



Redundant small holding buildings

USE

The proposed use of the site is for residential development (for domestic residential purposes) and approximately 14% of the site would become public open space.

AMOUNT

The site area is approximately 1.38 ha. The number of dwellings shown is 26 which is considered to be a reasonable amount in this location and equates to 19 dwellings per hectare.

The detail of the mix of dwellings would be determined at Reserved Matters stage.

The dwelling mix shown on the submitted drawing PD02 is indicative only. The indicative dwellings shown could potentially provide the following for example:-
14 no. 2 bedroom houses (2 storey).
5 no. 3 bedroom houses with garages (2 storey).
7 no. 4 bedroom houses with double garages (2 storey).

The affordable housing provision would be to SHDC standards, the detail of which would be determined at Reserved Matters stage.

LAYOUT

The detail of the layout would be determined at Reserved Matters stage.

Notwithstanding this, the submitted drawing PD02 demonstrates a well considered layout that incorporates an adoptable highway and public open space provision. The layout also demonstrates that it should be possible to retain the majority of existing trees.

The new road meanders through the site, and is punctuated with the swathe of public open space mid-way along its length.

Car parking has been carefully designed so that wherever possible garages are located back from the front of dwellings. The majority of parking is, therefore, to the sides of the homes. This helps create a better streetscape when viewed from one end as the cars are much less prominent.

The overall layout is designed to minimise overlooking into neighbouring properties. Relatively generous rear gardens allow scope for additional tree and shrub planting to further enhance privacy. The layout and position of windows can facilitate casual surveillance of gardens, footpaths and driveway areas.

SCALE

The detail of the scale would be determined at Reserved Matters stage.

Notwithstanding this, the proposed scale shown on drawing PD02 is sympathetic to the immediate context and its setting.

The scale is all two storeys and varies from potentially 2 bedroom houses without garages to 4 bedroom houses with double garages.

The river frontage properties will enhance the streetscene and form a continuation of the existing properties along Cowbit Road.

The larger houses (possibly 3 and 4 bedroom properties) can be of a scale and form that allow the garages to be less prominent by pushing the garage back from the main front face of the houses. The smaller possible 2 bedroom houses can be of a cottage scale and form.

The overall development has a scale and form which is varied and is reminiscent of traditional rural homes in the area.



Scale of adjacent housing fronting Cowbit Road

LANDSCAPING

The detail of the landscaping would be determined at Reserved Matters stage.

Notwithstanding this, drawing PD02 demonstrates that the majority of existing trees can be retained and the site designed in such a way so as to utilise these as a natural screen between housing and the public open space. Some existing trees can also be retained to provide natural screening to existing housing along Cowbit Road. Additional trees can be planted to increase visual screening and to assist in demarcating space, particularly around the edges of the public open space.

In addition the natural topography of the site has been utilised to integrate a surface water drainage strategy including a detention pond on the lower side of the site within the open space area.

Hard landscaping to publicly accessible areas would likely comprise generally of tarmacadam. Private areas can generally be a mixture of paving flags for pathways and block paviors for drives and parking areas. All plots have the opportunity for soft landscaping comprising lawned front gardens.



Existing trees can be retained to aid demarcation of public open space



Existing trees can be retained to aid screening of existing residential properties

APPEARANCE

The appearance would be determined at Reserved Matters stage.

Notwithstanding, this, the properties indicated on drawing PD02 are of a size and scale that lend themselves to a sympathetic fenestration design and a palette of materials that could provide cohesion to the scheme yet simultaneously allowing plenty of variation and interest.

ACCESS

The site is approximately 10-15 minutes walk from the centre of Spalding and there are existing footpaths facilitating this. The area has good transport links to Holbeach, Boston, Kings Lynn and Peterborough. The site fronts onto Cowbit Road which has a 30mph speed restriction.

Spalding has a train station and bus station, both of which can be reached from the site either by foot or bicycle. As such the use of a motor vehicle is not essential. Notwithstanding this, Spalding is a rural town and as such car ownership must be catered for within the schematic proposals.



View northwards from site access along Cowbit Road



View southwards from site along Cowbit Road

Every effort has been made to work with the topography in a way which affords accessibility wherever possible and within the constraints of the site.

The new properties will comply with the Building Regulations Part M and will include gently sloping ramped approach to principal entrance doors, level threshold and ground floor accessible toilet. Car parking is designed to be close to the dwelling to which it serves.

Jon Sharpe and Dean Whitehead of LCC Highways have been consulted throughout the design process and they are supportive of the access, pedestrian and highways proposals. Further consultation has been carried out in relation to the highways drainage strategy and a Surface Water Drainage Strategy accompanies this application.

PLANNING

SOUTH HOLLAND LOCAL PLAN 2006

The location of the residential development is partially within and adjacent to the defined settlement limit for Spalding, and is, therefore, categorised by the South Holland Local Plan as being in open countryside. As such the relevant policy within the Local Plan would be Policy HS7 – New Housing in the Open Countryside including other Rural settlements.

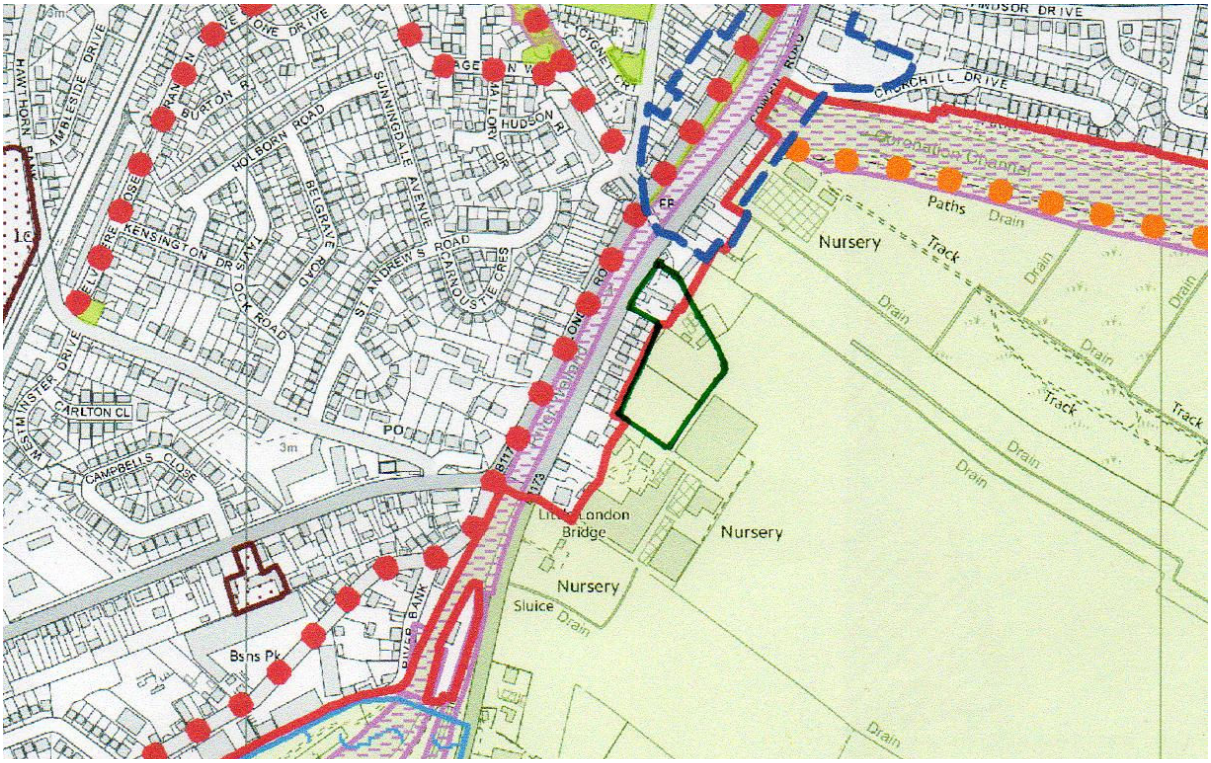
At the present time, however, SHDC does not have a 5 year supply of housing land in place and the guidance within the NPPF takes precedence over the Local Plan, and the relevant Housing policies within the Local Plan cannot be considered to be up to date.

Criteria 1 of Policy SG2 states that although priority is given to brownfield sites within defined settlement limits, and then Greenfield sites within defined settlement limits, it does then allow land adjacent to defined settlement limits to be used for development.

DRAFT SOUTH EAST LINCOLNSHIRE LOCAL PLAN

The site is partially included on the South East Lincolnshire Local Plan – Publication Version (March 2017), inset map 2.

It can be seen that the site is surrounded by a mixture of built development on all sides apart from a small section to the north-east corner. In this respect it is not considered to be an isolated site.



Extract of inset map 2 (March 2017) showing site outlined in green

NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY FRAMEWORK

An objective of the NPPF is to '…boost significantly the supply of housing…'. Its paragraph 49 establishes that where local planning authorities cannot demonstrate through an adopted and up-to-date local plan that they have a 5 year supply of deliverable housing sites, housing applications should be considered in the context of the presumption in favour of sustainable development.

Paragraph 55 of the NPPF promotes sustainable development in rural areas where it will maintain or enhance the vitality of rural communities. As the proposed development is close to the centre of Spalding, and within walking distance of local shops and amenities, the proposal complies with paragraph 55 of the NPPF.

While it is acknowledged that there is conflict with the adopted development plan in relation to defined development limits, it is considered that the impact of the proposed development would be localised and contained, and would not be so harmful as to be unacceptable. In respect of this, the development of the site would be sustainable and in accordance with paragraphs 17 and 58 of the NPPF.

CONCLUSION

The Travel Stop Motel is no longer economically viable as a hotel and despite attempts at selling the property received no interest from prospective purchasers.

The Locksmill Farm smallholding is not large enough to be economically viable for modern farming methods / machinery and is also surrounded with built development on all sides inhibiting connection to agricultural land. Furthermore, it is considered that an industrial / commercial use is inappropriate given the proximity of existing housing. The site has attracted vandalism and the dumping of rubbish and it is feared by the owners that other types of anti-social behaviour will follow.

It is, therefore, considered that the two combined sites offer a more positive proposition as a single residential development than either site on its own. This can provide a more cohesive development and provide a much improved frontage to Cowbit Road and the River Welland.

At the present time SHDC does not have a 5 year supply of housing land in place and the guidance within the NPPF takes precedence over the Local Plan, and the relevant Housing policies within the Local Plan cannot be considered to be up to date.

While there may be conflict with the adopted development plan, in terms of its defined settlement limits, in accordance with Paragraph 14 of the NPPF, it is considered that there is no adverse impact which would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits.

The impact of the proposed development would be localised and contained, and would not be so harmful as to be unacceptable. In respect of this, the development of the site would be sustainable and in accordance with paragraphs 17 and 58 of the NPPF.

The proposed development is close to the centre of Spalding, and within walking distance of local shops and amenities. The proposal, therefore, complies with paragraph 55 of the NPPF.

From the outset, discussions (including pre-app) have been undertaken with SHDC Planning Department and LCC Highways and both parties have responded positively to the proposals.