Design & Access Statement for Change of Use from Motor Vehicle Repairs (B2) to Holiday Accommodation (C1) at Glenfirs, Stockhouse Lane, Surfleet, Spalding, Lincolnshire, PE11 4AR.

1.0 Introduction

1.1 This application seeks to change the current employment use of the site, including the demolition of the existing workshop. It is then proposed to build two modest holiday lodges using sustainable materials and construction techniques. This, it is hoped, will help to promote rural tourism and ecologically sensitive designed construction by providing the opportunity to experience such a building at first hand.

1.2 This report will endeavour to explain the design rationale and how the proposals are in accordance with the existing local plan policies.

2.0 Site History

2.1 The consent for the bungalow was issued on the 12th August 1946 (ref: 237) by the former Holland County Council.

2.2 The previous owner, Mr. George Boyes, repaired vehicles for a number of years at the site. He passed away in January 2004. Mr. Boyes' nephew has previously confirmed that he helped erect the workshop in 1965. The bungalow and workshop are both clearly shown on the 1972 Ordnance Survey edition.

2.3 The applicants, Mr. and Mrs. France purchased the property in January 2006. Their business had previously been located at a workshop adjacent to their home in St Johns Road, Spalding.

2.4 In 2010 the applicants were forced to apply for retrospective change of use to motor vehicle repairs for the workshop despite clear evidence that the use had existed since 1965. Consent was granted on 10th November 2010 (see planning reference number H17-0798-10). Condition 1 on the decision notice limits the use of the workshop to the occupants of Glenfirs.

3.0 Site Context

3.1 Glenfirs is located 500 m from the centre of the village and is less than 200 m outside the village envelope. There is a bungalow immediately adjacent to the east known as *'The Shingles'*. This is an interesting timber framed house complete with cedar shingle cladding. It dates from the early part of the 20th century and now represents a rather unusual survival for the area.

3.2 The next nearest neighbour, *'Glenfield'*, is 100 m to the North West with extensive sheep paddocks between.

3.3 The applicants' dwelling is a modest bungalow constructed in brick with a broadly pyramidal plain tile roof. It is set well back from the highway and benefits from a large gravel drive with a separate entrance and exit and more than adequate off street parking. The drive continues past the dwelling to the workshop at the rear. When the gate adjacent to the bungalow is shut only the upper portion of the gable is visible.

3.4 A ten feet high a privet hedge and a six feet high close boarded fence provide the boundary between Glenfirs and the Shingles.



Figure 1 – Workshop as viewed down the drive of Glenfirs

3.5 The workshop is a steel framed construction purpose-built for motor repairs. It measures 6.4m by 9.95m by 3.7m high and is clad in corrugated metal sheet and cement board. The interior of the workshop is boarded out with strand board for noise attenuation purposes. The site is also screened by a continuous mature conifer hedge on the western boundary which is nine feet high.

3.6 A view of the eastern roof pitch of the workshop (with a backdrop of the high, conifer hedge) is possible when travelling West on a short section of Stockhouse Lane near the pumping station.

3.7 Views of the St Lawrence Church spire are also possible from the hardstanding at the northern end of the curtilage.



Figure 2 – The Workshop



Figure 3 – Glenfirs and the Shingles

3.8 The river Glen is literally across the road. This is a particularly attractive feature within the village and is used for coarse fishing and boating. There is a public footpath on the opposite bank which provides a route to Pinchbeck and Surfleet Seas End.

4.0 Planning Policy

4.1 It is estimated that the ***South East Lincolnshire Plan*** will be adopted in February 2017. In the meantime the saved policies of the *South Holland Local Plan (2006)* are currently the most relevant relating to this proposal. In this document Surfleet is identified as a rural settlement with limited development potential. This is slightly at odds with other villages which are identified as group centres and yet have an inferior range of businesses and services.

4.2 The following Core Strategic and General Policies are considered to be relevant to this application:

SG1 General Sustainable Development
SG4 Development in the Countryside
SG7 Energy Efficiency
SG11 SUDs
SG14 Design and Layout
SG17 Protect Residential Amenity
SGA18 Landscaping

4.3 Policies SG8 *Water Efficiency* and LT1 relating to leisure and tourism have not been saved and are therefore no longer relevant.

4.4 Policy SG1 is relevant in that it seeks to protect and enhance the environment. It also encourages the prudent use of natural resources and sustainable economic development. It specifically encourages the reuse of previously used or *'Brownfield'* land and improvements to biodiversity. As mentioned elsewhere the site is already developed and has a current employment use. The sustainable construction proposed clearly demonstrates a prudent use of material resources.

4.5 Paragraph 3.34 relating to Policy SG4 *Development in the countryside* allows for diversification of the rural economy, stating that it is important to allow for tourism and recreation provided that there is limited impact on the environment. The application site is discreetly located and on previously developed land. The limited impact of the proposed lodges is therefore positive in that they represent a more complimentary use adjacent to the existing dwellings. The introduction of a green roof and dark stained timber cladding would also be an aesthetic improvement from the one public viewpoint along Stockhouse Lane.

4.6 Policies SG7 *Energy Efficiency* and SG11 *SUDs* are again addressed in the proposed construction method which will result in lightweight super insulated buildings. The proposals include green roofs and rainwater harvesting for each lodge which demonstrates a commitment to a sustainable urban drainage design philosophy.

4.7 The modest scale, design and layout of the proposals have responded positively to the site context and so are in accord with Policy SG14. The designs are simple yet progressive, using materials (such as timber cladding) from the local vernacular.

4.8 The iterative design process adopted and the separation distances achieved between new and existing buildings should ensure that there is no negative impact on residential amenity (Policy SG17).

4.9 The retention of existing hedges and the scope of the proposed planting (including small to medium-sized specimen trees, additional hedging and green roofs) demonstrates a clear commitment to a holistic and ecological design and so should satisfy Policy SG18 *Landscaping*.



Fig. 4 – Western boundary of Glenfirs



Fig. 5 – Eastern Boundary to the Shingles

5.0 Design Rationale

5.1 Given the imminent retirement of the proprietor of the motor repair business the workshop is largely redundant and clearly not suitable for residential conversion. It would therefore not be unreasonable to categorise the workshop and storage areas as brownfield land suitable for redevelopment.

5.2 The proximity of the workshop access to the Western flank of the applicants' home would suggest that a separate residential development would not be possible. In planning terms this would be deemed to be a tandem development which is usually contrary to good urban design principles and planning policy.

5.3 The recent opening of the crematorium has resulted in a significant boost in the local hospitality trade, particularly for the nearest pubs within the village. Based on anecdotal evidence there is clearly a shortfall in hotel and bed and breakfast

accommodation in Surfleet. The provision of guest accommodation proposed would therefore seem to be a useful and complimentary addition to the local economy. It could also provide all year-round accommodation for tourists including fishermen, boaters, and cyclists. The proposed lodges would be managed and supervised by the occupants of Glenfirs. And so, theoretically, there would be no loss of employment land or opportunity.

5.4 The portion of the site suggested for the redevelopment is largely screened from public view, including both neighbours.

5.5 The applicants have strictly controlled customer journeys to and from the site including the provision of a car collection service. It is envisaged that the number of visitors to and from the site would actually be reduced by the change of use.

5.6 The site plan as proposed shows an arrangement of two holiday lodges (to be referred to as North and South Lodge). Each has its own private garden space, some of which has a southern aspect. The lodge nearest the Shingles is over 24 m away and is also screened from view by a three meter (10 feet high) privet hedge which delineates the extent of the neighbour's rear garden. This will ensure that there is no detriment to the privacy or amenity of the occupants of the Shingles.

5.7 The South Lodge is also 23.3 m away from the rear aspect of Glenfirs. Partial screening already exists in the form of the summerhouse. This will be further enhanced by the addition of hedge planting and small to medium-sized specimen trees.

5.8 Both of the lodges are single aspect with no overlooking between the two. The South Lodge has one bedroom and the North two. The North Lodge is intended to be fully wheelchair accessible with conveniently designed parking, ramped access and bathroom.

5.9 The scale of the lodges has been limited to a single storey to avoid any detriment to the setting of the existing bungalows. The height of the both lodges is well below the existing ridge heights and is further reduced by the inclusion of a very shallow mono pitched roof (5°). Each will have a green roof planted with a mixture of sedums and saxifrages as per the detailed drawings. This will not only help insulate the lodges but also increase biodiversity and help prevent surges of rainwater run-off.

5.10 The roof of the North Lodge will be visible from Stockhouse Lane near the pumping station/sluice and will provide an attractive, unusual and interesting feature.

5.11 A unique selling point for the lodges is the opportunity to experience a low tech eco-home, which in turn may help to promote environmentally conscious building techniques and features. The super insulated timber post and been construction proposed

has a significantly lower carbon footprint than brick and block construction. It uses largely sustainable and renewable products such as softwood timber and recycled cellulose insulation. The black stained feather edged cladding proposed will complement the cedar shingles of the stud framed bungalow adjacent.

6.0 Landscaping

6.1 The existing conifer and privet hedges are retained within the proposed layout to provide structure and maintain privacy. Each of the lodges will have its own enclosed private garden space for relaxation. Adjacent to each lodge will be a raised deck beyond which is a private lawn area.

6.2 A number of small to medium-sized specimen trees will be dotted around the site to provide some degree of screening, vertical interest and seasonal change. Again those trees around the North Lodge will be visible from Stockhouse Lane. There will also be additional hedge planting to enclose the garden to the South Lodge.

6.3 The close boarded fencing along the northeastern boundary will be replaced and lowered slightly in the centre to improve the views across the adjacent arable field toward the church spire.

7.0 Flood Risk

7.1 According to the Environment Agency's Flood Risk maps (see EA website) the application site is located in an area where the likelihood of flooding is categorized as ***'low'*** with perhaps a one in 200 chance or less. The risk of flooding posed by the application site's proximity to the River Glen does not merit a flood risk assessment and is therefore not a material consideration.

7.2 The lodges are to be set on cast in situ concrete piers, the height of which may be adjusted if the Environment Agency or Internal Drainage Board so desire.

8.0 Accessibility

8.1 Surfleet is a local service centre with a school, three pubs, a post office, a cafe, garage, take-away fish and chip shop, church, church hall, village hall, Glen Park and a number of other businesses. There are bus stops within 500 m of the application site from which there is a regular service to both Spalding and Boston.

8.2 With specific reference to the site there is already ample parking provision both to the front and rear of the bungalow. As part of the proposed layout there will be a block paved disabled parking bay with a footpath leading to the access ramp to the North Lodge. Each of the lodges will have a level threshold and toilets on the ground floor in accordance with the requirements of Schedule M. of the current Building Regulations and in the spirit of the Disability Discrimination Act.

9.0 Conclusion

9.1 At the heart of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) presumption in favour of sustainable development, which it states *'should be seen as a golden thread running through both plan making and decision taking'* (paragraph 14).

9.2 The application site is situated conveniently close to the centre of the village. It involves the redevelopment of existing employment land in the rear curtilage of the applicants' dwelling. By definition it is therefore Brownfield land and not open countryside. The management and maintenance of the lodges will continue to provide work and an income for the owners of Glenfirs. The proposed holiday lodges will encourage visitors to come to the village and boost the local economy. The scale of the proposal is modest and sensitively designed to suit the site context. It makes use of progressive construction techniques which are less damaging to the environment and should be more widely promoted. The impact of the proposal is negligible and the character of the countryside will be preserved. The proposals are therefore in accord with local plan policy and the NPPF which both seek to promote sustainable development, diversify the rural economy and encourage leisure and tourism. We sincerely hope that the authority can support our application and grant permission for this proposal.

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References/Bibliography

South Holland District Council Local Plan 2006 (saved policies).

SHDC. *Design and Access Statements - A Guidance Note.* August 2006.

Town & Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987.

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). Department of Communities & Local Government March 2012

Planning Practice Guidance - The Importance of Good Design. Department of Communities & Local Government

Drawing Schedule

Please note that this statement should be read in conjunction with the following drawings:

GF/01/16	Site Location Plan	1:2500	A4
GF/02/16	Site Plan as existing	1:500	A4
GF/03/16	Site Plan as proposed	1:200	A3
GF/04/16	South Lodge – floor plan and elevations	1:50	A3
GS/05/16	South Lodge -section and elevations	1:50	A3
GF/06/16	North Lodge- principal elevation & floor plan	1:50	A3
GF/07/16	North Lodge-rear elevation	1:50	A3