

May 2015

Planning Statement

Planning statement in support an application to South Holland District for the construction of a single detached dwelling at Land to rear of playing field, Station Road, Tydd Gote.

On behalf of Ian Gowler, Architectural and Domestic Energy Consultant

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1. INTRODUCTION

This full planning application is submitted on behalf of Ian Gowler, Architectural and Domestic Energy Consultant. The proposal is for the construction of a single detached 3 bed residential dwelling at land to the rear of the playing field, Station Road, Tydd Gote.

The site is accessed from Station Road, near the junction with the A1101, and is adjoined to the west and south-east by residential development, with a playing field directly to the south and agricultural fields to the north. The site itself does not benefit from particular use and is largely open, with a number of trees and other vegetation found to the north-eastern corner and along the boundaries.

The site is located within Flood Risk Zone 2, but is not subject to any other planning designations. The application proposal is supported by a separate Flood Risk Assessment.

2. DESCRIPTION OF DEVELOPMENT AND SITE AND SURROUNDINGS

The application site comprises a parcel of land which is located immediately to the north of the playing field within the centre of Tydd Gote village. The site is broadly rectangular in shape with the exception of the private access road which extends south to the adopted Station Road. The site is adjoined by residential development to the west which fronts the A1101, with further housing to the south east. Beyond the northern boundary open agricultural fields can be found, with a further rectangular parcel of land to the east. The site is not used for agriculture and does not benefit from any particular use class.

Tydd Gote village comprises mainly residential properties, and is located a short distance from the larger settlement of Tydd St Mary where a range of services and facilities can be found. A public maintainable footpath extends along the A1101 providing easy walking links between the two settlements.

In terms of property types the centre of the village is characterised by mainly traditional buildings of varying form and style, with the development to the periphery more modern and comprising both bungalows and houses.

The site itself does not benefit from any specific use and such is classified as 'amenity land' given it is not in use for agricultural production. A number of trees and other vegetation can be found to the north eastern corner of and along the boundaries. None of the trees are subject to a Preservation Order and the site lies outside a Conservation Area. Moreover the trees are of little public amenity value given the lack of public views.

3. PLANNING HISTORY

The site has not been subject to any previous applications of note, however the pre-application (PE-00168-2015) advice was sought in January 2015 for the construction of a dwelling and commercial unit. This advice is as follows:

'The site is located within an 'Other Rural Settlement', as defined in the South Holland Local Plan, 2006. Local Plan policies SG3, SG4 and HS7 indicate that new development is normally only allowed in such locations if it is appropriate and necessary in that location, as opposed to within a defined settlement limit.

Policy SG14 of the Local Plan indicates, inter alia, that new development should respect the historic pattern of development in the locality and not have an adverse effect upon the character and appearance of the locality.

The proposal is not wholly in accordance with Policy HS7. However, it is recognised that Section 6 of the National Planning Policy Framework, 2012 indicates that housing applications should be considered in the context of the presumption in favour of sustainable development. In this respect the village is not highly ranked within the settlement hierarchy.

Moreover, it is considered that the development would project beyond the existing development within the village on the northern side of Station Road and that it would not be wholly in accordance with Local Plan Policy SG14'

Further to this advice the commercial unit has been removed from the scheme and this planning statement justifies why more weight should be given to the National Planning Policy Framework than the development plan (settlement hierarchy) in allowing for the new dwelling, as well as justifying the impact on the landscape/built environment.

4. PLANNING POLICY AND ASSESSMENT

National Planning Policy Framework

Relevant planning policy in consideration of this proposed development is contained within the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) which was published by Central Government on 27th March 2012. The central objective of the NPPF is that of achieving sustainable development.

Paragraph 14 of the NPPF advises that at the heart of the NPPF is a presumption in favour of sustainable development, which should be seen as a golden thread running through both plan making and decision taking.

At decision taking, this presumption in favour of sustainable development means:

- Approving development proposals that accord with the Development Plan without delay;
- Where the Development Plan is absent, silent or relevant policies are out of date, granting permission unless:
 - 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; or
 - Specific policies in this framework indicate development should be restricted

Paragraph 17 of the NPPF set out certain core planning principles. Of direct relevance to this proposed development are the following:

- To proactively drive and support sustainable economic development to deliver the homes, business and industrial units, infrastructure and thriving local places that the country needs. Every effort should be made objectively to identify and then meet the housing, business and other development needs of an area, and respond positively to wider opportunities for growth. Plans should take account of market signals, such as land prices and housing affordability, and set out a clear strategy for allocating sufficient land which is suitable for development in their area, taking account of the needs of the residential and business communities;
- To always seek to secure high quality design and a good standard of amenity for all existing and future occupants of land and buildings; and
- To actively manage patterns of growth to make the fullest possible use of public transport, walking and cycling, and focus significant development in locations which are or can be made sustainable.

Section 7 of the NPPF refers specifically to design and states that good design is a key aspect of sustainable development. Paragraph 60 advises that planning policies and decisions should not attempt to impose architectural styles or particular tastes and they should not stifle innovation, originality or

initiative through unsubstantiated requirements to conform to certain development forms or styles. It is, however proper to seek to promote or reinforce local distinctiveness.

Paragraph 61 comments that although visual appearance and architecture on individual buildings are very important factors, securing high quality and inclusive design goes beyond more aesthetic considerations. Decisions should therefore address the connections between people and places and the integration of new development into the natural, built and historic environment.

Paragraph 65 advises that local planning authorities should approach decision taking in a positive way to foster the delivery of sustainable development. The relationship between decision taking and plan making should be seamless, translating into high quality development on the ground.

Paragraph 187 advises local planning authorities should look for solutions rather than problems, and decision takers at every level should seek to approve applications for sustainable development wherever possible. Local planning authorities should work proactively with applicants to secure developments that improve the economic, social and environmental conditions of the area.

Paragraph 196 confirms that the planning system is plan led, and that planning law requires that applications for planning permission must be determined in accordance with the Development Plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. It is confirmed the NPPF is a material consideration in planning decision. Paragraph 197 states that in assessing and determining development proposals, local planning authorities should apply the presumption in favour of sustainable development.

Planning Practice Guidance

The planning practice guidance is clear in advising tariff style planning obligations should not be sought from small scale and self build development. In particular contributions should not be sought from developments of 10 units or less, and which have a maximum combined gross floorspace of no more than 1000sqm.

Local Plan Policy

The Development Plan comprises the South Holland Local Plan (adopted July 2006), with the following policies relevant to this proposal.

HS/7 – New housing in the open countryside including other rural settlements

Outside the defined settlement limits of Spalding, Area Centres and Group Centres, new housing development will only be permitted where:

- 1) it is proven to be essential to meet the needs of agricultural, forestry or other workers and complies with Policy HS12; or
- 2) the proposal is for small, rural exception affordable housing that complies with policy HS9.

SG3 – Settlement Hierarchy

4) Other rural settlements

In all other rural settlements (as shown on the proposals maps) only a very limited amount of new development and only in exceptional circumstances to meet demonstrated local needs and where the location of the development is well related to the built up area of the settlement.

SG4 – Development in the countryside

Planning permission will only be granted for development in the open countryside which is essential in the proposed location and cannot reasonably be accommodated within the defined settlement limits. Development proposals that would result in an unacceptable impact upon the landscape character of an area, either individually or cumulatively, will only be permitted where:

- 1) the need for the development in that location outweighs its impact; and
- 2) no other site or solution exists to accommodate the proposed development.

SG14 – Design and layout of new development

New development should be designed to ensure that it makes a positive contribution to the architectural and visual quality of its surroundings. It should normally respect the vernacular architecture of the area in which it is located although high quality contemporary design will be supported in appropriate contexts.

5. ISSUES AND CONSIDERATIONS

Principle of development

Weight to be given to the NPPF

The adopted Local Plan (2006) seeks to resist new residential development outside defined settlement boundaries, as set out in policies HS/7 – New housing in the open countryside including other rural settlements, SG3 – Settlement Hierarchy and SG4 – Development in the countryside. This approach is reflective of national guidance at the time in the form of the PPS1 Delivering Sustainable Development and PPS3 Housing.

In March 2012 these national planning statements were replaced by the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), which sets out a **presumption if favour** of sustainable development and advises for decision taking *‘where the development plan is absent, silent or **relevant policies are out of date**, granting permission unless any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in the framework taken as a whole’*.

Paragraph 215 of the NPPF is clear in advising that due weight should be given to relevant policies in existing Local Plans according to their degree of consistency with the NPPF. In this case the Local Plan was adopted in 2006 and has not been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the NPPF, and specifically the requirements of Chapter 6 (Delivering a wide choice of high quality homes) which seeks to **boost significantly** the supply of housing. As such it is considered more weight should be given to the requirements of the NPPF than to the development plan in the decision making process. The importance of the NPPF in the decision making process has been acknowledged in the officer pre-application advice.

NPPF and Sustainable Development

Paragraph 49 of the NPPF advises housing applications should be considered in the context of the *‘presumption in favour of sustainable development’*, with paragraph 55 stating *‘housing should be located where it will enhance or maintain the vitality of rural communities’*. This approach is fundamentally different to that of the development plan which seeks to resist new housing in villages such as Tydd Gote. Moreover paragraph 55 goes on to advise *‘where there are groups of smaller settlements, development in one village may support services in a village nearby’*.

Tydd Gote is located in close proximity to the larger village of Tydd St Mary to which it is connected via a public footpath, and where a range of services and facilities can be found (including a primary school) within walking distance. As such the residential development proposed under this application will assist in maintaining the level of services and facilities offered in this rural community thus contributing to a sustainable rural community.

In addition to the positive social dimension (supporting strong, vibrant and healthy communities) of the development the proposed scheme results in a positive economic benefit (jobs created in the construction industry) without harm to the environment, thus complying with the three dimensions of sustainable development as set out in the NPPF.

Character and appearance of the built environment

As noted in Section 2 'Description of development and site and surroundings', the development site benefits from a close relationship with the existing built form arising from its position close to the centre of the village with development to two sides (west, south and south-east). Importantly the site boundary is clearly defined by mature planting to the north, thus providing a notable physical buffer between the 'developed' village and open agricultural fields beyond. This visual separation is clearly defined and ensures the landscape impact of the proposal is negligible. Moreover this separation visually ties the development site to the village ensuring the scheme is in harmony with the built environment.

The proposed dwelling is of an appearance which seeks to replicate that on an agricultural barn, with the introduction of large glazing panels to the front elevation and few and narrow elongated windows to the other elevations. As such the design solution is appropriate for this edge of settlement location. Moreover the building would not be visible from public vantage points given its location and extensive landscaping to the site boundaries.

Parking provision

The new property is served by adequate off road parking provision and turning area which allows for vehicles to access and egress from the site in a forward gear.

The provision of cycle parking can be controlled by condition, with sufficient space to accommodate a bicycle shed.

Neighbour amenity

The development has been designed to prevent any material adverse impact on neighbour amenity, with the outlook from the windows preventing any material overlooking of neighbouring residents.

In respect of shadowing and loss of outlook, the buildings siting on the plot and relationship with the adjoining properties prevents any material overshadowing or loss of outlook.

6. CONCLUSION

The proposal has been tested against the national planning policy advice contained within the NPPF and PPG, and those policies as contained within the development plan that are directly applicable to the scheme.

The development of the site for residential purposes is found to be sustainable having regard to the definitions contained within the NPPF.

The proposals are for the provision of new housing and in accordance with paragraph 49 of the NPPF should be considered in the context of the presumption in favour of development. In this regard paragraph 14 of the NPPF states that the local planning authority should grant permission where the development plan is not up to date.

This planning statement summarises the site specific assessment that has been carried out having regard to all relevant material planning considerations and policies in this instance and concludes the proposal represents sustainable development.

Accordingly the proposal is in accordance with the current development plan and having regard to the NPPF it is concluded that the development as proposed should be granted permission without delay.