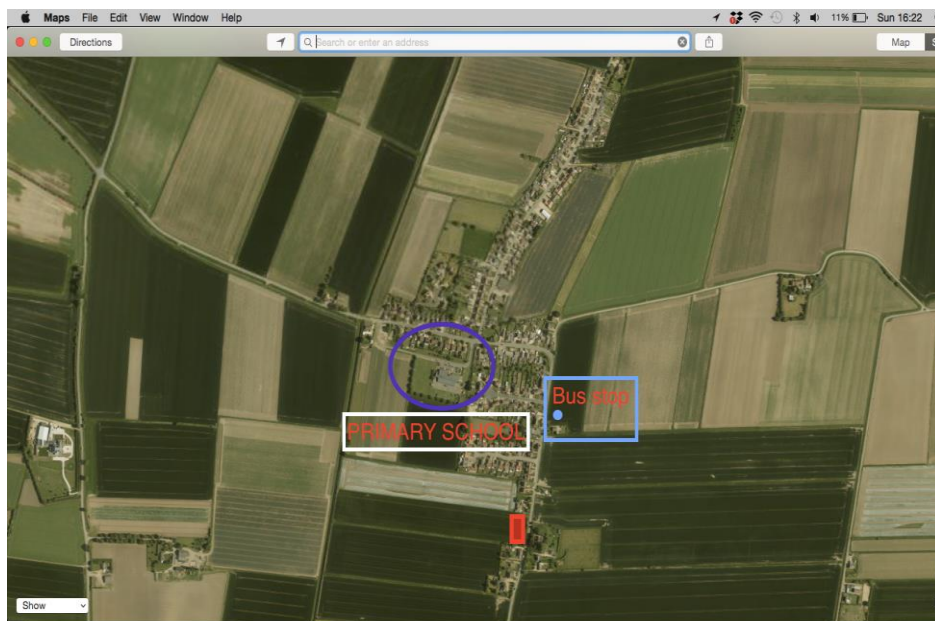


Planning/Design and Access Statement

Outline Planning Application for Residential development - 3 plots

Opposite 299 Broadgate, Weston Hills, Spalding,
Lincolnshire, PE12 6DQ



Google Extract – Site in relation to Weston Hills village, Primary School and Bus stop

Ashgrove Associates
Weston Hills
Spalding
PE12 6BZ
Email: info@ashgroveassociates.co.uk

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. This Planning Statement has been prepared in support of an application for outline planning permission for residential development on a site with an approximate frontage of 58 metres onto Broadgate, Weston Hills. The site has a depth of approximately 36 metres. The application site is shown edged in red on the plan below, with the adjoining land in the ownership of the applicant edged in blue.

1.2. To the north, south and opposite to the application site are residential properties, and the site relates well to the centre of the village in locational terms.

1.3 On the Environment Agency's Flood Maps, the application site is shown to be within Flood Zone 3 and therefore a Flood Risk Assessment has been undertaken.



Site Plan

2. THE APPLICATION SITE AND SURROUNDINGS

2.1. This application seeks Outline planning permission for residential development on a site of 0.2 Ha, being rectangular in form. An indicative layout showing a design with 3 dwellings has been submitted for illustrative purposes with the application and is shown below.

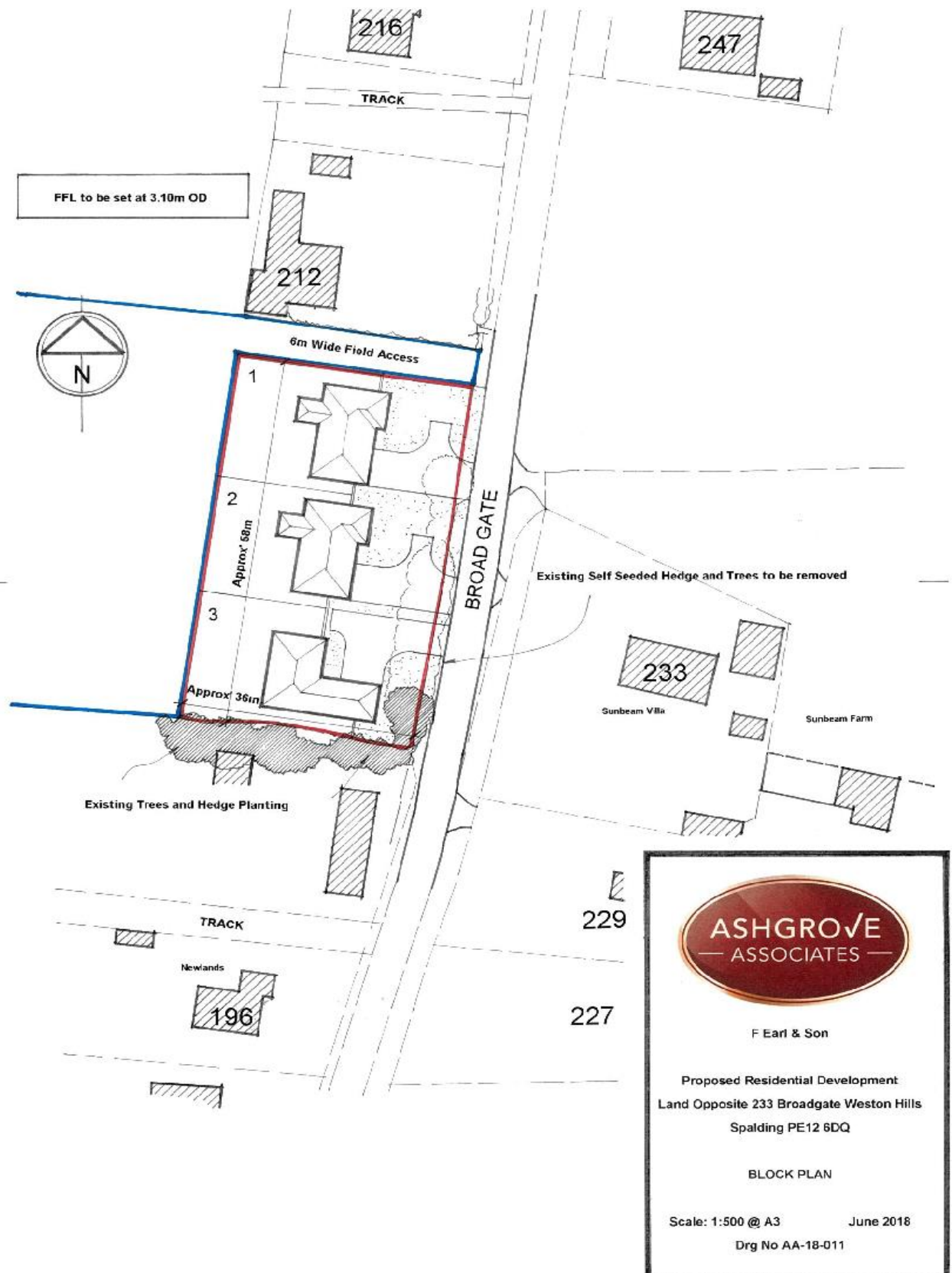
2.2 The application site (approx. 58 m frontage x 36 m depth) is located on the east side of Broadgate and is bounded to the north and south by existing residential properties fronting onto Broadgate. It is also opposite residential properties. It is separated from Broadgate by a grass verge approx. 1m wide, and a small overgrown ditch exists at the southern extent of the frontage. There is an overgrown hedge to a part of the frontage, with interspersed self seeded hedge trees.

2.3 The site is presently a cultivated area, being part of the frontage of the field. The field is currently in arable cultivation, and access to the remainder of the field will be provided by a 6m access roadway to the north of the application site. The site is flat and level and is approximately level with the height of Broadgate.

2.4 Broadgate continues through to the centre of the main part of the village of Weston Hills, where the Primary School, Children's Pre-school, a Village Hall and Bus stops are located, linking the village to Wisbech (via Sutton St James) and Spalding town centres via various Bus services. The 40mph speed limit for the village starts to the immediate north of the application site. There are a number of existing frontage dwellings comprising both single and two-storey dwellings located adjacent, and opposite to the site.

2.5 The application site is located within 200m of the Bus stop, and within 500m of the Primary School/ the centre of the main part of the village of Weston Hills. The site is within 200m of the Children's Pre-school and Playing field, and is within walking distance of the Village Hall.

2.6 There is a pole carrying overhead electricity cables in the highway verge in the front of the site, and a Mains sewer runs in the road in front of the site.



Indicative Layout

Photographs of the site, and its context to surrounding dwellings and amenities



View of site looking south



View of site looking north



Bungalow immediately adjacent (north) to the application site (212 Broadgate)



Two next adjacent properties (216 and 218 Broadgate)



Bungalow on opposite side of Broadgate (247 Broadgate)



House opposite application site (233 Broadgate)



Two houses immediately adjacent (south) to application site (196, and 194 Broadgate)

3. PLANNING POLICY

The Development Plan

3.1. 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.”

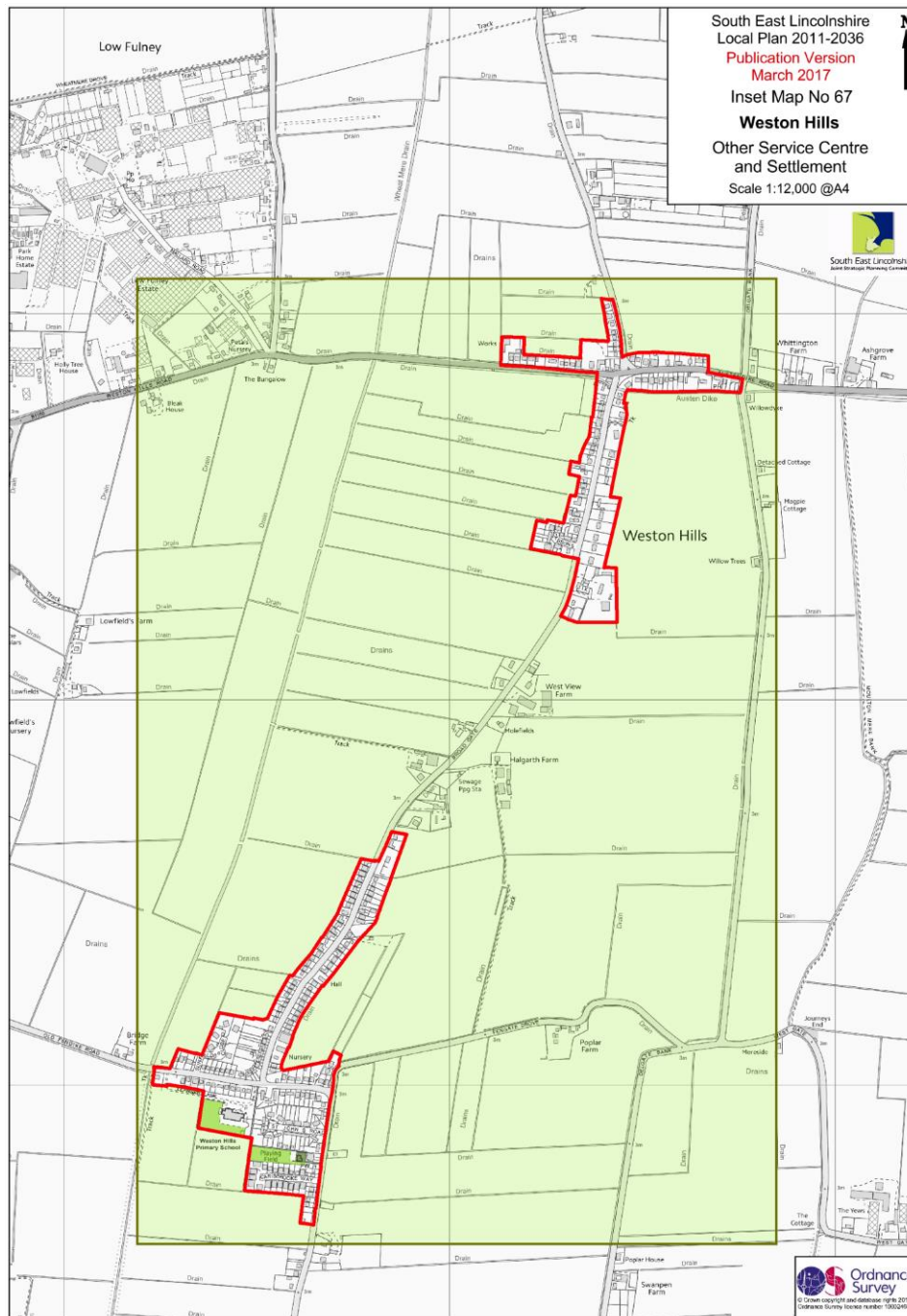
3.2 The current Development Plan consists of the saved policies of the South Holland Local Plan adopted in 2006 (the ‘Local Plan’). In the adopted 2006 South Holland Local Plan, Weston Hills is identified on the proposals map only as an Other Rural Settlement – being close to the Main Centre of Holbeach.

3.3 Policy SG3 states that “for all Other Rural Settlements shown on the proposals map, only a very limited amount of new development will be permitted 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.”

Draft South East Lincolnshire Local Plan

3.4 The South Holland Local Plan is to be replaced by the South East Lincolnshire Local Plan in 2017/2018, which proposes Weston Hills to be classified as an “Other Service Centre and Settlement”, and it identifies a proposed Settlement Boundary.

3.5 The Settlement Boundary is drawn to exclude the application, finishing at the north boundary of the site, i.e adjacent to the site.



Extract from SELLP Inset Map No 67 – WESTON HILLS

3.6 The recent “Deposit Draft Local Plan” policy on Preferred Sites for Development states in Revised Policy 2: Spatial Strategy C1 that “Within the settlement boundaries of the (designated) “Other Service Centres and Settlements”, development will be permitted that supports their role as a service centre for the settlement itself, helps sustain existing facilities or helps meet the services needs of other local communities. Recent other planning applications on land lying adjacent to or just outside proposed settlement boundaries have been granted planning consent, in several other similarly sized villages in the South Holland area, including Weston Hills.

National Planning Policy Framework

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

3.8 Sustainable development is the key to and at the heart of the NPPF, as it makes clear in paragraphs 6 – 10. Paragraph 7 explains there are 3 dimensions to sustainability, an economic role, a social role and an environmental role and paragraph 6 explains that the rest of the NPPF, paragraphs 18 – 219, sets out the Government's view of what constitutes sustainability in the planning context.

3.9 Paragraph 14 of the NPPF states that:

"At the heart of the National Planning Policy Framework is a **presumption in favour of sustainable development**, which should be seen as a golden thread running through both plan-making and decision-taking...

For decision-taking this means:

- approving development proposals that accord with the development plan without delay; and
- 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."

3.10. The paragraph 14 presumption applies to sustainable development and so the first question is always "is this development sustainable"? To answer that question one has to judge the proposal against the relevant paragraphs in the Framework.

3.11. The three dimensions to sustainability are explained in Para 7 (NPPF) in more detail as:

"an economic role - contributing to building a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right type is available in the right places and at the right time to support growth and innovation; and by identifying and coordinating development requirements, including the provision of infrastructure;

a social role - supporting strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by providing the supply of housing required to meet the needs of present and future generations; and by creating a high quality built environment, with accessible local services that reflect the community's needs and support its health, social and cultural well-being; and

an environmental role – contributing to protecting and enhancing our natural, built and historic environment; and, as part of this, helping to improve biodiversity, use natural resources prudently, minimise waste and pollution and mitigate and adapt to climate change including moving to a low carbon economy.

3.12. The economic dimension identifies the need to ensure sufficient land is available for the right type of development in the right places.

Weston Hills is identified as an Other service centre and settlement, and as indicated in the revised policy 2:spatial strategy of the emerging South East Lincolnshire Local Plan, residential development will be permitted that supports the role of these settlements as a service centre,

helping to sustain existing facilities such as the Primary School, Pre-school, Village Hall, and playing field, as well as meeting service needs of other local communities, such as Cowbit and Moulton Chapel. As the site is close to larger main town of Spalding, within 4 miles, the proposed new housing will be able to also rely on and help sustain the facilities of that Main service centre.

3.13 On a social level, the application proposal will assist in the support of a strong and vibrant community by providing suitable housing through the development of dwellings of appropriate size and form, similar to those dwellings to the north, south and immediate east (opposite). As such, the proposal will provide dwellings that will assist in meeting the needs of both present and future generations.

3.14. The NPPF, (and 2018 Draft Revised NPPF) requires that people are given a real choice about how they travel (paragraph 29), but recognises that in rural areas standards may have to be relaxed (paragraph 34). Within the constraints of the area the site satisfies the NPPF policies on sustainable transport.

There are 3 existing bus services that stop on Broadgate, i.e within 200m of the application site. Bus services:

Bus service H43S (formerly No 49) – and now operated by Fowlers, runs as a daily (except Sundays) bus service to and from Spalding/Wisbech (via Sutton St James) .

Additionally Bus services No. s138/s139 – operated by Fowlers Travel on a daily basis during school terms, providing Secondary school buses to and from Spalding.

3.15 Reliance on a car is not therefore essential, but as it is now accepted at Case Law level that the assessment of sustainability for rural settlements should be measured on the basis that there is an expectation that a car may be needed to also serve those properties in rural settlements and the tests of sustainability must have a tolerance to this expectation.

3.16. The environmental dimension considers the natural, built and historic environment, and the proposal will make a positive contribution to the built environment in this part of Weston Hills through careful and sensitive design, and the utilisation of what is a genuine infill frontage location.

3.17. Paragraph 55 requires development to enhance or maintain the vitality of rural communities, which this proposal will help to do. New residential dwellings will also help to support the social, recreational and cultural facilities in the village, as required by paragraph 70.

3.18. The application proposal is, therefore, supported both by the NPPF and the presumption in favour of sustainable development.

3.19. Paragraph 49 refers to housing applications and the presumption in favour of development where there is not a 5-year housing land supply as is recognised to be the case in South Holland District. (South Holland District Council: Assessment of 5-year housing land supply as at 31 March 2017)

3.20. The development proposed by this application accords with the presumption in favour of sustainable development and the proposal is fully compliant with the NPPF. The benefits of providing new housing demonstrably outweigh the low level of harm which could possibly be cited as occurring to the character of the area, and accord with the 2018 Draft NPPF revision suggestions, promoting that developments on smaller sites of up to 0.5ha, should make up to 20% of the overall housing provision to allow for small scale builders to boost the housing need.

Flood Risk

3.21 A Flood Risk Assessment has been carried out which shows that the site is within Flood Zone 3a of the Environment Agency Flood Map. It is therefore necessary for Sequential and Exception Tests to be applied to the development.

3.22 Following application of these Sequential and Exception tests, it is found that the sites has passed these tests .

3.23 The site is shown within the defended area of the South East Lincolnshire Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (March 2017), as being without any depth of flooding in a 1 in 100 year fluvial or 1 in 200 year tidal event in 2115.

3.24 The South East Lincs Advice Matrix, shows that advice can be found on the recommended mitigation required by referring to a spreadsheet on the South East Lincolnshire website. As the development is in flood zone 3, but there is no flood hazard, reference should be made to Category G8, which shows that the matrix reference for this category is “No Comment”.

3.25 The site is found to be suitable for the siting of dwellings, including single storey properties, with the ground floor levels for the proposed dwellings built at a minimum of 3.1m OD (which is approximately 300mm above minimum ground levels on the proposed development site).

Policy Conclusion

3.26 The application site is only partially in accordance with the 2006 Local Plan Policy SG3, in that it is well related to the built up area.

3.27 The NPPF asserts a presumption in favour of sustainable development and that where housing proposals are made and there is not a 5-year housing supply as is the situation in South Holland District and in the area of the South East Lincolnshire Local Plan, this presumption should be afforded full weight.

3.28 The site is considered suitable for development following consideration of the Sequential and Exception tests.

3.29 The emerging South East Lincolnshire Local Plan has identified Weston Hills as an “Other Service Centre or Settlement”. The application site is opposite to areas included in the settlement boundary on Inset Map 67.

3.30 As indicated in the Revised Policy 2: Spatial Strategy, of the emerging South East Lincolnshire Local Plan (see 3.8 above) residential development will be permitted that supports the role of these settlements as service centres, helping to mutually sustain existing facilities such as in this case, the Primary School, Pre-school, Playing field, and Village Hall, as well as meeting service needs of other local.

3.31 The site is not the subject of any landscape designations. It is not Green Belt, nor are there any other national landscape designations that might apply (such as AONB status). Indeed, the site is not subject to any local designations. The site lies within a semi-rural but unremarkable part of the village. In a similar vein, the site has not been identified for retention as an open space or an important gap in the village of any value. It therefore does not benefit from any policy protection.

3.32 Development of the site would maintain the existing linear pattern of housing along Broadgate, filling in or ‘blocking’ the gap, in a form of frontage development that mirrors that opposite.

3.33 All matters have been reserved in this application for outline planning permission, although the indicative layout accompanying the submission closely accords with the development elsewhere in the immediate locality, in terms of plot depths and widths.

3.34 The grant of consent for dwellings on other sites: in Weston Hills, (H22-1004-16) Saracens Head Ref (H23-0980-17 and H23-0231-18), Moulton Seas End, (Ref H13-0013-18), further support the case that development on the outer bounds of the rural villages is accepted as sustainable, particularly when infrastructure facilities exist adjacent (foul drainage, electricity and water).

3.35 Applications have also recently been granted consent in other nearby rural settlements, Gedney Hill, (Refs H07-0945-17 and H07-0059-18) for housing developments, each of 6 dwellings, on frontage land similarly located to the site, i.e between residential properties on the outskirts of the village and outside the main built up area of the settlement, on frontages of 125m and 150m respectively, both greater than the application site (58m).

3.36 Finally, the application site should not be considered as 'isolated', or in the countryside. In the recent High Court case brought by Braintree District Council, Mrs Justice Lang made the observation that 'isolated' should be given its meaning of 'far away from other places, buildings or people; remote'.

4. DESIGN AND ACCESS

4.1 The design proposals are explained in the following text and demonstrated on the indicative layout shown on Drawing No. AA-18-011, to be agreed at Reserved matters stage.

Use

4.2 The site will be developed with single storey dwellings, in a similar manner to the dwellings adjacent, with main elevations facing north onto Broadgate.

Amount

4.3 The depth of the application site is similar to that of the plots occupied by the dwellings to the north, and the length of frontage available onto Broadgate establishes a clear case for this proposal to construct three new dwellings.

Layout

4.4 The positioning of the dwellings as shown on the indicative layout, is guided by the dimensions of the application site and the relationship of the proposed dwellings with Broadgate.

Scale

4.5 The proposal which would provide for single storey dwellings on the application site reflects the character of the properties opposite on Broadgate.

Landscaping

4.6 The introduction of a more positively garden based landscape in place of the existing open land, and will be in keeping with the adjoining dwellings adjacent and opposite on Broadgate.

Access

4.7 Vehicular and pedestrian access to the proposed dwellings will be from Broadgate, and at the north point of the application site it is subject to a 40mph speed limit. Each dwelling shall have turning provision available on site to enable vehicles to be able to enter and leave the site in a forward direction. New accesses would be formed over the front verge.

4.8 The provision of new dwellings constructed in accordance with the Building Regulations will ensure that current access standards for the disabled will be a feature of the properties.

Foul Drainage

4.9 There is a main Foul Sewer in the road immediately in front of the application site.

Surface Water Drainage

4.10 Individual driveways will be of permeable construction. Roof water from the dwellings will also be directed to suitably sized and located soakaways.

5. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATION

5.1 The application site provides a suitable and sustainable location for the construction of additional dwellings in Weston Hills.

5.2 Individual vehicular access to the proposed dwellings as proposed, will not compromise highway safety, being located on a straight stretch of road with good visibility and adjacent to the start of the 40 mph speed limit.

5.3 It is considered that the application proposal should be granted outline planning permission in accordance with the Development Plan and taking into account the provisions of the NPPF, particularly whereby,

“Housing applications should be considered in the context of the presumption in favour of sustainable development. Relevant policies for the supply of housing should not be considered up-to-date if the local planning authority cannot demonstrate a five-year supply of deliverable housing sites” (Paragraph 49).

5.4 In these circumstances (para 3.22 above), the NPPF asserts a presumption in favour of sustainable development where housing proposals are made, and as there is not a 5-year housing supply, this presumption should be afforded full weight.

5.5 The emerging South East Lincolnshire Local Plan proposes the Settlement of Weston Hills as an Other Service Centre or Settlement. The whole of the application site is located on frontage within the geographical extremes of existing residential properties demarking the settlement and the start of the 40mph speed limit, i.e within an existing established area of residential occupation.

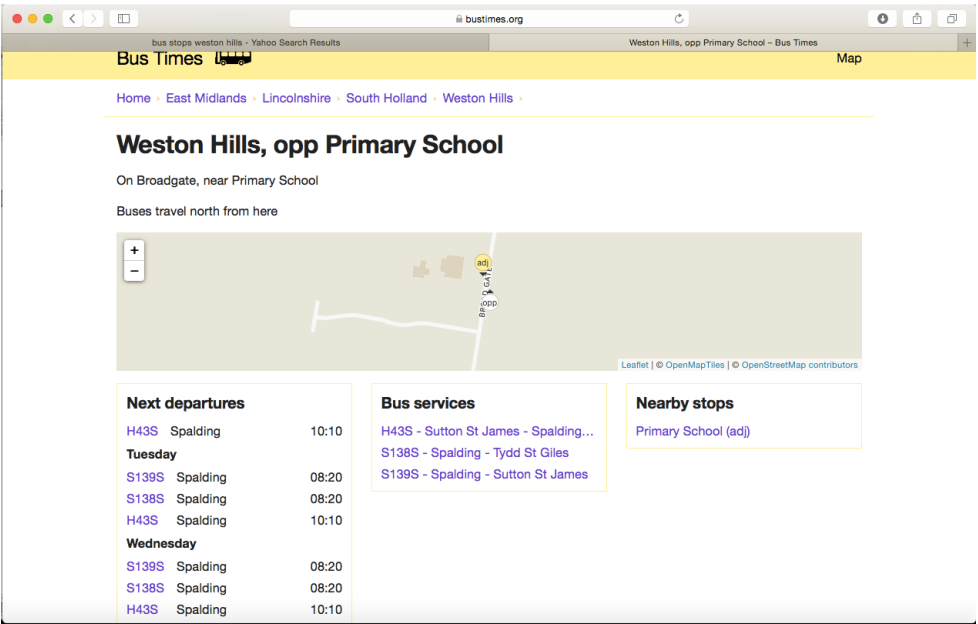
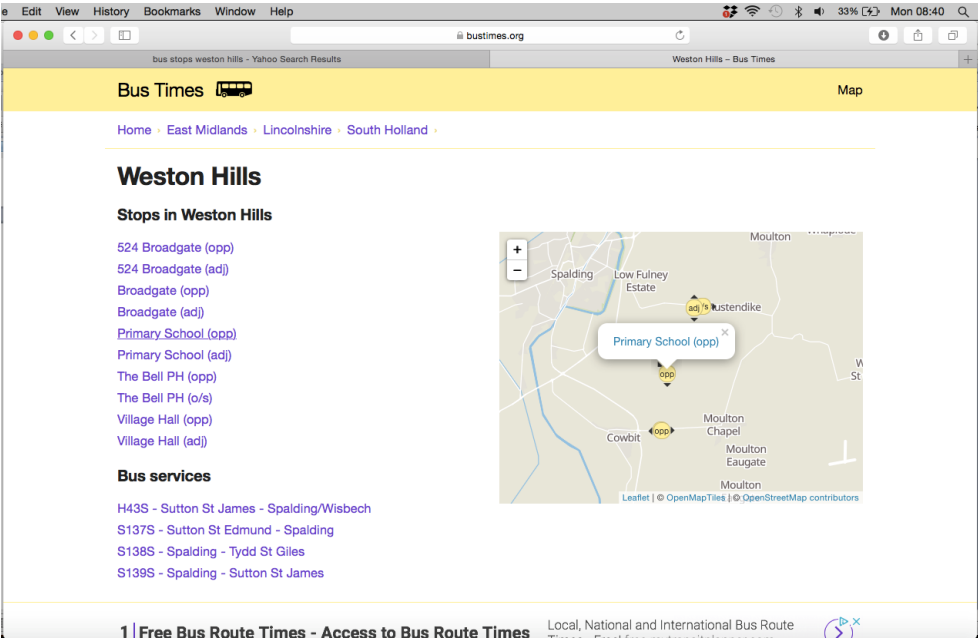
5.6 Whilst the land may not be identified as a housing allocation, emerging Policy 12 acknowledges that in addition to allocated sites for housing there should also be incremental growth in housing supply within the settlements as a result of infill and ‘speculative’ applications.

5.7 Existing infrastructure in the form of Water, Mains Foul sewage, Electricity and High speed BT Fibre optic, all exist in the road in front of the site.

5.8 The village has a large Primary School, and a Pre-school, and has good transport links to Secondary schools in Spalding.

5.8 In these positive circumstances it is our strong recommendation that conditional Outline Planning Permission should be granted for residential development of this site, which for this village environment this should be welcomed as ‘manageable’, with minimal impact on infrastructure, a positive contribution towards the sustainability of the settlement and without having any significant adverse effects on the character of the area.

Appendix A



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