PLANNING, DESIGN & ACCESS STATEMENT

Proposed Residential Development, Land off Small Drove, Weston, Spalding

Larkfleet Homes Limited

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1 Introduction

1.1 This statement has been submitted in support of a planning application for the erection of 45 dwellings, including 15 affordable homes on land of Small Drove, Weston, near Spalding.

1.2 The proposals have been the subject of a public consultation including a Public Exhibition held on the 20th July where a large number of residents attended.

1.3 The District is in need of high quality, sustainable new homes, including affordable ones and Larkfleet Homes and its sister company Allison Homes have a good record in Lincolnshire and the surrounding counties of delivering such homes.

2 The Site and its Surroundings

2.1 The site is located to south east of Weston, to the south of Small Drove, which is accessed off High Road and Broad Gate. The site is outside of the current settlement limits of the town as defined in the Local Plan. It is therefore considered in planning terms to be within open countryside.



2.2 The site lies to the south of Small Drove and is approximately 1.76 Ha (4.351 Acres) in size. Access will be directly off Small Drove, close to its junction with Broad Gate. The small section of Small Drove between Broad Gate and the site will be widened to facilitate a safe access to the site.



Photo looking west towards Broad Gate showing the homes on Small Drove.

2.3 The site is currently under grass but we understand not actively farmed. Towards the north-western corners are the foundations of a greenhouse and

numerous small farm buildings which are evidence of its more active previous use.

2.4 Opposite the site on the north side of Small Drove is established housing, with more recent housing development behind. To the south-west and west are the rear gardens of the properties that front onto Broad Gate. To the south are open fields in agricultural use.



Photo looking south east down Small Drove, taken from Broad Gate

2.5 Further along Small Drove, to the north of the site, is the local primary school. Also close by, again to the north, is the village shop and St Mary's Church along with Chequers, the village pub. To the south, just outside of the village is the Baytree Garden Centre.



Photo showing the existing buildings on site.

3 The Proposed Development

3.1 The initial layout as detailed below was the subject of a public exhibition. The details of this are contained in the Statement of Community Involvement which has been submitted as part of the application documents.



Earlier Layout as shown at the Public Exhibition

3.2 Following further survey work and the feedback from the exhibition the layout has been amended. Much concern was raised at the exhibition on the need to provide a footpath along the frontage of the development as none exist at the moment on either side of Small Drove at this point.

3.3 The submitted layout has been amended to accommodate the provision of a footpath through the site adjacent to Small Drove. This avoids the need to culvert the existing drain along the southern edge of Small Drove, whilst still providing a footpath along the full length of the site.

3.4 The current plans provide a number of routes through the site the most direct utilising the proposed adopted roads and private drives alongside the existing drain.

3.5 The position of the site access has been moved east to take into account the rising (foul) main and its easement, which runs across the site from north to south.



Layout as amended following Public Exhibition

Design Principles

3.6 The layout incorporates development along Small Drove facing onto the road, which mimics the existing residential development to the north and will complement the existing form.

3.7 Footpaths are proposed along all the adoptable roads within the site. Along the full frontage of the site onto Small Drove, a pedestrian route will be provided to

allow pedestrians a safe route to the school and playing fields, as an alternative to using the narrow lane which is Small Drove, which is the option at the moment.

3.8 The development will provide a wide range of open market dwellings together with 15 affordable dwellings. The affordable dwellings will be in the form of shared ownership and rental. The mix of units is based on the type and style of dwellings based on our experience of development in the South Holland area.

3.9 Consideration has been given to the existing dwellings along Small Drove by setting back the new development from the road and by locating the larger, executive homes along this frontage to reflect the positioning and style of the development opposite.

3.10 The site will provide additional landscaping to complement the existing character of Small Drove. Along the southern boundary to the open fields there will be a buffer to soften the development 'edge'. A pond in the south-east corner will be part of the sustainable urban drainage system. These areas will be managed by a management company, which will be initiated and set up by Larkfleet.

3.11 Materials are a mixture of red and buff clay facing bricks, stone and render and red and grey concrete interlocking roof tiles, which reflects the materials used in the existing built form. Care is taken to provide focal buildings in the street scene which will be highlighted by the choice of materials used in their construction.

3.12 Small Drove is accessible via 'B' roads, such as Broad Gate and High Road. Both of these roads are linked to the A151 which is the main 'A' road from Spalding to Holbeach. The access roads will be designed and constructed in accordance with the Highways Authority requirements to ensure that the roads are adopted towards the end of the development.

Visual Impact

3.13 The proposed dwellings will be two storey, similar in impact to the existing surrounding development. The proposed landscaping on the site will help minimise any impacts of the development and also help assimilate the development into its landscape.

3.14 The setting and appearance of the proposed development will enhance the visual aesthetics of the site itself and surroundings, complimenting existing views.

3.15 The appearance of the dwellings and landscaping will also enhance the character of the area.

4 Planning Policy

The Development Plan

4.1 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that all planning applications must be determined in accordance with the policies of the relevant development plan unless other material considerations state otherwise. Following the abolishment of the East Midlands Regional Plan, the statutory development plan for South Holland comprises the saved policies of the South Holland Local Plan which was adopted in July 2006.

4.2 As the policies of the Adopted Local Plan are rather outdated the relevant policies contained in the National Planning Policy Framework (2012) are considered to be more influential in the determination of this planning application. Notwithstanding this, the relevant local policies, including those in the emerging local plan, as well as the national policies contained in the NPPF are considered below.

South Holland Local Plan.

4.3 The South Holland local Plan 2006 was formally adopted on 18 July 2006. Following a direction from the Government Office for the East Midlands under paragraph 1(3) of Schedule 18 to the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, as of 18 July 2009 only certain Local Plan policies have been extended and continue to form part of the development plan.

4.4 In the context of those relevant saved policies referred to below, the Council consider that the Local Plan was adopted in general accordance with the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (albeit under the transitional arrangements). The Council consider that those policies referred to below generally accord with the thrust of the guidance set out in the National Planning Policy Framework, and in the context of paragraph 215 of the NPPF should therefore continue to be given weight in the decision making process.

4.5 The relevant policies are:

- Policy SG1 – General Sustainable Development
- Policy SG2 – Distribution of Development
- Policy SG3 – Settlement Hierarchy
- Policy SG4 – Development in the Countryside
- Policy SG6 – Community Infrastructure

- Policy SG7 – Energy efficiency
- Policy SG11 – Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDS)
- Policy SG12 – Sewerage and Development
- Policy SG13 – Pollution and Contamination
- Policy SG14 – Design of New Development
- Policy SG15 – New Development: Facilities for Road Users, Pedestrians and Cyclists.
- Policy SG16 – Parking Standards in New Development.
- Policy SG17 – Protection of Residential Amenity.
- Policy SG18 – Landscaping and New Development.
- Policy HS8 – Affordable Housing

National Planning Policy Framework

4.6 The NPPF indicates that housing applications should be considered in the context of the presumption in favour of sustainable development. The core planning principles in the Framework include, of relevance here, to secure high quality design and a good standard of amenity for all existing and future occupants of land and buildings. The NPPF also indicates that, amongst other things, that Local Planning Authorities should:

....set out their own approach to housing density to reflect local circumstances.

4.7 The Framework (NPPF) at the paragraph 14 'presumption in favour of sustainable development' seeks the speedy approval of proposals that accord with the development plan and, where the plan is "absent, silent or relevant policies are out of date", to grant permission unless the adverse impact would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits; or that policies in the NPPF indicate development should be restricted.

4.8 Under the topic heading Delivering a wide choice of high quality homes, paragraph 49 of the NPPF states that:

...housing applications should be considered in the context of the presumption in favour of sustainable development

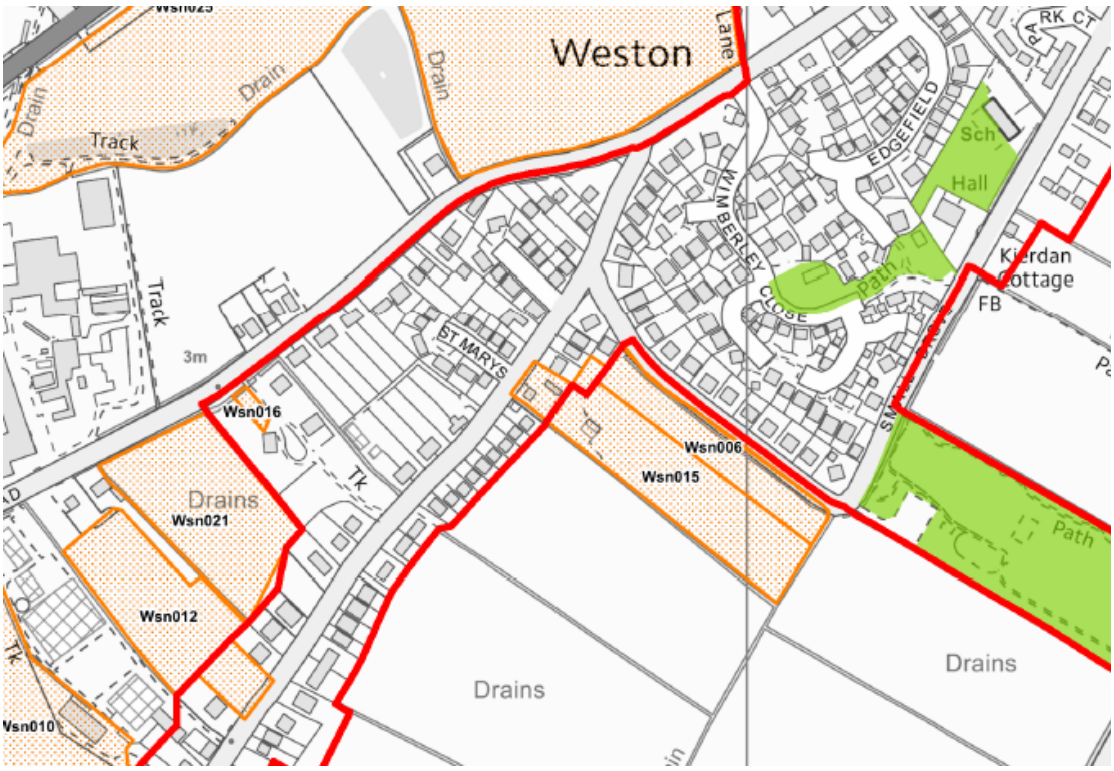
4.9 And then goes onto to comment:

...'relevant policies for the supply of housing should not be considered to be up-to-date if a five year supply cannot be demonstrated'

4.10 A consequence of Paragraph 49 of the NPPF is that policies restricting the supply of housing should be considered out of date. In this instance, policies protecting development beyond settlement frameworks cannot be relied upon. Furthermore, in line with Paragraph 14 of the NPPF, planning permission should be granted for sustainable development unless any adverse impacts of doing so will significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits when assessed against the policies in the Framework.

Emerging Local Plan

4.11 At a meeting of the South East Lincolnshire Joint Strategic Planning Committee on the 11th September 2015 draft plans showing potential housing sites and settlement boundaries for each settlement were discussed, along with the housing targets for each settlement. An extract from the Weston plan is shown below.



4.12 The emerging Local Plan (see above) seeks the development of approximately 300 dwellings at Weston between 2011 and 2036. The Council confirm that only six new homes were built in Weston between 1st April 2011 and 31st March

2015. With the same number with planning permission. The Council consider therefore that there is a need to accommodate a further 288 dwellings in Weston.

4.13 The site is identified as Wsn006 and Wsn015. Issues raised in the Council's initial assessments of these sites, include the poor width of Small Drove and the need to access the site from Broad Gate via an improved section of Small Drove as we currently propose. Inaccurately, it states that no developer is involved which is not the case. In respect to the issue of flood risk the submitted FRA states in paragraphs 4.1.7 and 4.1.8:

> *From the data within the South Holland SFRA, the site is not within an area at risk of flooding taking the flood defences into account. The actual flood limits, current day, year 2055 and 2115 for the 1 in 100 year event are outside the boundary of this development site. The closest are of flooding identified on the plans is 135m away from the Northern boundary of the site in the 2115 flood extents scenario for the 1% fluvial and 0.5% tidal events.*
>
> *Therefore, for the purpose of this assessment, the site is within Flood Zone 1 as the effect of the long standing and very effective flood defences, (even when breached and / or overtopped) prevent flood waters from tidal and fluvial sources from reaching the development site.*

4.14 The site is therefore at a low risk of flooding and is considered suitable for development.

<u>Five Year Land Supply.</u>

4.15 South Holland cannot currently demonstrate a 5-year supply of deliverable sites as per the provisions of NPPF. In the context of the objectively assessed need identified in the Council's Strategic Housing Market Area Assessment (SHMA), completed in 2014, and including a 20% buffer by virtue of a persistent under delivery of housing, the Council can only currently demonstrate a 2.3 year supply of deliverable sites.

4.16 As per the provisions of Paragraph 49 of the NPPF, the Council's Local Plan polices relevant to the supply of housing are considered out-of-date and the presumption in favour of sustainable development applies.

4.17 We note that even as recently as the 30th September 2015 the Council considered, in respect to the consideration of a planning application, that they could not demonstrate a five year land supply.

S106 Contributions

4.18 The proposals show that a third (15) of the proposed dwellings will be in the form of affordable units. This complies with the Council's policy. The details of tenure will be subject to further discussion with the Council and will reflect the recent changes to Government policy in this respect.

4.19 Policy SG6 of the Adopted Local Plan relates to the provision of community infrastructure and identifies those service and infrastructure headings which the Council are likely to seek contributions towards. The details of this will be negotiated within the application process.

4.20 The provision of all elements of the s106 contributions including the affordable housing are required to meet the tests within the CIL Regulations and repeated in the Framework. The tests are:

- Necessary to make the development acceptable in planning terms;
- directly related to the development, and;
- fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind to the development.

4.21 In addition the NPPF makes it clear that developer contributions should not be at such a level as to make the scheme unviable.

Community Fund

4.22 In addition to any s106 contributions the applicants will contribute towards a community fund that can be used for projects that help the existing and new communities. A payment of around £500 will be payable for each market house sold. In respect of Weston that will amount to around £15,000

5 Assessment

5.1 The key issues relating to the development of this site for housing are:

i. The Council's ability to demonstrate that there is a five year supply of land for housing.

ii. Flood Risk.

iii. Impact on the general amenities of the area.

iv. Providing a safe access onto the site.

v. Other matters

Five Year Land Supply.

5.2 As detailed in Section 4, the Council fully accept that at the moment they cannot demonstrate that they have a 5 year land supply for housing. Therefore, notwithstanding the fact that this site is outside of the settlement limits of the town in open countryside, provided it meets the requirements of any other, non-housing delivery related policies of the Adopted Local Plan as well as the relevant policies of the NPPF, the development will be acceptable.

Flood Risk

5.3 In respect to the issue of flood risk, again this was commented upon in section 4. The submitted FRA states in paragraphs 4.1.7 and 4.1.8:

From the data within the South Holland SFRA, the site is not within an area at risk of flooding taking the flood defences into account. The actual flood limits, current day, year 2055 and 2115 for the 1 in 100 year event are outside the boundary of this development site. The closest are of flooding identified on the plans is 135m away from the Northern boundary of the site in the 2115 flood extents scenario for the 1% fluvial and 0.5% tidal events.

Therefore, for the purpose of this assessment, the site is within Flood Zone 1 as the effect of the long standing and very effective flood defences, (even when breached and / or overtopped) prevent flood waters from tidal and fluvial sources from reaching the development site.

5.4 The site is therefore at a low risk of flooding and is considered suitable for development. Taking into account the limited amount of unconstrained and/or

previously developed land available within the District it is considered that the development passes the Sequential Test as detailed in the submitted FRA.

Impact on amenity

5.5 In terms of impact on the amenities of the area careful consideration has been taken to ensure that any impacts on the amenities of the occupiers of the existing dwellings close to the site are minimised. As mentioned in section 3, consideration has been given to the existing dwellings along Small Drove by setting back the new development from the road and by locating the larger, executive type homes along this frontage to reflect the positioning and style of the houses opposite.

5.6 The separation distances between the new dwellings and the existing homes that border the site along the northern and western boundaries of the site is generous having distances of around 30m between the front habitable windows of the new properties and those of the existing homes on Small Drove, with both Small Drove and a private driveway in between. This will ensure that there will be no impact in terms of loss of privacy/overlooking or loss of outlook. The minimum separation distances are around 28m with largest being 33m.

5.7 To the west the separation distances are similar in respect to the rear windows of the properties that back onto the existing dwellings that front onto Broad Gate. Also of note is that a number of properties have gables facing onto the existing properties which will tend to minimise any impacts such as overlooking etc.

Providing a safe access onto the site

5.8 It is proposed to increase the width of Small Drove from the junction with Broad Gate to the proposed access to the site utilising the land to the south of Small Drove which is currently grassed, but which is part of the adopted highway.



Proposed highway improvements to the junction.

5.9 This will ensure a safe access to the site. In addition, as mentioned previously a footpath will be provided on the south side of Small Drove within the development. In order to maintain the existing drainage ditch, the footpath will be located immediately to the south of the ditch within the development. It will run along the proposed roads and private drives of the development.



Proposed improvements to the bend on Small Drove

5.10 In addition further along Small Drove where it there is a ninety degree bend speed control measures in the form of a raised platform are proposed. Concerns were raised at the public exhibition about traffic speed along Small Drove and the fact there is no footpath for pedestrians. Whilst we can provide a safe footpath the full length of our site, the speed constraint measure proposed will help slow vehicle speed and ensure that the Small Drove is safer than before for pedestrians particularly on this tight bend where visibility is poor.

Other matters

5.11 Ecology. An Ecological Scoping Survey was undertaken and is submitted with this application. This looked for evidence of bats, badgers, reptiles, water voles, barn owls or ground nesting birds on the site. The botanical survey recorded nineteen common and widespread species of plants.

5.12 The overall conclusion of the survey was that overall, the site is of low ecological value.

6 Conclusions

6.1 This planning, design and access statement has been prepared in support of a detailed planning application for the development of 45 much needed, high quality dwellings (open market and affordable) together with associated roads, garages and open space areas. It should be read alongside the suite of documents prepared in support of the submission.

6.2 This statement has considered the planning application against the Development Plan and other material considerations. The Development Plan is a starting point for planning decisions and this comprises the 'saved' policies within the adopted South Holland Local Plan. This report has addressed the general development control criteria within the Local Plan and based on the supporting evidence accompanying the application, it is considered that these requirements have been satisfactorily addressed and that the scheme aligns with them.

6.3 Notwithstanding the above, the site is outside the development limits of Weston, within open countryside. However, the situation since the Local Plan was adopted has changed significantly particularly with the publication of the NPPF.

6.4 The current Local Plan is now considered out of date and the Council accept that they cannot demonstrate that they have a five year land supply at the moment. In light of the out of date Local Policy position, significant weight, in the determination of the application, should be given to the NPPF as well as other material considerations. Other material considerations include the emerging South East Lincolnshire Joint Local Plan. This identifies the site as a potential site for development and accepts that a further 300 homes needs to be built in Weston during the plan period.

6.5 The proposals are considered to be sustainable development as defined in Paragraph 14 of the NPPF. The various reports including the heritage assessments demonstrate that there is no adverse effects which would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits of this proposal. Whilst the site falls within an area at risk of flooding which can suspend the presumption in favour of sustainable development in certain circumstances, the technical flood risk assessment work has concluded that there is only a residual risk and that the location of the proposed development is appropriate in terms of managing flood risk.

6.6 As the proposal is acceptable in terms of the other policies contained within the NPPF (such as those relating to flood risk) and the Local Plan, as demonstrated

by this statement, it is considered that the Council should grant consent for development even though it is outside of the current settlement limits.

6.7 The Council is therefore invited to support the proposal and grant planning permission.