

PLANNING & DESIGN & ACCESS STATEMENT

On behalf of Mr & Mrs Whittington



**Full planning application for a dwelling on land at Bluebell Meadow,
East Langdon Road, Martin, CT15 5JJ**

**Finn's Reference – 3420/00
January 2021**

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1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 This is a full planning application for a new self-build dwelling for the owners of the stables to allow them to care for their horses in a more sustainable way.

2.0 Site location and description

- 2.1 The application site is a grassed field used for grazing of the owners' horses along with a horse paddock, stables, barn and riding area in the same ownership. There are boundary hedgerows to the west, north and southern boundaries. Residential properties lie to the north east on East Langdon Road and to the south east on Hollands Hill.
- 2.2 The site lies between the village of East Langdon and the hamlet of Martin with another hamlet Martin Mill to the east of the site. All of the surrounding settlements have access to public transport with bus stops approximately 500 m away from the site with buses every 2 hours through to Deal and Dover. Martin Mill has a railway station giving access further afield.
- 2.3 East Langdon has a primary school, church, village hall and a public house in nearby Martin. The settlement also benefits from a twice weekly post office facility with a further seasonal shop open between February and October in Hawthorn Farm Camp Site. Whitfield with its access to leisure facilities and supermarkets is 4 miles away.

3.0 Relevant Background Information

- 3.1 In August 2017 full planning permission was given for the erection of a timber clad barn (DOV/17/00735) and in February 2014 permission was given for a sand school (DOV/13/01012). Both of these applications show the applicant's commitment to the stables, horses and the site.
- 3.2 The application site falls under an Article 4 direction dated 2 April 1980 which removes permitted development rights for the erection of agricultural buildings, the use of the land as a caravan park or use by members of recreational organisations.

4.0 Proposed Development

- 4.1 The proposal is to erect a modest 3 bedroomed, two storey dwelling in keeping with the local vernacular. The Applicant proposes to build the property as a Self-Build dwelling supported by Government policy as set out in Right to Build. The ground floor

consists of a kitchen/diner leading to a utility room with downstairs WC and a separate living area. The first floor has 3 bedrooms, one with an en-suite bathroom and a family bathroom.

- 4.2 The finished dwelling would be sited at a distance of approximately 100 m from the neighbouring property to the north east and the residential property to the south. This distance will ensure that there is no impact on residential amenity from the proposed dwelling.
- 4.3 Access to the site will be via the existing access on East Langdon Road. Parking provision has been made for two cars which allows access and egress to the site in forward gears.

5.0 Relevant Development Plan Policy

Dover District Local Plan 2002

- 5.1 The Local Plan was adopted in 2002 and whilst the majority of the policies have been replaced by the Core Strategy and Land Allocations Local Plan, some of the policies remain 'saved' and continue to form part of Dover's Development Plan.
- 5.2 Saved Local Plan Policy TR9 states that the Council will seek the provision of cycle routes shown on the Policies Map. One such cycle routes runs along East Langdon Road connecting Deal and Dover which adds to the sustainability of the application site.

Core Strategy 2010

- 5.1 The Core Strategy (CS) was Adopted in 2010, prior to the publication of the National Planning Policy Framework. The degree of consistency with the Framework depends upon the continued relevance of the policy.
- 5.2 Policy DM1 of the Core Strategy states that development will not be permitted outside of the settlement boundaries as defined in CS Policy CP1, unless it functionally requires such a location. This proposal relates to the provision of a residential dwelling on the site for the landowners to enable them to live at site and provide care for their horses maintaining security for the livestock and buildings. Living at site will reduce the need for daily visits to the site to care for the livestock and will result in a reduction in traffic movements, enabling the site to operate in a more sustainable manner.

- 5.3 CS Policy DM11 concerns itself with the location of development and managing travel demand – the development would utilise the existing access onto East Langdon Road. The applicants already use this access on a regular basis to access their horses and stables, therefore vehicle journeys will not increase but will in fact decrease as they will not have to travel to the site.
- 5.4 CS Policy DM15 seeks to protect the countryside and limit development within it but does not apply to land within the curtilage of existing buildings. This policy therefore is not relevant to this application.
- 5.5 CS Policy DM16 addresses landscape character. The supporting text confirms this does not preclude the possibility of development in the right location. The policy gives support to development where ‘it can be sited to avoid or reduce the harm’ to landscape. The proposed dwelling would be well screened by virtue of existing vegetation along the southern boundary and is sited to be close to the existing buildings on this site.
- 5.6 Part of the application site falls within Groundwater Source Protection Zone 2, Policy DM17 gives guidance on what is acceptable in this zone.

Land Allocations Local Plan 2015

- 5.7 The Land Allocations Local Plan 2015 identified figures related to housing need and allocated specific sites. It also made an allowance for the inclusion of windfall sites, with a predicted windfall allowance over the Plan period (2014-2026) of 135 dwellings within the rural area.
- 5.8 Since the Plan was Adopted, the Council have struggled to deliver on housing provision within the District. Whilst they have land allocated for development, this is currently under review within the Local Plan process and given no progress on many allocated sites, it is likely that some sites are no longer available. The new local plan is in the early stages of preparation and is commencing the Regulation 18 Consultation in January 2021 and land to the south west of the site is identified under reference LAN003 in the Emerging Plan for residential development for some 40 dwellings, accepting there is a need for new dwellings within the village. The Land Allocations

Local Plan, paragraph 3.245, 'Housing Quality', sets out the Council's aim to improve design standards in the rural area and this proposal meets those aims.

Dover District Landscape Character Assessment 2006

5.9 The Landscape Character Assessment was published in 2006 and is now some 14 years old. Throughout that period, several new areas of land have been allocated for development which has been developed or under construction. Additionally, several sites have been granted due to the Council not having a 5 year supply of land at various points in the timeframe. The Landscape Character Assessment is therefore very out of date.

5.10 Maps within the document are unclear, but it is believed the application site sits within Character Area 10; Eythorne Arable Mosaic with Parkland which describes the 'topography is undulating, with a distinct and regular pattern of gentle ridges and valleys flowing in a northeast-southwest direction. Settlements tend to be located on the higher ridges, giving way to wider views across open arable land.'

5.11 In the case of the application site, it is situated on lower ground within a valley with land rising to north and south, providing a natural screen which limits its longer views. The Landscape Character Assessment refers to the fact that 'enclosure is notable around settlements with built fabric, narrow roads, hedgerows and mature trees', which is an accurate description of the position of the application site itself, with the road tree lined and enclosed.

National Planning Policy Framework 2019

5.12 The Government's objective is to significantly boost the supply of new homes and variety of sites is noted as an important factor (paragraph 59). Local planning authorities should take into account the needs of different people in the community.

5.13 Paragraph 61 supports people who wish to build their own homes whilst paragraph 68 recognises the important contribution that small sites can make in meeting the housing requirements of an area and encourages 10% of a local planning authorities sites to be designated on land less than 1 hectare in size.

5.14 In rural areas, the Framework requires planning decisions to be 'responsive to local circumstances and support housing developments that reflect local needs.' (paragraph 77). It further recognises the benefits of development in one settlement, which may

help to support services nearby, where there are groups of smaller settlements such as Martin, Martin Mill and East Langdon.

- 5.15 Paragraph 79 seeks to avoid isolated homes in the countryside. However, the application site is not isolated and sits between existing dwellings. Additionally, it is in an area where groups of small numbers of properties are located close to one another, rather than in one defined close knit arranged settlement. It also lies just east of a proposed allocation for some 40 dwellings in the emerging local plan. The Framework recognises the benefit of the re-use of redundant or disused buildings where an enhancement to the immediate setting can be obtained.

Self-Build Register and Right to Build

- 5.16 The Government is encouraging self-build plots and requires all local authorities to maintain a Self-Build Register registering local need for self-build plots. A review of the Right to Build legislation is currently underway aimed at supporting self and custom builders and a new funding initiative, 'Help to Build' was announced by the Government in November 2020 making 2.2 billion of new loan finance available specifically to those people wishing to build their own homes.
- 5.17 The Applicant has chosen not to register on the Council's Self-Build Register as they already have a plot of land within their ownership on which they wish to build.

Technical Housing Standards

- 5.18 The proposals meet the requirements of the Technical Housing Standards as updated in October 2020.

6.0 Key Issues

- 6.1 The key issues are;

- Need for the development;
- Impact on the countryside.

Need for the development

- 6.2 The Applicants own an area of land which they use for a hay crop and for the keeping of horses. Currently living away from the site, the Applicant's are proposing to move to site to enable on site care and security for their animals and to avoid the daily

commute, significantly reducing the number of multiple daily traffic movements to and from this site. The Applicant is proposing to build their own home under the Self-Build initiatives supported by Government.

- 6.3 The proposed dwelling has been designed to be modest in size but also very high quality in its design to reflect the Government's growing encouragement of improving design standards for new buildings. It is located to be grouped as close as possible with the existing buildings whilst enabling a clear view over the paddocks and the adjacent yard and site entrance.
- 6.4 The Applicants have been operating from the site for a number of years and wish to maintain their business and living at the site will enable them to secure its long term future. In these uncertain times, where travelling is encouraged to be at a minimum, the ability to live at site and remove the daily commute will support the governments aims of reducing travel and staying safe.

Impact on the countryside

- 6.5 The site sits within an area of land which is within the countryside, albeit land to the northeast and south is already developed with housing. Land to the west is also now proposed to be developed for some 40 new dwellings within the emerging Local Plan and therefore the area is not considered to be unsuitable for new housing developments.
- 6.6 Sitting at the base of a natural valley, the site is shielded from longer distance views and hedgerows around the road and field boundaries have grown up to provide a natural screen. The Applicant is keen to improve the biodiversity value of the site and plant landscaping attractive to birds and insects. A number of biodiversity improvements such as log piles and bird boxes can be installed within the site.
- 6.7 These improvements will add to and encourage the range of wildlife using the site and new planted hedgerows will create new habitat corridors within the site, further enhancing the landscape.

7.0 Conclusions

- 7.1 This proposal seeks a modest three bedroom dwelling to be built as a self-build project by the Applicant and to provide on-site accommodation for the Applicant and his family

to enable them to stay at site with their livestock. The proposal will result in reduced traffic movements to and from the site, which currently result from required daily visits and is supported by the Governments Right to Build initiatives.

- 7.2 The site is located in the bottom of the valley and benefits from natural screening with opportunities to provide further enhanced boundary treatment and landscaping including introduction of new hedgerows to extend and improve the habitat corridor offering at this site. Biodiversity improvements such as bird boxes and log piles will further result in an enhanced biodiversity offering from the site which is currently a grazed paddock.
- 7.3 Land to the west is identified within the emerging Regulation 18 Local Plan for the erection of some 40 new dwellings, accepting that the area can benefit from new housing and that it is an appropriate and sustainable location for new residential development. The settlement does benefit from its own railway station and primary school provision and can support local shops in nearby settlements, as recognised in the Framework paragraph 77.
- 7.4 It is respectfully requested that planning permission be granted.