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Date: 28 July 2022

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Dear Planning Central Registration

PLANNING APPLICATION FOR SINGLE DETACHED BUNGALOW (RESTRICTED OCCUPANCY TO OVER 55 YEARS OLD) AT LAND AT DENE HOUSE FARM, LONGFRAMLINGTON

George F. White (Planning, Architecture and Development) have been instructed by the Wilson Family (the 'Client') to submit a full planning application seeking permission for the erection of a single bungalow which is to be limited in occupancy to those over the age of 55 on land at Dene House Farm, Longframlington. Having regard to section 38 (6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, this planning statement considers the application's conformity with the Development Plan, relevant national planning policy and other material considerations.

Background and Proposed Development

The application site is located at Dene House Farm, Harrogate Lane, Longframlington. The site which has been identified for this additional bungalow is located to the north of the existing leisure building complex and between Dene House Farmhouse and Poppy Cottage (which forms a group of 4No cottages, known as Dene House Farm Cottages). The site although vacant and set to lawn benefits from an extant planning permission through APP/Q2908/A/06/2022244 which allowed for the development of a bed and breakfast, laundry, and leisure building extension (the leisure building extension having subsequently been completed).

Further, full planning permission was also granted under application reference 89/A/225 for the construction of four holiday bungalows for disabled persons (known as Dene House Farm Cottages as referenced above). The permission was granted subject to a condition that restricted occupancy so that the units could not be occupied between 1 February and 1 March in any year, to ensure that the accommodation was used for holiday purposes only. The applicant then applied under reference 98/A/349 to remove condition 5 of permission 98/A/225 relating to the occupancy restriction. Permission was subsequently granted, subject to the completion of the s106 agreement that included the following obligations:

Second Schedule

1. To utilise the 4 holiday homes for holiday accommodation only
2. Not to permit any of the holiday homes to be continuously occupied by the same person or persons for longer than 5 months in any one year

Under application 14/00407/DISCON the applicant had originally sought to modify the existing obligations of the s106 agreement with the following wording:

Not to permit the four cottages to be occupied other than persons over the age of 55 or registered disabled.

The reason being that the applicants had run the cottage business from the site since their construction following the 1989 permission. These cottages sit alongside other two other units designed specifically for disabled use, and the leisure building. The proposed variation of the 106 agreement was intended to fill an identified gap in the market for specialised and supported accommodation for over 55s (similar in concept to that of the more well-known operators such as McCarthy Stone for example). Following consideration of the application planning officers at the time advised that it was not considered reasonable to modify the existing s106 agreement to restrict occupation to a particular category of residents. The applicant therefore amended the application to remove the obligation altogether.

This application seeks planning permission for a further bungalow to be located adjacent to Poppy Cottage. The applicants will extend the 24-hour assistance and care service for users of this new bungalow. Further, as this is a fresh planning application, free of the previous S.106 agreement, the applicants are again seeking a restricted occupancy to that originally envisaged in 2014. The occupation would be to persons over the age of 55. This meets with this business model and the type, form and specialist health and care services that can be provided at the site. If approved the accommodation at the site would be broken down as follows, including changes undertaken since the removal of the S.106 in 2014.

Charlottes Stable Cottage – Currently Occupied (Over 55 with 24-hour emergency on-call if required)
Willows Stable Cottage – Currently Occupied (Over 55 with 24-hour emergency on-call if required)
Poppy Cottage – Currently Occupied (Over 55 with 24-hour emergency on-call if required)
Bluebell Cottage – Privately Owned by Family Members (24-hour emergency on-call if required)
Buttercup Cottage – Privately Owned by Family Members
New Bungalow – To be Let (Over 55 with 24-hour emergency on-call if required)

The bungalow which is proposed is for the parents of the occupier of Bluebell Cottage who are currently looking for accommodation to suit their needs and health issues following a return from Canada in May of 2022. The bungalow takes a simple form, and provides for 2 No bedrooms, a shared dining and living space with kitchen and separate utility room. There is a main bedroom which has an en-suite and second bedroom which would have access to the main bathroom and a separate snug. Provision has been made such that if a carer was required, they would have the opportunity to use the second bedroom and the snug as a small private space with separate entrance to the outside space to provide a degree of privacy and 'breakaway' from the resident. This would generally occur during breaks, handovers, or during family or other visits.

Planning Considerations - Principle of Development

Following the successful referendum, the Longframlington Neighbourhood Plan was formally 'made' at a meeting of the Council's Cabinet on 8 March 2022. Now that the neighbourhood plan is formally 'made', it becomes part of the statutory development plan. Consequently, decisions on whether to grant planning permission in the Longframlington Neighbourhood Area will need to be made in accordance with the plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The Northumberland Local Plan includes the planning policies used to guide and determine future planning applications in Northumberland. It details the scale and distribution of new development and includes land allocations and designations. The Northumberland Local Plan 2016 to 2036 was formally adopted by Northumberland Council on 31 March 2022. As a result, assessment against both the Local Plan and Neighbourhood Plan is required.

The Local Plan recognises that most people who can do so prefer to remain living well in their own homes within inclusive communities for as long as possible, with or without support, while others require specialist accommodation to meet their specific needs on either a temporary or longer-term basis. The Council wants to ensure the provision of better housing choices for older people and vulnerable groups, whatever their requirements, including homes that are adaptable to residents' needs over their lifetime and set within accessible 'lifetime neighbourhoods' that are well-designed places suitable for all people regardless of their age or disability.

The needs of older people are diverse; some still have jobs or are still actively seeking work, while others have retired from work and can reorganise their lives around family responsibilities, leisure, non-vocational education, and voluntary work. For some, their lives are substantially affected by long-term illness or disability, and they may require additional care or specialist accommodation. Given the projected significant increase in

the County's elderly population, both from ageing and inward migration, it is anticipated that there will be significant growth in the number of older people in need of care and specialised support.

The Neighbourhood Plan also positively supports development within the village, and there are opportunities for further development on brownfield sites within the village. In addition, national planning policy allows for rural exception sites on the periphery of rural villages to deliver local needs housing, which the Parish Council is also supportive of. It is considered that the approach taken is a positive one, which seeks the right kind of development for Longframlington over the period of the LNP.

Policy HOU 11 sets out the policy for homes for older and vulnerable people. The supporting text acknowledges that there are additional costs associated with the delivery of sheltered and extra care accommodation. While the delivery of housing of these types is encouraged as part of the housing mix in market housing developments, sheltered and extra care schemes are often bespoke and delivered by specialist providers. Where matters of viability arise and require negotiation, the Council will look to work with such providers, to identify solutions, to secure the delivery of sheltered and extra care accommodation.

There is a preference for new housing designed for older people to be located centrally in Main Towns and Service Centres where they are accessible to local shops, community facilities and public transport, thereby supporting the local economy and integrated into and complementing the surrounding community. In this case however, the additional unit will complement the existing accommodation already provided and in operation at Dene House Farm and whilst there is a preference for a Main Town or Service Centre, the fact that this development will enhance and extend the existing accommodation at Dene House is a significant material consideration, unique to this application.

In policy terms, HOU 11(1.a.) supports the adaptation of existing homes and the provision of new adaptable homes, including bungalows, level-access flats and sheltered 'extra care' accommodation, located in accessible and sustainable central locations well-served by local health, leisure, education, and transport facilities. The LPA have previously considered the location of Dene House Farm through 14/00407/DISCON, and it was found that although the cottages are outside of the main settlement and for planning purposes would be classed as the countryside, the site is not significantly isolated from Longframlington, being around 1.1 km from the northern edge of the village. The area to the north of the village is characterised by existing groups of housing around North End and on Harrogate Lane that leads down to the site.

On this basis an additional bungalow, restricted in occupancy to those over 55 and forming part of Dene House Farm would not have significant or adverse effects in terms of achieving a sustainable form of development in this location. It is the intention of the applicants to deliver a form of housing for a specific target market, and it is felt that this could achieve benefits in terms of achieving a mix of housing. In this instance the properties are not substantially isolated and are relatively well related to the village. As such this development is in general accordance with HOU 11 of the Local Plan which was adopted after the Neighbourhood Plan, and which is currently silent on homes for older and vulnerable people.

Design and Access Considerations

Use

The bungalow will be in a residential use, with the occupancy restricted to those over the age 55 years old. The use will form part of the existing and wider complex at Dene House Farm which includes other specialist residential accommodation as well as dedicated health and leisure facilities.

Amount

The accommodation is limited to a single residential unit. The unit is modest in size as described above and includes versatile accommodation.

Layout

The bungalow will fall on the footprint of the extant laundry building which was allowed on appeal as part of the much larger scheme. The site sits between the existing Farmhouse and Dene House Cottages. It is located to take advantage of the outdoor space associated with Dene House Cottages and compliment the available accommodation and community by introducing an additional resident.

Scale

The bungalow is single storey and has been designed to reflect the eave and ridge height of Dene House Cottages. It will sit comfortably within the available plot and will not appear overly dominant. As set out in Appendix A, an Inspector has already found a much larger form of development to be acceptable in this location. Therefore, this modest bungalow will not cause a significant impact on the landscape or character of the area.

Landscape

The external landscaping which surrounds with the building will not be affected by the development save for the loss of a small amount of lawned area between the existing buildings.

Appearance

The bungalow is single storey and has been designed to reflect the eave and ridge height of Dene House Cottages. The materials to be used in the construction of the dwelling will match and compliment the materials of the existing Dene House complex.

Access

Access to the building will remain unaltered and will utilise Harrogate Lane. On entering the site and surroundings appropriate car parking is to be provided with intermittent landscaping. The building has been designed to be completely accessible.

Summary

It is considered that an additional bungalow, restricted in occupancy to those over 55 and forming part of the mixed accommodation already on offer at Dene House Farm would not have significant or adverse effects in terms of achieving a sustainable form of development in this location. It is the intention of the applicants to deliver a form of housing for a specific target market, and it is felt that this could achieve benefits in terms of achieving a mix of housing. In this instance, and as the properties are not substantially isolated and are relatively well related to the village the development is in general accordance with HOU 11 of the Local Plan which was adopted after the Neighbourhood Plan, and which is currently silent on homes for older and vulnerable people. Should further information be required as a result of formal consultation then we would be happy to address and supply any additional information to aid in the decision-making process.

Yours sincerely



Craig Ross
Partner

For and on behalf of George F. White LLP

Appendix A – Appeal Decision (APP/Q2908/A/06/2022244 - with Highlights)
Appendix B – Officer Report (14/00407/DISCON – with Highlights)
Appendix C – Extant Site Plan