

PLANNING STATEMENT

**Proposal: FULL PLANNING APPLICATION - CONVERSION OF EXISTING
BUILDINGS TO 3 x HOLIDAY LETS**

Site: ADJACENT TO 314 SPRING LANE, NOTTINGHAMSHIRE, NG3 5RQ

Prepared by

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1. *GraceMachin Planning and Property* on behalf of **Mr. D Hayer** (“the Applicant”) has prepared a planning application for the conversion of existing buildings in the Green Belt to holiday lets. The site is adjacent to 314 Spring Lane, Mapperley, Lambley, NG3 5RQ.
- 1.2. The purpose of this Statement is to set out the case, in planning terms, in support of the proposed development. Section 2 describes the Application Site and its surroundings, with Section 3 providing details of the proposed development. Section 4 provides the relevant planning policy context against which the application must be determined, and Section 5 undertakes an assessment of the development against planning policy and all other relevant material considerations. Finally, Section 6 sets out the summary and conclusions.

2.0 THE APPLICATION SITE

Site Description and Surroundings

- 2.1 The Application Site is edged red and is shown on the submitted site location plan. The Site comprises of a variety of redundant outbuildings associated with 314 Spring Lane which are capable of ‘conversion’. The Site is located directly off Spring Lane and is very accessible to all parts of greater Nottingham by public and private transport. The Site is on the transitionary edge of the urban / built up area and open countryside / Green Belt to the North.
- 2.2 Its immediate setting is characterized by the site forming an ‘infill area’ between existing residential property.
- 2.3 The Site constitutes previously developed land within the Green Belt.
- 2.4 **With this proposal we're removing 18% of the original building footprints and increasing the soft landscaping area within the red line from 21% to 40%.**

Planning History

- 2.5 There is no planning history directly linked to the buildings which are subject to this planning application.
- 2.6 Planning permission was granted in 2015 to extend the 'host dwelling' – 314 Spring Lane. LPA Ref: 2015/0172. In the Officers report it refers to '*several single storey outbuildings to the rear of the plot...*'.
- 2.7 314 Spring Lane was granted planning permission, very nearly 70 (seventy) years ago in 1955 (LPA Ref: S/25/84).

3.0 THE DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS

- 3.1. This application seeks planning permission from the Council for a proposed change of use and conversion of existing redundant outbuildings at the rear of 314 Spring Lane to be used as tourist / overnight accommodation.
- 3.2. The existing outbuildings offer a clear opportunity for conversion to just three holiday lets. This development would provide much needed tourist accommodation within Gedling in a highly sustainable location.
- 3.3. The development would not encroach or be harmful to the openness of the surrounding Green Belt and would be sympathetic to the surrounding rural area with the building footprints being REDUCED. Indeed, the proposals reduce the footprint of buildings on site and the 'openness' of the Green Belt would be increased.
- 3.4. The supporting structural report from *Moran Structural Consultants (Feb 2024)* clearly supports the view that the buildings can be converted to a holiday let use.
- 3.5. Overall, the proposal relates to some demolition of existing buildings and conversion of others with minimal building works.
- 3.6. The proposed conversion scheme is very modest and would result in a development 'in keeping with its surroundings'.

4.0 **PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT**

Local Planning Policy

4.1 Greater Nottingham **Aligned Core Strategy**

- Policy A – Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development
- Policy 3 – The Green Belt
- Policy 10 – Designing and Enhancing Local Identity

Gedling Local Planning Document – 2018 (Part 2 Local Plan)

- LPD15 – Infill Development within the Green Belt
- LPD19 – Landscape Character and Visual Impact
- LPD24 – Tourist Accommodation
- LPD32 - Amenity
- LPD35 – Safe, Accessible, and Inclusive Development
- LPD47 – Agricultural and Rural Diversification

National Planning Policy Framework

4.2 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), revised in December 2023, has replaced all previous Planning Policy Guidance (PPG) and Planning Policy Statements (PPS) in respect of the consideration and determination of planning applications. The heart of the NPPF stresses the presumption in favour of sustainable development. In decision making, this means:

- *Approving development proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan without delay; or*
- *Where there are no relevant development plan policies, or the policies which are more important for determining the application are out-of-date, granting permission unless:*
 - the application of policies in this Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a clear reason for refusing the development proposed; or*
 - 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.”*

4.3 The NPPF reaffirms the statutory requirement for decisions to be made in accordance with the Development Plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Decisions on applications should also be made as quickly as possible

and within statutory timescales unless a longer period has been agreed by the applicant in writing.

- 4.4 As far as the weight to be attached to an existing development plan is concerned, the NPPF states that:

“Due weight should be given to them [existing policies] according to their degree of consistency with this Framework (the closer the policies in the plan to the policies in the Framework, the greater the weight that may be given)”.

- 4.5 The NPPF advises that the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development.

- 4.6 The NPPF details that there are three overarching objectives to achieving sustainable development which are interdependent. These objectives are:

a) an economic objective – to help build a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right types is available in the right places and at the right time to support growth, innovation and improved productivity; and by identifying and coordinating the provision of infrastructure;

b) a social objective – to support strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by ensuring that a sufficient number and range of homes can be provided to meet the needs of present and future generations; and by fostering a well- designed and safe built environment, with accessible services and open spaces that reflect current and future needs and support communities’ health, social and cultural well-being; and

c) an environmental objective – to contribute to protecting and enhancing our natural, built and historic environment; including making effective use of land, helping to improve biodiversity, using natural resources prudently, minimising waste and pollution, and mitigating and adapting to climate change, including moving to a low carbon economy.”

- 4.7 The NPPF details that these objectives should be delivered through the preparation and implementation of plans and the application of the policies in this NPPF; they are not criteria against which every decision can or should be judged. Planning policies and decisions should play an active role in guiding development towards sustainable solutions, but in doing so should take local circumstances into account, to reflect the character, needs and opportunities of each area – therefore decisions for each development should be dependent on the case at hand.

4.8 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. For decision-taking, this means:

- “c) Approving development proposals that accord with an up-to date development plan without delay, or*
- d) Where there are no relevant development plan policies, or the policies which are most important for determining the application are out-of date, granting permission unless:*
 - i. the application of policies in this Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a clear reason for refusing the development proposed; or*
 - ii. 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 (paragraph 11).”*

4.9 Supporting a Prosperous Rural Economy states:

“Planning policies and decisions should enable:

- a) the sustainable growth and expansion of all types of business in rural areas, both through conversion of existing buildings and well-designed new buildings;*
- b) the development and diversification of agricultural and other land-based rural businesses;*
- c) sustainable rural tourism and leisure developments which respect the character of the countryside; and*
- d) the retention and development of accessible local services and community facilities, such as local shops, meeting places, sports venues, open space, cultural buildings, public houses and places of worship.”*

4.10 The NPPF states:

“Planning policies and decisions should recognise that sites to meet local business and community needs in rural areas may have to be found adjacent to or beyond existing settlements, and in locations that are not well served by public transport. In these circumstances it will be important to ensure that development is sensitive to its surroundings, does not have an unacceptable impact on local roads and exploits any opportunities to make a location more sustainable (for example by improving the scope for access on foot, by cycling or by public transport). The use of previously developed land, and sites that are physically well-related to existing settlements, should be encouraged where suitable opportunities exist.”

4.11 The NPPF (proposals affecting the Green Belt) states:

“A local planning authority should regard the construction of new buildings as inappropriate in the Green Belt. Exceptions to this are:

- a) buildings for agriculture and forestry;*
- b) the provision of appropriate facilities (in connection with the existing use of land or a change of use) for outdoor sport, outdoor recreation, cemeteries and burial grounds and allotments; as long as the facilities preserve the openness of the Green Belt and do not conflict with the purposes of including land within it;*
- c) the extension or alteration of a building provided that it does not result in disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original building;*
- d) the replacement of a building, provided the new building is in the same use and not materially larger than the one it replaces;*
- e) limited infilling in villages;*
- f) limited affordable housing for local community needs under policies set out in the development plan (including policies for rural exception sites); and*
- g) limited infilling or the partial or complete redevelopment of previously developed land, whether redundant or in continuing use (excluding temporary buildings), which would:
 - not have a greater impact on the openness of the Green Belt than the existing development; or*
 - not cause substantial harm to the openness of the Green Belt, where the development would re-use previously developed land and contribute to meeting an identified affordable housing need within the area of the local planning authority.”**

5.0 CASE IN SUPPORT OF THE APPLICATION

- 5.1 This Planning Application seeks consent for the conversion of existing buildings in the Green Belt to three (3) small holiday lets.

The General Principle of Development and the Green Belt

- 5.2 The NPPF states at the heart there is a presumption of sustainable development, and thus approving sustainable development proposals that are up to date with the Development Plan should be concluded without delay. In recognition of this, the proposed site comprises a highly sustainable location that would be attractive to people looking to stay in Gedling Borough.

- 5.3 According to the NPPF, all decisions should be plan-led, and Section 5 shows the Government's objective to support the development of rural businesses.
- 5.4 **The National Planning Policy Framework states that the re-use of buildings provided that the buildings are of permanent construction is not “inappropriate” in the Green Belt provided the proposed scheme would preserve its openness and would not conflict with the purposes of including land within it.**
- 5.5 There would be minimal work intervention meaning the conversion would be sympathetic to the rural character of the surroundings. The proposed holiday lets would be contained wholly within the existing curtilage of 314 Spring Lane so there can be no negative impact upon Green Belt openness.
- 5.6 Therefore, this application is compliant with the NPPF and the Development Plan.

Tourism

- 5.7 The NPPF also explicitly sets out very clear support for rural regeneration through appropriate re-use and conversion of existing buildings, rural diversification schemes and generating local employment.
- 5.8 A healthy tourism industry within the Borough can help sustain economic growth and contribute to prosperous communities and attractive environments. Gedling as a local authority wants to increase the proportion of visitors to Greater Nottingham staying overnight in Gedling itself.
- 5.9 The Site would be a very attractive location for visitors. The proposed units of self-catered accommodation would make an important contribution to the local economy in terms of support for existing community services and facilities.
- 5.10 Tourism is a significant contributor to the Gedling economy, but the market supply (number of beds) is relatively low. There is still a significant scope for an increase in bed spaces.

Planning Considerations

- 5.11 The proposal would involve the removal of some of some of the structures on site and some very minor alterations to the retained buildings which are located within an existing complex of buildings.
- 5.12 The footprints of the buildings are all identified on the planning application drawings and within the Design & Access Statement. The overall proposals

would result in a REDUCED floor area compared to that existing. The site is regarded as previously developed as there are several existing buildings on it. Some of which (as above) are to be removed.

- 5.13 The site has extensive areas of hard standing and the buildings are of different types in terms of appearance.
- 5.14 In this instance, because of properties already being located to the south and west of the site, we consider the site also to be 'infill'. You have built form on two sides of the site.
- 5.15 In terms of the scale of development it is limited in floor space terms as the proposed floor space will be **less** than what is on site currently.
- 5.16 As the proposals are within the footprint of the overall existing buildings the proposals are within the 'fabric of the site'.
- 5.17 While it is acknowledged that what is proposed will result in a minor change in appearance and use, when viewed against the backdrop of existing neighbours the openness of the Green Belt will actually be improved. The outdoor amenity areas are tightly drawn around the units and do not extend outwards further into the Green Belt. As a result, the scheme is 'inward facing' and would not encroach beyond the boundaries of the existing site.
- 5.18 Due to the number of existing buildings on site, and the level of adjacent development coupled with the fact that the proposed units would be located within the overall footprint of buildings to be removed, it is considered that no 'valuable views' would be lost.
- 5.19 In terms of the proposal being in keeping with the surrounding area, there is a variety of building styles (modern and old) and of a variety of materials. The site is not located within a Conservation Area or close to any Listed Buildings.
- 5.20 It is considered that the sensitive design proposals will not be out of keeping with existing development nearby. The scheme accords with LPD15 – what is proposed is not inappropriate development and therefore, there is no need to present any 'very special circumstances' to justify the proposal.
- 5.21 The proposed development can be seen as logical development of the site, removing some of the buildings on site and creating a courtyard scheme. It would be read in the context of nearby development and improve the character and appearance of the surrounding area.
- 5.22 In relation to neighbours the site is between 314 Spring Lane and neighbours to the North / West. The wider site is all in the ownership of the applicant. As such

the activity will be tightly controlled by the applicant and in this context, this will help ensure that no negative impacts result.

- 5.23 In terms of highways movements, they will be limited and use existing access onto Spring Lane. Due to the width of access and provision of a passing place, we do not anticipate any highway objections on safety grounds.
- 5.24 It is important to stress that the use of previously developed sites in the Green Belt, which are physically well related to existing settlements (which this site is) should be encouraged as important 'development opportunities' if they exist. As per the NPPF.
- 5.25 LPD24 sets out that tourist accommodation will be SUPPORTED if it accords with Green Belt policy.
- 5.26 The site in planning terms is not 'isolated' and sits on the urban edge. The location has very good accessibility to a range of local services and amenities around Mapperley Top and Arnold.
- 5.27 Overall, the proposal will be a significant improvement, enhancing the overall appearance of the buildings, which is a planning benefit.

6.0 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

- 6.1 This application seeks planning permission from the Council for a proposed change of use and conversion of existing outbuildings to tourist accommodation on land adjacent to 314 Spring Lane. **With this proposal we're removing 18% of the original building footprints and increasing the soft landscaping area within the red line from 21% to 40%.**
- 6.2 The above assessment shows that the application proposal accords with national Green Belt policy. The scheme proposes to re-use existing buildings to provide modest sized self-catered holiday lets. The buildings proposed for conversion are permanent, capable of conversion and well established and the proposed scheme would preserve Green Belt openness and would not conflict with the purposes of including land within it.
- 6.3 As shown in section 4 and 5 of this Statement, the development is in accordance with policies as set out in the Development Plan along with all relevant requirements from the NPPF.
- 6.4 **A healthy tourism industry within the Borough can help sustainable economic growth and contribute to prosperous communities and attractive environments. Increasing the proportion of visitors who stay overnight in Gedling should be supported in principle. In our view the application proposal represents a very positive re-use of the buildings that would contribute positively to the local economy.** The proposal raises no heritage, character, landscape, highway, amenity, or other development control issues that would warrant withholding of planning consent.
- 6.5 The NPPF establishes a clear presumption in favour of sustainable development. This full planning application proposes the conversion of buildings to holiday lets within Gedling and it would be fully policy compliant and should thus be approved without delay.

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