For and on behalf of:
Dean Manning

Local Plan Representation

Land off Greenway, Eastcote

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 This statement has been prepared to seek the variation of the settlement boundary at Eastcote to include land to the south of Greenway in the forthcoming South Northamptonshire Local Plan. The site is edged in red on the plan overleaf and extends to 0.24 hectares.

1.2 The Regulation 19 South Northamptonshire Local Plan Part 2 (LPP2) was published for consultation in September 2018. The proposed submission plan is based on up-to-date evidence and covers a broad range of local policies that will guide decisions on planning applications and development in the District up to 2029. The Council are currently inviting comments on the Regulation 19 Draft Submission Plan from 4 October 2018 to 16 November 2018.

1.3 The LPP2 does not allocate housing sites, its purpose is limited to:

- Revising the settlement hierarchy;
- Reviewing settlement confines and;
- Setting out exception policies for self-build (Policy LH5), starter homes (Policy LH2), low cost, affordable and entry level housing (Policy LH3).

1.4 The LPP2 establishes settlement confines or boundaries for all settlements in the top four tiers of the settlement hierarchy. The settlement hierarchy for South Northamptonshire identifies Eastcote as a Secondary Village as part of Pattishall and Astcote. New development is permissible within the established confines of each of the settlements set out in Policy LH1. Development outside of town and village confines will be supported if it is a Neighbourhood Plan allocation, starter homes under policy LH2, an exception site under policy LH3, a single dwelling compliant with policy LH4, self or custom build as allowed by policy LH5, specialist housing under Policy LH6 or a proposal for residential/nursing care under Policy LH9.

1.5 The site is located adjacent to but just outside of the Eastcote settlement boundary. As identified by Inset 28 of the South Northamptonshire Local Plan Part 2. The site comprises previously developed land containing buildings last used for agriculture as well as the remnants of residential buildings. It is bound by housing to the east and west with development to the east extending along Greenway.
1.6 The inclusion of this land within the settlement boundary represents a logical rounding off of this part of the village which would not harm the character or appearance, its setting in the wider landscape, or the living conditions of nearby residents.

1.8 There are no ownership or other constraints to the development of the site.
2.0 THE SITE AND SURROUNDINGS

2.1 The village of Eastcote is located south west of Northampton and north of Towcester. The village contains a variety of homes with no overriding design in the area that sets a precedent for future development. Road access to the village is taken via Butchers Lane off the A5.

2.2 The site (as outlined in red below) is broadly rectangular and extends to 0.24ha. The land lies on the south side of Greenway and forms a single parcel of land between existing residential properties. The site has a road frontage of around 68 metres.

2.3 The site comprises previously developed land containing the remnants of former residential buildings as well as agricultural buildings. Historically the land was occupied by cottages and other buildings.

2.4 At the northern boundary is an existing stone wall and a mature hedgerow which largely screens the site along Greenway. The eastern boundary is also defined by an existing hedgerow with a number of converted agricultural buildings and residential development beyond. At the southern boundary is post and rail fencing with open countryside beyond and to the western boundary is domestic fencing forming a curtilage boundary to 4 Greenway.

2.5 The site is within walking distance of the villages of Pattishall and Astcote. Due to the proximity of the three villages to each other they have been considered together as a secondary village and it is acknowledged that they share services and facilities including: a village hall, playing fields, a primary school, pub and places of worship as well as some local employers.
3.0 THE PROPOSAL

3.1 This representation seeks the inclusion of the representation land within the settlement boundary which would allow for an infill development. The settlement boundary for the village is proposed for extension in a number of places as indicated on the attached map, therefore extension to the village boundary to include this land would not be contrary to the overall local plan strategy.

3.2 Access to the land would be provided from Greenway by upgrading the existing access.

3.3 The main body of the site extends to 0.24ha and could accommodate up to 5 dwellings while retaining trees and hedges on the site boundaries as shown on the attached layout plan.

3.4 The site is available for development in the short term and there are no constraints to its development. The land is in single ownership and all of the services are available within Eastcote. The site is available for development within the next 5 years.
4.0 INCLUSION OF THE SITE IN THE SETTLEMENT BOUNDARY

4.1 The council are preparing a new Local Plan (to be known as South Northamptonshire Local Plan Part 2). This will establish the district’s settlement hierarchy and define the settlement boundaries for each of the villages.

4.2 In the emerging Local Plan Eastcote has been identified as a Secondary Village.

4.3 We consider that further growth should be identified in the plan for the rural areas. Whilst the JCS sets a figure for the number of dwellings which need to be provided in the rural areas between 2011 and 2029, that figure is not a ceiling. The fact that the 2,360 dwellings allocated for the rural areas was fulfilled early in the plan period indicates that there was a pent up demand for additional housing in the rural areas in the period pre 2011. There should be some contingency to provide flexibility to adapt to change as well as choice and competition in the land market.

4.4 If no further allocations are made above the 2,360 dwellings required through the JCS then many settlements would not be able to accommodate further development to meet the needs of residents of that settlement.

4.5 The inclusion of this parcel of land in the settlement confines offers the opportunity for a small-scale infill development which would provide additional housing to support the local community and would conform with the built form and character of the village.

4.6 The land can be developed in an environmentally acceptable manner without harm to the setting of the village or amenities of nearby residents. Existing hedgerows along the boundaries can be retained and reinforced as necessary with additional landscaping being provided as appropriate.

4.7 The National Planning Policy Framework advises (at paragraph 77) that in rural areas, planning policies and decisions should be responsive to local circumstances and support housing developments that reflect local needs.

4.8 The South Northamptonshire Methodology for Town and Village Confines sets out 5 criteria that need to be taken into account when considering drawing new village confines. These criteria are:
Criteria C1: The need to try to base confines on strong physical boundaries that can be easily identified on the ground. (Roads, watercourses, and strong field and curtilage boundaries)

Comment: The parcel of land is bound by development on three sides, to the north it is bound by the highway and to the east and west of the land lies existing residential development. There is a strong field boundary to the south of the site demarcating it from the countryside beyond. Due to the existing strong physical boundaries around the site it is considered that it complies with Criteria C1.

Criteria C2: The need to try and control future ribbon development within villages. Exclude undeveloped land that is, in use or appearance, more closely related to adjoining open countryside than to the built-up part of the village or that affords important views into or outward from a village or an attractive setting for listed or important buildings or conservation areas

The site is bound by development to the east and west giving the site an enclosed appearance within the settlement which would not create ribbon development. Due to the previously developed nature of the land it is considered that it relates well to the built up part of the village than to the open countryside beyond. The land does not form part of an important view not in or out of the village, nor does it form part of the setting of any listed or important buildings or conservation areas.

Criteria C3: Include developments that have taken place outside but adjoining confines (including exception sites) and outstanding planning permissions where development has started

Comment: Criteria C3 is not applicable as the site has not recently been developed nor does it benefit form an extant planning permission.

Criteria C4: Developments that are isolated or peripheral to the main built up part of a village.

Comment: The site is not isolated from the main part of the settlement and can be considered locally as part of the village of Eastcote. Therefore, development would represent a logical extension of the village which would provide the opportunity for an infill development.

Criteria C5: Farm Buildings and peripheral developments
Comment: Criteria C5 seeks to exclude farmsteads and isolated developments from settlement confines. The representation land is neither a farmstead nor a peripheral development.

4.9 The South Northamptonshire Settlement Hierarchy forms a key part of the LPP2 evidence base. Within this document the hierarchy of rural settlements for South Northamptonshire have been outlined where Pattishall (which includes Eastcote) has been ranked 35 out of 81 villages. Based on the sustainability rating of the village it is considered suitable for some additional development.

4.10 Paragraph 78 of the Framework advises that to promote sustainable development in rural areas, housing should be located where it will enhance or maintain the vitality of rural communities. Planning policies should identify opportunities for villages to grow and thrive, especially where this will support local services. Where there are groups of smaller settlements, development in one village may support services in a village nearby. Support for some further development in the villages of Pattishall, Eastcote and Astcote is considered to comply with the Framework.

4.11 Policy R1, Spatial Strategy for the Rural Areas, of the West Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy (JCS) states that development within the rural areas will be guided by a rural settlement hierarchy. Additionally, the rural hierarchy in the Part 2 Local Plans will have regard to but not exclusively the opportunities to retain and improve the provision and enhancement of services critical to the sustainability of settlements. It is understood that Pattishall Primary School has a shortfall in numbers of pupils attending the school. The variation of the settlement boundary in this part of Eastcote would allow for an infill development including family housing which could make a useful contribution to pupil numbers in the local school.

4.12 Moreover, Policy R1 in the JCS sets out a list of criteria against which development will be required to comply. These are:

(a) Provide for an appropriate mix of dwelling types and sizes, including affordable housing to meet the needs of all sectors of the community including the elderly and the vulnerable

Comment – the owner of the land is happy to provide a range of types and sizes of dwellings. However, due to the shortfall in numbers at the local primary school 3 to 4 bedroom dwellings may be more appropriate to support the school.
(b) Not affect open land which is of particular significance to the form and character of the village

Comment – the site is flanked by development to the east and the west and would form a logical rounding off of this part of the village. Due to the existing previously developed nature of the land and the existing landscaped boundaries of the site, development would be well contained within the site and it would not appear intrusive or cause harm to the form and character of the village.

(c) Preserve and enhance historic buildings and areas of historic or environmental importance including those identified in conservation area appraisals and village design statements

Comment – the site does not form the setting for any listed buildings, buildings of note or conservation areas nor are there any heritage assets contained within the site.

(d) Protect the amenity of existing residents

Comment - the amendment of the settlement confines to include the site and a subsequent infill development would not impact upon the amenity of existing residents.

(e) Be of an appropriate scale to the existing settlement

Comment – including the representation land within the settlement confines would and a subsequent infill development of around five dwellings would be of an appropriate scale to the existing settlement.

(f) Promote sustainable development that equally addresses economic and social and environmental issues.

Comment – development of the land would create jobs during the construction phase together with employment opportunities associated with the on-going need for maintenance. There will be increased net expenditure within the local area. Socially new housing will provide for those who cannot afford to meet their housing needs on the open market as well as providing a wider choice of open market housing. The additional population will help to support the local school and nursery and shall inject new life into existing clubs and societies in the village. Environmentally the provision of additional landscaping and well-designed houses will provide an environmental improvement in this part of the village.
(g) Be within the existing confines of the village.

Comment – the alteration to the settlement boundary to include the representation land would a logical rounding off of this part of the village and would not set a precedent for further development. The site is bound by development to the east and west giving the site an enclosed appearance within the settlement.

4.13 The inclusion of this land within the village confines would fully accord with Policy SS1 of the emerging Local Plan, Policy R1 of the JCS and the advice contained within the Framework. Development would not affect open land and would provide infill development which would not harm the character of the village or the amenity of existing residents. Accordingly, we request an amendment to the settlement boundary for Eastcote to include the representation land in the forthcoming Part 2 Local Plan.

4.14 We would be pleased to discuss any aspects of the amendment to the settlement boundary to include the representation land as part of the local plan process.
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