

Mr Paul Garrett, east of Hollins Farm, Grosmont.

Supporting Planning Statement for Proposed Local Needs dwelling located at East of Hollins Farm, Grosmont.

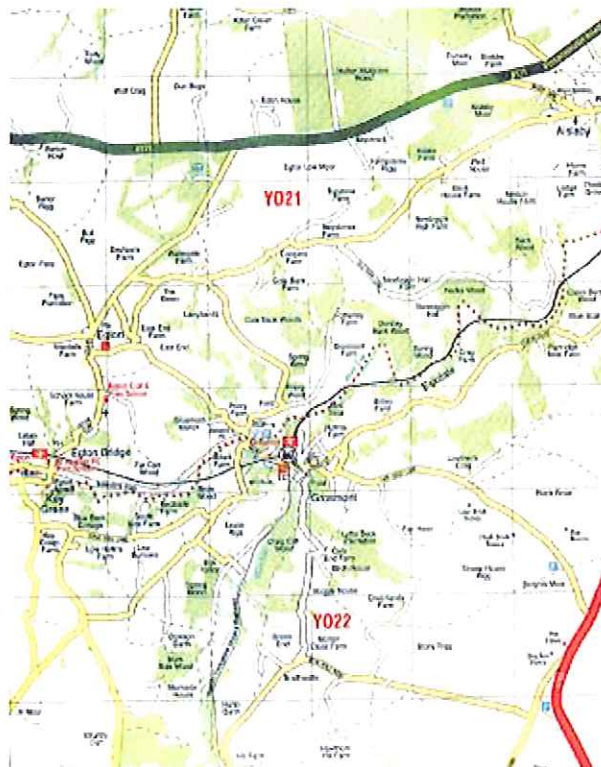


1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 This report is a Supporting Planning Statement in respect of the enclosed detailed planning application submitted by our client Paul Garrett for the construction of a Local Needs dwelling on part of the garden of Hollins Farm in Grosmont. It should be read in conjunction with the *Design & Access Statement* which has also been prepared by this Company.

This road map shows the general location of the site.

1.2 Our clients have engaged a team of qualified professionals to fully prepare this submission including, lead Agents, who have prepared the plans: the BHD Partnership, experienced draughtsman allied to the RIBA, and our Company EnK Planning & Design,



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planning consultants from Mickleby. We are Registered and Chartered Town Planners. Both local Practices have had much success in proposing new dwellings in the NYM National Park over many years.

- 1.3 This proposal is to enable a young man who lives and works in the Park and is from a local longstanding family which has been resident in the Park for over three generations, to build his own home on land which is in the family's ownership, so he can remain a resident in the village.
- 1.4 This report will describe the application and site, outline the relevant local and National Planning Policies, and finally review the proposal in the light of those policies.
- 1.5 Having regard to all of the above it is suggested that in view of the specific material considerations described, the proposed scheme generally accords with the planning policies and should be considered to be satisfactory in planning terms.

2.0 THE SITE AND APPLICATION

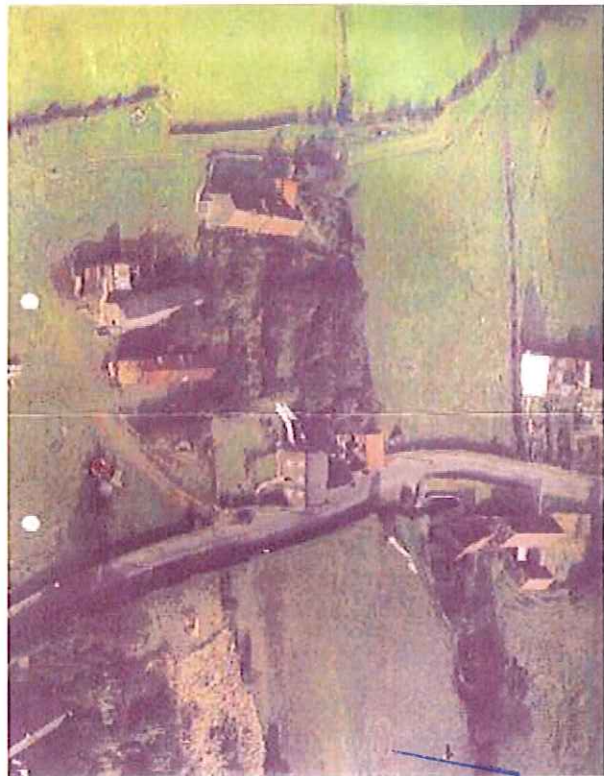
- 2.1 The applicant presently lives with his grandmother at the donor property (Hollins Farm, which is not a *farm*). He is engaged to be married so needs his own home. He wishes to stay near his extended family (his mother also lives close by at 4 Eskside Cottages) where he can continue to offer support and practical assistance (looking after his grandmother's attached pasture land and garden for example). He works in the Park at the Boulby Potash Mine. He clearly qualifies as a local needs occupier within the framework of the Park's Policies for the occupancy of new dwellings in this location, and has submitted the required proforma.



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2.2 As the average house price in the Park is around £250,000* it is extremely difficult for young people to buy their own home. If this scheme is allowed, because the land is owned by the family, the applicant could provide his family house, doing much of the work himself, for around half that amount. In this way he can meet his housing needs by providing a home for himself and his future wife, where he wants to live in his home village, which is *affordable* in the general meaning of the term. He intends to remain here in the future which the house has three bedrooms; it is a "lifetime family home".

2.3 As shown on the submitted plans and described more fully in the *Design and Access Statement* this site is in Grosmont, on Eskdaleside. It is within part of the side garden of a bungalow called Hollins Farm, comprising a vegetable garden and part of a grassed area.



2.4 Formerly there was a long stone farm building on the site, as *pictured in the old photograph here, before the bungalow was built. It shows the position of the access track was already in place.*

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2.5 The site is within a gap between the donor bungalow and the end terraced house at no 1 Eskside Cottages and the front garden of Hollins Farmhouse. The site has a treed frontage to Eskdaleside and will be accessed from a shared drive with the donor property. Sight lines on to the public highway are

*Source Authority's Housing Supplementary Planning Document April 2010

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satisfactory, being 2m x 70m or more in both directions.

- 2.6 In association with advice from this Company, the BHD Partnership has designed a stone and pantiled house in the local vernacular. We have taken careful regard to the advice in the Authority's Supplementary Planning Documents Design Guides Part 1 and 2 when preparing the details. This house is intended to be for life so it is designed to accommodate a family. It is a high quality, attractive development.



This picture is a general view of the host property taken from the main village road.

Our client's grandmother (Mrs Wooding) owns the bungalow, where she lives, and the application site which is within the domestic curtilage. Generous garden space will be retained for the donor property.

3.0 PLANNING POLICIES

- 3.1 It is acknowledged that planning applications have to be determined in the light of current planning policies, unless material considerations dictate otherwise. Adopted policies on both a local and National basis are relevant. In respect of this application we believe that the main *local* policies are contained in the North York Moors National Park Authority's Local Development Framework (LDF) adopted on 13th November 2008, as outlined below.

3.2 In the *Core Strategy and Development Policy*:

- *Core Policy A considers the delivery of National Park Purposes and Sustainable Development*. The main thrust of this policy is to ensure all development has Supporting Planning Statement, EnK Planning & Design Ltd



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careful regard to sustainability, whilst maintaining the special qualities of the natural environment. In meeting the social and economic objectives of the Plan, priority will be given to providing development in locations and of a scale which will support the character and function of individual settlements.

- *Core Policy B refers to Spatial Strategy.* To meet the needs of people in the Park this strategy seeks.....to provide additional housing ...within settlements in accordance with settlement hierarchy. It defines Grosmont as one of the "Other Villages" where new housing will be allowed to meet an identified need to live in the parish. The supporting text explains that no settlement limits are identified in the Plan; the suitability of each site will be considered on a case by case basis.

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- *Core Policy J specifically considers housing.* It notes that a mix of housing types and tenures will be sought to maintain the vitality of local communities, consolidate support for services and facilities and support the delivery of more affordable housing. This is to be achieved through a list of four criteria, (summarized):

1. Locating all open market housing in Helmsley and the Service Villages,
2. Supporting local needs housing on infill plots (or conversions) within the main built up area of the Local Service Villages and Other Villages. (Grosmont is included in the list of "Other Villages"),
3. Restricting housing in Open Countryside to that essential for farming etc. and
4. Supporting Botton Village schemes.

Development Policy 3 is relevant. It seeks to maintain and enhance the distinctive character of the Park by ensuring that the siting, layout and density of schemes preserves or enhances views into and out of the site, that the scale

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height etc. are compatible with the surrounding buildings that there are high standards of design and the site access etc are safe.

The Policy also notes that all local needs housing will be restricted to people with strong links with the Park or a proven need to live there as set down in a detailed list of five provisos.



- 3.3 Countrywide there is now significant emphasis on promoting the efficient use of land, building at higher densities and maximising the development of brownfield sites. (Whilst garden areas are no longer considered to be *brownfield*, the site in this application is within in a domestic cartilage, where a large building once stood). This proactive approach has led to many hundreds of new dwellings being successfully built on garden sites. Government Policies as currently relevant to the consideration of this application are set out in Planning Policy Statement 1 (PPS1) Delivering Sustainable Development, Planning Policy Statement 3 (PPS3) Housing, and Planning Policy Statement 7 (PPS7) Sustainable Development in Rural Areas.

PPS1 one of the key principles is the prudent use of resources. Paragraph 21 notes:

"The prudent use of resources means ensuring that we use them wisely and efficiently, in a way that respects the needs for future generations"...

PPS3 came into effect on 1st April 2007. This PPS offers guidance to Local Authorities in respect of the framework of planning for housing in the wider context, for example in terms of supply and demand and the proper and efficient use of land, but some of the contents, such as suitable location and design considerations are relevant to small one-off *windfall* sites such as this. The principal aim of the PPS is to underpin the Government's response to the Barker review and the necessary step change in housing delivery through a new,

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more responsive approach to land supply at a local level. It is intended to improve the affordability and supply of housing in all communities, including rural areas. **The Government is seeking to ensure everyone has the opportunity of living in a decent home, which they can afford, where they want to live.** (our emphasis). The strategy seeks to:

- *"Achieve a wide choice of high quality homes , both affordable and market housing , to address the requirements of the community,*
- *Widen opportunities for home ownership and ensure high quality housing for those who cannot afford market housing, in particular those who are vulnerable or in need,*
- *Improve affordability across the housing market, including by increasing the supply of housing, and*
- *Create sustainable, inclusive, mixed communities in all areas, both urban and rural."*

Through development plans and planning decisions the PPS guides that the planning system should deliver:

- *"High quality housing that is well designed and built to a high standard,*
- *A mix of housing , both market and affordable, particularly in terms of tenure and price, to support a wide variety of households in all areas, both urban and rural,*
- *A sufficient quantity of housing taking into account need and demand and seeking to improve choice,*
- *Housing developments in suitable locations, which offer a good range of access to jobs, key services and infrastructure, and*
- *A flexible, responsive supply of land, managed in a way that makes efficient and effective use of land, including re-use of previously developed land, where appropriate."*



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In determining applications, Local Planning Authorities are advised to have regard to: (briefly):

- achieving high quality design,
- a good mix of housing reflecting the accommodation of specific groups including older people,
- the suitability of the site,
- using land effectively and efficiently, and
- ensuring the development is in line in planning for housing objectives.

PPS 7 states at paragraph 4 that:

"Planning authorities should allow some limited development in, or next to, rural settlements that are not designated as local service centres, in order to meet local business and community needs and to maintain the vitality of these communities. In particular Authorities should be supportive of small scale development of this nature where it provides the most sustainable option in villages that are remote from, and have poor public transport links with service centres."

Also at paragraph 8:

"The key aim is to offer everyone the opportunity of a decent home. The needs of all the community should be recognized, including those in need of affordable housing. It is essential that the LPA plan to meet the housing requirements in rural areas.....the focus for most additional housing should be on existing towns.....But it will also be necessary to provide for some new housing to meet the identified local need in other villages." (Our emphasis)

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The guidance in paragraph 9 is to strictly control even single houses in the countryside but **supports housing in villages to meet the needs of local people.** (our emphasis).

4.0 A REVIEW OF THE PROPOSAL IN THE LIGHT OF PLANNING POLICIES

4.1 It is clear from the above mentioned national policies that the application is in line with the Governments aims in PPS1, 3 and particularly 7 to meet the needs of local residents in rural areas by allowing houses to be built in villages. The advice in PPS quoted above in bold type is especially relevant: limited development in villages should be allowed to meet the needs of local people, which in turn helps maintain the viability of these communities.

4.2 We believe that given the location, the design detail and overall quality of this application there can be no "in principle conflict" with the LDF Core Policy A or Development Policy 3. Similarly we suggest that there is full conformity with Core Policy B. We have suitably addressed these considerations and the requirements of Development Policy 3 in the separate Design and Access Statement.

4.3 From the preliminary Officer advice given informally on a previous occasion to others who enquired about the principle of this proposal, it seems that the Officer was, however, concerned that the development of a single house here could not be supported in principle as it would seem to be contrary to *Core Policy J (2)*. It appears to us that this is the key policy in respect of this application. It was advised at that time that the site was in open countryside outside of the main built up area of the settlement of Grosmont. This is the crux of the matter. We disagree with this assessment as detailed in this report. We argue that the proposal is not at odds with this policy.

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This picture shows the site when viewed from the fields to the northwest.

The "gap" is between the gable of 1 Eskside Cottages. (a holiday home) to the left and the donor bungalow to the right. There are trees and rising ground to the moor top in the background.



- 4.4 As mentioned earlier, to accord with policy for a local needs house the infill plot has to be within the main built up area of the Local Service Villages or Other Villages. The supporting text at para. 9.16 explains that the plot has to be within a continuous built up frontage, be of the size to take one property only, and the "gap" should be suitable for the development. In the following paragraphs we examine carefully the requirements of this policy in regard to this village and this application.

This is a picture of the site from the access onto Eskdaleside. It can be seen that the site lies at a level well below the public highway and is screened by trees, most of which will remain when the new private drive is constructed.



Core Policy J

- 4.5 *Firstly, is the site in one of the villages where infill plots can be allowed?* Grosmont is one of the villages listed as an Other Village. The Plan does not define village limits, however the site is within the signed settlement, also within the 30mph speed limit; it is clearly in one of the permitted *Other Village* locations.



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4.6 *Secondly, is it an infill plot for a single unit?* The site is within a continuous built up frontage between two dwellings, in part of the garden of a dwelling, Hollins Farm, which is not a farm house. It is in a domestic garden, in a village

This is part of the site close up taken from the area behind the donor property.

The site is a vegetable garden with the two wooden sheds here, and the foreground grass. Due to the very serious snow this winter and freezing water troughs the ponies on the large fields to the north have been allowed access to the garden for water and to be bucket fed, hence in the photo, the ground is poached and a temporary wire fence is in place dividing the site.



not in the open countryside. Whilst the Government has changed the definition of gardens from brownfield to greenfield, this is not fatal to the application as many new houses are still being built in gardens as this to some degree takes the pressure off building on greenbelts or in the open countryside to meet the Nation's urgent housing needs. Moreover, the Authority is on record as saying that "*there are very few infill plots which are brownfield in the Park, and if all greenfield sites in villages were resisted it would seriously curtail the provision of local needs housing*" (Trennet View, Chopgate).

The Plan is silent on how big (or small) a site should be to be classed as appropriate for a single unit, and each site has to be assessed on its merit. In recent times the Authority has allowed a single infill plot on a site as big as a 38m frontage (Church Lane, Swainby NYM/2010/0390/FL). Clearly, the character of the area and the size of nearby plots will always be relevant. This site has a shared access to the highway Eskdaleside (with the donor dwelling), which is approximately 5m wide, and a frontage of 15m, whilst the width of the

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main body of the plot averages around 20m wide. Nearby detached dwellings have frontages varying from approximately 45m at the donor house as it stands, to Hollins Farmhouse 28m, Birds Cottage 25m, whilst terraced houses at New Houses have very narrow frontages of perhaps 5 or 6m, so the area is characterised by a mixture of both small and large frontages. This site has a width which is appropriate for one detached house in this area.

This part of the village has a very varied building line and is characterised by a variety of larger properties in their own grounds and short terraces such as New Houses, Hollins Cottages and Eskside Cottages. Generally, but not always, the houses follow (are parallel to) the land contours. The application proposal is sited



following the land contours between Hollins Farm and 1 Eskside Cottages, set roughly in line with the frontage of the first and forward of the second, however that property, 1 Eskside Cottages has a blind gable, as pictured above. As sited the dwelling will have no significant effect on the amenities of any nearby properties. We consider it to be a suitable infill plot for a single detached dwelling.

- 4.7 *Thirdly, is the site within the main built up area of the settlement?* In the previous Local Plan the policy allowed for up to five houses on an infill site in "any named settlement". This permitted some new dwellings, in very recent times, in rather outlying hamlets with no services e.g. Redberry Cottages at Lealholmside (NYM/2008/0741/FL). In the new LDF the potential for new infill plots has been vastly restricted within Core Policy Policy J. The Plan also offers no explanation of how, in assessing proposals it will define the term the **main built up area** of the settlement in any of the villages. Considering this matter we have wondered why this "main built up area" proviso has been

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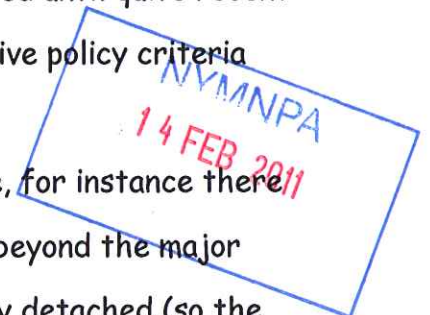
included in the policy. **This is an important consideration in the light of the fact that the Government offers very clear, general support for local needs housing in villages in PPS7.**

Given the type of infill development which has been allowed until quite recent times we have concluded that fundamentally the restrictive policy criteria must revolve around three main planning issues:

1. to preclude isolated development at an infill site where, for instance there might be a scattering of two or three outlying dwellings beyond the major housing groups in village, which are significantly physically detached (so the new house would potentially appear isolated and prominent),
2. to preclude backland development or "rounding off", and
3. in consideration of the sustainability issue; a key factor running through government and local planning policies. New houses should be within easy walking distance of the village centre for shopping, transport and other community services. In turn the new development helps the viability of these services.

As with many planning assessments, defining what actually is the main built up area of the settlement is always going to be something of a subjective opinion, and open to challenge. It is just this kind of matter of judgement which forms the basis of most planning appeals.

Every village is different. For example, take Goathland, here there are houses often significantly well spaced out with green areas between and agricultural land interspersing sites; where is the main built up area here? Take Chopgate, linear and running for some distance beside the highway, where is the main built up area here? We believe the Authority itself may find some difficulty in defining the main built up area of a settlement. Our point here is that there are always going to be grey areas in a judgement of this nature.



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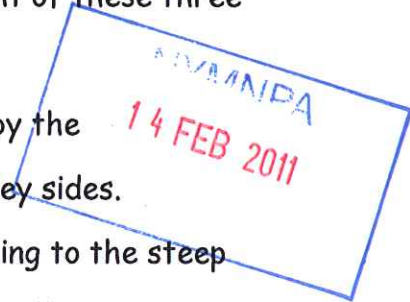
We have carefully examined the village and the site in the light of these three considerations.

1. To a significant degree the layout of the village is defined by the topography, particularly the steep slopes of the River Esk valley sides.

Terraced railway cottages and detached later "villa" houses cling to the steep slope up from the valley bottom and the railway, where historically due to presence of the river and then the railway, the village would have originated and most of the shops are located. Moving further to the south towards the application site, there are significant tracts of agricultural land until the topography next to the highway levels out on Eskdaleside. Here, on this top part of the village which is historically part of the main settlement, and within the 30mph speed limit, there are 27 dwellings. Sited between two houses in this section of the village the application plot is obviously part of the village and not within "open countryside". The village has two sections, the lower part on the steep valley side and upper part on Eskdaleside. Together they comprise the main built up area of the village. In this higher location, on the main road through the village, lie many of the principal dwellings. (Note; in fact it is only in this top part of the village that there is any potential for infill development in line with the strict policies contained within the Authority's policies).

2. This is not rounding off or *backland* development, the site is within the main body of long established housing in a village and has frontage to the main road linking the village to Sleights on onward to Whitby.

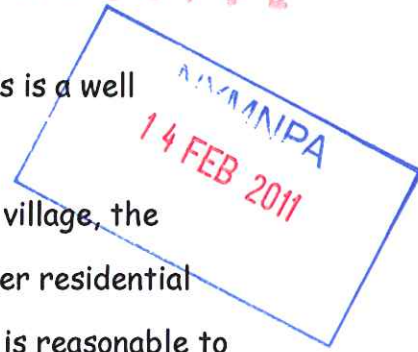
3. The application site is only 10 minutes walk down (and 15mins back due to the steep incline) to the local general dealers shop (Co-op) and Post Office, the railway station, the church, the Station Tavern and various other facilities such as the art gallery, book shop, and tea shop. There is also a bus service (M & D) which runs regularly into Whitby and stops as requested to pick up



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and drop off. Compared to many rural villages in the Park this is a well serviced village.

Therefore, having regard to all of the above; the form of the village, the position of the site in relation to the primary highway and other residential properties and the sustainability considerations, we believe it is reasonable to argue that the site *is* within the main built up area of the settlement.



- 4.8 *Is the gap one which it is essential to retain?* We appreciate that not all gaps can be built upon because they may offer significant amenity value or important public access points or views into and out of the site. This site is a garden set back some 30m from the public highway. In itself as a space it has no great merit. Due to the low lying location relative to Eskdaleside, and the screening by Hollins Farmhouse and Birds cottage in addition to the trees on the frontage as shown on the picture earlier (which will be only partly removed to form the private drive) the site is well screened from the south and the public highway. From the east it is partly screened by the terrace Eskside Cottages and from the west by the donor property. From the north, views are more open but they are significantly more distant. Here the site is seen at a considerable distance set against trees and the higher lying landform beyond to the south, rising to the grassed hill tops. Also, it is relevant to note that in the immediate locality there has been significant development in recent times, for example the substantial extensions at the rear of Eskside Cottages, the double garage and major two storey extension at 4 Eskside Cottages which we won on appeal, *as only partly pictured here, immediately adjacent to the application site. Another near neighbour at The Haven has recently been granted permission for a large two storey extension. Those plans were also prepared by BHD.*



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So a suitably designed new building here will not look out of character in the area, which has been subject to so much inward investment in new built development. In terms of the considerations of important amenity or landscape impact, we cannot see that there are any important views to be kept 'open' and we conclude therefore that the gap is not one which it is essential to retain.

4.9 In conclusion, Local Planning Policies are intended to guide developers and the public as to what types of development the Authority may allow; they are not supposed to be a strait jacket. If the Authority is genuinely committed to its stated intent of providing the opportunities for local young people to remain living and working in the Park, then we suggest this is just the kind of application which should receive its' support. This applicant clearly meets all of the criteria of the local needs occupancy conditions. The proposal will enable him to start on the housing ladder in a manner which is affordable and where no demonstrable harm will be caused. In summary, we firmly believe that if one examines the policies carefully, there is no significant conflict between them and this proposal.

5.0 CONCLUSION

5.1 This detailed application has been prepared in the light of the adopted Policies in the LDF and National planning policies. National Policies which set the broader planning framework are clearly supportive of this type of small scale, local needs housing development in a rural village. It also follows the design guidelines in the Authority's SPD Design Guides Part 1 and 2.

5.2 For the most part the proposal clearly accords with the adopted policies in the LDF. Where some doubt has arisen previously in (informal) Officer advice



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concerns the compliance with one part of Core Policy J (2). We note with respect this earlier opinion but we have fully reviewed the proposal in the light of policy. The key policy offers no guidance to applicants on how the Authority will define the term the "main built up area". Therefore this is always going to be something of an arbitrary, subjective assessment. Following a careful look at the form of the village and the relationship of the site to the settlement we have argued on appropriate planning grounds that the site is within the main built up area of Grosmont. We firmly believe that this is a fair and accurate judgement. We therefore conclude that the proposal complies also with this element of the Policy.

- 5.3 The proposal will have no adverse impact on the character or environmental qualities of this part of the NYM National Park. In fact, given the high quality and vernacular design, it could be said to have a beneficial impact.
- 5.4 If the Authority is genuinely committed to its stated intent of providing the opportunities for local young people to remain living and working in the Park, then we suggest this is just the kind of application which should receive its' support.
- 5.5 If the application is approved it would be significant for our client and enable him to stay in the village by building a suitably designed lifetime new home close to his family. We hope that the Authority can agree and therefore give it their approval.

