

**Site Adjacent To 1-5 South Darklands,
Lhanbryde, Elgin, Moray**

**NOTICE OF REVIEW
(PLANNING REFERENCE - 22 / 00542 / PPP)**

**Supporting
Statement**

S Reid Design

CHARTERED ARCHITECTURAL DESIGN SERVICE

Site Adjacent To 1-5 South Darklands, Lhanbryde, Elgin, Moray

Supporting Statement

Background to Application

The applicant, Mr Steve Cox, is working on behalf of a Mr Jim Silvestri who has lived at North Darkland farm for his entire life and his family have lived on the farm for 100 years. Unfortunately, Mr Silvestri's health is not what it was and he now wishes to build a bungalow adjacent to 1-5 Darklands so that he can continue to help out in the day to day running of the farm with a view to retirement in the future. The proposal would allow him to still be involved as much as possible in the farm while residing in more comfortable accommodation.



PHOTO OF SITE FROM NORTH

Reasons for Refusal i

In the refusal notice for the proposal the council state the following -

The proposal is contrary to policies DP4 Part d) ii), DP1(i) and EP4 for the following reasons:

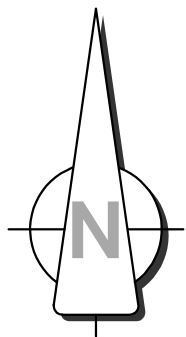
i) The proposal site falls within the Pressurised and Sensitive Area identified by Policy DP4 Part d) ii), in which no new house sites will be permitted due to the detrimental landscape and visual impacts associated with high levels of rural housing build up in these areas. The proposed house in this location is contrary to Policy DP4 and DP1(i). The proposed new dwellinghouse will have an adverse impact on the character and appearance of the surrounding area given that the site lacks the required immediate (on the boundary of the site) backdrop of existing landform, trees and buildings to provide acceptable enclosure.

Response to Refusal i (please refer to aerial map below)

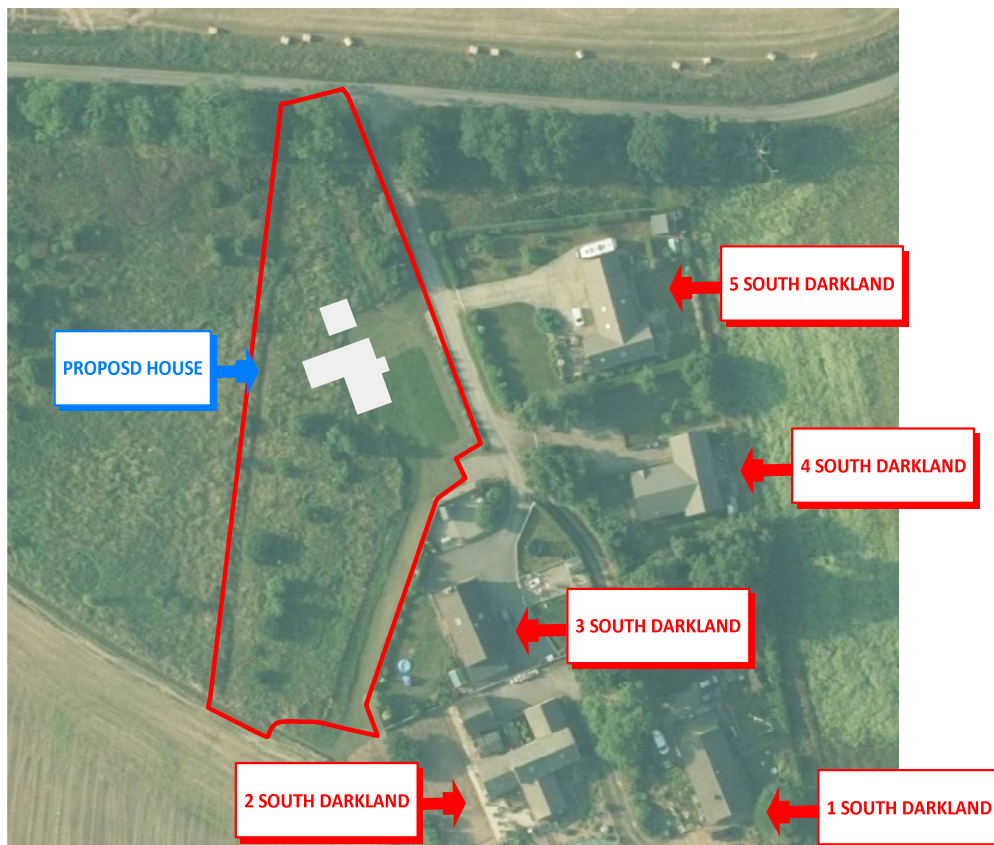
We understand that the site falls within into a pressurised and sensitive area however given the context that the proposal would be located adjacent to an already established build-up of houses we feel that another house would not have any detrimental landscape or visual impact at this location compared to say a new house in a corner of a field with no enclosure or containment.

We believe that this area of ground lends itself to an additional house and that the proposal would integrate well into the surrounding landscape for the following reasons -

- **EXISTING HOUSES PROVIDING ENCLOSURE** - 5no. existing dwelling-houses next door which would provide a context for this proposal and would help it blend in to the landscape, ensuring it is not a "stand alone" proposal but rather part of a small settlement with containment and enclosure (see photo on page 3).
- **MATURE TREES / ESTABLISHED WOODLAND** - a grouping of existing mature trees are located to the south which would give a backdrop to the dwelling-house. Further, a row of existing mature trees exist at the roadside providing a level of softening and concealment.



Aerial View



Reasons for Refusal ii and iii

ii) The proposed introduction of a further house in this location alongside existing housing is considered to constitute an unacceptable cumulative build-up of housing which will negatively impact the landscape character of this area.

iii) The site falls within the Countryside Around Towns Area identified by Policy EP4, in which no new rural housing will be permitted unless the proposal involves the rehabilitation, conversion, limited extension, replacement; or change of use of existing buildings or for the purpose of agriculture, forestry or low intensity recreational or tourism; or is designated as long term housing allocation released for development. The proposals do not fall within any of the above criteria and will result in development sprawl into the countryside affecting the special character of this area.

Response to Refusal ii and iii

ii) We disagree with this point. We strongly feel that the proposal would compliment the existing settlement here. If planning were granted, a sensitive bungalow design would be proposed to integrate with the houses which exist at the moment. The design would be based around the Moray Council Rural Housing design criteria.

Further to this, the existing settlement creates a backdrop for the proposed house. This backdrop would ensure that the proposal was in no way prominent or an unacceptable addition to the existing settlement. We would consider this proposal part of a jigsaw, complimenting and enhancing what exists at the moment (please see annotated photo below).

ii) While we acknowledge the site falls within the CAT (Countryside Around Town) identified by EP4 in the Moray Local Plan 2020 we are of the opinion that the proposal would not only integrate well with the existing settlement for reasons already mentioned but would also enhance the area. We would also like to point out that although Mr Silvestri's health is not what it was he is still very keen to play a part in the day to day running of the farm and to build a house himself for semi-retirement purposes leading to eventual full retirement. The proposal does not directly fit into one of above mentioned CAT exceptions however we would stress that the proposal should be approved for reasons of necessity to allow the applicant to enjoy a more comfortable life and to be able to play a part in the continuation of the farm business he has been involved with all his life. This proposal would be for his own use.



Conclusion

In conclusion, we respectfully ask the LRB panel to consider what this proposal means for the Mr Silvestri.

Mr Steve Cox is the applicant for this proposal however he is acting on behalf of Mr Silvestri who has lived at North Darklands farm for his entire life and wishes to semi-retire to a bungalow here so that he can help out in the day to day running of the farm. The farm itself will be changing hands at some point however the future owner, Mr Ian Dean, is very keen to retain Mr Silvestri's services due to his invaluable knowledge and experience of farming (please see supporting letter from Mr Dean).

Further to the above, Mr Silvestri would be looking to build the proposed house himself for semi-retirement purposes leading to full retirement. The proposal would be a perfect answer for his needs.

In terms of planning policy we understand why the planning department did not support the application given the fact that it is located in the CAT however we strongly feel that a house at this location would not only have a positive impact but would integrate well with an already established settlement and we would ask for an exception to be made in this case.

We respectfully ask that the appointed LRB panel approves this appeal.