

BLAKENEY – PF/21/3073 Demolition of existing single storey dwelling and erection of two dwellings and garages: 43 New Road, Blakeney: Mr Tony Sutcliffe

Target Date: 4 August 2022

Case Officer: Jayne Owen

Full application

Extension of Time: 5 August 2022

RELEVANT CONSTRAINTS

Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty

Conservation Area

LDF Residential Area

LDF Settlement Boundary

Areas Susceptible to Groundwater SFRA - Classification: < 25%

GIRAMS ZOI (Norfolk Valley Fen Sites) - GIRAMS: Norfolk Valley Fens Special Area of Conservation (SAC) Zone of Influence

GIRAMS ZOI (North Coast Sites) - GIRAMS: North Norfolk Coast Special Protection Area (SPA) Zone of Influence

GIRAMS ZOI (North Coast Sites) - GIRAMS: North Norfolk Coast Special Area of Conservation (SAC) Zone of Influence

GIRAMS ZOI (North Coast Sites) - GIRAMS: North Norfolk Coast RAMSAR Zone of Influence

GIRAMS ZOI (The Wash Sites) - GIRAMS: The Wash & North Norfolk Coast Special Area of Conservation (SAC) Zone of Influence

GIRAMS ZOI (The Wash Sites) - GIRAMS: The Wash RAMSAR Zone of Influence

GIRAMS ZOI (The Wash Sites) - GIRAMS: The Wash Special Protection Area (SPA) Zone of Influence

RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

None

THE APPLICATION

The application is for the demolition of an existing single storey dwelling and the erection of two new dwellings. The dwelling proposed on plot 1 would be a two storey four-bedroom property with attached car port. A single storey four-bedroom dwelling is proposed at the rear of the site together with a detached car port/garage building. A new access is proposed off New Road for the new frontage dwelling (plot 1) and the existing site access would serve the proposed dwelling to the rear.

The site is located within the Settlement Boundary of Blakeney and lies on the northern side of the A149 New Road. The site is 0.2 hectares in area and is currently occupied by a single storey detached three-bedroom bungalow with a floor area of 125 sq m together with a detached single garage and shed. The bungalow is set back from New Road and is surrounded by a large garden. The access is from New Road by way of a gravel driveway which runs along the northern boundary of the site. The site also lies on the southern boundary of the Blakeney Conservation Area, approximately 200 m from the High Street to the north and also lies within the Norfolk Coast Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB).

REASONS FOR REFERRAL TO COMMITTEE:

The application has been called in by Councillor Holliday on the following grounds:

There is strong community feeling that the proposal (especially, but not limited to plot 1) does not comply with the North Norfolk Design Guide and Blakeney Area Conservation Appraisal and does not comply with Core Strategy Policies EN 1 (Protection of Dark Skies), EN 2 and EN 4.

PARISH COUNCIL:

Blakeney Parish Council: Objects

Overdevelopment of the site, impact upon services, i.e., water/sewerage and concerns that the proposal is detrimental to Dark Skies policy owing to the amount of glazing within the development.

Norfolk Coast Partnership: Object

Whilst there are no major objections, both buildings have large areas of glazing on the west elevations. Dark Skies are a special feature of the AONB under a sense of remoteness, tranquillity and wildness, this quality is currently amber, a cause for concern.

Proposals should look to 'conserve and enhance' the AONB in line with paragraph 176 of the National Planning Policy Framework. Currently there is a risk of localised light spill from these large areas of glazing, and this should be reduced, or the use of smart glass considered to mitigate light spill. A condition with respect to external lighting is also recommended.

Norfolk County Council Highways: No objections subject to conditions.

Environmental Health: No objection

A condition with respect to external lighting and advisory notes in relation to demolition, drainage, refuse waste and asbestos removal are recommended.

Natural England: No objection

Landscape Officer: No objection

Trees and Landscaping

Subject to a condition requiring works to be carried out accordance with the approved details and the replacement of any plant which fails within a five-year period

Ecology

No objection subject to a condition to secure the mitigation and enhancement features suggested in the submitted ecological assessment

Conservation and Design Officer: No Objection

Scheme as revised - the comments provided previously, have been taken in board, replacing a protruding balcony and incorporating an earlier recommendation. As such the scheme is now considered to comply with Policies EN 4 and EN 8 of the North Norfolk Core Strategy.

REPRESENTATIONS:

Five representations have been received **OBJECTING** on the following grounds:

Design, appearance and layout

- Plot 2 – footprint disproportionate in relation to garden
- Roof over rear element, ungainly with hip at one end, gable at the other, taller than it needs to be
- Backland building which would represent overdevelopment of the site
- Design and associated planting/boundary treatment would fail to conserve and enhance the conservation area; dwellings out of proportion and would be overly dominant
- Ridge height of plot 2 (6.7 m) is only 13 cm less than height quoted for the two-storey house on plot 1, creating an overbearing building
- Both dwellings employ large areas of glazing which would be counter to the dark skies policy in the village
- Blakeney Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Guide states ‘the wider New Road has a much more open and leafy character. Views long the road are characterised by the set back of the houses from the street and their surrounding gardens, creating a more suburban feel than the dense streets to the north. The application damages this aspect of the conservation area by placing the new dwelling closer to the road and by increasing the building density’
- New Road has defining features such as hedges and trees lining the road and in private gardens. Any proposed development should be carefully considered avoiding overdevelopment and being sensitive to the existing street pattern, scale and materials. The application doesn’t seem to meet this consideration and neither does the Conservation and Design Officer’s comments address them.

Amenity

- Overlooking, overshadowing, overbearing impacts, loss of views
- Noted that applicant intends to reinforce boundary with Byways but lack of privacy likely to remain until the proposed newly planted hedges mature; new hedging would not fully screen Byways from new building

Trees and Landscaping

- Vegetation removal will affect amenity of neighbours and surrounding area
- Protected trees in the garden of No. 4 (New Road?) misrepresented
- As a result of clearance work, no visual break between properties and unobstructed open view between neighbouring properties
- Any future building should fully compensate for the trees and undergrowth already removed
- Three tree work application approvals have not been followed

Ecology

- Impact on wildlife; detailed bat survey required with further monitoring during any future demolition works

Other

- Application should be re-advertised if new plans/consultee comments received

One representation has been received **SUPPORTING** the proposal:

- *Having been fully involved in the design and planning process with the owner of the plot I fully support the application. The position of the house towards the road is key as if it is any further back any windows to the north of the property will look directly into our children's bedrooms as opposed to overlooking the garden which, with the planned replanting, will be acceptable.*

HUMAN RIGHTS IMPLICATIONS

It is considered that the proposed development may raise issues relevant to

Article 8: The Right to respect for private and family life.

Article 1 of the First Protocol: The right to peaceful enjoyment of possessions.

Having considered the likely impact on an individual's Human Rights, and the general interest of the public, approval of this application as recommended is considered to be justified, proportionate and in accordance with planning law.

CRIME AND DISORDER ACT 1998 - SECTION 17

The application raises no significant crime and disorder issues.

RELEVANT POLICIES

North Norfolk Core Strategy (Adopted September 2008):

SS 1 - Spatial Strategy for North Norfolk

SS 3 - Housing

SS 6 - Access and Infrastructure

EN 1 - Norfolk Coast Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and The Broads

EN 2 - Protection and Enhancement of Landscape and Settlement Character

EN 4 – Design

EN 8 - Protecting and enhancing the historic environment

EN 9 - Biodiversity & Geology

CT 5 - The Transport Impact of New Development

CT 6 - Parking Provision

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF):

Section 2 - Achieving sustainable development

Section 4 - Decision making

Section 5 - Delivering a sufficient supply of homes

Section 8 - Promoting healthy and safe communities

Section 9 - Promoting sustainable transport

Section 11 - Making effective use of land

Section 12 - Achieving well-designed places
Section 14 - Meeting the challenge of climate change, flooding and coastal change
Section 15 - Conserving and enhancing the natural environment
Section 16 - Conserving and enhancing the historic environment

North Norfolk Landscape Character Assessment Supplementary Planning Document – January 2021

North Norfolk Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document (2008)

Blakeney Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan (2019)

MAIN ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION

1. **Principle**
2. **Landscape/Impact on the Norfolk Coast AONB**
3. **Design/impact on heritage asset (Conservation Area)**
4. **Amenity**
5. **Highway Impact**
6. **Ecology**

APPRAISAL

1. Principle (SS 1, SS 3):

The site lies within the Settlement Boundary of village of Blakeney which is defined as a Coastal Service Village under the spatial strategy for North Norfolk set out in Policy SS 1. It is also within a designated Residential Area. As such the principle of the demolition of the existing dwelling and its replacement with two dwellings is considered to be acceptable and in compliance with Core Strategy Policies SS 1 and SS 3 and Section 2 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

2. Landscape/Impact on the Norfolk Coast AONB (EN 1, EN 2)

The site lies within the Norfolk Coast AONB. Policy EN 1 provides that the impact of individual proposals, and their cumulative effect on the AONB and its settings will be carefully assessed. Development proposals that would be significantly detrimental to the special qualities of the AONB and its setting will not be permitted.

The site lies by existing built form and is currently in residential use, is occupied by a bungalow centrally located on the site with a detached garage to the rear of the dwelling.

The North Coast Partnership have raised no objections in principle to the proposed development but have concerns with regard to the areas of glazing proposed in terms of the risk of localised light spill, suggesting a reduction in the amount of glazing or the use of smart glass to mitigate light spill.

Having regard to the context of this site within a residential area and built-up part of the village surrounded by existing built form, including more modern development of a similar character and appearance, it is considered that a refusal based on the amount of glazing within the development could not reasonably be substantiated. However, a condition requiring details of any external lighting is considered appropriate.

Notwithstanding the above, amended plans have also been received reducing the amount of rooflights to minimise light spillage from openings as much as possible. Rooflights to plots 1 and 2 have been retained only where absolutely necessary to provide natural light to internal rooms with no other natural light source, this includes a utility room in plot 2 and an en-suite in plot 1, which will only be used intermittently, all rooflights and windows are proposed to be installed with blackout blinds/curtains to reduce light spillage from the building.

The application is supported by a Tree Replacement Plan (TRP) which proposes 11 replacement trees and three new boundary hedges. A further additional landscaping scheme has been submitted which provides a total of 19 new trees (8 more than the TRP) and an additional run of hedging to the New Road frontage and drive and driveway to Plot 1 (105 metre total linear run of new hedging). The applicant states that the lifetime of the new planting is likely to be in excess of 25 years and as such, the carbon sequestration is deemed to adequately offset the trees previously removed.

Having consulted with the Landscape Officer, the proposed landscaping proposals are considered to be acceptable subject to conditions that the landscaping works are carried out in accordance with the approved details prior to the first occupation of either of the approved dwellings, and that if any tree, shrub or hedgerow forming part of the landscape scheme which dies, is removed or becomes seriously damaged or diseased, within a period of five years from the date of planting, it must be replaced during the next planting season following removal with another of a similar size and species as that originally planted, and in the same place.

Therefore, subject to the imposition of conditions, the proposal would accord with the aims of Core Strategy Policies EN1 and EN 2

3. Design and appearance/Impact on heritage asset (EN 4, EN 8)

Policy EN 8 requires that development proposals, including alterations and extensions, should preserve the character and appearance of designated heritage assets and their settings through high quality sensitive design.

Policy EN 4 of the North Norfolk Core Strategy requires that all development will be designed to a high quality, reinforcing local distinctiveness. Design which fails to have regard to local context and does not preserve or enhance the character and quality of an area will not be acceptable.

Having consulted the Conservation and Design Officer, it is considered that the existing bungalow has little historic or architectural merit and as it is also set back from the road, its contribution to the conservation area is limited. No objections are therefore raised to its demolition.

It is also considered that the plot is of such a size that it is able to comfortably accommodate two dwellings and there is therefore similarly no objection in terms of the subdivision of the plot into two plots. There is a precedent in the immediate vicinity of the site for backland development (to the west and east), sub-division of larger plots and higher density developments such as at

Whiteways (approved in 1992) and Fleur Homes (2020) (which is opposite the site) and Samphire Close (to the east). In addition, each unit would have its own separate access.

As referred to above, it is considered that the site can comfortably accommodate the proposed dwellings together with an appropriate level of amenity space and parking and turning areas. It is therefore considered that the proposed development would not result in an overdevelopment of the site. Whilst the proposed dwelling on plot 1 is set slightly further forward than the neighbouring dwelling to the south (45 New Road), the neighbouring bungalow to the north (41b) is much closer to the highway. The form and character of New Road is generally modern detached houses set back from highway set within a variety of different plot sizes and it is considered that the proposed development would retain and enhance this character.

However, it is acknowledged that the frontage dwelling (plot 1) is more likely to impact the character and appearance of the Blakeney Conservation Area and in this regard some relatively minor issues were identified regarding the design and appearance of this dwelling.

Materials in New Road are typically a mixture of red brick with flint panels, red clay or concrete pantiled roofs with a mix of traditional timber sash and casement and modern upvc windows. It is considered that the originally proposed brick would give quite a flat appearance to the building and a brick with more colour variation should be utilised to add interest and soften some of the massing. Whilst an alternative brick has not been put forward by the applicant, it is considered that notwithstanding the details which have been submitted, a condition requiring that full details of the proposed materials are submitted to and agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority is appropriate and will enable the materials to be agreed prior to their first use on site.

With regard to the detailed design of the dwelling proposed on plot 1, the glazed gable end in the west (front) elevation appeared to be aiming to emulate a threshing barn opening, which was considered out of character in a new domestic dwelling. The applicant has taken on board the concerns raised by officers with respect to the design and appearance of the west elevation (front) of the proposed dwelling on plot 1 by adding a self-supporting timber clad Juliet balcony.

The single-storey dwelling proposed on plot 2 to the rear of the site, is considered to be acceptable in terms of its design and appearance and due to its siting, would have less of impact within the street scene and consequently within the wider conservation area.

The scheme as revised is considered to comply with CS Policies EN 4 and EN 8 and would preserve and enhance the character and appearance of Blakeney Conservation Area.

4. Amenity (EN 4)

Core Strategy Policy EN 4 requires that development proposals should not have a significantly detrimental effect on the residential amenity of nearby occupiers and new dwellings should be provided with an acceptable level of residential amenity.

Concerns have been raised in representations regarding potential overlooking, overshadowing, overbearing impact, loss of privacy and outlook.

With respect to plot 1, there is one first floor window within the northern facing side elevation of the proposed dwelling, which would serve a master bedroom. There would be a carport between the southern side facing elevation and No. 45 New Road and there are no first floor windows

proposed within the southern facing side elevation of the forward facing gabled projection. The rear elevation of the dwelling proposed on plot 1 is well separated from the dwelling proposed on plot 2 and in any event would face towards the proposed car port, garage and store which is proposed to serve plot 2.

With respect to the relationship of the proposed dwelling on plot 2 with neighbouring dwellings to the north, it would be sited in close proximity to the northern boundary of the plot, beyond which lies the garden areas of 41a New Road, and the property known as Byways. The proposed dwelling would be single storey comprising pitched roof elements for the living and bedroom spaces linked by a flat green roof. The front part of the dwelling largely faces towards the garden area of 41a New Road and has an eaves height of 3.2 m with a pitched roof sloping away from the boundary. There is a roof light proposed within the northern facing roof slope, however no accommodation is proposed within the roof space. The middle part of the dwelling comprises a flat green roof and at the eastern end, the gable roof facing the boundary is hipped to reduce the visual mass and any potential overshadowing/overbearing relationship with the rear garden of Byways.

The master bedroom serving plot 2 has been angled to screen views from a first-floor bedroom window on the west elevation of 4 Samphire Close. A window serving a dressing room would be obscure glazed and a condition is recommended to secure this.

Concerns have also been raised with regard to the potential for light pollution and a condition is considered appropriate that prior to the installation of any external lighting, details are submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

With regard to the outdoor amenity space to serve the proposed dwellings, the North Norfolk Design Guide provides that private garden areas should be of an adequate size and shape to serve their intended purpose, should reflect the likely number of occupiers within each dwelling and have an aspect substantially free from shading from trees and buildings during the year. It is recommended that the area of a plot given over to private amenity space should normally be no less than the footprint of the dwelling on that site. However, this is a guide only and, in this instance, having regard to the surrounding context, it is considered that the level of amenity area provided for each of the dwellings is acceptable and appropriate.

In summary, it is not considered that the proposed development would have a significantly detrimental effect on the residential amenity of nearby occupiers and that each dwelling would be provided with an acceptable level of residential amenity. The proposal therefore complies with the requirements of Core Strategy Policy EN 4.

5. Highway Impact (CT 5, CT 6)

A new access is proposed off New Road for the new frontage dwelling and the existing access would serve the proposed new dwelling to the rear.

No objections have been raised by the Highways Authority subject to conditions with respect to the vehicular access/crossing over the verge/footway for plot 1; access gates/bollard/chains or other means of obstruction and that the proposed access/on-site parking/turning area is laid out and retained in accordance with the approved plan.

Subject to the conditions recommended by the Highways Authority the proposal will accord with Policies CT 5 and CT 6 of the North Norfolk Core Strategy.

6. **Ecology (EN 9)**

The application is supported by an ecological report. This confirms that a preliminary roost assessment report was undertaken in January 2022 which determined that the existing bungalow had moderate bat roosting potential and the associated garage had low bat roosting potential (both largely due to the presence of pantiles). In accordance with published guidance, summer activity surveys were recommended which have been carried out. No bats were seen to be roosting on either of these surveys albeit a small common pipistrelle roost (maximum number 13 bats) was noted to be roosting under lead flashing on the upper chimney on 45 New Road, to the south-east, other occasional bats were using the site for foraging. On the basis of the above, no further surveys (or derogation licence) are required for the development to proceed, but precautionary mitigation is proposed which will include the following:

- Licensed ecologist supervision during the removal of the roofs;
- Limitation to external lighting to prevent impacts on foraging bats, particularly those associated with the adjacent property at 45 New Road.
- Erection of bat boxes as enhancement on a pole on the boundary and into the new properties
- Planting part of the garden to attract insects that bats can feed on

Subject to a condition to secure the recommended mitigation and enhancement features it is considered that the proposal complies with CS Policy EN 9.

7. **Other Considerations**

GIRAMS - the site lies within the Zone of Influence of a number of European sites as listed in the constraints section above. With regards to recreational impacts upon these designated sites, although the individual contribution from the proposed development may be insignificant, it would contribute to a cumulative impact overall. The proposed net gain of one dwelling would therefore trigger the requirement for a financial contribution towards the strategic mitigation package in accordance with the Norfolk Green Infrastructure and Recreational Impact Avoidance and Mitigation Strategy (GIRAMS). The developer contribution is currently set at £185.93 per dwelling and is index linked with inflation. The required contribution has been secured and as such the proposal complies with Core Strategy Policy EN 9.

Nutrient neutrality - the application has been assessed against the conservation objectives for the protected habitats of the River Wensum Special Area of Conservation and the Broads Special Area of Conservation and Ramsar site concerning nutrient pollution in accordance with the Conservation of Species and Habitats Regulations 2017 (as amended) (Habitats Regulations). The proposal will result in additional overnight accommodation; however it is located outside the catchment areas of the River Wensum Special Area of Conservation and the Broads Special Area of Conservation and Ramsar site and does not involve foul or surface water drainage into those catchment areas. As such, it is not likely to have a significant effect on the conservation objectives either alone or in combination with other projects and there is no requirement for additional information to be submitted to further assess the effects. The application can, with regards nutrient

neutrality, be safely determined with regards the Conservation of Species Habitats Regulations 2017 (as amended).

8. Conclusion

The proposal is acceptable in principle and the site is in an appropriate location in terms of the spatial strategy for the District. The design and appearance of the proposed dwellings is considered acceptable and will preserve and enhance the character and appearance of the conservation area. The proposed development will not have a significantly detrimental effect on the residential amenity of any nearby occupiers and each dwelling is provided with an acceptable level of residential amenity.

No objections have been raised by the Highway Authority or the Conservation and Design and Landscape Officers subject to conditions.

RECOMMENDATION:

APPROVE subject to conditions relating to the following matters and any others considered necessary by the Assistant Director for Planning.

- Time limit for implementation
- Approved plans
- Full details of external materials to be submitted to and agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority
- The development shall be carried out in full accordance with the submitted Preliminary Ecology Appraisal
- The landscaping works shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details and prior to the first occupation of either of the dwellings
- Any tree, shrub or hedgerow forming part of the approved landscape scheme which dies, is removed or become seriously damaged or diseased, within a period of five years from the date of planting, shall be replaced during the next planting season following removal with another of a similar size and species as that originally planted, and in the same place
- Vehicular access/crossing over the verge/footway for plot 1
- Access gates/bollard/chain/other means of obstruction
- Parking and turning area
- Remove certain permitted development rights
- External lighting

Final wording of conditions to be delegated to the Assistant Director for Planning.