

EGMERE - PF/20/0365 – Erection of dwelling (Estate House under NPPF Paragraph 79e)) and restoration of barns; associated landscape and ecology proposals and change of use of land from agriculture to residential curtilage; Creake Buildings, Walsingham Road, Egmere for The Holkham Estate

Minor Development

- Target Date: 20 May 2020

Case Officer: Mr C Reuben

Full Planning Permission

CONSTRAINTS

Landscape Character Area

LDF Tourism Asset Zone

C Road

Contaminated Land

National Air Traffic Service - Application for Wind Turbines

LDF - Countryside

RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY for Creake Buildings, Walsingham Road, Egmere

PF/16/0463

The Pistol Club, Creake Buildings, Egmere, NR23 1RY

Conversion of the pistol club, Creake Buildings into a residential dwelling with associated access, parking and landscaping

Approved - 05/08/2016

IS2/18/2257

Creake Buildings, Egmere, NR23 1RY

Proposed erection of new dwelling (NPPF Para 79)

Advice Given (for pre-apps) - 29/03/2019

PF/19/0895

Agricultural Barn, Walsingham Road, Egmere

Conversion of the pistol club, Creake Buildings into a residential dwelling with associated access, parking, landscaping and erection of detached garage

Approved - 13/11/2019

THE APPLICATION

The application, submitted on behalf of the Holkham Estate, proposes a large detached estate property with formal gardens, associated landscaping and the conversion of an existing barn on the site to an ancillary residential building. The submitted plans evoke a traditional country house estate which is attempting to fulfil the criteria of being 'truly outstanding' under Paragraph 79e) of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). The application follows extensive pre-application discussions between the Council and applicant/agent, including a formal pre-consultation response issued under ref: IS2/18/2237, and subsequent further detailed negotiations. Ultimately, these proposals will be considered by members of the Development Committee against current adopted local and national policies and in particular, the specific requirements of NPPF Paragraph 79e).

The site currently forms part of a larger agricultural field with a redundant barn to the west (the barn benefits from extant planning consent for a dwelling, first in ref: PF/16/0463 and again under ref: PF/19/0895), a copse of woodland to the north and two access tracks, one running eastwards then southwards to adjoin Walsingham Road to the south, and the other serving the existing barn, again linking to Walsingham Road. Two modest semi-detached cottages were formerly positioned on the site but have long since been demolished. The former Creake Airfield lies to the northeast, with agricultural land in all directions and the boundary of the Holkham Estate (Historic Park and Garden - Grade II) situated approx. 0.8 miles to the north.

REASONS FOR REFERRAL TO COMMITTEE

At the request of the Head of Planning, as the recommendation is one of approval and therefore represents a departure from adopted local strategic planning policy. In addition to be approved the proposals must be considered as being otherwise exceptional by virtue of compliance with Paragraph 79 (e) of the NPPF. Few proposals can be considered to be truly exceptional and as such it is appropriate for members of the Development Committee to consider the material planning merits of the case and exercise planning judgement on this case.

PARISH COUNCIL

Walsingham Parish Council - No objection.

REPRESENTATIONS

The site notice expired on 18/05/2020. To date, no public representations have been received.

CONSULTATIONS

Environmental Health - No objection.

Norfolk County Council (Highway) - No objection subject to conditions requiring improvements to the proposed site access width, access visibility and provision of the on-site parking/turning areas.

Conservation and Design Officer - No objection. The reasons for this conclusion are threefold:

1. The proposal would not harm the overall significance of any existing heritage assets; namely the scheduled medieval village to the SE with its Grade II* listed church ruins, and the Grade II listed farmsteads at Quarles and Egmere Farm.
2. It has been sufficiently demonstrated that the new house would be truly outstanding and would reflect the highest standards in architecture. It would thus help to raise standards of design more generally in this particular rural area. In essence, it is an impeccably observed composition which is rooted in classicism and which will be defined by the quality of its detailing and craftsmanship.
3. The development as a whole would significantly enhance its immediate setting and would be sufficiently sensitive to the defining characteristics of the local area.

Therefore, whilst there perhaps remains some residual disappointment about the traditional approach adopted, this does not prevent the scheme from clearing the high bar established by para 79e) of the NPPF.

In the event of an approval being issued, the only one of the materials that we need to definitely condition are the peg/plain tiles to be used on the main roof. Otherwise the palette of materials is self-explanatory and considered acceptable.

Landscape Officer - No objection. The Landscape section have assessed this proposal for a large new high quality dwelling set in a deeply rural isolated location and conclude that in this case the stringent requirements of para 79e of the NPPF have been met. One of the criteria stipulates that the design is of exceptional quality in that it 'would significantly enhance its immediate setting, and be sensitive to the defining characteristics of the local area'.

Landscape

The site lies within the Rolling Open Farmland Landscape Type, as identified in the North Norfolk Landscape Character Assessment, Nov 2018. High level, open rolling arable farmland with relatively large geometric fields and sparse settlement concentrated on river valleys are key characteristics of this Type. The Holkham estate is notable for its wooded parkland within this expansive open landscape. A sense of remoteness, tranquillity and wildness epitomised through dark night skies is a noted Valued Feature of this landscape. The proposed large country house is located adjacent to an existing brick barn in an elevated position with open fields in the foreground and a backdrop of mature woodland. The proposed landscape and ecological enhancements extend well beyond the confines of the immediate site location and include 5.4ha of new native woodland planting (5940 trees), 0.9ha of new and restored aquatic habitat in the form of lakes, 2.9km of new mixed native species hedgerow planting with 151 free-standing or hedgerow trees, 22.8ha of arable reversion to wildflower meadow and grazed pasture and 90 new trees (including fruit varieties) within the formal garden area.

The Landscape Character Assessment identifies that there is 'significant scope to increase landscape variety and ecological connectivity without detrimentally reducing the open expansive rural nature of the area' (p.44). Given the extent and variety of landscape enhancements proposed with this submission, together with the species choice and linkage with existing habitats, the Landscape section concludes that this development would result in significant habitat and biodiversity improvement.

Ecology

The Ecological Appraisal carried out in June 2019 by Catherine Bickmore Associates identifies use of the existing barn by two species of bat, confirming that an EPS Licence will be required. Use of the barn by roosting barn owls and stock doves was also confirmed. Recommended mitigation measures include provision of alternative barn owl roosting habitat, incorporation of a permanent internal owl roost within the roof void of the converted barn, provision of a range of bird boxes and timing of works to avoid the bird nesting season. All of these measures could be secured by way of a condition requiring an Ecological Design Strategy to be submitted prior to commencement of the development.

Arboriculture

The submitted AIA (Ravencroft 24.3.2020) assesses that a 20m length of hedgerow (H2) will require removal to facilitate the rear access to the new dwelling. The Landscape section

agree that this is not significant given its location where it is surrounded by mature woodland and when weighed against the amount of proposed new planting.

Lighting

In accordance with the ILP Guidance Note 01/20 Guidance Notes for the reduction of obtrusive light, the site lies within the E1 Environmental Zone, i.e. a relatively uninhabited rural area with a dark lighting environment. The Lighting Strategy set out within the D & A Statement gives detail regarding the type of external light fittings, but does not include the specification of the light intensity or lux for each fitting. This information is required to ensure that the light levels are not excessive for the purpose and meet the light level recommendations set out in the ILP Guidance.

The lighting plan (SK139) shows wall lights to illuminate the entrance to the house, but also has a number of wall lights fixed to the existing barn which is a secondary building. The Ecological Appraisal identifies use of this building by bats. In this context a reduced number of external light fittings would be more appropriate given the presence of protected species and less intensive use.

All external lighting should be PIR, so that it is not in use when not required. The proposed use of automatic dim-out blinds to limit internal light spill is a thoughtful design element, given the sensitive rural location.

Should this proposal go forward for approval, precise conditions should be imposed to secure the following details:

- Arboricultural Method Statement
- Ecological Design Strategy
- Landscape and Ecological Management Plan
- EPS licence
- Lighting Design Strategy

Historic England - No objection. Should the Council be minded to support the proposal we recommend conditions are attached to the consent to secure the high quality of materials and fine detailing which are essential if the building is to be successful. Considered that the application meets the requirements of the NPPF, in particular paragraph numbers 7, 8, 193, 194 and 196.

Norfolk Coast Partnership - No objection subject to the appropriate installation/control of external lighting.

Norfolk Landscape Archaeology - No objection.

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.

POLICIES

North Norfolk Core Strategy (Adopted September 2008):

SS 1 - Spatial Strategy for North Norfolk

SS 2 - Development in the Countryside

HO 9 - The Conversion and Re-use of Rural Buildings as Dwellings

EN 2 - Protection and enhancement of landscape and settlement character

EN 4 - Design

EN 8 - Protecting and enhancing the historic environment

EN 9 - Biodiversity and geology

EN 13 - Pollution and hazard prevention and minimisation

CT 5 - The transport impact of new development

CT 6 - Parking provision

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF):

Section 2 – Achieving sustainable development

Para 11: decisions should apply the presumption in favour sustainable development which for decision making means approving development proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan without delay.

Para 12: the presumption in favour of sustainable development does not change the statutory status of the development plan as the starting point for decision making. Where a planning application conflicts with an up-to-date development plan permission should not usually be granted. Local planning authorities may take decisions that depart from an up-to-date development plan, but only if material considerations in a particular case indicate the plan should not be followed.

Section 4 – Decision-making

Para 47: applications for planning permission must be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material consideration indicate otherwise

Section 5 – Delivering a sufficient supply of homes

Para 79: Planning policies and decisions should avoid the development of isolated homes in the countryside unless one or more of the following circumstances apply:

a) there is an essential need for a rural worker, including those taking majority control of a farm business, to live permanently at or near their place of work in the countryside;

b) the development would represent the optimal viable use of a heritage asset or would be appropriate enabling development to secure the future of heritage assets;

c) the development would re-use redundant or disused buildings and enhance its immediate setting;

d) the development would involve the subdivision of an existing residential dwelling; or

e) the design is of exceptional quality, in that it:

- is truly outstanding or innovative, reflecting the highest standards in architecture, and would help to raise standards of design more generally in rural areas; and

- would significantly enhance its immediate setting, and be sensitive to the defining characteristics of the local area.

Section 12 - Achieving well-designed places

Para 124: good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, creates better places in which to live and work and helps make development acceptable to communities

Para 131: in determining applications, great weight should be given to outstanding or innovative designs which promote high levels of sustainability, or help raise the standard of design more generally in an area, so long as they fit in with the overall form and layout of their surroundings.

Section 15 - Conserving and enhancing the natural environment

Para 170 – planning policies and decisions should contribute to enhance the natural and local environment by protecting and enhancing valued landscapes, sites of bio-diversity or geological value and soils; and recognising the intrinsic beauty and character of the countryside

MAIN ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION

1. Principle
2. Design - consideration against paragraphs 79(e) and 131 of the NPPF
3. Amenity
4. Highway impact
5. Landscape impact
6. Heritage impact
7. Biodiversity
8. Environmental considerations

APPRAISAL

1. Principle (Policies SS 1, SS 2 and NPPF Paragraph 79e)

Core Strategy Policy SS 1 sets out the spatial strategy for the North Norfolk District which seeks to direct the majority of new development to the towns identified as Primary and Secondary Settlements, with a smaller amount of new development focused on designated Service Villages and Coastal Service Villages to support rural sustainability. The remainder of the district including settlements not listed in Policy SS 1, is designated as Countryside. Within the Countryside area development is restricted to particular types of development to support the rural economy, meet affordable housing needs and provide renewable energy. Policy SS 2 limits development within the Countryside to that which requires a rural location and where it is compliant with the specific types of development listed in the policy. This does not include new market housing. In this respect, the proposed development is therefore contrary to adopted Policy SS 2.

Paragraph 47 of the NPPF states that applications for planning permission be determined in accordance with the development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The NPPF is a material consideration and therefore it must be considered in the decision making process and the planning balance. The application is promoted as meeting the requirements of paragraph 79(e) of the NPPF. The proposals must meet exceptional standards as being:

- truly outstanding or innovate, reflecting the highest standards in architecture, and should help to raise standards of design more generally in rural area; and

- significantly enhancing the site's immediate setting, and being sensitive to the defining characteristics of the local area.'

This being the case, in order to justify a departure from current adopted local strategic planning policy, the Council would need to be satisfied that the proposed development complies with the requirements of NPPF Paragraph 79e), along with complying with other relevant North Norfolk Core Strategy policies.

Paragraph 79 - 'isolation'

First and foremost, the Council consider the proposals comply with the requirement to be sufficiently 'physically isolated', i.e. the location meets tests for isolation detailed within case law for NPPF Paragraph 79 to apply. The nearest residential properties being situated just under half a mile to the north (Quarles farm) and over half a mile to the east (Egmere Farm). In addition, the remoteness of the site from any meaningful shops/services/facilities further leads to the conclusion that the site is considered as being functionally isolated.

Reasoned site justification:

It is understood that a number of sites have been explored in the locality, with the application site being considered by the applicants as the most appropriate. Advantages of the site cited include being outside of the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (the boundary of which is approx. 1 mile to the north), the presence of existing buildings and the former presence of two dwellings, the backdrop of woodland, isolation from other properties and opportunities to enhance the immediate landscape. It also retains proximity to the Holkham Estate which gives a suitable link to but avoids any substantial conflict with the wider estate in terms of appearance and setting. Officers have accepted that the application site may lend itself in principle to consideration under Paragraph 79 that is subject to meeting the specific criteria.

2. Design (Policy EN 4 and NPPF Paragraphs 79e) and 131)

Setting the scene, it is worth reflecting upon the historic content of Planning Policy Statement 7 (superseded by the NPPF in 2012) which, when introduced, required proposed isolated dwellings in the countryside to be both truly outstanding and innovative, noting that the design should be 'ground-breaking', with specific reference made to 'materials, methods of construction or protecting and enhancing the environment', and further stating that value will be found in 'reflection of the highest standards in contemporary architecture, the significant enhancement of its immediate setting and its sensitivity to the defining characteristics of the local area'.

Many of these requirements have subsequently followed through into the current NPPF with some subtle differences. There is now no requirement to be 'contemporary' and a more flexible approach which can now include a more classical concept is available. This approach is further aided by the insertion of the word 'or' - now reading as needing to be 'truly outstanding' or 'innovative' - both within previous NPPF Paragraph 55 (2012) and current NPPF Paragraph 79 (2019). It is recognised that this approach has now been reflected more recently in developments outside of this district approved under previous NPPF Paragraph 55 and current NPPF paragraph 79. In any event, proposals under paragraph 79e) should still be exemplar and exceptional in concept and delivery to justify policy compliance.

Turning to the specifics of the application, the overall siting of the proposed property has a clear logic, being off-set from, yet in line with, the existing barn to the west, and sited relatively close to the woodland to the north and thereby avoiding the appearance of 'floating' within the agricultural field. The overall scale of the property and associated curtilage is undoubtedly large, but not to the extent that causes undue concern, indeed it is to an extent smaller than many typical rural country manor estates. In height, the property would remain lower than the tree line to the rear and as such, again raises no major concerns on landscape matters. The proposals represent a development of significant quality, reflecting a traditional, classical appearance - particular features include a traditional concave recessed front entrance, neatly proportioned lead dormer windows, two notably grand chimneys, an overall sense of balance and symmetry on each elevation accentuated by window placements, and a thoughtful array of materials proposed to be incorporated. These materials include the following:

- Soft red peg/plain tiles
- Clipsham (buff limestone)
- Painted oak/lead dormers
- Iron rainwater goods
- Knapped flint
- Clunch (white limestone)
- Red/orange brick

This mix of materials is broadly sensitive to the defining characteristics of the locality and reflect the local vernacular. In relation to elevation detailing, the facades are particularly well proportioned with emphasis on geometry, symmetry and classical detailing. The choice of roof material has been a point of contention, though the agent has referred to examples locally, notably in Holkham, which use a similar tile.

The existing barn is already the subject of a recent planning consent for conversion to a dwelling and as such, the principal of its retention is established. In this respect, it makes sense to incorporate the existing building into the curtilage of the proposed new dwelling, and use it as an ancillary outbuilding. The conversion scheme proposed is perfectly acceptable with few new interventions. Indeed, the current proposals portray much less intervention than the two previous planning consents for the barn and therefore equate to an improvement. The result should be an attractive yet understated outbuilding typical of many country house estates with such satellite outbuildings.

It is clear that the proposal does not necessarily strive to be 'innovative', the proposals "strong suit" clearly is outstanding architectural merit. In terms of sustainability, the dwelling would incorporate a range of measures to include ground source heat pumps, solar panels, extensive tree planting and with the aim of being carbon negative (i.e. beyond carbon neutral). The ambition to be carbon negative is welcome and fits the Council's ethos of addressing the current climate emergency.

Overall, attention is drawn back to the specific criteria of having to demonstrate a design that is 'truly outstanding' in line with Paragraph 79e). In adopting a traditional approach, the risk could have been that the proposed development may have slipped into a "comfortable"

pastiche, doing no more than paying lip service to traditional architectural character and practices, but not necessarily pushing to a higher architectural plain.

The Council have set the bar high to ensure that such new development will stand the test of time and indeed make a marked and respected contribution to architecture within the district. There is no doubt that the design as proposed presents an exemplar traditional approach that reaches the highest bar of being 'truly outstanding'. The proposed development would reflect local distinctiveness, drawing upon elements of design seen on Norfolk Estates and in particular as part of buildings on the nearby Holkham Estate and local distinctiveness along with the palette of materials presented offers a uniqueness to the design. By way of further evidence to support the meeting of paragraph 79e), the proposed development has also been peer reviewed prior to the submission by the Traditional Architecture Group (a group of RIBA architects who actively promote and assess traditional architecture); they have concluded that the design is truly outstanding and of exceptional quality.

Paragraph 79e) requires that any design should raise the standards of design more generally in rural areas. The high quality design proposed should indeed set a standard for traditional architecture for other developers to follow. The agent has further suggested the incorporation of an apprenticeship programme into the building programme as a demonstration of the building skills/craftsmanship required in traditional architecture. This will assist in underpinning development of a local skills base that can then deliver traditional techniques in the repair and maintenance of North Norfolk's built heritage.

To conclude, it is considered that the proposed development achieves the high bar set by the NPPF and the Council of being truly outstanding and reflecting the highest standards in traditional architecture and helping to raise the standards of design, with enough uniqueness to set it apart from other traditional country estates. Furthermore, the materials proposed would be sensitive to the defining characteristics of the local area. As such, the proposed development meets the design requirements of NPPF Paragraph 79e) in respect of the key design tests.

3. Amenity (Policy EN 4):

Given the isolated position of the proposed development, there are no dwellings within the immediate vicinity of the site that would be adversely affected by the proposed development. As such, in regards to amenity, the proposed development complies with the requirements of Policy EN 4

4. Highway impact and parking (Policies CT 5 and CT 6)

It is not considered that, given the appropriate access arrangements utilising a single point of access and sweeping realigned access drive around the eastern/northern edge of the site, and suitability of the adjoining road, that the proposed development would give rise to any significant highway concerns, subject to visibility improvements at the site access. It is noted that the existing barn would have generated a volume of agricultural traffic in and out of the site and, although the dwelling has a large number of bedrooms that may possibly engender a slight increase in access use, any increase is likely to be small for what is a single dwelling and noting that the existing barn has already been granted consent for conversion to a dwelling. No objections have been raised by the Highway Authority subject to the securing of the access improvements through condition.

It is clear that a more than adequate level of parking and turning can be provided within the site to meet the requirements of Policy CT 6. Given the rural location, the avoidance of any unsuitable suburbanised features (including entrance walls, gates and fencing) is key.

Overall, the proposed development complies with the requirements of Policies CT 5 and CT 6.

5. Landscape impact (Policy EN 2):

The site itself is immediately visible from Walsingham Road to the south, and from the approach along Walsingham Road looking in an easterly direction. It is generally flat with perhaps only a very slight fall from north to south. Wider views of the site from the surrounding landscape are partially softened by the backdrop of a copse of woodland to the north, hedged field boundaries and the presence of a redundant barn.

North Norfolk District Council have recently published a new North Norfolk Landscape Character Assessment (LCA) (November 2018) to provide an up-to-date evidence base for the emerging Local Plan. This document has been published in final form and represents the most up-to-date and accurate assessment, based on current best practice and in line with the requirements of the latest NPPF. The LCA defines this particular area as being one of 'Rolling Open Farmland (ROF1) which, amongst other characteristics, recognises the presence of 'larger isolated farmsteads and minor gentry houses'. However, it requires that to maintain landscape character, properties (if accepted) should be of a 'scale and location which respect the individual form of the settlement in which they are located (i.e. development should not 'stand out' but rather should be almost unnoticeable and unremarkable...' and with landscaping that 'actively blends with existing features rather than tries simply to screen new development'. In essence, any new dwelling should be mindful of maintaining, complementing and where possible, enhancing its immediate landscape setting. However, Paragraph 79e) goes a step further than this, requiring new proposals to 'significantly enhance' their immediate setting.

The introduction of a new, large dwelling on a relatively unspoilt landscape inevitably directs a challenge to the applicant to provide a development that will not harm the wider landscape and also significantly enhance its immediate setting. This demands landscaping proposals of the highest quality. It is clear that painstaking works has been undertaken to try and reach this highest bar, with a detailed assessment of the defining landscape character through the submission of a Landscape Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA). A combination of measures has been proposed in order to help to meet the challenge and achieve the quality required. These measures include:

- A driveway flanked by native hedgerows/trees;
- 5.4ha of new native woodland planting (approx. 5,940 trees) to the east, south-east and west of the dwelling, linking to existing habitats;
- A restored and extend pond to the south-east with informal planting and a new lake to the south of the new dwelling, together accounting for approx. 0.9ha;
- Formal lawn to the south, east and west side of the property, along with an orchard and kitchen garden;

- A wildflower meadow, retained farmland and a parkland-style setting to the foreground (south of the property);
- Restoration and enhancement of existing hedgerows along with new hedgerows (approx. 2.9km) and further informal native tree planting.
- Better management of the existing woodland to the north, which provides the backdrop.
- The sensitive re-use of an existing barn.

As proposed, the landscaping is well conceived and appropriate to the setting. Initial concerns as to whether the landscaped grounds could become rather too formalised and overly ornate have been largely ameliorated. When approaching the site from the driveway, and when viewed from the public highway to the south, the effect is to achieve a transition from the informal to the formal, with glimpsed and filtered views along driveway leading through to the house itself. From the public highway, the foreground is very much dictated by the transition from agricultural land, to wildflower meadow, hidden formal terraced gardens and then the house. The effect is to make the development appear as if it has always been a local feature and a well-known part of the surrounding landscape. The additional enhancement and restoration of hedged field boundaries is particularly welcome, along with the scattered planting of native trees, thereby avoiding formality and partially creating a parkland setting in the foreground.

It is not considered that the proposed development would have a significant impact on existing trees - indeed, the development proposes much improved management of the existing woodland to the north and, as mentioned, the planting of a significant number of additional native trees (including two sizeable native woodlands to the east and west of the property), resulting in a net gain.

Avoidance of any inappropriate hard landscaping features, in particular gates and fencing (particularly along the driveway and around the site entrance), would be paramount, alongside the avoidance of any unnecessary external lighting (and being mindful of the effect of extensive glazing on the proposed property and consideration of light spillage). The use of down lighting externally, and the incorporation of internal blinds will help to minimise the impact. A Lighting Strategy will be the subject of condition and will be stringently considered as part of any discharge of condition.

It is concluded that the proposed development would significantly enhance its immediate setting and be sensitive to the local defining landscape characteristics, in line with the requirements of Paragraph 79e) of the NPPF.

6. Heritage impact (Policy EN 8)

The nearest heritage assets lie approx. half a mile to the south-east (Ruins of Church of St Edmund - Grade II*) alongside the site of the Medieval village of Egmere (Scheduled Ancient Monument), and just under 700m to the north (Quarles Farmhouse - Grade II). Given the degree of separation between the proposal site and these identified assets, aided by the backdrop of woodland and a degree of historic precedent for two dwellings on the site, it is not considered that the proposed development would result in harm to these designated assets. No objections have been raised by the Conservation & Design Team Leader nor Historic England. Furthermore, no concerns have been raised by Norfolk County Council's

Archaeological Liaison Officer regarding the potential for any archaeological interests within the site area.

As such, it is considered that the proposed development complies with the requirements of Policy EN 8.

7. Biodiversity (Policy EN 9)

Significant opportunities exist across the application site for ecological enhancements. Such enhancements should be achieved in relation to the copse of woodland immediately to the north through better management. The existing barn and proposed new dwelling can also add to the mitigation and enhancement of local biodiversity and habitat creation. Evidence regarding use of the existing barn by bats and barn owls has been previously discovered, with the most recent survey submitted further confirming use of the barn by bats as well as affecting a previously installed artificial barn owl nesting site, along with affecting wild bird nests. The enhancement measures suggested include habitat enhancement measures with the planting of native trees, the restoration/extension of existing hedgerows, the planting of wildflower meadows and the creation of/restoration of two large ponds - these should all aid connectivity to existing landscaping features within and around the site. A European Protected Species licence would be required for bats, which in turn would inform further suitable mitigation and enhancement measures which may include the provision of two bat roost sites. External lighting in proximity of the barn should also be minimised to ensure suitable habitats. A further artificial owl roost could be installed, either within the barn or pole-mounted, and further bird nesting boxes should be added.

Subject to the securing of a European Protected Species Licence and suitable biodiversity mitigation and enhancement measures, the proposed development complies with the requirements of Policy EN 9.

8. Environmental considerations (Policy EN 13)

It would appear that matters of contamination in relation to the existing barn were addressed under the previously approved application ref: PF/19/0895. As such, it is not envisaged that there would be any further environmental concerns under Policy EN 13, subject to satisfactorily foul sewage disposal and surface water disposal arrangements being incorporated into the development. This includes the provision of a package treatment plant, the use of a water harvesting tanks and permeable surfaces. It is further noted that rainwater could also be diverted to the newly created pond. No concerns have been raised by the Environmental Protection Officer regarding any contamination with the site area. On this basis, the proposed development complies with the requirements of Policy EN 13.

9. Conclusion

To conclude, the proposed classical dwelling seeks to comply with the requirements of NPPF Paragraph 79e) in being of an exceptional quality in that it:

- Is truly outstanding or innovative, reflecting the highest standards in architecture and would help to raise the standards of design more generally in rural area; and
- Would significantly enhance its immediate setting and be sensitive to the defining characteristics of the local area.

It is considered that the application successfully meets these key tests, proposing an unashamedly traditional design of a very high standard that draws upon, and is sensitive to, the local vernacular, yet incorporates an inherent uniqueness that will positively set it apart from other traditionally designed dwellings and avoids the risk of unacceptable precedent in future. Coupled with this, the landscaping offered seeks to embed the property within the context of the existing landscape through a thoughtful combination of hedgerow/woodland/pond restoration and enhancement along with further new planting to create new wildflower meadows, a parkland setting and further significant woodland plantations, all of which will also provide ecological enhancements. The result is a development that would significantly enhance its immediate setting. The recommendation is therefore one of approval in meeting the required tests of NPPF Paragraph 79e) and thereby justifying a departure from adopted local planning policy SS2.

RECOMMENDATION:

It is recommended that the application be APPROVED subject to conditions relating to the matters listed below and any others considered necessary by the Head of Planning:

- Time limit for commencement (3 years)
- Constructed in accordance with the approved plans/documents
- Materials (in accordance with the submitted/samples submitted if required)
- Materials (further details/samples of roof tiles)
- Landscape Management Plan
- Ecological Design Strategy/Management Plan
- EPS Licence
- Arboricultural Method Statement
- Replacement of new trees
- Vehicular access/visibility improvement
- Parking/turning areas
- Lighting Design Strategy
- Details of any additional lighting
- Removal of PD rights - boundary treatments/outbuildings

Final wording of conditions to be delegated to the Head of Planning.