



Design & Access Statement

prepared in support of an application for the refurbishment and extension of

'Denning', 7 Marsh Lane, Burnham Norton

December 2020

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1.0 PREAMBLE

This planning application has been prepared by Cowper Griffith Architects on behalf of the owners, in connection with alterations and extension works at:

Denning
 7 Marsh Lane
 Burnham Norton
 King's Lynn
 PE31 8DS

The house and site are located within the hamlet of Burnham Norton, the Burnham Norton Conservation Area and the North Norfolk Coastal AONB.

The site is within catchment of Norfolk County Council and the Borough Council of King's Lynn and West Norfolk.

Burnham Norton is classified as a 'smaller village or hamlet' in the latest adopted local plan (2016).

The application site is partly within a designated flood zone. Further information can be found in the accompanying Floor Risk Assessment.

The proposals involve the light refurbishment and limited, localised alteration of the existing house, and addition of a new extension, converting it from a three to six bedroom property.

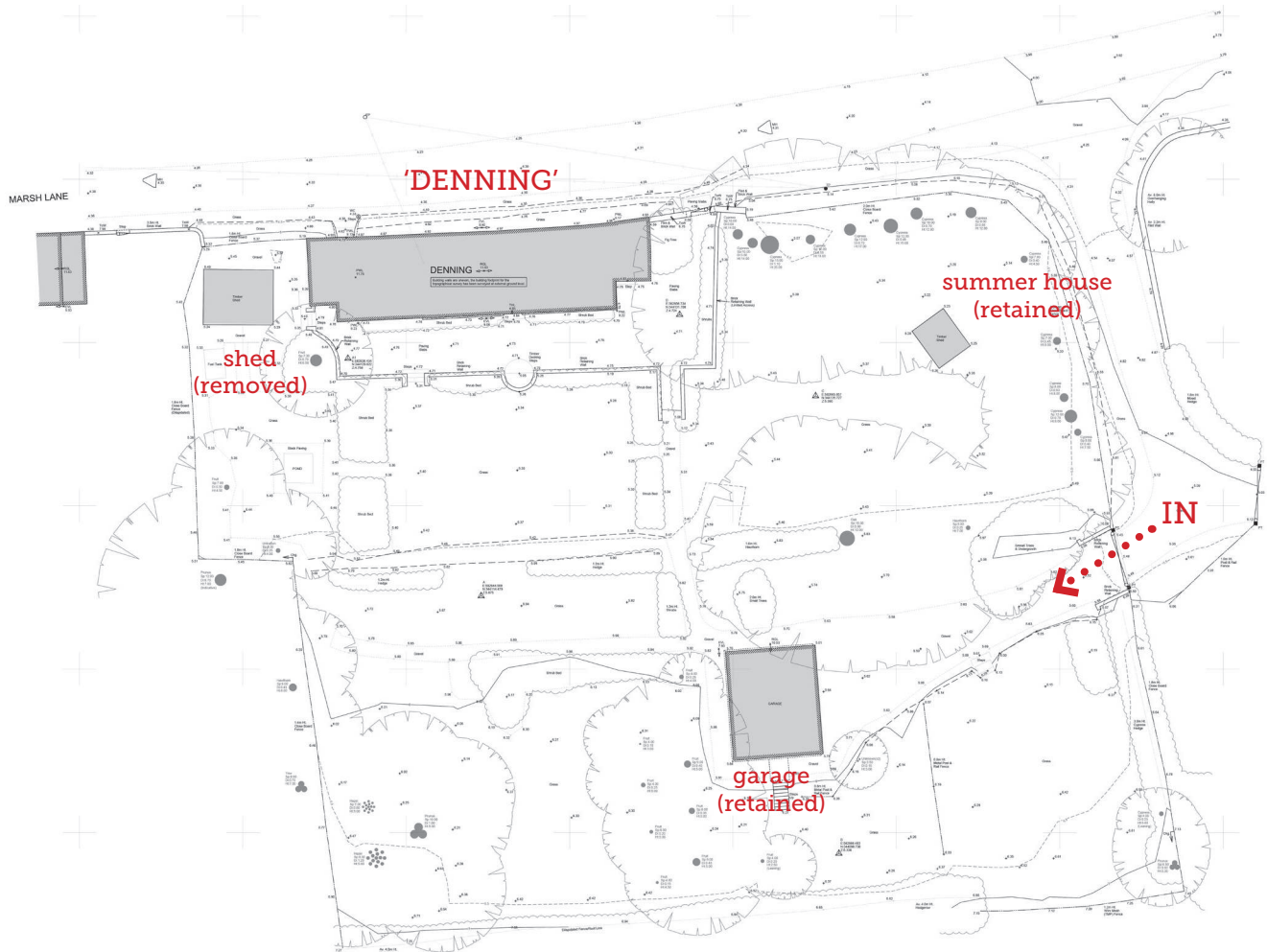
This Statement should be read in conjunction with the following drawings, submitted as part of this application:

2028 P 100 P6 Ground Floor & Site Plan
 2028 P 101 P4 First Floor and Roof Plans
 2028 P 110 P5 North (street) Elevation and Section A
 2028 P 111 P4 South Elevation and Section B
 2028 P 112 P3 East & West Elevations, Section C, D
 2028 P 150 P1 3D Street sketch view
 2028 P 200 P2 Block/roof plan
 2028 P 201 P1 Site ownership plan

2028 FRA Rev P2: Flood Risk Assessment prepared by Cowper Griffith Architects

GY/5098 Topographical Survey Rev A
 GY/5098 Floor Plans Survey Rev A
 GY/5098 Elevations Survey Rev A
 GY/5098 Sections Survey Rev A

REP20045 Preliminary Roost and Habitat Survey prepared by Robson Ecology



2.0 THE SITE & ITS LOCATION

The site is located on Marsh Lane, Burnham Norton, approximately 2km North of Burnham Market and 10km West of Wells-next-the-Sea. The site is around 4km from the coast by path, and 2.4km as the crow flies.

The site is roughly square, with a narrow property fronting the street. The remainder is given over to established gardens, and includes a detached, timber clad double garage with room over, timber outbuilding and oil tank.

Access is afforded via an established drive, shared with Number 5 Marsh Lane.

The existing house on a broadly East/West orientation is of two-storey construction, with brick, clunch and flint walling, with white painted metal windows, under a pantiled duopitch roof.

The site's boundary is well established, typically marked by a close-boarded timber fence of 1.8 to 2.0m in height.

The Southern boundary to open farmland has simple stock fencing.

The house is characterised by small, punched openings to the North, and more, larger windows and doors opening onto the garden, to the South.

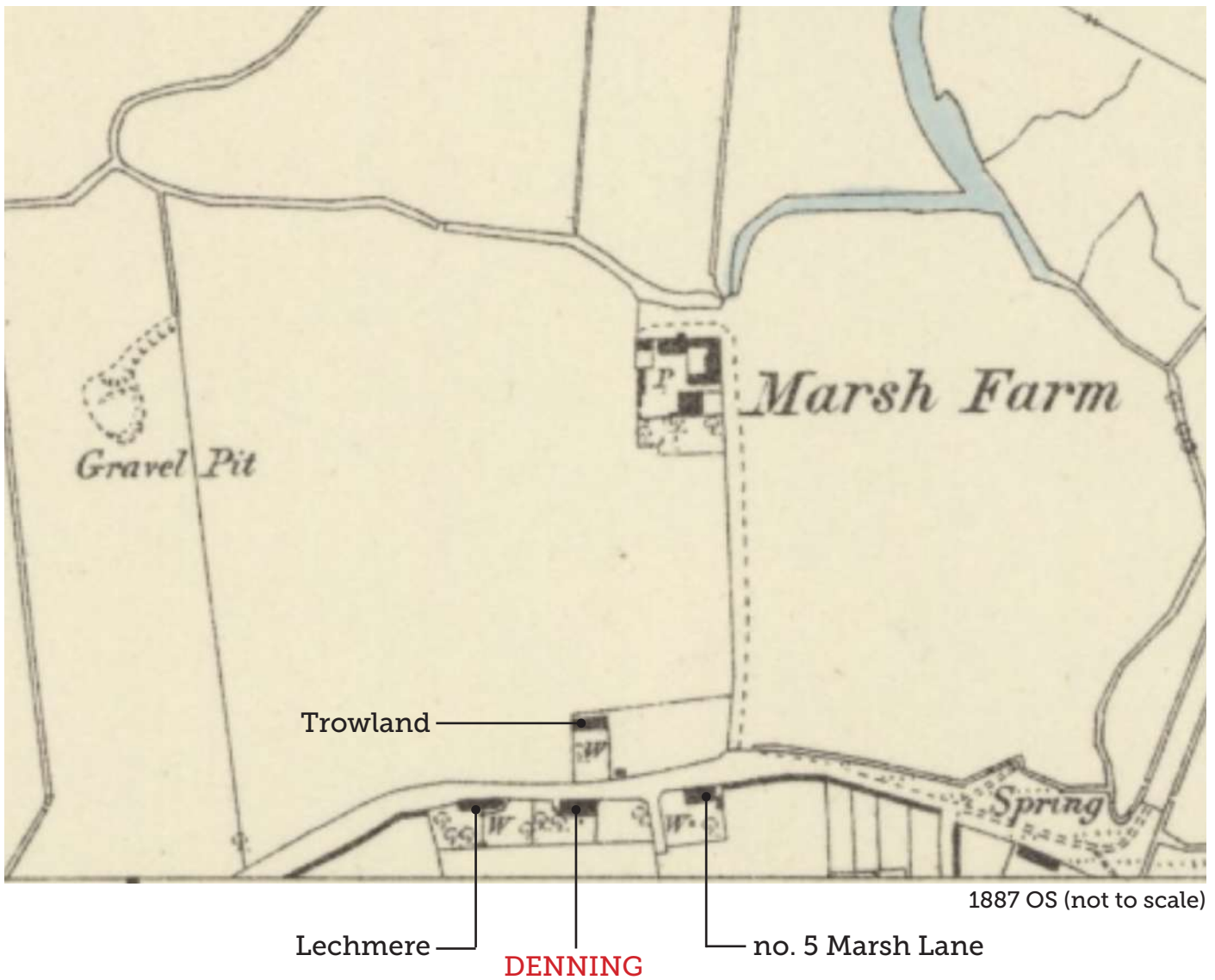
The garden contains a range of very large, mature and attractive trees, which are to be retained and left untouched by the proposals.

3.0 SITE GEOLOGY

The Norfolk Coast Partnership published 'Geological Landscapes of the Norfolk Coast' in 2011. This document identifies Burnham Norton as being located within the 'Hunstanton Glacial Zone', close to the boundary of the North Coastal Zone. The area is predominantly of sandy-clay soils, with large areas of chalk bedrock.

4.0 SITE TOPOGRAPHY

The site slopes upwards towards the Southern boundary. Marsh Lane directly in front of the house lies at 4.30m AOD. Ground floor of the house lies at 4.38m AOD. The Southern (and highest) boundary varies from 6.62m AOD in the middle, to 7.40m AOD at the South East corner. Thus the level change across the site is around 2.6m.



5.0 SITE HISTORY

The existing house appears on the 1886 OS Map, as do the three closest neighbours; 'Trowland Cottage' opposite, 'Lechmere' to the West and Number 5 to the East. The map also shows the incremental but significant extension of both Trowland Cottage and Lechmere, as recorded in each property's planning history. The site of 3 Marsh Lane, known as St Anthony's Cottage, appears to have been previously undeveloped land.

6.0 SITE CONSTRAINTS

The existing house faces Trowland Cottage, opposite, and has since the properties were built. Intervisibility is diminished by distance, established hedges lining the carriageway and Trowland's detached garage.

The existing Denning has West facing windows looking towards the East gable of Lechmere. The proposed house will not.

The site is within designated Flood Zones as defined by the Environment Agency. The approach to flood risk mitigation is outlined in the accompanying Flood Risk Assessment.

The site lies within the Burnham Norton Conservation Area, which cites St Anthony's Cottage as an exemplar of neo vernacular design, and Norton Hall Farmhouse as the key heritage asset in the village. Denning is unlisted.

The site has an abundance of mature trees, many of species typical to the region. Their contribution to the Conservation Area should be preserved.



7.0 PLANNING HISTORY

Denning has no recent planning history.

'Lechmere', to the West, has been extended twice under consents 2/00/0942/F and 08/01426/F, resulting in a footprint significantly larger than the linear form seen on the late C19 OS Map.

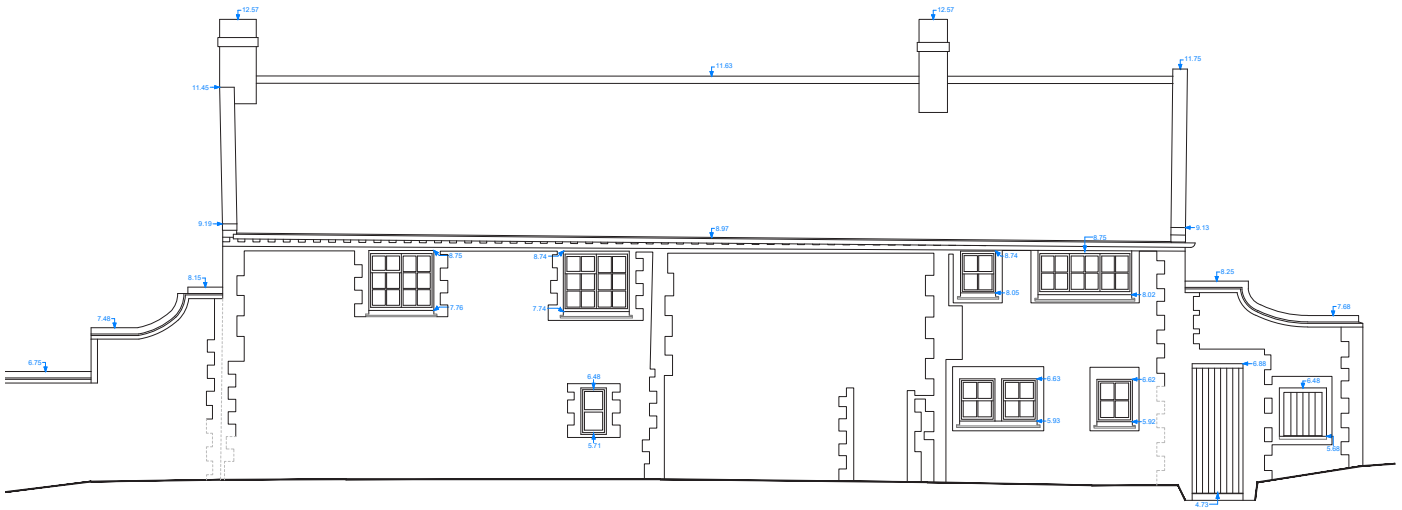
Number 5, to the East, has recently had consent for a multi-volume extension and adaptation project under consent 19/00813/F which results in a similar degree of extension compared to the original cottage form as seen on historic maps.

Number 3 ('St Anthony's Cottage') was built under consent 2/94/1791/F on what appeared to be previously undeveloped land.

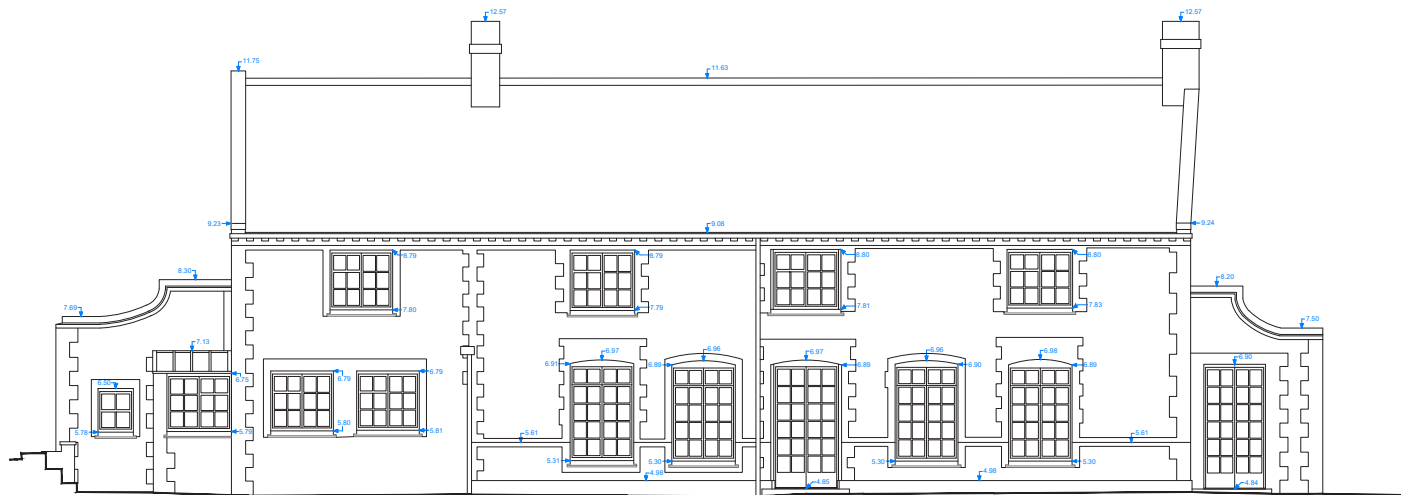
Trowland Cottage opposite benefits from a varied history of permissions to adapt and extend the original house, with consents in 2001, 2004, 2006, 2007, 2013 and 2019.

Thus a clear and immediately local precedent is established for the extension and reconfiguration of existing dwellinghouses on Marsh Lane.

CGA is acutely aware of the need to execute the design of any such project in a manner compatible with and of no detriment to the Conservation Area.



Elevation to Marsh Lane; simple form, small windows, varied, local materials



Elevation to gardens; larger windows, typical local details and material palette

8.0 THE CASE FOR AN EXTENSION

The House and gardens have recently been purchased by our Clients. Whilst this will not initially be their primary residence, it is important to note that this is our clients long term aim, having owned property in and developed a great affinity for the area over many years. This is not a development project, it concerns the sensitive adaptation of a pretty but inherently limited existing house to a more accommodating family home.

The existing house has been well maintained, but is very dated, and inefficient both in its generation and retention of energy. There are also localised areas of damp, and repairs which have not been carried out to the highest standards. A clear by-product of the proposals, as shown in the drawings, is a retention of the house's essential character and a thorough but entirely appropriate overhaul of its fabric, preserving it for generations to come.

It is no secret that the area has its fair share of second home owners, but our clients' clear intention ultimately to move to Denning wholesale, coupled with their approach to design and craftsmanship, use of local artisan builders and the amount of time they will spend there mean they will in fact make a positive contribution both to the local community and economy.

The existing house is absolutely typical of a modest rural cottage, with a long, narrow plan form and evidence of historic extension and adaptation according to need at the time. None of this history is to be erased or rendered illegible by the proposals. The cellular, 'room off a room' layout does of course present practical challenges to modern life, and the proposals retain this essential character, whilst providing more flexible and accommodating space in the extension. Thus the extended property seeks a successful and harmonious balance of character with modern convenience.

There will be no intensification of use given the continuing single dwelling to the plot, nor will there be any change of use class.

There is much precedent for the sensitive extension and adaptation of older properties in the area, both Listed and undesignated assets.

Cowper Griffith Architects (CGA) is passionately committed to continuing this tradition, having worked extensively and to some acclaim in the area for more than thirty years.



9.0 BURNHAM NORTON CONSERVATION AREA

The Burnham Norton Conservation Area was designated in 1977. The area's Character Statement was last revised in 1992.

Denning is absolutely typical of the 'C19 farm labourers' cottages ... constructed of clunch, flint and clay pantiles'. The Statement acknowledges the number of 'weekend and retirement cottages' locally.

Denning also shows that variety of materials 'knit together by a single roof material', and it is most definitely 'attractive and small scale'.

Norton Hall farmhouse (above) is singled out as the sole heritage asset of 'real distinction', but clearly the typical, small cottages have a consistency and a collective value.

The Statement then provides commentary for the entirety of Marsh lane, highlighting the subtle variations in this streetscape of street-fronting and 'end on' humble cottages, with steep roofs and punched openings, interspersed with 'undistinguished' modern houses, and a couple of more recent, highly crafted standout properties; 'The Step', which combines the traditional with the contemporary to great effect, and St Anthony's Cottage, an exercise in the neo-vernacular described in the Statement as 'outstanding'.

Denning and its neighbours are hard against the road, on the landward side, and interspersed by mature trees.

On the seaward side of the road, the house enjoys an expansive view across a wide area of flat grazing marshes, with only Trowland Cottage and Marsh Farm between the site and the sea.

10.0 LISTED BUILDINGS

There are two Listed Buildings in Burnham Norton; the Prince of Wales House and Norton Hall Farmhouse, both Grade II, C17 properties.

The map in the Conservation Area Appraisal classifies Denning as an 'important unlisted building', along with the majority of properties in the village. This is testament to the degree of intactness and consistency to the settlement, which contribute to its character and sense of place. The need to preserve the character of the settlement's key undesignated heritage assets has fundamentally influenced the design approach for this project.

11.0 AONB

A sensitive approach to 'Settlement Character' is also a key requirement of the Statement of Significance for the North Norfolk Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

It is deemed far preferable to adapt an existing dwellinghouse within a settlement's defined limits rather than to permit new development which extends a settlement's size and risks coalescence. The string of settlements along the coastline all have their own character and identity, and the design proposals seek not to diminish these qualities, principally through layout, scale, material, form and detail.

The minimal incursions into site also ensure the extensive, mature planting will continue to support a variety of wildlife, and contribute to local biodiversity.

Our approach to respecting Burnham Norton's character and grain are explored in greater detail in subsequent 'Design' sections.



12.0 SITE IMAGES



View East along Marsh Lane, with Lechmere in the foreground. Note extensive rear extensions, plus view across to Trowland Cottage North of Marsh Lane.



View East, by later phases of work at Lechmere



View East alongside the narrow, street-fronting earlier dwelling at Lechmere, with 3m boundary wall beyond. No view of Denning at this point due to oblique, narrow view.



View East alongside Lechmere's 3m high boundary wall, obscuring the extension site. Denning now visible, with mature trees beyond and grassed roadside bank to frontage (both retained).



View East towards Denning's Western gable, noting modern timber fence and dilapidated timber shed to rear, which makes no positive contribution to streetscene. Note also grassed bank to highway, which is to be retained.



View West along Denning's Northern boundary, noting extension site largely obscured by Denning. Oblique angle ensures minimised impact into streetscene, and no loss of essential character as defined in the Conservation Area Appraisal.



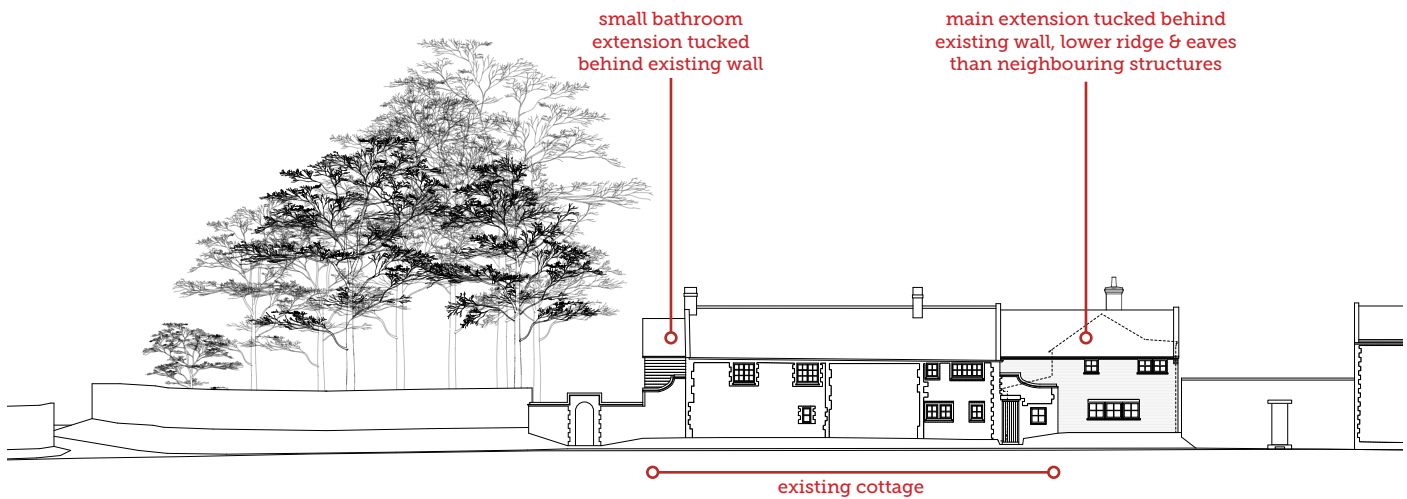
Shared access drive into Denning, running along Eastern boundary to existing double gate. Note raised bank to retained fence, with lawn under mature trees beyond.



View of St Anthony's Cottage, a relatively recent and large new build at No 3 Marsh Lane, utilising a variety of vernacular features and materials.



View West with No 5 Marsh Lane to the left, benefitting from extant consent to add two large volumes, plus low connecting elements. A glimpse of Denning and Lechmere along Marsh Lane, and Trowland Cottage's roof to the right.



North Elevation facing street

13.0 DESIGN

The scheme seeks to preserve the existing house, and to add an extension providing the more flexible, usable modern space which Denning lacks. This additional space will enable our clients to use Denning as a family home, initially as and when they wish, but ultimately as their primary residence. Their purchase of Denning represents the fruition of a number of years' patient observation of the local market, until the perfect opportunity arose. This is therefore a long-term proposition, based on a long held love of the area, rather than a result of recent property trends.

Denning is retained in its original form, with modest and essential adaptation where new and old meet.

The extension hugs the Western boundary, creating a 'L' configuration not unlike the neighbouring 'Lechmere' (No. 9).

Crucially, this allows us to remove a life expired timber shed and oil tank, and to preserve the beautiful Southern elevation of Denning, which shares a material palette with the North. But where Denning's North elevation is solid, with small, punched openings, the South is very light, benefitting from a wonderful, established garden and sunny aspect.

The extension connects to Denning at both Ground and First floor levels, with Denning's existing floor level of 4.83m AOD being extended throughout.

This brings significant benefit, as the site slopes towards the South, meaning the house is increasingly cut into the topography, rather than its mass and ridge height stepping up to reflect level changes.

The submission pack includes a long 'street elevation' (above). Since Marsh Lane is so narrow, and Denning abuts it, the house and its impact upon the streetscene are better examined in photographs.

The drawing does however show the clear retention of the unchanged Northern elevation, with its Dutch influenced half gabled add-ons at either end. The fabric of the house remains in fairly good order but of course, any necessary repairs will be carried out as part of the main works, using appropriate, high quality matching natural materials and techniques.

The extension's North Elevation is visible, but sits behind the retained and Westernmost single storey element.

It is low, modest, and built entirely in robust, high quality materials which will weather slowly, predictably and attractively.

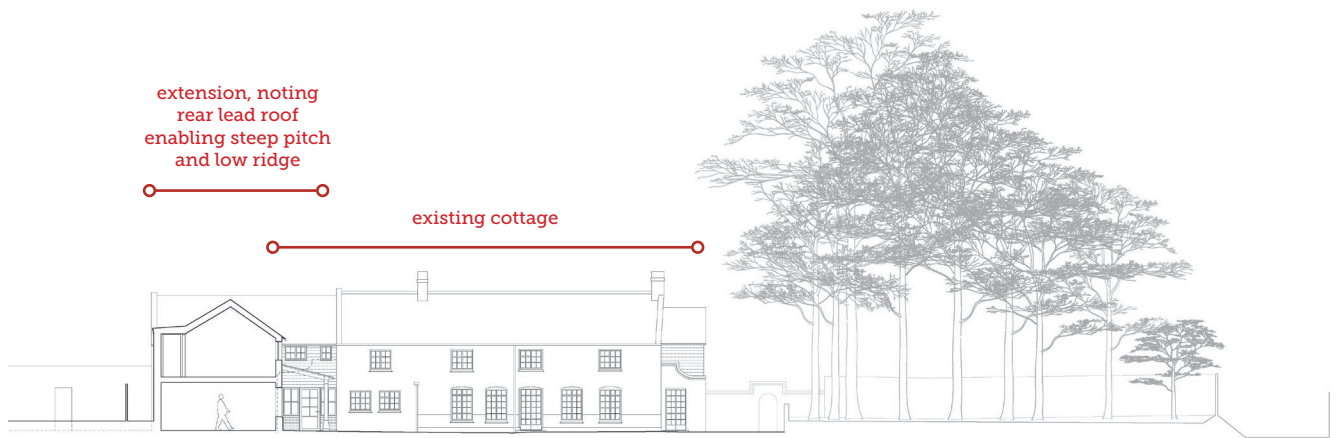
It replaces a low quality timber boundary fence, and the existing shed, and its impact is further lessened by the retention of the grassed banking abutting the edge of the road.

The extension is set back from the line of Denning's North elevation, allowing the existing Western parapet to be 'read' as the line between two phases of development.

Furthermore the ridge of the extension is lower than that of both Denning and Lechmere, ensuring its subservience.

Images taken along Marsh Lane confirm that the extension is largely hidden by Lechmere and its 3m high boundary wall when approaching from the West, and by the existing Denning when approaching from the East.

Thus the essential character of this section of Marsh Lane, with its 'brick and clunch cottages hard by the road' is successfully retained.



South Elevation facing garden



West facing site cross section showing existing Eastern gable end, with new extension to rear

The existing house has a number of windows looking North, towards the sea.

The extension has three windows facing North, one at Ground floor, serving the kitchen, with an outlook partly impeded by the established hedgerow on the North side of the street.

A further two small windows at First Floor, serving corridors rather than habitable rooms, simply mimic the outlook of the existing windows in Denning, thus the proposals involve no further loss of amenity to existing neighbours.

Our material palette is entirely appropriate to the Conservation Area, comprising of red brick and natural weathered hardwood cladding under a pantile roof.

We have deliberately assembled a limited and pared back palette of materials, and avoided an excess of vernacular detailing, to ensure the extension plays second fiddle to the existing house, which has a wonderful, textural and varied palette of brick, clunch and flint, evidencing adaptation according to need throughout the building's history.

Much like Denning, the extension has a small number of small windows facing North, and opens up towards the garden, and the passing sun. This lighter, more open aspect is almost entirely hidden from public view.

The extension is rectangular in plan, with three connected duopitch roof forms.

The Northernmost 'block' takes the form of a low, humble recessed extension of the existing house, and ends at a plain brick gable with simple eaves corbel.

The main body of the extension has an asymmetrical roof profile, which allows us to maintain an appropriate roof pitch whilst keeping the ridge height lower than our Northernmost block, which is in turn lower than both existing, neighbouring houses.

The Southernmost 'block' runs parallel to the street, and is inset into the ground by around 600mm.

The indent between the two 'end blocks' benefits from a simple oak framed loggia, creating an outdoor dining area and breakfast terrace, which in its simple, robust details recalls local cart lodges, barns and outbuildings.

Windows to these South and Western aspects are all bespoke hardwood items, and care had been taken to ensure that whilst each pane is substantially larger than those in Denning, giving a much lighter and more modern internal feel, pane proportions are similar and consistently 'portrait' rather than 'landscape'.

The Western elevation is deliberately plain, as it has no windows whatsoever to avoid any compromise of Lechmere's privacy. In order to enliven this elevation, two large 'blind window' features have been incorporated, one to each gable, to offer some relief, variety and shadow as the sun tracks across the lime-pointed brickwork.

14.0 ACCESSIBILITY

The common ground floor level of 4.83m AOD, level threshold to entrance door and reconfigured WC ensure full and free access both for disabled visitors and occupants. It will be a 'visitable dwelling' as defined by Approved Document M of the Building Regulations.

First floor is set at 7.45m AOD, two steps up from the first floor of the existing house, which provides a viable Place of Refuge sufficient to safeguard residents in the event of a 1 in 100 year flood, as described in the accompanying Flood Risk Assessment.

15.0 VEHICLE ACCESS

The site will continue to be accessed via the existing driveway, shared with Number 5. Cars will continue to enter via the double gate, and park on the gravelled area in front of the existing detached double garage. A slight reconfiguration to the edge of the gravel zone is proposed to improve vehicle circulation. This requires a short retaining wall of 450mm height, a shown on the accompanying Site and Ground Floor Plan.

Construction works will not result in an impediment to access for the neighbouring house.

Existing bin collection practices will be maintained.

Fire access is afforded both to more than 15% of the building's perimeter, and to within 45m of all points on plan, direct from Marsh Lane, meaning an appliance need never use the shared driveway or gate.

16.0 CONTAMINATION

The proposals require the demolition of an aged shed and oil tank and localised enhancements internally. Whilst the house is in good order, much of the internal works date from the C20. Breaking out and removal of finishes does therefore carry limited risk of exposure to ACMs.

A Demolition and Refurbishment Survey will precede any works on site, and any notifiable material safely removed and disposed of by a suitably licensed operative and in full accordance with current HSE recommendations.

Similarly any evidence of long term leakage from the oil tank will result in testing and where necessary a proportionate exercise in removal and disposal of contaminated material.

17.0 ENERGY

Denning is not an energy efficient property. It has uninsulated, solid masonry walls and single glazed windows, though there is a good thickness of insulation quilt at ceiling level.

Enhancements to the thermal performance of the existing house will be made where necessary and practicable and without detrimental effect to the building's character, for example, through the potential use of new and more efficient Crittall Windows which mimic the colour, material, configuration and sightline of the existing units.

The extension will by contrast be very well built, insulated to outperform Building Regulations and achieving through robust detailing an acceptably high degree of airtightness.

The narrow plan form, which mimics the existing house, is within the limits of cross ventilation. The loggia provides a good degree of solar control to the dining room's large windows. Lighting will be low energy throughout. The house is likely to run off a renewable energy source given the impending end of reliance on gas combi units. Detailed analysis will establish the optimal location for a heat pump, which will be screened and located next to the house, in an unobtrusive location and away from boundaries.

18.0 TREES

All significant trees are retained, as they form an important part of the site and indeed street's character. Two small trees are to be removed to enable construction of the extension. Due to their location their loss has no impact on the street-scene.

Compensatory planting is deemed unnecessary due to the extensive number of mature trees on site, and the garden's character, defined by tiered, open lawns, edged with shrub planting and punctuated by large, specimen native trees.

19.0 ECOLOGY

The proposals represent no adverse impact on local ecology, as confirmed by the preliminary site assessment carried out by Robson Ecology (attached).

The buildings show no evidence of bat roost and the pond is of very low potential.

Our client is happy to implement a proportionate suite of mitigation measures in line with our ecologist's recommendations.

All building works will proceed in an appropriate and considered manner, as outlined in Robson Ecology's report.

20.0 FLOOD RISK MITIGATION

Surfacewater will be disposed of by sustainable methods, and no new impermeable surfaces introduced.

The existing house already offers a first floor place of refuge at a height sufficient to accommodate a 0.5% AEP (or '1 in 200 year flood event') plus a 300mm 'freeboard', equivalent to 7.10m AOD.

New first floor areas are around 300mm higher still, thus the place of refuge and the property's safety are enhanced.

Measures will be taken at detailed level to mitigate flood impacts to the existing and new ground floor areas.

21.0 ARCHAEOLOGY

The Norfolk Heritage Explorer reveals several archaeological investigation sites in the vicinity of site, as illustrated overleaf. No entries relate specifically to Denning or its site.

possible post Iron Age or Roman enclosure (Ref 27041)

APPLICATION SITE

possible post medieval industrial site (Ref 27044)

post medieval field boundary (Ref 27033)

possible post medieval bank and ditch (Ref 27036)

post medieval sea defences (Ref 26670)



LOCAL ARCHAEOLOGICAL POTENTIAL

22.0 CONCLUSIONS

The proposals seek to extend and adapt an existing house, in alignment with clearly established local precedent, both built and consented.

The extension has been designed to be modest, sensitive and of minimal impact to the Conservation Area, and in complete sympathy with the C19 cottage.

The essential character of the pretty, existing house has been preserved and the house will benefit from a programme of sensitive refurbishment and upgrades resulting in an enduring and robust external envelope.

The project creates a property which combines a retained and unadulterated Norfolk cottage with more flexible, modern spaces, providing the functionality and convenience the existing house lacks, enabling its preservation in its original form.

Once complete the house will be proportionate to its generous plot, and in broad alignment with its immediate neighbours, whose homes have over time been similarly extended.

The project will use appropriate materials and techniques, and the services of a local artisanal builder and tradesmen, as do all of our Norfolk homes, thus quality and a tangible contribution to the local economy are guaranteed.