

Heritage Statement

Land south of
12 Prince Charles Close
Dersingham
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1.0 Introduction & Site Location

- 1.1 This Heritage Statement has been written to support an application for planning permission for the construction of two detached dwellings on land south of 12 Prince Charles Close, Dersingham. The National Planning Policy Framework 2021 (NPPF) requires an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected by the proposal, including any contribution made by their setting. The level of detail should be proportionate to the assets' importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance (paragraph 194).
- 1.2 This Statement provides an appraisal of the heritage assets affected and assesses significance in accordance with the policies contained in the NPPF and the guidance contained in Historic England's Advice Note 12 *Statements of Heritage Significance: Analysing Significance in Heritage Assets*. The impact of the proposed works on the significance of the heritage asset is then described and considered.
- 1.3 The site is located at the south end of Prince Charles Close and to the west of Windsor Drive, at the north-east corner of a large private garden. The site lies within the Dersingham Conservation Area.

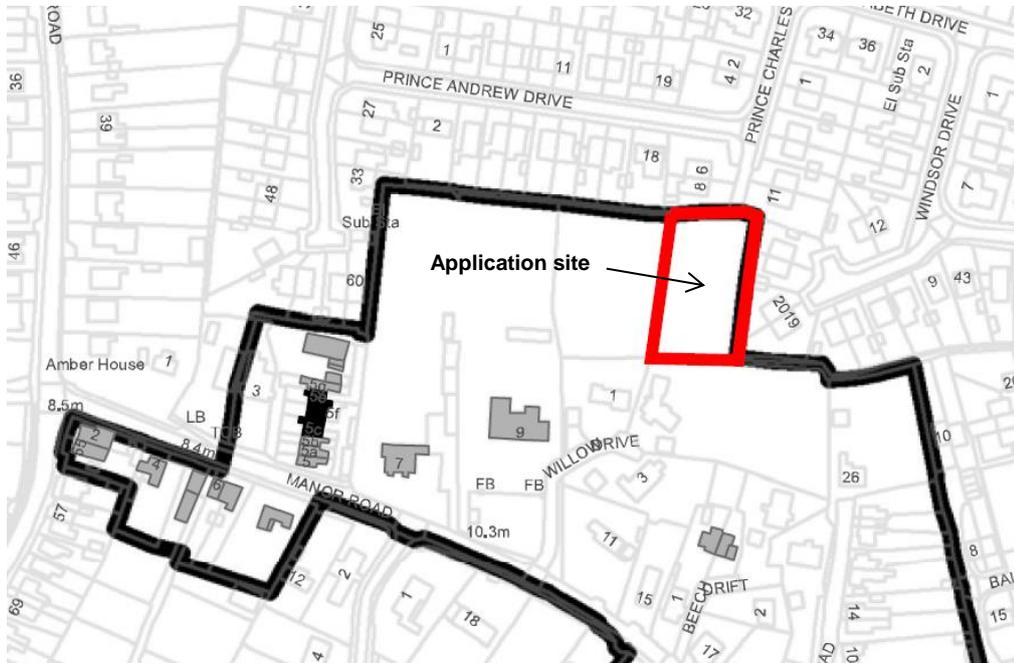


- 1.4 An application for planning permission for the construction of two dwellings on the site was withdrawn in July 2019 following objections. The application (ref. 19/00940/F) proposed a single storey bungalow and a 1.5 storey house. The current application is a revised proposal.



2.0 Dersingham Conservation Area: Context & Significance

- 2.1 Dersingham Conservation Area was designated in 2013 and a Character Statement was published at the same time. The conservation area is in the form of a reverse C-shape, covering most of the settlement built before twentieth century expansion and the application site is situated in the south-west section of the conservation area.



- 2.2 It lies to the north of Manor Road in an area of private open space between the estate development of Prince Charles Close and Windsor Drive, to the north of Willow Drive, which has a small number of larger detached properties. As the Character Statement notes, 'Whilst this short section of Manor Road is comprised of essentially modern buildings, the number and quality of mature trees and high hedges give a sense of enclosure and form a link between the traditional buildings'¹.



¹ Borough Council of King's Lynn & West Norfolk: *Dersingham Conservation Area Character Statement* p.7

- 2.3 The title map of 1840 shows the application site as a part of a rectangular-shaped area, lying the north of a triangular area of common, with houses along the common's north boundary. The application site lies in the north-east corner of plot 212, which the title apportionment notes was named 'Calves Pightle' a pasture of 2 acres, owned by Elizabeth Rouse and occupied by William Baldwin (who also occupied the adjacent plot 210 from which the pightle (a fenced enclosure) was divided by a north-south track.



- 2.4 Ordnance Survey maps of 1884 and 1905 show the gradual erosion of the common as houses were built along Manor Road. The rectangular piece of land of which Calves Pightle formed a part is shown with internal boundaries, which by 1970 had largely disappeared and by then the housing estates to the north were partially built.



- 2.5 The division of the space has changed through time with changes in ownership and more recently the development of the south-east corner with two detached houses on Willow Drive.



Significance

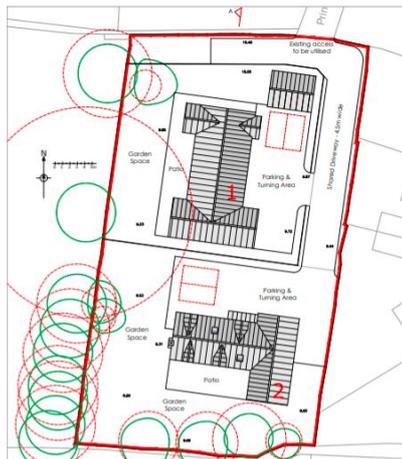
- 2.6 Significance may be assessed on a scale from very high to none depending on the values society places on a particular historic asset. Historic England considers that these values may be 'evidential' (from past activities or remains), historical, aesthetic, communal (commemorative or symbolic, cultural, social or spiritual) or natural². Understanding such values can help in deciding the most efficient and effective way of managing the heritage asset so as to sustain its overall value to society. In assessing significance, the importance of the setting of the heritage asset should also be considered.
- 2.7 The application site occupies a part of a former rectangular area of open space to the north of a former common. Over time the common has disappeared and the rectangular field subdivided for domestic garden use. The land has historical value showing the development of Dersingham from the mid-nineteenth century. It has natural value as an area of mature trees, which provide a backcloth the conservation area along Manor Road. It is this latter element which gives it significance as a part of the character of the conservation area.



² English Heritage 2008 pp. 27-40

3.0 Proposed Works & Heritage Impact Assessment

3.1 The withdrawn application proposed two dwellings set to the west of an access drive as a continuation of Prince Charles Close, hard against the site's eastern boundary. The revised proposal shows the access as a private drive with a soft landscaped strip between the road and the garden fences of the bungalows on Windsor Drive. This enables additional planting to soften the appearance.

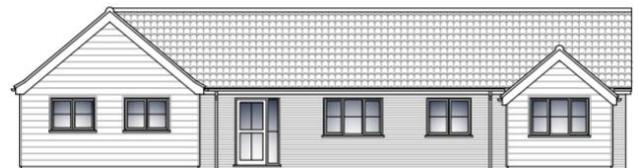


Withdrawn block plan



Proposed block plan

3.2 The design of the proposed dwellings has been simplified, so that two bungalows are now proposed. These reflect more closely the style of housing along both Prince Charles Close and Windsor Drive.



Withdrawn proposal



Revised proposal

Heritage Impact Assessment

- 3.3 The question is whether the proposal affects the character and appearance of the conservation area and the local planning authority has a statutory duty to consider the desirability of preserving or enhancing it.
- 3.4 The Historic England advice note suggests a stage approach to assessing the impact³. The first step is to identify the heritage assets concerned and the second step is to assess what contribution the setting makes to the significance of the heritage assets or allows significance to be appreciated.
- 3.5 The foregoing section explains that the heritage asset is the conservation area and the significance of the application site in relation to its character and appearance.
- 3.6 The next step is to assess whether the proposal is beneficial or harmful on the significance or on the ability to appreciate the heritage asset. Proximity of the proposal, its position in relation to topography and key views and its orientation are considerations. The location of the proposed forms a continuation of the bungalow development along Prince Charles Close. It rounds it off.



View to the site entrance from Prince Charles Close



View from the site entrance along Prince Charles Close

³ Historic England *The Setting of Heritage Assets: Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning: 3 (Second Edition)* 2017

- 3.7 Within the site, the views north, south and east are of residential property, whilst the view westwards is a garden fence.



Looking north, the fence forms the site's west boundary & gardens to Windsor Drive the east boundary



Looking south to the house on Willow Drive



Turning area Windsor Drive with application site behind

- 3.8 Whilst the proposal does not benefit the setting, it is not harmful either. Its impact on the character of the conservation area is neutral.

4.0 Conclusion

- 4.1 The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 states that special attention shall also be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of a conservation area in the exercise of any powers under the planning Acts (paragraph 72).
- 4.2 The National Planning Policy Framework (2021) expands on the 1990 Act. It identifies protection and enhancement of the historic environment as an important element of sustainable development and establishes a presumption in favour of sustainable development in the planning system (paragraph 11). The NPPF also states that the significance of listed buildings and conservation areas can be harmed or lost by alteration to them or by development in their setting. Paragraph 206 states that proposals which preserve those elements of the setting that make a positive contribution to, or better reveal the significance of the heritage assets should be treated favourably.
- 4.3 Paragraph 194 of the NPPF requires an applicant to “describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting”. Paragraph 197 requires local planning authorities, in determining applications to take account of “the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets”.
- 4.4 Paragraph 200 states “Any harm to, or loss of, the significance of a designated heritage asset (from its alteration or destruction, or from development within its setting), should require clear and convincing justification’ and paragraph 199 advises that when considering the impact on the significance of designated heritage assets, great weight should be given to their conservation.
- 4.5 Paragraph 206 states that “Local planning authorities should look for opportunities for new development within Conservation Areas...and within the setting of heritage assets to enhance or better reveal their significance. Proposals that preserve those elements of the setting that make a positive contribution to the asset (or which better reveal its significance) should be treated favourably.”
- 4.6 Paragraph 207 states that “Not all elements of a Conservation Area...will necessarily contribute to its significance”. So the question is whether the proposal causes harm to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.
- 4.7 In this case, the proposed development relates to the buildings in its immediate vicinity. The application site is an enclosed domestic garden land and its development for a pair of bungalows is a continuation of that from of development and is not harmful to the character of the conservation area.
- 4.8 However, if harm is perceived, it is, in terms of the NPPF, ‘less than substantial and the level of less than substantial harm is very low. Paragraph 202 of the NPPF states that “Where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal”.

- 4.9 The public benefits of providing two dwellings and the economic benefits which will accrue during their construction and eventual occupation are sufficient to outweigh the low level of less than substantial harm
- 4.10 Consequently in this case the balance is in favour of the proposed development. It satisfies both national planning guidance and local planning policies which seek to protect the historic environment.

Bibliography

Borough Council of King's Lynn & West Norfolk	<i>Dersingham Conservation Area Character Statement</i>	2013
Department of Communities & Local Government	<i>Planning Practice Guidance: Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment</i>	March 2014
Historic England	<i>Conservation Principles: Policies and Guidance</i>	2008
Historic England	<i>Statements of Heritage Significance: Analysing Significance in Heritage Assets (Advice Note 12)</i>	2019
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