



**Phil Cobbold**  
Planning Ltd

42 Beatrice Avenue Felixstowe IP11 9HB  
info@philcobboldplanning.co.uk  
www.philcobboldplanning.co.uk  
01394 275431

**TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1990**  
**CONVERSION OF BARN TO DWELLING.**  
**BEDFIELD HOUSE, EARL SOHAM ROAD, BEDFIELD, IP13 7EF.**

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PLANNING STATEMENT  
Including  
HERITAGE STATEMENT & LOCAL VALIDATION STATEMENT.

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Phil Cobbold BA PGDip MRTPI Member of the Royal Town Planning Institute – Chartered Town Planner  
Phil Cobbold Planning Ltd  
Registered in England No. 09701814  
Registered office 42 Beatrice Avenue Felixstowe IP11 9HB

## **INTRODUCTION**

1. This Planning Statement has been produced in support of an application for planning permission for conversion of barn to dwelling at Bedfield House, Earl Soham Road, Bedfield.
2. The following statement is in three parts. The first part deals with the Council's 'Local Validation Requirements' for planning applications. The second part is a Heritage Statement and, the third part is a Planning Statement which sets out relevant local and national planning policies and other material considerations.
3. The proposed development has been the subject of positive pre-application discussions with Planning Officer Sian Bunbury (reference DC/21/00137). The advice received is described in the accompanying Design and Access Statement (DAS). In summary, the pre-application advice was *"The conversion of the building appears to be acceptable in accordance with national and local planning policies outlined above but would be subject to formal consultation should an application be submitted. The elevation treatment has not been illustrated at this stage but should retain the character of the building"*.

## **LOCAL VALIDATION REQUIREMENTS STATEMENT**

### ARCHAEOLOGICAL STATEMENT

4. The Historic Environment Records (HER) confirm that there are no records of archaeological remains on or adjacent to the site. Therefore, it is not necessary to carry out any pre-submission investigation and there is no justification for a planning condition requiring a pre-commencement programme of archaeological work.

### BIODIVERSITY SURVEY AND REPORT

5. The application is accompanied by a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal.

### CAR PARKING

6. The scheme will provide three car parking spaces in accordance with the Suffolk Parking Standards.

## DRAINAGE

7. Surface water drainage will discharge to soakaways. Foul drainage will be via existing private treatment plant system.

## FLOOD RISK ASSESSMENT

8. The Environment Agency flood maps confirm that the application site is situated within Flood Zone 1 (FZ1) which means that it comprises land which is not at risk of flooding from a river or other watercourse and is suitable for all forms of development.

## HERITAGE STATEMENT

9. This Heritage Assessment has been produced pursuant to paragraphs 194 and 195 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). Paragraph 194 states in part that in determining applications, *"local planning authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected by a development. The level of detail should be proportionate to the assets' importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential of that impact on the significance."*
10. This Heritage Assessment has been carried out with reference to the following Historic England (HE) guidance:
  - Conservation Principles (2008)
  - Good Practice Advice 2: Managing Significance in Decision-Taking (2015)
  - Good Practice Advice 3: The Setting of Heritage Assets (2017)
  - Advice Note 12: Statements of Heritage Significance (2019)
11. This Assessment has also been produced in accordance with the requirements for Heritage Assessments as set out within the Council's Local Validation Requirements list.
12. In preparing this Assessment, reference has been made to various documents including the National Heritage List for England (NHLE) and historic Ordnance Survey plans.

13. Annexe 2 of the NPPF defines 'Significance (for heritage policy)' as *"The value of a heritage asset to this and future generations because of its heritage interest. The interest may be archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic. Significance derives not only from a heritage asset's physical presence, but also from its setting. For World Heritage Sites, the cultural value described within each site's Statement of Outstanding Universal Value forms part of its significance."*
14. The setting of a heritage asset is defined by Annexe 2 of the NPPF as *"The surroundings in which a heritage asset is experienced. Its extent is not fixed and may change as the asset and its surroundings evolve. Elements of a setting may make a positive or negative contribution to the significance of an asset, may affect the ability to appreciate that significance or may be neutral."*
15. The application building is not listed. Furthermore, it cannot be considered as a curtilage listed structure as it was constructed after 1947.
16. Bedfield House is a grade II listed building. The listing entry for the property states
- "Former farmhouse. C16 with C19 alterations. Timber framed, the front roughcast-rendered, the remainder plastered. Roof plaintiled to front, the lower half of the slope retaining old tiles; pantiles to rear. Probably 2- cell form. storeys and attic. 3 windows, mid-late C19 small-paned casements with shallow cinquefoil-cusped heads to the lights. Wooden hoodmoulds. To left the windows are larger and the upper one is set higher. Lobby entry: C19 gabled porch and 4-panel door, the upper panels glazed in matching style to the windows. Internal stack, placed almost centrally, with plain oblong shaft; the lower part of the shaft is original, the upper part C19. Left gable end has matching windows. Interior not examined".*
17. Section 66 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires local planning authorities to have special regard to the desirability of preserving the setting of listed buildings.
18. In this case, Bedfield House may be 'experienced' from the barn and therefore the barn is located on land which forms part of the setting of the listed building. However, neither the barn nor the application sites are features that contributes to the significance of the listed building. Furthermore, the proposed conversion, which will involve minimal change to the barn and the way the land is used, will not have any material effect on the ability to

appreciate the significance of Bedfield House. Therefore, the conversion of the barn as proposed would not cause any material harm to the heritage asset.

## **PLANNING STATEMENT**

### PLANNING POLICY

19. Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (As amended) requires planning decisions to be made in accordance with development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

20. In this case, the development plan consists of the Mid Suffolk Local Plan (1998) and the Mid Suffolk Core Strategy (2012). The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) is a material consideration.

#### Mid Suffolk Core Strategy (2012)

21. The application building is in the countryside. Policy CS2 of the Core Strategy lists what forms of development the Council consider acceptable in the countryside. The conversion of rural buildings to dwellings is included on the list. Policy CS2 does not place any requirements or restrictions in terms of the buildings age or former usage. Therefore, the policy applies to any building in a rural location.

#### Mid Suffolk Local Plan (1998)

22. Policy H9 deals with the countryside and provides for the conversion of rural buildings to dwellings. The policy begins *"In the countryside, the conversion and change of use of agricultural and other rural buildings whose form, bulk and general design are in keeping with their surroundings, will be favourably considered, subject to the following criteria"*.

23. In this case, the barn is a rural building, and its form, bulk and general design is in keeping with its surroundings. Policy H9 continues as follows, *"the proposed conversion must respect the structure, form and character of the original building and retain any important architectural features. Existing openings should be utilised wherever practicable and new openings kept to a minimum"*.

24. In this case, the scheme of conversion retains and respects the structure, the form and the rural character of the barn. The scheme also uses existing openings and disruption to the existing building is minimal. Policy H9 then states *"where proposed extensions are essential*

*they should not dominate the original building in either scale, use of materials or situation. Proposed extensions should not detract from the appearance or character which warrants the original building being retained as a feature in the countryside. Domestic features, such as porches and chimney stacks, unrelated to the traditional appearance of the building will be considered inappropriate. The creation of a residential curtilage around a newly converted building should not impose adversely on the character of the surrounding countryside;"*

25. No porches or any other domestic features are proposed. The land which will form the residential curtilage of the proposed barn conversion is currently used in association with Bedfield House. In addition to the barn, it contains a manege and a kitchen garden. It will be noted from the aerial photograph of the site that the character of the land is notably different to the surrounding arable landscape. Existing trees and hedging along the frontage of the site screen views of the barn and associated land. Therefore, the use of the land as residential curtilage for the barn conversion will not have any adverse impact on the character of the surrounding countryside.

26. Policy H9 then concludes with "*- the extent to which any residential conversion detracts from the original character of the building or its rural surroundings will be treated as a material consideration. In order to protect the character and appearance of the converted building or the amenity and appearance of the surrounding countryside the district planning authority may impose conditions removing permitted development rights under the general permitted development order 1995."*

27. In this case, the conversion of the building will not detract from the original character of the building nor its rural surroundings. The applicants would have no objections to the removal of permitted development rights in the event that permission was granted.

National Planning Policy Framework) NPPF)

28. Paragraph 80 of the NPPF concerns housing in rural areas. It states in part that dwellings in isolated locations should be avoided unless one or more of five circumstances apply. One of those circumstances is where the development would involve the reuse of a redundant or disused building, as is the case with this proposal.

19. At the heart of the NPPF is the presumption in favour of sustainable development. Paragraph 8 of the NPPF explains that the objectives of sustainable development are to provide economic, social and environmental benefits. This proposal will secure those objectives for the following reasons. Firstly, the development will provide economic

benefits as future residents will help to support local shops, services and facilities. In addition, the conversion works will provide employment for local builders and tradesmen. These two aspects will benefit the local rural economy.

20. Secondly, the proposal will fulfil the social objective of sustainable development by providing a single storey property suitable for use by elderly persons or for those with mobility issues.

21. Thirdly, the scheme accords with the environmental objective of sustainable development. The proposal involves the reuse of an existing building and will therefore help to reduce pressure on the use of natural resources. In addition, the proposed development incorporates the use of renewable energy (solar panels) and other energy efficiency measures as explained in the design and access statement. The proposal will therefore help to reduce emissions and mitigate climate change.

#### PLANNING BALANCE

22. In this case, having regard to planning policy, the main planning considerations are:

- I. Whether the proposals harm the significance of the listed building;
- II. Whether the proposal would harm neighbouring residential amenity;
- III. Whether the proposal would harm the character of the area; and,
- IV. Whether the proposal would impact on highway safety.

23. As previously stated, the proposals, will have no material impact on the significance of Bedfield House.

24. Furthermore, given the separate distance between the barn and Bedfield house the scheme would have no material adverse impact on the applicants who occupy the only neighbouring property.

25. The conversion has been sensitively designed and will not cause any material harm to the character or appearance of the area.

26. The barn conversion will be served by a new vehicular access. The new access is positioned where the carriageway is of straight alignment and affords good visibility in either direction. The proposal will not have any material adverse impact on highway safety.

## **CONCLUSIONS**

27. Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (As amended) requires planning decisions to be made in accordance with development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
  
28. In this case, the proposed development accords with the relevant policies contained in the Mid Suffolk Local Plan and the Mid Suffolk Core Strategy. The scheme also accords with the NPPF.
  
29. The proposed development represents sustainable development and can take place without causing any adverse impacts on any interests of acknowledged importance.

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