



Planning Statement

To rebuild an existing dwelling including new walls, roof and fenestration, retain the original concrete slab and portal frame, and create a new outdoor swimming pool and a new outbuilding

On behalf of

Mr & Mrs Lehtonen-Riley

Friars Manor, Tindon End, Saffron Walden, CB10 2XT



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1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1. This Planning Statement has been prepared by Andrew Martin – Planning Limited (AM-P) on behalf of the Applicants, Mr & Mrs Lehtonen-Riley. It supports a full planning application to rebuild the existing dwelling including new walls, roof and fenestration, retain the original concrete slab and portal frame, and create a new outdoor swimming pool and a new outbuilding at Friars Manor, Tindon End, Saffron Walden, CB10 2XT.

1.2. The planning application is accompanied by:

- Application Forms
- Red Line Boundary Plan
- Existing Site Plan
- Proposed Site Plan
- Main Dwelling – Existing Floor Plan, Roof Plan and Elevations
- Main Dwelling – Proposed Floor Plan, Roof Plan and Elevations
- Outbuilding – Existing & Proposed Floor Plan, Roof Plan and Elevations
- Landscape Development Plan
- Proposed Footprint Development Plan
- CGIs of Proposed Dwelling
- Site Analysis Document
- Built Heritage Statement
- Archaeological Statement
- Ecological Report & Mitigation Method Statement

1.3. The following sections of this Planning Statement:

- introduce to the Site, surrounding area and planning history (Section 1);
- summarise the pre-application advice received to date (Section 2);
- outline the main elements of the Proposed Development (Section 3);
- review the national and local planning policy and guidance relevant to this proposal (Section 4);
- assess the principle of development and other main planning considerations (Section 5);
and
- conclude with a justification for the Proposed Development (Section 6).

Application Site & Surroundings

1.4. The Application Site extends to 0.6 hectares (ha) (1.5 acres) and is located at Tindon End, approximately 2 km to the north of Thaxted and 7.5 km to the southeast of Saffron Walden. The Site is situated 1.25 km to the east of Thaxted Road (B184) and is accessible via the predominantly single track Tindon End Road – which is a private road.

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- 1.5. The Application Site includes an existing dwelling (Friars Manor), its associated garage/outbuilding, garden land and various boundary trees and hedgerow. Both the dwelling and its outbuilding were originally built as agricultural barns, but later changed to residential use.
- 1.6. The Application Site currently benefits from three points of vehicular access – to the north, the west and the southwest – from Tindon End Road.
- 1.7. A tall mature hedgerow to the southeast screens the majority of the Site and the existing dwelling from Friars Farmhouse, which is a Grade II listed building. Three other dwellings are located in relatively close proximity to the site – Westwood Lodge to the south, The Barn to the east and The Dairy to the northeast.
- 1.8. These five dwellings now form a small hamlet of privately owned residential properties, but historically would have all been part of Friars Farm.
- 1.9. Although the site is situated in a rural area, there is a wide range of services and facilities available in the nearby settlements of Thaxted and Saffron Walden.

Planning History

- 1.10. A Certificate of Lawfulness (ref. UTT/17/2888/CLE) was approved in December 2017 for the use of Friars Manor as a separate dwelling.
- 1.11. However, the physical conversion of the former agricultural building to a residential use took place in 2003 and was carried out to a relatively poor standard and using materials which provide low levels of insulation and which detract from the appearance of the Application Site and its surroundings.



2.0 PRE-APPLICATION ADVICE

- 2.1. The Applicants have undertaken extensive pre-application dialogue with Uttlesford District Council's (UDC's) planning officers and Essex County Council's (ECC's) heritage advisors.
- 2.2. The Applicants first submitted a pre-application enquiry (ref. UTT/21/2091/PA) in June 2021 to rebuild the existing dwelling, extend the existing outbuilding, create an outdoor swimming pool install a large patio area. UDC's pre-application advice, comprising a virtual meeting and follow-up letter in August 2021, concluded that:
- Officers are supportive of the principle of development, subject to a heritage statement being prepared and finding that the barn is not curtilage listed.
 - ECC's heritage advisor recommended that less glazing is proposed and the roof terrace is omitted to ensure that the replacement building is 'agricultural' in character.
 - Soft landscaping is needed to mitigate the creation of a swimming pool.
 - The very large outbuilding was not supported by officers. However, the Applicant could apply for planning permission to rebuild the main dwelling and create a swimming pool, then go back further down the line with another application for a new outbuilding.
 - Officers indicated that supporting ecological surveys and landscape planting plans could be needed.
 - Finally officers recommended that once the plans have been revised, follow-up pre-application advice should be obtained from UDC.
- 2.3. With this in mind, the Applicants duly revised the proposed plans and submitted a second pre-application enquiry (ref. UTT/21/3592/PA) in November 2021.
- 2.4. The revised plans still sought to rebuild the existing dwelling, including new walls, roof and fenestration, and create a new outdoor swimming pool, but retained the original concrete slab and portal frame, omitted the previously planned roof terrace and incorporated a much smaller new outbuilding. The design of the rebuilt dwelling also differed significantly.
- 2.5. Brinkworth Architects carried out an historic analysis to establish how the original farmstead was laid out and functioned, and submitted information showing this through a series of photographs, sketches and plans. This demonstrated that as recently as the 1970's, the farmstead comprised a range of agricultural buildings of various ages, constructions and uses. There was far more built form at and immediately adjacent to the Site than is currently the case now. Since the 1970's:
- The farmstead has been divided up into a number of properties and all converted into residential dwellings.
 - The Grade II listed farmhouse has undergone an extensive renovation and modernisation.
 - The traditional Essex barn has been converted, renovated and extended to become a large residential dwelling.

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- The agricultural storage building has been converted poorly into a residential building, with a mixture of cladding and window types replacing the open facades and vertical timber cladding.
 - The single story vehicle store has been shortened and re-clad in a patchwork of timber cladding types.
 - Some other agricultural buildings have been removed from the farmstead entirely.
- 2.6. The farmstead as a whole has been divided up into three separate dwellings and delineated by tall evergreen Yew hedges. In doing so there has been a reconfiguration of all of the site accesses, demolition of the Victorian walled garden and the brick stable block, as well as a shortening of the vehicle storage building. The revised proposals sought to rebuild Friars Manor in such a way that its character more closely reflects and respects the original agricultural appearance and function of the building, which had open elements to allow easy access and an exposed portal frame. In particular, the proposed design:
- includes new vertical hit and mass cladding to the existing portal frame;
 - creates a new thermal envelope set within the main barn, with a glazed wall set back from the southwest gable end; and
 - incorporates sliding agricultural style timber doors and openings. Datum to be in line with the original opening heights and traditional shelter barn aesthetic.
- 2.7. An on-site meeting was held in February 2022 and follow-up letter received from UDC in March 2022. This pre-application advice was largely positive and supportive of the revised proposals, including the proposed fenestration, while noting that:
- Concerns were about the proposed provision of a new two-bay car port.
 - Although officers do not object to the use of vertical cladding on the steel framed part of the building, they favour traditional horizontal weatherboarding on the main two-storey part of the barn and the existing outbuilding.
 - Additional cladding should be added to the southwest elevation of the main barn.
 - There is no objection to the use of heat pumps, but solar PV is unlikely to be supported here.
- 2.8. The latest plans being submitted with the full planning application take on board and comply with these comments. In addition: new rooflights have been added to the main building to increase access to natural light and positioned in similar locations to the existing transparent sections of roof covering; a corrugated cement board roof covering, in a natural finish, is proposed to reflect the existing roof materials; and, a landscaping plan is now provided showing the proposed landscape treatment along with design information on new planting.



3.0 PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

3.1. The Proposed Development comprises a full planning application to:

“Rebuild the existing dwelling including new walls, roof and fenestration, retain the original concrete slab and portal frame, and create a new outdoor swimming pool and a new outbuilding.”

- 3.2. The external dimensions of the rebuilt dwelling will be the same as those of the existing building, with the exception of a very minor (350mm) increase in the height of the eaves and ridge to allow for over cladding of the existing frame with a warm roof to expose the structure internally. However, the internal layout of the building will be reconfigured to create a modern family home that meets the Applicant’s needs and provides high-quality living accommodation, including open plan kitchen/diner/sunken-lounge, cloakroom, snug, gymnasium, home office, five bedrooms and three bath/shower rooms.
- 3.3. The dwelling will incorporate a new corrugated cement roof, in a natural finish, to reflect the existing roof material used on this building. The dwelling will be set on a concrete upstand, with horizontal hit and miss batten cladding proposed on the two-storey part of the dwelling and vertical hit and miss timber cladding on the single-storey part of the building, as agreed during pre-application discussions.
- 3.4. Three glazed sliding doors (one to be the property’s front door) are proposed on the northwest elevation of the dwelling, with vertical hit and miss battens forming window / door shutters. The northwest elevation will also incorporate two openable roof lights fitted flush with the corrugated cement roof, along with a fixed glazed panel and an openable window behind the hit and miss cladding.
- 3.5. The southwest elevation of the dwelling will include six full height glazed panels / sliding doors, set back approximately 2 metres from the vertical hit and miss timber cladding that frame the top and sides of this gable end. This elevation will also include a new openable roof light to allow daylight into the main 2-storey part of the dwelling and to help passively ventilate the building.
- 3.6. A single glazed sliding door, with two fixed glazed panels either side, are also proposed on the southeast elevation of the dwelling, with vertical hit and miss battens forming window / door shutters.
- 3.7. Finally the northeast elevation of the dwelling will include six glazed windows, with horizontal hit and miss cladding forming sliding window shutters. The arrangement of these openings is intentionally irregular to reflect the agricultural past and character of the building, and to avoid a more domestic appearance that a regular window arrangement might create.
- 3.8. The new outbuilding (84 sq m internal area) will be only 20% larger than the existing outbuilding (70 sq m internal area) that it replaces and will be sited in the same location to the south of the main dwelling. The increase in footprint reflects the historic size of the old carport and there is a partial concrete slab in this area.

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- 3.9. The new outbuilding will incorporate a corrugated cement roof, in a natural finish, to match the main building and will be set on a concrete upstand, with hit and miss blackened timber cladding to its exterior walls. Fenestration will be limited to two windows on the northeast elevation, a window and glazed panel screened by hit and miss cladding on the northwest elevation and two sliding blackened steel doors on the southwest elevation.
- 3.10. The new concrete outdoor swimming pool and timber decked area, which is smaller than previously proposed at the pre-application stage, will be sited to the west of the main dwelling and where it can benefit from a southern aspect. Associated pool equipment, plant and pumps will be accommodated below the new timber decking. While new planting to the north, west and east will provide some privacy to the swimming pool and help to screen the pool from the surrounding area.
- 3.11. The Proposed Development will also close off the central driveway access from Tindon End Road, leaving the two other existing accesses to the northwest (to serve the main dwelling) and to the southwest (to serve the new outbuilding).
- 3.12. New air source heat pumps will be installed between the southeast elevation of the new outbuilding and the existing tall mature hedgerow on the site boundary.
- 3.13. New enriched wildflower turf will be planted to the north and west of the main dwelling and south of the swimming pool to preserve the character and appearance of this rural site and to enhance biodiversity.
- 3.14. New beds with screening plants will be introduced to the south of the main dwelling, around the new outbuilding and opposite the gravel parking area to the south of the outbuilding to soften the appearance of the proposed built form and mitigate any visual impact on the wider countryside beyond the Application Site.
- 3.15. The existing ponds to the south of the Site are to be retained, as is the existing tall mature hedgerow to the southeast, which screens the majority of the Site and the main dwelling from the Grade II listed Friars Farmhouse.



4.0 PLANNING POLICY AND GUIDANCE

- 4.1. Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 states that if regard is to be had to the development plan for the purpose of any determination to be made under the Planning Acts, then determination must be made in accordance with the plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
- 4.2. In this case the saved policies in the adopted Uttlesford Local Plan (2005) comprise the statutory development plan and the National Planning Policy Framework (2021) is a material consideration.

National Planning Policy Framework

- 4.3. Revised in July 2021, the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2021) sets out the Government's planning policies for England.
- 4.4. Paragraph 11 of the NPPF states that plans and decisions should apply a presumption in favour of sustainable development. This means, for decision taking, approving development proposals that accord with the development plan; or, where policies are out-of-date, granting permission unless particular NPPF policies provide a clear reason to refuse or any adverse impacts would demonstrably outweigh the benefits. Footnote 7 confirms that policies are rendered out-of-date where the local authority cannot demonstrate a five year supply (plus appropriate buffer) of deliverable housing sites.
- 4.5. Paragraph 38 expects local authorities to approach decisions on proposed development in a positive and creative way and decision makers at every level should seek to approve applications for sustainable development, where possible.
- 4.6. Paragraph 78 directs that planning decisions should be responsive to local circumstances and support housing developments that reflect local needs in rural areas.
- 4.7. Paragraph 174 expects that planning decisions should recognise the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside and minimise impacts on and provide net gains for biodiversity.
- 4.8. Paragraph 194 directs that applicants should describe the significance of any heritage assets affected by their proposals, including any contribution made by their setting, and that the level of detail should be proportionate to the asset's importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on its significance.
- 4.9. Paragraph 202 recognises that where a development proposals will lead to a less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, the harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal. Furthermore, paragraph 206 confirms that proposals that preserve those elements of the setting that make a positive contribution to a heritage asset (or which better reveal its significance) should be treated favourably.



Uttlesford Local Plan

- 4.10. The Uttlesford Local Plan was adopted in 2005 and provides the basis for planning decision in the District. In 2007 the majority of the policies in the Plan were 'saved' by the Secretary of State for continued use when determining planning applications.
- 4.11. Policy S7 confirms that in the countryside, which will be protected for its own sake, planning permission will only be given for development that needs to take place there or is appropriate to a rural area.
- 4.12. Policy H7 recognises that a replacement dwelling will be permitted if it is in scale and character with neighbouring properties. In addition, outside development limits, a replacement dwelling will be permitted providing, through its location, appearance and associated scheme of landscape enhancement, it would protect or enhance the particular character of the countryside in which it is set.
- 4.13. Policy GEN1 sets out that development will only be permitted where: access to the main road network is capable of carrying the traffic generated by the development safely; traffic generated by the development is capable of being accommodated on the surrounding transport network; and, site design does not compromise road safety.
- 4.14. Policy GEN2 directs that development will not be permitted unless:
- a) it is compatible with the scale, form, layout, appearance and materials of surrounding buildings;
 - b) it safeguards important environmental features in its setting, enabling their retention and helping to reduce the visual impact of new buildings or structures where appropriate;
 - c) it provides an environment, which meets the reasonable needs of all potential users;
 - d) it helps to reduce the potential for crime;
 - e) it helps to minimise water and energy consumption;
 - f) it has regard to guidance on layout and design adopted as supplementary planning guidance to the development plan;
 - g) it helps to reduce waste production and encourages recycling and reuse;
 - h) it minimises the environmental impact on neighbouring properties by appropriate mitigating measures; and
 - i) it would not have a materially adverse effect on the reasonable occupation and enjoyment of a residential or other sensitive property, as a result of loss of privacy, loss of daylight, overbearing impact or overshadowing.
- 4.15. Policy GEN7 explains that development that would have a harmful effect on wildlife or geological features will not be permitted unless the need for the development outweighs the importance of the feature to nature conservation. The policy also directs that mitigation or compensation measures for the potential impacts of development will be required and that the enhancement of biodiversity through the creation of appropriate new habitats will be sought.



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4.16. Policy ENV2 states that development affecting a listed building should be in keeping with its scale, character and surroundings. However, development proposals that adversely affect the setting of a listed building will not be permitted.



5.0 PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

Principle of Development

- 5.1. It is notable that the Application Site is located outside of development limits and therefore in the 'countryside' in planning policy terms.
- 5.2. However, as UDC cannot currently demonstrate a full five-year housing land supply, Policy S7 in the Uttlesford Local Plan is rendered out-of-date and the presumption in favour of sustainable development and the so-called tilted balance at paragraph 11 of the NPPF are engaged.
- 5.3. Furthermore, irrespective of the current status of Policy S7, Policy H7 confirms that the principle of a replacement dwelling in the countryside is acceptable, providing that:
 - it is in scale and character with neighbouring properties; and
 - through its location, appearance and associated scheme of landscape enhancement, it would protect or enhance the particular character of the countryside in which it is set.
- 5.4. The Proposed Development includes a rebuilt dwelling that has the same external footprint and dimensions as the existing dwelling, with the exception of a very minor (350mm) increase in the height of the eaves and ridge to allow for over cladding of the existing frame with a warm roof to expose the structure internally. The proposed design is also of a character that more closely reflects and respects the agricultural appearance and function of the original building, while utilising external materials and design treatments that were historically present on this site and are commonly found on shelter barns.
- 5.5. Although the new outbuilding is larger than the building it replaces, the net increase in floorspace is relatively modest (i.e. 20%) and it will be sited in exactly same location, to the south of the main dwelling. The increase in footprint also reflects the historic size of the old carport.
- 5.6. The Applicants submit that the Proposed Development is of a scale and character that both respects the existing buildings on-site, as well as their historic agricultural appearance and function as part of a wider farmstead. Although located outside development limits, the Proposed Development will protect the particular character of this part of the countryside through its siting, appearance and landscape proposals, and therefore should be deemed acceptable in accordance with Policy H7 in the Uttlesford Local Plan and paragraph 11 of the NPPF.

Design

- 5.7. Policy GEN2 in the Uttlesford Local Plan is the main design-related policy of relevance to this scheme. The following paragraphs consider where and how each of the policy's relevant criteria have been met by the Proposed Development.

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a) It is compatible with the scale, form, layout, appearance and materials of surrounding buildings

- 5.8. The proposed design is wholly compatible with the existing dwelling and outbuilding on-site. The external dimensions of the rebuilt dwelling will not exceed those of the existing dwelling, except for a very minor increase in the height of the eaves and ridge. Furthermore, the design will incorporate: a new corrugated cement roof, in a natural finish, to reflect the existing roof material used on this building; horizontal hit and miss batten cladding on the two-storey part of the dwelling, as agreed during pre-application discussions; and, vertical hit and miss timber cladding on the single-storey part of the building. Where prominent glazed openings are proposed, these are often to be accompanied by window shutters or sliding doors made from vertical hit and miss battens. These design treatments should help to reflect the building's origin as a shelter barn.
- 5.9. The new outbuilding will be sited in exactly same location as the building it replaces and will incorporate a corrugated cement roof, in a natural finish, to match the main building, with hit and miss blackened timber cladding on its exterior walls.
- 5.10. The Applicants consider that the scale, form, layout, appearance and materials proposed on-site, which reflect a typical shelter barn and accompanying agricultural outbuilding, are compatible with the surrounding buildings which would have once all been part of Friars Farm.

b) It safeguards important environmental features in its setting, enabling their retention and helping to reduce the visual impact of new buildings or structures where appropriate;

- 5.11. The removal of the relatively recent and poor quality building materials (such as corrugated plastic wall and roof coverings) and their replacement with traditional materials sympathetic to the original shelter barn aesthetic will improve the appearance of the dwelling and reduce the visual impact of the building on its immediate setting and environment, including neighbouring properties.
- 5.12. The new concrete outdoor swimming pool and timber decked area, which is smaller than previously proposed at the pre-application stage, is to be sited to the west of the main dwelling and will be largely screened from the surrounding area by new planting to the north, west and east. New landscape beds with screening plants will also be introduced to the south of the dwelling, around the new outbuilding and opposite the gravel parking area to soften the appearance of the proposed built form and mitigate any visual impact on the wider countryside beyond the Application Site.

c) It provides an environment, which meets the reasonable needs of all potential users

- 5.13. By rebuilding the dwelling and reconfiguring the internal layout of the building, the Proposed Development will create a modern family home that meets the Applicant's needs and provides high-quality living accommodation, including open plan kitchen/diner/sunken-lounge, cloakroom, snug, gymnasium, home office, five bedrooms and three bath/shower rooms.



d) It helps to reduce the potential for crime

5.14. Although crime is not a particular problem in or around the Application Site, the Proposed Development will create a modern and secure family home which reduces the likelihood of break-ins when compared to the existing dwelling and its substandard and piecemeal exterior materials.

e) It helps to minimise water and energy consumption

5.15. The Applicants are committed to minimising water and energy consumption, and the Proposed Development has been designed with this in mind. In particular, new air source heat pumps and a water butt are proposed to the southeast of the new outbuilding. These will generate renewable energy for the property, reduce carbon emissions, reduce water consumption and enable grey water recycling.

f) It has regard to guidance on layout and design adopted as supplementary planning guidance to the development plan

5.16. The proposed layout and design have been primarily driven by an assessment of local context, including the existing dwelling's historic use as a shelter barn and the Application Site's proximity to and relationship with the Grade II listed Friars Farmhouse, along with extensive pre-application discussions that have taken place with BDC and ECC. That said, the proposed layout and design also have regard to UDC's adopted policies and planning guidance, and complies with these.

g) It helps to reduce waste production and encourages recycling and reuse

5.17. The Applicants are committed to reducing waste and promoting recycling and reuse. The proposed design and layout incorporate sufficient space, both internally and externally, to aid the separation, storage and collection of waste and recycling.

5.18. In summary the Proposed Development complies with the design-related aspects of Policy GEN2 in the Uttlesford Local Plan.

Access

5.19. The Proposed Development will close off the central driveway access from Tindon End Road (a private road), leaving the two other existing accesses to the northwest (to serve the main dwelling) and to the southwest (to serve the new outbuilding).

5.20. In all other respects access will remain as existing and the Proposed Development will not lead to an intensification of the use of Tindon End Road or the wider highway network. As a result there will be no impact on highway capacity or highway safety and the Proposed Development complies with Policy GEN1 in the Uttlesford Local Plan.



Heritage

- 5.21. There are no listed buildings on the Application Site itself, however, Friars Farmhouse circa 35 metres to the southeast is a Grade II listed building. Although Friars Manor and Friars Farmhouse are now clearly defined as separate properties, with a tall mature hedgerow screening the majority of views between the two, they were associated historically and formed part of the same farmstead.
- 5.22. However, Policy ENV2 in the Uttlesford Local Plan expects development to be in keeping with the scale, character and surroundings of a listed building, and not adversely affect its setting. The Applicants are confident that this will be the case, not just due to the very limited intervisibility between the two properties, but also the high-quality of the design and materials being proposed.
- 5.23. The Proposed Development seeks to rebuild Friars Manor in such a way that its character more closely reflects and respects the original agricultural appearance and function of the building, which had open elements to allow easy access and an exposed portal frame. While the removal of the relatively recent and poor quality building materials and their replacement with traditional sympathetic materials will improve the appearance of the building and enhance the setting of the listed building.
- 5.24. When compared to the quantum of built form that stood at and immediately adjacent to the Application Site, up until the 1970's, it is apparent that the new swimming pool and new outbuilding will not result in an excessive amount of built form on-site or cause any significant harm to the setting of the listed building.
- 5.25. Following pre-application discussions with UDC and ECC, the Applicants commissioned RPS to prepare a Built Heritage Statement (June 2022) and this assessment accompanies the planning application package. Notably the Built Heritage Statement concludes at Section 6.0 that:

"... it has been found that the proposals do not cause direct material harm to Friars Farm nor indirect harm to its setting and thus significance. The proposed architectural design, layout, materials and colour palette would preserve and enhance the special architectural and historical character of Friars Farm, its historic farmstead and fishponds. The proposals would also make an overall positive contribution to the rural locality.

The proposals provide utility, flexibility and privacy, in addition to bringing the previously poorly converted main Barn in line with modern requirements for family living.

The proposals are in accord with both national and local planning policies and guidance. There are no heritage reasons indicated to justify refusal of planning permission on the grounds of heritage impact and we [RPS] therefore respectfully request that planning permission is granted by Uttlesford District Council."

- 5.26. Based on these findings and the considerations set out above, AM-P agrees that the Proposed Development complies with Policy ENV2 in the Uttlesford Local Plan and paragraphs 202 and 206 in the NPPF.



Ecology

5.27. The planning application package is accompanied by an Ecological Report (June 2022) and Mitigation Method Statement (July 2022). These conclude that:

- The Application Site has three ponds which are being managed by the Applicants to provide a benefit to local aquatic wildlife.
- Great Crested Newts were detected within two of the ponds during eDNA surveys in 2022.
- The Proposed Development does not pose a significant risk to the conservation status of the newt population in the area.
- The use of exclusion fencing and habitat manipulation (gardening) can reduce the likely discovery of terrestrial phase newts within the building/work areas thus not requiring a specific licence.
- Habitat features which may provide shelter for terrestrial newts would need to be removed in staged habitat clearance under the guidance of a newt ecologist.
- A gap in the hedgerow on-site will be closed providing ample opportunity to provide further terrestrial habitats for newts, snakes, mammals, and other animals using the boundary features of the site.
- Maintaining the edge habitats allowing for migration of amphibians around the Application Site and keeping grass well-kept and mown will remove the need for licensing most of the project.
- If disturbance of terrestrial newts cannot be avoided, then a low impact licence would be recommended and guided by the on-site ecologist.
- Mitigation for the project would include suitable management of the ponds on-site with a view to ensuring that the ponds continue to provide a habitat for newts post development.
- Follow-up field surveys in 2023 are recommended with ongoing monitoring throughout the project.
- The development proposals would therefore provide a net benefit for great crested newts and local biodiversity through advice and management plans for the project.

5.28. This, along with the retention of the ponds and proposed planting of new lawns enriched with wildflower turf on-site, will protect and enhance biodiversity in accordance with Policy GEN7 of the Uttlesford Local Plan and paragraph 174 of the NPPF.

Neighbouring Amenity

5.29. Policy GEN2 in the Uttlesford Local Plan also covers neighbouring amenity. The following paragraphs consider where and how each of the policy's relevant criteria have been met by the Proposed Development.

h) It minimises the environmental impact on neighbouring properties by appropriate mitigating measures

5.30. The Proposed Development is not expected to cause any material environmental impact on neighbouring properties for the reasons set out below.



i) It would not have a materially adverse effect on the reasonable occupation and enjoyment of a residential or other sensitive property, as a result of loss of privacy, loss of daylight, overbearing impact or overshadowing

- 5.31. The Proposed Development will have no impact on neighbouring amenity, from loss of daylight, overbearing impact or overshadowing, because the rebuilt dwelling occupies the same footprint and has the same external dimensions as the existing dwelling, except for a very minor increase in the height of the eaves and ridge.
- 5.32. The only meaningful change to the dwelling, from a neighbouring amenity perspective, is new fenestration on the northeast, southeast and southwest elevations of the main building. However, this will not lead to any notable increase in overlooking, as there is already a tall mature hedge and other trees to the southeast and southwest which will screen and filter any views towards Friars Farmhouse and Westwood Lodge, and their private gardens.
- 5.33. For these reasons the Proposed Development is not expected to cause any material adverse impact on neighbouring amenity and therefore complies with Policy GEN2 in the Uttlesford Local Plan.



6.0 CONCLUSION

- 6.1. This Planning Statement has been prepared by AM-P on behalf of the Applicants, Mr & Mrs Lehtonen-Riley. It supports a full planning application to rebuild the existing dwelling including new walls, roof and fenestration, retain the original concrete slab and portal frame, and create a new outdoor swimming pool and a new outbuilding at Friars Manor, Tindon End, Saffron Walden, CB10 2XT.
- 6.2. The Application Site extends to 0.6 ha and is located at Tindon End, approximately 2 km to the north of Thaxted and 7.5 km to the southeast of Saffron Walden. The Site is situated 1.25 km to the east of Thaxted Road (B184) and is accessible via the predominantly single track Tindon End Road – which is a private road. The Application Site includes an existing dwelling (Friars Manor), its associated garage/outbuilding, garden land and various boundary trees and hedgerow. Both the dwelling and its outbuilding were originally built as agricultural barns, but later changed to a dwelling, with a subsequent Certificate of Lawfulness (ref. UTT/17/2888/CLE) approved in December 2017 for residential use. However, the conversion of the building was carried out to a relatively poor standard, using materials which provide low levels of insulation and which detract from the appearance of the Application Site and its surroundings.
- 6.3. Over the last 12 months the Applicants have undertaken extensive pre-application dialogue with UDC’s planning officers and ECC’s heritage advisors, which has informed and led to the submission of the current full planning application to rebuild the existing dwelling and create a new swimming pool and outbuilding.
- 6.4. For the purpose of determining the planning application, the saved policies in the adopted Uttlesford Local Plan (2005) comprise the statutory development plan and the NPPF (2021) is a material consideration.
- 6.5. UDC cannot currently demonstrate a full five-year housing land supply and this triggers the presumption in favour of sustainable development at paragraph 11 of the NPPF and the so-called tilted balance. Policy H7 in the Uttlesford Local Plan also confirms that the principle of a replacement dwelling in this location is acceptable, as the Proposed Development:
- (i) is of a scale and character that both respects the existing buildings on-site, as well as their historic agricultural appearance and function as part of a wider farmstead; and
 - (ii) will protect the particular character of this part of the countryside through its siting, appearance and landscape proposals.
- 6.6. Furthermore, the commentary in Section 5 of this Planning Statement recognises that:
- the Proposed Development complies with the design-related aspects of Policy GEN2 in the Uttlesford Local Plan, with a rebuilt dwelling whose external dimensions do not substantially exceed the existing dwelling and materials (including a corrugated cement roof and a mixture of horizontal and vertical hit and miss timber cladding) that reflect the historic character and appearance of this former agricultural building;



- the Proposed Development also includes new air source heat pumps and a water butt, which will generate renewable energy for the property, reduce carbon emissions, reduce water consumption and enable grey water recycling, in accordance with Policy GEN2 in the Uttlesford Local Plan;
 - there will be no impact on highway capacity or highway safety and the Proposed Development complies with Policy GEN1 in the Uttlesford Local Plan;
 - the proposals have been found to cause no harm to heritage assets and they would maintain the historic character of the setting of Friars Farm and of the local and extended area, in accordance with Policy ENV2 in the Uttlesford Local Plan and paragraphs 202 and 206 in the NPPF;
 - the ecological mitigation proposals, including the retention of the existing ponds and proposed planting of new lawns enriched with wildflower turf on-site, will protect and enhance biodiversity in accordance with Policy GEN7 of the Uttlesford Local Plan and paragraph 174 of the NPPF; and
 - the Proposed Development is not expected to cause any material adverse impact on neighbouring amenity and therefore complies with Policy GEN2 in the Uttlesford Local Plan, with views towards Friars Farmhouse and Westwood Lodge largely screened and filtered by a tall mature hedge and other trees.
- 6.7. In summary the Proposed Development complies with all relevant development plan policies and in the absence of any significant material considerations indicating otherwise, the Applicants respectfully request that UDC grants full planning permission to this scheme without delay.

Planning Statement
Friars Manor, Tindon End



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