

Design,  
Access &  
Planning  
Statement

Annex at: Park  
Cottage,  
Santon  
Downham,  
IP27 0TF



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## 1.0 Executive Summary

This document has been developed to assist a Householder planning application for a garden annex in the grounds of Park Cottage, Santon Downham.

The annex is for the habitation of the applicants parents. It will be ancillary to main house in all respects and will comply specifically with policy DM24 of the Joint development management policies document. The annex is of traditional garden building design, with the minimal functional space required. It will depend on the main dwelling for service connection.

The annex will replace a raft of outbuildings that sat in its place previously, and will sit in an inconspicuous and low impact location within the site.

The existing parking arrangements will be maintained, with access as close as the main house.

The proposed building will also directly face the kitchen/living accommodation in the main house, and be connected with a hard path for ease of access.

The use of the building if/when not an annex would be a summer house for recreational purposes to the main dwelling, which would be permitted and a normal addition to a large garden like the one at Park Cottage.

The applicants would be happy to condition any approval with:

SPECIFIC RESTRICTION ON DEVELOPMENT: ANNEX USE

Notwithstanding the description of development, the annex shall solely be used for purposes incidental to the main dwelling known as Park Cottage and not for primary accommodation purposes.

## 2.0 Design Components

### 2.1 Existing Site

Park Cottage is a detached single storey flint built dwelling located in a heavily wooded area of Santon Downham, just east of Brandon. The property features many outbuildings, most of which are to be/are being removed.

Photos of the existing site can be seen below.



Figure 1 –  
Existing site  
photos.

## 2.2 Design Justification

An application was previously submitted for an annex in the grounds (ref. DC/22/1611/HH), however the conclusion was that the proposal was placed too far away from the existing dwelling. Care and consideration has been given to both the new placing of the annex, and why it has not be joined to the dwelling. The existing is a 200 year old cottage with historic features and flintwork to all sides, and does not allow a suitable extension abutment area. The annex is for the applicants parents to reside in. While they are looking to move to the site to help take care of the busy household, neither party wish to be fully connected with each other without a small external disconnection.

The proposal is able to comply with Policy DM24 for the following reasons:

- d. the design and siting of the annex is effectively a summer hut and therefore the use (once ceased) would be integrated into the main property as ancillary accommodation in the form of a summer hut.
- e. the size is minimal for two persons (kitchen/living dining space, 1 bed, 1 shower room/WC).
- f. size - is submissive to both the main dwelling and previous/ surrounding outbuildings. scale - single storey with a low pitch gable roof structure that ties in with the surrounding single storey buildings and the plethora of outbuildings that was previously located on the site. Location - within a matter of meters from the existing dwelling and given the layout of the site and the direct facing aspect, not suitable (after annex use) for anything other than a summer hut. Design - timber frame with timber cladding as per previous and existing surrounding outbuildings. Low slung gable roof as per surrounding.

Aside from a legal agreement that would be placed anyway, the annex would never be able to be sold separately as a result of the unsuitable location (close to the main dwelling) and the fact that the style of the building is garden summer hut (ancillary to the main dwelling) and therefore not desirable or suitable on the market.

A successful application was recently undertaken at the dwelling directly adjacent, Old Laundry Cottage (ref. DC/21/2062/FUL). This was for the conversion and new placing of multiple holiday let units. This was allowed to proceed based on positive consultations from all parties, most importantly Natural England.

The site is outside of the 1500m buffer around components of Breckland Special Protection Area (SPA) designated for [REDACTED]. However, the site is located within 400m around Breckland Forest Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), a component of Breckland SPA designated for Woodlark and Nightjar.

Policy CS2 of the Core Strategy which covers the Forest Heath Area of West Suffolk, requires that: Where new development is proposed within 400m of components of the Breckland SPA designated for Woodlark or Nightjar a project level Habitats Regulation Assessment (HRA) will be required (see Figure 3). Development which is likely to lead to an adverse effect on the integrity of the SPA will not be allowed.

A Habitats Regulations Assessment was undertaken to accompany this application, which gave a positive conclusion. This can be seen appended to this report. (Appendix 1).

Natural England also gave a positive consultation on the previously submitted application for this annex, and can be seen under Appendix 2.

## 4.0 Access

Vehicular access is via the road from Brandon to Santon Downham, off an established driveway to both Park Cottage and Laundry Cottage. There are a series of pedestrian paths through the wooded area, leading into Brandon town.

The site and its main features, seen in plan view are highlighted on the adjacent map. A street view looking into the site from the Santon Downham Road can be seen in the image below.

1. Existing entrance
2. Park Cottage
3. Annex



## Appendix 1 – HRA

### DC/21/2062/FUL

#### Old Laundry Cottage, Brandon

**Planning application - conversion of outbuilding to Class C3 dwelling for holiday letting and change of use of land for additional garden land to station two former rail carriages for holiday letting | Old Laundry Cottage Access Road From C622 To Property Santon Downham IP27 0TF**

#### Habitats Regulations Assessment

The proposed development is outside of the 1500m buffer around components of Breckland Special Protection Area (SPA) designated for [REDACTED]. However, the site is located within 400m around Breckland Forest Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), a component of Breckland SPA designated for Woodlark and Nightjar.

Policy CS2 of the Core Strategy which covers the Forest Heath Area of West Suffolk, requires that:

Where new development is proposed within 400m of components of the Breckland SPA designated for Woodlark or Nightjar a project level Habitats Regulation Assessment (HRA) will be required (see Figure 3). Development which is likely to lead to an adverse effect on the integrity of the SPA will not be allowed.

The local planning authority, as the competent authority, is responsible for the Habitats Regulation Assessment as required by The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017. Regulation 63 (1) requires that a competent authority, before deciding to undertake, or give any consent, permission or other authorisation for, a plan or project which (a) is likely to have a significant effect on a European site or a European offshore marine site (either alone or in combination with other plans or projects), and (b) is not directly connected with or necessary to the management of that site, must make an appropriate assessment of the implications of the plan or project for that site in view of that site's conservation objectives. There is also a requirement to consult the appropriate nature conservation body and have regard to any representations made by that body.

Natural England has commented on the application and consider that without appropriate measures the application would have an adverse effect on the integrity of Breckland Special Protection Area and would damage or destroy the interest features for which Breckland Forest SSSI has been notified.

Natural England has recommended that the works should be undertaken outside of the bird breeding season and that light pollution from the development should be minimised, secured through planning conditions

The proposed development is not directly connected with, or necessary to the management of any European protected sites and appropriate assessment is required

Breckland SPA is designated because during the breeding season it supports populations of Nightjar, Woodlark and [REDACTED] which are of European importance. The conservation objectives for Breckland SPA as set out by Natural England are in table 1 below. Nightjar breed almost exclusively in afforested land,

particularly in clear-fells and young plantations. The system of rotational clear-felling within the conifer plantations also provides ideal breeding conditions for Woodlark.

Breckland Special protection Area (SPA)
Qualifying Features: A133 <i>Burhinus oedicephalus</i> ; [REDACTED] A224 <i>Caprimulgus europaeus</i> ; European nightjar (Breeding) A246 <i>Lullula arborea</i> ; Woodlark (Breeding)
Conservation objectives: Ensure that the integrity of the site is maintained or restored as appropriate, and ensure that the site contributes to achieving the aims of the Wild Birds Directive, by maintaining or restoring: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The extent and distribution of the habitats of the qualifying features</li> <li>• The structure and function of the habitats of the qualifying features</li> <li>• The supporting processes on which the habitats of the qualifying features rely</li> <li>• The population of each of the qualifying features, and,</li> <li>• The distribution of the qualifying features within the site.</li> </ul>

#### Direct Effects

Supplementary advice on conserving and restoring Breckland SPA outlines that Woodlark are known to be sensitive to human-related disturbance. Research investigating the impact of disturbance on Woodlark populations on heathlands, found that Woodlark density was lower on sites with higher levels of human disturbance (Mallord et al., 2007). Nightjar are also sensitive to human related disturbance, a negative correlation between the numbers of these species and housing was identified i.e. higher density of housing resulted in fewer birds on certain heaths in Dorset (Liley et al., 2007). The research shows that the impact of housing situated close to heaths is more severe than housing that is further away. Based on this research a 400m zone was developed around components of Breckland SPA designated for woodlark and nightjar. The 400m exclusion zone has been selected by NE to represent the highest potential impact on the SPA from new residential development where:

- Residents are more likely to visit than people living further away;
- Cats associated with housing may be more likely to visit the heaths/woodland;
- Other effects, such as garden waste dumping, garden extensions and fly-tipping from gardens, all occur where housing is adjacent or very close to heaths/woodland.

The proposal will not lead to a direct loss of habitat.

The generation of noise during the construction period may result in some disturbance to woodland and nightjar nesting in close proximity to the site. Construction should be undertaken outside the bird breeding season, considered to be between the beginning of March and the end of August, to avoid this impact.

The applicant has confirmed that there is no external lighting associated with the development, however this should be secured through a condition.

In this case the proposal is to relocate one converted rail carriage and site another new converted rail carriage in the same vicinity, with a net increase of only one unit. Following construction, noise from vehicles and additional human presence is expected to be a minimal increase from existing levels.

The carriages will be used for holiday lets therefore there will be no likelihood of additional cats on the site.

The creation of one new holiday let will result in an increase of visitors to the area and subsequently increased recreational pressure on local protected sites however this will be a minimal increase from existing levels given the location on the edge of Brandon.

In relation to in-combination recreational effects; for the former Forest Heath area of West Suffolk, there is a strategy in place to reduce and avoid any in-combination effects on Breckland SPA as a result of the total development that will come forward in the SIR/SALP. The detail of this is in the accessible natural greenspace study and the strategy is implemented in the SALP policies. The measures are concentrated on the main settlements in Forest Heath where growth is proposed. This is because these are the areas where measures would be more effective in providing meaningful new recreational facilities and also the areas where most people will be living, so reducing the overall number of visits to the SPA.

#### Conclusions

Based on the information submitted, Natural England's consultation response and the implementation of the mitigation measures which should be secured through planning conditions, the Local Planning Authority, in its role as Competent Authority, is able to conclude that the proposals would not have an adverse effect on the integrity of Breckland SPA alone or in combination with other developments.



Appendix 2 – Natural England comments under application DC/22/1611/HH

Date: 24 October 2022  
Our ref: 409199  
Your ref: DC/22/1611/HH

Thea Stockley  
West Suffolk Council

[planning.help@westsuffolk.gov.uk](mailto:planning.help@westsuffolk.gov.uk)

**BY EMAIL ONLY**



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Dear Thea,

**Planning consultation:** Householder planning application - detached annexe.

**Location:** Park Cottage Access Road From C622 To Property, Santon Downham, Suffolk, IP27 0TF.

Thank you for your consultation on the above which was received by Natural England on 06 October 2022.

Natural England is a non-departmental public body. Our statutory purpose is to ensure that the natural environment is conserved, enhanced, and managed for the benefit of present and future generations, thereby contributing to sustainable development.

**SUMMARY OF NATURAL ENGLAND'S ADVICE**

**NO OBJECTION**

Based on the plans submitted, Natural England considers that the proposed development will not have significant adverse impacts on designated sites and has no objection.

Natural England's further advice on designated sites and advice on other natural environment issues is set out below.

**European sites – Breckland Special Protection Area (SPA)**

Based on the plans submitted, Natural England considers that the proposed development will not have likely significant effects on the Breckland Special Protection Area and has no objection to the proposed development.

To meet the requirements of the Habitats Regulations, we advise you to record your decision that a likely significant effect can be ruled out. The following may provide a suitable justification for that decision:

This site is within 400m of components of Breckland SPA designated for Woodlark or Nightjar, but is very small scale and negative impacts on the designated species are not expected from this development alone. However we recommend that your authority strategically reviews the cumulative impacts of new developments within this zone.