

# Heritage Statement

**Buxhall Vale, Rectory Road, Buxhall, Suffolk,  
IP14 3DH**

**Proposed new boat house**



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# **Contents**

## **1.0 Introduction**

## **2.0 The Site and its Context**

## **3.0 Relevant Policies and Guidance**

## **4.0 Assessment of significance and setting of heritage assets affected**

## **5.0 Proposed works at Buxhall Vale**

## **6.0 Assessment of the impact of the proposed development**

## **7.0 Conclusions**

## **Appendix A : Statutory list descriptions and Suffolk Historic Environment Record**

## **Appendix B : References**

*Cover photograph 01 : Front façade of Buxhall Vale*

## 1.0 Introduction

1.1 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) July 2021 sets out the Government's policies on different aspects of spatial planning in England, with Section 16 dealing with 'Conserving and enhancing the historic environment'. Paragraph 194 of the NPPF states that :- *'In determining applications, local planning authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, 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. As a minimum the relevant historic environment record should have been consulted and the heritage assets assessed using appropriate expertise where necessary....'*

1.2 This report satisfies the requirements of Paragraph 194 and supports the planning application for revised proposals for the construction of a boat house at Buxhall Vale, Buxhall. It provides an appraisal of those heritage assets affected by the proposed development and assesses their significance, including the contribution of setting, in accordance with the policies contained in the NPPF and the guidance in Historic England's Advice Note 12 *'Statements of Heritage Significance : Analysing Significance in Heritage Assets'*. It also sets out the impact of the proposed development on their significance.

1.3 The report has been commissioned by the applicants, Mr & Mrs R Stewart and prepared by David Edleston who is a member of the Royal Institute of British Architects and the Institute of Historic Building Conservation. He has over 30 years' experience in dealing with design and development affecting the historic built environment in both the public and private sectors, including acting as an expert witness on cultural heritage at several major public inquiries; design and conservation advice on applications for listed building consent and planning permission; Conservation Area designation, character appraisals and enhancement schemes; preparation of design guidance and adoption as SPDs; Heritage Statements; Statements of Significance and Heritage Impact Assessments.

1.4 Research has been undertaken on the history and development of the site and surrounding area. The National Heritage List for England and the Suffolk Historic Environment Record have also been consulted along with historic maps of the area, together with other information found through internet research.

1.5 This Heritage Statement should be read in conjunction with the Design & Access Statement and accompanying drawings prepared by the Last & Tricker Partnership.

## 2.0 The Site and its Context



Site Location Plan

Scale 1:2500  
0 20 40 60 80 100m



**LAST & TRICKER**  
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Client: Mr & Mrs R Stewart

Project: New Bathhouse at Buxhall Vale,  
Rectory Road,  
Buxhall,  
Suffolk,  
IP14 3DH

Drawing: Site Location Plan

Date: Jul '23 Scale: 1:2500 at A3 Drawn: BR

Job No: 5614 Draw No: 21 Revision: -

2.1 The site lies within the Parish of Buxhall, which is in the District of Mid Suffolk. Buxhall is a small rural village, around four miles to the south-west of the historic market town of Stowmarket.

2.2 Buxhall Vale is a manor house in a remote and secluded location to the north of the village of Buxhall, within an attractive, parkland setting with woodland, paddocks and formal gardens. The Rattlesden River runs through the northern part of the site and Lower Road runs along the north boundary. There are outbuildings and a coach house to the south of the main house forming a courtyard arrangement and a walled garden to the west. To the north of the site there are a number of scattered dwellings. Access into the site is from the east via a driveway from Rectory Road.

### 02 : Site Location Plan © Last & Tricker Partnership

2.3 Consent has been granted for a variety of alterations and other works to the main house and these are currently in progress on site. Planning permission has also been obtained for the creation of a conservation pond located to the front of the property including the construction of a new boat house and a new driveway. The new pond has now been completed on site and works to the new driveway are in progress, but work on the new boat house has yet to commence.



03 & 04 : Views within the site to the west and to the north

## 3.0 Relevant Policies and Guidance

3.1 In relation to heritage assets the following policies and guidance are considered to be relevant when assessing the proposed development of the site :

3.2 **National Planning Practice Guidance : Historic environment** (updated July 2019) sets out the main legislative framework for planning and the historic environment and states : *'Any decisions where listed buildings and their settings and conservation areas are a factor must address the statutory considerations of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (see in particular sections 16,66 and 72) as well as applying the relevant policies within the development plan and the National Planning Policy Framework.'*

3.3 **Section 66(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990** states *'In considering whether to grant planning permission for development which affects a listed building or its setting, the local planning authority or as the case may be, the Secretary of State, shall have regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses'.*

3.4 **National Planning Policy Framework**, (revised July 2021), Section 16 : Conserving & enhancing the historic environment.

3.5 **Conservation Principles, Policies and Guidance : Historic England**, (April 2008).

3.6 **Historic England Guidance : Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning : GPA2 'Managing Significance in Decision-Taking in the Historic Environment'** (July 2015) and **GPA3 'The Setting of Heritage Assets'** (Dec 2017).

3.7 **Historic England Advice Note 12 'Statements of Heritage Significance : Analysing Significance in Heritage Assets'** (October 2019).

3.8 **Mid Suffolk Local Plan (1998) saved policies**

- Policy GP01 : Design and layout of development
- Policy HB01 : Protection of historic buildings



## 4.0 Assessment of significance and setting of heritage assets affected

4.1 In accordance with the Historic England Guidance, the starting point of the analysis is to identify those heritage assets likely to be affected by the proposed development. The National Heritage List for England and the Suffolk Historic Environment Record have been consulted. A site visit was undertaken on 25 July 2023 to make an assessment of the significance of Buxhall Vale and to identify those heritage assets potentially affected by the proposed development and to assess the site and its context. Buxhall Vale is Grade II listed and in addition, there are a number of other designated heritage assets in close proximity to the site. Their locations are shown in figure 05, which include the following Grade II listed buildings:

- **Lodge Cottage**
- **Milestone 5 metres to north-west of Lodge Cottage**
- **Milestone Cottages**
- **Reedhouse Farm Cottage**



05 : Location of listed buildings in relation to Buxhall Vale

© Google Earth

4.2 The works proposed at Buxhall Vale involve the construction of a new boat house on the north west corner of the recently created pond. Buxhall Vale is a Grade II listed building and the site of the proposed boat house lies within its setting. There are many views throughout the site where the proposed boathouse will be visible along with the listed building. There are also a number of listed buildings to the north of the site. Reedhouse Farm Cottage lies some distance away to the north-west and Milestone Cottages are on the opposite (north) side of Lower Road which borders the site. However, due to the degree of separation and the extent of existing dense, mature trees and vegetation, neither of these buildings will be visible in views along with the proposed boathouse. Similarly, the listed milestone is also not visible. Lodge Cottage lies immediately to the north and is the closest listed building to the proposed site. Although there are mature trees and vegetation between the two, there is potential during the winter months, when there are no leaves on the trees, for some degree of intervisibility. The key heritage impacts which therefore need to be considered include

- The impact on the setting of Buxhall Vale
- The potential impact on the setting of Lodge Cottage

4.3 The second stage of the Historic England Guidance, is to assess whether the setting of a heritage asset makes a contribution to its significance and the extent and/or nature of that contribution. This should initially address the key attributes of the heritage asset itself and then consider

- the physical surroundings of the asset
- the way the asset is appreciated
- the asset's associations and patterns of use

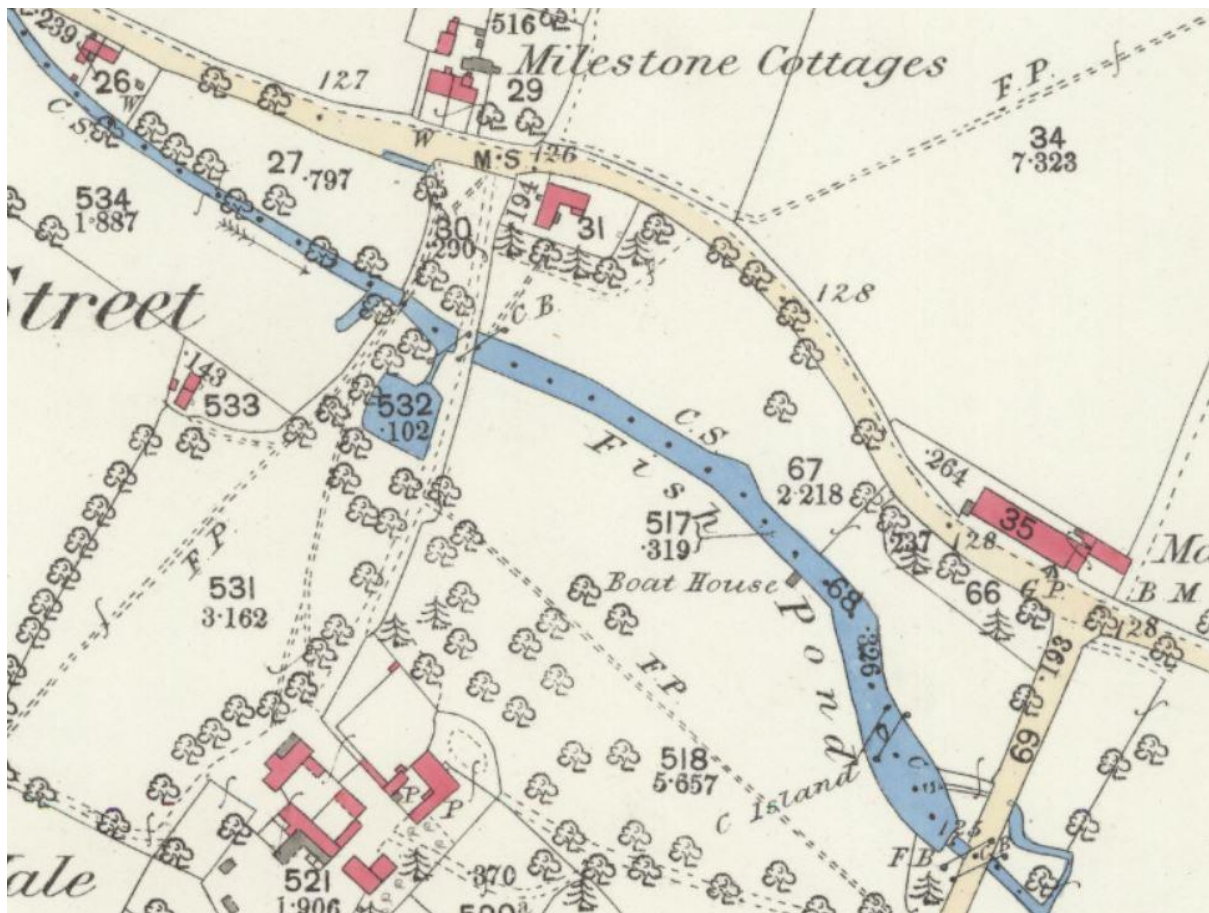
4.4 'Significance' is defined in the NPPF glossary as *'The value of a heritage asset to this and future generations because of its heritage interest. That interest may be archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic. Significance derives not only from a heritage asset's physical presence, but also from its setting'*

4.5 'Setting' is also defined in the NPPF glossary 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'*.

4.6 Buxhall Vale is a Grade II listed timber framed building with a 17<sup>th</sup> century or possibly earlier historic core. The frame of the original mediaeval hall house remains largely intact and is partially exposed internally. Considerable changes were made during the early 19<sup>th</sup> century when the upper storey was added, largely resulting in the appearance of the building as seen today. Map regression reveals that the main changes over time relate to the number and layout of outbuildings to the south-west



of the house. The Suffolk Historic Environment Record refers to a 19<sup>th</sup> century farmstead with a regular courtyard plan formed by working agricultural buildings. These can be seen on the first edition Ordnance Survey map of 1885, but many of these traditional agricultural buildings no longer survive. The map refers to the river where it runs through the site as 'Fish Pond' and there is also a boat house adjoining the river.



06 : First edition OS Map of 1885

© National Library of Scotland

4.7 The principal façade of Buxhall Vale is of high significance and faces north-east towards the open parkland beyond. It is three storeys high, of symmetrical design, with colour washed render and a hipped slate roof. Key architectural features which contribute to its significance include small pane sash windows without horns, with fine glazing bars, six, 6-over-6 at ground floor level, seven, 6-over-6 at first floor level and three, 3-over-3 at second floor level; a Greek Doric portico porch with fluted columns and entablature with triglyphs to the frieze; a pair of 3-panelled doors with panelled reveals and a modillion cornice at eaves level. The south-east facing elevation is also of high significance with similar fenestration and eaves details, although some of the sash windows have horns. The elevations to the rear are less formal in character and are of slightly lower significance with a number of alterations over time including the insertion of modern rooflights. There are various window types and styles with the tall, decorative, red brick chimneys, some with panelled shafts being important features.





*07-10 Views of the exterior of Buxhall Vale*

4.8 In assessing the extent that setting contributes to significance, the Historic England Guidance provides a checklist of potential attributes of a setting. It is important to note that setting is dynamic and the relationship between an asset and its surroundings changes as one moves around. The attributes of the setting of Buxhall Vale in relation to its physical surroundings include land use; openness, enclosure and boundaries; history and degree of change over time. Key elements of the experience of Buxhall Vale include views from, towards, across and including the asset.

4.9 The surrounding parkland and woodland form the setting of Buxhall Vale which make an important contribution to its significance. The area to the north-east is open, but is enclosed along the boundaries with dense, mature trees and vegetation, such that the building can only be appreciated from within its parkland setting. On the approach to the building along the access driveway from Rectory Road, it is the south-east façade which first becomes visible, set amongst mature trees on either side, with the principal north-east façade not being appreciated until the point of arrival at the building. However, it is from the open parkland to the north-east, where the main façade is seen as a focal point within the landscape. There are many views from this area looking south, east and west towards the house where there is a constantly changing relationship between the building and the surrounding mature trees. The most important views from the building are also those looking out across this area. Historic maps illustrate that there has been little change in the setting of the building over time, apart from the maturing of the surrounding landscape which has created a stronger sense of enclosure around this open space. However, the main change has



been the recent construction of the large pond which, with the reflective qualities of the water, has resulted in a dramatic and enhanced setting of Buxhall Vale when appreciated from the open parkland.



*11 : Setting of Buxhall Vale when approached along the driveway from Rectory Road*



*12 : Setting from the coach house driveway where the open parkland can be seen*



*13 & 14 : The main façade of Buxhall Vale addresses the open parkland beyond*





*15-18 : The series of images above illustrate the setting of Buxhall Vale seen from the open area of parkland to the north-east, moving from the west to the east. The building is seen as a focal point alongside and in between mature trees in the landscape.*

4.10 The principal façade of Lodge Cottage is of high significance and faces north onto Lower Road. Views of the building from Lower Road form the main aspect of its setting, where it can be appreciated when travelling along the road. The rear of the building where there are a number of alterations and extensions is of lower significance and is less visible, being enclosed by mature planting.





19 : *Setting of Lodge Cottage seen from Lower Road* © Google Street View

4.11 There are glimpses of the roof of Lodge Cottage seen between trees and above hedges in views from the area immediately to the west of the access track. In views to the north from Buxhall Vale and from within the open parkland beyond, Lodge Cottage is not visible, being screened by existing dense, mature trees and vegetation around the parkland boundary.



20 & 21 : *Glimpses of Lodge Cottage seen in views from the area to the west of the access track*



22 & 23 : *Views to the north showing dense planting to the boundary of the open parkland. Lodge Cottage lies beyond these trees and is not visible in views from Buxhall Vale or the surrounding parkland.*

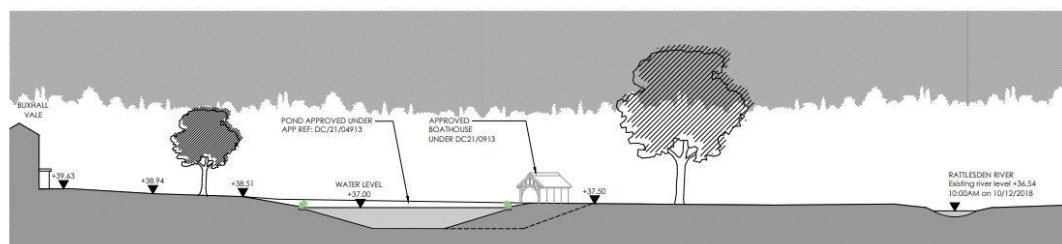


## 5.0 Proposed works at Buxhall Vale

5.1 Planning permission was granted on 4 March 2022 (ref : DC/21/04913) for the creation of a conservation pond and the construction of a boat house at Buxhall Vale. Works have been undertaken on the construction of the pond but the proposals for the boat house have now been amended.

5.2 The revised boat house is to be located in the same position as the approved scheme, on the north-west corner of the pond. The revised design is to have an increased floor area to provide covered space around the boat and an increased height to provide storage facilities within the roofspace and a viewing platform looking towards the pond and the house. Materials are to be the same as the approved scheme with an oak frame and a thatched roof.

5.3 Details of the boat house as now proposed are illustrated on the following drawings, prepared by the Last & Tricker Partnership. Further information and details of the proposed works are also provided in the Design & Access Statement submitted with the application.

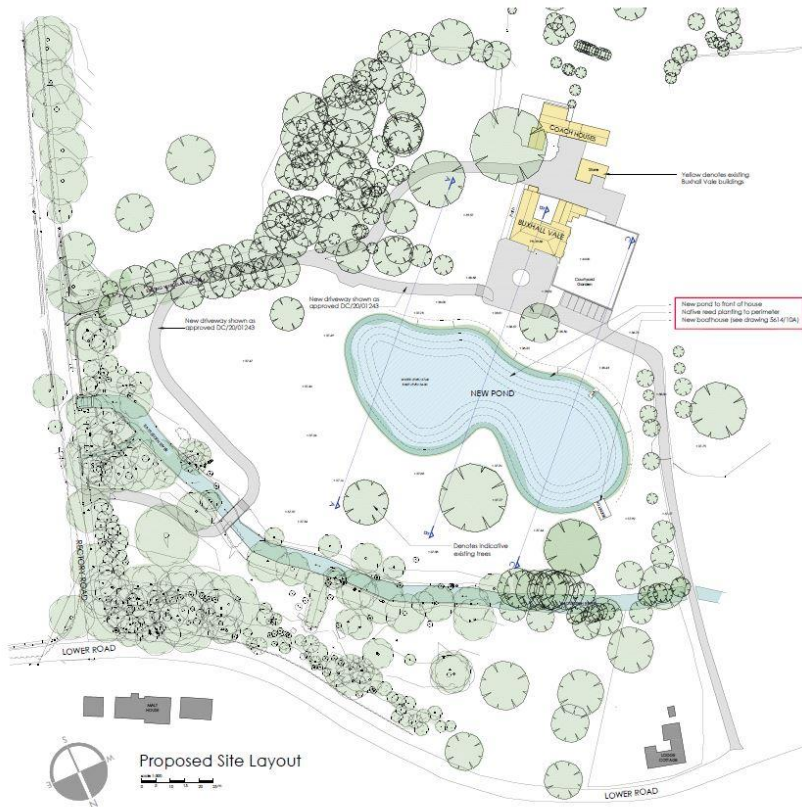


SECTION B-B - AS APPROVED  
THROUGH PARKLAND TO FRONT OF BUXHALL VALE



SECTION B-B - AS PROPOSED  
THROUGH PARKLAND TO FRONT OF BUXHALL VALE





**HISTORIC PRECEDENT**  
Historic photo (1910) within the front parkland of Buxhall Vale.



**BIODIVERSITY BENEFIT**  
Native reed planting to perimeter of pond to enhance the potential habitat offered to a wide range of species



**EXAMPLE OF BOAT HOUSE**  
See drawing S614/10A for details.

**EXISTING TREES**  
The proposals do not harm or require the removal of existing trees.

Rectangular Pond

Client: Mr & Mrs P Stewart  
 Project: Rectangular Pond and Boat house of Buxhall Vale, Buxhall, Suffolk, IP14 3DH  
 Drawing: Proposed Site Layout Plan  
 No: S614 Date: 19 Rev: A

25 : Site Layout Plan as approved DC/21/04913

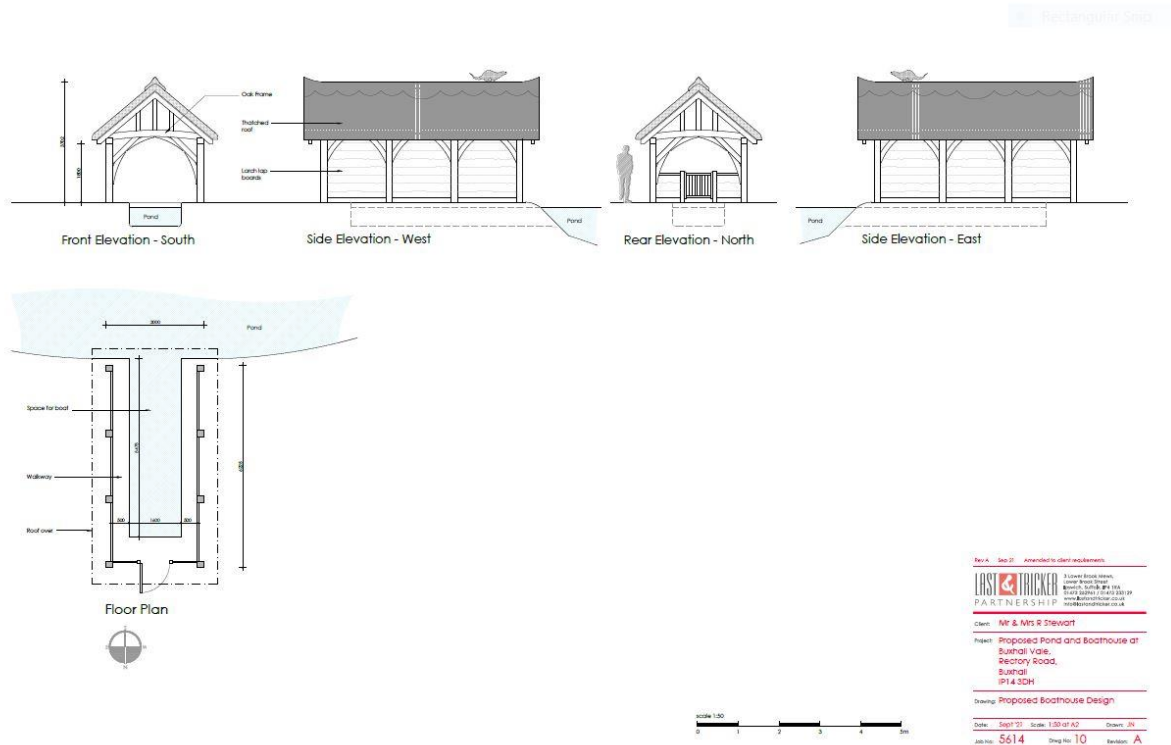
© Last & Tricker Partnership



Client: Mr & Mrs P Stewart  
 Project: New Boat house of Buxhall Vale, Buxhall, Suffolk, IP14 3DH  
 Drawing: Proposed Site Layout Plan  
 No: S614 Date: 19 Rev: A

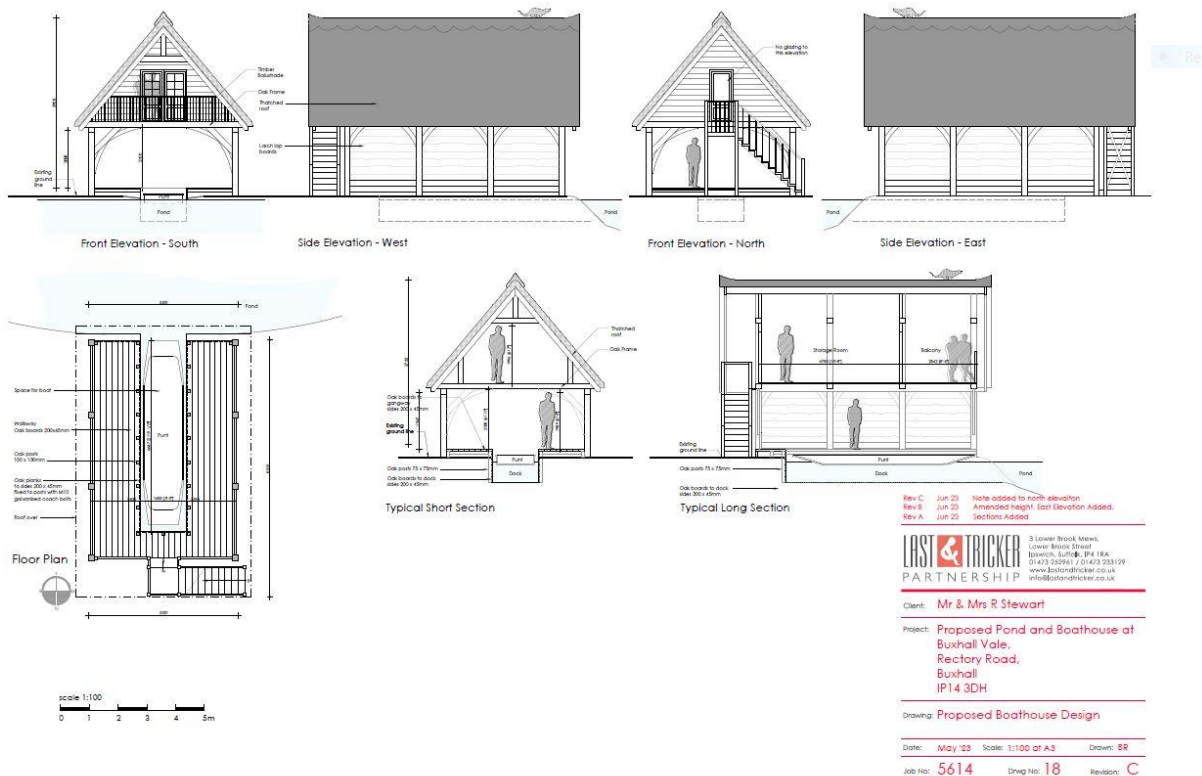
26 : Site Layout Plan as proposed

© Last & Tricker Partnership



27 : Boathouse as approved DC/21/04913

© Last & Tricker Partnership



28 : Boathouse as proposed

© Last & Tricker Partnership

## 6.0 Assessment of the impact of the proposed development

6.1 Paragraph 199 of the NPPF states :-

*'When considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation. (and the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be). This is irrespective of whether any potential harm amounts to substantial harm, total loss or less than substantial harm to its significance.'*

6.2 Paragraph 200 goes on to say :-

*'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. Substantial harm to or loss of :*

- a) grade II listed buildings, or grade II registered parks or gardens, should be exceptional;*
- b) assets of the highest significance, notably scheduled monuments, protected wreck sites, registered battlefields, grade I and II\* listed buildings, grade I and II\* registered parks and gardens, and World Heritage Sites, should be wholly exceptional'.*

6.3 Where a degree of harm is identified, Paragraph 201 states :-

*'Where a proposed development will lead to substantial harm to (or total loss of significance of) a designated heritage asset, local planning authorities should refuse consent, unless it can be demonstrated that the substantial harm or total loss is necessary to achieve substantial public benefits that outweigh that harm or loss, or all of the following apply :-*

- a) the nature of the heritage asset prevents all reasonable uses of the site; and*
- b) no viable use of the heritage asset itself can be found in the medium term through appropriate marketing that will enable its conservation; and*
- c) conservation by grant-funding or some form of not for profit, charitable or public ownership is demonstrably not possible; and*
- d) the harm or loss is outweighed by the benefit of bringing the site back into use.'*

6.4 Paragraph 202 states :-

*'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 including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use.'*

6.5 In relation to the determination of applications affecting heritage assets, Paragraph 197 states :-

*'In determining applications, local planning authorities should take account of :*



- a) the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation;*
- b) the positive contribution that conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities including their economic vitality; and*
- c) the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness’.*

6.6 The assessment undertaken in Section 4.0 concludes that the site for the proposed boat house lies within the setting of Buxhall Vale, which is a Grade II listed building and the development will therefore impact on its setting. Lodge Cottage, which is also Grade II listed, lies to the north of the site and there is potential to impact on its setting. There will be no impact on the setting of other nearby listed buildings arising from the proposed development, including Reedhouse Farm Cottage, Milestone Cottages or the Milestone to the north-west of Lodge Cottage.

6.7 Lodge Cottage is located approximately 82 metres to the north of the site of the proposed boat house. The main aspects of the setting of the cottage which contribute to its significance are views from Lower Road where its principal façade is visible. Hedges and trees along boundaries, which include some mature laurels and English yews, screen other views of the building, Furthermore, dense mature trees and vegetation along the boundary of the parkland to Buxhall Vale separate the cottage from the site of the boathouse, with no intervisibility between the two. Taking into account the degree of separation between the two, along with the extent of screening, there will not be an adverse impact on the setting of Lodge Cottage arising from the proposed development.

6.8 A search of historic maps of the site has revealed that a boat house previously existed within the parkland to the north-east of the house, adjacent to the river. Furthermore, the principle of constructing a new boat house has also been established through the recent approval, when there were no objections to the addition of such a feature within the parkland setting of Buxhall Vale

6.9 The proposed boat house will be seen in views from the house looking over the parkland to the north (see photos 22 & 23) and there are a number of important views where the boat house will be seen along with views of the main house including

- Views to the north when approaching the main house along the access drive from Rectory Road where the parkland becomes visible (see photo 12)
- Views to the south towards the main house adjacent to the site of the proposed boathouse
- Views to the south-west from the north-east side of the pond
- Views to the south-west from the east side of the pond and the new driveway (see photo 18)

6.10 In all of these views, the proposed boathouse will be seen against the backdrop of existing mature trees which surround the open parkland, thereby minimising the visual impact of the new structure. Although the boat house is to be slightly larger in scale and height, it will clearly read as subordinate to the main house in these views. The boathouse is to be simple and traditional in form with gables and a pitched roof using traditional materials, which include an oak frame and thatched roof,

6.11 The recent addition of the pond within the parkland, has provided an enhanced setting for Buxhall Vale. Taking into account the proposed scale, form, massing and materials, the revised design of the boathouse is considered to be entirely appropriate in this setting. There will be no harmful impact on the setting of Buxhall Vale and furthermore, the addition of this structure will positively contribute to the enhanced setting of the building in accordance with Paragraph 197 of the NPPF.

## **7.0 Conclusions**

7.1 This Heritage Statement identifies and sets out the significance, including the contribution of setting, of those heritage assets affected by the proposed development at Buxhall Vale and makes an assessment of the impact on their significance, to satisfy the requirements of Paragraph 194 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

7.2 The proposed development will not result in a harmful impact on the significance of Buxhall Vale, including its setting and its special interest will be preserved. There will be no adverse impact on the setting of Lodge Cottage or the setting of other surrounding listed buildings. The proposals therefore satisfy the statutory requirements of Section 66(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

7.3 The proposals will also comply with the requirements of Section 16 of the National Planning Policy Framework and saved policies GP01 and HB01 of the Mid Suffolk Local Plan. Accordingly, it is therefore concluded that there are no heritage grounds for resisting the proposed development.

## Appendix A : Statutory list descriptions

### Buxhall Vale, Rectory Road, Buxhall



*Front façade of Buxhall Vale looking to south-west*

List entry number : 1352146

Listed building Grade II

Date first listed : 09 December 1955

BUXHALL VALE, RECTORY ROAD TM 05 NW

2/47 Buxhall Vale 9.12.55

House, early C19 with earlier core, possibly C17. Timber framed and plastered. Hipped slated roof, low pitched with paired modillions beneath the eaves. Rear chimneys of red brick, two with panelled shafts in the C17 manner. 3 storeys (the upper storey added C19). 7 windows. Early C19 small pane sashes. Greek Doric portico porch with fluted columns and entablature with triglyphs. A pair of 3 panelled doors with panelled reveals.



## Lodge Cottage, Lower Road, Onehouse



*Rear of Lodge Cottage looking to east*

List entry number : 1352186

Listed building Grade II GV

Date first listed : 22 January 1988

ONEHOUSE LOWER ROAD TM 05 NW

2/150 Lodge Cottage

House, probably early C16 with extensions of c.1600, c.1700 and mid C20. Of 3-cell plan, with a rear service wing added c.1700 to right. One storey and attics. Timber framed and plastered. Thatched roof, hipped at right hand end; 2 C19 casement dormers. An axial chimney of pink/buff brick. Small pane casements of C19 and C20. Gabled late C19 or early C20 porch with C18 or early C19 2-panelled door at lobby entrance position. An unusual survival of a very small house, probably not later than c.1550. An open hall house with a cross-entry at the present front entrance position. Heavy, widely spaced studwork and smoke blackened coupled rafter roof. A single cell extension to right has mid C16 framing and a blocked diamond mullioned window. An inserted floor in the hall reuses several heavy medieval joists. In late C16 or early C17 a further cell was added to left with unchamfered floor joists and clasped purlin roof; perhaps at this time the chimney was inserted into the cross entry. To rear is a service wing of c.1700 with good pegged primary braced studwork for date, and clasped purlin roof. A mid C20 flat-roofed single storey extension to left is not of special interest.



## **Suffolk Historic Environment Record**

### **Farmstead Record BUX 081 – Farmstead : Buxhall Vale**

**GRID REFERENCE : Centred TM 0048 5883 (102m by 102m)**

**MAP SHEET : TM05NW**

**CIVIL PARISH : Buxhall, Mid Suffolk, Suffolk**

Buxhall Vale Farm, Buxhall. 19<sup>th</sup> century farmstead and farmhouse. Regular courtyard full plan formed by working agricultural buildings. The farmhouse is set away from the yard. Significant loss (over 50%) of the traditional farm buildings. Located within an isolated position.

Recorded as part of the Farmsteads in the Suffolk Countryside Project. This is a purely desk-based study and no site visits were undertaken. These records are not intended to be a definitive assessment of these buildings. Dating reflects their presence at a point in time on historic maps and there is potential for earlier origins to buildings and farmsteads. The project highlights a potential need for a more in depth field study of farmsteads to gather more specific age data.

## Appendix B : References

- National Planning Policy Framework, Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government, 2021
- National Planning Practice Guidance : Historic Environment, Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government, [www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk) 23 July 2019
- Planning (Listed Buildings & Conservation Areas) Act 1990
- Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning : GPA2 'Managing Significance in Decision-Taking in the Historic Environment', Historic England, July 2015
- Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning : GPA3 'The Setting of Heritage Assets', Historic England, Dec 2017
- Making Changes to Heritage Assets; Historic England Advice Note 2, February 2016
- Statements of Heritage Significance : Analysing Significance in Heritage Assets; Historic England Advice Note 12, October 2019
- Conservation Principles, Policies and Guidance; Historic England, April 2008
- Mid Suffolk Local Plan (1998) saved policies
- Suffolk Historic Environment Record
- National Heritage List for England : [www.historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list](http://www.historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list)
- Historical Map Archive : National Library of Scotland

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