

PLANNING & HERITAGE STATEMENT

Proposed Touring/Camping Pitches
and change of use of pond to a commercial fishing pond

The Conifers
Church Lane, Croft, Lincolnshire, PE24 4RU



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DOCUMENT HISTORY

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1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This statement accompanies a planning application for the proposed change of use of land to provide 8 no. touring/camping pitches, the erection of a toilet/shower block and change of use of pond to an 8-peg commercial fishing pond.

2 THE SITE & SURROUNDINGS

- 2.1 The Conifers is located on the eastern side of Church Road (at Grid reference TF 53355 64625) which is to the north of the main body of Croft village (Figure 1).
- 2.2 The Conifers is a detached dwelling with a large garden to the rear/east, with an existing store/workshop in the northeast corner. The property also includes a paddock which is largely located to the south but also extends to the northeast of the garden (Figure 2). Planning permission has been granted to excavate a pond within the paddock and to convert part of the workshop to a holiday let (application reference S/039/02070/21). This permission is extant with the pond and the new access in place (see photographs at Appendix A).
- 2.3 The existing dwelling and garden are well screened by mature hedging. Closer to the dwelling this is in the form of laurel and conifer hedging. To the rear the boundaries are enclosed by tall Willow trees. As evidenced in the photographs at Appendix A the approved landscaping around the boundaries of the paddock is also in place.

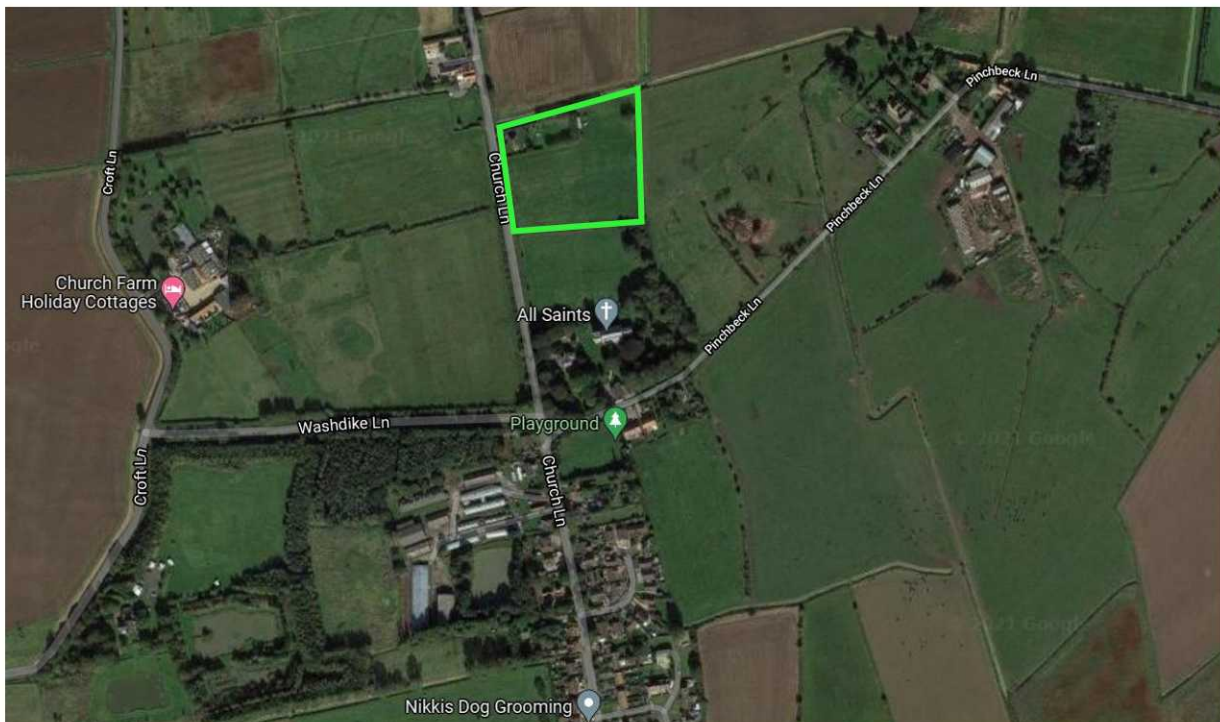


Figure 1: Aerial photograph showing the location of the site.

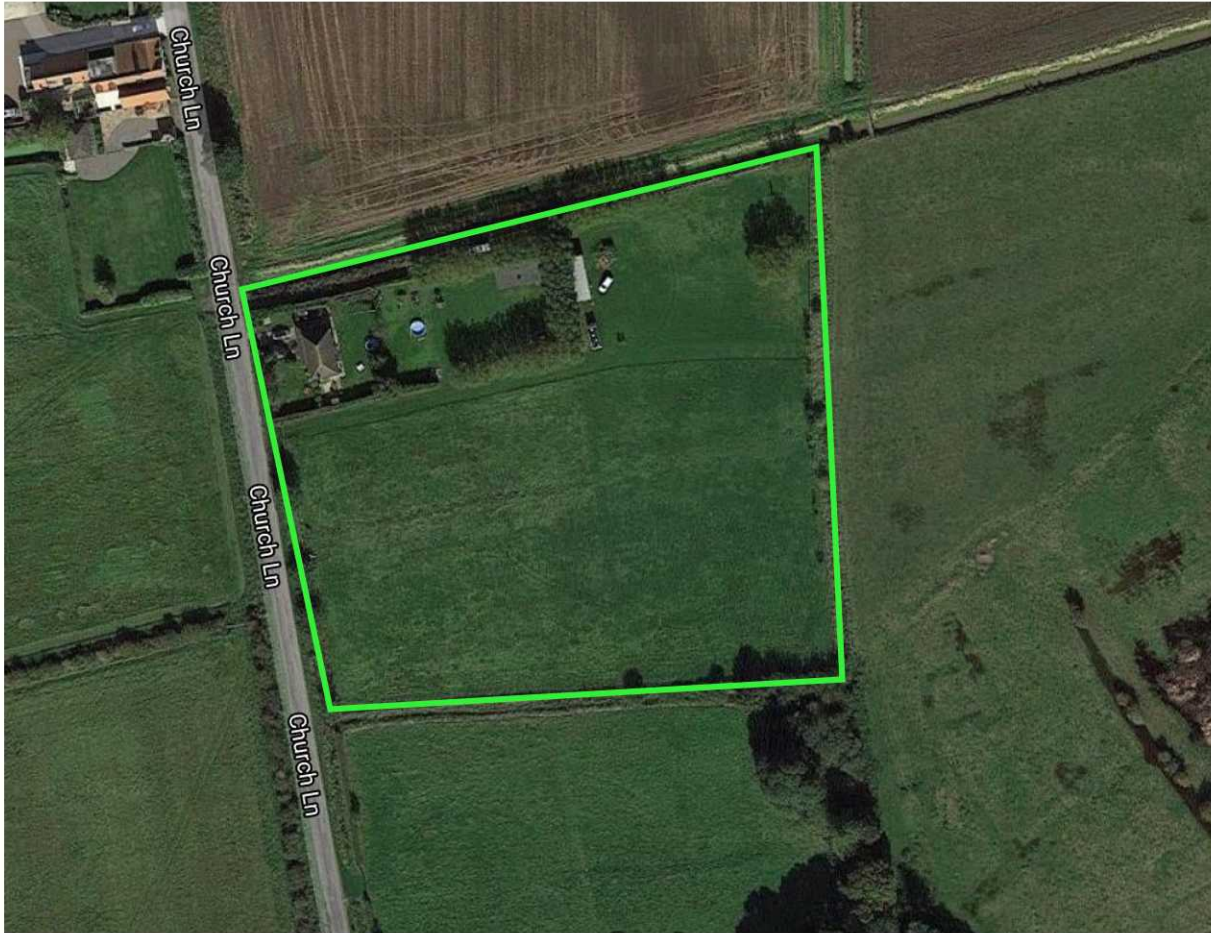


Figure 2: Aerial photograph showing the site in more detail.

- 2.4 The Church of All Saints is a Grade I listed building and located just over 200m to the south of the proposed holiday let. The Old Vicarage is a Grade II listed building and is located to the west of the church. Both buildings will be discussed in more detail later within this statement.
- 2.5 The site is in Flood Zone 3. A separate Flood Risk Assessment has been produced and accompanies the application.
- 2.6 A public footpath runs along the adjacent side of the eastern site boundary (Figure 3) and can be accessed from the northeast corner of the site. This path provides access to the village and by heading south the path continues all the way to the A52, where regular bus services operate between Skegness and Boston. The footpath also continues northwards and provides a pedestrian route directly to the large village of Burgh le Marsh. As the distance along this route is approximately 3km it is realistic that visitors to the site could walk to good range of facilities available in Burgh le Marsh. The site location also makes it feasible for visitors to cycle to Burgh le Marsh as well as Wainfleet and Skegness.

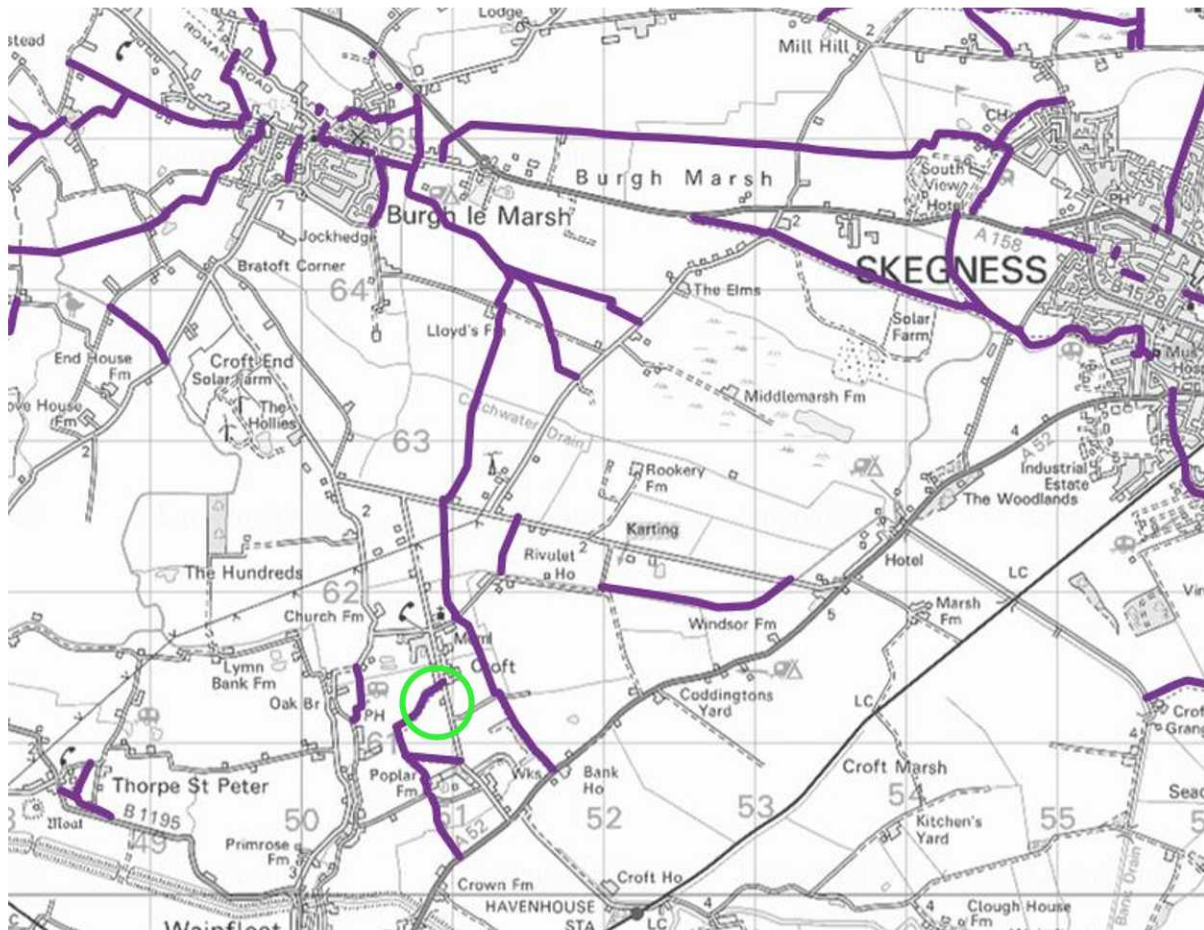


Figure 3: Public footpath route from the site to the village and further to Burgh le Marsh.

3 THE PROPOSAL

3.1 The proposal involves the following components:

1. The change the use of the existing pond (which has recently been stocked with common carp, yellow carp and tench) to a commercial fishing pond with 8 no. pegs. Parking will be provided within the area enclosed by landscaping to the rear of the dwelling (where parking is already approved for the permitted holiday let).
2. The change the use of the north eastern corner of the adjoining field for the creation of 8 no. touring/camping pitches.
3. The erection of a toilet and shower block alongside the touring pitches in the location of an existing static caravan which is to be removed.

3.2 Access will be via the improved access which was approved under application S/039/02070/21 and is already in place. The landscaping approved under the same scheme has also been carried out and is establishing well.

- 3.3 The proposal is to create a low-density camping site which will complement the extant permission for the holiday let. The camping pitches have been focused on the north-eastern corner not only because the landscaping is more mature in this area but to retain the rural character of the paddock and provide a quiet open space around the new fishing pond. The proposal provides a site where visitors can enjoy the quiet semi-rural location and take advantage of the public footpath routes and endless possibilities for cycling whilst still being close enough to enjoy the wider range of tourist facilities available in nearby resorts such as Skegness.

4 PLANNING POLICY

- 4.1 Policies within the East Lindsey District Council Local Plan (2018) that are relevant to this proposal include:

SP2 Sustainable Development
SP10 Design
SP17 Coastal East Lindsey
SP19 Holiday Accommodation

- 4.2 There are numerous paragraphs within the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) which are in support of the proposal. For example, paragraph 84 states that:

'Planning policies and decisions should enable: c) sustainable rural tourism and leisure developments which respect the character of the countryside...'

- 4.3 At the heart of the NPPF is a presumption in favour of sustainable development. For decision taking this means *'Approving development proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan without delay'*. In decision making this means Local Planning Authorities should work proactively with applicants to secure developments that will improve the economic, social, and environmental conditions of the area.

- 4.4 These three overarching objectives of sustainable development (economic, social, and environmental) are interdependent and need to be pursued in mutually supportive ways. The proposal will benefit the local economy through the additional overnight stays and visitors using local facilities and services. This will be achieved by a development which is sensitive to the existing site and maintains and enhances the high-quality natural environment which has already been created. Overall, the combined benefits of the proposal weigh in the favour of the proposal and meets the requirements of sustainable development.

- 4.5 Paragraph 81 requires planning policies and decisions to help create the conditions in which businesses can invest, expand, and adapt. It states that:

'Significant weight should be placed on the need to support economic growth and productivity, taking into account both local business needs and wider opportunities for development. The approach taken should allow each area to build on its strengths, counter any weaknesses and address the challenges of the future.'

4.6 Policy SP17 lists Croft as one of the settlements that the Coastal Policies apply to. SP17 is supportive of proposals which contribute to the local economy and diversifies the tourism market.

4.7 The permission to convert the workshop to a holiday let was supported as it accorded with Clause 3 of SP19. As already discussed, this permission is extant due to the works being complete for the access and pond. Clause 5 of SP19 discusses new and extensions to existing sites where they are located alongside a town, large or medium village. Croft is categorised by SP1 as a 'medium' village and the site is close enough to be considered alongside. Clause 5 supports the proposal as follows:

5. The Council will support new and extensions to caravans, log cabins, chalets, camping and touring site development where sites adjoin or are in a town, large or medium village, providing it can be demonstrated that they add to the built and natural environment by the provision of extensive landscaping and green infrastructure, do not cause unacceptable harm to the wider landscape, protected or important habitats and they are connected to the existing settlement by road and footpath.

The small area for the camping pitches in the northeast corner benefits from existing landscaping and because of the discreet location there will be no effect on the countryside or the setting of the church. There is a public footpath immediately to the east which provides access into the village and directly to Burgh le Marsh (approx. 3km) to the north.

4.8 If the site is deemed in the countryside Clause 6 would apply. This has similar requirements to Clause 5 but states that proposals must be related to an existing tourism facility. Whilst not yet in place, the extant permission for the holiday let is a material consideration and does effectively make the site an existing tourism facility. The change of use of the existing stocked pond to a commercial fishing pond will also make the site an existing facility if carried out prior to the touring pitches being put in place. This is a situation which was deemed to be acceptable for an approved development of 10 no. holiday cabins approximately 1.5km to the north at Home Farm (application reference S/039/02073/21). The following sections from the Home Farm officer report are of relevance:

The site does not have an established tourism attraction that is open to the general public, indeed the lake was originally approved as a conservation and wildlife pond

only. Currently it is fished more on an informal basis by the site owner and friends, but as part of this application access to the general public would be formalised which is reasonable, so full compliance with the policy in terms of relating to an existing tourism facility can be achieved, by way of a condition, before any cabins are occupied on the site.

The comments of the Parish Council are noted in terms of lack of compliance with the local plan but as mentioned above there is a requirement by condition to open the already informally used lake, as a tourist attraction prior to cabins being occupied on the site. Furthermore the fact that there is not a clearly defined segregated footway with access to local services is acknowledged and it is a strand of policy that does not comply with the local plan SP19 subsection 6 criteria. However when members have considered pedestrian or public transport access to settlements when looking at other similar applications in the locality, and indeed further afield, they have followed the approach set out in Paragraph 6.3 above relating to the advice in the Framework cited above, and therefore it is considered this view equally applies to this application. This helps to satisfy this strand of policy where there is not full compliance with the local plan. Nevertheless it is considered there is compliance with the local plan as a whole given that it is generally supportive of sustainable rural tourism through Policy SP17, and furthermore there is the clear intention by the applicants to formally open the use of the lake as a commercial fishery, and this is secured by condition, rather than just family and friends as currently exists, and therefore most of the policy strands in Policy SP19 subsection 6 as mentioned above relating to this application are complied with.

- 4.9 When allowing an application for 9 no. static caravans at Moat Farm in Bratoft the following comments were made in relation to SP15:

The application site lies to the south west of Burgh le Marsh which is designated as a large village in SP1 of the Local Plan. The site is approximately 2.8km from the edge of Burgh le Marsh by road but there is a public footpath which leads direct from the site to the village and this distance is only 1.9km. Due to the direct footpath link it is considered that the site lies in close proximity to Burgh le Marsh.

As the site also had an existing facility (a commercial fishing lake) it was concluded that the proposal met the criteria of SP15 and in principle was acceptable.

- 4.10 Based on these precedent applications, in particular the almost identical example at Home Farm, it is considered that the proposed touring pitches are acceptable as they are well screened with a visitor attraction in the form of a commercial fishery to be established as part of this application. There will also be no significant harmful impact on amenity or on highways safety. On balance the proposal does demonstrate compliance with the local plan policies when taken as a whole and provision of this modest number of touring/camping pitches at the site is reasonable.

5 HERITAGE ASSESSMENT

- 5.1 The Church of All Saints is a Grade I listed building and located just over 200m to the south of the proposed holiday let. The Old Vicarage is a Grade II listed building and is located to the west of the church. This section sets out the existing situation and how the proposal relates to these heritage assets.

EXISTING SITUATION

- 5.2 The Church of All Saints is a Grade I listed building located on Pinchbeck Lane and over 200m to the south of the proposed pitches and 100m from the fishing pond. The listing describes this building as follows:

Parish church. C14, C15. Greenstone rubble, limestone ashlar, some red brick patching. Lead roofs with parapets and embattled clerestory. West tower, nave with north and south arcades and south porch; chancel. Late C14 west tower with moulded plinth and string courses, and 4 stage angle buttresses, the south-west buttress with plaque inscribed with the names of the vicar and 2 church wardens, and the date 1656. Slit stair lights in south side to the right of the south-west buttress. Pointed west doorway with continuous richly moulded surround, hood mould and double plank doors. Pointed window above with 2 ogee headed lights flanking a single semi-circular headed light; plain panel tracery and hood mould. Small pointed window above with 2 semi-circular headed, cusped lights, panel tracery and hood mould. Bell openings on all 4 sides, each with a pointed head. 3 pointed, cusped lights, panel tracery and hood moulds with head label stops. Moulded eaves with projecting corner gargoyles and battlements with ornate pinnacles. C14 north aisle remodelled in mid C15. Moulded plinth and regularly placed 2 stage buttresses. West end with a pointed window with 3 plain ogee headed lights, panel tracery, hood mould and single label stop head to left. North side with flattened triangular headed window to right with 3 ogee headed lights, panel tracery and hood mould. Pointed doorway to left with continuous moulded surround, C16 plank door, hood mould and label stop head to left. 3 windows to the left, similar to that to the right of the doorway. East end with a pointed window with 3 pointed lights, panel tracery and hood mould. Battlemented mid C15 clerestory above with 5 windows each with pointed head, 2 semi-circular headed lights, panel tracery and hood mould. C15 chancel with plinth and 2 pointed windows in north side, each with 3 pointed cusped lights, panel tracery and hood mould. East end defined by diagonal 2 stage buttresses. Pointed east window with 5 pointed cusped lights, panel tracery, hood mould and head label stops. South side with some brick patching and a small, pointed priest's doorway with segmental head, continuous moulded surround, hood mould and traceried plank door. 2 pointed windows above, each with 3 pointed cusped lights, panel tracery and hood mould, C14 south aisle remodelled in the mid C15. East end with a pointed window, 3 ogee headed lights, plain panel tracery, hood mould and head label stops. South side with 3 flattened triangular headed windows, each with 3 ogee headed lights, panel tracery and hood moulds. Gabled C15 brick patched porch with pointed south doorway with moulded head, slender responds with moulded imposts and hood mould with head label stops. Interior flanking stone benches and C14 doorway with pointed head, richly moulded continuous surround, hood mould and

head label stops. Panelled studded plank door with smaller doorway within with segmental head and inscription: 'God Save the King 1633'. Single window beyond porch with flattened triangular head, 3 ogee headed lights, panel tracery and hood mould. Pointed window in west end with 3 ogee headed lights, plain panel tracery, hood mould and head label stops. C15 clerestory identical to that on the north side. Tall mid C14 interior tower arch with pointed, double chamfered head and triple responds. South-west corner of tower with C14 ogee headed doorway with continuously moulded surround and plank door. Mid C14, 5 bay north and south arcades, with pointed, double chamfered heads, octagonal piers, polygonal responds and moulded capitals. C15 north and south aisle parclose screens, each side of which have 5 ogee headed ornate openwork, panel traceried, sections. South aisle with ogee headed, cusped piscina. C14 pointed chancel arch with double chamfered head and polygonal responds with moulded capitals. C15 screen with 5 openwork traceried sections with crocketed and finialled ogee heads and painted lower blind panels. Chancel with C14 cusped ogee headed piscina. C15 pews with hinged doors with simple early panel tracery. C19 choir stalls, reredos, communion rail. C15 brass eagle lectern of an East Anglian school with moulded, bulbous pedestal with 3 small lions at its foot. Pulpit of 1615 related to that at Burgh le Marsh, with steps leading up to hexagonal pulpit with ornate bands of fretwork and stylised dragons; book rest inscribed: 'William Worship Doctor in Divinite.' Paired, fluted angle columns with moulded panels and fretwork. Ornate sounding board and canopy, the latter with rich scroll work and pendentive finials. C15 octagonal font on a tall, panelled pedestal, the octagonal bowl supported by head and foliate motifs, and each side of the bowl with a shield set in a cusped arch. C16 altar table in south aisle. C19 roofs re-using C15 timbers and medieval stone corbels and C15 south aisle roof. Monuments include one of alabaster streaked with orange and pink and faded paint and gilding to Sir Valentine Browne, died 1600, and Elizabeth his wife; with 8 sons and 7 daughters kneeling below on a rectangular moulded plinth; the kneeling figures of Browne and his wife above, beneath a semi-circular arch with panelled soffit, flanking pilasters, bracketed key and cartouche above. Another alabaster monument, streaked pink and grey, to John Browne, died 1614, and Cicely, his wife; both figures kneel in prayer beneath a semi-circular arch with panelled soffit, flanking pilasters and cartouche over. Ashlar standing monument to William Bonde, died 1559, with high plinth with geometric patterning, flanking free standing columns, cartouche above with skull, coat of arms, rays of sunlight and a tiny bearded bust. Late C13 or early C14 brass in floor of south aisle, with head and shoulders of knight with hands in prayer. One of 4 or 5 of the earliest brasses in England.

- 5.3 The Church can be clearly seen from the paddock (Figure 3). The proposed pitches are set back in the north-eastern corner of the site and are screened by large Willow trees and cannot be seen in the same view as the Church. This includes the public footpath which runs parallel to the eastern site boundary.
- 5.4 The Old Vicarage is located on Pinchbeck Lane, to the west of the Church, and is also over 200m to the south of the proposed location for the touring pitches. The listing describes this building as follows:

Vicarage, now house. c.1820. Red brick. Hipped slate roof with overhanging eaves and 2 ridge stacks. 2 storeys, 3 bay front with central doorway with semi-circular head and overlight; 4 steps lead up to deepest, three-quarter glazed door. Doorway flanked by single glazing bar sashes with 3 glazing bar sashes above, all with segmental heads. South side with ornate Venetian arched conservatory-porch with small glazing bars, and flanked by single glazing bar sashes, with 3 cross casements above, all with segmental heads.



Figure 3: View of the church looking south from the existing paddock entrance off Church Lane.

- 5.5 The Old Vicarage is set within mature gardens with large broadleaf trees to all boundaries. Due to the trees on the northern boundary, and the Willow trees which are close to the pitches, there are no views where the two can be seen together.

IMPACT ON THE LISTED BUILDINGS

- 5.6 Views of the proposed pitches in the same context as the listed buildings are already very limited due to the position in the small northeast corner of the field and the intervening mature landscaping. The views will in time be further limited by the landscaping which has been planted as part of previous approval. As such it is considered that there will be no harmful effect on the setting of the listed buildings from the proposal.

6 CONCLUSIONS

- 6.1 The proposal complies with both Local and National policy and would not result in an adverse impact such as on the character of the area. As such the proposal can be granted planning approval.

Appendix A

Current site photographs

















