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TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1990
ERECTION OF DWELLING
LAND TO THE EAST OF THE TYWNINGS, WICKHAM SKEITH

Planning Statement
Incorporating
Design And Access Statement
And
Local Validation Requirements Statement

Ref: 2966/E
March 2024

INTRODUCTION

1. This Planning Statement has been produced in support of a planning application proposing the erection of one dwelling on land to the east of The Tywnings, Wickham Skeith.
2. The following report is in three sections. The first part deals with the Council's Local Validation Requirements for planning applications. The second part is a Design and Access Statement as required by the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) Order 2015. The final part is a Planning Statement which sets out the relevant national and local planning policies and other material considerations.

LOCAL VALIDATION REQUIREMENTS STATEMENT

Affordable Housing

3. The proposed development is below the threshold for affordable housing.

Biodiversity

4. The application is accompanied by a Preliminary Ecological Assessment.

Car Parking

5. The dwelling will be provided with a minimum of two car parking spaces. The level of car parking proposed accords with the Suffolk Parking Guidelines.

Drainage

6. The proposed dwelling will be connected to the mains sewer if available. Alternatively, a Private Treatment Plant will be installed. Surface water will discharge to soakaways.

Flood Risk

7. The Environment Agency Flood Maps confirm that the site is located within Flood Zone 1 where all types of development are acceptable.

Heritage

8. There are no listed buildings in the vicinity of the application site.
9. The site is located within the Wickham Skeith Conservation Area. The Conservation Area for Wickham Skeith was originally designated by East Suffolk County Council in 1973. In 2007, Mid Suffolk District Council produced a Conservation Area Appraisal (CAA.) The CAA highlights the traditional materials most common in the Conservation Area. These consist of render, black weatherboarding, Suffolk red brick, Suffolk white brick and flint/stone. The CAA also identifies the village green, enclosed areas and important vistas.
10. Annex 2 of the NPPF defines 'Significance (for heritage policy)' as *"The value of a heritage asset to this and future generations because of its heritage interest. The interest may be archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic. Significance derives not only from a heritage asset's physical presence, but also from its setting. For World Heritage Sites, the cultural value described within each site's Statement of Outstanding Universal Value forms part of its significance."*
11. Annex 2 of the NPPF defines the setting of a heritage asset 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."*
12. Paragraphs 207 and 208 of the NPPF set out the considerations when determining applications for development affecting heritage assets.
13. Paragraph 207 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 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 terms 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 possible; and*
 - d) the harm or loss is outweighed by the benefit of bringing the site back into use."*

14. Paragraph 208 of the NPPF 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 securing its optimum viable use”.
15. In this case, the erection of a dwelling of traditional form, scale and materials would not harm the significance of the Conservation Area. It is acknowledged that new development would introduce change to the Conservation Area but change in itself is not harmful. In this case, development of the plot as proposed would have a neutral impact on the significance of the Conservation Area. The Council would have full control over the scale and appearance of the dwelling at the Reserved Matters stage and could therefore ensure that the new dwelling was compatible with its surroundings.

Tree Survey and Report

16. The application is accompanied by a Tree Survey and Report produced by Land and Sculpture Design Partnership.

DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT

Physical Context

17. The application site area consists of part of the garden of The Tywnings. The site is located in the heart of the village in an established residential area.

Use

18. The proposed residential development of the site is justified on the basis that it makes a more efficient use of the land in accordance with Government objectives.

Amount

19. The amount of development is consistent with the scale and density of development in the locality.

Layout

20. The layout of the development is a Reserved Matter to be agreed at a later stage. However, the indicative layout plan clearly illustrates that the site can accommodate a dwelling without infringement into the Root Protection Area (RPA) of any important trees.

Scale & Appearance

21. The scale and appearance of the proposed dwelling is a Reserved Matter to be agreed at a later stage. However, it is intended that the dwelling will be a bespoke design which will reflect traditional vernacular architecture and incorporate building materials traditional to Suffolk.

Landscaping

22. Landscaping of the site is a Reserved Matter to be agreed at a later stage.

Access

23. Access to the site will be via a new vehicular access as shown on the submitted drawing. The adjacent highway is not heavily trafficked and therefore the proposed development will have no material impact on highway safety.

PLANNING STATEMENT

24. Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (As Amended) requires planning decisions to be made in accordance with development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
25. In this case, the development plan consists of the Babergh and Mid Suffolk Joint Local Plan, adopted November 2023.
26. Wickham Skeith does not have a Neighbourhood Plan.
27. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) is a material consideration.

Development plan

28. Policy SP01 deals with housing needs and states in part that in Mid Suffolk the Joint Local Plan (Parts 1 and 2) will seek to deliver a minimum of 10,165 net additional dwellings (535 dwellings per annum) over the plan period.

29. Policy SP03 deals with "The sustainable location of new development". It is reproduced below.

SP03 - The sustainable location of new development

- 1. New housing development will come forward through extant planning permissions, allocations in made Neighbourhood Plans, windfall development in accordance with the relevant policies of the Plan or Neighbourhood Plans and any allocations which are made in the forthcoming Part 2 Plan.**
- 2. Settlement boundaries are defined on the Policies Map. These boundaries were established in earlier Local Plans and Core Strategies and have not been reviewed as part of the Plan but are carried forward without change at the present time. The principle of development is established within settlement boundaries in accordance with the relevant policies of this Plan. Outside of the settlement boundaries, development will normally only be permitted where:
 - a) the site is allocated for development, or**
 - b) it is in accordance with a made Neighbourhood Plan, or**
 - c) it is in accordance with one of the policies of this Plan listed in Table 5; or**
 - d) it is in accordance with paragraph 80 of the NPPF (2021).****
- 3. Settlement boundaries will be reviewed, and if necessary revised, as part of the preparation of the Part 2 Plan.**

30. The application site was within the settlement boundary for Wickham Skeith as designated by the Mid Suffolk Local Plan (1998). However, the Mid Suffolk Core Strategy (2008) did not include Wickham Skeith within its settlement hierarchy and therefore the village is currently classified as countryside. That will not change until the adoption of Part 2 of the Joint Local Plan.

31. Policy LP01 of the JLP is relevant. It concerns windfall infill housing development outside of settlement boundaries. It states:

“Proposals for windfall infill¹⁸ development outside settlement boundaries where there is a cluster of at least 10 well related dwellings will be acceptable, subject to compliance with all the following:

a) It would not be detrimental to the character and appearance of the settlement, landscape (including the AONB), residential amenity or any heritage, environmental or community assets;

b) It would not result in consolidating sporadic or ribbon development or result in loss of gaps between settlements resulting in coalescence; and

c) The development would usually be for only one or two dwellings.”.

32. Footnote 18 of the JLP defines infill as *“the filling of a small undeveloped plot in an otherwise built-up highway frontage”.*

33. The application site is an undeveloped plot in an otherwise built up highway frontage and is within a cluster of more than 10 well related dwellings. The proposal would not be detrimental to the character or appearance of the settlement, the landscape, residential amenity or any heritage environmental or community assets. Furthermore, the development would not result in consolidating sporadic or ribbon development or result in loss of gaps between settlements resulting in coalesce. Consequently, the development accords with policy LP01.

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

34. The NPPF sets out the Government's planning policies and is a material consideration in the determination of planning applications. At the heart of the NPPF is a presumption in favour of sustainable development.

35. Paragraph 8 of the NPPF describes the three objectives of sustainable development as economic, social and environmental and states that these dimensions give rise to the need for the planning decisions to produce economic, social role and environmental benefits.

36. The proposed development would fulfil each of the three objectives of sustainable development. Firstly, it would meet the economic objectives as the residents of the development would help to sustain and improve the vitality and viability of local services

and facilities in Wickham Skeith and other villages nearby. Secondly, the development would benefit the local economy by generating local jobs in the building trades during construction.

37. The development would meet the social role of sustainable development by providing a new family home in an area where there is a general demand for more housing.

38. Like the vast majority of villages within Mid Suffolk, Wickham Skeith does not benefit from a regular public transport service. However, the village is a short distance from Bacton, Finningham and Mendlesham, all of which benefit from a good range of local shops, services and facilities.

CONCLUSIONS

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

40. In this case, the proposed development accords with policy LP01 of the development plan and should therefore be approved in accordance with the presumption in favour of sustainable development.

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