

AGENDA ITEM NO: 8/2(e)

Parish:	Northwold	
Proposal:	Outline Application: proposed residential development of 3no. self-build plots	
Location:	Land W of 3 Little London Road Northwold Norfolk	
Applicant:	M G Property Developments Ltd	
Case No:	19/00348/O (Outline Application)	
Case Officer:	Mrs C Dorgan	Date for Determination: 22 April 2019 Extension of Time Expiry Date: 6 June 2019

Reason for Referral to Planning Committee – Called in by Councillor Peake.

Neighbourhood Plan: No

Case Summary:

The application is for outline consent with some matters reserved for the construction of three dwellings at Little London Road, Northwold. Access is to be considered at this stage, with three separate accesses shown accessing the Little London Road to the south. The site lies outside the development boundary for Northwold and currently comprises open paddock land. The site is immediately adjacent to the Northwold Conservation Area.

Key Issues:

Principle of Development
Impact on the Conservation Area and Listed Buildings
Highway Safety

Recommendation:

REFUSE

The Site and Application:

Outline permission with all matters except for access reserved is sought for three dwellings.

The site lies outside the development boundary for Northwold, a Key Rural Service Centre (with Methwold). The site is currently used as paddock land and is bordered to the west by Riverside, with a number of residential properties on the other side of the lane.

The proposal site is located directly adjacent to the Northwold Conservation Area, with Waterloo House; a grade II listed building diagonally opposite to the west.

Supporting Case:

A supporting statement was requested; however one was not received at the time of writing this report.

Response to Consultation:

Northwold and Whittington Parish Council: OBJECTION.

The following considerations were agreed as the basis of the objection:

1. The site is outside of the development boundary for the Parish as detailed within the Site Allocations and Development Management Policies Plan 2016 and approval of the site would contradict the following statement within the plan G.59.7 there were no available sites in Northwold which could satisfy the local highway authority's requirements, and hence the Council has chosen not to allocate any sites there.
1. The development site is partly situated on a 60mph road and entrance / exit to the proposed site would create a road safety hazard for all road users.
2. The Parish Council believes that the development will have a detrimental impact on the Northwold Conservation Area and the Listed Building Waterloo House.

Conservation Officer: OBJECTION.

This application seeks outline consent for three substantial houses in parkland/agricultural land to the southeast of the village. The site is immediately adjacent to the Northwold Conservation Area, and diagonally opposite the Grade II listed Waterloo House and will therefore have an impact upon the setting of these heritage assets.

The Northwold Conservation Area Character Statement highlights that the character of the conservation area is firmly linked to the "mature historic landscape of trees grass verges, rough tracks, hedgerows and paddocks which are located between, around and behind the buildings. The association of buildings and landscape both within the village and also when seen from outside which gives Northwold Conservation Area its essential quality" Moreover the statement emphasises specific importance to the landscape to the east of the conservation area: the application site "Views out of the conservation area are delightful and give glimpses of farmland and water meadows to the north and surrounding agriculture to the southeast and west. Finally there are also attractive views of the conservation area from the Little London Road to the east." The statement goes on to reaffirm the importance of the application site, highlighting the "eastern node..... is also very attractive.....to the north east a mature treed landscape which provides a definite visual stop to the conservation area".

The construction of three substantial houses in this sensitive location will erode this mature historic landscape, detract from important views in and out of the conservation area and destroy the definite visual stop to the conservation area created by the mature treed landscape. This development will cause harm to the setting and therefore significance of the Northwold Conservation area and on this basis should be refused.

The setting above also provides the setting for the listed Waterloo house which looks diagonally out to the mature treed landscape described above. The development of three houses will detract from this setting causing harm to the significance of this heritage asset and on this basis should be refused.

Local Highway Authority: NO OBJECTION.

I observe that access only is to be considered at this stage and having examined the plans submitted it is apparent that the visibility splays for the accesses could accord to the adopted standard. However, I would suggest that the access for the west most plot be moved further east to avoid the need to adjust utility apparatus. Recommended conditions.

Natural England: NO OBJECTION. No significant adverse impacts are expected.

Representations:

30 letters of **OBJECTION** have been received. The comments can be summarised as follows:

- *Outside development boundary
- *Surface water flooding
- *Little Wissey river environment and the requirement for ecological appraisal
- *Loss of verdant character and green verges
- *Parking on highway and highway safety
- *Impact on Conservation Area and surrounding Listed Buildings
- *Ribbon development out of character with village
- *Out of keeping with local vernacular
- *Impact on Trees
- *Impact on views into/out of conservation area

LDF CORE STRATEGY POLICIES

CS01 - Spatial Strategy

CS02 - The Settlement Hierarchy

CS06 - Development in Rural Areas

CS08 - Sustainable Development

CS11 - Transport

SITE ALLOCATIONS AND DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT POLICIES PLAN 2016

DM1 – Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development

DM2 – Development Boundaries

DM6 - Housing Needs of Rural Workers

DM15 – Environment, Design and Amenity

NATIONAL GUIDANCE

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

Planning Practice Guidance (PPG)

Planning Considerations:

The Key Issues are:

- *Principle of Development
- *Impact on Conservation Area and Listed Buildings
- *Highway Safety

Principle of Development:

The Borough Council Local Plan currently comprises the Core Strategy (2011) and the Site Allocations and Development Management Policies Plan (SADMP) (2016). Northwold, along with Methwold, is classified as a Key Rural Service Centre in the Core Strategy and as a result the settlement has a defined development boundary which aims to guide development to the most sustainable locations within the borough. The proposal lies outside of the development boundary for Northwold and is therefore treated as countryside in accordance with SADMP policy DM2 which restricts development to that identified as suitable in rural areas. No justification has been provided with this application to outweigh this policy.

Information provided within the application states an intention for the proposed dwellings to be Self-Build homes for the applicant and his extended family. Paragraph 61 of the revised NPPF (2018) states, in regard to delivering a sufficient supply of homes, that: 'the size, type, tenure of housing needed for different groups in the community should be assessed and reflected in planning policies... including but not limited to, those whose require affordable housing, families with children, older people, students, people with disabilities, service families, travellers, people who rent their homes and people wishing to commission or build their own homes.' The LPA must 'have regard' to self-build opportunities and give enough suitable development permissions to meet the identified demand. However, given the information and justification provided as part of this application, it is not considered that the benefits of the intended self-build status of the proposed development outweigh the lack of justification for development in the countryside. Whilst the NPPF is a material consideration in planning decisions, it does not alter the statutory status of the development plan as the starting point for decision making. The lack of justification for the development leads to the development being considered contrary to the current policies of the Local Plan, more specifically Policy DM2 of the Site Allocations and Development Management Policies Plan (2016).

Impact on Conservation Area and Listed Buildings:

The proposal site is located immediately adjacent to the Northwold Conservation Area, and diagonally opposite the Grade II listed Waterloo House. Development on the site will therefore have an impact on the setting of these heritage assets, which there is a legal duty to protect and enhance. Paragraphs 190, 192, 193 and 194 of the NPPF, also highlight the importance of protecting heritage assets and their significance.

By way of the construction of the houses as well as the three separate access routes into the site, the proposal will lead to the loss of green verges and trees which are specifically noted within the Northwold Conservation Area statement, which states:

'Inextricably linked to the built fabric is the mature historic landscape of trees, grass verges, rough tracks, hedgerows and paddocks which are located between, around and behind the buildings. The association of buildings and landscape both within the village and also when seen from outside which gives Northwold Conservation Area its essential quality.'

The Character Statement also emphasises the importance of the landscape to the east of the conservation area - the application site.

'Views out of the conservation are delightful and give glimpses of farmland and water meadows to the north and surrounding agricultural to the southeast and west... Finally, there are also attractive views of the conservation area from Little London Road to the east' The statement goes on to reaffirm the importance of the application site, highlighting that 'the eastern node...is also very attractive... to the north east a mature treed landscape which provides a definite visual stop to the conservation area.'

The construction of three substantial houses in this sensitive location will erode this mature historic landscape, detract from important established views both in and out of the conservation area and destroy the definite visual stop to the conservation area that the verdant character of the current site provides. The proposal site also provides the setting of the grade II listed Waterloo House which looks diagonally out to the mature treed landscape described above.

The development of three houses will detract from this setting causing harm to the significance of both the Listed Building and the surrounding Northwold Conservation Area, which as designated heritage assets there is a duty to protect and enhance. The application is therefore considered contrary to Policy CS12 of the Core Strategy (2011) and DM15 of the Site Allocations and Development Management Policies Plan (2016), as well as paragraphs 190, 192, 193 and 194.

Highway Safety:

The application is for outline consent with access to be considered at this stage. Three individual accesses are shown onto Little London Lane, and the Local Highway Authority have stated no objection to the proposal, recommending conditions relating to the laying out of accesses and visibility splays prior to the first occupation of the dwellings. Whilst the safety of the proposed accesses were reasons for objection from the parish council, as the issue has not brought objection from the Local Highway Authority, the development is considered acceptable in this respect.

CONCLUSION:

It is concluded that the proposed development would create three new dwellings outside the development boundary for Northwold on land which is considered countryside. The applicant has not provided any special justification why countryside protection policies should be relaxed. The proposed development is therefore considered contrary to Policy CS06 of the Core Strategy and Policy DM2 of the SADMP (2016).

By virtue of its siting, in close proximity to the Northwold Conservation Area and the Grade II Listed Waterloo House, the development would also cause harm to the setting of the designated heritage assets. Paragraph 193 of the NPPF states that when assessing the impact of a proposal on the significance of a heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation. This is irrespective of whether any potential harm amounts to substantial harm, total loss or less than substantial harm to its significance. Paragraph 194 goes on to state that any harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset (from its alteration or destruction, or from development in its setting), should require clear and convincing justification. In accordance with paragraph 196 of the NPPF, the limited public benefits provided by the proposed scheme, which is also contrary to established policy on the location of development, are not considered to outweigh the harm to the significance of the heritage asset in this case.

The proposal therefore fails to accord with the provisions of paragraphs 190, 193, 194 & 196 of the NPPF, Core Strategy Policies CS06, CS08 & CS12 of the LDF, and Policies DM2 and

DM15 of the SADMP (2016). It is recommended that members refuse the application for the reasons discussed above and detailed below.

RECOMMENDATION:

REFUSE for the following reason(s):

- 1 The site lies outside of the development boundary for Northwold where development is restricted to that identified as sustainable in rural area. No justification has been provided that outweighs the policies of the local plan and the development is therefore considered contrary to policies CS06 of the Core Strategy (2011) and DM2 of the Site Allocations and Development Management Policies Plan (2016).

- 2 It is considered that the proposed development by virtue of its siting would cause harm to the setting of designated heritage assets (the Northwold Conservation Area and Grade II Listed Waterloo House). In accordance with paragraph 196 of the NPPF, the harm created by the proposed development must be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal. Given the proposal's positioning outside the development boundary for Northwold, it is considered that the harm created by the proposed development would not be outweighed by the limited public benefit of a net gain of three dwellings.

The proposal therefore fails to accord with paragraphs 190, 193, 194 & 196 of the NPPF and Core Strategy Policy CS12 of the LDF.