

Parish:	Congham	
Proposal:	Proposed SELF-BUILD conversion of outbuilding to a single dwelling with extensions and erection of cart shed	
Location:	Little Congham House Grimston Road Congham KINGS LYNN PE32 1DR	
Applicant:	Mr & Mrs J Diksa	
Case No:	25/01684/F (Full Application)	
Case Officer:	Jody Haines	Date for Determination: 10 December 2025 Extension of Time Expiry Date: 6 February 2026

Reason for Referral to Planning Committee – Called in by Cllr de Whalley and officer recommendation is contrary to Parish Council recommendations.

Neighbourhood Plan: Yes

Case Summary

This application is for the proposed self-build conversion of an outbuilding to a single dwelling with extensions and erection of a cart shed.

The application site is located within the Congham development boundary as seen within the policies map as defined by the Local Plan 2021-2040 and Figure 3: Strategic gaps of Grimston, Pott Row, Roydon and Congham Neighbourhood Plan.

The site comprises an area of land measuring approx. 1439 sqm and accommodates an outbuilding constructed of a variety of materials such as carrstone, knapped flint, chalk and brick.

Key Issues

Principle of Development
 Form and Character
 Impact on Non-Designated Heritage Asset
 Impact on Neighbour Amenity
 Highway Safety
 Flood Risk
 Impact on biodiversity
 Other matters requiring consideration prior to the determination of this application

Recommendation

A) APPROVE subject to the completion of a legal agreement to secure the dwelling as a self-build dwelling. If the agreement is not completed within 4 months of the committee resolution, but reasonable progress has been made, delegated authority is granted to the Assistant Director/Planning Control Manager to continue negotiation and complete the agreement and issue the decision.

B) REFUSE If in the opinion of the Assistant Director/Planning Control Manager no reasonable progress is made to complete the legal agreement within 4 months of the date of the committee resolution, the application is REFUSED on the failure to secure the dwelling as a self-build in line with LP31.

THE APPLICATION

This application is for the conversion of an outbuilding with extensions to create a self-build dwelling and erection of cart shed following the sub-division of the garden land of Little Congham House.

The existing outbuilding constructed of carrstone, knapped flint, chalk and brick with a clay pantile roof, would be brought into a viable use, seeing single storey extensions to the north of the outbuilding constructed of brick and carrstone with a red zinc roof.

The application site is approx. 1439 sqm, located within the development boundary as seen within the policies map as defined by the Local Plan and Figure 3: strategic gaps of Grimston, Pott Row, Roydon and Congham Neighbourhood Plan. Congham falls within Tier 6: Smaller Villages and Hamlets within Policy LP01 of the Local Plan 2025.

APPLICANT/AGENT SUPPORTING CASE

None received at the time of writing the report.

PLANNING HISTORY

No relevant planning history.

RESPONSE TO CONSULTATION

Parish Council: OBJECTION

Original comments

A spring exists in the site of the proposed garages, flooding has occurred previously. More vehicles will use St Andrew's Lane. The zinc panelling on a section of the roof is not in keeping with the area. The size of the plot in comparison to the development seems small. The neighbourhood plan recognises Congham as a hamlet and does not seek further development. The neighbouring Owl Barn will lose their view and have a building just 15 metres from their property.

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Comments received after amended plans

The adjustments to the planning application have been debated by the Parish Council and our original view to object to the planning application has not changed and our concerns remain as already put forward to the planning department.

Highways Authority: NO OBJECTION

Original comments

Given the site's rural location (albeit within the development boundary), it is remote from the local services and transport connections that are available in Hillington, Gayton or Kings Lynn and as such precludes any realistic opportunity of encouraging a modal shift away from the private car towards public transport or sustainable travel choices.

However, having regard to the scale of the development, it is considered it would be difficult to sustain an objection on the grounds of accessibility and transport sustainability, nor demonstrate that there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety, or the residual cumulative impacts on the road network would be severe.

Accordingly, it is recommended that conditions and / or informatives relating to vehicular access, access gates or other means of obstruction, visibility splays, on-site parking and turning, and development involving works within the public highway are appended to any grant of consent.

Comments received after amended plans

No further comment to make in respect of this application; its response dated 4 November 2025 and recommendations therein remains applicable.

Environmental Health & Housing – Environmental Quality: NO OBJECTION

Original comments

The application is for the development of a new dwelling via the conversion of an existing store/coal shed outbuilding with associated extensions following the sub-division of the application site. Proposed landscaping will comprise of parking and turning situated to the east and north-east of the plot incorporating the outbuilding and additional maintained garden land to the west of the site including patio and courtyard space, laid with slabs.

The application includes a Design & Access Statement, and screening assessment form. Both of which contain information about the site's previous use and assessment of the likelihood of land contamination being present.

The information in the submitted documents suggests that the site and surroundings were associated with historical farm buildings and land. The current use is domestic. The information submitted and also on our files does not identify any significant sources of contamination, therefore we have no objections regarding contaminated land.

Comments received after amendments

No further comments to make.

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Conservation Officer: NO OBJECTION

Original comments

This conversion and extension appear to be similar to the previously submitted pre-app. Within the previous pre-application the barn was recognised as being a Non-Designated Heritage Asset. However, the additional lounge area does make the extension much larger than the existing barn and is not a traditional form of extension for this type of rural building. Perhaps this could be removed or reduced in scale.

It is pleasing that the existing historic barn is being retained, and the extension is limited to single storey, however, it is large and does overpower the barn to some extent.

The materials appear to be acceptable but should be controlled by an on-site sample panel condition. Exact window and door details should also be subject to a condition, along with flues and vents.

The Conservation Team consider that a reduction in the scale of the extension would be an enhancement on the current plans and would cause less harm to the character and setting of the historic barn.

Comments received after amendments

It is clear that the mass of the proposal is the same as that which we provided comments on at pre-application stage. At this point no objection is raised to the proposal. For clarity, there are no concerns now at application stage. The Conservation Team therefore have no objection to the scheme in front of you.

With regards to the window condition – the applicant's plan 923/24/14 REV A state that the windows will be black/dark grey aluminium windows and the elevation plans show that the windows will be slim profile. Should the applicant wish to move away from this material or profile then it would materially affect the appearance, and an application would be required. There is therefore enough information on the plans, and no windows condition would be required.

A condition requesting the sample panel and details of all external materials should however be considered.

Arboricultural Officer: NO OBJECTION

Having reviewed the submitted Arboricultural Assessment, the Arboricultural Officer has no objection in principle to the proposed conversion and associated works. The proposal will necessitate the removal of T1 Yew, which has established directly against the gable end of the existing barn, and one unimportant Cherry Plum tree also located very close to the existing building.

The Arboricultural Assessment provides only preliminary information for the protection of the remaining trees within Group G1, it demonstrates that these may be retained through a combination of protective fencing and ground protection, but a detailed Tree Protection Plan has not been provided at this stage.

This information may either be submitted prior to determination or, more appropriately, secured via a pre-commencement condition, requiring the submission and approval of a

detailed Tree Protection Plan and Arboricultural Method Statement in accordance with BS5837:2012, prior to the commencement of any works on site.

In addition, the proposed site plan and street scene drawings indicate the planting of nine new trees. To secure this it is recommended the inclusion of a standard hard and soft landscaping condition, to include planting details, implementation, and replacement provisions

Ecology Officer: NO OBJECTION

Original comments

Protected Species

Bats

The barn was considered to have moderate bat roosting potential and the PEA recommended further surveys. Emergence surveys were undertaken on 23/07/2025 and 18/08/2025. On the 23/07/2025 a maximum of three brown long-eared bats were seen to enter the barn via the western gable end window (assumed not to be roosting). A single soprano pipistrelle was still inside at the end of the survey. Soprano pipistrelle, common pipistrelle, brown long-eared, natterers and noctule were noted around the site. On 18/08/2025 a maximum of two brown long-eared were seen to emerge. Soprano pipistrelle, common pipistrelle, serotine, barbastelle and noctule calls were noted around the site.

It is concluded that 1 x brown long eared and 1x pipistrelle roost (max 2 bats) are present and a licence is required to facilitate the proposed development.

Great Crested Newts (GCN)

The PEA also identified one pond that required further survey to understand the potential to support GCN. On the 30/06/2025, an eDNA assessment was undertaken of Pond P2 and the result returned was negative for GCN DNA. It is concluded that GCN are likely absent from the site.

Birds

No active bird nests were noted during the survey. The survey was however undertaken outside of the main bird nesting period. 10 barn owl pellets were noted within Section 1 of the barn, and it is reported that a barn owl is often seen in there. There was some potential for nesting birds under the pantile roof and within cavities. The remaining vegetation on site (that hadn't been cut at the time of the survey) did have the potential to support common garden birds.

Protected Sites

There are no impacts anticipated on protected sites beyond the in-combination recreation impact that can be mitigated for through a GIRAMS payment. An sHRA form should be completed and saved to file and a GIRAMS tariff payment made.

Protected Habitats

No notable or protected habitats were identified on site. The application has claimed a self-build and custom build exemption from Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) and this should be

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conditioned. An exemption from BNG does not preclude every developments duty to provide a measurable net gain in biodiversity. Appropriate ecological enhancements have been recommended in the PEA and bat report to meet this duty and implementation of them should form condition of any consent.

In summary the LPA's Senior Ecologist raises no objection to the proposed development subject to conditions and / or informatives relating to BNG, protected species licence and ecological enhancements.

Comments received after amendments

There are no comments on the updates submitted. The previous comments on the 28/10/20205 remain valid and unchanged.

REPRESENTATIONS

There was **ONE** comment in **OBJECTION** received on the original scheme. The comment raised the following:

- The cart shed would block rural views and reduce natural light to neighbouring dwellings.

Following amendments there were **FOUR** comments received in **OBJECTION** and **THREE** comments received in **SUPPORT**.

The comments in **OBJECTION** raised the following:

- The cart shed would obstruct views, be overbearing, reduce natural light, create a sense of enclosure to neighbouring dwellings,
- The cart shed would be out of keeping for the established character of the area,
- Disruption to neighbouring dwellings during the construction phase,
- Loss of privacy, increase overlooking and overbearing impact,
- To protect privacy, safety and minimise impact to neighbouring dwellings the current picket fence should be replaced with a flint and brick wall,
- Possibility of a natural spring on the site, where the gardens of Owl and St Valentines Barns have been flooded, where any disturbance could increase the risk of water runoff and flooding elsewhere,
- The materials and style are not in keeping for the area,
- Little Congham House would remain a large house with little garden, and
- Little Congham House would see devaluation.

The comments in **SUPPORT** raised the following:

- The proposal is a pleasing piece of architecture using contemporary and traditional design and materials sensitively designed to blend and enhance the local area,
- Without the proposal the outbuilding would become derelict,
- Opportunity to preserve heritage,
- Appreciation of the use of single storey which will naturally blend into the surrounding buildings,
- The development would feature typical Norfolk features such as carrstone insets and 5-barred gate which would make the road more attractive,
- Never seen evidence of a spring on this plot of land, and
- Positive and harmonious visual impact on this outlying part of the village.

KING'S LYNN AND WEST NORFOLK LOCAL PLAN 2021-2040

LP01 - Spatial Strategy and Settlement Hierarchy Policy (Strategic Policy)

LP02 - Residential Development on Windfall Sites (Strategic Policy)

LP06 - Climate Change (Strategic Policy)

LP13 - Transportation (Strategic Policy)

LP18 - Design & Sustainable Development (Strategic Policy)

LP19 - Environmental Assets - Green Infrastructure, Landscape Character, Biodiversity and Geodiversity (Strategic Policy)

LP20 - Environmental Assets- Historic Environment (Strategic Policy)

LP21 - Environment, Design and Amenity (Strategic Policy)

LP25 - Sites in Areas of Flood Risk (Strategic Policy)

LP27 - Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) (Strategic Policy)

LP31 - Custom and Self-Build Housing (Strategic Policy)

NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN POLICIES

Policy 2 - Infrastructure & Sust Growt

Policy 3 - Housing Type and Mix

Policy 5 - Density of New Housing Dev

Policy 7 - Location of New Housing

Policy 12 - Dark Skies

Policy 14 - Heritage Assets

Policy 15 - Sustainable Transport

NATIONAL GUIDANCE

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

Planning Practice Guidance (PPG)

National Design Guide 2021

PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

The main considerations are:

- Principle of development
- Form and character
- Impact on Non-Designated Heritage Asset
- Impact on neighbour amenity
- Highway safety
- Flood risk
- Impact on biodiversity
- Other matters requiring consideration prior to the determination of this application

Principle of Development:

Paragraph 2 of the National Planning Policy Framework (2024) reiterates the requirements of planning law which is that applications for planning permission be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

In this instance the Development Plan comprises of the King's Lynn and West Norfolk Local Plan 2021-2040, (2025) and Grimston, Pott Row, Roydon and Congham (GPRRC) Neighbourhood Plan 2017-2036, (2024) (hereon referred to as the NP).

The site is located within the development boundary in Congham which falls within Tier 6: Smaller Villages and Hamlets. In accordance with Policy LP02 of the Local Plan and Policy 7 of the NP, development within development boundaries would be supported subject to being in accordance with certain criteria and other development plan policies.

Policy LP02 of the Local Plan and Policy 3 of the NP strive for the size, type and tenure of new housing to support the needs of the community. The proposal for one dwelling would provide three-bedrooms. Whilst Policy 3 is not engaged due to the proposal only providing one additional dwelling not two as required by the policy, the King's Lynn & West Norfolk Housing Needs Assessment 2020 shows the need for more three-bedroom dwellings.

It is not considered that a three-bedroom dwelling would cause significant adverse impacts on services and infrastructure, therefore not engaging Policy 2 of the NP due to the proposal not generating the need for additional local services and infrastructure and therefore being in line with Policy LP02 of the Local Plan.

The application is identified as 'self-build' dwellings. Footnote 28 of the NPPF explains that that the Self Build and Custom Housebuilding Act 2015, (as amended recently by the LURA), places a legal duty "to give enough suitable development permissions to meet the identified demand". Para 73(b) of the NPPF 2024 seeks opportunities to support small sites to come forward for custom and self-build housing, with Local Plan Policy LP31 supporting self-build and custom housebuilding where it respects local character and complies with other relevant policies of the plan. Development is therefore acceptable in principle subject to securing the provision of the self-build dwelling via a legal agreement.

Form and Character:

Policy LP02 of the Local Plan provides criteria for ensuring acceptable windfall development. In regards to design, it ensures sustainable design that respects and enhances local character, contributes to place making and enforcing local distinctiveness, and that it can be assimilated into the settlement. Specifically in relation to infill development of small gaps

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within the development boundary within an otherwise continuously built-up frontage in Congham, Policy 7 of the NP requires that these do not:

- a. Harm the purpose of the strategic gap (Policy 1);
- b. Fill a gap which makes a positive contribution to the street scene or the distinctiveness of the rural character of the settlement; and
- c. Unduly erode the sense of openness.

Policies LP18 and LP21 of the Local Plan and Policy 4 of the NP require all new development to be of a high-quality design, which reinforces, complements, protects and enhances the character and amenity of Congham. This will be achieved by proposals responding to the local context by responding, preserving, complimenting or enhancing the character of the area. This will be achieved by ensuring the appropriate density, variety, scale and layout, and the use of vernacular and sustainable materials. Development that is of a poor design will be refused.

Policy 5 of the NP provides further details ensuring that density of new housing reflects the prevailing character of the area, with the building footprint, including any ancillary buildings, to be in keeping with the predominant pattern of development in the area and site's context. Sufficient outdoor amenity and landscaping space should be provided. This should not be eroded over time by inappropriate extensions.

In regards to extensions these will be supported provided they:

- a) Do not reduce the gaps between existing dwellings in a way which leads to a cramped appearance or undermines the rural character of the village;
- b) Are subordinate to the original dwelling; and
- c) Retain sufficient space for off street parking for the expanded dwelling in accordance with Norfolk County Council parking standards.

The proposal would see the conversion of the outbuilding with an extension added to the north. To the northeast of the dwelling there would be a cart shed/store. The extension is identified in three parts: the link (from the original barn), the main section and the projection to the north. The link would measure a width of approx. 9.4 metres, depth of approx. 4.4-4.6 metres and a ridge height of approx. 4.27 metres to the east and a parapet height of approx. 3.3 metres to the west. The main section would measure a width of approx. 21.9 metres, depth of approx. 5.62 metres, and a ridge height of approx. 4.97 metres. The projection to the north would measure a width of approx. 5.6 metres, depth of approx. 6 metres, and ridge height of approx. 4.97 metres.

The cart shed with store would measure a width of approx. 9 metres, depth of approx. 6 metres with a ridge height of approx. 3.9 metres.

Due to the location of the proposal, it would not impact on the strategic gaps as recognised on Figure 3 of the NP.

The built development in the immediate vicinity is limited being in a clustered form. The site currently provides garden land to Little Congham House. Within the locality garages, outbuildings and converted outbuildings can be seen. Whilst the proposal would reduce the space awarded to the south of Little Congham House, given the single storey nature and open space remaining, it would not result in a cramped form of development and would reflect the form of surrounding buildings.

The subdivision of Little Congham House would allow the retention of ample amenity space for the donor dwelling and the proposed dwelling. The proposal would also see a parking and turning area to the east of the dwelling.

The extension, whilst large in mass, is considered to be of an appropriate scale and design that are sympathetic to the existing built form and reflective of the locality. The materials proposed are a mixture of traditional and modern materials. The extension would see the use of Norfolk red facing brick and coursed carrstone slip which would be in keeping with the vernacular of the locality. Whilst the red standing-seam zinc roof would introduce a new material giving a new profile, the colour would respect that of clay pantiles. There would also be limited views of this material awarded to the south of the site. The extension would also see details such as straight ashlar, brick banding, and parapet to reflect the traditional character and appearance of the surrounding locality and outbuilding. The use of black/grey aluminium windows and doors would not detrimentally impact the character and appearance of the locality.

The cart shed would have vertical timber cladded elevations with a hipped clay peg/pin tiled roof. The use of these materials would allow the building to remain subservient in nature and would be in keeping for the surrounding rural locality.

Therefore, whilst the proposal would introduce an extension which has a large mass, with contemporary material of red zinc roofing, the proposal keeps a simplistic design which materials respect or respond to the materials or colour of the local vernacular. It is considered the site would remain with a sense of openness, providing adequate amenity space and parking and turning area, and would not see a cramped form of development. It is therefore considered the proposal complies with Policies LP02, LP18 and LP21 of the Local Plan and Policies 5 and 7 of the NP.

Impact on Non-Designated Heritage Asset:

Para 202 of the NPPF recognises that heritage assets are an irreplaceable resource and should be conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance, so they can be enjoyed for their contribution to the quality of life of existing and future generations. With Para 208 requiring that any conflict between a heritage asset and any aspect of the proposal is avoided or minimised. Para 207 of the NPPF requires an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting.

These are reiterated by Policy LP20 of the Local Plan and Policy 14 of the NP requiring a heritage statement and development to be of the highest design quality that will sustain and protect, and where appropriate, enhance the special interest, character and significance of the heritage assets and their setting and that will make a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness will be supported.

Para 216 of the NPPF, Policy LP20 of the Local Plan and Policy 14 of the NP ensure that proposals to non-designated heritage assets should be assessed on their significance and their setting. Development which would remove, harm or undermine its significance, or its contribution to the character of a place (directly or indirectly) will require a balanced judgement having regard to the scale of harm and significance of the asset.

The outbuilding is of some age and has some historic significance to the site and the wider farm complex. Therefore, it has been identified as a Non-Designated Heritage Asset. The form, scale and character of the barn add to the character of the area and sits comfortably within the rural street scene.

The outbuilding has been recognised as being suitable for the conversion and therefore would bring the outbuilding into a viable use which would see restoration and long-term care of the outbuilding.

To respect the existing character and appearance, the proposal would utilise as many existing openings as possible. Due to the disrepair of the roof, it would be re-roofed using the re-claimed pantiles as much as possible. The rooflights would be conservation rooflights therefore lying flusher with the roof to reduce the visual impact. The windows would be black/grey aluminium with slim profiles which would not detract from the character and appearance of the outbuilding.

Whilst the extension has a contrasting design such as the gable projections and red zinc roofing, the scale would remain single storey with the use of carrstone slip, Norfolk red brick, pantiles and traditional detailing, therefore respecting the local vernacular of the outbuilding and the surrounding locality.

Although the extension has a larger mass than the outbuilding, the extension is set in from the west and east ends of the outbuilding and due to its location, the outbuilding remains the principal element from the street scene. It is also considered that the design would not overpower the setting of Little Congham House or its grounds.

Currently the outbuilding is of a traditional form, scale and construction. Whilst the proposal would alter this causing some level of harm, the outbuilding can still be appreciated, with the proposal seeing the preservation of the outbuilding, therefore overall, there would be negligible harm to the significance of the Non-Designated Heritage Asset. It is considered the proposal is in accordance with Policy LP20 of the Local Plan, Policy 14 of the NP and the NPPF, specifically Para 216.

Impact on Neighbour Amenity:

Policy LP21 of the Local Plan and Policy 7 of the NP states that proposals will be assessed against their impact on neighbouring uses and their occupants as well as the amenity of any future occupants. Development that has a significant adverse impact on the amenity of others will be refused. The NPPF also refers to these issues in para 135f by encouraging development to have a high standard of amenity for existing and future users.

To the south of the conversion, extensions and cart shed and to the west of the conversion and extensions, there would be no neighbour amenity impacts as there are no neighbouring properties.

Impact on Little Congham House

The site would see the sub-division of Little Congham House. Whilst Little Congham House has an immediate garden (approx. 223 sqm) to the south, there is ample land (approx. 1885 sqm) to the west of the house to serve this property.

The cart shed would be approx. 5.3 metres from the west boundary of an approx. 1.7 metre carrstone and brick wall, and approx. 3 metres from the north boundary of an approx. 2.5 metre carrstone and brick wall. The adjacent land to the west is a garden and gravel drive to the north. Given the scale of the cart shed, current and proposed boundary treatments and incidental residential use, there would be minimal neighbour amenity impact.

The main extension would be approx. 1 metre to the current approx. 1 metre picket fence and approx. 1.5 metre carrstone and brick wall, with the fence to be infilled by a garden wall and woven steel fencing installed above both elements. The main extension would be approx. 16.1 metres from Little Congham House. The projection extension would be approx. 2.1 metres from an approx. 2 metre brick and flint wall and approx. 1 metre from the wall to

the east. To the north of the projection there would be an ASHP positioned 1.8 metres behind the wall and would have a separation distance of approx. 7.2 metres to Little Congham House.

Due to the single storey nature, boundary treatments, no windows on the north elevation with the dormer, rooflights and gable glazing being at a high level, there would be no overbearing or overlooking impact, with minimal overshadowing impact.

Impact on Owl Barn and St Valentines Barn

The boundary treatment to the east of the site is an approx. 1.2 metre picket fence for Owl Barn. The boundary treatment for St Valentines Barn has a short length of approx. 1.6 metre close boarded fence with the rest of the boundary being an approx. 1.7-1.8 metre flint and brick wall.

The cart shed would be approx. 6.3 metres from the east boundary and given the separation distance, incidental residential use and scale of the cart shed, there would be minimal neighbour amenity impacts.

Given the separation distance from the conversion and extensions to the east boundary (approx. 15.1 metres from bedroom 3, approx. 20.8 metres from the entrance hall, and approx. 18.1 to the wall and 21.1 metres to the picket fence from bedroom 2), scale of the proposal, boundary treatments (such as the wall and fence), and the window on the gable end being of a high level, there would be no overbearing, overshadowing or overlooking impact.

Therefore, the proposal accords with Policy LP21 of the Local Plan, Policy 7 of the NP and Para 135f of the NPPF.

Highway Safety:

Policies LP02, LP06, LP13 and LP21 of the Local Plan ensure proposals do not result in unacceptable impacts on highway safety or the road network, provide safe and convenient access for all modes, and promote and support sustainable modes of transport. These policies also push to ensure development is located within the correct locations reducing the need to travel by car and utilise sustainable modes of transport. Policies LP14 and LP21 of the Local Plan provides parking provisions for new dwellings and ensures all development has adequate parking facilities.

Policy 7 and 15 of the NP allow for infill development within settlements provided that vehicular access and off-street parking is acceptable and promotes sustainable modes of transport.

Whilst the comments of the LHA regarding the sustainability of the location are noted, the Local Plan provides for infill development within Tier 6 settlements and is therefore acceptable.

The site would see the removal of the existing access and flint and brick wall to the south, to make way for a new entrance. The visibility splays and inward opening gates have been shown on the plan and no objection has been raised by the Local Highway Authority subject to conditions.

Whilst the proposed cart shed would not comply with the minimum dimensions for parking spaces cited within Policy LP14 of the Local Plan, there is adequate space on-site to

accommodate the two parking spaces, with the cart shed providing the secure and covered cycle parking. The Local Highway Authority does not object and as a result the proposal is considered acceptable.

Overall, the proposal would comply with Policies LP02, LP13 and LP21 of the Local Plan and Policy 7 of the NP.

Flood Risk and drainage:

Policy LP25 of the Local Plan ensures that where sites are at risk of flooding and there are no other sites appropriate with a lower risk of flooding, they will be subject to a site-specific flood risk assessment that considers all sources of flooding. Policy 13 of the NP specifically discuss surface water flooding and incorporating Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) wherever technically feasible. Policies LP06 and LP18 of the Local Plan also ensures that new development is designed and adapted to incorporate climate change and flood risk resilience.

The site lies within Flood Zone 1, which has a low probability of flooding; however, the site is in an area at risk of surface water flooding and ground water flooding.

The surface water flooding has a 3.3% chance of flooding per year to the west, and 0.1-1% chance of flooding per year to the rest of the site. This has a depth of no more than 30cm. The groundwater flooding is susceptible of <25% to the west and <=25%<50% for the rest of the site.

The public comments regarding the spring have been noted however, the agent/applicant has no evidence to suggest that there is a spring on the land.

As per Section 14 the NPPF all development at risk of flooding (from any source) needs to pass the sequential test and a proportionate site-specific flood risk assessment required.

The agent has provided evidence that there are no other available sites within the Congham area, with a lower flood risk. The agent has also confirmed that the design of the site will meet the flood risk design standards guidance and that the surface water drainage strategy conforms to the requirements of the Norfolk County Council as LLFA. Whilst this has been stated on the flood risk proforma, given the flood risk on site and concern from neighbouring dwellings, it is considered that further details in relation to how the drainage will meet these standards is required and therefore will be conditioned.

The foul drainage will connect to the main sewers, which falls within the Grimston STW catchment. This catchment is not an affected WRC area.

The new access would be conditioned, so it provides arrangements for surface water drainage to be intercepted and disposed of appropriately to prevent run-off on the highway.

Overall, the proposal would comply with Policies LP06, LP18, and LP25 of the Local Plan, Policy 13 of the NP and the NPPF.

Impact on biodiversity:

Impact on Trees:

Policies LP18, LP19, and LP21 of the Local Plan recognise the importance of landscape character and the need to protect the existing natural environment and green infrastructure

and avoid impact on these aspects. It also ensures the protection and enhancement of biodiversity, and where this is affected, this is mitigated or compensated for.

In addition to the policies of the Local Plan, Policies 4 and 9 of the NP emphasise the need to retain and enhance the overall sense of rural character and openness by enhancing landscaping and vegetation on site. Where proposals affect trees or hedgerows, the proposal must be accompanied by a survey and any loss must result in adequate replacement.

Immediately adjacent to the outbuilding to the west there is a Yew tree (T1) and Cherry Plum (T2) tree. The Yew tree is recognised as category U, which is unsuitable for retention, and the Cherry tree is recognised as category C, which is of low quality and value. The removal of these trees is to ensure that there is no further damage to the outbuilding. It is considered that the loss of these trees would not cause detriment to the visual amenity of the street scene and no objection has been raised by the Arboricultural Officer.

The remaining cluster of trees to the west are proposed to be protected through fencing and ground protection. Whilst this preliminary information has been given, the Arboricultural Officer requires a condition for a detailed tree protection plan.

On the proposed site plan is shows the planting of nine new trees. Currently no details on the species have been provided and therefore this has been captured by a hard and soft landscaping condition which was recommended by the Arboricultural Officer.

Impact on Ecology:

In addition to the policies in the Local Plan, Policy 9 of the NP emphasise the need to safeguard, retain and enhance wildlife. Any loss to habitat should be justified and result in adequate replacement.

The barn was considered to have moderate bat roosting potential, where further surveys were conducted. From these surveys it found the presence of Soprano pipistrelle, common pipistrelle, brown long-eared, natterers and noctule around the site, with long-eared bats and a single soprano pipistrelle bat entering or emerging from the barn.

Given this a licence is required before any work can commence on site to avoid disturbance to the bats, which has been conditioned.

Whilst ponds are in locality to the site it is concluded that Great Crested Newts are likely absent from the site.

Whilst the report was undertaken outside of the main bird nesting period, barn owl pellets were noted within the ecology report, with the potential for nesting birds under the pantile roof, within cavities and within vegetation on the site.

Therefore, to ensure there is minimal impact on wildlife, mitigation and enhancements have been secured by condition such as timing of work, lighting, bat and bird boxes, bee bricks, bat friendly planting, and methods of habitat clearance.

Three tests of derogation – licence:

The NPPG advises that the LPA must be confident that Natural England will issue a licence before granting planning permission.

Natural England will only grant a licence if satisfied that the three statutory tests prescribed under the directive and regulations have all been met. The test are:

1. There are no feasible alternative solutions that would be less damaging or avoid damage to the site.
2. The proposal needs to be carried out for imperative reasons of overriding public interest.
3. The necessary compensatory measures can be secured.

The obligation on the LPA is to consider the likelihood of a licence being granted by NE, not to determine definitively whether or not the licence will, in fact, be granted. It therefore has to review the three tests, in the context of a planning application, to then form a view on the likelihood of NE granting a derogation licence under the Regulations.

Taking each of the three tests in turn:

1. There are no other available proposal sites for the applicant, with the development relating to the conversion of the outbuilding rather than demolition.
2. The proposal would bring back a Non-Designated Heritage Asset into use. Whilst the proposal is only for one dwelling it provides a positive contribution to the Council's self-build housing supply.
3. Based on the information within the Ecology Report, the Council's Ecologist considered that the necessary compensatory measures could be secured to offset any impacts the proposal would have on the protected species.

Taking the above into account, the LPA cannot see any reason why Natural England would not likely grant a derogation license under the Regulations in relation to this development.

Overall, the proposal would comply with Policies LP18, LP19, and LP21 of the Local Plan, Policies 4 and 9 of the NP.

BNG:

Whilst Policy LP19 of the Local Plan and Policy 9 of NP require a 10% Biodiversity Net Gain requirement, the site is exempt from 10% Biodiversity Net Gain due to the proposed dwelling being a self-build exemption.

Whilst the proposal is exempt from Biodiversity Net Gain, it does not preclude the need to include enhancements for species within development. All development has a duty to deliver measurable net gains for biodiversity. Therefore, the enhancement measures outlined with the Preliminary Ecological Appraisal prepared by Philip Park Associates Ltd dated 20/08/2025 will be conditioned.

GIRAMS:

Policy 27 of the Local Plan and Policy 8 of the NP ensure that development proposals do not adversely affect the integrity of European sites either alone or in-combination. Evidence such as a shadow Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA) would need to be provided to demonstrate that adverse effects would be avoided.

A shadow HRA has been provided, and it is considered that there would be no impacts on protected sites beyond the in-combination recreation impact that can be mitigated for through a GIRAMS payment. This payment has been secured and paid.

Other matters requiring consideration prior to the determination of this application:

Climate Change:

LP06 of the Local Plan requires development to recognise and contribute to the importance of, and future proofing against climate change and to support the Government target of becoming a net zero economy by 2050. Policy 12 of the NP strives for designs that reduce energy demand and help to design out energy uses, with all new housing being encouraged to be designed to a high energy efficiency standard.

The proposal would see the conversion of an existing outbuilding therefore retaining the embodied carbon. This proposal would bring this building into acceptable thermal and energy efficiency standards and would comply with building regulations. The extension would also meet these standards and due to the orientation would see the addition of solar panels on the south roof pitch. The site would also see the use of an ASHP to reduce energy demand.

Therefore, it is considered the proposal would comply with Policy LP06 of the Local Plan and Policy 12 of the NP.

Dark skies:

Section f of Policy LP21 requires light to the need to take into consideration light pollution of a proposal. Policy 12 of the NP requires the protection of dark skies, with external lighting not normally being supported except where it is required for safety, security or community reasons or public footways.

Currently the proposal does not propose external lighting, however, this issue has been captured by the need for a bat sensitive lighting scheme which is to be conditioned.

Given the height of the windows with louvres used at high level and the rooms the rooflights serve (being mostly non-habitable), there would be minimal impact from internal lighting.

Therefore, the scheme is considered acceptable in regards to Policy LP21 of the Local Plan and Policy 12 of the NP.

Specific comments and issues:

It is considered that the above report addresses the Parish Council and third-party objections.

In addition, devaluation of a property and loss of a view are not material planning considerations and therefore have not been discussed within the body of the report.

CONCLUSION

The proposal is for the conversion of an outbuilding to provide a self-building dwelling with associated extensions and the erection of a cart shed/store.

The site is located within the development boundary in Congham which falls within Tier 6: Smaller Villages and Hamlets.

Whilst the proposal would introduce a large extension, with contemporary material of red zinc roofing, the proposal keeps a simplistic design with materials that respect or respond to the materials or colour of the local vernacular. It is considered the site would remain with a sense of openness, providing adequate amenity space and parking and turning area, and would not be a cramped form of development. Also, whilst the proposal would alter the traditional form, scale and construction of the outbuilding, the outbuilding can still be appreciated and would see the preservation of the outbuilding, therefore causing negligible harm to the significance of the Non-Designated Heritage Asset. It is not considered the proposal would cause detrimental harm to the amenity of neighbouring dwellings. It is also not considered that there would be any detrimental impacts to the locality in relation to flood risk or biodiversity, with these elements being conditioned accordingly.

Therefore, the proposal is considered acceptable and in accordance with Policies LP02, LP06, LP13, LP18, LP19, LP20, LP21, LP25, LP27, and LP31 of the Local Plan, Policies 3, 5, 7, 12, 14, and 15 of Grimston, Pott Row, Roydon and Congham Neighbourhood Plan, as well as the NPPF, specifically Para 212 and 213 of the NPPF. It is recommended that this application be approved subject to the following conditions.

RECOMMENDATION:

APPROVE subject to the imposition of the following condition(s):

- 1 Condition: The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.
- 1 Reason: To comply with Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act, 1990, as amended by Section 51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act, 2004.
- 2 Condition: The development hereby permitted shall be carried out using only the following approved plans:
 - * Location Plan 923/24/00
 - * Proposed site plan and street scene 923/24/11 Rev A
 - * Proposed floor plan 923/23/12
 - * Proposed elevations & section 923/24/13
 - * Proposed sections, cart shed plan, elevations and section 923/24/14 Rev A
- 2 Reason: For the avoidance of doubt and in the interests of proper planning.
- 3 Condition: The use of the cart shed/store hereby approved shall be limited to purposes incidental to the needs and personal enjoyment of the occupants of the dwelling and shall at no time be used for separate residential, business or commercial purposes.
- 3 Reason: In order that the Local Planning Authority may retain control over the development in the interests of the amenities of the locality in accordance with Policy LP21 of the Local Plan and the NPPF.
- 4 Condition: No development or other operations shall commence on site until the existing trees and/or hedgerows to be retained have been protected in accordance with a scheme that has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The scheme shall provide for the erection of fencing for the protection of any retained tree or hedge before any equipment, machinery, or materials are brought on to the site for the purposes of development or other operations. The fencing shall be retained intact for the full duration of the development until all equipment, materials and

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surplus materials have been removed from the site. If the fencing is damaged all operations shall cease until it is repaired in accordance with the approved details. Nothing shall be stored or placed in any fenced area in accordance with this condition and the ground levels within those areas shall not be altered, nor shall any excavations be made without the written approval of the Local Planning Authority.

- 4 Reason: To ensure that existing trees and hedgerows are properly protected in accordance with the NPPF.
- 5 Condition: Prior to the first occupation of the development hereby permitted, full details of both hard and soft landscape works shall have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. These details shall include finished levels or contours, hard surface materials, refuse or other storage units, street furniture, structures and other minor artefacts. Soft landscape works shall include planting plans, written specifications (including cultivation and other operations associated with plant and grass establishment) schedules of plants noting species, plant sizes and proposed numbers and densities where appropriate.
- 5 Reason: To ensure that the development is properly landscaped in the interests of the visual amenities of the locality in accordance with Policies LP18 and LP21 of the Local Plan and the NPPF.
- 6 Condition: All hard and soft landscape works shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details. The works shall be carried out prior to the occupation or use of any part of the development or in accordance with a programme to be agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority. Any trees or plants that within a period of 5 years from the completion of the development die, are removed or become seriously damaged or diseased, shall be replaced in the next planting season with others of similar size and species as those originally planted, unless the Local Planning Authority gives written approval to any variation.
- 6 Reason: To ensure that the work is carried out within a reasonable period in accordance with the NPPF.
- 7 Condition: Construction works associated with the conversion of the outbuilding to provide one new dwelling shall not in any circumstances commence unless one of the following has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority:
 - a) a licence issued by Natural England pursuant to Regulation 55 of The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended) authorizing the specified activity/development to go ahead; or;
 - b) a statement in writing from the relevant licensing body to the effect that it does not consider that the specified activity/development will require a licence.
- 7 Reason: To conserve protected species and allow the LPA to discharge its duties under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended), the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) and s17 Crime & Disorder Act 1998.
- 8 Condition: The development hereby approved shall be carried out in strict accordance with the mitigation and enhancement Strategy outlined in Sections 8 of the Preliminary Ecological Appraisal prepared by Philip Park Associates Ltd dated 20/08/2025. The specific details of all of the required mitigation and enhancement measures such as the timing of work, external lighting, bat and bird boxes, bat friendly planting, methods of habitat clearance, and bee brick, including the type or species, dimensions, and

location of these together with a scaled plan or drawing illustrating the requirements, shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority prior to occupation of the dwelling. The mitigation and enhancement measures shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details and thereafter retained in a suitable condition to serve the intended purpose.

- 8 Reason: In order to ensure the development does not result in the loss of habitat for protected species and to enhance biodiversity on the site in accordance with Policies LP18 and LP19 of the Local Plan and Paragraph 174 of the NPPF.
- 9 Condition: No development shall commence on any external surface of the development until a sample panel of the materials to be used for the external surfaces of the extension hereby permitted has been erected on the site for the inspection and written approval of the Local Planning Authority. The sample panel shall measure at least 1 metre x 1 metre using the proposed materials, mortar type, bond and pointing technique. The development shall be constructed in accordance with the approved details.
- 9 Reason: To ensure a satisfactory external appearance and grouping of materials in accordance with Policies LP18, LP20 and LP21 of the Local Plan and the principles of the NPPF.
- 10 Condition: Full details of all extractor vents, heater flues and meter boxes including their design and location shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority prior to installation. Installation shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.
- 10 Reason: To ensure that the design and appearance of the development is appropriate in accordance with Policies LP18, LP20 and LP21 of the Local Plan and the principles of the NPPF.
- 11 Condition: No development shall commence on site until full details of the surface water drainage arrangements have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The drainage details shall be constructed as approved before any part of the development hereby permitted is brought into use.
- 11 Reason: To ensure that there is a satisfactory means of drainage in accordance with Policy LP06, LP18 and LP21 of the Local Plan and the NPPF.
- 12 Condition: Prior to the first occupation of the development hereby permitted the vehicular access shall be constructed in accordance with the highway's specification (TRAD 5) and thereafter retained at the position shown on the approved plan. Arrangement shall be made for surface water drainage to be intercepted and disposed of separately so that it does not discharge from or onto the highway.
- 12 Reason: To ensure construction of a satisfactory access and to avoid carriage of extraneous material or surface water from or onto the highway in the interests of highway safety in accordance with Policies LP13 and LP21 of the Local Plan and the NPPF.
- 13 Condition: Any access gates/bollard/chain/other means of obstruction shall be hung to open inwards, set back, and thereafter retained a minimum distance of 5 metres from the near channel edge of the adjacent carriageway. Any sidewalls/fences/hedges

adjacent to the access shall be splayed at an angle of 45 degrees from each of the outside gateposts to the front boundary of the site.

- 13 Reason: In the interests of highway safety enabling vehicles to safely draw off the highway before the gates/obstruction is opened in accordance with Policies LP13 and LP21 of the Local Plan and the NPPF.
 - 14 Condition: Prior to the first occupation/use of the development hereby permitted visibility splays shall be provided in full accordance with the details indicated on the approved plan (Drg No. 923/24/11 Rev A). The splays shall thereafter be maintained at all times free from any obstruction exceeding 0.225metres above the level of the adjacent highway carriageway.
 - 14 Reason: In the interests of highway safety in accordance with Policies LP13 and LP21 of the Local Plan and the principles of the NPPF.
 - 15 Condition: Prior to the first occupation of the development hereby permitted the proposed on-site car parking/turning area shall be laid out, demarcated, levelled, surfaced and drained in accordance with the approved plan and retained thereafter available for that specific use.
 - 15 Reason: To ensure the permanent availability of the parking/manoeuvring areas, in the interests of satisfactory development and highway safety in accordance with Policies LP21 and LP25 of the Local Plan and the NPPF.
- B)** If in the opinion of the Assistant Director/Planning Control Manager no reasonable progress is made to complete the legal agreement within 4 months of the date of the committee resolution, the application is **REFUSED** on the failure to secure the dwelling as a self-build in line with LP31.