

Parish:	Stoke Ferry	
Proposal:	Full Planning Permission for 6 dwellinghouses in a conservation area following demolition of agricultural barns	
Location:	Land And Buildings Immediately N To NE of The Old Farm House Oxborough Road Stoke Ferry Norfolk	
Applicant:	Mr Will Chapman	
Case No:	20/01892/F (Full Application)	
Case Officer:	Mrs C Dorgan	Date for Determination: 19 March 2021 Extension of Time Expiry Date: 21 May 2021

Reason for Referral to Planning Committee – Application called in to Planning Committee by Cllr Colin Sampson.

Neighbourhood Plan: No

Case Summary

Full planning permission is sought for the development of 6 dwellinghouses (4 detached and a pair of semi-detached) in a Conservation Area, following the demolition of a large modern agricultural barn. Proposed access is via Oxborough Road only.

The site lies outside of the development boundary for Stoke Ferry (a Key Rural Service Centre (CS02)) as shown on Inset G88 of the SADMPP, and is therefore designated as countryside.

The site lies within flood zone 1, and is within Stoke Ferry Conservation Area.

Key Issues

Principle of Development
 Loss of Employment Use
 Form and Character and impact on the Conservation Area
 Residential Amenity
 Highway Safety
 Affordable Housing
 Other Material Considerations

Recommendation

REFUSE

THE APPLICATION

The application site is situated to the north of Oxborough Road in the village of Stoke Ferry. The site lies outside of the development boundary for Stoke Ferry (a Key Rural Service Centre (CS02)) as shown on Inset G88 of the SADMPP, and is therefore designated as countryside.

The site is currently occupied by a large modern barn which has been used for agricultural storage which is proposed for demolition, and two traditional small brick barns which are to be retained as outbuildings for plot 2. The site comprises a total area of 0.38 hectares.

Full planning is sought for the residential development of 6 dwellings on the site; 4 detached and a pair of semi-detached. A similar application for outline planning consent for residential development on this site was determined and refused at Planning Committee in June 2018 (ref 18/00410/O).

Whilst the farm has a vehicular access directly onto the A134, that access does not form part of this application and vehicular access is via Oxborough Road only. Each property has an individual access onto Oxborough Road and all properties have driveways and garages or car ports to the front of the proposed dwellings (aside from plot 1). Plot 2 also includes the two existing historic brick barns to the front of the dwelling which are to be utilised as outbuildings in association with the domestic use. The private amenity space is in the form of gardens to the rear of the proposed dwellings.

The site is also adjacent to existing housing that was permitted under application 15/01757/O when the Local Authority could not demonstrate a five-year housing land supply.

The site lies within flood zone 1, and is within Stoke Ferry Conservation Area.

SUPPORTING CASE

This statement supports the full planning application for a housing development at Romer Farm, Oxborough Road, Stoke Ferry. The scheme rounds off the existing cul-de-sac development pattern providing six attractive 2-storey dwellings, 2 of which are affordable houses.

The application site is on the edge of the conservation area and is currently occupied by a large modern agricultural building which is proposed for demolition. The steel portal frame and corrugated metal cladding detracts from the conservation area setting. Its removal is supported by the conservation officers as below.

“The removal of the modern agricultural building is to be welcomed. This building is highly visible and detracts from the appearance and the appreciation of wider views out of the Stoke Ferry Conservation Area as identified in the Conservation Area Statement above. The retention of much of the older agricultural buildings to Romer Farm is also to be welcomed along with their careful integration into the scheme.”S.King Conservation Officer

As such it is reasonable to assume any harm to the conservation area associated with the proposed development is less than substantial and Historic England have not felt it necessary to comment on the application.

In line with NPPF 201 and 196 the public benefits brought about by this scheme include:

- reduced noise disturbances to residences along the street from farm traffic using the site until late at night.

- blocking up the existing access to the site from the (A134) main road which represents a safety improvement and prevents cut throughs.
- much needed affordable units to the village
- continuation of the roadside footpath

This site is well situated in the village for access to the local shops and services. The development has houses opposite and to the side and is a natural extension of the linear frontage properties up to the A134. It finishes off development along this road offering both visual and public benefits. It offers no impact to neighbours and is the optimum viable use of the site.

Although the site is outside the development boundary it is within the grain of the village. The planning gain of the benefits of this more compatible use and improved aesthetics should be weighed against any harm.

As such the site should be considered as a windfall site for approval.

PLANNING HISTORY

20/01057/PACU3: Application Withdrawn: 21/08/20 - Notification for Prior Approval for change of use of agricultural buildings to 5 dwellinghouses (Schedule 2, Part 3, Class Q) - Land And Buildings Immediately N To NE of The Old Farm House

18/00410/O: Application Refused – Committee decision: 04/06/18 - Proposed residential development - Romer Farm Oxborough Road

17/00038/TPO: TPO Work Approved: 13/04/17 - 2/TPO/00353: T1 Beech Tree - Remove - Romer Farm

04/02016/CU: Application Permitted – Committee decision: 08/02/05 - Extension and change of use of storage buildings to Retail (Class A1) for farm shop and creation of vehicular access - Romer Farm, Oxborough Road

2/99/1278/F: Application Permitted – Committee decision: 23/11/99 - Conversion of cattleyard to provide farm offices and storage facilities - Romer Farm

2/95/1587/F: Application Permitted – Committee decision: 09/07/96 - Erection of steel framed agricultural storage building - Romer Farm

RESPONSE TO CONSULTATION

Parish Council: OBJECTION

The Parish Council resolved at their meeting on 19 April 2021 that they OBJECT to the planning application 20/01892/F based on the following reasons summarised below-

- Site is outside of the development boundary and development should not be permitted.
- Concerns raised that the current condition of the agricultural barns is due to an active lack of maintenance, including the removal of roof tiles.
- Disagreed that dwellings proposed were attractive.

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- The six dwellings neighbouring the site have had drainage/ sewerage issues. Likely that similar issues would arise on this site.
- No further new development is needed in Stoke Ferry, infrastructure would not cope.
- Concerns raised at Cllr Sampson not supporting views of Parish Council.
- Development would set a precedent for development moving towards A134.

This is the Chairman of Stoke Ferry Parish Council's statement and is on behalf of the PC:

'The Parish Council principally objects to the planning application at the end of Oxborough Rd on the simple – but highly important reason - that it is outside of the development boundary. What is the value of having a development boundary if it can be ignored or anyone can claim special circumstances in order to evade it? The boundary is not arbitrary.

To put this application into context - the site is at the end of Oxborough Rd bordering the A134 and in the Historic Conservation Area. On the site is a steel frame and corrugated cladded barn. We understand this barn is going to be demolished, although it currently is in use, despite what you may have heard. (There are tractors and other equipment regularly at this site.) Importantly, there are also two early nineteenth-century brick, flint and clunch, pan tiled barn buildings. These were beautiful buildings until they had their roofs removed, probably, we suspect, in preparation for this planning application. They had been home to many bats. Since the removal of the roofs, neighbouring properties have reported finding a large number of dead bats.

Of course, "rounding off" the road would be "tidy", but a building development is not the only possible solution to tidying up an eyesore. The nineteenth-century buildings could be properly repaired to serve their original purpose. If no longer needed for this purpose, they could be removed entirely to leave an important beautiful view across the fields.

To take the wording of the Village Design Statement, 2005:

"Oxborough Rd can be described as a meandering route which offers a series of attractive views in both directions."

The Statement describes these farm buildings as "important unlisted buildings". The brick buildings most certainly were very beautiful before being allowed to fall into disrepair.

Supporting documents go on to say that the buildings have been subject to many substandard repairs. This does not – and should not – in itself become a reason for replacing them with houses or it could become a reason for neglectfully allowing them to become derelict. It is a reason why they should be expertly repaired so that these important buildings are retained within the landscape. It is after all the applicant seeking planning permission who has allowed the buildings to fall into disrepair.

The proposal statement claims there will be attractive new housing. It is difficult to believe that any proposed new buildings would fit into the landscape better than the original historically important buildings. After all, the property is in a Conservation area and the Conservation Character Statement says:

"The range of farm buildings contribute to the significance of the Stoke Ferry Conservation area."

Their demolition will cause harm to the character of the village.

Added to this is the important fact that the field is constantly flooded. The new houses which were built bordering this proposed development have been subjected to flooding, as the

Internal Drainage Board has pointed out in their consultation document included in the Planning portal.

The proposed development should be rejected. Stoke Ferry Parish Council ask that these objections be taken very seriously into account and given the weight due to them when considering your decision.

Finally, I would like to point out that the correspondence from the Borough Councillor when calling in this application, is worded in such a way as to indicate the PC endorses him when he supports the development.

However, it cannot be stressed too strongly that we are disappointed in his decision to support the developer. This is to act against the wishes of the PC whose function is to represent the wishes of the villagers as a whole, and to act according to those expressed wishes.

I would like to urge you to reject this proposal and prevent making a mockery of regulations by ignoring the vital development boundary.'

Earlier comments submitted by the Parish Council. The Parish Council have stated the issues raised recently are in addition to those raised previously and detailed below -

The Stoke Ferry Parish Council considered planning application 20/1892/F at their meeting on 3rd February 2021 and resolved for the following response to be sent to you as part of their consultee role. The Stoke Ferry Parish Council wish to object to this application 20/01892/F based on the following reasons:

- 'Road access' as a material consideration, because this is not sufficient enough via Oxborough Road that is already heavily congested with traffic from current properties in the area.
- 'Highway Safety' and 'Increased Traffic' on Oxborough Road which is already congested with traffic and in its close proximity to the A134.
- Fewer houses should be considered for the development.
- The application is made on land which is outside the building development area for the Stoke Ferry parish and is exception land.
- There is already plenty of development in the village currently and planned for the future.

Highways Authority: NO OBJECTION subject to conditions.

The layout and highway mitigation as shown on the revised plans are in accordance with the required standard and therefore recommend conditions are attached relating to access, visibility splays, parking and turning areas, and off site highway improvements works.

Internal Drainage Board: NO OBJECTION

The site falls within Stoke Ferry IDB district. The application states surface water is to be disposed of via soakaway, however the FRA suggests infiltration will not be suitable and recommends additional testing is required. The site is adjacent to a recent residential development, where in 2018 there were issues with the disposal of treated foul water from the packages STWs. These became inundated due to the high ground water preventing the soakaways functioning and as a consequence the developer applied for consent to discharge the treated water to the IDB drain. If the investigative work shows soakaways are not practical and consent is sought to discharge to the IDB drain, the discharge should be limited to greenfield run off rates due to the existing network/ culverts.

Environmental Health & Housing – Environmental Quality: NO OBJECTION subject to conditions.

Contaminated Land - Due to the history of prior development, use of the site for agricultural purposes and proposed sensitive end use with 6 dwellings proposed, it is plausible that sources of contamination may be present that may pose an unacceptable risk to the sensitive end use and therefore conditions be attached to any planning consent.

Conservation Officer: OBJECT

This site lies within the Stoke Ferry Conservation Area, with the older farm buildings noted as important unlisted buildings. Whilst the site is within the conservation area and adjacent to residential properties, it lies outside the village boundary.

The Stoke Ferry Conservation Area Statement confirms that one of the factors which provide the conservation area with its unique character are the views outwards of surrounding countryside. The statement goes on to highlight the characteristics of this section of Oxborough Road:

“A node is created where Little Mans Lane and Barkers Drove meetmarks a further change in the conservation areas character. There are now views north west and eastward out of the conservation area towards the rolling agricultural landscape beyond. The north eastern vista is closed by the remaining buildings of the conservation located around Romer Farm. Whites Farmhouse occupies higher ground to the west along Barkers Drove. The farm complexes occupy almost island sites and the sense of the intimacy of the core is no longer present. These buildings are however important components of the village infrastructure.”

The removal of the modern agricultural building is to be welcomed. This building is highly visible and detracts from the appearance and the appreciation of wider views out of the Stoke Ferry Conservation Area as identified in the Conservation Area Statement above. The retention of much of the older agricultural buildings to Romer Farm is also to be welcomed along with their careful integration into the scheme.

However, the statement does confirm the importance of the rural character of this part of the conservation area highlighting the contrasts between this site and the village centre. On this basis, some harm is caused to the Stoke Ferry Conservation Area and the application needs to be considered in light of paragraph 201 and 196 of the NPPF. Given that some harm is caused and this does not appear to be outweighed by the public benefit, the conservation team object to this application.

Community Safety and Neighbour Nuisance: NO OBJECTION

Drainage - No objection to the proposal, subject to confirmation of a suitable surface water/land drainage scheme. As there is no mains drainage for foul water in Oxborough Road, each plot will require an on-site foul water treatment system. Consideration should be given as to whether a French Drain or similar is installed between the site and the existing dwellings to the SW (ie boundary of plot 1) to prevent any impact on these dwellings from the development of the site.

Neighbour Amenity - As there are 6 dwellings, a CMP is not required but a condition is suggested for construction site hours. Given the proximity of plot 6 to the A134 main through route, suitable measures are required to protect the future occupiers from road traffic noise. This will require the boundary treatment currently proposed as hedging to be upgraded to a 2m high close board fence of robust quality for the full boundary length including across the rear of the rear garden. This will also offer protection from noise associated with the

remaining use of the adjacent farm access. Plot 6 does not have any openings to noise sensitive rooms on the elevation fronting the A134, however consideration should be given to enhanced glazing to the upper floor bedrooms. ASHPs are not included however unless it can be confirmed that these will not be used in this scheme the ASHP condition should be attached.

As there will be demolition and clearance of the site prior to any construction, please attach the following informatives re Noise, Dust & Smoke from Clearing and Construction Work and Asbestos removal.

Historic England: NO OBJECTION

On the basis of the information available to date, Historic England do not wish to offer any comments. We would therefore suggest that you seek the views of your specialist conservation and archaeological advisers, and other consultees, as relevant.

Housing Enabling Officer: NO OBJECTION

The site area and number of dwellings proposed triggers the thresholds of the Council's affordable housing policy as per CS09 of the Council's adopted Core Strategy.

As this site is proposed for 6no units in a designated rural area and the site area is under 0.5ha, a financial contribution of £72,000 would be required. This is calculated as 6no units times 20% affordable housing – 1.2 units, times £60,000 per unit. It is noted that the applicant has proposed 2 units for affordable housing in place of the financial contribution, whilst this exceeds policy requirements, this is acceptable. However, it is noted bedroom 3 in plot 6 does not meet our standards, a single bedroom should provide at least 6.5m² floorspace.

A S.106 Agreement will be required to secure the affordable housing contribution. The affordable units must be transferred to a Registered Provider of Affordable Housing agreed by the Council at a price that requires no form of public subsidy.

CPRE: OBJECTION

CPRE Norfolk objects to this application for the following reasons:

- The proposed site is not an allocated site for housing within the current Local Plan's adopted site allocations and development management policies plan (September 2016.)
- The site lies outside the development boundary of Stoke Ferry and is therefore classified as 'countryside', and is subject to Core Strategy Policy CS06 where "the strategy will be to protect the countryside for its intrinsic character and beauty, the diversity of its landscapes, heritage and wildlife, and its natural resources to be enjoyed by all. The development of greenfield sites will be resisted unless essential for agriculture or forestry needs." If this proposal is granted permission it will set a precedent for ever-increasing ribbon development into countryside spreading from the settlement of Stoke Ferry.
- The proposal is also contrary to Policy DM2: Development Boundaries, where "the areas outside development boundaries (excepting specific allocations for development) will be treated as countryside where new development will be more restricted and will be limited to that identified as suitable in rural areas by other policies of the local plan." The site is not a rural exception site where the intention is to provide only affordable housing.
- We are concerned about the harmful impact of the development on the Conservation Area of Stoke Ferry and its setting.

- Whilst CPRE Norfolk generally welcomes development on brownfield sites, the majority of this site is greenfield, with the whole site being classified as 'countryside'. Development would not be able to take place solely on the brownfield part of the site and therefore we feel that any benefit from developing the brownfield part of the site would be heavily outweighed by development on the greenfield parts, together with the harms to countryside and the conservation area.

REPRESENTATIONS:

ONE letter of **OBJECTION** received. The objection refers to six issues as summarised below-

- The boundary of our village's housing should not be defined by a by-pass, rather, it should be defined by the existing development boundary.
- It is wrong to first construct an expensive village by-pass and then to build the village right up to that by-pass.
- There are a great number of houses planned for our village, exceeding the quota in the Borough Council's Local Plan.
- This section of Oxborough Road from Bridge Road is a cul-de-sac. Already traffic congestion and difficulties for resident drivers, pedestrians, horseriders, and cyclists. Further, Oxborough Road forms part of National Cycle Route 30 and continued development along this road goes against the aims of the County's Cycling Strategy of having cycle routes along "quiet roads".
- Research has shown that living next to a main road has serious and wide-ranging effects on health. It goes against the Borough Council's duty of care to its residents to allow house building next to the A134.
- * When the most recent new houses were built on Oxborough Road, Stoke Ferry Parish Councillors suspected that there would be a second planning application to build upon the farmland occupied by the barn on Oxborough Road. The feeling was that the whole development was being done piecemeal because the landowner would have met fierce opposition if he had put in for permission to develop the whole site, i.e. across the development boundary and up to the by-pass. Concern that further planning applications will be lodged to 'fill in the gap' bordered by Oxborough Road, Furlong Road, and the by-pass.

LDF CORE STRATEGY POLICIES

CS02 - The Settlement Hierarchy

CS06 - Development in Rural Areas

CS08 - Sustainable Development

CS10 - The Economy

CS11 – Transport

CS12 - Environmental Assets

SITE ALLOCATIONS AND DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT POLICIES PLAN 2016

DM2 – Development Boundaries

DM15 – Environment, Design and Amenity

DM17 - Parking Provision in New Development

NATIONAL GUIDANCE

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)
Planning Practice Guidance (PPG)
National Design Guide 2019

PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

The main issues in the determination of this application are:

- Principle of Development
- Loss of Employment Use
- Form and Character
- Impact on the Conservation Area
- Residential Amenity
- Highway Safety
- Affordable Housing
- Other Material Considerations

Principle of Development

The site lies outside of the development boundary for Stoke Ferry and is therefore subject to countryside protection policies contained within the NPPF and Local Plan.

Both the NPPF and Local Plan Policy CS06 seek to locate housing where it will enhance or maintain the vitality of rural communities or that are essential for agricultural or forestry needs.

The site, in conjunction with the land opposite, provides a clear break between built form and the Bypass (to the northeast), and represents the beginning of open countryside.

A similar application for outline planning consent for residential development on this site was determined and refused at Planning Committee in June 2018 (ref 18/00410/O). There has been no real material change in circumstances since that time.

The adjacent houses (to the southwest of the application site) were approved at a time when the LPA could not demonstrate a five-year supply of housing land. As such, at that time, applications should only be refused if there was clear and demonstrable harm as policies for the supply of housing were considered to be out of date. In this regard it was concluded that the development, due to the fact that the houses were consistent in form and character with existing housing opposite, would not represent such harm. The current application, however, extends development further towards the A134 and would mean there was no material break between the A134 and the village.

However, the LPA can now demonstrate in excess of a five-year supply of housing land (at January 2021 the figure was 7.96 years) and therefore its policies in relation to residential development should be accorded full weight. Development must therefore be considered against the policies of the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. This is an agricultural site and therefore not previously developed land as defined by Annex 2 of the NPPF. It is not considered that there is any special justification for continuing linear development on this side of the road into the countryside, outside of the defined

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development boundary; a stance which has been supported in various locations for similar developments across the district. Therefore, the scheme is contrary to the NPPF, Policy CS06 of the Core Strategy and Policy DM2 of the Site Allocations and Development Management Policies Plan (SADMPP).

Loss of Employment Use

Core Strategy Policy CS10 seeks to retain employment land (including agricultural uses) unless it can be demonstrated that:

- continued use of the site for employment purposes is no longer viable, taking into account the site's characteristics, quality of buildings, and existing or potential market demand; or
- use of the site for employment purposes gives rise to unacceptable environmental or accessibility problems particularly for sustainable modes of transport; or
- an alternative use or mix of uses offers greater potential benefits to the community in meeting local business and employment needs, or in delivering the Council's regeneration agenda.

The view was taken on previous application 18/00410/O that on balance the loss of such a small area of land of a wider agricultural holding (that accommodates only one building currently in use) did not warrant refusal of the application in this instance. Policy CS10 remains relevant and therefore for consistency this stance is maintained.

Form and Character and impact on the Conservation Area

The application site lies at the edge of the village and within Stoke Ferry Conservation Area.

The proposed dwellings have been designed to reflect the scale and form of the houses found along Oxborough Road and the wider locality. The materials proposed are multi-facing red bricks with red and black double pantile roofs, and traditional style windows and doors, suitable to the conservation setting. All dwellings are 2 storey (with a maximum height of 9m) but vary in their design and incorporate staggered roof lines. Existing trees and hedges would be retained, with new openings created for access.

However, as stated previously, this application would represent linear development into the countryside that would be contrary to policy and at odds with the land use on the opposite side of the road.

The Conservation Officer has drawn attention to the fact that the site lies within Stoke Ferry Conservation Area, and includes some existing the older brick farm buildings noted as important unlisted buildings. The applicant has submitted a Heritage Statement in support of the application which considers the sensitivity of the conservation area and the likely impact of this development upon it. This is in line with the requirements of the NPPF.

The Stoke Ferry Conservation Area Character Statement confirms that one of the factors which provide the conservation area with its unique character are the network of tracks and views of the open countryside. The statement goes onto highlight the characteristics of this section of Oxborough Road:

“A node is created where Little Mans Lane and Barkers Drove meetmarks a further change in the conservation areas character. There are now views north west and eastward out of the conservation area towards the rolling agricultural landscape beyond. The north eastern vista is closed by the remaining buildings of the conservation located around Rommer Farm. Whites Farmhouse occupies higher ground to the west along Barkers Drove. The farm

complexes occupy almost island sites and the sense of the intimacy of the core is no longer present. These buildings are however important components of the village infrastructure.”

Paragraph 201 Of the NPPF states:

“Not all elements of a Conservation Area ... will necessarily contribute to its significance. Loss of a building (or other element) which makes a positive contribution to the significance of the Conservation Area ... should be treated as substantial harm under paragraph 195 or less than substantial harm under paragraph 196, as appropriate, taking into account the relative significance of the element affected and its contribution to the significance of the Conservation Area ... as a whole.”

Both the Conservation Area Character Statement and the Conservation Area boundary indicate that the range of existing farm buildings contribute to the significance of the Stoke Ferry Conservation Area. Accordingly, amendments were made to the application (during the negotiation process) to retain the two historic barns which will form outbuildings for plot 2.

The Conservation Officer states that the removal of the modern agricultural building is to be welcomed and is seen as a detractor. This building is highly visible and detracts from the appearance and the appreciation of wider views out of the Stoke Ferry Conservation Area as identified in the Conservation Area Statement above. Also, that the amended scheme with the retention of much of the older agricultural buildings to Romer Farm is welcomed along with their careful integration into the scheme.

However, the Heritage Statement provided by the applicant does confirm the importance of the rural character of this part of the conservation area highlighting the contrasts between this site and the village centre. On this basis, some harm is caused to the Stoke Ferry Conservation Area and the application needs to be considered in light of paragraph 201 and 196 of the NPPF.

The application would extend residential built form into the countryside, and would result in the loss of a visual buffer between the village, countryside and A134. CSNN have stated that 2m fencing would be required along the boundary to reduce noise impacts from the A134 and this hard edge would detract from the existing rural character and form as described in the character statement and outlined above.

While the removal of the modern barn has a positive impact on the conservation area, it is the view of the conservation officer that the development would cause some harm for the reasons outlined above, and therefore the scheme is not in accordance with the NPPF (paragraph 196) and Policy CS12 (Core Strategy 2011).

Residential Amenity

The proposed site layout does not give rise to any overshadowing or loss of privacy between the proposed dwellings themselves, or the nearby existing properties, due to the orientation of dwellings, positioning of windows and adequate spacing between these.

CSNN has requested that should the application be granted consent; conditions are required regarding construction site hours and also details of air source heat pumps (if these are to be installed) to protect neighbours from any detrimental noise impacts. Furthermore, concerns are raised about the proximity of the A134 and the impact of the traffic noise from this main route on the dwelling proposed on plot 6. It is suggested that an appropriate boundary treatment should be provided to offer some protection from the noise, and that improved glazing should be considered on the first floor bedroom windows (although it is noted there are no windows to noise sensitive rooms on the elevation fronting onto the A134). However,

the boundary treatment proposed (2m fencing) would cause issues within its own right as would detract from the setting of the Conservation Area.

In terms of neighbour amenity, subject to the inclusion of recommended conditions, the scheme broadly accords with the NPPF and Policy DM15 of the SADMPP.

Highway Safety

The Parish Council and the public objection both raise concerns that Oxborough Road is already congested and that additional residential development will add to this issue on Oxborough Road, and also increasing traffic onto the A134.

However, the Local Highway Authority (LHA) has no objections to the application, subject to the inclusion of conditions relating to the proposed access layout, visibility splays, parking and turning arrangements and the off-site highway improvement works. While the Parish Council comments are noted, the increased number of vehicular movements as a result of this development are not thought to be sufficient to warrant refusal of the application on this basis, particularly given the LHA has not raised any highway safety concerns. The scheme is in accordance with Policies CS11 (Core Strategy) and DM17 (SADMPP).

Affordable Housing

Policy CS08 of the Core Strategy requires an affordable housing contribution for sites (in rural areas) of 0.165 of ha or 5 or more dwellings. Therefore, the applicant would be required to make a contribution of 20% as part of this scheme. The NPPF states that affordable housing units should not be sought on developments of fewer than 10 dwellings and/or 0.5ha other than in designated rural areas, and so a financial contribution based on £60,000 per equivalent whole affordable dwelling is sought. In this case a financial contribution of £72,000 would be required.

The applicant has put forward a pair of semi-detached dwellings (plots 5 and 6) as affordable units. This approach is broadly acceptable and a Section 106 agreement would be required to secure these dwellings.

Broadly the affordable housing contribution put forward does accord with the NPPF, and Policy CS09 of the Core Strategy.

Other Material Considerations

Ecology - In relation to the presence of protected species such as bats on the site, no surveys/reports have been received from the applicant as to the presence of these. However, the two traditional brick barns are potential likely habitats and surveys should be provided prior to a consent being granted.

Drainage – There are no drainage details submitted as part of the application and so if permission were granted full details of foul and surface water drainage arrangements should be submitted and agreed prior to the commencement of development. It is likely percolation testing would be necessary to inform the arrangements, based on comments made by the IDB and CSNN.

Piecemeal development – An objection received states that the applicant has submitted a series of applications within this locality in a piecemeal approach, and as a result development in creeping into the countryside. Each application is assessed on its own merits and it should be noted that the recent development adjacent to this site was permitted during the time where

the Council could not prove a 5 year land supply. Circumstances are materially different at the current time and the application should be considered against the adopted Local Plan.

CONCLUSION

The proposed development represents a departure from national and local planning policy and would represent unjustified residential development in the countryside. The Borough Council has an adequate housing land supply of 7.96 years. Furthermore, the site is not classed as previously developed land in accordance with Annex 2 of the NPPF. Given the above there are not considered to be any material considerations that outweigh this departure. It is therefore considered that this application should be refused on the basis of being contrary to the NPPF, Policies CS06 and CS08 of the Core Strategy 2011 and Policy DM2 of the SADMPP 2016.

Furthermore, whilst the development of the site will provide affordable housing units and remove the modern barn which is a detractor from the conservation area, the application would cause harm to the Stoke Ferry conservation area as detailed in the Stoke Ferry Conservation Area Character Statement. In accordance with paragraph 196 of the NPPF the public benefits of the scheme do not outweigh this harm and therefore the scheme is contrary to the provisions of the NPPF and Policy CS12 of the Core Strategy. The application is, for the reasons given above, duly recommended for refusal.

RECOMMENDATION:

REFUSE for the following reason(s):

- 1 The site lies within countryside where residential development is restricted. The applicant has not provided any special justification why countryside protection policies should be relaxed. The development proposed would not represent a sustainable form of development and is therefore contrary to the NPPF, Policies CS06 and CS08 of the Core Strategy 2011 and Policy DM2 of the SADMPP 2016.
- 2 The development proposed, by reason of the impact of residential development extending into the countryside in a location noted for its rural character and views of the open countryside, would cause harm to the significance of the Stoke Ferry Conservation Area as detailed in the Stoke Ferry Conservation Area Character Statement. This harm is not outweighed by public benefit and the proposed development is therefore contrary to Paragraph 196 of the NPPF and Policy CS12 of the Core Strategy 2011.