



Planning, Design & Access Statement
to accompany a full planning application
at Faras Lodge, Anne Sucklings Lane, Little Wratting, CB9
7TA

On behalf of: Mr & Mrs Farenden

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Date: 30/10/2023

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Introduction

This planning, design & access statement accompanies a full planning application at Faras Lodge, Anne Sucklings Lane, Little Wratting, CB9 7TA.

Development proposals:

Construction of 1 no. self-build, detached, 2-bed dwelling (C3).

Planning Direct has been instructed to produce this statement on behalf of Mr and Mrs Farenden, the applicants, site owners and intended occupiers of the proposed dwelling.

The statement should be read in conjunction with the following documentation:

- Existing/proposed site & location plans 2717-01-1;
- Proposed floor plans 2717-02-2;
- Proposed elevations 1 2717-03-1;
- Proposed elevations 2 2717-04-2;
- Proposed 3D visuals 2717-05-2;
- Proposed 3D ground floor 2717-06-1;
- Proposed 3D first floor 2717-07-1;
- Proposed block/streetscene 2717-09-1;
- Proposed visibility splay 2717-10-1;
- Pre-application advice letter (PREAPP/23/037);
- Phase 1 contaminated land report (GEMCO, 2016); and
- Biodiversity checklist.

Location & site description

The site is located in Little Wratting, a small village on the north-eastern edge of Haverhill. Anne Sucklings Lane is, effectively, part of a suburban area that relates to the wider urban area of Haverhill.

There are examples of both older, more traditional residential development and newer, more contemporary residential development in the immediate vicinity.

The site consists of a modest, infill plot of land with a frontage onto the lane. To its rear (north) is an older building - Boyton Hall Farmhouse. On one of its sides (west) is a modern dwelling named Willoughby's which was constructed c. 2019, whilst on its other side (east), another modern dwelling named The Wright House recently completed construction.



The infill plot in its built-up, residential context

Proposed development

The development proposals consist of the construction of a self-build¹, detached, 2-bed dwelling on the land described above.

The dwelling is a 1-5 storey building, with accommodation in the roof space. It has been designed in compliance with current Building Regulations (last updated in 2023).

2 no. parking spaces are provided in-curtilage on a private driveway. A turning head is also shown on plan 2717-01-1. No separate garage is proposed.

Also included on plan 2717-01-1 are the following features:

- EV charge points;
- Bin storage (4 x 180L bins);
- Vehicular access point; and
- Planting & boundary treatments.



Main south and west elevations of the proposed dwelling [not to scale]

¹ in compliance with the statutory definition (Self-build and Custom Housebuilding Act 2015)

Relevant planning history

Reference no.	Description	Decision	Date
DC/15/2442/ OUT	Outline Planning Application (Means of access to be considered) - 2 No. dwellings with associated access and parking	Approved	10/02/2016
DC/17/2516/RM	Reserved Matters Application - Submission of details under Outline Planning Permission DC/15/2442/OUT. Means of access appearance, landscaping, layout and scale for the construction of 1no. dwelling (Plot 1) - Including Details Reserved by conditions C3, C4, C5, C8, C9 and C10	Approved	01/05/2018
PREAPP/21/064	4 bed house and single detached garage, with landscaping, boundary treatments with bin and bike storage. Vehicle entrance is existing	N/A	19/04/2021
DCON(A)/ 15/2442	Discharge of conditions for DC/15/2442/ OUT - 3- materials, 4 - access, 7 - surfacing of access, 8 - visibility and 9 - contamination	Approved	04/08/2021
DC/21/2523/FUL & APP/F3545/ W/22/3296719	a. One dwelling b. Detached single garage	Refused & appeal dismissed	09/03/2022 & 11/2022
PREAPP/23/037	Dwelling re-design following refusal and appeal dismissal of previous scheme	N/A	03/05/2023 & 22/09/2023

Policy justification

As confirmed by the LPA in recent pre-application advice (PREAPP/23/037), the policies most relevant to the proposal are:

St Edmundsbury Core Strategy December 2010:

- Core Strategy Policy CS1 - St Edmundsbury Spatial Strategy
- Core Strategy Policy CS3 - Design and Local Distinctiveness
- Core Strategy Policy CS4 - Settlement Hierarchy and Identity

Joint Development Management Policies Document:

- Policy DM1 Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development
- Policy DM2 Creating Places Development Principles and Local Distinctiveness
- Policy DM7 Sustainable Design and Construction
- Policy DM12 Mitigation, Enhancement, Management and Monitoring of Biodiversity
- Policy DM15 Listed Buildings
- Policy DM22 Residential Design
- Policy DM46 Parking Standards.

The development is considered to achieve compliance with all relevant provisions of the above policies, as discussed below. Where relevant, reference is made to the site's recent planning history and the recent pre-application advice issued by the LPA (PREAPP/23/037).

Commentary

Principle

The principle of development is considered to be established having primary regard to the following matters:

The LPA has raised no “in principle” objection to similar developments recently proposed on the site and there has been no material change in national or local planning circumstances since these decisions were issued.

In response to recent application DC/21/2523/FUL, the LPA provided the following assessment of the principle of development:

“The application site lies within the defined settlement boundary of Haverhill. Core Strategy Policy CS1 and CS4 identifies Haverhill as one of the most sustainable places in the district to live and as such the principle of an additional dwelling in this location is deemed to be acceptable, subject to the consideration of other material planning considerations which are discussed below. Furthermore, the principle of development was established with the granting of outline consent for a dwelling in 2016.

This is considered to remain an accurate assessment.

In accordance with policies CS1 and CS2 and consistent with recent decisions taken by the LPA, the principle of development is established.

Design

Background & pre-application advice

The background to the application is somewhat complex. The land originally formed part of Boyton Hall Farmhouse's rear curtilage. In 2016, outline consent (DC/15/2442/OUT) was granted for the construction of 2 no. dwellings - 1 on the current application site and 1 on the adjacent plot, now occupied by Willoughby's. Willoughby's was constructed pursuant to the 2016 outline consent and subsequent reserved matters application (DC/17/2156/RM).



Extract of the approved indicative site layout plan (DC/15/2442/OUT) [not to scale]

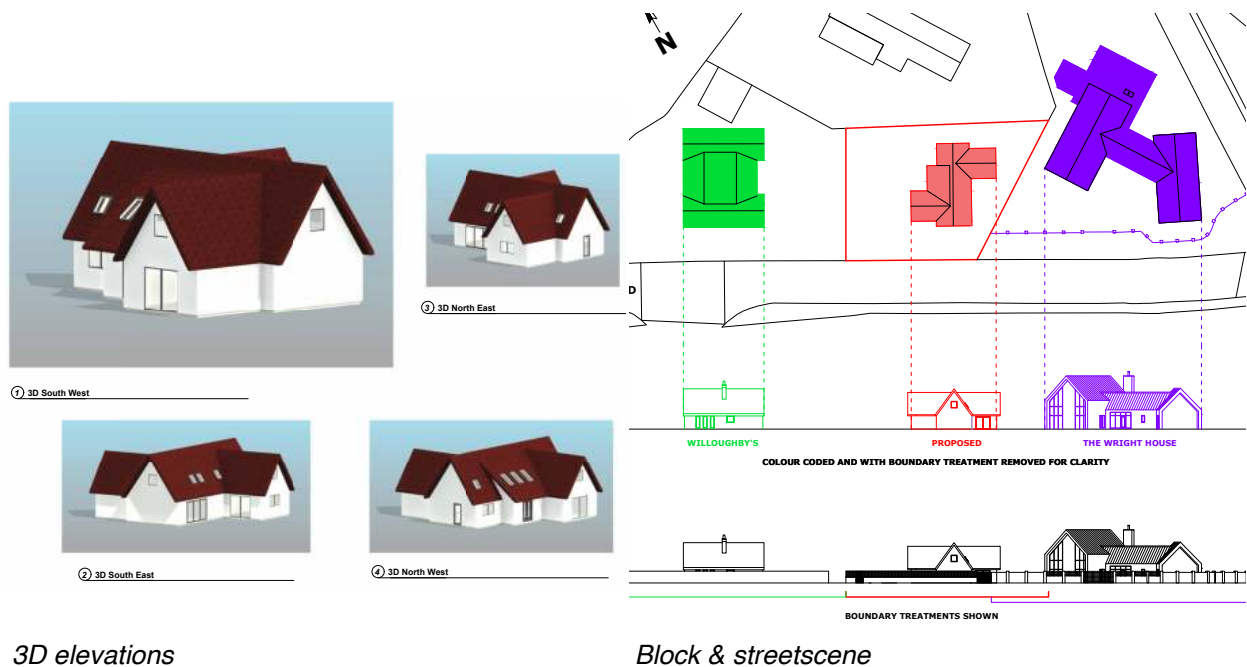
Approved & implemented block plan - Willoughby's

Unfortunately, the 2016 outline consent expired before reserved matters for the current application site were approved.

The owners of the plot subsequently submitted a full planning application for the construction of a detached dwelling on the land (DC/21/2523/FUL). In March of 2022, the LPA refused planning permission for the development. The refusal was issued on two grounds, the first pertaining to design and the second to amenity impact.

The site owners appealed the LPA's decision (APP/F3545/W/22/3296719). However, the appeal was dismissed, with the Inspector agreeing with a number of the LPA's design concerns (but not all).

Following the appeal dismissal, the site owners engaged extensively with the LPA in respect of a re-design (PREAPP/23/037). Multiple designs were considered by the LPA, with each design evolving in response to the LPA's comments on the previous iteration. The final design for which the LPA's pre-application advice was sought and received is indicated by the plan extracts below.



3D elevations

Block & streetscene

The LPA responded favourably to the final iteration of the pre-application design. Their detailed advice was given as follows:

“Overall, these appear to be acceptable. I suggest adding windows to the ground floor elevation on the south side, to reduce the blankness on this side. I also think that the window on the gable of the west elevation should be slightly smaller, given that this will be obscure glazing.

There will be some overlooking from the bedroom on the west elevation into the garden to the north, but I accept that the latest proposal is much better in this regard than the proposal that was refused (and the Inspector had no concerns in relation to this).

Please note for your submission that the block plan should include the full extent of the building (it looks like the roof span has not been included in your plan) OR, in addition,

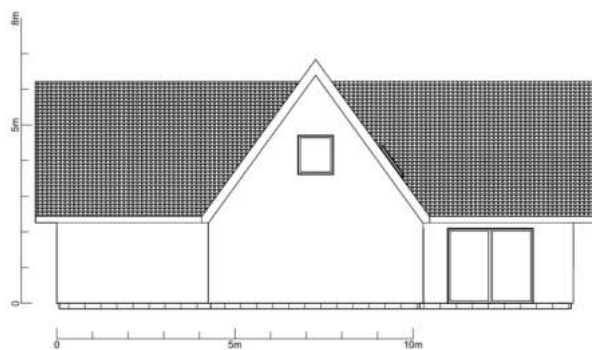
provide a roof plan that includes the relationship with the neighbour. Please also provide a street scene plan.

I note that the access, any proposed garaging and boundary treatment to the front has not been included in the draft plans. Preferably the existing wall will be set back and the integration with the boundary treatment for the Wright House will be carefully considered and enhanced compared to the current arrangement.”

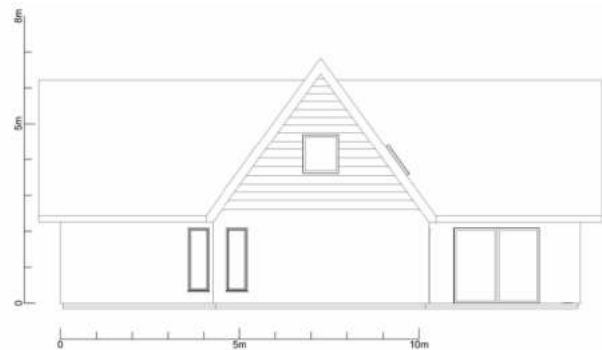
Some minor alterations have been made to the plans, in line with the above officer advice (see bullet list below). Excepting these minor alterations, the development for which full planning consent is sought is the same as the final iteration of the design that was assessed favourably by the LPA at pre-application stage.

List of minor alterations in line with pre-application advice

- 2 no. windows have been added to the ground floor elevation on the south side. A change in material has also been introduced, with timber cladding now appearing on the upper section of gable. These measures combine to materially reduce the blankness on this elevation.



South elevation - pre-application design



South elevation - current design

The combination of white render and timber cladding is responsive to the local vernacular and there are existing examples of dwellings with similar external materials in the immediate vicinity (see example below)².

² The officer's report on previous application DC/21/2523/FUL also specifically identified timber cladding as a characteristic typical of the local area



Dwelling located c. 200m east of the application site along Anne Sucklings Lane

- The window on the gable of the west elevation has been modestly reduced in size and will remain subject to obscure glazing.



West elevation - pre-application design



West elevation - current design

- The application is accompanied by a block plan, separate roof plan and orthographic projections, including streetscene plan which clearly demonstrate how the proposed building would appear in context and relate to its neighbours. The various 3D models also provide a valuable and clear insight into how the finished development would appear.
- Details of access, parking and boundary treatments are provided on plan 2717-01-1. No garage is proposed and parking spaces are provided by way of a private driveway;
- The existing wall has not been set back. However, it is proposed that this feature will not be increased in height and will remain at its very low current height of 1m. It will

also be white-rendered for a softer and more cohesive appearance within the streetscene. A new laurel hedge will be planted to the rear of the wall to enhance privacy and achieve a sense of set-back - this will provide a more comfortable junction with existing side and neighbouring boundary treatments.

- The only other alteration to the plans considered by the LPA at pre-application stage is the addition of 6 no. solar panels to the roof. This improves the sustainability of the development and serves to optimise energy efficiency, in compliance with local policy DM7. The form and positioning of the solar panels is only indicative at this stage.

Given the generally favourable response of the LPA at pre-application stage and the minor alterations subsequently undertaken in line with officer advice, it is anticipated that the LPA's response to the design of the currently proposed dwelling will be favourable.

All main components of the development's design - including layout, form, scale and materials - are discussed in greater detail below.

Detailed assessment of the main design components

Layout

The dwelling adopts a roughly central plot position and maintains a front building line with its two immediate neighbours. Its rear building line sits forward of its neighbours to maintain a comfortable distance from the site's rear boundary with Boyton Hall Farmhouse.

Its footprint is proportionate to the site area, for a percentage built coverage of c. 20%³. Applying the Nationally Described Space Standards, this equates to a 2 bed, 4-person dwelling which is a smaller dwelling type. The internal accommodation complies with Nationally Described Space Standards in all respects.

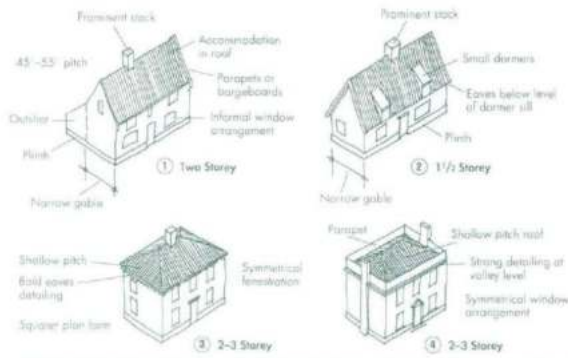
Form

The dwelling is made up of narrow, rectangular forms that are strongly representative of the Suffolk vernacular. These forms combine in a traditional and familial manner, with two smaller, rectangular wings branching off to either side of the main, rectangular core

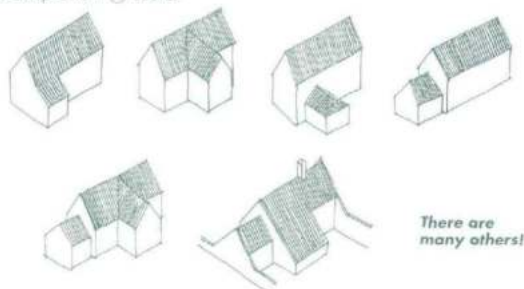
³ footprint is c. 135 sqm, compared to a site area of c. 648 sqm

in an “S” format. The result is an irregular plan form, appearing as a series of linked small scale elements in the traditional Suffolk manner (see relevant extract of the Suffolk Design Guide below).

Typical Traditional Suffolk House Forms:-



Remember these typical Suffolk house forms when considering new designs. Numerous variations can be developed from them – for example those below are developed from (1) above:-



Form

5.5.1 There is little point in producing a well thought out layout if each neighbourhood created consists of nothing more than characterless little boxes.

5.5.2 Traditional Suffolk House forms evolved from the available local building materials and the limitations which these placed upon the builders - see Chapter 4 on materials. Houses were frequently only a single room in depth, or a single room in width. Often this simple narrow rectangular form was extended by lean-to additions, or by single or double storey wings to the side or rear of the main house. This resulted in a large house, of irregular plan form, but appearing as a series of linked small scale elements.

5.5.3 In the larger towns, where space at ground level was at a premium, terraces of 3 or 4 storey height, frequently with accommodation within the roof space, were common.

5.5.4 Many new buildings are of a very different form. Near square plans, frequently with integral garages, are covered with a single shallow pitched roof. The resulting shape is inevitably alien to Suffolk traditional building, even where the property is 'dressed-up' in vernacular materials and details.

Page 78 of the Suffolk Design Guide - see paragraph 5.5.2 in particular

Use is also made of a cat slide roof - a traditional and characterful feature that appears on the existing, older dwelling to the immediate rear of the site - to provide an entrance hall.



Catslide roof - a traditional feature of the local area, appearing here on Boyton Hall Farmhouse

The main roofs are simple and traditional, adopting open gable forms throughout. All main roofs are pitched at 54 degrees which is the same roof pitch adopted by Willoughby's.

Willoughby's is the dwelling located to the immediate west of the application site. It originally received its outline planning permission together with the current application site (DC/15/2442/OUT) and the two plots thus share a similar provenance. It is appropriate, in recognition of this shared provenance, that they would also share similar architectural features. The matching roof pitches thus assists the dwellings to better relate to each other for a comfortable and familial appearance within the streetscene.



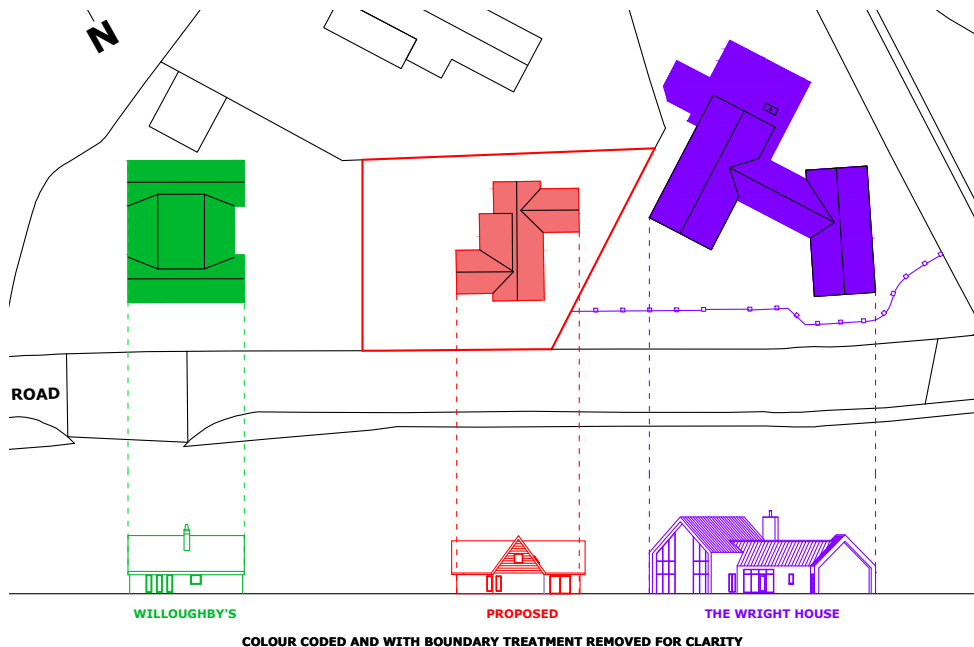
The main, gabled roofs of Willoughby's adopt the same 54 degree pitch

The cat slide roof adopts a shallower pitch (c. 35 degrees), in keeping with the existing cat slide roof on the neighbouring, traditional building to the rear of the site.

Scale

The site is flanked on one side by a modern domestic plot of similar, overall modest dimensions (Willoughby's) and on the other side, by a more sizeable, modern domestic plot (The Wright House). The smaller neighbouring plot contains a dwelling of overall modest scale, whereas the larger neighbouring plot contains a dwelling of perceptibly larger scale. The scale of the proposed dwelling has been designed to appear in keeping with this established characteristic. The size of the plot is similar to Willoughby's and, in recognition of this, the scale of the dwelling is also similar. This is

demonstrated, in part, by the proposed streetscene drawing (extract below).



Extract of plan 2717-09-1 - In views from the public realm, the proposed dwelling appears of near-identical scale to Willoughby's and of perceptibly smaller scale than The Wright House. In plan view, the proposed dwelling appears to adopt a scale smaller than both its neighbours

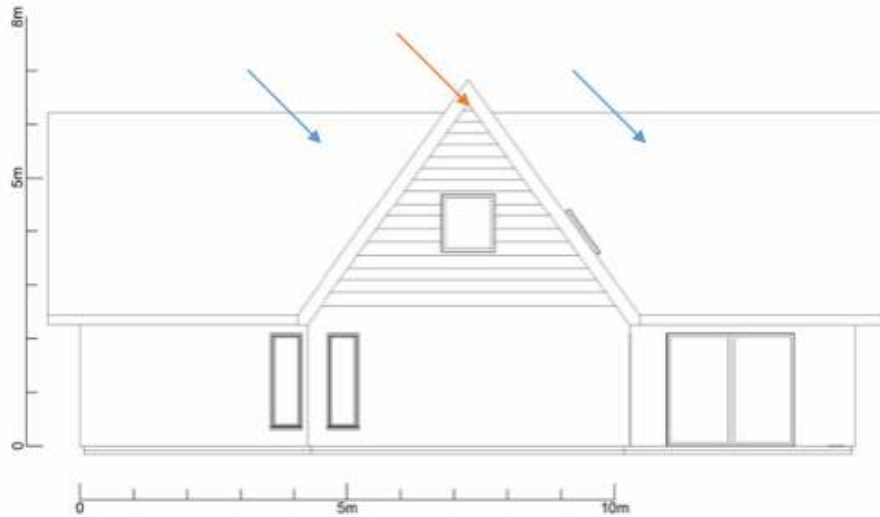
Height

The height of the dwelling also takes its cues from Willoughby's. In particular, the dwelling adopts an overall modest, 1.5 storey height that steps down significantly from the height of its neighbours to the east and north.

The road-facing gable protrudes modestly above the more visible roofs to either side to provide a comfortable junction and pleasant sense of articulation. The presence of this front gable also assists the dwelling to “speak to” the public realm, rather than presenting a blank or uninteresting facade.

The roofs of the dwelling that appear most prominently in the public realm each have modest ridge heights of c. 6.2 m, with the protruding front-facing gable extending that to a maximum ridge height of c. 6.8m. 6.8m is the maximum ridge height achieved by Willoughby's which shares a similar provenance and a similar plot size. By comparison,

The Wright House to the east and Boyton Hall Farmhouse to the north have significantly greater ridge heights of c. 9m.



The dwelling's public, road-facing elevation - roofs identified by blue arrows achieve ridge heights of c. 6.2m, whereas the roof identified by an orange arrow achieves a ridge height of c. 6.8m

Openings

Careful consideration has been given to the amount, form and positioning of doors and windows. Large expanses of glazing have been avoided in order to achieve an overall traditional, as opposed to contemporary, style for the building. This also has clear benefits for sustainability as it will assist to keep the dwelling cool in summer and warm in winter. In addition, the amount of glazing ensures compliance can be demonstrated with recently updated Building Regulations.

5.6.4 A strong looking facade will be achieved by keeping the area of opening considerably less than the remaining area of brickwork. A general rule is that the total area of windows and doors in each facade should not exceed one third of the total wall area. Gable end walls require particular care, and may benefit from having an even lower ratio of opening to wall.

Page 80 of the Suffolk Design Guide - traditional Suffolk design expects the area of opening to be considerably less than the remaining area of brickwork. The proposed dwelling achieves this for a traditional and locally relevant appearance

The positioning and style of windows also ensures that the amenities of the existing dwellings to the north, east and west of the site are duly preserved, with minimal openings facing towards the private areas of the neighbouring sites. For example, the elevation facing the rear garden of Boyton Hall Farmhouse contains only one opening, comprising a ground-floor door, which has no potential for overlooking. Similarly, the elevation facing towards the garden of The Wright House contains only rooflights and a bathroom window (obscure glazed) above ground level to ensure no overlooking potential.

The building's main elevation faces towards Willoughby's in due recognition of both their shared provenance and the established orientation of Willoughby's which faces towards the application site. The result is a familial pair of modern dwellings that appear to "speak to" each other across the shared access way.

In order to provide a sense of interest and articulation to the public (road-fronting) face of the dwelling, there are 3 no. openings on the ground floor, with another window and a section of timber cladding introduced at roof level.

Materials

The dwelling will make use of the following external materials:

- Slate roof tiles;
- White rendered walls with a modest section of horizontal timber cladding⁴; and
- Grey aluminium door and window frames.

These materials are traditional and very well-represented in the local area. They are firmly in line with and responsive to the proposed dwelling's overall traditional form and style.

Front boundary treatment

It is proposed that the front boundary treatment will consist of a 1m high, white-rendered brick wall, with a new laurel hedge planted to its rear to provide an additional, "soft" privacy screen and an improved sense of enclosure.

⁴ and a blue brick (grey) skirt - c. 2 brick courses - around the base of the building



Examples of similar boundary treatments for reference

The combination of a low-lying hard boundary in addition to a taller, soft boundary ensures an acceptable visual impact is had on the streetscene whilst still achieving adequate privacy levels for the site's occupants and a suitable distinction between public and private realms.

The siting of the hedge to the rear of the brick wall means the boundary steps back slightly to achieve a comfortable junction with the established side/neighbouring boundary treatments depicted in the photographs below. The white render of the wall will also soften its appearance and provide a sense of cohesion with the white render of the dwelling.

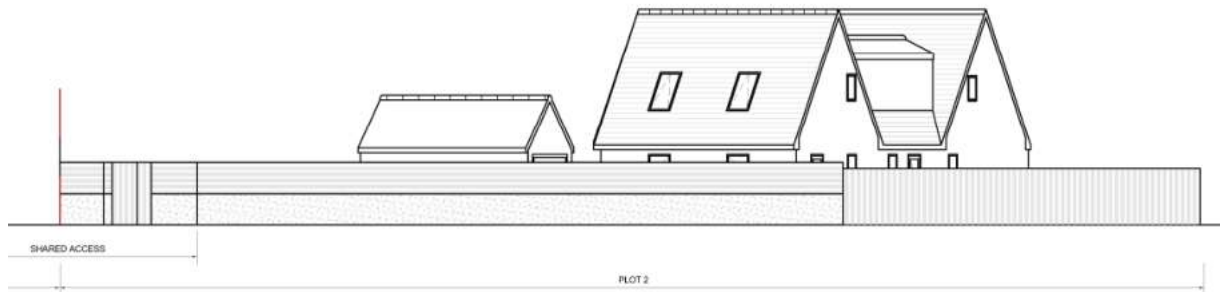


Photographs depict the more imposing front boundary treatment of The Wright House (in red brick) & how it adjoins to the boundaries of the application site

Because of the low height of the wall and soft character of the hedge, the proposed front boundary treatment is considered to be perceptibly less solid and imposing than neighbouring front boundary treatments, including The Wright House's tall brick wall.

The proposed introduction of a new hedgerow to this section of the streetscene will improve its overall appearance whilst providing some modest benefits for biodiversity and land drainage.

The current front boundary treatment also materially improves upon the design of the front boundary treatment previously considered by the LPA and, subsequently, the Planning Inspectorate (refs. DC/21/2523/FUL & APP/F3545/W/22/3296719). The previous treatment consisted of a solid, 2m high boundary wall with timber slats.



Previously proposed front boundary treatment (DC/21/2523/FUL & APP/F3545/W/22/3296719)

It is of clear relevance that the Planning Inspector raised no particular objection to the previously proposed boundary treatment, offering only the following relevant comments:

Paragraph 13 - *“A high boundary wall, of white rendered masonry topped by timber slats, would protect the garden from public view”;*

Paragraph 14 - *“The unusual layout of the site derives from its geometry and from the understandable desire to preserve a glimpse of the historic buildings to the north, to mitigate harm to their setting. In the circumstances, the high boundary wall on the street frontage could be acceptable in the streetscene.”*

In spite of the lack of any clear objection to the previous front boundary treatment on the Inspector's part, the applicants have still chosen to make some amendments in line with

LPA advice, materially reducing the height of the wall and adding a hedge to soften its character and visual impact whilst still providing essential privacy to the garden.

Overall, the proposed front boundary treatment is considered to preserve and, to some extent, enhance the established character and appearance of the streetscene.

Conclusion

The design of the proposed dwelling and its plot has been carefully progressed as part of an iterative design process, involving input from the LPA. Its design is considered to:

- Fully resolve the concerns of the LPA as raised in response to previously proposed designs (DC/21/2523/FUL & PREAPP/23/037);
- Accord positively with the established character and appearance of the local area, demonstrating due regard for the design of its modern, residential neighbours;
- Achieve a neighbourly relationship with adjacent plots, preserving their amenities; and
- Secure compliance with all relevant national and local planning policies, including policy CS3 of the Code Strategy and policies DM2, DM7 and DM22 of the Joint Development Management Policies Document.

Amenity

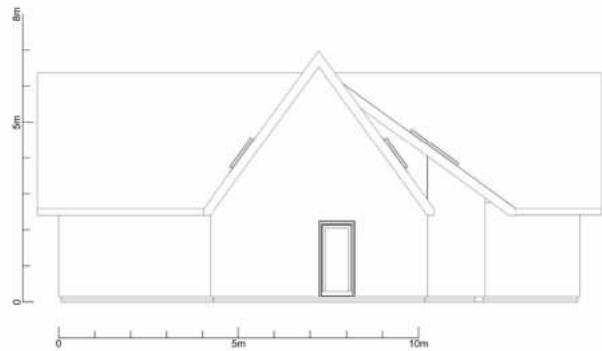
As discussed above, a previous iteration of the current design was recently subject to the LPA's pre-application advice (PREAPP/23/037). In respect of the amenity impact of the pre-application proposals, the LPA advised as follows:

“There will be some overlooking from the bedroom on the west elevation into the garden to the north, but I accept that the latest proposal is much better in this regard than the proposal that was refused (and the Inspector had no concerns in relation to this).”

Only very minor alterations have been undertaken to the design subsequent to the above officer advice (outlined previously). None of these alterations have the potential to cause or increase harm to neighbouring amenities.

The development is considered to be a neighbourly scheme and great efforts have been made to limit any impact on adjacent dwellings. For example:

- The dwelling is of a modest scale and footprint that relates well to the smallest dwelling in the host cluster (Willoughby's) and shows clear deference to the largest dwellings in the cluster (Boyton Hall Farmhouse and The Wright House);
- The dwelling adopts a roughly central plot position, maintaining a comfortable distance from all site boundaries;
- Because of its modest scale and on-plot positioning, there is no potential for overshadowing or overbearing of neighbours; and
- The size, type and positioning of openings has been very carefully considered to reduce to a minimum any overlooking of neighbouring plots. For example, the elevation facing the rear garden of Boyton Hall Farmhouse contains only one opening, comprising a ground-floor door, which has no potential for overlooking. Similarly, the elevation facing towards the garden of The Wright House contains only rooflights and a bathroom window (obscure glazed) above ground level to ensure no overlooking potential.



The most sensitive elevations of the building contain only very limited glazed openings at upper level; consisting of rooflights and a single, obscure-glazed window

For these reasons, compliance is secured with all relevant amenity provisions of local policies DM2 and DM22.

Heritage

The only heritage asset with the potential to be affected by development of this site is Chapel Farm Cottage, a grade II listed building.

The impact of the site's development on the significant of this listed building was previously considered by the LPA's conservation officer in response to recent application DC/21/2523/FUL, which concerned the construction of a single detached dwelling on the same plot, albeit of a materially different design.

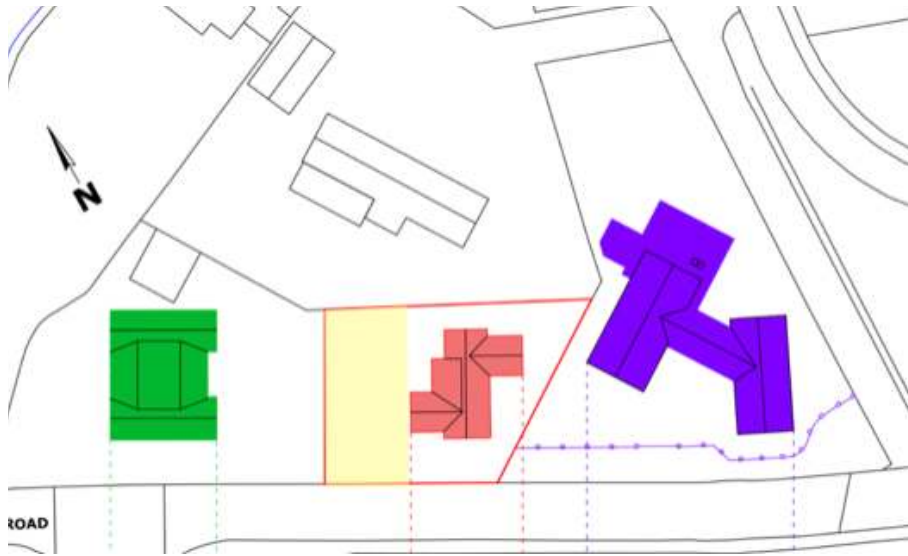
Although the Conservation Officer raised some design concerns in relation to application DC/21/2523/FUL, they ultimately found that the setting of the listed building would not be adversely affected. Their full comments are copied below:

“The proposed development relates to a single dwelling south of Boyton Hall Farm a converted barn. Heritage assets in the locality include Chapel Farm Cottage (Grade II listed) and Boyton Hall Farm itself - listed building consent was required for its original conversion. Outline permission for two dwellings south of Boyton Hall Farm has already been approved alongside the details of one of the two plots. Whilst the overall size of the proposed development would appear cramped within its plot given the surrounding development and its location towards the south eastern extremities of the plot allowing a degree of openness to Boyton Hall farm it is not considered to adversely affect its setting or that of Chapel Farm Cottage. I therefore have no objections from a conservation point of view.”

Taking the above recent assessment as a starting point, it is considered that the proposed development would also conserve the setting of the relevant listed building, in compliance with local policies DM2 and DM15. This is asserted having regard to the following key matters:

1. The built context of the application site remains materially the same, including in terms of the site's spatial and visual relationship with the listed building; and
2. The design of the development has been materially improved, aided by the LPA's pre-application advice. The position of the dwelling is no longer cramped or contrived and its scale and bulk are now duly proportionate to the site area, with a material increase in the size of its garden. In addition, a degree of openness to Boyton Hall Farmhouse

is still retained, as highlighted on the plan extract below:



Undeveloped area of the site shaded in yellow retains a degree of openness to Boyton Hall Farmhouse (rear)

Highways & parking

Policy DM46 requires proposals to provide appropriately designed and sited car parking, in accordance with SCC Suffolk Guidance for Parking (SGP).

Paragraph 111 of the NPPF provides that, “development should only be prevented or refused on highways grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety, or the residual cumulative impacts on the road network would be severe”.

In terms of the amount of parking spaces, the SGP recommends 2 spaces per 2-bed dwelling. In this case, the dwelling is a 2-bed and the private driveway indicated on drawing 2717-01-1 includes 2 car parking spaces.

In terms of the type and siting of parking spaces, the SGP provides as follows:

“Where housing densities are lower, space for car parking can be provided ‘on plot’ within the curtilage of the dwelling, such as in the form of a garage, car port, parking bay or private drive. Parking or garaging within the private curtilage of the dwelling has the advantage of being accessible, secure and easy to supervise. Given accessibility requirements, preference should be for access from the front of the dwelling/premises.”

The proposed parking spaces demonstrate clear compliance with this guidance. In particular, they:

- Are within the curtilage of the dwelling;
- Take the form of a private drive; and
- Are accessed from the front (west) of the dwelling.

The dwelling is also provided with generous private amenity space which will enable the provision of adequate, secure cycle parking.

In terms of highways safety, the proposed shared access point is identical to the access recently approved and implemented on the adjacent plot, Willoughby’s. It achieves acceptable visibility splays of 2.4m x 43m in both directions⁵. Furthermore, Anne

⁵ refer to plan 2717-10-1

Sucklings Lane is not subject to any known highway safety or capacity issues. The modest increase in its use that would arise from the proposed addition of a single, 2-bed dwelling is not considered to cause any unacceptable impact on highway safety.

The requirements of local policy DM46 and paragraph 111 of the NPPF are consequently met.

Landscape, ecology & biodiversity

The development will include the following planting, as a minimum:

- Native species hedge along western site boundary;
- 2 no. potted olive trees; and
- Laurel hedge along southern (front) site boundary.

These features are indicated on plan 2717-01-1.

The site's private garden will also be predominantly laid to lawn.

The development does not require or result in any loss in trees or other beneficial landscape features.

Overall, modest net benefits will be achieved for soft landscape cover and biodiversity. These benefits are considered to be commensurate with the scale, amount and type of development, in compliance with policy DM12.

Sustainable design & construction

The development includes the following sustainable design features:

- Solar panels; and
- Electric vehicle charge points.

The design of the proposed building secures full compliance with current Building Regulations (last updated in 2023), including in terms of insulation, energy performance, air tightness etc.

Its detailed design also demonstrates due regard for key sustainability principles. For example, large expanses of glazing have been avoided to assist to keep the dwelling cool in summer and warm in winter.

These features improve upon the sustainability of previous designs (including DC/21/2523/FUL) and it is noted that the LPA has raised no objections to any previous schemes on the grounds of sustainability.

In terms of water efficiency, the applicants are willing to accept a suitable planning condition to secure compliance with the relevant requirements of policy DM7. It is understood that the use of such a condition for development of this type and scale is standard practice.

Overall, the development is considered to adhere to broad principles of sustainable design and construction and to optimise energy efficiency through a variety of features and techniques, in accordance with local policy DM7.

Conclusion

It is considered that the proposed, high-quality residential development secures full compliance with all relevant national and local planning policies.

Its design has been progressed as part of an iterative design process, involving detailed input from the LPA. The resultant scheme is considered to sensitively overcome all those design concerns raised by the LPA and Planning Inspectorate over the course of the site's recent planning history.

The development will deliver a very high standard of modern accommodation, in accordance with Nationally Described Space Standards, and incorporates a range of sustainability principles and features. Its detailed design will ensure the due preservation of neighbouring amenities whilst also conserving and, to some extent, enhancing the character and appearance of the public realm.

It is the professional opinion of Planning Direct that this application ought therefore to be approved without delay.

The applicant expects the LPA to bring any potential issues arising with the proposal to the attention of Planning Direct at the earliest opportunity, in order that clarifications can be provided and/or solutions agreed where appropriate.