

Application for Determination

Parish	Hoveton
Reference	BA/2012/0083/FUL Target date 14 June 2012 and BA/2012/0084/LBC
Location	Greengates, New Lane, Hoveton
Proposal	Proposal to bring No 10 Greengates back in to use as a residential dwelling and associated renovation and refurbishment works
Applicant	Mr Tom Blofeld
Recommendation	Approve subject to conditions
Reason for referral to Committee	Departure from Development Plan

1 Description of Site and Proposals

- 1.1 The application site is a Grade II* listed dwellinghouse on the Hoveton Estate which lies to the north of the River Bure between the main settlements of Hoveton and Horning. The Estate includes Hoveton House and many other listed dwellings, as well as more modern agricultural buildings serving the Estate operations. The site is outside the Development Boundary and in flood risk zone 1.
- 1.2 Greengates is a two storey red brick building to the west of New Lane, with a formal garden to the front (south) and sides and a less formal curtilage area, including access and parking to the north. The building consists of a two storey section under a plain and pan tile roof with shaped gables. This has a brick pilaster and pediment door surround with rusticated quoins and other decorative brick detailing. On the western side the roof drops to one and a half storeys in height and is thatched, with a single storey pantile lean-to on the north elevation. The property dates from circa 1700.
- 1.3 Anecdotal evidence records that the building has been historically occupied as two semi-detached dwellings known as 10 and 11 Greengates (thatched and tiled respectively), although Number 10 originally accommodated the village school house. However, in the 1950s the building came to be occupied as one single family dwelling. Number 11 is currently occupied as a single dwelling, but Number 10 has been vacant for some time. In planning terms,

Greengates is still considered to be a single dwelling as the use of Number 10 as an independent dwelling has lapsed.

- 1.4 Planning permission is sought to bring back Number 10 Greengates into use as a separate dwelling, which means effectively, that the application is for a sub-division. Listed building consent is also being sought for associated renovation and refurbishment. No physical works are proposed to Number 11.
- 1.5 The work proposed to renovate and refurbish Number 10 consists of the blocking off of an internal ground floor door between the two sides of the building, repair and replacement of internal finishes and installation of a bathroom with associated plumbing and ventilation, as well as a new central heating system throughout.
- 1.6 Number 10 has suffered from some structural movement around the first floor dormer windows and it is proposed to strengthen this by inserting a new composite timber beam into the floor depth with a new structural partition adjacent to an existing partition wall on the first floor. The roof would also be strengthened with new purlins and other roof timbers would be repaired before the roof would be re-thatched. This solution has been informed by a Structural Survey. New plasterboard finishes are proposed to the first floor ceiling and gable wall.
- 1.7 Externally, timber fences have already been erected to sub-divide the curtilage to the south of the building and a fence has also been erected along the driveway to the northeast. These fences do not have the benefit of planning permission, are inappropriate and are proposed to be replaced with holly hedges. Two storage sheds and a satellite dish have also been erected in the curtilage of number 11. These are proposed to be re-located and the sheds are proposed to be stained dark brown. A new oil tank is also proposed adjacent to the north elevation, screened by a new holly hedge. Rainwater goods and the external brickwork would be repaired and refurbished as necessary.

2 Site History

A planning application and listed building consent application were submitted in 2010 for the same proposal but were subsequently withdrawn pending further discussion regarding the details of the proposal (BA/2010/0279/FUL and BA/2010/0280/LBC).

3 Consultation

Broads Society – No comments.

Parish Council – No comments.

District Member – No response.

English Heritage – No objection to proposed approach to structural reinforcement of roof, leave Authority to secure sufficient drawn detail.

Representations

None received.

4 Policies

4.1 Broads Core Strategy adopted September 2007

[Core Strategy \(Adopted Sept 2007\).pdf](#)

CS1 – Landscape

CS5 – Historic and Cultural Environments

CS6 – Archaeology

CS18 – Rural Sustainability

CS24 – Residential Development and the Local Community

4.2 Development Management Policies DPD adopted November 2011

[DMP DPD - Adoption version.pdf](#)

DP4 – Design

DP5 – Historic Environment

DP6 – Re-use of Historic Buildings

DP22 – Residential Development within Defined Development Boundaries

DP23 – Affordable Housing

DP26 – Permanent and Temporary Dwellings for Agricultural, Forestry and Other Workers

DP28 - Amenity

4.3 National Planning Policy Framework

5 Assessment

5.1 The application effectively proposes the creation of a new dwelling in the countryside through sub-division and the principle of this must be considered. If this is considered to be acceptable, the details of the proposed renovation and refurbishment works to this Grade II* listed building to facilitate the creation of a new dwelling must be considered.

5.2 In terms of principle, the site is outside of any Development Boundary where there is a presumption against the creation of new dwellings in accordance with Policy CS24 of the Core Strategy, DP22 of the Development Management Policies DPD and the National Planning Policy Framework (paragraph 55). Policy DP22 does identify circumstances where new dwellings in the countryside may be permitted and these include for affordable housing (DP23) and for agricultural and other rural workers (DP26). Additionally, Policy DP6 allows for the re-use of historic buildings, subject to criteria.

- 5.3 What is proposed here does not accord with the definition of affordable housing and it has not been demonstrated that there is a need for an employee of the Hoveton Estate to live here in accordance with the criteria of Policy DP26. However, it is appreciated that the Estate wish to offer the proposed dwelling as low cost rented accommodation for a local or Estate worker. This would be consistent with other dwellings within the Estate. Although this is not in accordance with the criteria of Policies DP23 or DP26, the applicant's intentions are welcomed and are considered to have some merit given the history of the building and the current vacancy of Number 10.
- 5.4 Policy DP6 of the Development Management Policies DPD allows for the conversion or change of use of listed buildings, subject to criteria, with the preferred use being the use it was originally designed for, which in this case would be as a school house. If it is not possible to retain the building in its original use, employment, tourism (including holiday accommodation) and recreation uses are the next preference with residential use only being permitted where these are shown not to be viable. The application does not strictly propose a conversion and no assessment of the viability of potential employment, tourism or recreation uses has been submitted.
- 5.5 Although this part of Greengates may have originally been built as a school house, it has been used for significant periods as both an independent dwelling and as part of the dwelling at Number 11. With the exception of a bathroom and fixtures in the kitchen, Number 10 is laid out as, and is capable of functioning as, an independent dwelling. The National Planning Policy Framework, at paragraph 131, states local planning authorities should take account of "*the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation...*". When compared with employment or recreation uses, the proposed residential use would require relatively little work to the fabric of the building and is therefore considered to be more consistent with the intentions of DP6 and the National Planning Policy Framework and the conservation of the building.
- 5.6 The National Planning Policy Framework has superseded the previous national heritage guidance of Planning Policy Statement 5 (PPS5). However, English Heritage have confirmed that the Government continue to endorse the Practice Guide which accompanied PPS5 as a relevant document. This Practice Guide states "*Finding the optimum viable use for an asset may require the local planning authority to apply other development control policies flexibly and imaginatively to achieve long-term conservation*". However, officers are mindful that Section 38(6) of the *Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004* requires that planning applications should be determined in accordance with the Development Plan unless there are other material considerations which indicate otherwise.
- 5.7 In this case, it is considered that the optimum use for Number 10 is a residential use. It is noted that Policy DP6 differentiates between primary and holiday accommodation with the latter preferable where a conversion of a listed building is proposed. Whilst the characteristics of residential and holiday

accommodation are not significantly different, with the exception of the wider economic benefits that holiday accommodation is likely to generate, the Hoveton Estate is a small community relatively isolated from the villages of Hoveton and Horning and is therefore not particularly sustainably located in relation to tourist attractions and facilities. This weighs against the policy presumption in DP6. The proposal is for the dwelling to be occupied by a local or Estate employee which would offer improved sustainability credentials compared to holiday use as it is likely to generate fewer and/or shorter journeys. It is noted that any physical work required to bring Number 10 into use as a residential dwelling would not preclude future use as holiday accommodation, subject to a further planning permission to vary any necessary conditions. There would therefore be some flexibility in potential future uses, safeguarding the buildings future viability.

- 5.8 It is also necessary to be mindful that this is a building of significant architectural and heritage value and its current vacant status is contributing to deterioration of its structural condition. The primary objective of both national and local policies is to conserve, protect and enhance heritage assets and bringing this building back into use is considered to be the most beneficial way to conserve it in the long-term. The National Planning Policy Framework states that the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be given to its conservation. In this case, Greengates' Grade II* listed status denotes its outstanding architectural and historical interest and accordingly its conservation should be given significant weight in determining this application.
- 5.9 The proposal to create and then offer the separate dwelling as low cost rented accommodation to a local or Estate worker is not in strict accordance with the criteria of Policies DP6, DP23 or DP26 but does to some extent fulfil the broad policy objectives without undermining them or setting an undesirable precedent. Although it is the applicant's intention to offer the proposed dwelling as low cost accommodation for local workers, it is not considered there is any policy or other material consideration that would make it necessary or reasonable to restrict the occupation as such; there is no objection to it being general market housing. It is considered that the proposed residential use offers significant benefits for the long-term conservation of the building and that this is a material consideration which outweighs the provisions of the Development Plan and would allow for the granting of planning permission as a departure from the Development Plan policy.
- 5.10 Having established that the proposed use can be considered to be acceptable, the internal and external works to facilitate the use as a separate dwelling must be assessed.
- 5.11 The proposed works are largely repair and refurbishment to bring the building back to a habitable standard. Like-for-like repair and replacement has largely been specified, with some modern materials being introduced to new parts, such as the first floor plasterboard ceiling. This is considered acceptable as the historic fabric will be largely retained and the new fabric will be read as

such. Precise details of the materials and finishes to be used can be secured by condition.

- 5.12 The most significant work is that proposed to reinforce and stabilise the roof and first floor structure. This will be concealed within the floor depth and partition wall and be constructed with appropriate modern materials sympathetic to those that are original. An existing tie beam and the partition wall it sits within will remain in situ as part of this solution. This is considered to be an appropriate solution to stabilise the building that would conserve and protect the historic fabric. New vents are proposed to the ground floor with gravel drains externally to improve the ventilation and alleviate damp; this is considered an appropriate solution and is welcomed.
- 5.13 Internally, the proposed bathroom installation would be the most significant intervention but the ventilation and plumbing solutions are considered to be as concealed and sympathetic as possible. Further confirmation of the foul drainage is required pending further investigation and this can be agreed by condition.
- 5.14 Externally, the proposed removal of the unauthorised fences, re-location and staining of the sheds and re-siting of the satellite dish are welcomed as these currently detract from the setting of the building. The proposed holly hedges are considered an appropriate boundary treatment to divide and define the curtilage and there is no objection to the proposed external repair and refurbishment works.
- 5.15 Individually and cumulatively the proposed works, coupled with the proposed use, are considered to conserve and protect the fabric and setting of the building; it is not considered that any harm or loss, substantial or otherwise, would result.
- 5.16 On a previous proposal, the Norfolk Historic Environment Service recommended a condition requiring a programme of historic building recording to be agreed and implemented. Although no formal response has been received to this application it is considered necessary to append this condition.
- 5.17 The proposal is not considered to result in any unacceptable impact on the amenities of the occupiers of the existing dwelling, protected species or highways.

6 Conclusion

- 6.1 The application proposes the creation of a new dwelling in the countryside to provide low cost rented accommodation for local workers. The dwelling would be created through the sub-division of a Grade II* listed building, however this has historically been used as two dwellings and the work required to facilitate this use is not substantial.

- 6.2 Whilst the proposal to restore the use as a separate dwelling is not in full accordance with the relevant policies, the proposed residential use is considered to be the optimum use for this building and the proposal would secure the repair and stabilisation of the structure and long-term conservation of the building. Accordingly it is considered that these are material considerations which weigh against the provisions of the Development Plan and the application is recommended for approval as a departure from Development Plan policy.
- 6.3 It is considered that the proposed works to bring this part of the building back into use as a dwelling are sympathetic to the history and fabric of the building and would not result in any harm or loss to the heritage asset. The structure would be stabilised, securing the long-term future of the building.
- 6.4 If the Local Planning Authority were minded to grant planning permission it will be necessary to re-advertise the application as a 'departure'.

7 Recommendation

Approve planning permission and listed building consent subject to conditions:

- (i) Standard time limit.
- (ii) In accordance with submitted plans.
- (iii) Joinery details to be agreed.
- (iv) Foul drainage to be agreed.
- (v) New rainwater goods to be agreed.
- (vi) Any new materials to be used in repairs not identified in application are to be agreed.
- (vii) Fences to be removed once hedges established.
- (viii) Sheds to be stained within 3 months of approval.
- (ix) Satellite dish to be re-located within 3 months of approval .

8 Reason for Recommendation

The proposal is considered to be in accordance with Policies DP4, DP5 and DP28 of the adopted Development Management Policies DPD (2011), Policies CS1, CS5 and CS6 of the adopted Core Strategy (2007) and the National Planning Policy Framework. The proposal is contrary to Policies DP6 and DP22 of the Development Management Policies DPD and Policy CS24 of the adopted Core Strategy (2007), however it is considered that there are substantial material considerations that weigh in its favour and the application is recommended for approval as a departure from Development Plan policy.

Background papers: Application Files BA/2012/0083/FUL and BA/2012/0084/LBC

Author: Maria Hammond
Date of Report: 6 July 2012

List of Appendices: Appendix 1 Location Plan

BA/2012/0083/FUL & BA/2012/0084/LBC – Greengates, New Lane, Hoveton
Proposal to bring No 10 Greengates back in to use as a residential dwelling and associated renovation and refurbishment works

