

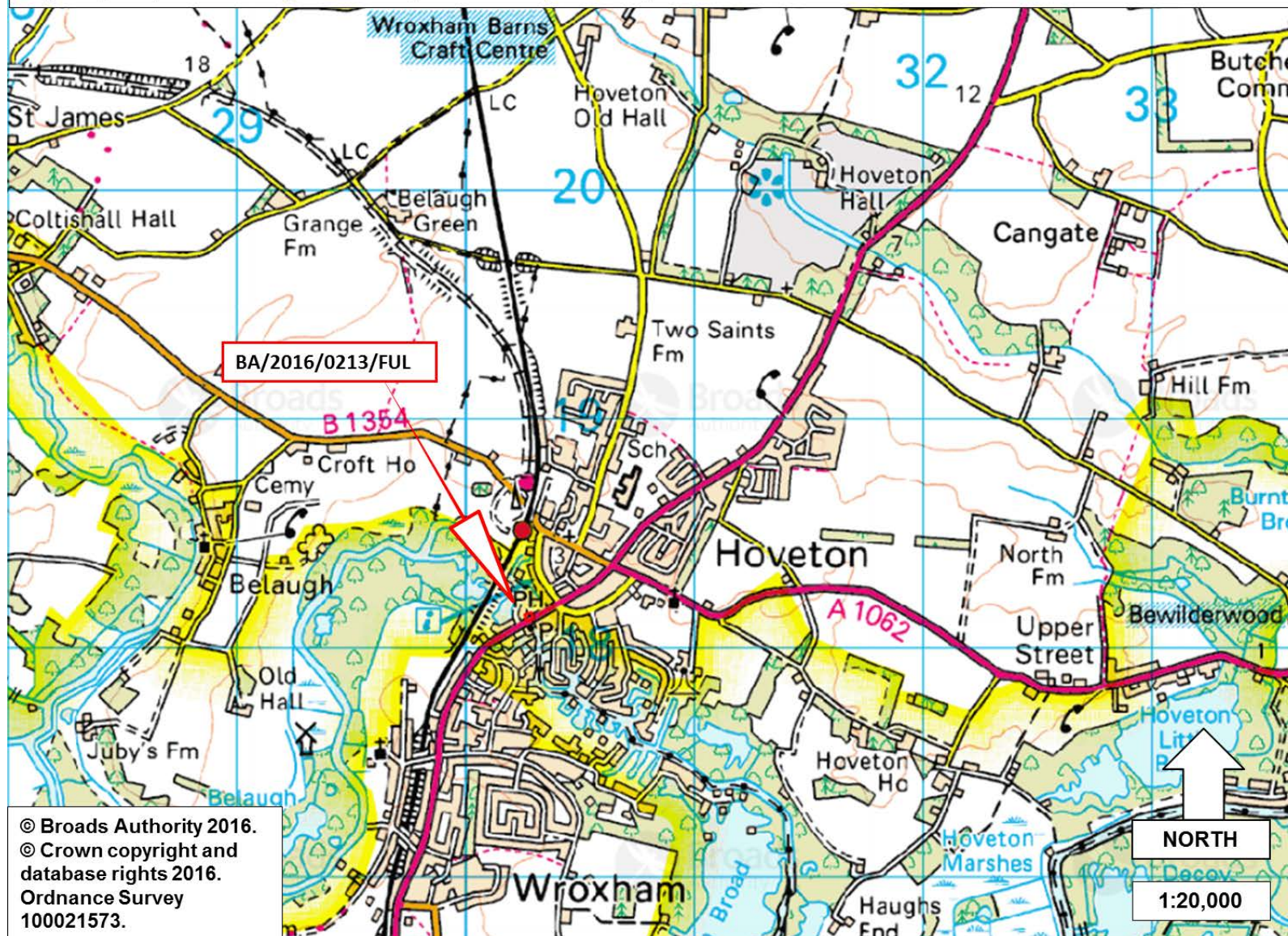
Reference:

BA/2016/0213/FUL

Location

The Bridge Restaurant, Norwich Road, Wroxham

BA/2016/0213/FUL - The Bridge Restaurant, Norwich Road, Wroxham, NR12 8RX



Application for Determination

Parish	Wroxham		
Reference	BA/2016/0213/FUL	Target date	25 July 2016
Location	The Bridge Restaurant, Norwich Road, Wroxham		
Proposal	Replacement restaurant		
Applicant	Wroxham Bridge Developments Ltd.		
Recommendation	Approve subject to conditions		
Reason for referral to Committee	Objections received.		

1 Description of Site and Proposals

- 1.1 The site is located immediately next to Wroxham Bridge, on the upstream side and western (Wroxham) bank. It is accessed from Bure Close off the A1151 Norwich Road. A restaurant has existed on this site for many years within single storey timber buildings that extend off a brick lean-to building attached to the bridge itself. The timber parts are in poor condition. The building is concentrated in the southern part of the site, with car parking to the north and external seating along the river frontage. An oak tree grows out of an opening within the building.
- 1.2 To the west of the site across Bure Close there is a storey and half timber building occupied by a recreation business and laundrette. Beyond these buildings, Bure Close turns into a private residential close of 15 two storey dwellings arranged in parallel terraces along the riverfront and road. The application site is in flood zone 3 and Wroxham Bridge is a Scheduled Monument.
- 1.3 The application proposes demolition of all but the brick section of the existing restaurant and replacement with a new predominantly two storey building which would also trade as a restaurant. This would have a footprint of approximately 290 square metres, approximately 60 square metres larger than the existing. It would be laid out with gable ends facing the river and Bure Close, with a small wing at 90 degrees facing the bridge and a single storey section on the northern side, the roof of which would cover stepped and ramped access and cycle parking. The main ridge would be at 8.7m AOD, this compares to the nearest dwellings at Bure Close which have a ridge height of

9.42m AOD, the recreation/laundrette building at 7.83m AOD and Broads Tours on the opposite side of Norwich Road at 10.29m AOD.

- 1.4 The river elevation would be largely glazed with a narrow balcony at first floor level and the gable to the bridge would also be glazed, adjacent to this there would be a first floor fire exit leading to external stairs. There would be no first floor windows on the north elevation and windows only to an office/store on the west elevation. The walls would have cedar cladding, the roof would have dark grey profiled steel sheeting and the windows and doors would be dark grey aluminium.
- 1.5 The retained brick part of the building would be re-roofed and an existing window on the river elevation would be replaced with a shallower window. The applicant has also made an application for Scheduled Monument consent to Historic England.
- 1.6 The new building would have a seating capacity of 80-100 covers internally with further seating on the riverside frontage which would have a new decking surface. The existing informal car park can accommodate up to eight cars and it is proposed to lay this out more formally with three designated disabled spaces. Five cycle spaces are proposed. The oak tree would be removed and improvements are proposed to the existing small areas of planting. A bin storage area is proposed in the northwest corner and safety chains and a ladder are proposed on the existing quayheading where moorings for visiting customers would be retained.

2 Site History

No previous applications.

3 Consultation

Broads Society – No response.

Wroxham Parish Council - Wroxham Parish Council held a site meeting attended by six councillors. They had strong objections as follows: site not suitable for a two storey building, it would destroy the visual impact of the iconic bridge; metal roof not in keeping with surrounding area; car parking provision not acceptable; site will require water safety measures for customers; impact on neighbouring properties in residential area; and, tree, part of bridge vista.

Hoveton Parish Council - No objection.

District Member – No response.

Historic England - Wroxham Bridge is a Scheduled Monument. Historic England do not object in principle to the redevelopment of the site but at a pre-application site meeting did recommend some design changes to increase permeability across the site and reduce the overall impact on the bridge,

particularly in key views from the eastern side of the river. We appreciate that a number of amendments have been made. We have concluded that although we continue to have a concern that the impact of the development would be harmful to the significance of the monument, we consider this to be less than substantial. We therefore recommend that the application be considered under paragraph 134 of the National Planning Policy Framework and with reference to the Authority's own policies. If the Authority is minded to grant permission the quality and use of materials will be key to the success of the project and consider that conditions should be used. The scheme will need to be subject to Scheduled Monument Consent and we recommend that acquiring this formal consent be made a planning condition. We also recommend that the current building is recorded prior to its demolition and the County's Historic Environment Service be consulted to ensure that non-designated heritage assets are also considered.

Highways Authority - Whilst parking provision is restricted on the site, there is ample public car parking nearby such that it is unlikely there would be a detrimental effect on the public highway. It is noted cycle stands are proposed and this is welcomed in order to encourage alternative and sustainable modes of transport. No objection but recommend condition.

Environmental Health Officer - Recommend conditioning kitchen extraction (noise levels and odour filtration).

Environment Agency - No objection providing you are satisfied the development would be safe for its lifetime and you assess the acceptability of the issues within your remit. The site is in fluvial and tidal flood zone 3 and the proposal is for a replacement restaurant which is classified as a 'less vulnerable' use. It is therefore necessary for the application to pass the Sequential Test and be supported by a Flood Risk Assessment which can demonstrate that the 'development will be safe for its lifetime taking account of the vulnerability of its users, without increasing flood risk elsewhere and, where possible, will reduce flood risk overall'.

We are satisfied the Flood Risk Assessment provides you with the information necessary to make an informed decision. The proposal will only meet the requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework if a condition is applied requiring it to be carried out in accordance with the submitted Flood Risk Assessment, ground floor levels are no lower than 1.26 metres AOD and the mitigation measures are implemented prior to occupation.

4 Representations

- 4.1 Six residents of Bure Close submitted a joint representation raising concerns in respect of: lack of parking spaces on site which will result in access to the private close being blocked by customers and customers trying to park in the close; noise nuisance, including from the balcony; lack of privacy to riverside gardens in Bure Close due to views from the balcony and upper storey; the tree will be removed removing the only greenery on site; and, welcome the idea of new premises replacing the existing and improving the visual aspect of

Wroxham to Hoveton from the bridge but the size is out of proportion to the site size.

- 4.2 One representation based on EDP story, not submitted plans and documents, commenting that the increased seating and less parking will make parking overspill onto the road worse and that another iconic Broads building would be destroyed.

5 Policies

- 5.1 The following Policies have been assessed for consistency with the National Planning Policy Framework ([NPPF](#)) and have been found to be consistent and can therefore be afforded full weight in the consideration and determination of this application.

Adopted Broads Core Strategy (2007)
[Core Strategy Adopted September 2007 pdf](#)

CS1 - Landscape protection and enhancement
CS5 - Historic and Cultural Environments
CS9 - Sustainable Tourism
CS23 – Economy

Adopted Broads Development Management DPD (2011)
[DEVELOPMENTPLANDOCUMENT](#)

DP1 – Natural Environment
DP2 - Landscape and Trees
DP4 - Design
DP11 - Access on Land
DP27 - Visitor and Community Facilities and Services
DP29 - Development on Sites with a High Probability of Flooding

- 5.2 The following Policies have been assessed for consistency with the NPPF and have found to lack full consistency with the NPPF and therefore those aspects of the NPPF may need to be given some weight in the consideration and determination of this application.

CS7 - Environmental Protection
CS20 - Rural Sustainability

DP5 - Historic Environment
DP20 - Development on Waterside Sites in Commercial use, including Boatyards
DP28 - Amenity

- 5.3 Site Specific Policies (2014)
[Site-Specific-Policies-Local-Plan-11-July-2014](#)

HOV4 - Village Retail Core

6 Assessment

- 6.1 The retention of a restaurant on this site within a replacement building is acceptable in principle in accordance with Policies CS9, CS23 and DP27 which seek to retain visitor and community facilities. With regard to DP20, the proposal would retain the existing commercial use and the site would remain as one unit and it is not a boatyard, therefore criteria (a) to (c) can be satisfied and the proposal is acceptable in this regard. The Site Specific Policy HOV4 supports the redevelopment of sites and buildings where it provides tourist facilities and enhances the appearance of the area.
- 6.2 As the proposal is acceptable in principle, the key considerations are the design and impact on heritage assets, flood risk, highways, amenity, ecology and trees.

Design and Heritage Assets

- 6.3 This is a prominent, well known and sensitive site. It is open to views on the approach to Wroxham Bridge, from the vehicular bridge itself, from the river, from the Hoveton bank, in clear views as you travel downstream towards the bridge and in glimpsed views beyond the bridge from downstream of it. The site is immediately adjacent to the Scheduled Monument and any new development must conserve the significance of this heritage asset. The earliest parts of the bridge structure date from the 16th century and this was subsequently altered. A new pedestrian bridge was added on the downstream side in the mid-twentieth century and consequently the upstream side has the best views of the road bridge. The brick part of the existing building which is to be retained and is attached to the bridge is thought to be 19th century; it is not covered by the Schedule.
- 6.4 The retention of the brick part of the building is welcomed but the existing timber structure which was later added to this is in poor condition and not considered to be worthy or reasonably capable of retention. The replacement of the existing single storey building with a largely two storey structure on a slightly bigger footprint requires careful consideration in terms of its impact on the significance of the Scheduled Monument and the surrounding area.
- 6.5 The form of the proposed building is relatively traditional with a strong gable to the river and lean-to at the side which references traditional boatyard buildings characteristic of this area. It would not be as tall as the dwellings to the north of Broads Tours building to the south, downstream of the bridge, and in any case the mass is broken by the break in rooflines, whilst the lean-to element anchors the building into the site. The design has been amended following pre-application discussions with officers and Historic England, including ensuring space is maintained around the building to protect the historic connect of the site by lessening the impact on the bridge. It is not considered the scale of the proposal would dominate the bridge or surrounding area and, whilst taking account of the concerns

of the Parish Council and neighbouring residents, it is considered that the scale of the building is appropriate to the site.

- 6.6 Whilst the form is relatively traditional, the detailed design is more contemporary which is not considered inappropriate here. The materials indicated are considered appropriate to the context, including the profiled sheet steel roof which is common on boatyard buildings along Norwich Road and elsewhere along this section of river. The comments of Historic England in respect of the quality of materials being key here are supported and it would be necessary to agree details by condition.
- 6.7 In respect of the impact on the bridge, the open feeling around it would be maintained by the compact footprint of the new building. Views from upstream on the river itself and the public open space on the Hoveton bank would be retained and these factors help mitigate the impact on the significance of the bridge. The National Planning Policy Framework sets out a hierarchy of the impact of development on the significance of heritage assets, ranging from substantial harm (which should be allowed only wholly exceptionally in respect of scheduled monuments) to less than substantial harm, which can be allowed in certain circumstances. Historic England considers the proposal would result in less than substantial harm to the significance of the bridge. In accordance with paragraph 134 of the Framework, where it is considered there would be less than substantial harm, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal.
- 6.8 The proposal would result in the redevelopment and enhancement of this prominent site and retain it as a tourist and community facility. It is likely to have positive economic impacts and continue to attract visitors to this popular area. Furthermore, the design would provide enhanced opportunities for customers to enjoy views of the bridge and its setting, including taking in views up and downstream from the balcony, and existing off-site views of the bridge would be maintained. This scheme has been carefully designed to take account of the impact on the bridge and it is considered the public benefits do outweigh the less than substantial harm in accordance with paragraph 134.
- 6.9 Subject to conditions on material samples, details of the work to the retained brick lean-to, a photographic survey, signage and external lighting, the proposal is considered acceptable in terms of design and the impact on heritage assets in accordance with Policies CS5, DP4, DP5, HOV4 criterion (ii) and the National Planning Policy Framework.

Flood Risk

- 6.10 The submitted Flood Risk Assessment and Environment Agency response confirm the site can be considered as flood zone 3a. As the proposal is for the replacement of an existing building and use, it is not considered appropriate to consider alternative sites and the Sequential Test can be passed. The new building would have a floor level approximately 300mm

higher than the existing, a void is proposed under the increased footprint and deck and flood resilient construction measures are proposed up to the 1 in 100 plus climate change flood level. By extending the footprint, there would be a negligible loss of floodplain storage, however there are flood risk and safety benefits to the proposal compared to the existing building. Subject to conditions on the floor level, retaining voids beneath the building, flood resilience measures and a flood response plan, the proposal is considered acceptable in respect of flood risk in accordance with Policies CS20, DP29 and the National Planning Policy Framework.

Highways

- 6.11 The existing restaurant has insufficient parking on site to serve the development and this proposal would increase the capacity of the restaurant without increasing the number of spaces, thereby increasing the parking deficit. It would, however, secure the provision of dedicated disabled spaces. On street parking does occur on Bure Close and the concerns regarding parking within or blocking of access to the private residential part are appreciated. However, the residential close is clearly marked as private and any on-street parking cannot be directly attributed to the restaurant. There is ample public parking in Wroxham and Hoveton, including a large pay and display car park opposite the site, accessed by a pedestrian crossing. Furthermore it is very well served in terms of public transport and cyclists would be encouraged by the on-site covered cycle parking. The site is also accessible by river with moorings available for customers and other visitor moorings available nearby. There is no objection to the proposal from the Highways Authority subject to a condition on provision of the parking and turning prior to the first use. Whilst local concerns about parking availability are appreciated, the Highways Authority do not consider the proposal unacceptable and it can be considered acceptable in accordance with Policies DP11 and HOV4 criterion (ii).

Amenity

- 6.12 The northern boundary of the site separates it from the end dwelling of a terrace of four riverfront dwellings with small gardens at the waters edge. The closest dwelling has only one small window on the elevation nearest the site; the dwellings on the opposite side of the road have windows with views of the site. There would be no first floor windows on the north elevation facing the neighbouring dwellings and the west elevation office/store windows would only give views at an oblique angle to those dwellings on the west side of Bure Close, over 30 metres away. It is therefore not considered any windows would directly or unacceptably overlook the neighbouring dwellings.
- 6.13 On the river elevation, the first floor balcony would give customers views towards the waterfront gardens. These gardens are currently open to views from the river, bridge and opposite bank so enjoy little privacy. The balcony would be 1 metre deep and it is not proposed to be used for seating. It

would offer customers an opportunity to stand out and appreciate the view of the river and bridge and this is considered to be a benefit in terms of the enjoyment and understanding of the bridge and its context. Given the existing lack of privacy to the gardens, it is not considered this would result in any unacceptable levels of overlooking or loss of privacy which would justify a refusal of planning permission. Whilst it is not proposed to have seating on the balcony, it is not considered reasonable or appropriate to condition this and any views from a seated position may in fact be less than those obtained when standing.

- 6.14 In terms of noise and odours, the Environmental Health Officer has recommended a condition requiring agreement on kitchen extraction equipment and this is considered appropriate and necessary to protect amenity and the environment. It is noted the riverfront decking would create a degree of noise and activity which may disturb occupiers of the adjacent dwellings, however this area has historically been used for external seating to the restaurant. The decking would be approximately 2 metres deeper than the existing seating area but given the context of the site, adjacent to the busy road bridge and on one of the busiest sections of river, it is not considered this additional seating area would give rise to any additional unacceptable impacts on amenity. The opening hours are proposed to be 08:00 to 23:30 seven days a week and it is considered necessary to condition this. Subject to conditions, the proposal is considered acceptable in accordance with Policies DP28 and HOV4 criterion (ii).

Ecology and Trees

- 6.15 The existing building is considered to have low potential to be used by protected species but the demolition should be overseen by an ecologist and the oak tree, which is considered to have higher potential, should be surveyed prior to removal. this can and should be improved by incorporating bBiodiversity enhancements should be included in the new building and, . sSubject to appropriate conditions, the proposal is considered acceptable in accordance with Policy DP1.
- 6.16 An existing oak tree which grows out of an opening within the building footprint is proposed to be removed. The Parish Council consider this tree to be part of the Bridge vista and whilst this is the case, particularly when approaching downstream by river or on the road from Norwich, the tree is in poor health, compromised by its position within the building. Requiring its retention is not considered viable or reasonable and the development would benefit from some new soft landscaping in the available areas and this should include a replacement tree. Subject to this, the proposal is considered acceptable in accordance with Policy DP2.

Other matters

- 6.17 In response to the Parish Council's identification of the site requiring water safety measures, safety chains and a ladder are proposed. This is welcomed

as a safety feature for users of the site and the public on the river. The details of these should be agreed by condition to ensure they are appropriate and retained for the lifetime of the development.

7 Conclusion

- 7.1 Policy HOV4 supports the redevelopment of sites in the Wroxham/Hoveton village core to provide tourist facilities and where they would enhance the appearance of the area. It is considered this proposal would achieve both these objectives. The significance of the Scheduled Monument would not be substantially harmed and there are public benefits to the proposal which weigh in its favour.
- 7.2 There is concern locally about the scale of the development and its visual impact. The proposed building would be larger in scale than the existing and thus have more impact, however it is not considered this impact would be detrimental and the design is considered to be of an appropriately high quality in accordance with DP4. With regard to amenity, it is not considered the replacement restaurant would have any greater impacts on neighbouring amenity than the existing restaurant that would be unacceptable in terms of Policy DP28.
- 7.3 Given the location in the centre of Wroxham and Hoveton, it is not considered customers would be reliant on private car to access the site and there is sufficient parking available locally to serve the development. The proposal is also considered acceptable in respect of flood risk, ecology and trees.

8 Recommendation

- 8.1 Approve subject to conditions:
- (i) Standard time limit
 - (ii) Submitted plans
 - (iii) Photographic survey
 - (iv) Bat survey of tree
 - (v) Ecologist on site during demolition
 - (vi) Samples of materials
 - (vii) Details of refurbishment of brick lean-to
 - (viii) External lighting
 - (ix) Signage
 - (x) Landscaping scheme (to include replacement tree)
 - (xi) Biodiversity enhancements
 - (xii) Flood resilience measures
 - (xiii) Flood response plan
 - (xiv) Kitchen extraction details
 - (xv) Water safety features
 - (xvi) Parking and turning
 - (xvii) Minimum ground floor finished floor level of 1.26m AOD
 - (xviii) Retain voids under building
 - (xix) Opening hours 08:00 to 23:30, seven days a week

9 Reason for recommendation

- 9.1 The proposal is considered to be acceptable in accordance with Policies CS1, CS5, CS7, CS9, CS20 and CS23 of the adopted Core Strategy (2007), Policies DP1, DP2, DP4, DP5, DP11, DP20, DP27, DP28 and DP29 of the adopted Development Management Policies (2011), Policy HOV4 of the Site Specifics Policies (2014) and the National Planning Policy Framework (2012) which is a material consideration in the determination of this application.

Background papers: BA/2016/0213/FUL

Author: Maria Hammond
Date of Report: 11 July 2016

List of Appendices: APPENDIX 1 - Site Plan

APPENDIX 1

