

This prepared response to a planning application sets out the policies and guidance referred to, an application summary, planning history and the comments of the parish council and any grounds for objection.

Consultee Comments for Planning Application DC/24/0909/HH

The Parish Council has referenced the following where relevant:

- [National Planning Policy Framework \[NPPF\]](#)
- [Core Strategy \(2010\) Former SEBC area \[CS\]](#)
- [Rural Vision 2031 \(2014\) Rural \[RV\]](#)
- [Joint Development Management Policies Document \(2015\) \[DM\]](#)

The Parish Council does not currently have a made Neighbourhood Plan, but is in the process of preparing one.

Application Summary – West Suffolk Council

Application No: [DC/24/0909/HH](#)

Address: Australia Farm, Meeting Green, Wickhambrook

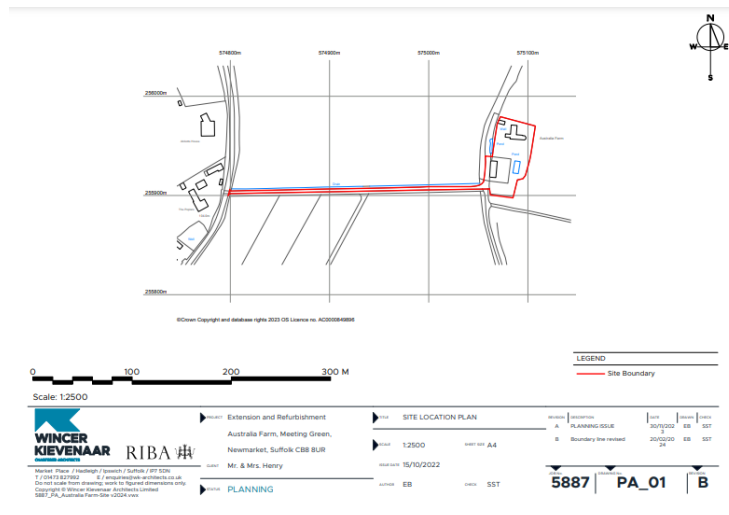
Proposal: Householder planning application

This is a re-circulation of a householder application (previous applications considered by the parish council at its meetings on 11 January '24 **Min 24.01.14.1** and 15 August '24 **Min EO.24.08.06**) made by Wincer Kievenaar Architects Ltd on behalf of Mr Jim Henry for planning permission for:

- a. single storey extension to the south elevation
- b. single storey extension to the west elevation (following demolition of existing single storey elements)
- c. two storey extension to the east elevation (following removal of existing conservatory)
- d. alterations and conversion to existing barn to provide detached garage and gym with first floor bedroom

The application differs from the application considered in August, in that the alterations to the existing barn are defined more specifically (to provide detached garage and gym with first floor bedroom) and the proposed surface improvements of the track (actually a bridleway) leading to Australia Farm have been excluded from the application (this has been confirmed by the planning officer, Adam Yancy).

Full details of the application can be found at: [DC/24/90909/HH](#)



The following documents were submitted with the original application:

- Arboricultural Report
- Bat and GCN Survey
- Design & Access Statement
- Existing Elevations, Floor and Site Plans
- Preliminary Ecological Appraisal
- Proposed Elevations & Floor & Site Plans
- Proposed Track Improvements

And a [new block plan](#) has been submitted.

Constraints - identified by West Suffolk are:

- Development Type: All wind farm / turbine development
- Designation: Countryside Policy: CS4, DM5
- Route: W-561/031/0 Consultee: Suffolk County Council Type: Byway Open to All Traffic
- Route: W-561/032/0 Consultee: Suffolk County Council Type: Bridleway
- Consultee: Norwich International Airport Constraint: Statutory consultee for all wind turbine applications within 42.5 nautical miles of Norwich International Airport
- Consultee: Cambridge Airport Constraint: Advise of Any Developments

Responses have been received from seven [local residents](#), who have raised the following concerns:

- No notice put up by West Suffolk relating to the changed application
- Development of the site is likely to have an adverse impact on the bridleway
- That the bridleway is being used for vehicular access and impeding access of designated users (foot, cycle and horse)
- That use of the bridleway for vehicular access is a risk to the safety of designated users
- That Suffolk Highways have stated that no work should commence without adequate parking and turning provided on site
- The property should establish its own private access and egress in accordance with the covenant within the deeds
- The Draft Neighbourhood Plan sets out an express intention to protect footpaths, bridleways and byeways in the parish
- Design of the alterations not in keeping with rural surroundings
- Concern about likely adverse noise generated by the development

- Concern about parking issues
- Demolition and clearance work has already commenced and damage caused to the bridleway
- The junction of the bridleway and Byeway 31 has been obstructed with rubble

Our West Suffolk Councillor, Sarah Pugh, has provided the following comments:

"Cllr Pugh has visited the site at the request of the planning team in order to assess the works that are alleged to be happening when the application is still out for consultation. There is indeed a misleading notice regarding the works which give the impression that permission has been granted. The agent has been advised to remove it, not least because it refers to Forest Heath District Council!"

Cllr Pugh advises that it is within their right to remove doors and windows ahead of planning permission. Of concern, however, is the thick layer of hardcore which has been laid to accommodate heavy vehicle movements. It appears that this breaches the bridleway meaning that it is now unusable by horses, dogs or other animals.

Cllr Pugh confirms that SCC PROW team have been asked by the planning officer to attend the site and give their advice on the damage to the bridleway as a matter of urgency. Cllr Pugh has requested that Cllr Bennett ensures her PROW team respond promptly."

The following matters are relevant and should be considered with respect to the application:

1. **Settlement Hierarchy and Identity:** The proposed site is not within the published settlement boundary of Wickhambrook [RV3 – Housing Settlement Boundaries], but in designated countryside [CS4 – Settlement Hierarchy & Identity, DM5 – Development in the Countryside].
2. **Sustainable Development:**
 - a. District Council policies seek to protect the countryside against unsustainable development. Further development of the green could adversely affect its built character and sense of place.
 - b. The application does not appear to make provision for the installation of an electric charging points for the proposed dwelling. This could have a negative impact on air quality in the vicinity and is not consistent with the NPPF paragraphs 105 & 110¹, Air Quality Planning Guidance, [CS2 – Conserving and where possible, Enhancing of Natural Resources including Air Quality], [DM14 – Protecting and Enhancing Natural Resources, Minimising Pollution and Safeguarding from Hazards], and Section 3.2 of Suffolk Parking Standards, which sets out requirements for electrical charging infrastructure.
3. **Noise and Disturbance:** site clearance, preparation and construction activities (including deliveries and removal of waste materials) would result in noise and disturbance to neighbouring properties, particularly at weekends and bank holidays, a material consideration.
4. **Minimising Pollution and Safeguarding from Hazards:** Hazardous materials must be removed from site and not burnt, to ensure that there is no risk to contamination of ground or surface water and that the amenity of neighbouring areas is protected. Relevant policies are NPPF (paragraphs 170, 178, 179), (GP3), Policy CS2 (Sustainable Development) and Policy DM14.
5. **Infrastructure Capacity:** that the proposed access is over a bridleway (Route: W-561/032/0).

¹ adequate provision of parking for ...ultra low emission vehicles and enabling of charging for such vehicles.

6. The Neighbourhood Plan currently being prepared by the parish has identified the following policy which is relevant to this application:

Policy WHB 18 - Public Rights of Way

Measures to improve and extend the existing network of public rights of way and bridleways will be supported where their value as biodiversity corridors is safeguarded and any public right of way extension is fit for purpose. Where practicable, development proposals should incorporate measures to enhance biodiversity within the improved or extended public right of way.

7. The bridleway (Route: W561/032/0) is restricted under law to walking, horse riding, bicycles, mobility scooters or powered wheelchairs. Whilst the applicants may have private rights over the bridleway for the purposes of access to land, there is further access via BOAT 31 south to Coltsfoot Green
8. That Suffolk County Council Public Rights of Way Team had provided a response (9th August) to the application recommending that any permission which the planning authority may give should include the conditions identified in the interests of:
- public amenity
 - that safety of users is not compromised by the traffic associated with the development

PROW have been on-site to inspect damage to the bridleway and byeway, but a further response has not yet been posted.

9. **The parish council is referred to Minute 24.02.08 (set out below)**

An enquiry had been received from a parish resident concerned that an application had been made to HM Land Registry for registration of the Bridleway from Abbots House to Australia Farm by the new owners of Australia Farm. The clerk had made enquiries of the Suffolk County Council Public Rights of Way Team who had advised that:

- SCC has no right of objection to Land Registry applications
- Land ownership is irrelevant in respect of public rights of way (which are highways) the public rights cannot be extinguished (or only where it can be demonstrated that there is no public use of the highway)
- A land owner can only make changes to a highway (including public rights of way such as this bridleway) with the consent of the highways authority

The meeting reached the conclusion that there would be no case for the parish council to consider making an application to register the bridleway in its name, and asked the clerk to write to SCC PROW stating that the parish council would like to be reassured that SCC PROW, when commenting on any future planning application, be assured that access over the bridleway to Australia farm be for residential use or access for other landowners for agricultural purposes, such that the safety of public users of the bridleway is not impeded in anyway.

Action:

The Parish Council is asked to consider the application above and prepare a response setting out the reasons for its decision.