

16 June 2020

Kerri Cooper
Planning Officer
West Suffolk Council
West Suffolk House, Western Way
Bury St Edmunds IP33 3YU

Dear Ms Cooper

**DC/20/0752/FUL Planning Application - 3 no. dwellings with associated access and garages.
Land Adjacent Old Rectory, The Street, Lidgate, Suffolk**

I am writing on behalf of the Suffolk Preservation Society (SPS) regarding the above application for a residential development at Lidgate. The site lies outside the settlement boundary, within the Lidgate Conservation Area and adjacent to a number of designated and non-designated heritage assets. SPS considers that the scheme is contrary to local planning policy and will be harmful to the character of the conservation area.

The site forms part of an area of glebeland which surrounded the original medieval parsonage which was replaced by the Old Rectory in the early 1800s. A glebe was an area of land within an ecclesiastical parish used to support a parish priest and this site therefore has important historic significance to the village. Although an appraisal for the Lidgate Conservation Area, which would provide a full description and justification of the conservation area boundary has yet to be produced by the local authority, the inclusion of the site within the conservation area clearly demonstrates the significance of the site in heritage terms.

The Lidgate settlement boundary is drawn tightly to exclude the site which has housing immediately to the west and the extensive grounds of the Old Rectory to the east. DM27 of the local plan allows infilling on sites outside the settlement boundary where there is an otherwise continuous built up frontage. It also limits the development to a single of semi-detached pair of dwellings. The proposals clearly do not meet these criteria and furthermore although the site is currently screened by trees from The Street, together with the Old Rectory gardens its forms part of an important gap which contributes to the distinct character of the rural scene.

Moreover, the proposed scheme will introduce three detached dwellings together with separate garages and associated domestic paraphernalia into the setting of the Old Rectory, which has been identified as a non-designated heritage, and a number of grade II listed buildings in close proximity to the site including Harvest and Selig Cottages immediately to the west and Hill Rise

and Meadow Cottage across The Street. The development of a vehicular driveway across the gardens to the front of the Old Rectory, together with the residential development will be intrusive in the setting of the property which is currently located within well screened gardens. The removal of a number of trees to accommodate plot 1 as well as requirements from Suffolk Highways will also result in the development being visible from the highway, particularly in the winter months. The access from the highway, via the existing access to the Old Rectory will require the widening of the access to 4.5m and the further removal of trees to establish and maintain a 90m visibility. It should also be stressed however that the impact of the development on the setting of heritage assets must also be defined as how an asset is experienced and not simply in terms of views and intervisibility. In this case the listed buildings derive their significance, in part, from their location around the glebeland associated with the Old Rectory. This association will be diminished through development of the site.

In summary, SPS objects to the proposals due to the loss of glebeland and the resultant impact on the conservation area and nearby heritage assets. The development is contrary to DM15: Listed Buildings as it does not respect the setting including views to and from the asset and DM17: Conservation Areas as it will not preserve or enhance the character or setting of the conservation area. We therefore urge that this application is refused. We trust that you find the helpful in your assessment of the application and request that we are consulted on any subsequent amendments.

Yours sincerely,



Bethany Philbidge
BSc (Hons) MSc (Town Planning) MRTPI
Planning Officer

Cc: Lidgate Parish Council
District Councillors
West Suffolk Heritage Team