

18 September 2023

Mr Iain Robertson
Planning Officer, East Suffolk Council,
East Suffolk House, Riduna Park,
Station Road, Melton,
Woodbridge, IP12 1RT

Dear Mr Robertson,

DC/23/3133/FUL Replacement of existing dwelling with a new sustainable eco home. Willow Fen Castle Lane Bungay Suffolk NR35 1DE

I am writing on behalf of the Suffolk Preservation Society to raise concerns regarding the application for the replacement of Willow Fen, in Bungay. Willow Fen is located at the western edge of the Bungay Conservation Area and is adjacent to the site of Bungay Castle and Castle Hills, both Scheduled Ancient Monuments.

The current building is a 1960's single storey structure which, although unlisted and not typical of other dwellings within the conservation area, is listed within appendix 4 of the 2022 Conservation Area Appraisal as a structure making a positive contribution. Whilst the original design of the dwelling has been compromised to a degree by later additions, we agree with the view of your Design and Conservation Officer that it sits quietly within the streetscene and contributes to the character of Castle Lane. Any replacement dwelling must preserve and enhance the character of the Conservation Area and we are therefore concerned that the proposals include a second storey as well as garaging to the front of the property which together will increase the bulk and prominence of the replacement dwelling within the streetscene. We consider that the architect's visualisations demonstrate this increased prominence within the streetscene, despite the additional evergreen foliage screening which has been introduced into the viewpoint to ameliorate the impact.

From the west, views of the Conservation Area including the Castle and its earthworks are enjoyed across the open water meadows. Willow Fen is visible within these landscape views against a green backdrop of the Castle Hill. The dwellings on Castle Lane will be particularly prominent within these edge of settlement views during the winter months when screening is at a minimum. We note that the visualisations provided within the submitted Landscape Appraisal document rely on summer screening when illustrating the landscape impact of the proposals.

The applicant refers to the heights of the two adjoining dwellings as justification for the inclusion of a second storey on the proposed replacement dwelling. However, the neighbouring dwellings have dark-coloured pitched roofs which will be less obtrusive within these views than the proposed flat roofed second storey. We are concerned that the full height windows with glass

balustrades will be particularly prominent after dark when lit as well as during the day from the glint and reflection on the expanses of glass. We understand that timed blinds can be used to reduce the light spill after dark but have concerns over how their use will be controlled.

In conclusion, Willow Fen is identified as a positive unlisted building within the conservation area. The proposed scheme for demolition and replacement with the larger building would fail to preserve the character and appearance of the conservation area and setting of highly graded designated heritage assets. Accordingly, we object to the application as submitted.

We are trust that you will find these comments helpful and would ask to be consulted on any amendments.

Yours Sincerely,

Bethany Philbedge BSc (Hons) MSc MRTPI
Planning Officer

Ccs: Ward Councillors
Bungay Town Council