



Planning
Norfolk County Council - Norwich Western Link
County Hall
Martineau Lane
Norwich
Norfolk
NR1 2DH

Our ref: P01578239

22 July 2024

Dear Sir/Madam,

**T&CP (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015
& Planning (Listed Buildings & Conservation Areas) Regulations 1990**

**NORWICH WESTERN LINK - LAND BETWEEN THE A1270 BROADLAND
NORTHWAY NEAR RINGLAND AND THE A47 NEAR HONNINGHAM, NORFOLK
Application No. FUL/2024/0022**

Thank you for your letter of 12 June 2024 regarding the above application for planning permission. On the basis of the information available to date, we offer the following advice to assist your authority in determining the application.

Historic England Advice

Significance of heritage assets

There are a number of designated heritage assets in the area around the proposed dual carriageway. These include:

The church of St Peter, Ringland: a medieval parish church of outstanding architectural and historic significance. Its 13th century west tower represents the earliest surviving element of the church and can be seen at a distance due to the open rural character of the church's setting, particularly towards the west in winter views. The nave, chancel, north and south aisles and porch date largely to the 14th and 15th centuries, with a very fine hammer beam roof surviving in the nave. The church's significance is reflected in its Grade I listing.

A 17th century three-steed thrashing barn is located within the site boundary and listed at Grade II (Barn 50m north west of Low Farm House, NHLE: 1051550).

The proposed dual carriageway is approximately 750m to the south of a cluster of listed buildings at Merton Hall Estate, including the Church of St Margaret (Grade II*) and four Grade II listed buildings or structures, including Merton Hall, garden walls at



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Merton Hall and Home Farm and a water cistern in the churchyard. This cluster of buildings is located within a wooded setting.

At the southern end of the proposed route, Barry Hall; 39, 40 and 41 The Street; and Honingham and East Tuddenham War Memorial are all listed at Grade II and located between 300 and 600m of the proposed site.

The rural character of the landscape surrounding the above cited heritage assets forms an important part of their significance.

In terms of archaeology, a recent geophysical survey (ES, Chapter 8: Appendix 2 Geophysical Survey Report - Parts 1, 2 & 3) has identified several new sites and anomalies of archaeological interest.

Non-designated heritage assets with evidential value are also present within the application site and its setting. Their significance and the impact of proposals are considered in Appendix 1.

Impact of proposals

Proposals are for a new 6km dual carriageway known as Norwich Western Link (NWL). It would connect the A1067 (Fakenham Road) with the new A47 North Tuddenham to Easton scheme. The scheme would include the construction of a new roundabout junction with the A1067 Fakenham Road, and improvements to the A1067 and the roundabout junction with the A1270 Broadland Northway.

Structures would include a new viaduct carrying NWL over the river Wensum, a new underpass at Ringland Lane, the provision of a green bridge carrying the Broadway over NWL, three further green bridges, wildlife crossings, and culverting of a tributary to the river Tud.

Proposals would introduce a new built form into the wider rural landscape and adversely impact the setting of a number of heritage assets in the area around the dual carriageway: some of the visual connections between heritage assets to the wider landscape would be affected. Proposals would change how the churches of St Peter in Ringland (Grade I) and St Margaret (GII*) would be viewed and the tranquil character of their rural setting would be partly eroded by noise.

The location of the proposed river Wensum viaduct would impact views towards the Grade II listed barn 50m north west of Low Farm when looking north and north-west from the dairy barn towards the river Wensum. The viaduct would also impact views from inside the farm complex, as well as impact the heritage asset's visual and



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possible historic relationship with Attlebridge Hall.

Proposals would have no direct impact on designated scheduled ancient monuments.

Please see Appendix 1 for a separate assessment of the impact on non-designated heritage assets.

Policy consideration

The National Planning Policy Framework sets out the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets, paragraph 203. It continues that great weight should be given to their conservation and that any harm requires clear and convincing justification, paragraphs 205 and 206. Where a proposal will lead to less than substantial harm, this should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal, paragraph 208 and 209.

Historic England's Position

Proposals for a new dual carriageway would introduce a new built form into the wider rural landscape and cause some harm to the setting of the churches of XXX and of the barn 50m west of Low Farm. As their rural setting would be eroded rather than markedly changed, we consider that this harm would be low, and certainly less than substantial in NPPF terms.

It is clear there are significant non-designated and archaeological heritage assets with evidential value present across the development area which have been taken into account in the ES. Please find our detailed advice on the impact of proposals on non-designated heritage assets attached in Appendix 1.

We recognise that there are potential strong public benefits to proposals.

We note that the applicant has provided a full ES chapter on heritage matters (Chapter 8: Cultural Heritage), with associated desk-based assessment, geophysical survey and WSI.

We broadly accept the assessment of heritage impacts of the ES.

Given the varied richness of heritage assets and historic landscapes potentially affected by these proposals, we recommend further work is undertaken to consider opportunities for unlocking the wider heritage benefits of this scheme and its wider development. This could for example a strategy for wayfinding, connectivity and



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heritage interpretation of these heritage assets; such enhancements would add a heritage value to the area.

Recommendation

Historic England has no objection to the application on heritage grounds.

We consider that the application meets the requirements of the NPPF, in particular paragraph numbers 203, 205, 206, 208 and 209.

Your authority should take these representations into account in determining the application. If there are any material changes to the proposals, or you would like further advice, please contact us. Please advise us of the decision in due course.

Yours sincerely,

[Redacted signature]

Inspector of Historic Buildings and Areas

[Redacted contact information]

Attachment:

Appendix 1_Norwich Western Link ES Comments.pdf

[Redacted attachment information]

