

Item No.	Applicant	Parish	Reference No.
1	Iceni Energy Ltd	SNETTERTON	3PL/2012/0029/F
2	Mr Michael Cawley & Miss Mary-	MATTISHALL	3PL/2012/0080/F
3	Whitbread Group PLC & Kier Hom	THETFORD	3PL/2012/0321/F
4	Breckland Council	THETFORD	3PL/2012/0479/F

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ITEM	1	RECOMMENDATION : APPROVAL
REF NO:	3PL/2012/0029/F	CASE OFFICER: James Stone
LOCATION:	SNETTERTON Snetterton Heath	APPN TYPE: Full POLICY: Out Settlemnt Bndry ALLOCATION: No Allocation CONS AREA: N TPO: N LB GRADE: N
APPLICANT:	Iceni Energy Ltd Sherwood Cottage Sutton Road	
AGENT:	Iceni Energy Ltd Sherwood Cottage Sutton Road	
PROPOSAL:	Erection of a 40MW renewable energy biomass power station and associated works	

KEY ISSUES

Principle of development - requirement for renewable energy
Ecology and conservation
Landscape impact
Visual amenity
Local amenity

DESCRIPTION OF DEVELOPMENT

The proposal is for a 40MW combined heat and power biomass plant with associated infrastructure. The main structures which would form the development are:

- The turbine and boiler house (30m high)
- Two fuel storage barns for the straw and miscanthus (17.6m high)
- Wood storage barn (17.6m high)
- Stack (60m high)
- Air cooled condenser (20m high).

The proposal would also include smaller structures such as offices, a control room, staff welfare facilities, internal access roads and car parking, a water treatment plant and ancillary equipment, diesel generator, a workshop and stores and extensive landscaping. It should also be noted that to support the development a temporary construction compound (approx. 21,780m² in area) will be located to the northwest of the proposed development.

The total area of the proposed site that forms this application is approximately 9.0 ha.

SITE AND LOCATION

The site is made up of one agricultural field of approximately 9.0 ha in size. The site is located in close proximity to the north of the A11 and is approximately 5km south west of the town of Attleborough and approximately 15km to the northeast of Thetford. Snetterton, South End, North

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End and Eccles Road are the closest villages and hamlets to the site, all being approximately 1.5km away.

The site is currently used for hay and is relatively flat but slightly lower than the adjacent road. There are mature trees and hedgerows along all the boundaries of the site except the north western boundary which cuts across the open field. To the north east and north west of the site is arable agricultural land. Running along the majority of the length of the south west boundary are a series of one storey turkey sheds. Further to the south west is an existing industrial estate. The A11 runs to the south of the site, with the junction and North End Road immediately to the south west of the site. The Snetterton Industrial Estate and Snetterton Motor Racing Track are also in close proximity to the site and are situated to the south of the A11. Swangey Fen SSSI, part of the Norfolk Valley Fens SAC, is approximately 1.5km to the north of the site. It should be noted that the site suffers from poor drainage.

EIA REQUIRED

An Environmental Statement was prepared by Icen Energy and accompanies this planning application. The statement concludes that for the majority of aspects there would be no negative residual impact, and in some cases a positive impact. With regard to visibility, archaeology, new structures in the landscape and the setting of cultural assets it was concluded that there would be a minor or moderate impact.

RELEVANT SITE HISTORY

No relevant site history

POLICY CONSIDERATIONS

The following policies of the adopted Breckland Core Strategy and Development Control Policies and the adopted Site Specific Policies and Proposals Document, including the Proposals Maps, have been taken into consideration in the determination of this application. The provisions of the National Planning Policy Framework have also been taken into account, where appropriate

CP.03	Employment
CP.04	Infrastructure
CP.08	Natural Resources
CP.09	Pollution and Waste
CP.10	Natural Environment
CP.11	Protection and Enhancement of the Landscape
CP.12	Energy
DC.01	Protection of Amenity
DC.07	Employment Development Outside of General Employment Area
DC.12	Trees and Landscape
DC.13	Flood Risk

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DC.15	Renewable Energy
DC.16	Design
DC.17	Historic Environment
DC.19	Parking Provision

CONSULTATIONS

GARBOLDISHAM PARISH COUNCIL -

We appreciate that we have missed the deadline date for comments on the above application, but Garboldisham Parish Council was not included in the consultation process. Garboldisham Parish Council is concerned about the traffic flow along the B1111 which runs through our village. The prospect of an increased traffic flow, particularly HGV's, will have a detrimental impact on Garboldisham and affect the quality of lives of our residents and those of the surrounding parishes along this route.

The Council feels that the quality of life for nearby residents would be adversely affected not only by the increase number of HGV's along our roads, but also by possible light pollution, noise pollution and smell pollution.

QUIDENHAM P C -

Quidenham Parish Council have severe reservations regarding this application as there are many questions that still need clarification.

POINTS TO CONSIDER

TRAFFIC AND TRANSPORT: The number of HGV movements is 44 per day. The application mentions traffic flow North/South along the A11 but nothing about movements along our country roads. Indeed, even the Highways Agency does not comment on this aspect. This is important for our community as we will inevitably be on one of the main feeder routes. The meeting felt that it might be impossible to restrict HGV movements once the development is up and running.

FUEL SUPPLY: The supply of straw is a contentious issue. The plant would require 250,000 tons per year. Local pig farmers felt the supply of straw was very much down to weather conditions. In dry years the amount of straw produced on farms would be considerably less, thus causing the price to rise. How would this effect pig farmers, who are already struggling to survive and who are major employers across this part of the world?

NOISE: Whilst reports within the application suggest that any noise generated by the plant would be minimal, this is not the view of people who have visited other similar plants. Our community already suffer extensively from noise generated by activities on Snetterton Heath.

GREEN ENERGY: Is this really Green Energy bearing in mind the number of HGV movements, the millions of litres of water required and the by product produced?

WATER PROVISION: Where are the millions of gallons of water coming from, especially as we have had the driest year for 60 years?

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT: Emissions should be negligible but we are not experts. How can we be sure?

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OPERATIONAL ISSUE: How will the scheme be connected to the National Grid? This will be subject to a separate application. But it does leave us with many questions unanswered.

EMPLOYMENT: This is a turnkey project. Therefore the claims for employment and operating restrictions made by the applicant can only be determined by the end user who would purchase the proposed plant if this application should be successful.

ARCHAEOLOGY: The report shows this to be a very important site, which needs more extensive work done before the site is destroyed.

WE ALSO CONSIDERED:

FUTURE ENERGY NEEDS: If we do not allow this application, where will our future energy come from? Without energy the Attleborough & Snetterton Heath Plan will be severely compromised and this region will not reap the benefits of future development/investment as we come out of the current recession.

SHROPHAM P C -

Shropham Parish Council strongly opposes this application as not being the right way to generate electricity for the Snetterton Heath employment area.

The water and straw requirements of the plant would have a particularly serious effect on the whole farming community in the area for whom water and straw are already in very short supply. This is most relevant in the case of pig farmers of whom there is a denser concentration in the area than anywhere else in the country and probably in Western Europe. Pig manure is important for the light soil in the area, so a reduced level of pig farming could have a detrimental effect on the condition of the soil.

The environment would be adversely affected. Despite assertions to the contrary, the quality of life for nearby residents would be adversely affected by light pollution, noise pollution and smell pollution from the plant and by access to/from it by HGVs over roads other than the A11.

This is a turnkey project. Therefore the claims for employment and operating restrictions made by the applicant can only be determined by the end user who would purchase the proposed plant if this application should be successful.

This is an incomplete application as no mention is made of connection to the grid which would be necessary.

The distances HGVs would need to travel to collect straw would have a negative effect on green energy targets.

In summary, the end does not justify the means. More electricity is required for the Snetterton Heath employment area but it should not be provided by way of this proposed biomass plant but rather by a method that fits in more harmoniously with the whole of the very strong farming community.

HARLING P C -

Traffic

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As ever with any significant development which will generate large volumes of HGV movements, we have major concerns for the impact the vehicles servicing this plant will have on the already overburdened B1111 through East Harling. It follows that if this application is to be granted, all possible enforceable conditions should be imposed to ensure that these HGVs are kept off this road.

Emissions

Before this application is considered for grant, there should be scientific certainty that any emissions are non-injurious to health.

Water

The generating process requires large amounts of water. Where will that come from? Can council be satisfied that there is sufficient in the area to satisfy the plant's need?

We ask that your committee take these into consideration during its deliberations please

SNETTERTON P C -

Snetterton Parish Council strongly objects to the above planning application on Strategic and Planning Policy Ground.

This application is:-

- a) Outside the guidelines Development Area for Industry on Snetterton Heath.
- b) Outside the guidelines for permitted development in the Village.
- c) Outside the Parish Council's Strategic Policy to protect the Village from intrusive development.

The Parish Council of Snetterton has always accepted at the County Council's Strategic and District Council's Land use Local Plans with a full understanding of the "All types of B3 Industrial classes use' on Snetterton Heath Industrial Area and being the opposite side of the A11 from the Village. (Strategically, industrial uses not acceptable in the towns and populated areas).

The emerging Local Development Framework has continued to endorse this Policy. However, our Parish Council has not been given the opportunity to comment yet on the new proposed Rural Enterprise Valley (REV) an area highlighted for the future development of over 30 ha of Business and Light industry. We are making the assumption it is the same as the Local Plan of exceptional development in the countryside, ie barn and redundant buildings, cottage and small business enterprise.

A Biomass plant can in no way be described as anything other than B3 Heavy Industry by nature of:-

1. Size of building and 60 metre chimney stack and process.
2. High numbers of heavy traffic dependence and movement.
3. A 24 hour operation.

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4. An incineration: pollution controlled, combustion operation.
5. Large waste recyclable ash product.
6. Other waste material (no such thing as zero waste, close but no yet!!)
7. High water pressure requirements. Fan assisted coolant machinery and always a risk of water course pollution.
8. 24 hour operational lighting requirements.
9. SUBSTANTIAL OPERATIONAL NOISE, pollution from the site particularly at night.
10. The requirement of large quantities of straw, wood chip & miscanthus grass feed plus chemical lime mix.
11. Its GREEN credential is highly suspect.

This kind of development should not be so close to the Village of Snetterton and its residential area.

The race track over the years has been a constant noise pollution concern in the local villages. This application is an additional undesirable intrusion to the quality of life for the residents of Snetterton.

The rural area and surrounding villages have a very extensive animal farming activity, particularly pigs. The very high STRAW requirements for incineration is considered 'unsustainable' and would be a serious risk to the RURAL ECONOMY and associated jobs.

The farmers are really concerned about this issue as demand would drive up the price of straw contracts. The fine margins through welfare levels for supermarket contracts on meat products and vegetable produce threatens their livelihoods. Greater travel distance to acquire straw negates any green energy argument. This cannot be the ethos of Breckland to service a few industrialists at the price of our substantial rural economy.

The protection of the environment is paramount and the Environment Agencies must have very real concerns regarding this location and water supply, particularly given the fact that this area is known as water/rainfall deficient area, possibly leading to drought conditions with potential restrictions on water abstraction/irrigation, together with the risk of pollution to water courses and boreholes.

This application is woefully short on detail and cannot be progressed. Major issues regarding unavailable information on how the electricity will be connected to the National Grid. Also the technical elements missing make this impossible to make judgments. One of which must be the particulates from the chimney; as the application admits it can not answer; as they will not be the process management.

The rural road infrastructure will be unable to manage the high volume of traffic and the promise of designed route to the A11 would be impossible to police.

This application is definitely not the right technology solution and more important not the right location.

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ROUDHAM & LARLING P C -

My Council was slightly surprised not to have been invited to comment on this application. Although it is not in Roudham & Larling, the site is in the adjacent parish only 2.6km from the boundary. If developed it would have a major impact on our parishioners and so my Council would make the following comments.

My Council objects strongly to the application.

The application site is outside any development area for industry. We have recently had one instance in this parish where Breckland Council has permitted commercial development on agricultural land. If this is permitted too where is the value of all the work carried out to identify the right places for commercial development?

My Council is very concerned about the suggestion that the straw required could be resourced locally. Currently straw is used as bedding in extensive animal farming, particularly pigs, and then returned to enrich the inherently poor quality soil in the area. If the straw is burnt there will be a local shortage (we do not have the massive stacks of bales which can be seen in other parts of the country), and even if the biomass plant does not need to import from elsewhere, other users will, thus negating any claims regarding 'green' energy.

The application also seems to make no comment on how the electricity generated will be transported to the National Grid.

ENVIRONMENT AGENCY

No objection to the proposed development, subject to conditions and an informative being appended to any subsequent planning permission. The conditions cover flood risk, land contamination and foul and surface water drainage.

HIGHWAYS AGENCY

No objection subject to conditions for the production and agreement of a traffic management plan.

ENGLISH HERITAGE

No objection.

NORFOLK LANDSCAPE ARCHAEOLOGY

Given the impact of the proposed development on the significance of the known heritage assets, if planning permission is granted we ask that this be subject to a condition for a programme of archaeological work.

NATURAL ENGLAND

Further to our previous advice on this application, given in our letter dated 21 March 2012, Natural England has received revised information from the applicants and we therefore wish to amend some of the previous advice provided to you. In our previous comments on statutory designated sites Natural England advised that, based on the information provided in the Environmental Statement, the proposed development would be likely to result in a significant effect on the Norfolk Valley Fens Special Area of Conservation (SAC). This was due to the

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effects of predicted atmospheric nitrate deposition and acid deposition at Swangey Fen Site of special Scientific Interest (SSSI). Swangey Fen SSSI is a constituent site of the Norfolk Valley Fens SAC. However we also advised that this impact should be re-assessed using recently revised critical load values for nitrate deposition and acid deposition on the relevant habitats and that some other amendments to the methodology for the calculations should also be applied. The revised calculations provided to Natural England, using data from APIS, show that for nitrate deposition the process contribution (PC) from the development would be 0.8% of the critical load (CL) for the alkaline fen and calcareous fen habitats if the lowest value in the range given for critical loads is used. This figure is reduced to 0.4% if the highest CL value is applied. The predicted environmental concentration (PEC) would be 181% of the CL using the lower end of the CL range or 90% using the highest value (PC = 0.12 kg/h/yr, CL = 15-30 kg/h/yr and PEC 27kg/h/yr). A conclusion of likely significant effect on the SAC feature is only reached if the PC is greater than 1% of the CL and the PEC is greater than 70% of the CL. In this case the PC is less than 1% (using either the lowest or highest value for CL) and a conclusion of no likely significant effect on these features from nitrate deposition can be drawn.

The APIS data provided identifies that the alkaline fen and calcareous fen qualifying features are not sensitive to acid deposition. The alluvial forests qualifying feature is shown in the data from APIS not to be sensitive to either nitrate deposition or acid deposition. There are therefore no critical loads to be applied for these pollutants / habitats.

Taking account of this information Natural England is able to advise that, based on the details included within the planning application, the proposed development would not be likely to have a significant effect on the Norfolk Valley Fens SAC. With regard to Regulation 61 of the Habitats Regulations, as it is Natural England's view that the development would not be likely to have a significant effect on the Norfolk Valley Fens SAC, or on any other European Site, we would further advise that it is not necessary for your authority to undertake an Appropriate Assessment of this proposal.

The only further notified feature within Swangey Fen SSSI which is not discussed above as a qualifying feature of the Norfolk Valley Fens SAC is S24 - *Phragmites australis* - *Peucedanum palustris* tall-herb fen habitat. This is also considered within the nitrate and acid deposition calculations. This habitat is assigned the same sensitivities as alkaline fens and calcareous fens discussed above and Natural England advises that this feature of the SSSI would not be significantly affected by the proposed development. Therefore we do not raise any objection to impacts of the proposed development on Swangey Fen SSSI.

NORFOLK WILDLIFE TRUST

NWT hasn't previously commented on this application as we do not currently have access to expertise relating to air pollution impacts. However, we manage Swangey Fen SSSI and are concerned that there should not be any adverse impact on this site. We support the view of Natural England that an Appropriate Assessment should be carried out in relation Swangey Fen, as part of the Norfolk Valley Fens SAC.

NORFOLK COUNTY COUNCIL HIGHWAYS

The proposal has been the subject of informal discussions with the County Highway Authority. The data supporting this application differs little from the informal submission and I am pleased to advise you that with the delivery of the minor highway works, detailed, the highway link to the A11 Trunk Road will be capable of sustaining the traffic generated by the proposal. Conditions and

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informatives have been provided.

TREE & COUNTRYSIDE CONSULTANT

No objection subject to conditions regarding tree protection, ecological management and geodiversity.

ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH OFFICERS

No objection subject to conditions to alleviate the following environmental concerns:

- air quality
- lighting
- noise during construction and fuel delivery

ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH OFFICERS

A scheme will be put in place to monitor and report on off site air quality for a period of at least 12 months prior to the commencement of development and shall remain in place unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Details of this monitoring scheme shall be agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority and implemented in accordance with the approved scheme.

The scheme shall include 3 years worth of nitrogen dioxide monitoring using diffusion tubes at 5 fixed sites (commencing one year prior and then two years post commissioning) and the regular monitoring of particulate levels from the site using a hand held/portable type particulate monitor

ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH OFFICERS

I have no reason to believe that their noise report is inaccurate. Recommend conditions

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Economic Development strongly supports the proposal because it will allow economic growth in an area that suffers from a lack of electricity but is situated in a prime location along the A11. Without the Biomass Plant we are once again constrained and will lose the prospects that such business could bring in terms of boost to the local economy, investment, jobs and skills both immediate and future.

CONTAMINATED LAND OFFICER

No objection.

MINISTRY OF DEFENCE

No objection.

ANGLIAN WATER SERVICE

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No objection.

PRINCIPAL PLANNER MINERAL & WASTE POLICY - No Comments Received

ECONOMIC AND STRATEGY OFFICER - No Comments Received

NATIONAL PLANNING CASEWORK UNIT - No Comments Received

REPRESENTATIONS

Many letters of support and objection have been received from local residents.

Letters of support refer to need for renewable energy; economic growth / employment; good location for deliveries; sustainability as using fuel from East Anglia; provision of energy; helping the UK to become self-sustaining; MotorSportVision (MSV) from Snetterton Circuit have stated that the scheme would help address a current shortfall of electricity required to facilitate employment growth in the area and that the traffic movements associated with the development will not coincide with Snetterton MSV's published race events.

Letters of objection refer to highway safety and traffic; noise pollution; unsustainable (due to transporting of fuel and burning of fuel); lack of nutrients from straw returning to ground because of being burnt; increased costs for farmers; fuel availability; excessive size of plant; shortage of water; location on other side of A11 would be preferable; air quality; landscape impact; increased prices for furniture industry; impact of infrastructure associated with the project; light pollution; impact on listed buildings; outside envelope for development; adjacent to old rookery; less pig farmers will mean less manure for soil; lack of straw for farmers; power station will need other sources of fuel other than straw; jobs created by the power station will be dwarfed by losses in farming community and related companies.

ASSESSMENT NOTES

* The application is referred to Planning Committee as it is a 'Major' application.

Principle of development

* The application is for the development of a 40MW biomass power station and associated works. The site extends to approximately 9ha and is located in close proximity to Snetterton Heath outside the zoned General Employment Area. The applicants did look at two other potential sites directly to the south of the Snetterton Race Track Circuit but concluded that neither was as ideal as the chosen site. The two other sites were considered less suitable because of insufficient road width and the potential impact on existing private properties with regard to road widening. It was also considered that because these two sites would be located at a greater distance from industrial development than the chosen site, the power station would be more visible on the landscape.

* Members are reminded that under the transitional arrangements for Development Plans set out in the NPPF the Council's adopted Core Strategy still benefits from full weight in decision making. The Council's adopted Core Strategy contains a positive policy framework for renewable energy proposals which remains valid.

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* Policy CP12 of the Council's adopted Core Strategy supports commercial scale renewable energy in the district, as well as supporting renewable and low carbon developments in major growth locations, which include Snetterton. Policy DC15 supports proposals for renewable energy in principle whilst section 10 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) retains the government's positive policy position towards proposals for renewable and low carbon energy. Paragraph 97 of the NPPF states that local planning authorities should 'have a positive strategy to promote energy from renewable and low carbon sources' whilst paragraph 98 is also relevant and explains that 'When determining planning applications, local planning authorities should approve the application if its impacts are (or can be made) acceptable'. It is felt that the potential impact of the power station with regard to the criteria listed by Policy DC 15 (namely landscape, highway safety, local amenity and on sites of conservation importance) has been made acceptable.

* The adopted Core Strategy identifies a requirement for additional employment land at Snetterton Heath which will be considered through the emerging Attleborough and Snetterton Heath AAP, and phased for delivery after the existing area has been developed. Furthermore, the East of England Plan remains at the time of writing as part of the Development Plan for the area until abolished by the Localism Act, which contains policies relating to promoting renewable energy (ENG.1 and ENG.2). The proposal will clearly increase the amount of built development in the area and could impact upon future decisions regarding the direction of growth of Snetterton Heath prior to consideration through the AAP.

* The Council's Economic Development team is supportive of the Snetterton Biomass Plant as its establishment will overall unlock the potential of the District bringing jobs and wealth to an area that currently is a desert as far as electricity is concerned. The power station would allow for a major growth area along the A11 corridor.

Ecology and Conservation

* The scoping study highlighted the potential for adverse effects of atmospheric acid and nitrogen deposition on the Breckland Special Area of Conservation (SAC) and the Norfolk Valley Fens SAC. Data and studies have been produced sufficient for specialists within Natural England to conclude that no significant adverse effect will in fact occur. The Local Planning Authority, having considered the analysis is entitled to accept this assessment and share Natural England's conclusion that no further assessment of this aspect, in respect of the Habitats Regulations, is necessary.

* Having considered potential aerial effects we may turn to sub-aerial effects. The power station is reported to run on a largely closed water cycle; however, a net use of 5 tonnes per day is envisaged. This has the potential to affect the chalk aquifers beneath the local area and affect local wetland conservation sites in the Thet valley. However, Anglian Water report that this level of extraction can be accommodated within their planned provision for growth in the region without adverse effect and furthermore, the Environment Agency has raised no objection. Similarly, and subject to a number of conditions they (EA) recommend are appended to any consent, the Environment Agency is initially satisfied that no pollution of the aquifers by the proposal is likely.

* The Tree and Countryside Consultant would have liked to have seen all of the unused part of the site used for ecological enhancement but has stated that the ecological and protected species reports are noted and accepted as are, in part, the soft landscaping plans. A condition requiring an Ecological Management would be appended to any consent.

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Landscape Impact

* The impact upon landscape is likely to form a key element of this proposal, particularly in light of the scale of the turbine and boiler house, straw storage barn and height of the stack. The site is located within the 'Snetterton Heath Plateau' Landscape Character Area (E.2) and the District Landscape Character Assessment considers that 'careful attention should be paid to the predominantly open skylines in planning for change'. The inter-visibility of the site with adjoining landscape character areas (such as the nearby river valley) should also be carefully considered.

* The proposed site is located in a relatively undulating landscape and the power station itself would be situated on the higher ground, surrounded by hedgerows and a number of mature trees which screen views from the immediate area. It is felt that because of the undulating nature of the area and the varying nature of the land cover, views into and out of the site can be long distance but small features, such as hedgerows and trees, can provide a high degree of screening. Therefore, although the site is situated on higher ground the trees bordering the site appear on the skyline and blend in with surrounding vegetation making it hard to determine the exact location of the site from a long distance.

* It is accepted that some of the new buildings, and in particular the stack, will create a new prominent focal point on the landscape. However, the existence of the A11 dual carriageway, Snetterton Industrial Estates on both side of the A11 and the Snetterton Motor Racing Track decreases the quality of the surrounds. Therefore, Landscape Character Areas identified within the study area of being 'medium' quality, including Harling Heathlands and Snetterton Heath Plateau, would be able to accommodate the change and the effects on landscape character would be minor adverse and not significant.

* Mitigation measures to reduce impact include supplementing existing vegetation with additional native vegetation. Furthermore, lights will be chosen which are directional and minimise uplighting and skyglow. The lighting will be chosen by a specialist to reduce the potential impact of light pollution at night.

Visual Amenity

* It is felt that filtered views of the development would be possible from certain residential properties and surrounding roads and footpaths that are closer to the application site. However, further from the site, trees and hedgerows bordering the site would screen the lower parts of the plant although the upper parts would still be visible. Overall, views from long-distance properties and footpaths would not be significant although there would be some minor to moderate adverse effects for the closest receptors such as residents of North End, Snetterton and South End village and hamlets.

Local Amenity

* The Environmental Statement submitted with the application explains how the power station can be designed, constructed and operated in such a way as to avoid significant adverse effects with regard to noise disturbance. Noise levels from normal operations, including the delivery of biomass fuels to the site and the removal of ash for use offsite will remain within acceptable levels and will not, in most cases, be discernible above the existing background noise levels at local noise sensitive dwellings. Construction will be controlled by a condition limiting hours of working.

* With regard to air quality the Environmental Statement claims that no significant residual effects are anticipated during the construction or operation phases and the proposed project is not considered to conflict with any national, regional or local policy in relation to air quality.

* Furthermore, the Council's Environmental Health Officers, including the Air Quality Management Officer, have not objected to the proposal.

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* The development would require an Environmental Permit from the Environment Agency, which would include controls on all emissions and day-to-day management processes.

Other Issues

Highway Safety and Traffic

* The use of a travel plan for operational staff is commended by the Highways Agency. Whilst public transport will clearly be difficult in this rural location, car sharing, cycling and walking should be positively encouraged in order to reduce vehicle trips.

* The Highways Agency are content that the operational requirements of the proposed application would not produce vehicles in such numbers as to adversely affect the safe operation of the trunk road, but do have some concerns regarding the traffic demands of the construction phase. It is predicted in the Environmental Statement that the construction phase of the project will generate on average 60 HGVs per day, and 150 HGVs per day during the peak construction period. The operational phase of the project is predicted to generate on average 52 HGVs per day. Staff cars are estimated to be 40 per day during the operational phase.

* The application suggests that a construction phase traffic management plan will be produced to address the relatively short term nature of the associated travel demands. The Highways Agency therefore required conditions for the production and agreement of such a traffic management plan. It should also be noted that the County Highways Officer did not object to the application subject to suitable conditions.

* Although the construction and operational phases of the project will result in an increase in traffic it is not considered to represent a significant effect given that the power station is located directly adjacent to a dual carriageway (A11).

Trees

* A general assessment of the trees bordering the site is offered in the Environmental Statement and the Arboricultural Impact Assessment is deemed acceptable by the Tree and Countryside Consultant. Conditions regarding tree protection will be added to any consent.

Geodiversity

* Provision for opportunistic recording of geodiversity during construction was flagged at the scoping stage. A protocol for field recording and forwarding of results to the Norfolk Geodiversity Partnership and Norfolk Biodiversity Information Service should be conditioned to any consent.

Impact on farming community

* Numerous letters of objection have been received from the farming community with regard to the significant use of straw by the power station and the resulting lack of straw and high prices for farmers. Local farmers also feel that more straw will not be made available because many farmers save money by ploughing into fields due to the high cost of fertiliser. In response to these concerns the applicants have explained that they have specifically agreed not to take fuel in the form of cereal straw from the area around the proposed site thus alleviating the immediate concerns of local straw supply for pig farmers. The applicant's wish to reiterate that the straw fuel mix that Icen energy are proposing is approximately 110,000 tonnes of oil seed rape straw and approximately 110,000 tonnes of cereal straw. There will also be a percentage of miscanthus introduced when available and at least 20,000 tonnes of virgin woodchip. The applicants have claimed that straw will be provided by requesting those farmers that currently chop and plough their straw to stop that practice and to bail the straw instead thus avoiding having an affect on the supply of straw in East Anglia.

* Whilst the promotion of economic activity in general terms is a legitimate objective of the planning system, the extent to which planning decisions can take into account the effects of new

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development on individual businesses is limited by the need to consider public rather than private interests. The supply and demand of straw is governed by market forces, and it is not considered that it would be appropriate for the planning system to seek to intervene here in order to favour one business sector over another. It is considered therefore that only limited weight should be given to the objections raised relating to the supply and price of straw.

Historic Environment

* The proposed development will affect an area known to contain heritage assets of archaeological significance. Previous archaeological investigations have revealed the presence of prehistoric remains, Roman ditches, an Early Anglo-Saxon settlement and a medieval field system. Accordingly, Norfolk Landscape Archaeology has asked that any permission granted is subject to a condition requiring a programme of archaeological work.

* English Heritage has considered numerous historical sites in the area and is of the view that no significant harm will result from the development. While the power station and its chimney may be visible in distant views from near these sites it is not felt the visual impact will be intrusive to such a degree as to be decisively harmful to their significance. In summary English Heritage would not wish to object to the application.

Water

* Anglian Water have stated that the future growth planned for the region includes commercial uses such as that for the proposed biomass power station. The applicant has provided information on the water usage for this proposed development site to Anglian Water and based on this information the plants' requirements will be met by the allowance for growth already contained within Anglian Water's long term plan for water resources.

Conclusion

* The proposed power station would accord with both local and national planning policies which encourage the development of renewable energy projects. By addressing current energy problems in the locality, the proposal would also help to promote the development of the Snetterton Heath employment area. Careful consideration has been given to anticipated environmental impacts, and it has been concluded that the scheme would not result in significant adverse effects. Accordingly, the application is recommended for approval subject to conditions.

RECOMMENDATION

Planning Permission

CONDITIONS

- 3007** Full Permission Time Limit (3 years)
- 3046** In accordance with submitted plans
- 3920** Air Quality
- 3920** EA condition - surface water
- 3920** EA condition - contamination
- EA condition - verification report

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3920

3920 EA condition - contamination

3920 EA condition - piling/foundation designs

3920 EA condition - disposal of contaminated waters

3920 EA condition - foul and surface water

3920 Highways condition - access

3920 Highways condition - vision splays

3920 Highways condition - parking/loading/turning

3920 Highways condition - parking during construction

3920 Highways condition - traffic management plan

3920 Highways condition - comply with traffic management scheme

3920 Highways condition - wheel cleaning

3920 Highways condition - wheel cleaning in accordance with schem

3920 Highways condition - off site highway works

3920 Highways condition - improvement works completed

3920 Highways condition - HGV route

3920 Ecological condition

3920 Geodiversity condition

3414 Fencing protection for existing trees

3920 RPA of Trees condition

3920 MOD condition - lighting

3920 NLA condition - archaeological work

3996 Note - Discharge of Conditions

3998 NOTE: Reasons for Approval

4000 Variation of approved plans

3994 EA Informative

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ITEM	2	RECOMMENDATION : APPROVAL
REF NO:	3PL/2012/0080/F	CASE OFFICER: James Stone
LOCATION:	MATTISHALL Clover Paddock off Mill Road	APPN TYPE: Full POLICY: Out Settlemnt Bndry ALLOCATION: No Allocation CONS AREA: N TPO: N LB GRADE: N
APPLICANT:	Mr Michael Cawley & Miss Mary-Lou Cawl Clover Paddock off Mill Road	
AGENT:	Mr Philip Mason Overburys Solicitors 3 Upper King Street	
PROPOSAL:	Retention of 1 static home, 2 touring caravans, laundry room 2 sheds, fences, access/splays parking, c/u ag land to res	

KEY ISSUES

Principle of development
Proof of ethnicity
Need for additional pitches
Suitability of site
Amenity/local concerns

DESCRIPTION OF DEVELOPMENT

The application seeks retrospective full planning permission for the retention of one static home, two touring caravans, a laundry room, two sheds, access splays, parking and the change of use from agricultural land to residential. The original proposal has been amended which will result in the removal of the front fence to be replaced by a native hedge.

SITE AND LOCATION

The application site was previously agricultural land and is served by a private track off Mill Road. The site is located in the countryside approximately 200m from the Settlement Boundary of Mattishall. To the south of the site are open fields whilst to the north is an existing gypsy and traveller site consisting of a mobile home and a caravan. To the west is residential development.

EIA REQUIRED

No

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RELEVANT SITE HISTORY

Ref: 3PL/2010/0223/F granted planning permission for the retention of a mobile unit for one travellers' family, permanent residential occupation and caravan for family room. This site is located to the north east of the current application site and is served by the same private track off Mill Road.

POLICY CONSIDERATIONS

The following policies of the adopted Breckland Core Strategy and Development Control Policies and the adopted Site Specific Policies and Proposals Document, including the Proposals Maps, have been taken into consideration in the determination of this application. The provisions of the National Planning Policy Framework have also been taken into account, where appropriate

CP.02	The Travelling Community
CP.11	Protection and Enhancement of the Landscape
DC.01	Protection of Amenity
DC.16	Design
DC.19	Parking Provision

CONSULTATIONS

MATTISHALL PARISH COUNCIL -

No case for changing use of land from agricultural to residential; outside the development boundary. Concerns over the highway (single track road) carrying additional traffic. Five objectors attended the meeting with two letters of objection also received.

NORFOLK COUNTY COUNCIL HIGHWAYS

The agent has confirmed that 'the touring caravans will not leave the site on a regular basis, as they are intended to be used for family accommodation.'

Whilst I accept in the immediate vicinity of the access the carriageway is limited to around 3m in width, on the basis Mill Road is a straight section of carriageway with good forward visibility, that around 200m - 250m south of the access Mill Road widens to around 5m, the limited scale of development proposed and in light of the additional information provided by the agent I consider adverse highway comment in this instance could be difficult to substantiate.

Recommend that the access be hard surfaced to minimise material being carried onto the carriageway

ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH OFFICERS

No objections

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MR B ROSE

I have been asked by both Mattishall Parish Council and a number of objectors who are concerned that their views should be made known about further development at this location on Mill Road.

The 6 acre parcel of agricultural land on which this application is part of, was originally given permission for the relocation of a dog breeding business about 15 years ago. Since that time other permissions were approved for agricultural activities, together with accommodation for temporary periods.

The whole site has now become a traveller site, this application being the last.

Development there has already compromised the residential amenity of occupiers of nearby properties and I would ask the committee to take account of these concerns when considering this application

REPRESENTATIONS

Representations have been received raising the following issues:

impact of the proposal on local services; future intensification of use; impact on local residents; site outside Settlement Boundary; use already established; increase in traffic movements; refusals for other sites in Mill Road.

ASSESSMENT NOTES

* The application was previously referred to Planning Committee on 14th May, 2012. The comments of the Ward Representative were not available at the time of that meeting. The application is referred back to allow further consideration of local concerns.

* This application has been brought before Planning Committee at the request of the Ward Representative.

Principle of development

* Proposals for gypsy and traveller sites should be determined in accordance with Policy CP2 of the adopted Core Strategy and Guidance contained within the NPPF

* The principle of development is considered acceptable because of the sustainable nature of the site, which is in close proximity to Mattishall, satisfactory access and the need for additional gypsy and traveller pitches in Breckland.

* Policy CP2 of the Core Strategy sets out the criteria the Council will use in identifying allocations for gypsy and traveller sites. Although this proposal is not an allocation, the criteria in CP2 are still relevant in determining proposals for permanent traveller pitches. Policy CP2 of the adopted Core Strategy states that within the period up to 2011 a permanent site for 15 pitches will be allocated along the A11 corridor and sets out the criteria which would be used to identify suitable sites. The Authority has yet to identify where the additional pitches should be provided.

* The proposal is for a single family away from the A11 corridor and is therefore considered a windfall site. However the criteria set out in policy CP2 provide a policy framework to assess applications for individual pitches.

* Policy CP2 sets out the following criteria:-

- The site is within reasonable distance to facilities and supporting services;
- The site is properly serviced;
- The site will not have an adverse impact on the character and appearance of the surrounding

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landscape.

Preference will be given to previously developed land or vacant and derelict land.

* The NPPF states that local planning authorities should promote more private traveller sites provision and consider:

- a) the existing level of provision and need for sites
- b) the availability (or lack) of alternative accommodation for the applicants
- c) other personal circumstances of the applicant

* The NPPF explains that landscaping is an important issue and that high walls or fencing and large amounts of hard landscaping are not desirable because it can result in isolation from the local community.

Proof of ethnicity

* Information has been submitted, from the Norfolk Traveller Education Service, to confirm the applicants are from the travelling community. This consultee has stated that this family are of Romany Gypsy origin. The information given confirms that the family fall within the planning definition of gypsy or traveller.

Need for additional pitches

* The Cawley family, the occupiers of this site, comprises of eight people and the site is owned by a member of the family. The agent acting on behalf of the Cawleys has explained that they used to be camped on the Mile Cross site in Norwich but were forced to move because of a violent dispute with other occupiers of the site. It is the intention of the family to establish a settled way of life according to their agent.

* Policy CP2 recognises there is a need for gypsy sites within the district and Breckland Council's housing team has confirmed that by approving this application the needs of this family will be met on an appropriate site, otherwise the Council will need to meet their housing need through alternative provision.

Suitability of the site

* The site is close to the village of Mattishall and therefore close to facilities and supporting services. The site is already fairly well screened by existing mature vegetation which would be enhanced by a landscaping scheme. The proposal does not raise any issues in terms of landscape impact and highway safety and there are no specific planning constraints. It should be noted that the existing fence at the front of the site would be removed as part of the application and replaced by a native hedge.

* The edge of the site would be located approximately 17 metres from the nearest residential property whilst the nearest caravan/static home would be approximately 33m from the nearest dwelling. It is considered that this separation would not result in any material impact in relation to loss of sunlight, loss of privacy and overdominance.

Local Concerns

* The static home and touring caravans will be located at an adequate distance from neighbouring properties to avoid issues with regard to loss of privacy, overdominance and unacceptable loss of sunlight.

* Furthermore, it is considered that the surrounding highway network is adequate to accommodate the additional traffic that will be associated with the scheme. The Highways Officer stated that he accepts that in the immediate vicinity of the access the carriageway is limited to around 3m in width. However, Mill Road is a straight section of carriageway with good forward visibility and that at around 200m - 250m south of the access Mill Road widens to around 5m. It is

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concluded that given the limited scale of development proposed adverse highway comment in this instance would be difficult to substantiate.

* Conditions of any planning permission would restrict the number of caravans and static homes on the site and the number and length of stay of any other touring caravans. On this basis, the proposal is not considered likely to have a significant impact on local services or the wider community.

Conclusion

* The proposal is considered to satisfy the criteria set out in the NPPF and 'Policy CP02 The Travelling Community' of the adopted Breckland Core Strategy. There is a need for additional pitches in the district, the site is located in a sustainable location and the applicants have provided evidence that they are from the travelling community. Furthermore, there would be no detrimental impact on the travelling community. The application is therefore recommended for approval.

RECOMMENDATION Planning Permission

CONDITIONS

- 3046** In accordance with submitted plans
- 3408** Landscaping - details and implementation
- 3920** Occupation restricted to gypsies and travellers
- 3920** Foul water drainage
- 3802** Precise details of surface water disposal
- 3920** Limited number of caravans and static homes
- 3920** Limit on tourers and stay
- 3750** Highways condition re visibility splay
- 3998** NOTE: Reasons for Approval
- 4000** Variation of approved plans
- 3996** Note - Discharge of Conditions

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ITEM	3	RECOMMENDATION : REFUSAL
REF NO:	3PL/2012/0321/F	CASE OFFICER: Chris Raine
LOCATION:	THETFORD Premier Inn The Warrener Maine Street	APPN TYPE: Full POLICY: In Settlemnt Bndry ALLOCATION: No Allocation CONS AREA: N TPO: N LB GRADE: N
APPLICANT:	Whitbread Group PLC & Kier Homes C/o Agent	
AGENT:	Walsingham Planning Bourne House Cores End Road	
PROPOSAL:	Erect 3 storey hotel annex, single storey extension to restaurant, alterations to car park & relocate play area	

KEY ISSUES

Principle of development
TPO and ecology issues
Open space
Highway safety
Visual impact
Neighbour amenity
Other issues

DESCRIPTION OF DEVELOPMENT

The application seeks full planning permission for the erection of a three storey detached building (holiday annex) which provides 36 additional bedrooms to the existing Premier Inn Hotel, a single storey extension to the front of the existing public house to provide additional space for the restaurant and alterations to the on-site car park and relocation of a play area.

SITE AND LOCATION

The application site consists of a roughly rectangular shaped plot which contains an L shaped building which provides hotel, public house and restaurant facilities. The site also provides on-site parking which is accessed via Maine Street which is located to the west beyond which is a relatively new residential development. To the north of the site is the A134 carriageway beyond which are residential properties. To the east are existing residential dwellings and associated gardens. The southern part of the site is to provide a play area/open space as part of the recently constructed residential development to the west.

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EIA REQUIRED

No

RELEVANT SITE HISTORY

3PL/2006/0530/F - Provision of roadside Premier Travel Inn with integral restaurant, landscaping and associated car parking - Approved 19/7/2006

3PL/2006/1086/A - Internal/external illuminated signage including 2 totem signs, name signs and 1 box sign, entrance and welcome sign - Approved 19/9/2006

3PL/2011/0715/F - 2 storey extension to hotel, single storey extension to restaurant, revise car parking layout, relocate play area - Refusal 3/10/2011

POLICY CONSIDERATIONS

The following policies of the adopted Breckland Core Strategy and Development Control Policies and the adopted Site Specific Policies and Proposals Document, including the Proposals Maps, have been taken into consideration in the determination of this application. The provisions of the National Planning Policy Framework have also been taken into account, where appropriate

DC.01	Protection of Amenity
DC.08	Tourism Related Development
DC.09	Proposals for Town Centre Uses
DC.11	Open Space
DC.12	Trees and Landscape
DC.14	Energy Efficiency
DC.16	Design

CONSULTATIONS

THETFORD T C -

Original proposal

The committee support this proposal

THETFORD T C -

Amended proposal

The committee supported the proposal but we do not have a meeting until the 12th June which is after the date for comments on the amendments, having spoken to Chris Raine we will go with the judgement of the officers on the revised floor plan which I believe moves the building nearer the trees which I believe have a TPO so this could be an issue.

ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH OFFICERS

No objection subject to a condition relating to external lighting.

ENVIRONMENT AGENCY

No objection.

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HIGHWAYS AGENCY

No objection

NORFOLK LANDSCAPE ARCHAEOLOGY

No objections subject to conditions

NATURAL ENGLAND

No objection.

NORFOLK COUNTY COUNCIL - HIGHWAYS

No objection subject to a condition relating to the laying out of the site as in the plan.

TREE & COUNTRYSIDE CONSULTANT

The extended Phase 1 Ecological Survey by ADAS is noted and accepted. However, Section 5 of Duramen Consulting's Arboricultural Impact Assessment and Section 4.8 of the Design and Access Statement are illustrative of the misunderstanding implicit in the applicant's consideration of the trees and greenspace east of Maine Street. To categorise the individual trees of a woodland by the BS5837 Cascade chart is to deny the principle under which the trees have been protected by a Woodland Tree Preservation Order. Such an order recognises the collective value of the trees and the inherent processes that sustain the woodland as a collective tree ecosystem and landscape unit. To individualise the trees as has been presented is to 'divide and rule' and present trees as a 'south Thetford. The piecemeal erosion of this corridor should be resisted.

CONTAMINATED LAND OFFICER

No objection.

THETFORD SOCIETY

No objection.

NORFOLK WILDLIFE TRUST - No Comments Received

ARCHITECTURAL LIAISON/CRIME OFFICER - No Comments Received

NATIONAL GRID - No Comments Received

ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH OFFICERS - No Comments Received

ANGLIAN WATER SERVICE - No Comments Received

PRINCIPAL PLANNER MINERAL & WASTE POLICY - No Comments Received

REPRESENTATIONS

Objections have been received, a summary of which is as follows:
Devaluation of property; loss of privacy; agree with reasons for refusal from previous application;

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loss of play space provision; loss of privacy and new accommodation should be focused towards the town centre.

ASSESSMENT NOTES

* The application is referred to the Planning Committee as it is a Major application.

Principle of Development

* A previous application (3PL/2011/0715/F) was recently refused and whilst previously referred to national guidance has been replaced by the NPPF, it is considered that the policy requirements are broadly the same in terms of the principle of such development. With this in mind, Policy DC8 confirms that hotel accommodation within the five market towns will be permitted where a "sequential approach" has been undertaken, where such a development can be justified and where it is a road related facility which primarily meets the needs of road users. It is acknowledged that a hotel is defined as a "town centre use" within the NPPF and as such it is necessary to consider the most appropriate locations for this development, namely within a town centre. However, it should also be acknowledged that a hotel already exists at the site and, as such, this is not a new enterprise but an extension to the existing facility. With this in mind it is considered appropriate to consider how viable it is to set up a new enterprise on a more "beneficial" site (within the town centre) rather than extend the existing facility. It is considered that it is not appropriate or viable to disaggregate the extension from the existing facilities on the basis that this hotel serves predominantly the needs of road users (the A11 is in close proximity to the site) and a more central site would not meet this need effectively.

* The agent has undertaken an assessment of vacant sites/premises and confirmed why each is not a viable alternative to accommodate the proposed extension. As such, it is considered that it has reasonably assessed alternative sites.

* Given the above it is considered that the principle of extending the facilities at this site are acceptable in principle.

TPO and Ecology issues

* Whilst the proposal is a detached building rather than the previously sought extension to the hotel, the scheme continues to result in the loss of part of a TPO woodland. As previously stated, this loss would be detrimental to the visual amenities of the area. This is notwithstanding the proposed additional planting on the site. The Tree and Countryside Officer supports this concern.

On this basis the proposal is contrary to the aims of Policy DC12.

* The submitted Ecological Survey has been assessed by the Tree and Countryside Consultant and it is considered acceptable. As such, there are no objections on ecology grounds.

* Natural England has confirmed that it has no objection to the proposal.

Open Space

* As with the previously refused scheme, the current proposal continues to result in the loss of part of an open space provision secured as part of the approval for the adjacent residential scheme.

* Policy DC11 seeks to retain areas of open space and only allows for their loss if it can be demonstrated that there is an excess provision of open space within the settlement and an appropriate enhancement to the remaining provision is made, or the community would gain greater benefit from the developer providing an alternative facility. It is evident that there is not excess provision and no alternative provision has been put forward. On this basis, and consistent with the previous application, the proposal continues to be contrary to Policy DC11.

Highway safety

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* In terms of highway safety, the Highway Authority and the Highways Agency have confirmed that they have no objection.

Visual Impact

* In visual terms, the proposed building replicates the architectural detailing, fenestration and external materials of the existing hotel and public house and this is considered an acceptable approach in the context of the site and the immediate locality. The three storey composition, whilst taller than the existing accommodation, is considered to be acceptable given that it is a stand alone building some distance from the existing premises.

Neighbour amenity

* With regard to neighbour amenity, the separation distances to neighbouring properties, given the overall size of the proposal, are such that there would not be any significantly overbearing impact resulting from the proposal. The positioning of the windows within the proposed building, given the separation distances are such that privacy would not be significantly compromised.

Other issues

* The Environment Agency, Environmental Health Officer and Contaminated Land Officer have not raised any objections

* Norfolk Landscape Archaeology has not raised any objection but would recommend a condition in relation to a programme of archaeological work.

* It should be stressed that there is no objection to the proposed restaurant extension on the front of the existing premises. It is considered that it relates satisfactorily to the existing premises in visual terms, would not compromise the character and appearance of the area and would not compromise neighbour amenity.

Conclusion

* It is considered that the scheme has not addressed the concerns raised by the previous refusal relating to the loss of part of a TPO Woodland Order and the loss of part of an open space and, as such, the proposal is considered to be unacceptable and therefore recommended for refusal.

RECOMMENDATION

Refusal of Planning Permission

REASON(S) FOR REFUSAL

9900 Loss of part of a dedicated open space

9900 Loss of trees

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ITEM	4	RECOMMENDATION : APPROVAL
REF NO:	3PL/2012/0479/F	CASE OFFICER: Viv Bebbington
LOCATION:	THETFORD Breckland Leisure Centre Croxtan Road	APPN TYPE: Full POLICY: In Settlemnt Bndry ALLOCATION: Open Space CONS AREA: N TPO: N LB GRADE: N
APPLICANT:	Breckland Council Elizabeth House Walpole Loke	
AGENT:	Breckland Council Elizabeth House Walpole Loke	
PROPOSAL:	Construction of concrete skatepark (228sqm)	

KEY ISSUES

Principle of development
Impact on the residential amenity
Impact on amenities of the area

DESCRIPTION OF DEVELOPMENT

The proposal seeks full planning permission for the construction of a Skatepark. The site is approximately 14m by 15m and consists of a concrete area of ramps, curbs and walls. The structure would be less than 1.4m in height.

It is intended to erect a fence around the site and install lighting. No specific details have been submitted as part of the application.

SITE AND LOCATION

The site is located to the rear of a group of existing non residential buildings which include the Health Centre to the south, the Leisure Centre and car park to the north and east and the football ground to the west. The area is an area of grassland adjacent an existing car park which has permission to be expanded.

EIA REQUIRED

No

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RELEVANT SITE HISTORY

No relevant site history

POLICY CONSIDERATIONS

The following policies of the adopted Breckland Core Strategy and Development Control Policies and the adopted Site Specific Policies and Proposals Document, including the Proposals Maps, have been taken into consideration in the determination of this application. The provisions of the National Planning Policy Framework have also been taken into account, where appropriate

DC.01 Protection of Amenity
DC.18 Community facilities, recreation and leisure

CONSULTATIONS

THETFORD T C - No Comments Received

ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH OFFICERS

No objection subject to conditions

ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH OFFICERS

I have looked at the application submitted and, based on the information provided to me at this time, I recommend approval providing the development proceeds in line with the application details and subject to the following conditions to alleviate environmental concerns.

∫ A 2 meter high acoustic fence, barrier or wall should be placed on the north eastern boundary of the site to protect the residents of Stanford Road. The fence, barrier or wall must be capable of reducing noise by at least 10 decibels and should be positioned and angled such that any reflected noise from the barrier, fence or wall is not reflected back from the surface of the Health Centre building over or around the barrier, fence or wall in the direction of the properties in Stanford Road.

Reason for condition:-

In the interest of the amenities of nearby residents

∫ No external lighting to be switched on between the hours of 21:00 and 09:00. All external lighting should be hooded and angled down and installed and maintained in accordance with the manufacturers design. No other external lighting shall be installed on the site without the prior written approval of the local Planning Authority.

Reason for condition:

In the interest of the amenities of nearby residents.

I have been advised by the applicant that the intention is that the skatepark is to be secured and

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monitored by infra red CCTV in conjunction with the police, I would therefore recommend the following as a condition to protect the residents of Stanford Road from night time disturbance.

∫ The site should not operate between the hours of 21:00 and 09:00 and signage should be displayed to advertise this. Between the hours of 21:00 and 09:00 the site should be secured by fencing, which may also include the acoustic fence, wall or barrier, and a locked gate. During these hours the site should be monitored by CCTV or other similar means with measures in place to prevent the use of the permitted site for activities that cause nuisance or annoyance to nearby residents.

Reason for condition:

In the interest of the amenities of nearby residents.

REPRESENTATIONS

None

ASSESSMENT NOTES

* The application is referred to Planning Committee as the applicant is Breckland Council.

Principle of development

* The proposal seeks permission for the construction of a concrete skate park to provide a new community recreational facility for use by skateboarders and BMX riders. The principle of the development is supported by Policy DC 18 which provides for proposals for community, recreational and leisure facilities within the Market Towns. The proposal is well related to existing leisure/ recreational facilities.

* The main issue in this instance is the acceptability of the location in terms of its impact on the amenity of the area and particularly the impact on residential amenity.

Neighbouring Amenity

* The nearest residential property is some 120m to the north of the site. The Leisure Centre and car park is located between the site and several of these properties. Residential properties to the east are separated by the Leisure Centre and Croxton Road.

* The Environmental Health Officer has raised no objection to the proposal subject to conditions to protect the residential amenity of the neighbouring residential properties. A condition has been imposed requiring a 2m acoustic barrier to be positioned on the northern boundary. It is also conditioned that the hours of operation should be controlled and outside these hours the site should be locked and the lighting switched off.

Visual Impact

* The proposal is relatively small and surrounded by existing buildings and recreational facilities. There are no views into the site from either Croxton or Mundford Road.

Conclusion

* In conclusion, the principle of the development is supported by policy. The site is well related and close to other recreational/leisure facilities. The proposal is unlikely to result in a significant adverse impact on residential amenity or the visual amenity of the area.

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RECOMMENDATION Planning Permission

CONDITIONS

- 3007** Full Permission Time Limit (3 years)
- 3046** In accordance with submitted plans
- 3920** Acoustic barrier
- 3920** Lighting and hours of operation
- 3920** Fencing
- 3998** NOTE: Reasons for Approval
- 4000** Variation of approved plans
- 3996** Note - Discharge of Conditions