PLANNING

SUPPORTING STATEMENT

PROPOSED CONVERSION OF BARNS TO FOUR RESIDENTIAL UNITS AT WEST FARM, YARMOUTH ROAD, THORPE ST ANDREW

Paul Clarke DipEP, MRTPI
1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 This Planning Statement has been prepared by Brown & Co in support of a full planning application submitted to Broadland District Council (BDC) on behalf of Mrs R Child (‘The Applicant’). The application relates to proposals for the conversion of existing barns into 4 dwellings on land at West Farm, Yarmouth Road, Thorpe St Andrew, Norfolk (‘The Application Site’).

1.2 The purpose of this statement is to set out the case for the proposal and it does it in the following manner:

• Section 2 of this statement describes the application site and surrounding area;
• Section 3 describes the application proposals;
• Section 4 sets out the relevant consultations that have taken place for these proposals as well as relevant planning history;
• Section 5 details the relevant policies in the Development Plan and the material considerations within the NPPF;
• Section 6 considers the planning issues surrounding the proposals and how they respond to the relevant planning policies for the area;
• Section 7 identifies the site specific issues; and,
• Section 8 concludes with a brief summary of the issues discussed and the benefits the proposed development would bring.

1.3 This statement should be read in conjunction with the following application documents submitted as part of the outline application:

• Covering letter
• Planning Application Form and Certificate of Ownership
• Site Location Plan (red line plan)
• Detailed plans and elevation drawings of existing barns and proposed dwellings
• Transport statement
• Design & Access Statement
• Ecological Statement
• Contamination Form

2. THE APPLICATION SITE AND ITS SURROUNDINGS

The Site

2.1 The site is approximately 0.3 hectares in size, and consists of a range of barns surrounding the original farmhouse and is located on the northern side of the Yarmouth Road in Thorpe St Andrew. The barns are of a red brick, timber and pantile construction and have been used until very recently as part of the livestock unit operated by one of the applicant’s sons, Jason Child.

Description of the Surroundings

2.2 The site is located approximately 5.5 kilometres (3.5 miles) from the centre of Norwich. To the west are two large residential properties with a pair of cottages beyond, and the elevated Norwich to Comer railway line further towards Norwich City Centre. Immediately to the east, there is a social club, before the characteristics of the area changes to offices
relating to the Broadland Business Park. Directly opposite the site is undeveloped land with Griffin Lane providing access to the riverside. The Griffin Public House is situated diagonally opposite the site. The area further to the east, on the south side of the A1067, changes back to residential use where the former buildings of St Andrews Hospital have been converted and added to with residential development in its former grounds.

2.3 The site is in a sustainable location and is situated within easy walking and cycling distance of a range of facilities and services.

3 THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

3.1 The planning application is made to convert an existing range of barns to four residential units. The proposed development seeks to use the existing access and retain the farmhouse as part of the proposals.

3.2 Further details of the proposed conversion are provided through the submitted detailed drawings, and the design and access statement.

4 CONSULTATION

Consultation with Relevant/Technical Stakeholders

4.1 Throughout the process of preparing this planning application, various statutory consultees have been approached and informed of the proposals. Significant dialogue has occurred in association with undertaking the technical studies, which accompany this planning application. The organisations consulted as part of the pre-application process and preparation of this Full Planning Application includes:

- Norfolk County Council – Highways
- Broadland District Council – Planning

District Council

4.2 Sketch proposals for the site were sent to the District Council for comment on 28 October 2015, by e-mail, and that subsequently resulted in a meeting on site with the planning officer on 10 November 2015. The planning officer issued an e-mail with comments on the proposals together with a response she had received from Norfolk County Council as the highway authority. The officer’s e-mail and highway officer’s responses are attached as Appendix 1.

Town Council

4.3 At the sketch layout stage of preparing the proposals, we attended a meeting of the Town Council (Plans Committee) on the 9 November 2015, at short notice at the kind invitation of the chairman. Having explained our proposals (which at that time included a separate housing plot at the rear as well as 4 barn conversions), the members had a general discussion making reference to the following points:

- Reference was made to the circumstances relating to the proposals
- The initial view was that the Committee preferred to see the existing buildings retained and converted rather than complete demolition and redevelopment of the site;
- The Committee felt that the barns should be retained as a ‘local feature’
4.4 Further revisions have been made to the proposed layout and sent to the Parish Council for comment on 11 December 2015.

**Neighbour Consultation**

4.5 We have sent letters to the occupiers of properties in the vicinity of the site together with a set of the plans illustrating the proposed development on the 11 December 2015. The letters went to the following:

- St Andrews Social Club, Yarmouth Road, Thorpe St Andrew
- The Griffin Public House, Yarmouth Road, Thorpe St Andrew
- 211, Yarmouth Road, Thorpe St Andrew
- 209, Yarmouth Road, Thorpe St Andrew

**Amendments following Consultation**

4.6 Further revisions have been made to the proposed layout to omit the separate dwelling plot initially proposed at the rear.

4.7 The entire site falls within Flood Zone 1 and is not, therefore, identified as being at risk of flooding.

4.8 The Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2011 (EIA Regulations) describes certain types of developments (‘Schedule 1 and Schedule 2 development’) that require an EIA. It is considered that by virtue of the type and scale of development proposed, an EIA is not required under the Regulations.

**Planning History**

4.9 There is no planning history of relevance for the site. The District Council’s Planning Application Online system shows no decisions of any significance relating to the application site.
5 DEVELOPMENT PLAN POLICIES AND MATERIAL CONSIDERATIONS

5.1 The purpose of this section is to assess the proposed development against relevant development plan policies and material considerations.

5.2 In determining planning applications, section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, and Section 70(2) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, requires proposals to be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

The Development Plan

5.3 The Development Plan consists of:

- Joint Core Strategy for Broadland, Norwich and South Norfolk 2011, as amended 2014 (JCS).
- Development Management DPD (Local Plan) for Broadland August 2015.
- Growth Triangle Area Action Plan (AAP) (submission version December 2014). Whilst these policies are not yet part of the Development Plan, they have recently been through a Public Examination and carry some weight (as defined in paragraph 216 of the National Planning Policy Framework 2012).

5.4 Other material considerations which need to be taken into account include the following:

- National Planning Practice Guidance, 2014

5.5 Following the publication of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) in March 2012, policies in the Core Strategy and the Development Management DPD are considered alongside the NPPF, with policies that are inconsistent with the NPPF deemed to have less weight attached to them in determining planning applications.

Joint Core Strategy for Broadland, Norwich and South Norfolk 2011 as amended 2014

5.6 The Joint Core Strategy (JCS) provides the broad spatial strategy and long term vision for the future development and use of land in Broadland, Norwich and South Norfolk up to 2026. This proposal seeks to accord with its key Spatial Planning Objectives including (Objective 2) which seeks to allocate enough land for housing, and affordable housing, in the most sustainable settlements, (Objective 8) To positively protect and enhance the individual character and culture of the area; and (Objective 9) To protect, manage and enhance the natural, built and historic environment, including key landscapes, natural habitat or nature conservation value.

5.7 Policy 1: “Addressing climate change and protecting environmental assets.” This all embracing policy seeks to ensure the environmental assets of the area will be protected, maintained, restored and enhanced and the benefits for residents and visitors improved. It is considered that the proposals adhere to the key themes of this policy by proposing to build housing where it is seriously needed within the Council’s section of the Norwich Policy Area. The development is located to make full use of public transport on adjoining road and encourage cycling and walking to local facilities.

5.8 Policy 2: “Promoting Good Design” indicates that all development will be designed to the highest possible standards creating a strong sense of place. The proposal is sited
immediately adjacent to the existing industrial estate and its design will take into account the local character. Although the proposal is in outline, it has been designed taking into account the parameters as set by the Broadland District Council Design Guide (SPG) (July 1997), and the Car Parking Standards (SPG) (June 2007).

5.9 Policy 3: “Energy and Water” this policy advocates that development in the area will, where possible, aim to minimise reliance on non-renewable high-carbon energy sources and maximise the use of decentralised and renewable or low-carbon energy sources and sustainable construction technologies. To help achieve this, all development proposals of a minimum of 10 dwellings or 1,000 square metres of non-residential floor space will be required to include sources of decentralised and renewable or low carbon energy to secure at least 10% of their energy requirement, unless demonstrated through the Design and Access Statement that there is no viable and practicable scope for this. Whilst the proposal is in outline form, we believe this policy can be adhered to through appropriate conditions.

5.10 Policy 4: “Housing Delivery” seeks to ensure at least 36,820 new homes can be delivered between 2008 and 2026, of which 33,000 will be within the Norwich Policy Area. Proposals for housing need to provide a mix of tenure and on sites for 16 dwellings or more (or over 0.6 ha) the proportion of affordable housing is 33%.

5.11 Policy 6: “Access and transportation” seeks to concentrate development close to essential services and facilities to encourage walking and cycling as the primary means of travel with public transport for wider access.

5.12 Policy 7: “Supporting Communities” this policy seeks to ensure that facilities and services are available as locally as possible, considering the potential for co-location, and are accessible on foot, by cycle and public transport.

5.13 Policy 10: “Locations for major new or expanded communities in the Norwich Policy Area” again identifies Rackheath as part of the growth triangle as a location for major growth. This policy describes a number of criteria that each major development location needs to adhere to.

5.14 Policy 12: “The remainder of the Norwich urban area, including the fringe parishes”. Thorpe St Andrew is identified as a fringe Parish in the JCS document. Settlements identified in this policy that are also within the Norwich Policy Area may be considered for additional development, if necessary, to help deliver the smaller sites in the NPA allowance (Policy 9).

5.15 The proposal accords with the general provisions of the Core Strategy.

Development Management Development Plan Document (DPD) (adopted 3 August 2015)

5.16 This recently adopted policy document has the following policies are considered relevant to these proposals:

- Policy GC1 – Presumption in favour of sustainable development – this policy advocates that the Council will take a positive approach that reflects the presumption in favour of sustainable development contained in the National Planning Policy Framework.
- **Policy GC2** – Location of new development – this policy identifies that new development will be accommodated within the settlement limits defined on the policies map.
- **Policy GC4** - Design – this policy sets out the Councils general principles relating to all development. All proposals should have regard to a range of criteria in order to achieve a high standard of design.
- **Policy EN1** – Biodiversity and Habitats – proposals for development will be expected to protect and enhance biodiversity, avoid fragmentation of habitats and support delivery of an integrated green infrastructure network.
- **Policy EN3** – Green Infrastructure – development will be expected to maximise opportunities for the creation of a well-managed network of wildlife habitats and make adequate arrangements for management and maintenance. Schemes of five or more dwellings will be expected to provide informal open space of at least 4 hectares and allotments of at least 0.16 ha per 1000 population. Para 3.19 recognises that it will not always be practicable to provide this on site and states that the Council will negotiate with developers accordingly. As this policy relates to 4 units it’s considered that this policy doesn’t apply.
- **Policy TS3** – Highway Safety – development will not be permitted where it would result in significant adverse impact on the satisfactory functioning or safety of the highway network.
- **Policy TS4** – Parking Guidelines – appropriate parking and manoeuvring space should be provided in new developments. Relevant standards are set out in the Council’s adopted SPD.

5.17 It is considered, therefore, that the proposed development complies with the policies in the Development Management DPD, insofar as they relate to full detailed proposals for the conversion to four units and the means of access. A fully detailed response to the criteria set out in Policy GC 4 is provided through the Design & Access Statement submitted with this application.

**Site Allocations Development Plan Document (DPD) Preferred Options 2013**

5.18 The Plan provides a settlement overview reiterating that development is acceptable in principle within “settlement limits”. There is no specific policy or allocation that relates to the application site within this Plan. There is a specific allocation relating to the land opposite the application site, Policy PS60-03 Land at Griffin Lane, Thorpe St Andrew. This policy refers to 71 dwellings, open space and a community building (planning permission 20130650). The proposals, whilst in outline, propose a roundabout as the means of access onto Yarmouth Road.

**National Planning Policy Framework (March 2012)**

5.19 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) came into immediate effect upon the publication on 27th March 2012. The NPPF promotes sustainable development in planning and positive growth. A presumption in favour of sustainable development is the basis for every plan and every decision. The NPPF is a material consideration in planning decisions.

5.20 Paragraph 13 states:

“The National Planning Policy Framework constitutes guidance for local planning authorities and decision-takers both in drawing up plans as a material consideration in determining applications.”
5.21 Paragraph 14 states:

*For decision-taking this means:*

- Approving development proposals that accord with the development plan without delay; and
- where the development plan is absent, silent or relevant policies are out-of-date, granting permission unless:
  - any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole; or
- specific policies in this Framework indicate development should be restricted.”

5.22 The proposed development has been assessed against the principles contained within the NPPF and is considered to deliver sustainable development as follows.

**Building a strong, competitive economy**

5.23 The proposed development will deliver much needed land for housing, in a location within a settlement boundary where the principle of development is considered acceptable.

**Ensuring the vitality of town centres**

5.24 The proposed development is not situated within a town centre and, therefore, this principle is not relevant.

**Supporting a prosperous rural economy**

5.25 The proposed development is not located within a village or rural area and, therefore, this principle is not relevant.

**Promoting sustainable transport**

5.26 The proposal located in an area where there are a series of transport improvements programmed to be implemented in the near future. These include a proposed Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) corridor along the A1042 Yarmouth Road.

**Supporting high quality communications infrastructure**

5.27 This principle does not apply to the proposed development.

**Delivering a wide choice of high quality homes**

5.28 The proposal is fully detailed to provide four high quality barn conversions that will add to the wide range of house types in the area.

**Requiring good design**

5.29 The proposed development has been designed with reference to the Broadland District Council Place Shaping Guide (November 2012) and the planning application is accompanied by a Design and Access Statement. The proposed development seeks to adhere to the principles as set out in Policy GC 4 of the Councils adopted Development Management DPD.
Promoting healthy communities

5.30 This principle does not apply to the proposed development.

Protecting Green Belt land

5.31 The site is not designated Green Belt and therefore this principle is not relevant.

Meeting the challenge of climate change, flooding and coastal change

5.32 The site is defined as Flood Zone 1 which is the lowest probability of flooding. The site is classified as being appropriate for development within the Technical Guidance to the National Planning Policy Framework (March 2012).

Conserving and enhancing the natural environment

5.33 The proposed development will not have a detrimental impact on the biodiversity, ecology or water resources in the area.

Conserving and enhancing the historic environment

5.34 The proposed development will not adversely affect any historic assets. Indeed, the proposal will result in the retention of a local landmark in the area.

Facilitating the sustainable use of minerals

5.35 There are no known mineral reserves on the site and hence no impact from the proposed development.

Additional advice within the NPPF

5.36 Paragraph 19 sets out the Government's commitment to ensuring that the planning system does everything it can to support sustainable economic growth through the planning system.

5.37 Paragraph 47 identifies measures for local planning authorities to boost significantly the supply of housing.

5.38 Paragraph 49 requires housing applications should be considered in the context of the presumption in favour of sustainable development. Relevant policies for the supply of housing should not be considered up-to-date if the local planning authority cannot demonstrate a five-year supply of deliverable housing sites.

5.39 Paragraph 50 advises that local planning authorities should undertake a number of measures to deliver a wide choice of high quality homes. These measures relate to planning for a mix of housing that deals with the demographic and market trends and the needs of different groups in the community; the size, type, tenure and range of housing needed; and meeting affordable housing need on-site, unless off-site provision or a financial contribution can be justified.

5.40 The proposed development has been assessed against the guidance in the NPPF and found to be in accordance with the principles contained within it which are intended to deliver sustainable development.
On 6th March 2014, the DCLG launched the Planning Practice Web-Based Resource (PPG). The PPG was developed following the recommendations of the External Review of Planning Practice Guidance which the Government consulted on in 2013. It replaced guidance previously published as separate documents.

In total there are 41 different guidance categories within the PPG, covering a variety of issues such as neighbourhood planning, planning appeals, environmental impact, and development viability. The PPG is intended to be a live resource and is actively managed by the DCLG so that any necessary updates will be made as and when they are required.

The PPG states under paragraph 30 ‘The National Planning Policy Framework sets out that local planning authorities should identify and update annually a supply of specific deliverable sites sufficient to provide five years’ worth of housing against their housing requirements. Therefore local planning authorities should have an identified five-year housing supply at all points during the plan period.’

Policy Assessment

The Council are currently unable to demonstrate a 5-year supply of housing land. In such circumstances policies relating to the delivery of housing cannot be considered up to date. In this situation, the presumption in favour of sustainable development set out in the NPPF means that permission for the development should be granted unless any adverse impact of so doing would demonstrably outweigh the benefits of specific policies in the Framework indicate that development should be restricted.

This position relating to the 5 year housing land supply has been confirmed by The Greater Norwich Growth Board has published its Annual Monitoring Report (AMR) on 1 December 2015. This acknowledges in Appendix A that the District Council cannot identify a 5 year housing land supply. Indeed, the summary of the appendix concludes the following:

‘Whilst a 5 year supply cannot be demonstrated, each authority within the NPA (Norwich Policy Area) will need to take a view on how to address the requirements of the NPPF when considering planning applications.’

The NPPF identifies three dimensions of sustainable development; economic, social and environmental that should be attributed weight in the decision making process.

The site is within the settlement boundary for the Parish, and adjoins the main built-up area and is close to other housing and services. Thorpe St Andrew is identified as a fringe parish in the JCS, and has a number of facilities which, whilst not adjacent to the application site would be accessible from the development. The proposal would therefore be consistent with the NPPF.

The proposal would also add to the range of housing available in the Parish. It would make a modest but positive contribution to the overall supply of housing and secure the redevelopment of a predominantly brownfield site. The removal of the existing livestock unit would have a significant beneficial effect on the appearance and environmental quality of the area and neighbouring residents.
Taking all of these facts into consideration, together with the significant shortfall of housing within the district as a whole, it is considered that the proposal is wholly consistent with the NPPF.

6 PRINCIPLE OF DEVELOPMENT

6.1 The purpose of this section is to provide a justification for the proposed development within the policy context of the Development Plan and the material considerations of the NPPF. The key considerations of this application are:

   i) the principle of residential development in this location;
   ii) housing land supply and deliverability;
   iii) the effect of the development on the character of the surrounding area and its relationship to adjoining uses;
   iv) the provision of a mix of residential unit sizes;

   i) The principle of residential development in this location

6.2 The application site comprises a working livestock farm that is adjacent to existing residential development and a short distance from services and facilities within the fringe parish of Thorpe St Andrew.

6.3 The NPPF seeks to promote sustainable development by locating housing where it will enhance or maintain the vitality of communities. The location of the site in proximity of services within Thorpe St Andrew would constitute sustainable development that would help maintain the vitality of the community. The proposal, therefore, accords with paragraphs 14, 49 and 50 of the NPPF.

6.4 The scheme has the same level of accessibility to local services as the properties located within the existing settlement surrounding the site and, therefore, the location must be considered sustainable.

ii) Housing Supply and deliverability

6.5 The need to plan for, and provide adequate land for, housing is underpinned by the Government’s strategic housing policy objectives. It is, therefore, a policy requirement and an important material consideration in the determination of this application.

6.6 Paragraph 7 of the NPPF identifies the supply of housing as the key component of the social role of sustainable development as follows:

   ‘A social role - supporting strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by providing the supply of housing required to meet the needs of present and future generations....’

6.7 Paragraph 47 of the NPPF states that ‘to boost significantly the supply of housing local planning authorities should’ (in summary)

   - Ensure that their local plan meets the full, objectively assessed needs for market and affordable housing.
   - Identify key sites which are critical to the delivery of the housing strategy over the plan period.
   - Identify and update annually a supply of specific deliverable sites sufficient to provide five-year’s worth of housing against their housing requirements with an
additional buffer of 5% (moved forward from later in the plan period) to ensure choice and competition in the market for land.

- Where there has been a record of persistent under delivery of housing, local planning authorities should increase the buffer to 20% (moved forward from later in the plan period).
- Illustrate the expected rate of housing delivery through a housing trajectory for the plan period and a housing implementation strategy describing how they will maintain delivery of a five-year supply of housing land to meet their housing target.

6.8 NPPF paragraph 49 states ‘Relevant policies for the supply of housing should not be considered up-to-date if the local planning authority cannot demonstrate a five-year supply of deliverable housing sites’.

6.9 The GNDB report confirms that, based on current estimations, the Council cannot demonstrate a 5-year supply of deliverable housing sites. The NPPF advises that where a LPA cannot demonstrate an up-to-date five-year supply of deliverable sites, they should favourably consider applications for housing.

6.10 Given the Council’s existing shortfall in delivering housing land, the site provides an opportunity, in a modest way, to assist in delivering much needed housing. The site is within a built-up area and is on the edge of an existing housing area. It has no specific designation within any of the Councils existing or emerging plans and can be considered a ‘windfall’ site.

6.11 The application site is in accordance with national and local plan policies when taken as a whole, is available for development, offers a suitable location for the re-use of a previously developed site, and will contribute to the enhancement of a sustainable rural community.

   iii) The effect of the development on the character of the surrounding area and neighbouring properties

6.12 The application site is currently in use as a livestock unit. This use results in a potentially significant level of noise and smell, both of which have a negative impact on the amenity of neighbouring residential properties. In this context the proposed development will bring about a positive enhancement to the environmental quality and character of the surrounding area.

6.13 The site lies between the residential properties to the west and the Social Club and immediately opposite residential dwelling located on the northern side of Chequers Lane. The proposed development would be seen as an infill site and form an integral part of this predominantly residential area.

6.14 The proposed scheme would be acceptable in terms of its character and appearance. It will complement and enhance the character of the surrounding area whilst ensuring that there will be no adverse impact on the neighbouring residential properties. The Design and Access Statement explains in detail the design strategy for the proposed development and demonstrates that a high standard of design will be achieved on site.

6.15 The overall result is a planning application that will provide positive benefits through the change of use of the site, delivering a high quality residential scheme on a sustainably located site within an existing residential neighbourhood. The proposed scheme will bring about the delivery of much needed homes in the area.
6.16 The scheme which comprises of 4 residential units will provide a mix of accommodation ranging from three-bedrooms to four bedrooms as a response to planning policy guidance, market demand and the context of the site.

7 SITE SPECIFIC ISSUES

Transport

7.1 A Transport Statement has been commissioned from Create Consulting which identifies the following:

- The access point is provided with appropriate levels of visibility.
- A wide range of local services and facilities are within readily achievable walking, cycling or by using public transport.
- The proposed residential development is unlikely to result in any significant increases in traffic and would remove farm vehicles from accessing the site.
- There are no prevailing safety (or capacity) issues on the local section of Yarmouth Road.

7.2 In addition, the District Council have obtained the comments on the earlier pre-submission proposals which are attached to this report as Appendix 2. These officers informal opinion confirms that whilst there would be no objection to the proposed conversion of 4 dwellings, although an objection would be made if a further dwelling was proposed at the rear of the site.

Ecology

7.3 A preliminary Ecological Appraisal has been commissioned from The Ecology Consultancy which makes the following recommendations:

- The planting of new hedgerows, if required, should comprise mixed native hedging species. It is recommended that the hedgerow should contain a diverse mix of native hedgerow species including approximately 60% hawthorn with the remaining 40% comprising a mix of hazel corlylus avellana, field maple, wild privet Ligustrum vulgare, crab apple Malus sylvestris and common dogwood Cornus sanguinea.
- Installation of bird boxes on the new buildings. It is recommended that a selection of boxes are installed including a variety of standard hole fronted and open fronted boxes for small birds.
- Installation of integrated common swift boxes into the new buildings. Provision of swift boxes into the building structure can lead to tangible benefits for swifts which are internationally declining species and an amber-listed bird of conservation concern. This is primarily due to the loss of traditional nesting locations in buildings resulting from changes in the design of new housing and retrofitting of exclusion devices on older homes.
- Bat tubes may be incorporated into the converted buildings to increase the number of roosting opportunities on the site. Once in place, tubes should not require any maintenance and any bats that begin roosting within the tubes will not have access to any other part of the building and will therefore be ‘contained’ in a discrete area. Likewise woodcrete bat boxes such as Schwagler 2F or 1FF could be erected on trees and buildings around the site to provide a range of roosting opportunities for bats. Such features, whether on trees or buildings, should be positioned at a height of 4m or more, away from sources of high-intensity lighting (e.g. security lighting) and will benefit a range of species including common and soprano pipistrelles, the latter
of which is a priority UK BAP species as well as being the subject of local (Norfolk) Biodiversity Action Plan (Norfolk County Council 2009).

7.4 It recommends that further bat and Owl inspections are made prior to development on the site. A copy of this report is attached as Appendix 3.

8 CONCLUSION

8.1 This application seeks full planning permission to convert an existing barn complex to four residential units at West Farm, Yarmouth Road, Thorpe St Andrew.

8.2 The application is in a sustainable location adjacent to an existing settlement. Services and facilities within 400 metres to the west of the site and within readily achievable walking and cycling distances according to the Chartered Institution of Highways and Transportation’s guidance. Bus services to higher order services are also accessible within walking distance. The site is not within an environmentally sensitive location where the NPPF would require development to be restricted. The District Council have also confirmed that the proposed development does not require an Environmental Impact Assessment.

8.3 The site is located within the settlement limits of a Fringe parish identified in the JCS as a location where new development can be accommodated.

8.4 The proposed development will deliver clear benefits including the following:

- Delivery of market housing to contribute towards the much needed delivery of housing in the area.
- The proposal will re-use and partially extend existing buildings to a viable use for the future.
- Delivery of affordable housing in line with Core Strategy policy to help meet the significant under provision in affordable housing.
- Support to local shops and services. Both national and local planning policies seek to retain and enhance the provision of local services in this part of the District. The new residents from the development will help to support the viability of local services in Rackheath and, therefore, aid their continued provision.
- The proposed development will assist in the delivery of New Homes Bonus over 6 years which Broadland District Council and Norfolk County Council can use locally.

8.5 Paragraph 14 of the NPPF requires this proposal to be approved unless significant and demonstrable impacts exist to outweigh the benefits of the proposal. The technical reports which support this application demonstrate that there are no such impacts. The proposals also comply with relevant sections of the emerging Area Action Plan.

8.6 It is, therefore, considered that the proposal represents sustainable development and as such it should be approved without delay, in accordance with the existing Development Plan and the policies contained in the NPPF.