



Historic Environment
Consultancy.
HERITAGE AND ARCHAEOLOGY

13 CHURCH LANE, MORCOTT,
LEICESTERSHIRE

HERITAGE IMPACT ASSESSMENT

AUGUST 2017

MR. & MRS FERRY OF
SUNDIAL HOUSE

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A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "H. Martin-Bacon". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'H'.

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SUMMARY

Commercial Archaeology Ltd (CAL) has been commissioned by Mr. and Mrs Ferry of Sundial House, Morcott to undertake a Heritage Impact Assessment to challenge a planning application for the demolition of an existing cottage and the construction of a new contemporary style dwelling located on a plot of land to the rear of properties on Church Lane, in the village of Morcott, Leicestershire. The application site (APS) is surrounded to the east, south and southwest by a number of grade II listed buildings, is near to the grade I listed Norman Church and falls within the Morcott Conservation Area (NGR SK 92462 00858).

The core of the village and modern road layout reflect the origins of Morcott in the early medieval period with a nucleated village form characterised by a main street joined by side lanes. The existing character of the village is for the most part defined by the vernacular nature of the buildings which utilise predominately cream-coloured limestone, occasional red brick and pitched roofs covered with Collyweston stone tiles or Welsh blue slate or clay pantiles.

The focus of this report is to assess the impacts of the proposed new dwelling at 13 Church Lane upon surrounding listed buildings, including the contribution of setting to their significance and in addition, any impacts upon the character of the conservation area itself.

The proposed scheme involves the demolition of an existing single storey cottage dating to the 1920s and the creation of a new contemporary dwelling with a much larger footprint than the existing cottage, but with a lower profile within the landscape.

The proposed new dwelling will incorporate a mixture of vertical stone-walling with a flat parapet, timber cladding and curtain wall glass facing towards the north. The roof will have a flat profile which projects beyond the footprint of the internal structure to form a secondary walkway. It is proposed to incorporate roof-lights and vegetation to create a living 'green roof'. Access will be along an existing L-shaped track from Church Lane.

This Heritage Impact Assessment has concluded that the proposed development of the plot of land at 13 Church Lane will cause substantial harm to the immediate settings of the



listed buildings that surround the site to the south, east and southwest. It will also detract from the wider setting of the Morcott Conservation Area when viewed from the north and northwest and therefore cause substantial harm.

It is also the contention of this report that the adoption of a contemporary style of architecture in this location within the village will result in a starkly incongruous contrast with the historic buildings that define the special architectural and historic interest of the conservation area.

It is also the case that the APS is located within the historic core of Morcott and therefore has the potential to contain archaeological remains of likely medieval date associated with back-plot activities undertaken to the rear of the houses which fronted the street. As the new dwelling will require excavation into the natural bedrock there would be a harmful impact on any in-situ archaeological remains which exist within the footprint of the proposed new dwelling. The impact from construction activities associated with the new dwelling on buried archaeological remains appears not to have been assessed as part of the application for redeveloping 13 Church Lane and it is recommended in this report that a desk-based assessment and/or archaeological evaluation is undertaken to inform the planning application.

The report has been prepared in accordance with all the relevant standards and guidelines laid down by the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA), Historic England (HE) and with planning guidance published by Rutland County Council.



1. INTRODUCTION

Background to the project

Commercial Archaeology Ltd (CAL) has been commissioned by the residents of Sundial House, Church Lane, to prepare a Heritage Impact Assessment relating to a proposed new contemporary-style dwelling located on a plot of land (NGR SK 92462 00858) to the rear of properties fronting onto Church Lane in the picturesque village of Morcott in Leicestershire.

The application (2017/0419/FUL) was recommended for approval by Rutland County Council but an objection to the decision has been submitted by the residents of Sundial House, in addition to other residents of the village, on the basis that the new dwelling will be harmful to the setting of Sundial House (grade II listed) and its grounds, given its proposed size and inappropriate contemporary design and will have unacceptable impacts on other nearby listed buildings and on the special architectural and historic interest of the Morcott Conservation Area.

The application was recommended for approval by Rutland County Council without the submission from the applicant of a Heritage Impact Assessment to inform upon the effects of the proposed new dwelling on either nearby listed buildings including their settings or on the Morcott Conservation Area. Similarly, no desk-based assessment and/or archaeological evaluation has been undertaken to inform upon the potential for buried archaeological remains being present within the APS.

This report addresses the impacts of the proposed development upon surrounding listed buildings, their settings and upon the conservation area itself. The report also assesses the impact of construction activities associated with the proposed new dwelling on potential buried archaeological remains.

The APS currently contains a bungalow which will be demolished to make way for the proposed new dwelling which will be contemporary in design with a low profile, a flat 'green' roof and with a built fabric comprising a mixture of stone, timber and glass walling. The



existing cottage has a footprint of c.78m² whilst the new structure will be over three times as large covering an area of c.240m².

The parcel of land which constitutes the APS is set back from Church Lane and may have been either a former strip field or back-plot area during the medieval period. The APS falls within the Morcott Conservation Area which was designated in March 1981.

Purpose of a Heritage Impact Assessment

The purpose of a Heritage Impact Assessment is to understand the significance of heritage assets and any contribution made to that significance from their settings. The impact of any proposed development on their significance is also evaluated.

Terminology

This Heritage Impact Assessment has been compiled using the following standard terminology:

Conservation Area - an area of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance. The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires every local planning authority to identify areas of special architectural or historic interest to designate as conservation areas.

Listed Building - a building, object or structure considered to be of special architectural and historic interest. Listings comprise Grades I and II* for the most exceptionally important buildings and Grade II for those considered of special interest. Buildings can also be locally listed which means that their conservation as heritage assets is an objective of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and a material consideration when determining the outcome of a planning application.

Designation - this recognises the significance of a heritage asset and increases its status of protection within the planning process. Designated assets can be statutorily protected as in the case of listed buildings and scheduled monuments or non- statutorily protected as is the case with registered parks and gardens and conservation areas.



Heritage Asset - this term refers to buildings, sites, places, monuments and landscapes which have been recognised as having a level of heritage significance which makes them a material consideration in the planning process.

Historic Environment Record (HER) - a repository which stores data on heritage assets within a defined geographical area.

Significance - the value of a heritage asset to this and future generations based upon its heritage interest which may be archaeological, architectural, aesthetic or historic.

Setting - the surroundings in which a heritage asset is experienced. The extent is not fixed and will vary according to the historic character of the asset and the development of its surrounding. Setting itself is not a heritage asset nor a heritage designation. Its importance lies in what it contributes to the significance of the heritage asset (HE, GPA 3 2015).



2. PLANNING BACKGROUND

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

Government policy relating to the conservation of the historic environment is set out in Section 12 of the NPPF entitled *Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment* (DCLG 2012). Sites of archaeological or heritage significance which are material considerations within the planning system are known collectively as *heritage assets*.

The NPPF acknowledges that heritage assets are a finite and irreplaceable resource and that their conservation can bring wider social, cultural, economic and environmental benefits and overall seeks the delivery of sustainable development in addition to the conservation of England's heritage assets in a manner appropriate to their significance.

NPPF states in relation to proposed development:

In determining applications, local planning authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting. The level of detail should be proportionate to the asset's importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance (Section 12 paragraph 128).

Paragraph 129 states that:

Local planning authorities should identify and assess the particular significance of any heritage asset that may be affected by a proposal (including by development affecting the setting of a heritage asset) taking account of the available evidence and any necessary expertise. They should take this assessment into account when considering the impact of a proposal on a heritage asset, to avoid or minimise conflict between the heritage asset's conservation and any aspect of the proposal.

In the NPPF designated heritage assets are distinguished from assets of lesser significance:



When considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation. The more important the asset, the greater the weight should be. Significance can be harmed or lost through alteration or destruction of the heritage asset or development within its setting. As heritage assets are irreplaceable, any harm or loss should require clear and convincing justification. Substantial harm to or loss of a grade II listed building, park or garden should be exceptional. Substantial harm or loss of designated heritage assets of the highest significance, notably scheduled monuments, protected wreck sites, battlefields, grade I and II listed buildings, grade I and II* registered parks and gardens and World Heritage Sites, should be wholly exceptional (Paragraph 132).*

Paragraph 134 states that:

Where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal, including its optimum viable use.

In terms of new development Paragraph 137 makes clear that:

Local planning authorities should look for opportunities for new development within Conservation Areas and World Heritage Sites and within the setting of heritage assets to enhance or better reveal their significance. Proposals that preserve those elements of the setting that make a positive contribution to or better reveal the significance of the asset should be treated favourably.

With regard to non-designated heritage assets NPPF states:

The effect of an application on the significance of a non-designated heritage asset should be taken into account in determining the application. In weighing applications that affect directly or indirectly non-designated heritage assets, a balanced judgement will be required having regard to the scale of harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset (Section 12 paragraph 135).



It is acknowledged that non-designated sites will normally be preserved through excavation and recording in accordance with their significance and the extent of the harm to their significance from the proposals. NPPF states that this is to:

Avoid or minimise conflict between the heritage asset's conservation and any aspects of the proposals (Section 12 paragraph 129).

Non-designated heritage assets of archaeological interest will also be subject to the policies reserved for designated heritage assets if they are of equivalent significance to scheduled monuments (Section 12 paragraph 132).

Paragraph 128 states with regard to archaeological remains:

Where a site on which development is proposed includes or has the potential to include heritage assets with archaeological interest, local planning authorities should require developers to submit an appropriate desk-based assessment, and where necessary, a field evaluation.

Planning Practice Guidance (PPG)

Advice on enhancing and conserving the historic environment is also published in the PPG which provides guidance on how the historic environment should be assessed within NPPF (DCLG 2014). This document states that:

The appropriate conservation of heritage assets forms one of the Core Planning Principles that underpin the planning system... and ...planning decisions should conserve heritage assets in a manner appropriate to their significance, so that they can be enjoyed for their contribution to the quality of life of this and future generations.

The main factor in the NPPF paragraphs 132-134 is whether a proposed development will result in substantial harm or less than substantial harm. Whilst these are not defined in the NPPF the PPG provides guidance:



What matters in assessing if a proposal causes substantial harm is the impact on the significance of the heritage asset. As the NPPF makes clear, significance derives not only from a heritage asset's physical presence, but also from its setting. Whether a proposal causes substantial harm will be a judgment for the decision taker, having regard to the circumstances of the case and the policy in the NPPF. In general terms, substantial harm is a high test, so it may not arise in many cases. For example, in determining whether works to a listed building constitute substantial harm, an important consideration would be whether the adverse impact seriously affects a key element of its special architectural or historic interest. It is the degree of harm to the asset's significance rather than the scale of the development that is to be assessed (Paragraph 017).

The PPG also provides guidance for the interpretation of less than substantial harm where the harm arising should be weighed against the public benefits of the development:

Public benefits may follow from many developments and could be anything that delivers economic, social or environmental progress as described in NPPF (Paragraph 7). Public benefits should flow from the proposed development. They should be of a nature or scale to be of benefit to the public at large and should not just be a private benefit. However, benefits do not always have to be visible or accessible to the public in order to be genuine public benefits.

The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990

The Listed Buildings Act sets out the general duty as regards the exercise of planning functions within a conservation area and the relationship of the site to any listed building and places upon Local Planning Authorities a duty to protect and enhance historic assets and their settings.

....special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area (section 72).

In considering whether to grant planning permission for development which affects a listed building or its setting, the local planning authority, or as the case may be, the Secretary of



State shall have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses (section 66).

Local Planning Policy

The Rutland Local Development Framework, Core Strategy DPD (adopted 2011) contains a section on the historic and cultural environment. This document recognises that Rutland has a rich built and historic environment with many attractive stone-built villages which provide a distinctive local character to the area (para. 5.15).

The aims of the Council set out in this document are to implement measures to protect and enhance the historic environment of Rutland in order to preserve its local character which contributes to a strong sense of place and quality of life. These measures may include:

- the preparation of a list of buildings and features of local architectural or historic importance;
- the production of conservation area management plans to identify and explain how the special interest of such areas will be preserved and enhanced;
- actions to ensure the proper conservation of all heritage features that are at risk;
- the maintenance and repair of heritage assets, and
- the introduction of tighter controls within conservation areas and other sites or areas of heritage importance by implementing Article 4 (2) Directions to control certain types of permitted development which, if unchecked would cause harm to the special character and appearance of such areas (para. 5.16)

Policy CS22 states:

The quality and character of the built and historic environment of Rutland will be conserved and enhanced.

Particular protection will be given to the character and special features of:

- a. *listed buildings and features;*
- b. *conservation areas;*
- c. *scheduled ancient monuments;*



- d. *historic parks and gardens;*
- e. *known and potential archaeological sites.*

All developments, projects and activities will be expected to protect and where possible enhance historic assets and their settings, maintain local distinctiveness and the character of identified features.

Development should respect the historic landscape character and contribute to its conservation, enhancement or restoration, or the creation of appropriate new features.

The Rutland Development Plan Document (Site Allocations and Policies 2014) also contains policies which are intended to protect, conserve and enhance the historic environment and heritage assets and to ensure that the character and appearance of the district's conservation areas are sustained and enhanced through management plans and high quality

Policy SP20 - The historic environment states:

All developments, projects and activities will be expected to protect and where possible enhance historic assets and their settings, maintain local distinctiveness and the character of identified features in accordance with Core Strategy Policy CS22.

Development proposals affecting or likely to affect any heritage asset or its setting will be expected to demonstrate an understanding of the significance of the asset and/or its setting by describing it in sufficient detail to determine its historic, archaeological or architectural interest to a level proportionate with its importance.

The policy contains sections reserved specifically for designated heritage assets:

a Conservation Areas.

Particularly relevant to the subject of this report is the following commitment:

Development in conservation areas will only be acceptable where the scale, form, siting and design of the development and the materials proposed would preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the area.



Favourable consideration will be given to a new development in conservation areas that preserves the elements of its setting that make a positive contribution to better reveal the significance of the asset.

b Listed Buildings

The Council will require the protection of listed buildings and seek to ensure that they are kept in a good state of repair.... The Council will also protect the setting of listed buildings where proposals could have an impact....

c Non-designated heritage assets

Development that has the potential to affect a non-designated heritage asset will be considered having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the particular significance of the heritage asset and its setting.

The policy makes specific mention of archaeological remains:

Where a development has the potential to affect heritage assets with archaeological interest, the applicant will be required to submit an appropriate desk-based assessment and where necessary a field evaluation.

Proposals for development on areas that are of known or suspected archaeological interest must be accompanied by an archaeological field evaluation that determines the significance of the archaeological remains and assesses the implications of the development on those remains.



3. METHODOLOGY

Introduction

All work undertaken in the preparation of this report is consistent with the guidance set out in Historic England's publication *Managing Significance in Decision-Taking in the Historic Environment* (HE2015a). Importantly this document provides assistance in the interpretation and implementation of the NPPF and PPG and provides crucial guidance on how to assess the potential effects of a proposed development on a heritage asset. There are six main guidance points:

- To understand the significance of the affected assets;
- To understand the impact of the proposal on that significance;
- To avoid, minimise and mitigate impact in a way that meets the objectives of NPPF;
- To look for opportunities to better reveal or enhance significance;
- To justify any harmful impacts in terms of the sustainable development aim of conserving significance and the need for change, and
- To offset negative impacts on aspects of significance by enhancing others through recording, disseminating and archiving the archaeological and historical interest of the heritage assets affected.

Specific approaches used in this report to assess the effects on archaeology and designated heritage assets from the proposed demolition of the existing dwelling at 13 Church Lane and the construction of a contemporary style replacement dwelling are described below.

Archaeology

Documentary Sources

The potential impacts of the proposed annexe on any buried archaeological remains have been assessed in accordance with guidelines in *Standards and Guidance for Historic Desk-Based Assessment* issued by the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA 2014). The information presented in the report has been obtained from desk-based research and a site visit.



A number of relevant online sources have also been consulted including:

- the Archaeology Data Service (<http://archaeologydataservice.ac.uk/ifp/wiki/pdf>);
- the National Heritage List (<http://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list>);
- PastScape (<http://pastscape.org.uk>).

Impact Assessment of Designated and Non-Designated Heritage Assets

The Morcott Conservation Area and the listed buildings it contains are all regarded as designated heritage assets. In accordance with Paragraph 132 of the NPPF and with the PPG the impact of the proposed new dwelling on those designated heritage assets and their settings will be considered with reference to the NPPF criteria of *less than substantial harm* or *substantial harm*. These criteria will be used in relation to assessing the degree of harm to an asset's significance (and that of its setting) and not to the scale of the development.

Similarly, the effect of the development on the significance of any non-designated heritage assets will be considered in the same way but in accordance with NPPF and the PPG a judgement will be made regarding the scale of harm or loss to the significance of the non-designated heritage asset balanced against any public benefits (Section 12 paragraph 135).

The assessment of impacts in this report will also be carried out with reference to the guidance set out in *Historic Environment Good Practice Advice Note 3: The Setting of Heritage Assets* (HE 2015b).

The Morcott Conservation Area and Listed Buildings

The Morcott Conservation Area contains a number of listed buildings and structures. However, only those listed buildings which are within the vicinity of the proposed new dwelling and which are judged to be possible receptors of impacts will be discussed in this report. Comprehensive descriptions of the listed and locally listed buildings within the conservation area as a whole can be found in the *Morcott Conservation Area Assessment* (RCC 2014).

In addition, this report will contain a summarised version of the history, development, special architectural and historic significance and layout of the conservation area set out in the Morcott Conservation Area Appraisal (RCC 2014).



Reporting

A copy of the Heritage Impact Assessment will be deposited with the Leicestershire Historic Environment Record for public viewing.



4. BACKGROUND TO THE SITE

Location, Topography and Geology

Morcott is situated in Leicestershire in the East Midlands. It is located 0.5km to the north of the A47, approximately 25m to the east of Leicester and 10km to the southwest of Stamford. The village lies on the south side of a shallow valley in undulating open countryside, approximately 75m aOD on the north facing slope of a tributary of the River Chater. The land slopes gently from west to east along High Street and from south to north towards the tributary. The village is located in a landscape character type described in the Rutland Landscape Character Assessment as *High Rutland - Ridges and Valleys*. The parish of Morcott covers an area of 1,363 acres of land.

The APS (centred on NGR SK 92462 00858) comprises an approximate 0.4ha parcel of land located to the northwest of Church Lane. The site is an elongated rectilinear plot with stone boundary walls and is bounded to the east, south and southwest by residential properties and to the west by a large paddock. The existing dwelling, which is to be demolished, is situated in the southern part of the APS at a height of approximately 65m aOD.

The APS is situated on solid geology of the Northampton Sand Formation - Ironstone, Ooidal - a sedimentary bedrock formed approximately 172 to 17 million years ago in the Jurassic Period. The local environment would have been dominated by shallow seas. No superficial geology is recorded. (<http://mapapps.bgs.ac.uk/geologyofbritain/home.html>)

Historic and Archaeological Background to the Site

The village has its origins in the Saxon period and the name Morcott is derived from the Old English *a cottage on the moor*. At the time of the Domesday Survey (1086) the village of *Morcote* formed part of the king's manor of Barrowden, and documentary evidence reveals that the village served the manorial interests of several different families during the 12th and 13th centuries (RCC, 2014). Morcott remained part of the manor of Barrowden during the medieval period.

During the post-medieval period Morcott again passed through the ownership of various families and by the 19th century had passed to the Fydell Rowley family.



The village plan along with its street pattern reflect the village's Saxon and medieval origins with the historic core consisting of a main street with an ancillary back service lane and the church of St. Mary's forming a focus around which the village developed. The Church of St. Mary is a defining landmark within the village and is regarded as the most complete Norman church in Rutland, the earliest surviving parts of the church, the nave and the chancel, dating from 1150. It is likely, however that the church stands on the site of a much earlier place of worship perhaps originating as a church during the Saxon period and its location on a raised area of ground within the village may contain archaeological evidence which provides testament to its earlier origins.

The core of the village also contains several buildings of historic interest including the Priest's House (now Sundial House), Morcott Hall and the Manor House. These buildings date back to the 17th and early 18th centuries and were clearly high status dwellings as shown by their construction in imported Barnack stone rather than the local limestone. (ibid). This reflects a level of prosperity in the village during this period.

The High Street was an important east to west route of some antiquity with five inns before the main road to the south was improved as a turnpike road at the end of the 18th century.

The stock of stone built farmhouses and cottages dating to the 18th and 19th centuries not only reflect the historic agricultural origins of the village but also indicate that during these centuries Morcott shared in the national economic growth of the country driven not only by the increased demand of a growing population but also by the technological advances in agriculture which marked the period including crop rotation and intensified sheep farming.

It was during the 18th and 19th centuries that the distinctive local character of Morcott was formed with house types sharing the common features of simple design in limestone with steep pitched roofs. This suggests that the village was inhabited by a large proportion of yeoman freeholders and wealthy tenant farmers working the village's common fields which survived as late 1835 when they were finally all enclosed (ibid).

The Fydell Rowleys of Morcott Hall remained a prominent family in local affairs into the 20th century though the Hall was converted into a school in the 1940s. They funded the local



school and paid for a road to the site of the railway which opened in 1898 on the branch line from Rugby to Stamford. Whilst the railway was locally popular as the main public transport to nearby towns it never had a significant effect on the development of the village and finally closed in 1966 (ibid).

The population peaked in the mid 19th century but subsequently declined into the 20th century and has remained fairly static over the past 50 years (ibid).

Cartographic evidence shows that the physical extent of the village has changed very little since the late 19th century apart from some limited demolition in the 20th century at the eastern end of the High Street and new housing beyond the former railway line, together with a small amount of infill development.

Special Architectural and Historic Character of the Morcott Conservation Area.

Lack of development during the post-medieval and modern periods has contributed to the preservation of the village's distinctive compact form with a settlement pattern which clearly reflects the nucleated layout of the original Saxon and medieval settlement.

The Morcott Conservation Area Character Appraisal makes the following observations:

Morcott is characterised by the predominant use of a limited range of building materials which give a uniformity of appearance. In order to retain the character and appearance of the village, it is important that appropriate materials are used for repairs or new development.

The predominant use of cream-coloured limestone for houses and boundary walls is a defining feature of the village: this has often been weathered to grey....Farmhouses and smaller cottages are usually built of coursed rubble, although smaller cottages may have no coursing at all. Cut ashlar stone is a feature of higher status buildings, such as Morcott Hall. Quoins are usually of harder cut limestone, more durable than the coursed rubble walling.



Roofs are traditionally simple in form gabled rather than hipped with the most important roofing materials being Collyweston stone slate and Welsh slate. Chimney stacks, sometimes brick due to it being more durable than stone, are important features and create roofline interest. Buildings of higher status tend to have the stack on the gable end to reflect the plan form, whilst cottages tend to have central stacks rising from a position to one side of the doorway, with later stacks on the gable end.

Timber is the traditional material for windows.... High status older buildings tend to have stone mullioned windows with metal casements; farmhouses and simple vernacular cottages usually had side-hung timber casements of painted softwood...Multi-pane sliding sash windows are seen in some late 18th and early 19th century buildings.

The appraisal has:

...identified how the setting, the relationship of buildings and the traditional proportions of the buildings contribute to Morcott's special character. In particular, the use of a limited range of traditional materials - limestone for walls, timber for windows and either Collyweston stone slate or Welsh slate for roofs- is important to the appearance of the village.

It is important that new development reflects the character and scale of buildings within the village.

The Proposal

The design of the proposed new scheme is entirely contemporary with a flat roof and the elevation to the north and west comprising a large element of glass. The building will be constructed of mainly natural Stamford stone with an element of cedar cladding and will have a green roof, comprising pre-grown mature sedums, designed with large overhangs offering shade. The building will be cut into the natural slope of the land and is intended to have its principal aspect facing away from the existing properties in this part of the village, looking towards the northwest (Appendix 1).



5. POTENTIAL IMPACTS ON THE SIGNIFICANCE OF BUILT HERITAGE ASSETS

As a result of desk-based research and a site visit the above ground receptors of potential impacts from the proposed new dwelling have been identified as the following:

- the Morcott Conservation Area and its setting;
- listed buildings, houses/structures and their settings, in close proximity to the proposed new dwelling;

Listed Buildings

The APS is a roughly rectangular plot of land situated at the edge of the village to the north of the church (Appendix 2). A small grey rendered bungalow is situated at the southern end of the site whilst the remainder of the site comprises lawn and mature trees and shrubs (Plate 1). The APS is accessed through a narrow entrance between numbers 11 and 17 Church Lane. The land slopes downwards towards the north in the direction of a tributary of the River Chater.

There are seven listed buildings/structures in the vicinity of the APS which have been identified as receptors of impacts from the proposed new dwelling due to their close proximity. They are:

- Sundial House and its garden walls- Grade II (NHLE: 1288040);
- 17 Church Lane - Grade II (NHLE: 1215551);
- 3 Pingle Lane - Grade II (NHLE: 1287995)
- 1 and 5 Church Lane - Grade II (NHLE:1288039);
- Barns to the rear of 1 and 5 Church Lane - Grade II (NHLE: 121550) and
- Wall to the churchyard - Grade II (NHLE: 1215548).

The proposed new dwelling will be prominent in the view from the rear of all of these listed buildings and structures and with its overtly contemporary design and enlarged footprint will have a detrimental impact on the setting of the nearby listed buildings and structures. In particular, current views of open countryside from the rear of Sundial House would be largely



blocked (Plates 2, 3, 4 and 5). The curtilage listed wall belonging to Sundial House and which forms the boundary between the APS and Sundial House will be entirely overshadowed and dominated given the dimensions and proximity of the proposed new dwelling. The current dwelling occupying the APS whilst of little heritage value still maintains a visual congruity with the surrounding buildings in that it is of limited size, has a pitched roof and a cottage-like appearance. It is, therefore, unobtrusive and blends into the current setting of the surrounding listed properties. In contrast, the proposed new dwelling, despite its low profile, will introduce an intrusive contemporary architectural style which will conflict with the distinctly traditional appearance of the listed buildings mentioned above and, in addition, will erode their historic back-plot setting.

It has therefore been judged that the proposed new dwelling would result in substantial harm to the setting of nearby listed buildings and structures, in particular Sundial House and its curtilage wall and this would constitute substantial harm to the way in which these buildings are currently experienced.

The Morcott Conservation Area

The Morcott Conservation Area is a small, compact settlement its special architectural and historic interest clearly defined by its rich stock of traditional stone built cottages and grander buildings which cluster along a network of narrow lanes, with buildings located directly along the frontages or set back behind stone walls. The Church of St. Mary, a grade I listed building, represents a landmark structure within the village signifying the heart of the Saxon and medieval settlement (Plate 9). The conservation area, which nestles into the undulating Rutland countryside, is overwhelmingly rural and vernacular in character.

The grain of the village has evolved slowly over time and this has left a distinctive organic legacy of gradual historic growth dating back to the village's earliest origins. Back-plot development around the fringes of the settlement has been very limited and historically mostly associated with ancillary/agricultural/horticultural activities. This has meant the preservation of views into the open countryside from a number of key locations within the village.



Construction of a large, contemporary-style dwelling in what has been traditionally marginal village land would constitute an unacceptable erosion of one of its defining historical characteristics.

In addition, distant views of the village and its church spire will be adversely impacted by the proposed new dwelling in particular at certain times of the year. When trees have shed their leaves the large glass windows along the northern elevation of the proposed new dwelling will be highly visible and in low winter sunlight will be very reflective (Plates 6, 7 and 8).

Given the limited size of the Morcott Conservation Area along with its prevalent historic, traditional appearance the proposed new development with its unashamedly contemporary style would be an incongruous addition to the village and would be totally at odds with the special architectural and historic qualities which led to its designation as a conservation area.

On the basis of the above it is predicted that the proposed new dwelling would constitute substantial harm to the conservation area and its setting.



6. POTENTIAL IMPACTS ON THE SIGNIFICANCE OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL HERITAGE ASSETS.

Given the location of the proposed new dwelling in proximity to the historic core of the village it is possible that the site contains buried archaeological remains potentially associated with the earliest phases of the village's settlement. In addition, the undeveloped nature of the APS would mean that any archaeological remains present are likely to be well-preserved.

Should archaeological remains be preserved within the footprint of the proposed new dwelling they would be disturbed/destroyed by any associated construction groundworks which would constitute substantial harm to the archaeological resource.

The substantial harm which the archaeological resource would incur as a result of construction activity could be mitigated by a programme of archaeological investigation being undertaken prior to that activity commencing. Archaeological investigation would serve to establish the presence or absence of archaeological remains and should they be present offer the opportunity for the archaeological resource to be preserved through excavation and recording.



7. CONCLUSION

The Morcott Village Plan (2013) expresses the views, needs and priorities of the village's population for the future and whilst recognising that change and development within the village cannot be halted the document presents a number of principles and guidelines regarding the scale, nature, pace and location of future development.

It states:

In line with the Proposed Limits of Development for Morcott in the Rutland County Council Local Plan, with the exception of ad-hoc, in-fill structures, development should be avoided within the conservation area boundary or in immediate proximity to it. The design and placement of any new buildings, particularly those visible from existing highways, footpaths and open space, should reflect the existing diversity within the village yet be sited and constructed in such a way and using such materials as to maintain a harmony with the existing structures.

In assessing the impact of new buildings:

...care should be taken to ensure that neighbouring buildings are treated with respect by any new structure i.e. they are not overshadowed, or dwarfed and they do not suffer any loss of privacy or amenity.

Morcott has many listed buildings, already subject to stringent development criteria. Particular care should be taken with any development adjacent to these to ensure that their features are not compromised by for example, starkly contrasting structures.

The Morcott Conservation Area Appraisal (RCC 2014) also contains a number of criteria for future development in its section on management proposals for the conservation area.

The previous sections have identified how the setting, the relationship of buildings and the traditional proportions of the buildings contribute to Morcott's special character.



This Heritage Impact Assessment concludes that the contemporary, blocked form of the proposed new dwelling would be entirely at odds with the criteria described in both documents above. In particular, the overwhelmingly traditional character of the listed buildings in proximity to the proposed new dwelling would suffer an unacceptable erosion of their traditional setting, especially in the case of Sundial House, and this, in turn, would cause substantial harm to appreciation of their heritage value and the contribution made to it by their setting.

In terms of the Morcott Conservation Area as a whole its compact size and its visual unity expressed in the village's stone-built vernacular architecture makes it unable to absorb such a starkly incongruous building as the proposed new dwelling within its confines.

In this case it has been judged that planning permission for the proposed new dwelling would not accord with the local planning authority's duty under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of conservation areas within their care.



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Plate 1: Detail of existing cottage at 13 Church Lane (to be demolished)



Plate 2: View from Sundial House; note new dwelling will be visible at end of garden



Plate 3: View of garden to rear of Sundial House



Plate 4: View looking southwest along eastern boundary wall of Sundial House to the development site



Plate 5: View from 1st floor of Sundial House with current building in APS visible



Plate 6: View from the northwest (approx. site of new building in yellow)



Plate 7: View from the north (approx. site of new building in yellow)



Plate 8: View from the northeast (approx. site of new building in yellow)



Plate 9: View looking southwest towards the Church, with Sundial House to the right.

APPENDIX 1



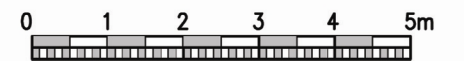
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Received 02 May 2017

Proposed Dwelling
13 Church Lane
Morcott, Rutland
For Vicky Johnson & Steve Jones

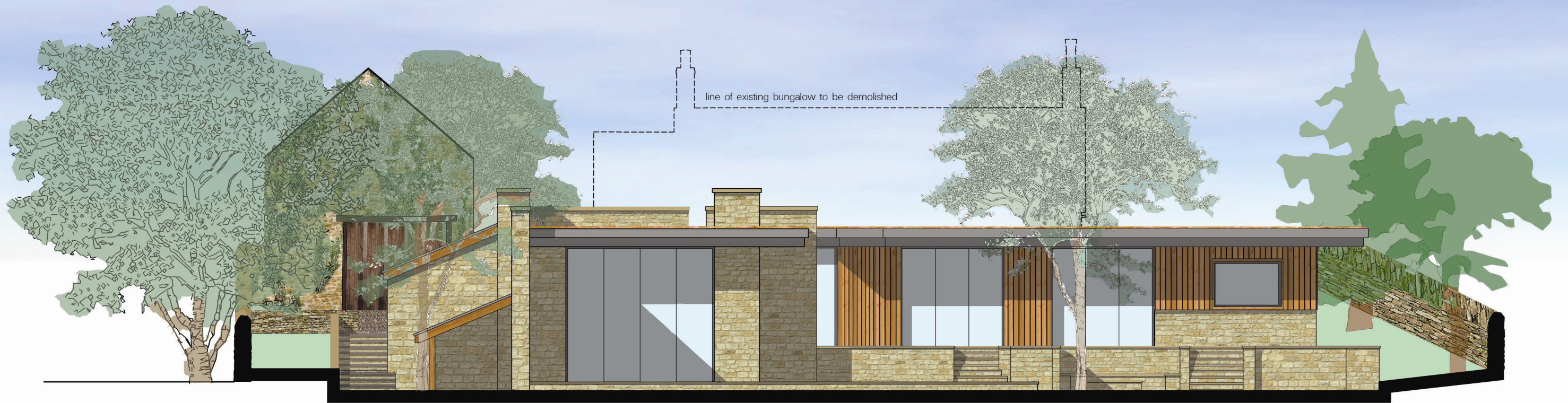
SCHEME DESIGN
- North West Elevation

1557/ 20
Scale 1:100 @ A3



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SCHEME DESIGN
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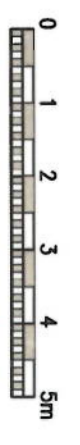
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SCHEME DESIGN
- South East Elevation

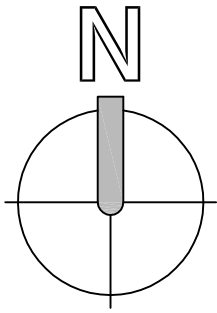
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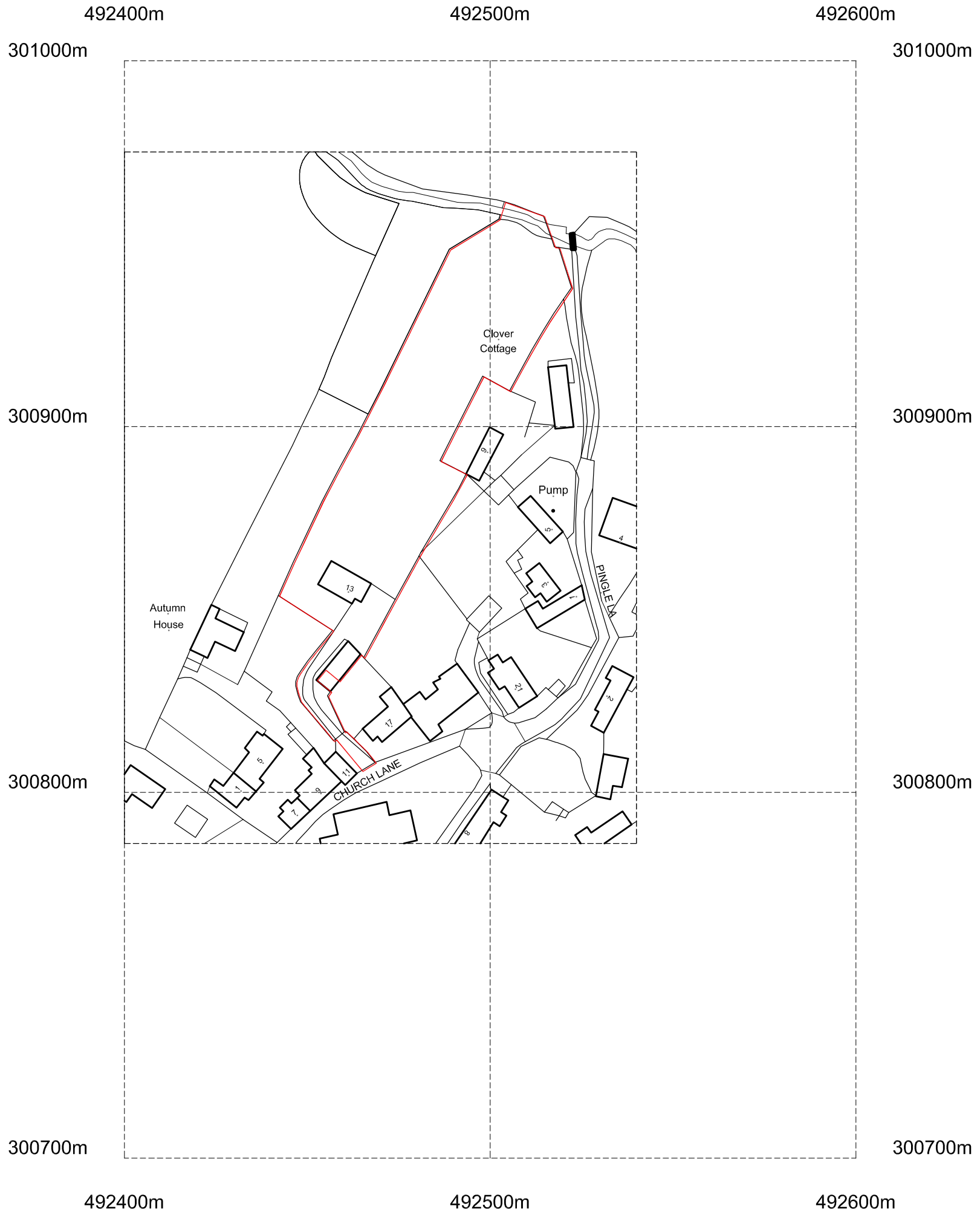


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APPENDIX 2



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Proposed Dwelling
13 Church Lane
Morcott, Rutland
For Vicky Johnson & Steve Jones

LOCATION PLAN

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HERITAGE SERVICES:

Constraints reports for land acquisition.
Desk-Based Assessments.
Heritage Impact Assessments.
Heritage Statements and Assessment of Significance.
Listed Building and Scheduled Monument Consents.
Historic Landscape Assessments.
Conservation Area Appraisals and Management Plans.
Historic Building Recording.
Setting Assessments.

ARCHAEOLOGICAL SERVICES:

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Preparation of Methodologies.
Scoping and negotiation with LPAs
Preparation of Mitigation Strategies.
Preparation of WSIs.
Full range of Fieldwork Services.
Consultancy and Advice.
Preparation of Risk Assessments.
PR & CSR/Public Outreach.

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