Design and Access Statement

Demolition of existing shop and erection of a three-bedroom bungalow

Applicant	Tulip Fields Homes Ltd
Site	Adjacent to Primrose Cottage, Church Gate, Whaplode, Spalding, PE12 6TA
Date	28 September 2026
Status	Planning submission

1. Introduction

This Design and Access Statement accompanies a fresh full planning application by Tulip Fields Homes Ltd for the demolition of the existing former shop on land adjacent to Primrose Cottage, Church Gate, Whaplode, and the erection of a three-bedroom single-storey bungalow with an attached single garage, associated access, parking, private amenity space, drainage and landscaping.

The application site measures approximately 365m² (0.0365ha). The submitted scheme is shown on TAC Architects drawing 26/699/PA/003 dated 28 September 2026. It is an alternative design to the bungalow granted planning permission under H23-0022-25 on 20 November 2025.

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The extant permission is an important and recent planning baseline. It establishes the acceptability in principle of demolishing the former shop, using the site for one dwelling, retaining the existing access arrangement and dealing with archaeology and drainage through the mitigation and controls identified by the Local Planning Authority and statutory consultees. The present application retains those central principles but proposes a different bungalow layout that makes more effective use of the plot.

2. Site context and planning history

The site lies within the defined settlement boundary of Whaplode, at the junction of Church Gate and Kirk Gate. Whaplode is identified as a Minor Service Centre in the South East Lincolnshire Local Plan 2011-2036 (SELLP). The surrounding area is predominantly residential and contains dwellings of varied ages, forms and architectural styles.

The site contains the former village shop/tearoom building and associated developed land. The building has been vacant for a considerable period and was described by the Council in the 2025 officer report as a small practical structure in a fair state of disrepair. The same report concluded that the former shop did not constitute a protected local community use for the purposes of SELLP Policy 32 and that its loss was acceptable.

Relevant planning history includes:

- H23-1066-04 - outline application for demolition of the former post office and garage and residential redevelopment - refused 30 September 2004;
- H23-1508-05 - change of use to general store and tea rooms with minor internal alterations - approved 16 December 2005; and
- H23-0022-25 - demolition of the existing shop and erection of a three-bedroom bungalow - approved 20 November 2025.

In determining H23-0022-25, the Council expressly accepted that the site is within the Whaplode settlement boundary, that residential redevelopment constitutes acceptable infill, and that reuse of the disused plot makes positive use of previously developed land. The Conservation Officer raised no objection, Lincolnshire County Council Highways and the Lead Local Flood Authority raised no objection subject to the access being brought to the County Council specification, and archaeological mitigation was secured by condition.

3. Planning policy context

Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires planning applications to be determined in accordance with the development plan unless

material considerations indicate otherwise. The statutory development plan includes the South East Lincolnshire Local Plan 2011-2036, adopted March 2019.

SELLP policies particularly relevant to this proposal include Policy 1 (Spatial Strategy), Policy 2 (Development Management), Policy 3 (Design of New Development), Policy 28 (The Natural Environment), Policy 29 (The Historic Environment), Policy 31 (Climate Change and Renewable and Low Carbon Energy), Policy 32 (Community, Health and Well-being), Policy 33 (Delivering a More Sustainable Transport Network), Policy 36 (Vehicle and Cycle Parking) and Appendix 6 parking standards.

The National Planning Policy Framework published on 17 August 2026 replaced the December 2024 Framework and is a material consideration of critical importance. The national decision-making policies most relevant to this application include S3 and S4 (the presumption in favour of sustainable development and the principle of development within settlements), L2 and L3 (effective use of land and appropriate densities), DP3 (key principles for well-designed places), TR4 and TR6 (access, parking and transport impacts), F4-F8 where flood-risk and drainage considerations are engaged, N2 (the natural environment) and HE4-HE6 (heritage assets and their setting).

Policy S4 provides that development proposals within settlements should be approved unless the benefits would be substantially outweighed by adverse effects when assessed against the national decision-making policies. Policy L2 requires substantial weight to be given to the benefits of making better use of vacant and underutilised land and buildings, expressly including redevelopment of underutilised retail and business sites. Policy L3 requires development to make efficient use of land, while DP3 requires the design response to integrate with and enhance its context.

4. Principle of development and effective use of land

The principle of a dwelling on this site is firmly established by the extant H23-0022-25 permission. The earlier officer report found the proposal to be acceptable infill within the Whaplode settlement boundary and concluded that the former shop represented previously developed land whose reuse for housing attracted significant positive weight.

The current proposal remains for one dwelling only. It does not alter the accepted residential principle, increase the number of dwellings or introduce a materially different access arrangement. Instead, it provides a more efficient bungalow layout on the same small site while retaining meaningful private amenity space and on-plot parking.

This approach accords with SELLP Policy 1 and with the stronger effective-use provisions of the August 2026 NPPF. In particular, the proposal brings an underused former commercial plot within a settlement into beneficial residential use and makes more efficient use of the available land without relying on additional height or upper-floor accommodation.

5. Amount, layout and scale

The proposal comprises one three-bedroom single-storey bungalow with an attached single garage. The accommodation includes an entrance hall, living and dining area, kitchen, bathroom, three bedrooms and an ensuite serving Bedroom 1. The garage is integrated with the dwelling rather than introduced as a separate curtilage building.

The footprint is larger than the approximately 83m² bungalow approved under H23-0022-25, but the proposal remains wholly single-storey. The resulting form makes substantially better functional use of the plot while avoiding the additional massing, overlooking and privacy considerations that could arise from first-floor accommodation.

The building has been positioned to retain a coherent relationship with Church Gate, provide a practical access and parking arrangement and create a useful area of private garden and amenity space. The layout also avoids crowding the irregular boundaries of the site and allows the dwelling to sit as a clear domestic building within the surrounding residential context.

6. Design and appearance

The architectural approach is intentionally restrained and domestic. The bungalow uses a simple pitched-roof form with a subordinate garage element and conventional window and door proportions. This is appropriate to the varied residential character identified by the Council in its previous assessment and ensures that the building reads as a natural addition to the established built form rather than as an overly assertive feature at the junction.

The proposed external materials are:

- Vandersanden Flemish Antique facing brickwork;
- grey concrete roof tiles;
- cream uPVC windows and external doors; and
- cream fascias and soffits.

The palette is deliberately restrained and traditional, reflecting the rural village setting without resorting to pastiche. The variegated Vandersanden Flemish Antique facing

brickwork will provide warmth and texture, while the grey concrete roof tiles create a simple and recessive roof plane. Cream uPVC windows and external doors, together with cream fascias and soffits, provide consistent light-coloured detailing. The scheme therefore accords with SELLP Policies 2 and 3 and NPPF Policy DP3.

7. Residential amenity

The closest neighbouring dwelling is Viray, adjoining the site to the north-west. The proposed bungalow is single-storey, which materially limits the potential for overlooking or an overbearing relationship. There are no first-floor windows or elevated external spaces, and normal boundary treatments will screen ground-floor views in the same manner as accepted for the previous bungalow.

The revised siting retains usable separation and private amenity space within the application site. The normal domestic use of one bungalow would not introduce an unacceptable level of noise, activity or disturbance beyond that already accepted through the extant permission. The proposal is therefore considered to maintain an acceptable standard of amenity for both future occupiers and neighbouring residents in accordance with SELLP Policies 2 and 3, NPPF L2 and DP3.

8. Access, parking and accessibility

Vehicular access remains from Church Gate using the established access arrangement. This principle was considered by Lincolnshire County Council Highways and the Lead Local Flood Authority under H23-0022-25, when no objection was raised subject to the unbound access being brought up to the County Council specification. The present proposal does not increase the number of dwellings or create a materially different pattern of vehicle movements.

SELLP Policy 36 and Appendix 6 require a minimum of two vehicle spaces for a dwelling of up to three bedrooms. The submitted layout provides an attached garage with internal dimensions of approximately 3.0m by 6.0m together with driveway/forecourt parking, providing at least two on-plot vehicle spaces. Secure cycle storage can be accommodated separately within the residential curtilage, so the garage is not relied upon for combined vehicle-and-cycle storage.

The parking and access arrangement is integral to the layout rather than dominating the street frontage. Provision for electric vehicle charging can be incorporated in accordance with current Building Regulations and NPPF Policy TR4. The single-storey internal arrangement is also inherently adaptable and capable of providing accessible circulation and threshold details in accordance with the Building Regulations.

9. Drainage and flood-risk considerations

The previous permission established an acceptable drainage route in principle. The Welland and Deepings Internal Drainage Board confirmed that a controlled surface-water discharge from the site had been agreed in principle, while foul drainage was to be subject to the Anglian Water approval process and the Board's byelaw requirements where the connection passes beneath a Board-maintained drain. The final permission required detailed foul and surface-water disposal arrangements to be approved before development beyond oversite.

The present application retains that broad drainage strategy, but the detailed design will be updated to reflect the revised footprint. Surface-water drainage will be designed so that the development does not increase flood risk elsewhere and will incorporate proportionate sustainable drainage measures in accordance with NPPF Policy F8 and the National Standards for Sustainable Drainage Systems. Any necessary IDB and Anglian Water consents will be obtained separately.

The Environment Agency Flood Map for Planning generated on 28 September 2026 places the application site in Flood Zone 1, an area with a low probability of flooding from rivers and the sea. The application site is approximately 365m² (0.0365ha), well below the one-hectare threshold in NPPF Policy F4. The site is therefore not required to be accompanied by a site-specific Flood Risk Assessment on the basis of river/sea flood zone or site area. The previous application also received no objection from Lincolnshire County Council as Highway and Lead Local Flood Authority, which confirmed that the proposal did not have an impact on surface-water flood risk. On the evidence currently available, no separate Flood Risk Assessment is considered necessary. Drainage will nevertheless be designed so as not to increase flood risk elsewhere and in accordance with NPPF Policies F7 and F8 and the applicable drainage standards.

10. Heritage impact assessment and archaeology

10.1 Designated heritage assets

The site lies close to nationally important heritage assets centred on St Mary's Church and its churchyard. The previous application identified the Grade I listed St Mary's Church approximately 75m south-west of the site and the Scheduled Monument comprising the churchyard cross approximately 50m from the site. These assets derive very high significance from their medieval fabric, architectural and historic interest, ecclesiastical use, archaeological interest and the contribution of the churchyard and village setting.

The application site is already a developed infill plot within the established settlement and does not form part of the churchyard or an open landscape setting around the heritage assets. The Council's Conservation Officer raised no objection to H23-0022-25, and the case officer concluded that the approved bungalow would not harm the setting of St Mary's Church or obscure critical views.

The current proposal remains a low, single-storey domestic building. Its restrained roof form and traditional material palette ensure that it will remain visually subordinate to the church and will not compete with its landmark role. The proposal involves no physical works to the listed building, Scheduled Monument or churchyard and would not sever or obscure an identified important view. On that basis, the proposal is assessed as having no harmful effect on the significance of the designated heritage assets through change within their setting. This conclusion has been reached having regard to section 66(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, SELLP Policy 29 and NPPF Policies HE4-HE6.

10.2 Archaeological interest

Lincolnshire County Council's Historic Environment Officer identified high medieval archaeological potential during consideration of H23-0022-25. The consultation response referred to the Scheduled Monument, St Mary's Church and recorded archaeological interventions in the locality, including evidence of medieval remains. The officer advised a post-demolition programme of archaeological evaluation and mitigation, initially including trial trenching, and the 2025 permission imposed conditions requiring a Written Scheme of Investigation, notification and subsequent reporting/archive deposition.

The present application does not seek to discount that archaeological potential. The same site was considered by Lincolnshire County Council Historic Environment and the Local Planning Authority very recently under H23-0022-25. On that application the Historic Environment Officer expressly recommended a post-demolition phased approach to archaeological investigation and mitigation, initially comprising trial-trench evaluation, and the Local Planning Authority accepted that approach by imposing conditions requiring a Written Scheme of Investigation, advance notification of archaeological work and subsequent reporting and archive deposition. The current proposal affects the same land and raises no materially different archaeological principle. It is therefore considered reasonable and proportionate for archaeological investigation and mitigation to be secured through equivalent conditions on any new permission. This approach recognises the archaeological interest identified for the site while following the site-specific mitigation route already accepted by the Local Planning Authority, having regard to NPPF Policy HE5 and SELLP Policy 29.

11. Natural environment and Biodiversity Net Gain

The application is not advanced as self-build and does not rely on the former self-build/custom-build BNG exemption used by H23-0022-25. Instead, the red-line site area is approximately 365m² (0.0365ha), which is well below the 0.2ha threshold introduced for fresh planning applications from 6 August 2026. A separate Biodiversity Net Gain Exemption Statement accompanies the application and explains the statutory position.

The site is a small previously developed plot containing the former shop and associated developed land. No onsite priority habitat has been identified in the current site information or the recent planning assessment. Accordingly, the proposal is considered to fall within the exemption for development no larger than 0.2ha, subject to the statutory requirement that no onsite priority habitat is impacted.

The BNG exemption does not remove normal biodiversity considerations. Existing features of value will be retained where practicable and the new dwelling provides opportunities for modest ecological enhancement through domestic landscaping. In accordance with NPPF Policy N2, an integrated swift brick will be incorporated into a suitable elevation unless a compelling technical reason is identified that would make it ineffective.

12. Sustainability and community considerations

Redevelopment will replace a disused and deteriorating former commercial building with a modern dwelling constructed to current Building Regulations standards. The new bungalow will provide improved thermal performance, airtightness and building services compared with the existing structure, while the compact single-storey form supports long-term adaptability and ease of occupation.

The previous officer report considered the loss of the former shop against SELLP Policy 32 and concluded that it was not a protected local community use, noting the presence of an alternative convenience store nearby and the considerable period for which the shop had been closed. That planning issue has therefore already been considered and accepted in granting the extant residential permission.

Water efficiency will be addressed in accordance with Building Regulations and any planning condition equivalent to that imposed on H23-0022-25. Electric vehicle charging and other low-carbon measures will be incorporated where required by the relevant Building Regulations.

13. Planning balance and conclusion

The application seeks a different design for a form of development whose principle has already been accepted through the extant H23-0022-25 permission. The revised scheme continues to provide a single bungalow on a small infill plot within the Whaplode settlement boundary, reuses an underutilised former commercial site, retains the accepted access principle and provides an appropriate level of private amenity and parking.

The larger footprint makes more effective use of the land, but the building remains wholly single-storey. This limits visual massing and protects neighbouring privacy, including the relationship with Viray. The proposed Vandersanden Flemish Antique facing brickwork, grey concrete roof tiles, cream uPVC windows and doors, and cream eaves detailing provide a coherent and locally appropriate architectural response.

The heritage setting has been considered proportionately and no harmful effect on the significance of St Mary's Church or the Scheduled churchyard cross is identified. Archaeological potential is expressly acknowledged and can be addressed through the same investigation and mitigation route previously required. Drainage, highway and parking matters likewise have a clear and recently tested basis for resolution.

Taken as a whole, the proposal accords with the spatial, design, amenity, transport, natural-environment and historic-environment objectives of the South East Lincolnshire Local Plan and with the relevant national decision-making policies in the August 2026 NPPF. In particular, Policies S4, L2 and L3 support appropriate residential development within settlements and the effective use of underutilised land. There are no identified adverse effects that would substantially outweigh the benefits of granting permission, and planning permission should therefore be granted.