

# Planning Committee

06 December 2024

Agenda item number 7.3

## BA/2024/0249/FUL- Car Park At, Ferry Inn, Ferry Road, Reedham

Report by Assistant Planning Officer

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### Proposal

Installation of 3 no. electric cycle charging boxes

### Applicant

Broads Authority

### Recommendation

Approve subject to conditions

### Reason for referral to committee

Broads Authority development

### Application target date

13 December 2024

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## 1. Description of site and proposals

- 1.1. The application site is the carpark that relates to the pub known as the Reedham Ferry Inn, located on the northern bank of the River Yare on the southwestern outskirts of the village of Reedham. The Reedham chain ferry is to the south of the pub and shares the same access road, Ferry Road.
- 1.2. The original pub is a historic and local landmark, thought to have been built in the 17th century. A large single storey wrap around lean-to extension is built on the front elevation and features a brick and flint wall, aluminium windows and concrete pantiles, this was built in the 20th century. The pub is a non-designated heritage asset. The car park is concrete and marked with parking bays. The site is not within a conservation area.
- 1.3. The application proposes to install three electric bike charging pods within the car park. The pods are manufactured by Intelligen and this is the beginning of a nationwide push for sustainable transport infrastructure. The pods are of a metal construction. The cladding proposed for the walls and door is a mock timber finished in black and will be horizontally boarded, slightly overlapping on the corners. The entire roof will be a solar panel, which will aid the running of the pod, and reduces the use of energy. The roof will have a slight curve to reduce build-up of leaves or water which could result in damage. Three identical pods will be positioned next to each other; each measuring 0.9m wide, and 2.3m deep with a maximum height of 1.5m. The pods are located in the southeastern corner of the car park which is set immediately adjacent the flood defence embankment.

## 2. Site history

- 2.1. BA/1991/4799/HISTAP - Extensions to public house, car park – Approved
- 2.2. BA/1993/4666/HISTAP - Telephone kiosk – Approved
- 2.3. BA/1994/4588/HISTAP - Telephone kiosk – Approved
- 2.4. BA/1995/4556/HISTAP - Alterations and extensions, conservatory – Approved

- 2.5. BA/2005/3752/HISTAP - Variation of condition 2 of planning permission 803030 (increase touring caravans from 20 to 30) – Refused
- 2.6. BA/2010/0219/FUL - Proposed introduction of one-way traffic system through existing Caravan, Camping Park – Refused, Appeal Dismissed
- 2.7. BA/2010/0220/FUL - Proposed erection of a Facilities Block and retrospective application for ten additional touring caravan pitches – Approved
- 2.8. BA/2011/0047/FUL - Erection of Facilities Block with associated landscaping and conversion of existing block to provide disabled facilities and extended washing up area. - Approved
- 2.9. BA/2021/0374/FUL - Replacement of ground floor Timber window frames to Aluminium double glazing. Colour of frames will remain the same – Approved

### 3. Consultations received

#### Parish Council

- 3.1. No response received.

#### BA Landscape Officer

- 3.2. The charging boxes look robust and of sympathetic finish to the surrounding buildings. Good consideration has been given to their location in the corner of an existing carpark. They support a sustainable alternative to cars. I have no objections from a landscape perspective. However, I would like further information on the composite material used for the walls, in terms of quality and sustainability.

#### BA Historic Environment Manager

- 3.3. Thank you for consulting me with the additional information provided for this application. The proposed location in the corner of the car park and behind the flood bank is a good one. The proposed material is a wood/recycled plastic composite material and I understand the darker colour is proposed, which is acceptable. I have no objection to this proposal.

### 4. Representations

- 4.1. Broads Society – supports.

### 5. Policies

- 5.1. The adopted development plan policies for the area are set out in the [Local Plan for the Broads](#) (adopted 2019).
- 5.2. The following policies were used in the determination of the application:
  - DM11 – Heritage Assets
  - DM15 – Renewable Energy

- DM16 – Development & Landscape
- DM21 – Amenity
- DM29 – Sustainable tourism and recreation development
- DM43 – Design

## 6. Assessment

6.1. In terms of the assessment of this application, the main issues to be considered include the principle of the development and the impacts on neighbouring amenity, the landscape and the design of the proposed development. This report will also include an assessment of the potential tourism and recreation improvements, along with the renewable energy benefits.

### Principle of development

- 6.2. The installation of electric bike charging pods aligns with the Broads Authority's commitment to promoting sustainable transport options and reducing carbon emissions in the region. Given the increase in the use of electric cycles, particularly on rural routes within the Broads, the provision of these charging facilities supports an evolving industry that encourages environmentally friendly travel alternatives.
- 6.3. The Broads Authority's Local Plan places an emphasis on enhancing sustainable infrastructure that minimises ecological impact while promoting tourism and accessibility within the area. The charging pods would enable cyclists to extend their journeys, thereby increasing accessibility to the Broads' natural and cultural attractions, without reliance on motor vehicles. This provision aligns with the Authority's sustainability objectives by reducing fossil fuel dependency and supporting eco-tourism initiatives.
- 6.4. Furthermore, the installation of electric bike charging pods is consistent with policies that encourage alternative modes of transportation, particularly those that are low in environmental impact. By enabling longer journeys, these facilities contribute to the region's sustainable tourism objectives and provide additional utility for both residents and visitors. The principle of this development is therefore considered acceptable.

### Design and Heritage Assets

- 6.5. Policy DM43 states that all development will be expected to be of a high design quality and should integrate effectively with its surroundings, reinforce local distinctiveness, and landscape character and preserve or enhance cultural heritage. Policy SP5 states that the historic environment of the Broads will be protected and enhanced. Policy DM11 also continues this and states that all development will be expected to protect, preserve, or enhance the significance and setting of historic, cultural and architectural heritage assets and elements of the wider historic environment that give the Broads its distinctive character. The pods themselves are reasonably large in size which is for a practical purpose to allow an electric cycle inside and remain locked up and safe.

- 6.6. The material pallet has been reviewed in detail to ensure they are appropriate. It was requested that the cladding material be natural timber, to retain a soft, natural appearance. Following this request, a fire safety test was carried out and details of this were provided. Given the purpose of the pods, there are numerous reports of electric cycles catching fire during charging, the structural components of the pods must therefore be able to withstand a fire if this was to occur. The fire safety results demonstrated that the plastic mock timber cladding was able to contain fire significantly more than timber cladding. The timber cladding could catch fire and potentially cause the fire to spread. The plastic cladding is non-flammable, meaning that the fire would not spread beyond the unit. Whilst the plastic mock timber cladding does not retain the natural, soft appearance of genuine timber, the benefits of fire safety outweigh the harmful impacts caused by the plastic and the material is considered acceptable.
- 6.7. The roof of the pods is to be a slight curved solar panel, and this will provide additional power to the running of the pod. This will improve the environmental credentials of the pods and reduce the carbon footprint of the pod. This is a modern design element, however as the units are functional units, it is considered appropriate in this case. The pods will be placed on a type 1 surface and fixed into the ground. There will be a door using the same materials on the front that can be locked to keep the bike safe inside while charging.
- 6.8. The location has been carefully chosen to reduce the visibility of the pods, while retaining the useability. The pods are set to be within the top corner of the Ferry Inn car park which is currently used by visitors to the pub. There is a flood embankment adjacent where there is a public footpath on top. The Reedham Ferry is also immediately adjacent the site and provides further access to paths for cyclists to explore. The Ferry Inn is a non-designated heritage asset which means that it needs to be protected. The pods are a modern form of development, however, are of some distance from the Ferry Inn. It is not considered that the pods will have a negative impact on the heritage asset and is considered acceptable. In terms of Policy DM43, and Policy DM11, the proposals are acceptable.

### Amenity

- 6.9. Policy DM21 requires that all new development must ensure a satisfactory level of amenity for occupiers and users. Development will not be permitted if it would result in an unacceptable impact on the amenity of existing or future neighbouring properties or uses. In this case, the proposed pods are situated in a corner of the car park, screened by a dense, mature hedge. Additionally, the flood embankment to the south is significantly elevated above ground level, ensuring that the pods are obscured from view beyond the hedge and from the river. While the pods will be partially visible from the road and the Ferry Inn, they are at a sufficient distance to mitigate visual impact. The proximity of adjacent footpaths also ensures safe, convenient access to the pods. Accordingly, the proposal is considered to comply with Policy DM21 – Amenity.

## Renewable Energy

- 6.10. The proposed cycle charging pods are minor in scale compared to traditional renewable energy developments like solar farms or wind turbines. Located within the car park, they align with the policy's preference for utilising previously developed sites. This location minimizes the visual impact on the distinctive landscape and preserves the recreational experience of the Broads. The pods will not require extensive ancillary infrastructure like power lines or storage buildings, which the policy stipulates should be evaluated in proposals. Since these pods are compact and don't interfere with sensitive biodiversity areas or cultural heritage, they are unlikely to compromise the Broads' environmental or visual character. Given the pods' scale and location, they meet the intentions of DM15 by supporting renewable energy infrastructure without altering the landscape's distinctive qualities.

## Sustainable Tourism and Recreation Development

- 6.11. Policy DM29 deals with sustainable tourism and recreation development, and consideration is given to both the locational and design principles laid out in the policy. The proposed pods are sited within an existing car park associated with a visitor attraction. This aligns with criterion (ii) of the policy, which supports development that is closely associated with existing visitor sites. Additionally, the pods offer sustainable access, being specifically intended to support cyclists, which aligns with the policy's requirement that developments be accessible by sustainable means of transport. The charging pods meet several key principles for sustainable development. Given the compact size of the pods and their siting within an established car park, they are unlikely to create significant additional demand on the highway network. There is also sufficient existing parking for both cars and cycles, meeting criteria (vi) and (vii).
- 6.12. The placement of the pods does not impact dark skies, as they do not include bright lighting, and they are carefully sited to avoid harm to the landscape character or local wildlife habitats. By supporting eco-friendly transportation, the pods also contribute positively to the area's environmental quality, aligning with criterion (viii).
- 6.13. The design and scale of the pods are appropriate to their setting, aligning with criterion (ix). They are small, non-intrusive structures that do not affect navigation or the open nature of the surrounding landscape, meeting the requirement for compatibility with local character.
- 6.14. The installation of the pods is compatible with the objectives and detailed requirements of Policy DM29. Their location within an existing car park and their support for sustainable tourism enhance accessibility for cyclists without detracting from the unique qualities of the Broads landscape.

## Landscape

- 6.15. The proposed pods are small in scale, appropriately sited within a car park bordered by a large, mature hedge. This layout effectively conserves the local landscape, as the pods

are positioned to minimise visibility from surrounding areas, preserving the overall visual experience and the traditional, open character of the Broads landscape. Additionally, the elevated flood embankment to the south offers natural screening, ensuring the pods are hidden from views beyond the hedge and from the river, which aligns well with the policy's requirement to enhance landscape features worthy of retention. The Broads Authority Landscape Officer raised no objections to the proposals; therefore, it is considered that the proposals are acceptable in terms of Policy DM16 – Development and Landscape.

### Other issues

- 6.16. The installation of electric cycle charging pods represents a positive step forward in supporting sustainable transportation options within the Broads. As an evolving industry, electric cycle charging infrastructure is becoming increasingly important for promoting eco-friendly travel and encouraging a shift toward greener forms of transport in the area. The installation of these pods in the current location is a sensible and forward-thinking measure that aligns with the Authority's sustainable tourism objectives and broader environmental goals. Given this context, the installation of these pods is considered acceptable.

## 7. Conclusion

- 7.1. In conclusion, the proposed electric cycle charging pods have been assessed against policies DM15 (Renewable Energy), DM16 (Landscape), DM21 (Amenity), and DM43 (Design). The pods are strategically located within an existing car park, with mature hedges and an elevated flood embankment providing natural screening. This siting minimises their impact on both the landscape and visual amenity, ensuring compatibility with the key landscape characteristics of the Broads as outlined in Policy DM16. The design is in keeping with the area's character, meeting the high-quality design expectations set out in Policy DM43 and ensuring the development respects the traditional features of the landscape.
- 7.2. The sustainable nature of the pods supports the broader environmental goals of the Broads Local Plan, contributing positively to tourism infrastructure while encouraging eco-friendly transport options. The proposals are therefore considered acceptable.

## 8. Recommendation

8.1. Approved subject to conditions:

1. Three Year timeframe for commencement
2. In accordance with the approved plans and material details
3. Prior to installation, all external materials to be confirmed

## 9. Reason for recommendation

9.1. The placement of three electric cycle charging pods in the southeast corner of the Reedham Ferry Inn carpark is in accordance with NPPF guidance and Policy DM11, DM15, DM16, DM21, DM29, DM43 of the Local Plan for the Broads and is considered acceptable.

Author: Callum Sculfor

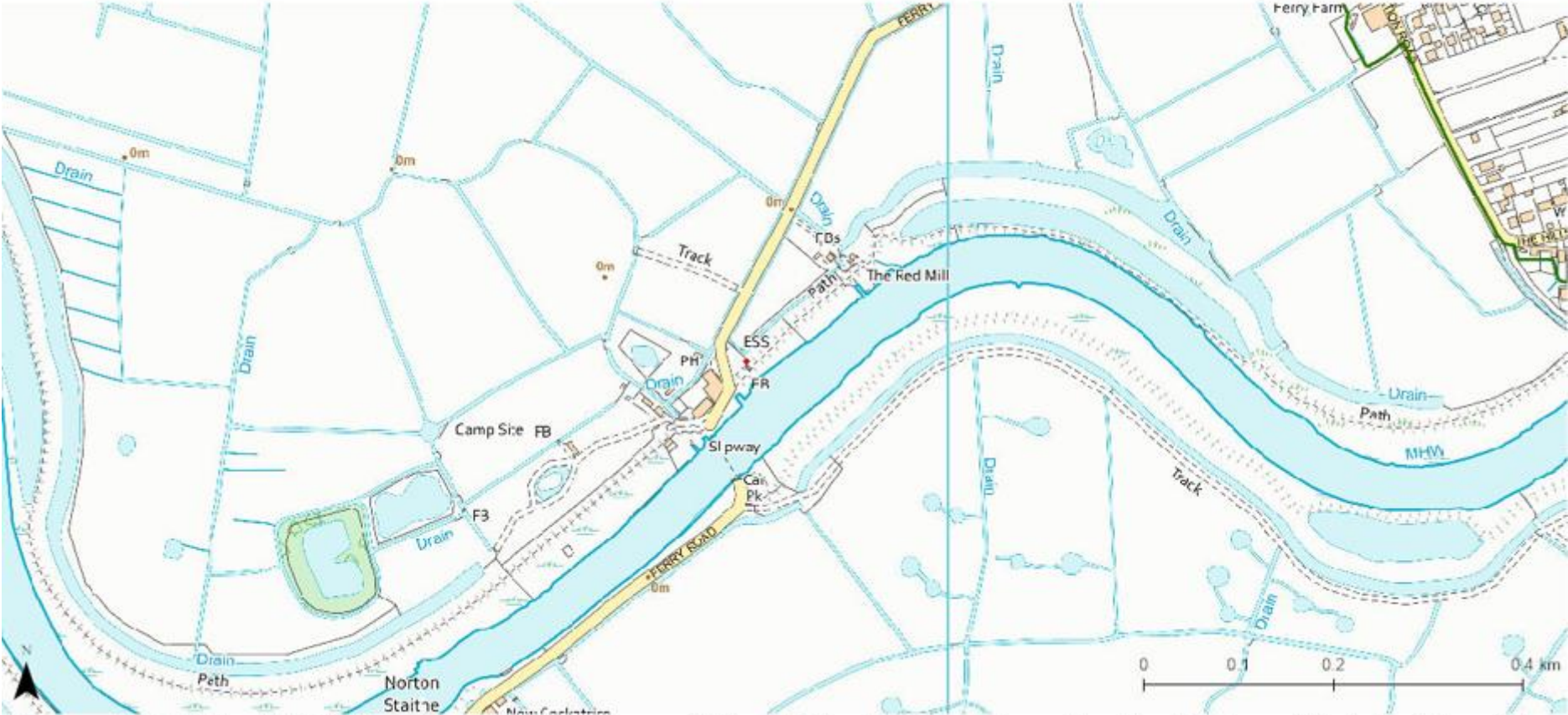
Date of report: 01 November 2024

Appendix 1 – [Location map](#)



# Appendix 1 – Location map

BA/2024/0249/FUL - Car Park At, Ferry Inn, Ferry Road, Reedham



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