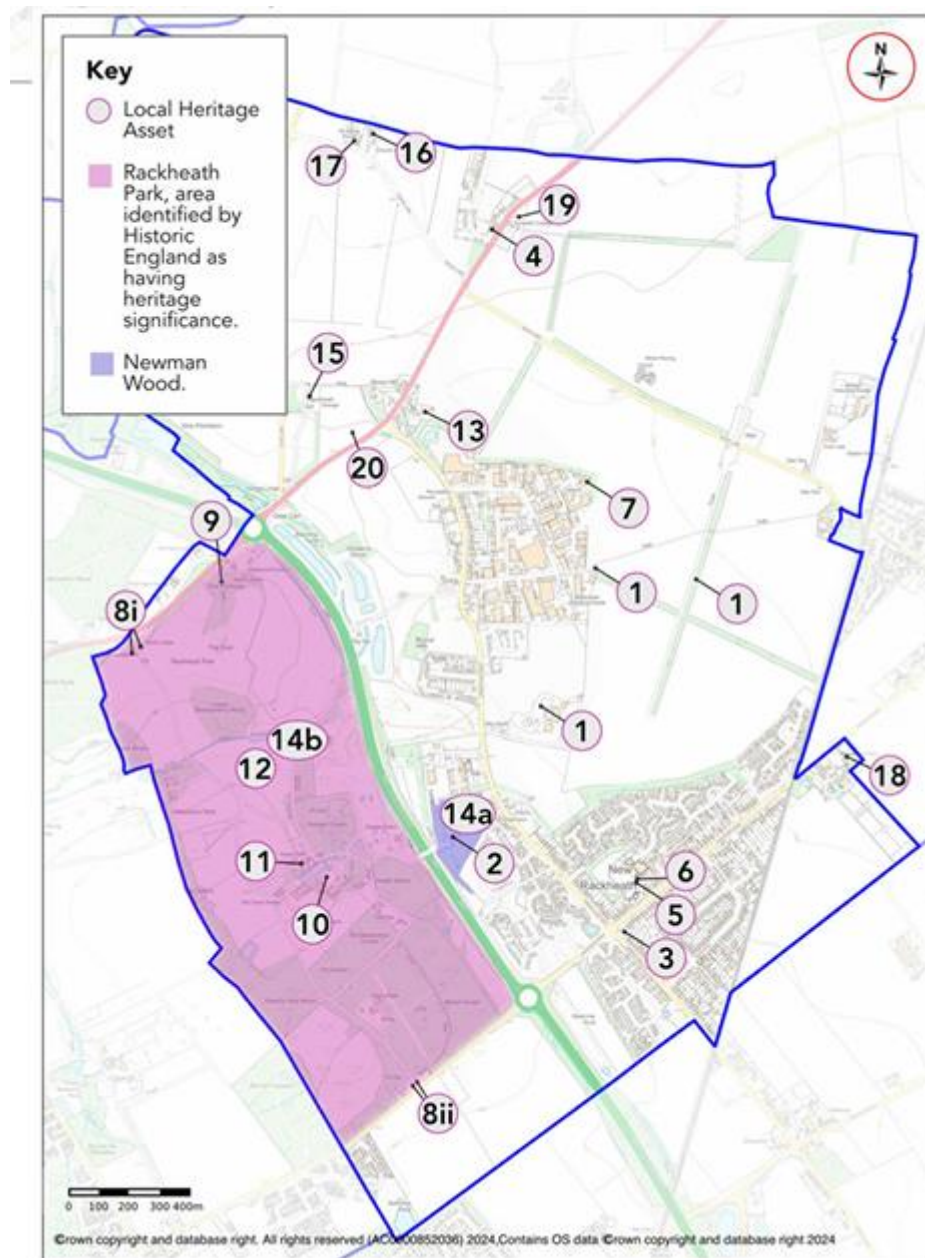


**Further query from the examiner in relation to Policy ENV5: Local landscape and local heritage assets**

‘As I’m progressing my Report there is an issue I have come across on which I need further input please, from yourselves and the QB. I note that in relation to the proposed non-designated heritage asset 12, the QB has shifted from justifying this with a rather misquoted assessment by Historic England to a different quotation from the Council’s Senior Heritage and Design Officer: "The [Rackheath Hall] parkland itself can be considered to be sufficiently intact with regard to the tree belt plantations and history of the site to also be considered a non designated heritage asset.’ However, I’m not presented with evidence that the boundary of asset 12, as shown on the Policies Map, coincides with what is recognised as the Hall "parkland". Also the link provided by the QB to support the quotation doesn’t take me to a document. Please could I be provided with supporting information on these two matters.’

## Rackheath Neighbourhood Plan Review - Local Heritage Asset – 12: Area identified by Historic England , west of the Broadland Northway – Rackheath Park

**Map 1:** The submitted version of the Rackheath Plan identified the area as shown below.



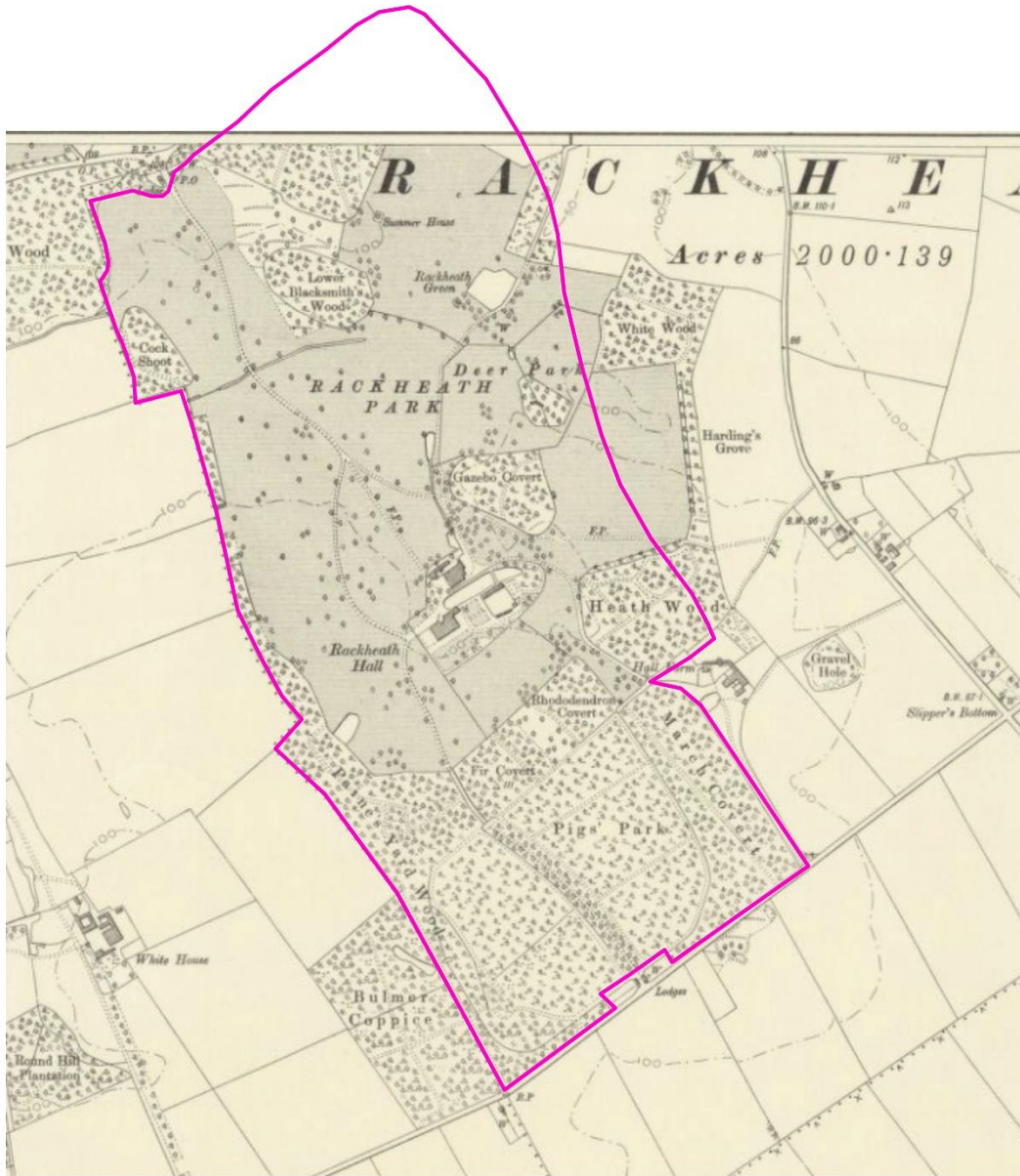
The Examiner has asked for evidence to support this boundary.

The boundary has been drawn using the OS 1905 map (published 1908) that is available on the National Library of Scotland website, to determine the extent of the original Park as there is no contemporary mapping available which shows the extent of the parkland. [View map: Ordnance Survey, Norfolk LXIV.NW \(includes: Plumstead Great and Little; Rackheath; Sprowston.\) - Ordnance Survey Six-inch England and Wales, 1842-1952](#)

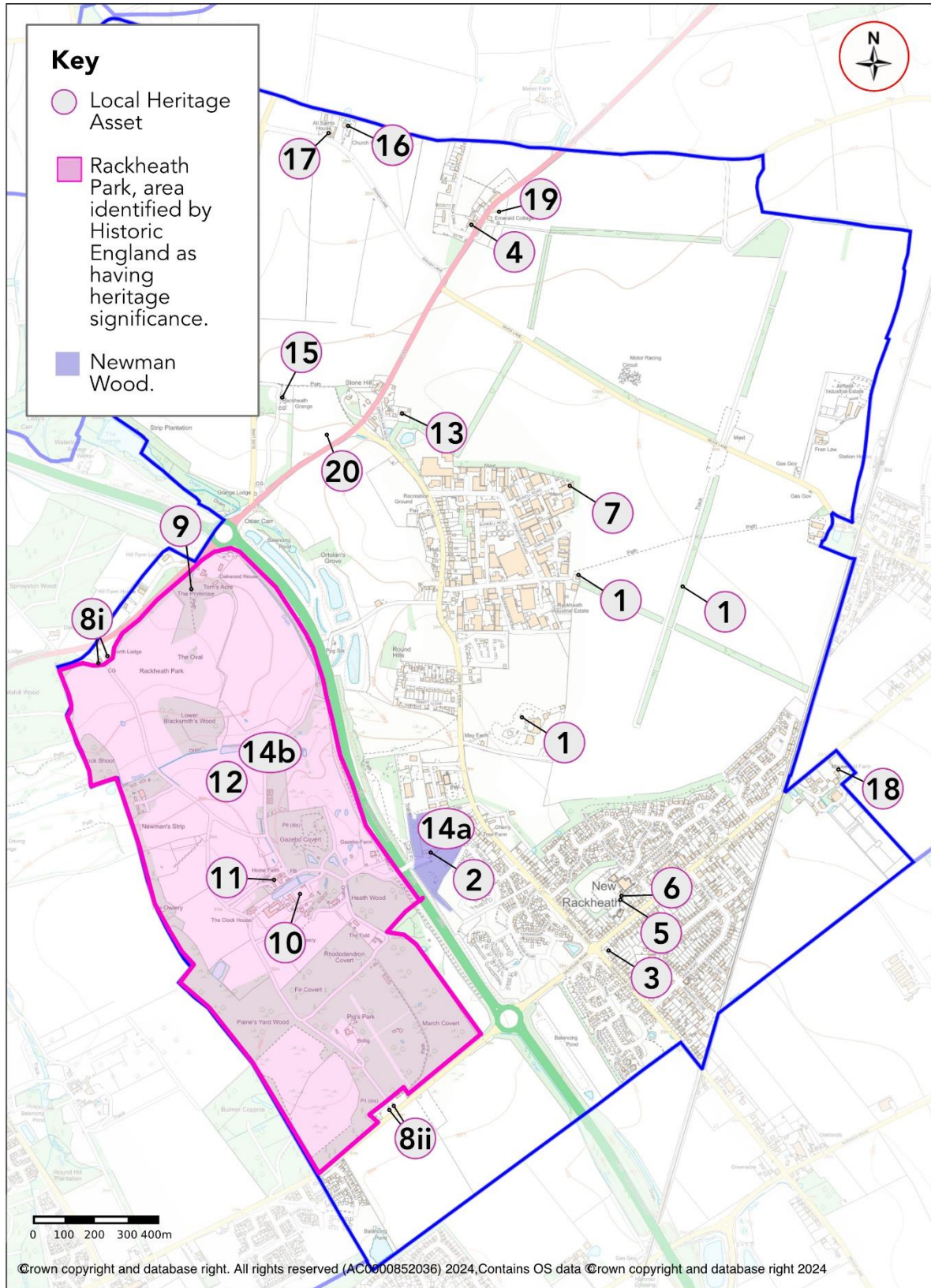
To assist the Examiner, the QB have recreated the proposed boundary over the top of the historic map (see Map 2 below). It can be seen that the Broadland Northway has already cut through some of the original parkland but the area to the west is still substantially intact. The

proposed boundary takes in both the grassland in front of the Hall but also the associated plantations. The western boundary of the parkland goes beyond the Neighbourhood Area and so the parish boundary forms the western boundary with Wroxham Road forming the north and Salhouse Road to the south. The eastern boundary part follows the Broadland Northway although there is an area south of Heath Wood which is excluded. This is shown in Map 3 below. The original designation included both sets of Lodges but these are identified separately as LHA 8 and therefore could be excluded from the boundary of LHA 12 as shown in Map 3.

**Map 2: Proposed boundary drawn over historic map**



Map 3: Proposed boundary of LHA (NDHA) 12 excluding the Lodges (LHA/NDHA 8) and Gazebo Farm



## **Referenced correspondence from Broadland District Council's Senior Heritage & Design Officer:**

**From:** Chris Bennett  
**Sent:** 30 March 2021  
**To:** Charles Judson

Dear Charles

### **Heritage and Design Comments**

#### **Heritage**

With regard to the impact on the setting of heritage assets, the development can be considered to be within the wider setting of Rackheath Hall and the estate structures including the listed entrance gates off Wroxham Road, and the two lodges which can be considered non-designated heritage assets. There is also a listed bridge, although less affected as its setting is fairly immediate, and various WWI structures relating to war time airfield accommodation, but none in the immediate area. From map evidence the Wroxham Road entrance was created sometime between 1801 and 1834 prior to the house which was rebuilt in its current form and location in the early to mid C19. The parkland itself can be considered to be sufficiently intact with regard to the tree belt plantations and history of the site to also be considered a non-designated heritage asset.

The relationship between this group of assets, although altered to some extent with the agricultural use and the loss of parkland trees to the north, can all be considered to be of some significance. With the planning of country house estates a significant element in terms of the design of the landscape of the house was the progression of views in the approach to the hall i.e. the contributions these various elements to the experience of arriving at the hall. This makes a contribution to the significance of the hall and its setting, as well as the other heritage assets viewed as an interrelated group. The main entrance gates off Wroxham Road was the main entrance to the estate and the entrance gates were sufficiently grand to mark that entrance, being exhibited at the Great Exhibition in 1851. The hall is partially visible from the gates – although more recent screen planting to the north side of the hall does now screen it to some extent in views. The picture given for Figure 2 in the Heritage Impact Statement, although this may have a degree of artistic licence rather than being truly accurate, does show relatively little planting to the north side of the hall and that this elevation was historically and in design intention ‘open’ to views from the north. The lake is also on the north side. These visual connections between heritage assets are therefore important and contribute towards significance. The setting of the listed buildings are how they are experienced and the development of the area proposed where there was former parkland and still very open in terms of landscaping would draw the eye and detract. This can be considered to be harmful, and needs to be taken into account in the planning balance.

There is some evidence from the tithe map of former dwellings in this area, possibly cottages belong to the estate, although these have long since been removed, and the area is now very much characterised by the remnants of historic estate plantation planting with open areas converted to arable. Paragraph 3.2 does state that “At the northern end around the proposed site, the rolling landscape is still largely unspoiled and attractive, although the parkland has been ploughed out. “ The heritage statement also states that “It appears, however, that historically the view south from the gate lodges allowed and focussed on the view of the north elevation of the hall (see figure 9).”

I appreciate that some screen planting has been proposed to the west, as well some areas left undeveloped as open space. However the proposal will fundamentally change what is currently a very rural area in terms of character. I disagree with paragraph 4.4 that the general rural character of the area will be retained. The sense of ‘openness’ with the rolling hills will be detrimentally affected by the development proposals resulting in less than substantial harm to the setting of the heritage assets. In terms of mitigation screening this “can only mitigate negative impacts, rather than removing impacts or providing enhancement” (paragraph 40 of HE Setting Guidance.) Consequently the mitigation is not removing harm, more a matter of mitigating against it.

## **Design**

At this stage the application is only outline, however an indicative plan has been submitted. Although village greens have been provided, houses are relatively tightly planned together in the streetscene. Also the proposals will include a large structure in the north east corner with extensive parking – referred to as a 'manor house', which I consider to be overdevelopment of this part of the site. At this stage the main concern is fundamentally the principal of development rather than seeking an appropriate design approach.

Regards  
Chris

**Chris Bennett**  
Senior Heritage & Design Officer