

Please find attached 3 submissions

1. Submission 1 Personal Statement
2. Submission 2 13th Century Stained Glass in St Mary's Saxlingham as requested by inspectorate (Introductory page and full list of contents)
3. Submission 3 Flooding as requested by the inspectorate

May I reiterate that I object strongly to Saxlingham as an AIL route and to the solar farm in such a unique medieval area. I see no evidence of any detailed investigation into the area and our village by the applicant. Had they done so, I believe that the unsuitability and tragedy of this AIL route would be evident.

Helen Pye

Submission ID: SE4EF5F1C

Submission by Interested Party [REDACTED]

Helen Pye
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

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Interested Party Reference number: [REDACTED] Personal Statement

Helen Pye, [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

- Official listing: [REDACTED]. *Late C16 and later. Rendered timber frame with corrugated tile roof. 2 storeys with upper storey formerly open to roof. Irregular fenestration mainly C20 with 2 surviving C18 or C19 3- and 4-light casements with horizontal glazing bars. Off-centre axial stack with doorway opposite. Modern extension to rear. Winding stair to entrance side of stack. 2 queen post trusses with highly cambered ties and arch braces. One beam at ground floor with broach chamfer stop. Listed primarily for surviving queen post roof.*
- In addition, we have A **WITCH PLATE** in original plaster over the Bressummer and absolutely **no foundations**, perched on a little slope right behind the hugely loved recently restored, listed Saxlingham War Memorial.

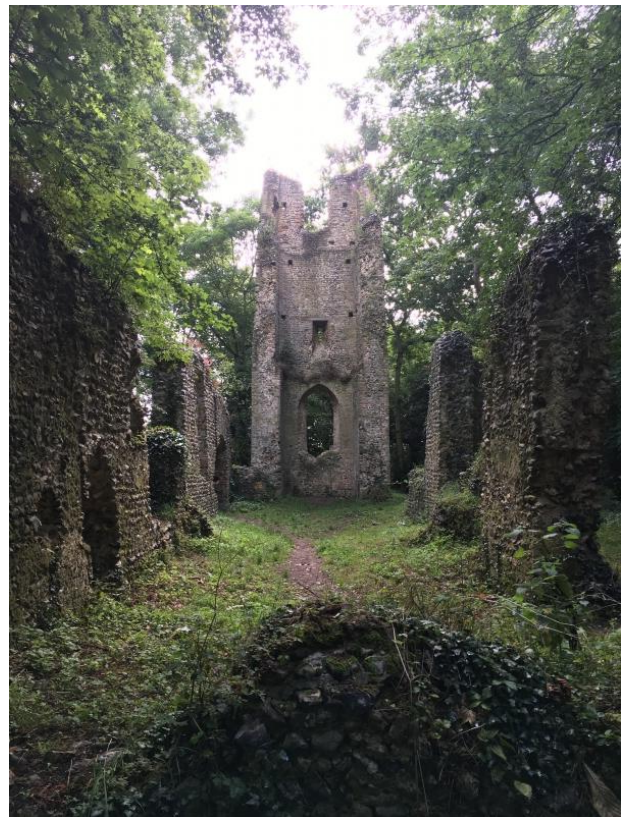
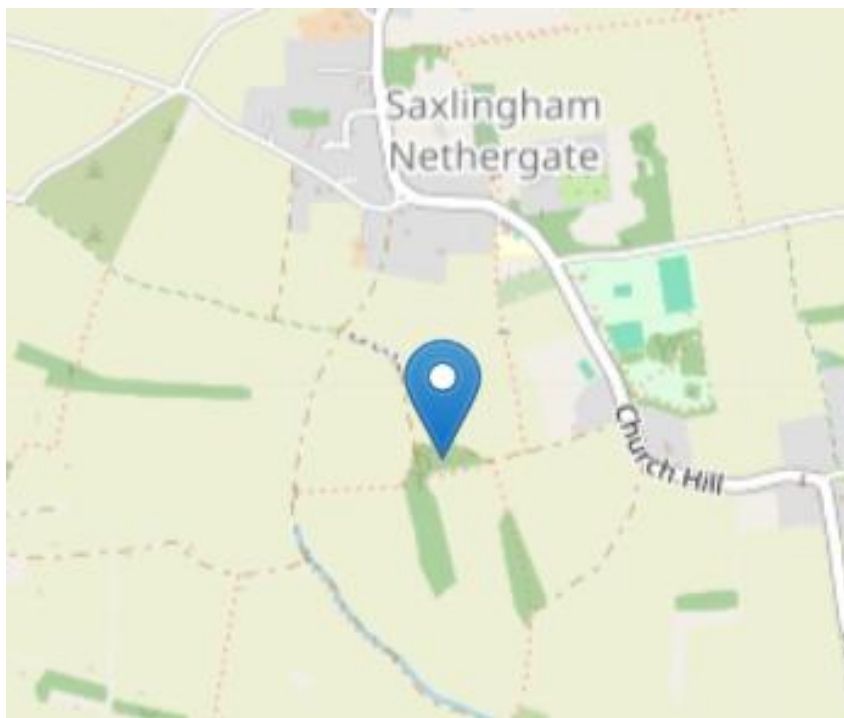
- **STRESS**- The proposed AIL route threatens the whole street in order to allow passage of the very large 30 axel? vehicles. Like residents of the other 33 listed properties on the route in our village I'm horrified and stressed, my husband likewise.



- **VIBRATION** -What of the effect of the potential vibrations caused by the very large vehicles manoeuvring around the corner in front of my overground sewer situated beside my steps, close to my listed windows on my Clay lump, wattle and daub, rubble infill home and other similar buildings beside me .
- **Manoeuvring backwards and forwards to get around this dangerous corner I believe is a danger to my home. What legal reassurance do we have that any damage will be fully and immediately repaired by the applicant? Are they able to cope with a major structural issue to my house?**
- To get around the corner it has been threatened:-
 - to remove the period/ historic street furniture
 - ancient hedges
 - demolish an 18th century listed 2*wall
 - to over run within a couple of feet of listed buildings like mine with no foundations
 - to over run the listed war memorial Green.
- **FLOODING** -There is a known flooding issue in Saxlingham , which we all physically work to mitigate by digging out ditches and the Council have just invested in 3 leaky dams.

- The war memorial dip outside my house can completely fill in 3/4 of an hour of heavy rain flooding houses further down the street.
- **See Submission part 3 Flooding (requested by inspectors)**
- The vehicle would cross delicate drainage pipes, go close to wooden sided or even no sided drainage ditches.
- Should any one of these collapse flooding would be inevitable at the next heavy rain. Already when the old Wash Lane ford is up, the current is such I cannot walk through it and is can be too deep to safely drive a car through.
- We are genuinely frightened of the very heavy vehicles damaging the drains we have beside and under the Street thus increasing our flooding risk we would be cut off, as we have been before. **What legal reassurance do we have that the applicant can cover the cost of the village flooding?**
- This is the very centre of a listed conservation village one of the best preserved and most well known in Norfolk. This damage could never be undone. It would be gone forever and for the foreseeable future of construction it would render our homes unsaleable. We would be trapped
- **CHURCHES - [REDACTED] Parochial Church Council of St Marys the Virgin** I argue there are similar risks to the 13th century church.
 - **This houses 13th century glass – the oldest in Norfolk and of national significance only matched by cathedrals in Canturbury Bruges and Chartres.**

- **See Submission part 2 Stained Glass Windows , (requested by inspectors)** and written on behalf of the Parochial Church Council.
- **The ruined church of ST Marys listed 2*** seems to have been ignored.
 - This is not just a heap of flints but **a place of active worship.**
 - Solar panels on the footpaths to this church would be very detrimental to the building and worship
 - **Noisy panels** would be **intolerable** during prayer unaccompanied singing and trying to listen to a sermon!



- I have rescued two houses in Saxlingham both still had earth floors and only the most basic plumbing, both were running with water as we are at the bottom of the valley.
- We have done this to conserve them for the future. We are but custodians who invest our life's money in ancient timbers resting one upon the other with ancient pegging.
- Saxlingham as a relic of mediaeval times is unique.
- You may argue, although I wouldn't agree, that solar panels could be undone, but destroying Saxlingham cannot be.
- **Therefore I strongly object to Saxlingham being on the AIL route.**

As Requested by Inspectorate

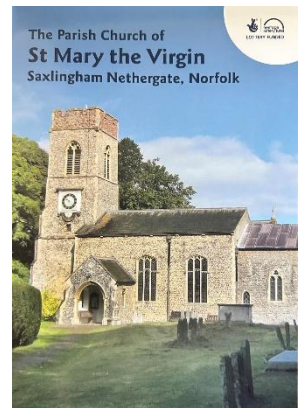
Submission by Helen Pye [REDACTED] on behalf of

St Mary the Virgin Parish Church, Church Hill, Saxlingham Nethergate

Parochial Church Council (including the specialist conservator's objection report)

- St Mary the Virgin Parish Church 2* which was listed in the Domesday Book and houses nationally significant glass of the 13th century, the oldest in Norfolk and England. This is only matched by Canterbury Bruges or Chartres cathedrals.

***"It represents an important surviving element of Norfolk's and England's medieval artistic and ecclesiastical heritage."** [REDACTED]*



- As a PCC we have the duty to ensure the heritage of the church.
- The church is on the proposed AIL route up Church Hill Saxlingham Nethergate.
- We submit that it is entirely wrong to risk the movements of the AIL lorries with their vibrations causing irreparable damage to glass of date no later than 1250 and other nationally significant glass.
- The ancient glass is irreplaceable
- The PCC **commissioned Devlin Plummer Stained Glass ltd** to restore this ancient glass using the latest technology. He is a member of the Institute of Conservation.
- Mr [REDACTED] has written **a full report on the risk to this precious historical glass in the light of East Pye's application.** Mr [REDACTED] evidenced conclusion is

***"temporary requirements of a construction programme should not be permitted to create an avoidable risk to an irreplaceable element of England's medieval stained-glass heritage."** ([REDACTED])*

- The PCC therefore objects strongly **that the Church Hill should be considered as an AIL route**

To evidence this submission of objection this report comprises

- Appendix A An edited extract from the church booklet to give a concise explanation of the glass. *Prepared by Helen Pye* page 3
- Appendix B Report on the risks to the glass were the AIL route going through Saxlingham Nethergate Church Hill. *Prepared by: [REDACTED] - Devlin Plummer Stained Glass Specialist Stained Glass Conservators especially for the AIL route*

His report comprises the following sections

1. Purpose of this Representation page 5
2. Significance of St Mary the Virgin page 6
3. Exceptional Significance of the Medieval Glass page 6
4. Irreplaceability page 6
5. Vulnerability of Historic Leaded Glass to Movement page 7
6. Concern Regarding Repeated HGV Movements page 7
7. Particular Sensitivity of the Saxlingham Glass page 8
8. Historic England Guidance page 8
9. Existing East Pye Traffic Management Principle page 8
10. Recommended Requirement: Avoidance page 8
11. Where HGV Movements Cannot Be Avoided page 9
12. The Appropriate Conservation Principle page 10
13. Requested Safeguards page 10
14. Conclusion page 11

- Appendix C the full text of church booklet for authentication of evidence
Authors: [REDACTED] Church Historian and [REDACTED] Tower Captain
page 12

Appendix A

Edited Extract from The Parish Church of St Mary the Virgin, Saxlingham Nethergate Booklet by Helen Pye

St Mary's church has Stained Glass; **a superb collection**, with modern glass, windows of the Victorian and Georgian ages, glass of the **15th and 14th centuries.....** very early pictorial glass of around **1250, this being of national importance.**

The east window of the aisle, part of the 1867 extension has been filled with glass of an earlier period. The canopy tops, of about **1400...** Little shaped panels of glass from the same date, show a bishop, an archbishop, and Edward the Confessor.....and enchanting little angels of c. **1420**, playing instruments of the period.....

Two other panels in the south west chancel window show a Resurrection and a Nativity, and are **15th century glass** as is a north chancel window which shows a fragmented series of the four Latin Doctors of the Church, Augustine, Ambrose, Gregory and Jerome. Only Jerome, in his Cardinal's hat, is really identifiable...Above are 'Norwich Angels', one with censer and another with a scourge and nails.

In the main East window, beautifully restored a few years ago, are **15th century** Pentecost on the left and Ascension to the right flanking the centre panels with the Coronation of the Virgin.

Lower down, the window has two roundels showing signs of the Evangelists, Matthew and John, and monograms with M for St Mary and IHS for Christ.

These have all been dated 1395-1420.....

The central window on the south side has early patterned glass at the bottom: this is "grisaille glass", from the French word for grey, and **dates from around 1250.**

Above are two saints, of the mid-**14th century**, they depict St Philip, with a basket of loaves, and St James the Less, a worker in the cloth trade.

.....

(Four rondels dating from 1250 the) **earliest pictorial glass in Norfolk, dated about 1250**, in the south east chancel window are a type of medallion seen in such French cathedrals as Chartres and Bourges, and Canterbury in England. The hands and feet of the saints cut into the surrounding border - a sign of very early glass.

Between the two pairs of 13th century medallions are diamond shapes in 'maple leaf grisaille' from the early 14th century.



Dating from 1250 this medallion shows.....The two saints, John and James, in the top left panel have their names shown,

and to their right is a panel of the same date showing the beheading of an unknown saint



The lower two roundels are of St Edmund, King and Martyr. He stands with his hands tied to a tree behind him while the bowman takes aim. **The other panel is unique - no other such image of the saint exists.** He kneels and offers up the arrows of his martyrdom to God, in a panel of great anguish and beauty. **Both are dated 1250**



Appendix B

Report on the potential risks to the nationally significant stained glass

DEVLIN PLUMMER STAINED GLASS LIMITED

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] Tel: [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] email: mail@dpsg.co.uk

Specialists in the conservation & restoration of leaded & stained glass windows

Devlin Plummer Stained Glass Limited. Registered Number 06806342

Registered Office [REDACTED]

Directors: [REDACTED] Associates: I. Pocklington ACR ICON Accredited

SPECIALIST HERITAGE REPRESENTATION

East Pye Solar Development

Potential Construction Traffic Impacts upon the Medieval Stained Glass at St Mary the Virgin,

Saxlingham Nethergate

Prepared by: [REDACTED] - Devlin Plummer Stained Glass

Specialist Stained Glass Conservators

1. Purpose of this Representation

Devlin Plummer Stained Glass wishes to raise a specific conservation concern regarding the potential routing of heavy construction traffic associated with the East Pye Solar development through, or in close proximity to, Saxlingham Nethergate and the Church of St Mary the Virgin.

Our concern relates specifically to the potential effects of repeated Heavy Goods Vehicle movements and ground-borne vibration upon the historic fabric of the church and, in particular, its exceptionally significant collection of medieval stained and painted glass.

We understand that the applicant's Outline Construction Traffic Management Plan states that construction vehicle routes have been selected with the principal aim of avoiding local villages, including Saxlingham Nethergate, wherever practicable, and of avoiding sensitive heritage assets as far as practicable. We strongly support that principle.

However, given **the exceptional significance and inherent vulnerability of the medieval glazing at St Mary the Virgin, we consider that avoidance of significant HGV movements in close proximity to the church should be expressly secured** within the final Construction Traffic Management Plan.

Where avoidance cannot be guaranteed, a specific programme of assessment, monitoring and mitigation should be required before construction traffic commences.

2. Significance of St Mary the Virgin

St Mary the Virgin, Saxlingham Nethergate, is a Grade II* listed church.

The principal fabric of the nave and chancel is of eleventh- or twelfth-century origin and was subsequently altered and heightened during the later medieval period.

Historic England's statutory list description specifically identifies the presence of:

“Important fragments of medieval stained glass.”

The stained glass is not simply incidental decoration within the listed building. It represents an important component of the heritage significance of the church in its own right.

3. Exceptional Significance of the Medieval Glass

The church contains an exceptional collection of medieval stained and painted glass ranging from the thirteenth century through to the late medieval period.

Most importantly, the first south chancel window contains figurative glass dating from no later than circa 1250.

This is recognised as the **earliest surviving figurative stained glass in a Norfolk church**.

The subjects include seated figures of St John and St James together with important scenes relating to the martyrdom of St Edmund.

The depiction of St Edmund has particular regional significance given the extraordinary importance of his cult throughout medieval East Anglia.

The glass is approaching **800 years in age**.

The church additionally contains important medieval glass from later periods, including:

- late fourteenth- and early fifteenth-century glass dating approximately from 1390–1413;
- medieval east-window tracery which appears to survive in its original architectural position;
- the Coronation of the Virgin;
- Pentecost;
- the Ascension;
- medieval heraldic glass;
- fifteenth-century representations of the Four Doctors of the Western Church;
- surviving angels associated with a former Last Judgement composition;
- medieval ecclesiastical figures and canopy work;
- musical angels dating from approximately 1420–1430;
- fifteenth-century representations of the Nativity and Resurrection; and
- a circa 1500 Flemish roundel depicting the Virgin and Child with St Anne.

The collection is also represented within the *Corpus Vitrearum Medii Aevi*, the principal scholarly record

for medieval stained glass.

The significance of this collection is therefore not merely local. It represents an important surviving element of Norfolk's and England's medieval artistic and ecclesiastical heritage.

4. Irreplaceability

An essential consideration when assessing potential risk to medieval stained glass is its complete irreplaceability.

Should an original thirteenth-century pane fracture or lose historic painted decoration, the resulting loss cannot genuinely be reversed.

A replacement piece could reproduce the approximate colour, shape or painted design, but it could never reproduce the historic authenticity of glass manufactured, painted and fired approximately eight centuries ago.

Conservation can stabilise damaged medieval glass. It cannot recreate lost medieval material.

Accordingly, prevention of damage must be given substantially greater importance than the possibility of repair.

5. Vulnerability of Historic Leaded Glass to Movement

A medieval stained glass window should not be regarded as equivalent to modern glazing. It comprises a complex assembly of individual pieces of historic glass held within a network of lead comes and supported by associated metalwork and fixings.

Depending upon the individual window, this may include:

- medieval and later historic glass;
- fragile painted decoration;
- weathered and corroded glass surfaces;
- existing fractures;
- historic repairs;
- edge-bonded fractures;
- lead comes of differing dates;
- soldered joints;
- perimeter leads;
- glazing mortar;
- saddle bars;
- copper or other ties;
- ferramenta and supporting ironwork;
- masonry glazing grooves; and
- environmental protective or isothermal glazing.

These components respond differently to movement.

The lead matrix possesses a degree of flexibility whereas the historic glass is comparatively brittle. The surrounding masonry, supporting metalwork and glazing system also have different mechanical characteristics.

Movement of the building or repeated vibration therefore has the potential to be transmitted through a complex historic assembly.

6. Concern Regarding Repeated HGV Movements

Our concern is not that a single HGV passing the church can automatically be assumed to cause damage to medieval glass.

Such a claim would require appropriate measurement and technical evidence.

The more important issue is the effect of **repeated heavy vehicle movements over an extended construction period.**

Potential vibration will depend upon several variables, including:

- vehicle weight;
- axle loading;
- vehicle speed;
- frequency and number of vehicle movements;
- road construction;
- potholes, covers and other surface irregularities;
- ground conditions;
- distance between the highway and church;
- foundation construction;
- condition of the historic masonry; and
- condition and support arrangements of the individual stained glass windows.

Consequently, absence of visible damage following an individual vehicle movement cannot demonstrate that repeated movements over months or years are without conservation risk.

Cumulative exposure should therefore be considered.

7. Particular Sensitivity of the Saxlingham Glass

The potential consequences at Saxlingham Nethergate warrant particular consideration because the **glazing includes exceptionally early material.**

Some of the glass has survived for approximately three-quarters of a millennium. During that period individual panes have inevitably acquired varying degrees of surface deterioration, historic fractures, repairs and changes to their supporting leadwork. Such characteristics form part of the archaeological history of the windows but may also make individual more vulnerable than new glazing.

The appropriate test should therefore not simply be whether vibration is capable of causing immediate structural failure of a church building.

Assessment should consider whether vibration or cyclic movement could adversely affect the **most vulnerable significant component within that building**, which in this case may be individual pieces of medieval painted glass or their historic glazing system.

8. Historic England Guidance

Historic England recognises vibration as a potential hazard to historic fabric.

Historic England's published guidance concerning historic features during building works specifically identifies vibration amongst the mechanisms capable of causing damage.

Historic England has also recognised, in its guidance concerning development and transport impacts, that intensification of traffic can affect the historic environment.

Of particular relevance, Historic England's published guidance concerning the impacts of mineral extraction specifically acknowledges that **noise, dust and vibration caused by the regular passage of HGVs have the potential to damage the fabric of historic buildings and monuments.**

The principle that repeated HGV-generated vibration may represent a legitimate heritage consideration is therefore well established.

9. Existing East Pye Traffic Management Principle

We note positively that the East Pye Outline Construction Traffic Management Plan states that construction vehicle routes have been selected with the principal aim of avoiding local villages wherever practicable, expressly including **Saxlingham Nethergate**, together with avoiding sensitive heritage assets as far as practicable.

In our view, St Mary the Virgin and its medieval glazing represent precisely the type of sensitive heritage asset to which this commitment should apply.

Given the exceptional significance of the glass, this principle should not subsequently be diluted when detailed construction routes are determined.

Avoidance should be the preferred form of mitigation.

10. Recommended Requirement: Avoidance

We recommend that significant construction HGV traffic associated with East Pye should, wherever reasonably practicable, be routed away from St Mary the Virgin.

If an alternative route is reasonably available, avoidance provides a substantially more robust conservation solution than attempting to manage vibration after heavy vehicle movements have commenced.

The final Construction Traffic Management Plan should therefore identify the church as a **specific sensitive heritage receptor** and demonstrate how construction routing has sought to avoid it.

11. Where HGV Movements Cannot Be Avoided

If significant HGV movements close to the church cannot be avoided, we recommend that the following measures are secured before commencement of the relevant construction phase.

A. Specialist Baseline Condition Survey

A comprehensive condition survey should be undertaken of the medieval glazing by an appropriately experienced stained glass conservator.

This should include high-resolution photographic recording and identification of:

- existing fractures;
- edge-bonded repairs;
- historic repair leads;
- unstable solder joints;
- fractured or fatigued leads;
- bowed panels;
- loose ties;
- condition of saddle bars and ferramenta;
- perimeter movement;
- condition of glazing mortar;
- vulnerable painted decoration;
- surface corrosion and weathering; and
- condition and fixing of environmental protective/isothermal glazing.

The purpose should be to establish an objective pre-construction baseline.

B. Structural Condition Survey

A conservation-accredited structural engineer experienced in historic masonry buildings should inspect the church and identify existing structural movement or vulnerabilities capable of transmitting vibration to the glazing.

C. Baseline Vibration Monitoring

Vibration monitoring should be undertaken before commencement of construction traffic to establish the existing environmental baseline.

D. Predictive Vibration Assessment

The likely vibration generated by the proposed HGV movements should be assessed taking account of:

- proposed vehicle types;
- maximum vehicle weights;
- axle configurations;
- daily movement numbers;
- vehicle speeds;
- road condition;
- distance from the church;
- local ground conditions; and sensitivity of the historic building and glazing.

E. Monitoring During Construction

Where construction HGVs are permitted to pass sufficiently close to the church to present a credible vibration risk, appropriate vibration monitoring should continue during the relevant construction period.

F. Alert and Action Levels

Appropriate project-specific vibration alert and action levels should be agreed before construction.

These should not simply adopt thresholds concerned with prevention of structural damage to modern buildings.

They should take account of the presence of exceptionally fragile and irreplaceable historic fabric.

Exceedance should trigger an agreed response, potentially including suspension of HGV movements pending investigation.

G. Speed Restrictions

A strictly controlled low speed limit should apply to construction vehicles in the vicinity of the church.

H. Highway Maintenance

The carriageway should be inspected before commencement and maintained throughout the construction period.

Potholes, depressions, defective covers and other irregularities capable of increasing dynamic vehicle loading and vibration should be promptly rectified.

I. Periodic Inspection

The medieval glass should be inspected periodically during the principal construction traffic phase, particularly following any significant vibration event or exceedance of agreed monitoring thresholds.

J. Post-Construction Survey

Following completion of the relevant construction phase, the glazing and church fabric should be resurveyed and compared directly with the baseline condition record.

12. The Appropriate Conservation Principle

The correct conservation hierarchy in this instance is:

Avoidance → Assessment → Monitoring → Mitigation

rather than:

Damage → Repair.

This distinction is particularly important where the heritage fabric concerned is irreplaceable medieval glass.

13. Requested Safeguards

We respectfully request that the Examining Authority considers securing the following:

1. St Mary the Virgin, Saxlingham Nethergate should be expressly identified as a sensitive heritage receptor within the Construction Traffic Management Plan.
2. Construction HGVs should be routed away from the church wherever reasonably practicable.
3. Where significant HGV movements close to the church cannot be avoided, no such movements should commence until an appropriate vibration risk assessment has been undertaken.
4. A specialist baseline condition survey of the medieval glazing should be completed before commencement.
5. Baseline and construction-stage vibration monitoring should be undertaken where the risk assessment identifies a credible potential effect.
6. Appropriate project-specific alert and action levels should be agreed, having regard to the exceptional sensitivity of the medieval glazing.
7. Construction vehicle speeds should be strictly controlled in the vicinity of the church.

8. The highway surface should be maintained to minimise unnecessary vibration.
9. A clear stop-and-review procedure should apply in the event of agreed vibration limits being exceeded or deterioration being identified.
10. A post-construction condition survey should be undertaken against the original baseline record.

14. Conclusion

St Mary the Virgin is not simply another historic building situated close to a proposed construction route.

It is a Grade II* listed medieval church containing an exceptional collection of stained and painted glass, including figurative material dating from no later than circa 1250 and recognised as the earliest surviving figurative stained glass in a Norfolk church.

This glass has survived for approaching eight centuries.

Its loss or deterioration would be irreversible.

We do not suggest, without appropriate measurement, that individual construction vehicles will necessarily damage the glass. **We do, however, consider that repeated movements of heavy construction vehicles close to a building containing fabric of this age, rarity and fragility represent a potential conservation risk which should be properly assessed rather than assumed to be insignificant.**

This position is consistent with the applicant's own stated principle of seeking to avoid Saxlingham Nethergate and sensitive heritage assets when determining construction traffic routes.

The exceptional significance of the medieval glass justifies a precautionary approach. Where avoidance is reasonably practicable, construction HGV traffic should be routed away from the church.

Where it is not, the applicant should be required to demonstrate through specialist assessment, baseline recording, monitoring and appropriate mitigation that the medieval glass will not be exposed to an unacceptable risk.

The temporary requirements of a construction programme should not be permitted to create an avoidable risk to an irreplaceable element of England's medieval stained glass heritage.

Devlin Plummer Stained Glass

Specialist Stained Glass Conservators

We trust the above is helpful and look forward to hearing from you. Should you require any further information or wish to discuss the proposals in more detail, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Yours sincerely

[Redacted Signature]

Devlin Plummer Stained Glass Ltd

SPECIALISTS IN THE CONSERVATION & RESTORATION OF LEADED & STAINED GLASS WINDOWS

Devlin Plummer Stained Glass Limited. Registered Number 06806342

Registered Office. [Redacted Address]

Directors [Redacted Names]

Associates: I. Pocklington ACR ICON Accredited



Appendix C

Church Booklet Text

THE PARISH CHURCH OF ST. MARY THE VIRGIN,
SAXLINGHAM NETHERGATE, NORFOLK, NR15 1TD.

Grid Ref. TM 231972

If you have approached our church from the Norwich direction, you will already have passed through the centre of this attractive village, finally finding St. Mary's on its hill, and we are delighted to welcome you here. Although the present day church appears, at first glance, to date from the fifteenth century, its origins are far older, and you stand in an area which we know to have been inhabited from Neolithic times, with flint tools, used by the villagers of the day, being found locally. The small stream that runs through the fields to the north of the church would, at that time, have been a much larger watercourse, and this part of South Norfolk would have presented a far more watery landscape than the one we see today.

The church must have been of a reasonable size in 1086, the year of the Conqueror's Domesday Book, because that was about taxation, and it was assessed to pay sixteen pence in tax. Today it consists of a nave, chancel, tower, north aisle, vestry and south porch, and it is interesting to walk around the exterior before investigating inside. The original chancel, the 'priest's church', was shorter than the present one, and a line can be seen in the masonry where it was extended. Then it was heightened, and the east window put in, in the late fourteenth century. The smallest window in the chancel is a 'low side window', which was formerly covered by a shutter. From it a bell was rung at the most sacred point in the Mass, the Elevation of the Host, and local people working in the fields or at home in Saxlingham could join in the worship at that point, and say their own prayer. The small door was used by the priest to give him access directly into the chancel. Moving on around the building, the north aisle and vestry are Victorian additions of 1867, when the old north doorway of the church was taken down and replaced in the new wall. The builder of the day was allowed to take fallen stones from the old, ruined church of the neighbouring parish, Saxlingham Thorpe, (but not to actually demolish any of its fabric to help in the new construction!)

The present tower was constructed in the fourteenth century, and its belfry windows have the older, 'Decorated' style of tracery, with curving patterns at their tops. Although the Perpendicular style had already superseded the former style when the tower was built, it seems probable that the people who paid for it liked the old forms. The clock on the tower's south face is unusual – it is one-handed, with a

2.

sundial beneath it. It was placed here in 1794. The tower contains eight bells. When work was done on the tower during the incumbency of Rev'd R. Pitt, 1892-1918, excavations revealed the base of a former tower, round like so many in this area of Norfolk. With the river systems giving access to the North Sea, there were strong trading links with ports in northern Germany, where many such towers exist. In an area as devoid of good building stone as this, it was useful to copy a type of tower which could be built of the local flint, and which required no costly dressed stone at its corners. It was almost certainly Norman in style. Back to the south side of the church, and we see that the nave walls, like those of the chancel, were heightened to accommodate new windows. These have seen much restoration, but it is easy to tell why these later windows are called 'Perpendicular' in style – the

stone bars, or mullions, run straight from the base to the top of the arch. Stand back and compare them with the earlier ones in the tower!

Before you walk into the south porch, have a glance at the tombstones in the churchyard. Some are very well carved, and many of the folk they commemorate lived to a good age. Near the south-east angle of the chancel is the grave of Thomas Barnham, a well-sinker: his headstone has a carved pump on it.

Porches played an important part in church services of the middle ages. The one here was partly reconstructed in the nineteenth century, but is likely to have incorporated quite a bit of its predecessor. Parts of the marriage and baptismal services took place in the porch, penance was performed there, and civil business transacted. The small niche near the door is called a 'stoup', and a bowl of holy water, which had been blessed by a priest, was placed in it. The medieval worshippers would have dipped their fingers in the water and crossed themselves as they entered their church, in renewal of the vows made on their behalf at baptism. Above is a consecration cross, to show where the Bishop of Norwich would have touched the wall with holy oil at the church's consecration. Churches had many such crosses, but this is the only one which now survives here. The south door is of about 1600, and contains two iron grills, which give a view of people approaching the church. There are small wooden hatches to cover them, and the real reason for them is obscure, but other local churches also have this feature.

The nave into which we step has been called 'mainly Perpendicular', being built in the period between the Black Death, the terrible plague which swept England

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in 1348-9, and the upheavals of the Reformation in the mid-1500s. But we already know that the north aisle was added in Victorian times, and if we look at the left side of the south doorway, there are remains of a far earlier, round-headed arch. This was part of that Norman church in Saxlingham which had a round tower....

The nave was, historically, the responsibility of the people who worshipped there, while the church's eastern part, the chancel, relied upon the rector for maintenance costs. This explains why some chancels are run-down, ruinous, or have been replaced over the years, as some incumbents neglected their duties, while, in wool-rich Norfolk congregations, often of great wealth, rebuilt and refurbished naves, not only for the glory of God but to vie with adjacent parishes. The nave was a social space from earliest times – villages had no community halls, and Saxlingham's early parishioners would have gathered in the church for all kinds of social events, or to greet their friends. The 'Church Ale' was a most convivial social occasion, and a very popular, ale-fuelled forerunner to the annual fetes of today, but held in the church.

Imagine the earliest church here, with an earth floor, round-headed doorways and small windows, dim light filtering in through coloured glass, and the scent of last Sunday's incense lingering in its interior, which would not have been very clean by modern standards. As time passed, larger windows were put in, and a screen separated the nave from the chancel, with a large crucifix above. There would initially have been no nave seating, and the folks would have continued talking to their friends as the Latin phrases of the Mass flowed over them, only pausing to kneel at the most sacred parts of the service. The present screen is a 20th century memorial to Campbell Steward of the Old Hall, the former one having been destroyed centuries ago, as was so much other woodwork. The pews too are Victorian, replacing the box pews of the post-Reformation church.

But the first thing we see as we enter is the FONT, almost always at the back of a church, as it signifies entry into the Church by baptism. Our font is of a type well-known in this part of Norfolk. Somewhere locally, a workshop was producing such fonts in the 15th century – the eight-sided bowl

has angels with shields on four alternate faces, and the emblems of the four Evangelists, Matthew, Mark, Luke and John on the other four. The shields have the emblem of the Trinity, chalices

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signifying the Sacrament, the three crowns of East Anglia, and the instruments of Christ's Passion. Look for the ladder, nails, scourge and Crown of Thorns. Around the bases of such fonts there are usually lions, with varying expressions. Saxlingham's are sitting, chests puffed out, and looking extremely smug, just as they have done for over five hundred years.

The ROOF was constructed in the 15th century, and restored in 1867 and 1955. Its dark stain makes it difficult to see details, but the corbels, the small carved figures at the base of the carved braces, are original, with the costumes worn by the women dating them to the period 1425-1450. There are more lions too! In the tower's east face, behind the roof's western tie-beam, there is a niche which was a sanctus bell window. Before the Reformation, a watcher seated in the tower room would have rung a bell from this window at the climax of the Mass. Later, the present roof was constructed, which made the niche hard to see.

Like all the parish churches of England, this place faced the maelstrom of the Reformation in the mid-sixteenth century, when so much of beauty was swept away, as the young King, Edward VI, ordered churches to embrace the Protestant faith. We can only guess that the screen and rood figures were taken down and burned, that a

stone altar-slab was smashed and perhaps buried in the churchyard, figures of saints on image-brackets mutilated with axes, and the wall-paintings depicting Biblical scenes whitewashed over. In 1552, churches were required to make an inventory of all their church goods – vessels used in the Mass, bells and vestments. Often these were things which had been given by former parishioners as acts of devotion and memorials over the years. Now, almost everything was confiscated by the Crown, leaving parishes with the bare minimum required for the conduct of services. Crosses, candlesticks, copes of silk and velvet, all gone. Many members of the church must have been heartbroken, as they regarded the bare, stripped interior of a place they loved, for by 1553, the church would have presented a sorry sight, when Mary, a staunch Catholic, replaced her half-brother on the throne. The church-wardens of the day then had to oversee the return of St. Mary's to the Catholic rite, having recently ordered the destruction of so much within it. Much had been burned or broken, but some things had to be replaced, which would have proved costly. After Mary's death, five years later, her half-sister, Elizabeth again made England a Protestant nation, and more changes were made, as the church interior was refurbished to conform with the

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'Prayer Book' liturgy. The words of Thomas Cranmer's 'Book of Common Prayer', still in use today, would have formed the basis of the services, and parishioners sat in their box pews to hear a lengthy sermon preached from the high pulpit. Chancels would have been used only rarely, and it is not surprising that rectors often neglected to maintain them. Our church had become a 'Church of the Word', not of the Sacraments. The law decreed that the Royal Arms should be displayed, and these, relating to King William III, are above the north door.

It was not until the nineteenth century that further sweeping changes were made in the Church of England's liturgy, which resulted in a great refurbishment of the church's fabric and contents. A group of clergy in Oxford started the movement, and because they circulated tracts telling people about their proposed changes, they became known as 'Tractarians'. Theirs was a High Church movement, intent on restoring the sacramental emphasis to services, and restoring much of the beauty of the medieval church and its services. Their influence, even in remote villages like Saxlingham, was tremendous – they were responsible for vast numbers of the church interiors we see today. Across this

country, hundreds of box pews and soaring three decker pulpits were swept away, with new suites of pews placed in naves, and seating for robed choirs in chancels, replacing the western gallery where the village band, which had accompanied services, were formerly seated. Before you pass through the screen into the chancel, glance at the oak LECTERN given in 1897 in memory of Canon George King and his wife Elizabeth, another member of the Steward family. The formidable eagle holds the Bible on his back – an eagle is a symbol of St. John the Evangelist.

Stepping into the chancel, the priest's church of medieval times, you will see that on the right an arch cuts into the south west wall. There would have been a stair here which gave access to the long-vanished rood loft, at the top of the screen in the middle ages. Candles would have been placed along it, and it would have been used for psalms and readings, playing a particularly important part in the elaborate ceremonies of Holy Week. Further along the chancel's south wall, beyond the priest's door, are the remains of SEDILIA, here simply a lowering of the window-sill to form seats for the priests and those who assisted them in the conducting of the

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Mass. 'Sedilia' is a Latin word for seats, and beyond it is a PISCINA, in a small niche. Here the vessels used in the Mass, and the hands of the officiating priest, were washed at the close of the ceremony. A small drain in the bottom of the piscina's bowl allowed the water to drain away into consecrated ground. Both sedilia and piscina are of the 14th century. Beneath the east window is a screen which it is said was moved to Saxlingham from Norwich Cathedral, although no proof of this has ever been found. Made in the 15th century, the heads of its bays alternate between the newer, fashionable 'perpendicular' motifs, and those of the earlier 'decorated' style. The little niche with a door, on the north side of the sanctuary is called an 'AUMBRY', and the elements of Holy Communion are kept in it, to be taken by our priest to those in the parish who are unwell or in hospital, or are unable for reasons of age or infirmity to get to the church for the communion service. The ORGAN was made by the Norwich firm of Norman & Beard, and organists consider it has a fine tone. A gift to the church from Mrs. Henrietta Steward, it was installed in 1896, and restored in the latter half of the 20th century by Messrs J & R Ince. When the Tractarian changes were made here, it was decided to have one of the new, fashionable robed choirs, but the chancel was not quite wide enough to accommodate two rows of seating both north and south. So the lower parts of the southern walls in the chancel were cut back, in order to allow another pew to be placed there. Thus some choir members sat in the space that had formerly been part of the walling: they still do today!

We have seen that so many things in our church have been given, over the years, as gifts of devotion or thanksgiving. The north aisle was built in 1867, but in 1948 it was consecrated as a chapel, dedicated to St. Andrew, and formed a thanksgiving that no lives were lost in Saxlingham during World War II. The Roll of Honour, inscribed with the names of those who died in the First World War is between the screen and the north aisle. Of the church's earlier memorials, the most spectacular is that on the sanctuary's south wall, to Rev'd. John Baron, DD, who had been Dean of Norwich. He died in 1739, and his wife in 1753, but their two daughters had predeceased them by many years, dying in 1707 and 1712. Like other memorials and ledger slabs in the floor, it brings home to visitors the terrible loss of life among the young in previous centuries. Eleanora Hardwick, aged 17, John

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Warmoll, Gentleman, aged 21, Charlotte Gooch, aged 13, and saddest of all, the two small daughters of curate Farley Wilkinson, one aged eleven months and the second four years ten months. These young parishioners probably died of diseases that could now be easily controlled, or that would be considered innocuous, while some have been eradicated altogether, due to advances in medical science. A modern-day form of memorial is found in some of the kneelers in the church, worked by people of the parish. The earlier series, in the nave, depicts parts of the stained glass, while the

blue series, in the north aisle, covers a wide range of subjects. The red kneelers were worked from materials given in memory of Mrs. Campbell Steward by members of her family, while the blue set's materials were given in memory of Mrs. Alice Nina Gibson, wife of Saxlingham's Doctor.

St. Mary's church has much of historic interest to delight visitors, but far outweighing all the rest is its STAINED GLASS, a superb collection, with modern glass, then windows of the Victorian and Georgian ages, and, before that, glass of the 15th and 14th centuries, back to very early pictorial glass of around 1250, this being of national importance. Much was formerly in the east window, until Messrs. George King & Son, glaziers with a workshop in Norwich, moved and rearranged it in the 1950s. Much of the important glass was placed in the south windows of the church, for maximum effect, as at that time it was not realised how detrimental strong sunlight could be to ancient glass. In our own time, a major restoration of the oldest windows has taken place by Messrs Devlin Plummer, of Great Moulton, who have used new technology to safeguard these treasures, and along the way have revealed the faces of saints which we had never seen before, with a craftsmanship which seemed to border on the magical.

The best way to make a tour of the windows is to start with the youngest, and work backwards in time until you are confronted by Saint Edmund, King and Martyr, in the glorious, vivid colours of 13th century glass. So first is the most westerly window on the south side of the nave, which was given in 1953 by Mr. R.S. Lawrence in memory of his son, who died in 1942. It depicts St. Michael, patron saint of the Royal Air Force. Further down the nave, on the same side, a window from the early years of the 20th century was given by Dr. Webb-Ware in memory of his uncle and aunt, Thomas and Florence Webb-Ware. The main lights depict the Virgin Mary, St. Edmund and St. Withburga, Abbess of a nunnery at Dereham in central Norfolk.

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Above, in smaller panels, Mary holds a lily, Edmund has arrows and Withburga a model of her church, while at the bottom are more small panels with scenes from the saints' lives. Withburga's shows a spring which sprung up in Dereham after her body had been stolen and taken to Ely. (If you are near Dereham and visit the church, walk round to the west end, and you will find that the spring is still there). The designer of the window, with its glowing colours and serene saints, was Hugh Arnold, who lost his life in the First World War.

There is little Victorian glass in Saxlingham. In the east window, the lower central panel shows the Crucifixion, and was dedicated by Frederick Gooch in memory of his father, Archdeacon John Gooch. It dates from 1878. Also, in the north aisle, the central window is a memorial to churchwarden Matthew Sallitt, who died in 1866. The aisle was new when this window was made by Hardmans of Birmingham, and shows the Good Samaritan, in colours which could be considered rather gaudy to modern taste. The window next to it, the easterly one in the north aisle, has glass from the 16th century. Two coats of arms of the Renaissance period belong to Cheshire families - other shields, at Merton, near Watton in south-west Norfolk, pair with them. The two small crowns in the westerly window of this aisle may belong with the shields, and Archdeacon Gooch, mentioned above, probably brought the glass to Saxlingham, as it is known he had friends in Cheshire.

The east window of the aisle, part of the 1867 extension, has been filled with glass of an earlier period. The canopy tops, of about 1400, were a fashionable design of the time, and were possibly once in the east chancel window. Little shaped panels of glass from the same date, show a bishop, an archbishop, and Edward the Confessor. Look for the enchanting little angels of c.1420, playing instruments of the period. One panel of glass is continental; it shows a figure wearing the robe of a friar, with a knotted girdle such as that worn by Franciscans. It is possibly St. Francis of Assisi. We have seen that the nave and aisle have a considerable amount of coloured glass, but all this is merely a foretaste of the glorious glass of the chancel.

The first little window on the right-hand side, the low side window, has more continental glass, the small round panel showing the Virgin Mary and the Christ child, with her mother, St. Anne. The two other panels show a Resurrection and a Nativity, and are 15th century glass which was probably originally in the east window. The north chancel window is from the 15th century, and shows a fragmented series of the

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four Latin Doctors of the Church, Augustine, Ambrose, Gregory and Jerome. Only Jerome, in his Cardinal's hat, is really identifiable. (At Ashill, near Watton, is a complete set of the same figures). Above are 'Norwich' angels, one with a censer and the other with a scourge and nails.

The other three chancel windows were beautifully restored a few years ago. While we are unsure what the subjects of the main lights in the east window were, the top lights are original, and like most of the medieval glass in this window, of the 15th century. Pentecost on the left and Ascension to the right flank the centre panels with the Coronation of the Virgin. This was a favourite medieval subject, but due to its very nature, a prime target for those who ravaged our churches in the 16th and 17th centuries, with no regard for the beauty of the places they left in ruins or the devastation of those who had given costly memorials of lost loved ones. Lower down, the window has two roundels showing signs of the Evangelists, Matthew and John, and monograms with M for St. Mary and IHS for Christ. These have all been dated 1395-1420. There is also heraldic glass, with the arms of the medieval lords of the manors of Nethergate and Saxlingham Thorpe, the latter church having been left to decay in the late 17th century. The rampant lion is for the Verdon family, the wavy edged 'cross engrailed' for the Noones, and three crowns, or 'chess rooks' in heraldic terms, for a member of the Fitzsimon family, whose nephew was a Verdon. All of these were Lords of Nethergate, but the two smaller shields show the arms of the Bouchier and Louvain families, the Morleys, de la Poles and Wingfields, who were associated with Saxlingham Thorpe, and some of whose names are famous in the history of our land.

The central window on the south side has early patterned glass at the bottom: this is grisaille glass, from the French word for grey, and dates from around 1250. Above are two saints, from an original series of twelve. Of the mid-14th century, they depict St. Philip, with a basket of loaves, and St. James the Less, a worker in the cloth trade. He carries a fuller's club, like a hockey stick, used in the preparation of cloth. The curving outline around these saints tell us that they would never have fitted any of the windows here, and they may have come from the top lights of some of the windows in Thorpe's church, the local suggestion always being that the folk of Saxlingham Thorpe duly left their church, as they were ordered to do, in 1688, but

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that they brought their gorgeous ancient glass with them. Notice how the colours in the windows vary – the colours in this window are golds, yellows and browns, the German colour palette, while the last window, the nearest to the church's east end, is suffused with the glorious blue of the earlier French palette.

Here is the earliest pictorial glass in Norfolk, dated about 1250, and with a type of medallion seen in such French cathedrals as Chartres and Bourges, and Canterbury in England. The hands and feet of the saints cut into the surrounding border – a sign of very early glass. Between the two pairs of medallions are diamond shapes in grisaille, some of them patterned with leaves, giving them the name 'maple leaf grisaille'. These date from the early 14th century, but the four roundels, or medallions, are what command our attention. The two saints, John and James, in the top left panel have their names shown, and to their right is a panel showing the beheading of an unknown saint. When the glass was conserved, it was thrilling, for many members of our congregation, to see the face of the victim for the first time, so great was the corrosion that the glass restorers removed. The

lower two roundels are of St. Edmund, King and Martyr. He stands with his hands tied to a tree behind him while the bowman takes aim. The other panel is unique – no other such image of the saint exists. He kneels and offers up the arrows of his martyrdom to God, in a panel of great anguish and beauty.

The people who work and worship here in the 21st century have the enormous privilege of being custodians of a treasure-house. Look around, and you will see that at the back of the north aisle, small chairs and toys are used for the youngest generation in our village, when they attend services. A board at the back of the nave is for prayer requests to be submitted; hymnbooks and service sheets are ready to be handed out. The choir's music is pushed, (not very tidily!) into the shelves above their kneelers, and the organist has a pile of books and music on the organ stool. The bell sallies are neatly looped in the bell-chamber. It's not a monument – it's a powerhouse, just as it has been for nine hundred years. May we ask that, before you leave, you ask for a blessing on all who come to this lovely place? Don't worry if it's difficult to find the words; the folks who have been coming here over the centuries were a very mixed bunch; they came in joy and desolation, in wealth and poverty, in peace and in war. God understood them all, those who used Norman French, and

11.

those who spoke in broad Norfolk. They took away with them a little of the peace and love that pervades our church, as we hope you will.

As Requested by Inspectorate

Submission by Helen Pye [REDACTED] for

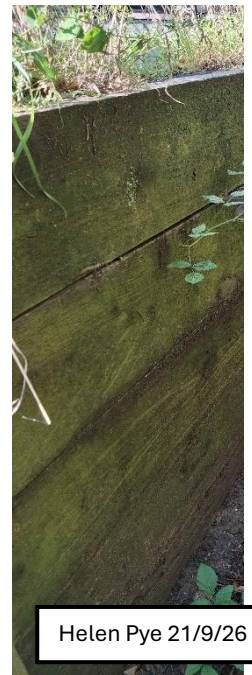
Flooding at Saxlingham Nethergate War Memorial

Saxlingham Floods regularly – with climate change this will not improve.

The proposed AIL could be a severe risk to homes.

- Historically there was a ford from Wash Lane to what is now the often inadequate **WOODEN-SIDED** open culvert drainage ditch built following the 1967 flood running **alongside the proposed AIL route**.
- The drainage system water from Church Hill meets the water from the Wash Lane catchment. Its confluence is as the side of the war memorial on the actual Saxlingham Street. **The actual AIL route**
- An inadequate pipe/conduit which inevitably silts up despite clearing, was inserted, from Wash Lane, by the War Memorial **under the AIL route** to the same ditch.
- So in reality this remains a ford especially between October and April

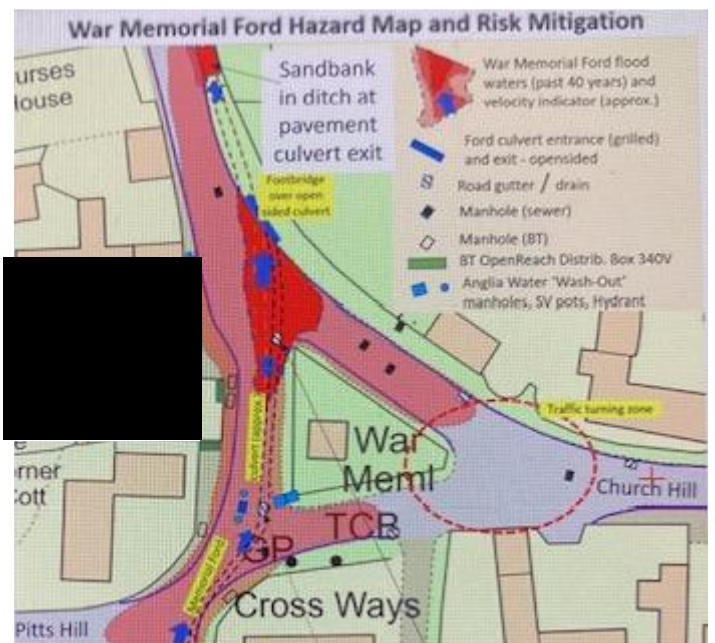
- The water is then intended to go through the open culvert



Helen Pye 21/9/26



Helen Pye 21/9/26

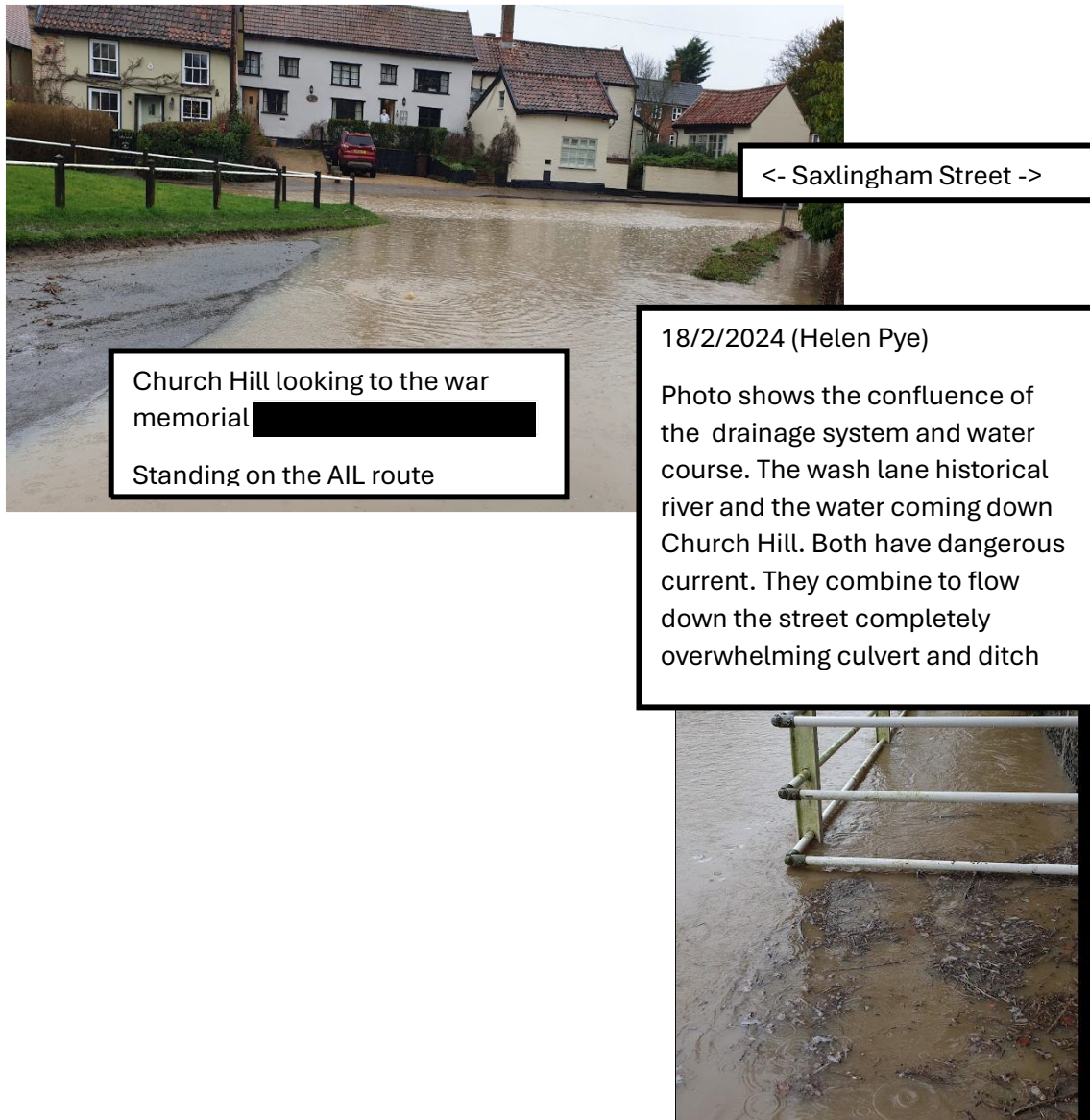


[REDACTED] former Saxlingham Nethergate Flooding Officer 2022



Helen Pye 21/9/26

- There are therefore (in my layman's terms) two kinds of flood
 1. Floods from run off along from Wash Lane: the volume being too great for the pipe and so the water passes the War Memorial [REDACTED] and crosses at the junction of Church Hill and Saxlingham Street. The highly contentious corner on the proposed **AIL route** and enters the open culvert into the wooden sided ditch alongside **the AIL route** on a very regular basis between October and April. **Running over the hidden pipe.**
 2. Every so often the volume of water from the confluence of Wash Lane, combined with the water from Church Hill exceeds the volume of the pipe and ditch and flows excessively down Saxlingham Steet, (**The proposed AIL route**), risking the flooding of houses from both the street and ditch. See photos in appendix A



- **Situation Today**

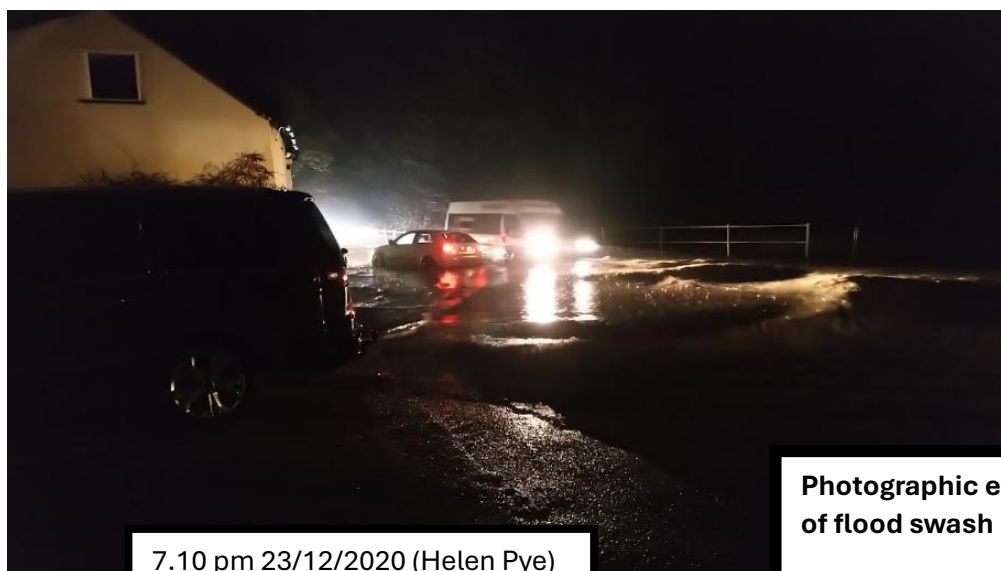
- The volume and velocity of the Wash Lane water, which is field run off, has seemingly dramatically increased since land use has changed from arable to dominantly pasture.
- Climate change has increased the intensity of rainfall with storms such as Babet forecast to arrive more often.
- Norfolk County have literally just been put leaky dams in Wash Lane to try to improve the situation.



- The status quo is hopefully improved in order to prevent the houses at the other end from flooding. **This situation must not be compromised by AIL damage of any kind**
 - The **proposed AIL route runs the length of the Street ditch. This is wooden-sided** and therefore would be at great risk from **the weight and proximity of AIL vehicles** potentially going nearer its wall than current traffic.
 - If the ditch were to cave in **along the proposed AIL route**, the risk of **major flooding** and vehicular swash to many of our cottages would be greatly increased.
 - **On the proposed AIL route** If the pipe under the join of Church Hill and Saxlingham Street were to crack or worse under the weight of the AIL lorry we would be totally at the mercy of the weather. At some point very major flooding would be inevitable.
 - **If the proposed AIL route meant** the railings were to be temporarily removed there would be huge health and safety issues re such a fast flowing deep water ditch being freely accessible.

Appendix A

Evidence of Flooding in Saxlingham in the past



7.10 pm 23/12/2020 (Helen Pye)

Photographic evidence
of flood swash



11.49 pm of 23/12/20 Fire Engines outside [REDACTED]
[REDACTED] came to try to help the village



24/12/ 2020 force of flood water - destroyed ditch

www.underwaterportraitsbyamy.co.uk

[REDACTED]



Saxlingham Nethergate Community Group



20 Oct 2023 · 🌐

Still flooded. Please don't try to get through!!



www.underwaterportraitsbyamy.co.uk



20/10/2023 severe flooding into peoples houses. People obviously do not want photos of this flooding in the public domain.



Fwd: Flooding 2 November 2023



Inbox



[Redacted] 7 days ago
to me ▾

7 days ago



2/11/23 [Redacted]

Saxlingham Resident



Fwd: Flooding 2nd January 2024



Inbox



[Redacted] 7 days ago
to me ▾

7 days ago



2/1/24 [Redacted]

Saxlingham Resident

Wash Lane water catchment area

