

Application Number: F/YR13/0614/F

Minor

Parish/Ward: Wisbech St Mary / Parson Drove/Wisbech St Mary

Date Received: 12 August 2013

Expiry Date: 07 October 2013

Applicant: Mr and Mrs P Knight

Agent: Mr R Swann, Swann Edwards Architecture

Proposal: Erection of a 2-storey 3-bed dwelling

Location: Land south east of Finchley, High Road, Wisbech St Mary

Site Area/Density: 0.02ha/2dph

Reason before Committee: The level of support received

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY/RECOMMENDATION

The proposal is a resubmission of a previous refusal. It has overcome two of the previous reasons for refusal, namely the unacceptable loss of trees and the inappropriate subdivision of the site. However the primary reason for refusal, the location of the site in relation to the existing built form, remains relevant. The dwelling would be positioned behind the established building line resulting in a tandem form of development. As the area is strictly characterised by linear frontage development the proposal would appear as an incongruous feature, to the detriment of the qualities of the area. By pushing the dwelling back within the site to overcome the previous reasons for refusal, the proposal is now wholly outside of the established settlement. No policy justification has been provided for the location of the dwelling and concerns are raised with regard to the impact of developing this site and the erosion of the visual amenities and qualities of the countryside.

The proposal is contrary to policies of the Development Plan and it is therefore recommended that planning permission is refused.

2. HISTORY

Of relevance to this proposal is:

2.1	F/YR12/0354/O	Erection of a single-storey dwelling	Refused – 04.07.2012
-----	---------------	--------------------------------------	----------------------

3. PLANNING POLICIES

3.1 National Planning Policy Framework:

Paragraph 2: Planning law requires that application for planning permission must be determined in accordance with the development plan.

Paragraph 14: Presumption in favour of sustainable development.

Paragraph 17: Seek to ensure high quality design and a good standard of amenity for all existing and future occupants.

Paragraph 58: Development should respond to local character and be visually attractive as a result of good architecture and landscaping.

3.2 **Draft Fenland Core Strategy:**

CS1: A Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development

CS3: Spatial Strategy, the Settlement Hierarchy and the Countryside

CS15: Facilitating the Creation of a More Sustainable Transport Network in Fenland

CS16: Delivering and Protecting High Quality Environments

3.3 **Fenland District Wide Local Plan:**

E8: Landscape and amenity protection

H3: Settlement Area Boundaries

4. **CONSULTATIONS**

- | | | |
|-----|--|---|
| 4.1 | <i>Parish Council:</i> | Recommend refusal, the development is situated at the back of the property behind the building line. |
| 4.2 | <i>North Level Internal Drainage Board:</i> | No comments |
| 4.3 | <i>FDC Environmental Protection:</i> | No objections |
| 4.4 | <i>FDC Trees:</i> | The proposed layout retains most of the trees, no issues raised with the proposed removals. A method statement will be required to ensure adequate protection of retained trees during any construction should the application be approved. |

4.5 **Neighbours:**

3 letters of objection, concerns are as follows:

- loss of privacy,
- out of keeping with the building line,
- loss of trees,
- loss of wildlife,
- anxiety to elderly neighbours,
- noise and disturbance,
- proximity of access road to neighbouring properties,
- precedent,
- highway safety given proximity of school visitors parking on highway,
- an application for a single-storey dwelling was refused on this site previously, this proposal is now for a 2-storey dwelling,
- other development which is out of keeping with the building line has been refused elsewhere in the village,
- preference has always been given to frontage development, not garden grabbing,
- no need for new dwellings in the village,
- the local infrastructure is unable to cope.

6 letters of support received, comments as follows:

- good design which will be an asset,
- the dwelling would be in an environmentally good position,
- no reason why it cannot go ahead,
- it will add to the number of quality homes in the village,
- the development does not block anyone's view,
- it does not take up agricultural land.

5. **SITE DESCRIPTION**

- 5.1 The site is located on the southern side of High Road with the majority of the land positioned behind the established building line and outside of the established settlement of Wisbech St Mary. The site currently provides garden land to the existing dwelling known as 'Finchley' and it is heavily landscaped. The area is strictly characterised by road frontage development.

6. **PLANNING ASSESSMENT**

- 6.1 The key considerations for this application are:
- Principle and policy implications
 - History
 - Design, layout and residential amenities
 - Other matters

(a) Principle and policy implications

Part of the site lies within the settlement of Wisbech St Mary albeit on land which is positioned behind the established building line. The dwelling itself is positioned beyond the built up limits of the village however no justification has been provided for the dwelling in this location. The proposal is therefore contrary to countryside housing policies.

Design policies within the current Local Plan, the emerging Core Strategy and guidance contained within the NPPF require new development to respond to local character in terms of materials, scale, layout and landscaping, in addition such schemes should not have an adverse impact on highway safety, neighbouring amenities or the natural environment.

(b) History

Outline planning permission for a single-storey dwelling was refused on this site in 2012 under delegated powers. The refusal reasons were as follows:

1. The proposed dwelling by virtue of its location would have a tenuous relationship with the road frontage and would appear incongruous in this position. Accordingly the proposed dwelling would unacceptably harm the character and appearance of the area contrary to Policies H3 and E8 of the Fenland District Wide Local Plan and to the National Planning Policy Framework which seek to secure development which respects and is sympathetic to the character of the area.
2. The proposed development would result in the loss of a number of significant mature trees which provide a group feature of high landscape value. Accordingly the proposal would be detrimental to the character and appearance of the area and contrary to Policy E3 of the Fenland District Wide Local Plan 1993.
3. The proposed development by virtue of the subdivision of the site would create a poor residential environment for potential occupier of the proposed dwelling and in so doing would result in an unacceptable reduction of amenity space available for the dwelling known as Finchley, High Road, Wisbech St Mary. As such the proposal is contrary to the provisions of Policy ENV7 of the East of England Plan 2008; Policy E8 of the Fenland District Wide Local Plan 1993; and to the guidance contained within the National Planning Policy Framework.

The subdivision of the plot and the siting of the dwelling have been revised since the previous refusal and therefore refusal reasons 2 and 3 have been overcome. However as the dwelling remains in a backland position, creating a tandem form of development, refusal reason 1 still remains relevant. The revisions to the scheme to overcome refusal reasons 1 and 2 have resulted in pushing the dwelling further back thereby encroaching further into the countryside.

(c) Design, layout and residential amenities

The dwelling is positioned to the rear of the existing dwelling, behind the established building line. High Road is strictly characterised by linear frontage development and it is therefore considered that the proposed tandem form of development would appear as an incongruous feature which is out of keeping with, and detrimental to the character of the area. The position of the dwelling to the rear of the site would appear as an inappropriate feature within the surroundings which will start to erode the character of the open countryside. Although the parking, access and design of the dwelling are workable, the principle of a dwelling on this site remains contrary to planning policies.

(d) Other Matters

A large amount of local representation has been received and the comments have been summarised in section 4.5 of this report. Although the comments in support have been noted they do not outweigh the primary concern relating to the principle of a dwelling in this location.

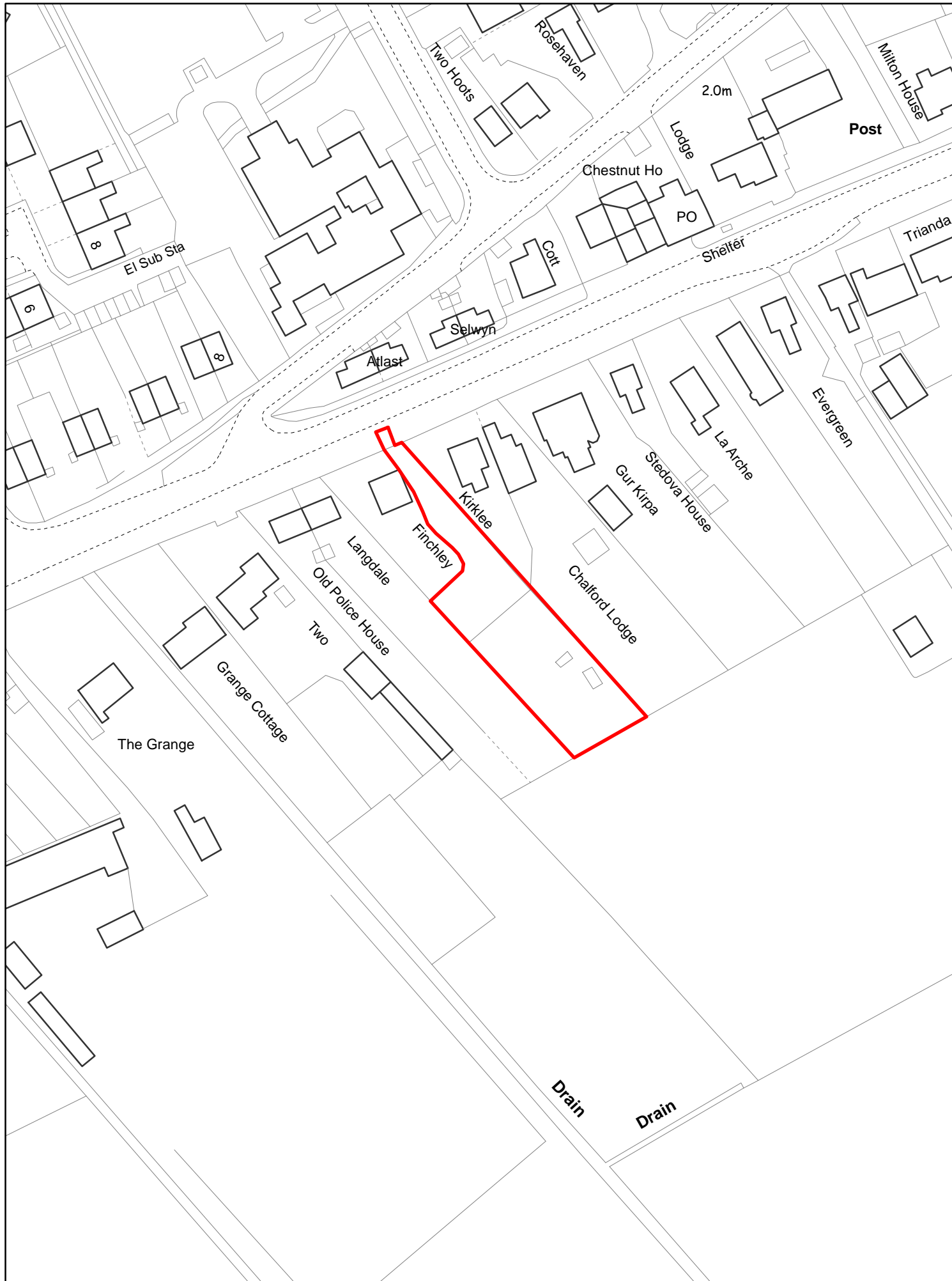
7. CONCLUSION

- 7.1 Although the proposal has overcome two of the previous refusal reasons, the location of the site behind the established building line remains a cause for concern. The dwelling would result in a tandem form of development which would appear as an incongruous feature within an area which is strictly characterised by linear road frontage development. The position of the building, beyond the established settlement and with no justification, would begin to erode the open countryside which would be to the detriment of the character and visual amenities of the area. The proposal is contrary to policies of the Development Plan and it is therefore recommended that planning permission is refused.

8. RECOMMENDATION

Refuse

1. **The proposed dwelling by virtue of its location would have a tenuous relationship with the road frontage and would appear incongruous in this position. Accordingly the proposed dwelling would unacceptably harm the character and appearance of the area contrary to Policies H3 and E8 of the Fenland District Wide Local Plan, CS16 of the emerging Core Strategy (Submission version September 2013), Section 07 of the National Planning Policy Framework which seek to secure development which respects and is sympathetic to the character of the area.**
2. **The proposal would result in an unjustified residential development within the open countryside which would begin to erode the quality and visual amenities of the area. The development is therefore contrary to H3 of the Fenland District Wide Local Plan, CS3 of the emerging Core Strategy (Submission version September 2013), and Section 06 of the National Planning Policy Framework.**



Created on: 23/08/2013

© Crown Copyright and database rights 2013 Ordnance Survey 10023778

F/YR13/0614/F

Scale = 1:1,250



