

**Application Number: FYR13/0905/F**

**Major**

**Parish/Ward: Roman Bank**

**Date Received: 5 December 2013**

**Expiry Date: 6 March 2014.**

**Applicant: Roddons Housing Association**

**Agent: Mr T Welland, The Design Partnership (Ely) Ltd.**

**Proposal: Erection of 12 x 2-storey dwellings comprising 8 x 2-bed and 4 x 3-bed with associated sheds and 2.1m high (max) close boarded fence with trellis over**

**Location: Land north east of Pinchpenny Farm, Broad Drove East, Tydd St Giles**

**Site Area: 0.43 hectares**

**Reason before Committee: The Parish Council's recommendation is contrary to Officer recommendation and at the request of Cllr Seaton as he considers that the proposed number of dwellings is excessive taking into account existing dwelling numbers in the locality and concerns are also raised regarding the impact on the locality.**

## **1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY/RECOMMENDATION**

This application is a full planning application for the erection of 12 affordable housing units at Broad Drove East, Tydd St Giles. The site is completely detached from the established settlement, within a rural location and currently comprises agricultural land.

Whilst the benefits relating to the provision of affordable housing are acknowledged concerns have been raised with regard to the impact of the proposal in terms of its detachment from the main settlement and the impact on the open countryside. In addition there are flood risk and highway safety issues arising from the development. These concerns present a significant conflict with planning policies surrounding the scheme and, due to their amount and range, are considered to outweigh the benefits gained from the proposal. It is therefore recommended that planning permission is refused.

## **2. HISTORY**

There is no history relevant to this application.

## **3. PLANNING POLICIES**

### **3.1 National Planning Policy Framework:**

Paragraph 2: Planning law requires that applications 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 55: Avoid isolated homes in the countryside unless there are special circumstances.

Paragraph 109: Conserving and enhancing the natural environment.

### 3.2 **Fenland Core Strategy – Submission Version September 2013:**

CS1: Presumption in favour of sustainable development.

CS3: Spatial strategy, the Settlement Hierarchy and the Countryside

CS5: Meeting Housing Need.

CS12: Rural Areas Development Policy

CS14 Part B: Flood Risk and Drainage.

CS16: Delivering and Protecting High Quality Environments across the District.

### 3.3 **Fenland District Wide Local Plan:**

H3 – Settlement Development Area Boundaries

H14 – Affordable Housing Rural Exceptions.

E8 – Proposals for new development.

## 4. **CONSULTATIONS**

### 4.1 ***Parish Council:***

Support the application subject to the following conditions:

- residents who have lived in the village for 5 years or more should be given priority for the development,
- none of the houses can be sublet.

### 4.2 ***Environment Agency:***

The Flood Risk Assessment is acceptable for the proposed development, the North Level IDB should be consulted.

4.3	<b><i>Anglian Water:</i></b>	A surface water strategy condition is required.
4.4	<b><i>North Level Internal Drainage Board:</i></b>	No objection, details of surface water disposal are required.
4.5	<b><i>CCC Highways:</i></b>	<p>The development is expected to generate 96 vehicular movements per day, the site does not have good access to public transport, without the provision of a quality footway the proposal is unacceptable from a highway safety point of view particularly given the narrow carriageway. The following should be addressed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- improvements between Broad Drove East between the site and High Broadgate should be identified,</li> <li>- provision of a footway link,</li> <li>- provision of street lighting,</li> <li>- provision of visibility splays,</li> <li>- the turning areas for plots 1 and 12 are unworkable,</li> <li>- the footways into the site should extend a minimum of 1.8m past the ramp to convey pedestrians to the shared surface,</li> <li>- a 5.5m wide shared surface will suffice.</li> </ul>
4.6	<b><i>EDF Energy:</i></b>	Comments awaited.
4.7	<b><i>Police Senior Architectural Liaison Officer:</i></b>	Support the application due to it meeting the aims of reducing crime and fear of crime for future residents.
4.8	<b><i>Housing Strategy/Enabling Officer:</i></b>	The application is supported.
4.9	<b><i>FDC Housing and Development:</i></b>	Comments awaited.
4.10	<b><i>FDC Scientific Officer:</i></b>	No objections.
4.11	<b><i>CCC Growth and Economy:</i></b>	No contributions required as the site is 100% affordable housing.
4.12	<b><i>Local Residents:</i></b>	<p>Objections received from 10 households. Comments as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- there is no mains drainage in this part of the village;</li> <li>- the proposal will exacerbate the already low pressure;</li> </ul>

- the speed limit is 70mph which is too dangerous for children living on the estate;
- loss of privacy;
- impact on health and well being from loss of rural feel;
- outside the Development Area Boundary;
- not an appropriate site, not an appropriate development;
- no pavements;
- no street lighting;
- the proposed development does not relate to the form and orientation of buildings or the street pattern;
- it would resulting parking along the highway;
- affordable housing should be integrated within the village;
- only one tree is shown on the land opposite the site;
- implications on the remainder of the field;
- a badger has been killed in close proximity to the site however the biodiversity checklist says that there is no evidence of badgers in the vicinity;
- overdevelopment in view of character of the area;
- Frances House was included in a photograph within the submission however were not directly consulted;
- the proposal is on grade1 agricultural land;
- the proposal is contrary to the Core Strategy;
- CS3 states that development will normally be limited to infilling;
- development in the countryside should be strictly controlled;
- the density and design is not in keeping with the style and character of the village;
- the number of houses will exceed the village quota and should therefore only be considered with support from a neighbourhood plan exercise – no such exercise has been carried out;
- there are more appropriate sites in other towns and villages where the infrastructure can support the number of units;
- the 'need' is questionable and out of date;

- the speed limit along the road is too high;
- precedent;
- this is not the place for larger developments;
- the Parish Council appears to be decided in favour of the development without holding any formal meetings;
- only 30% of new housing should be affordable;
- the proposal does not meet the requirements of the Tydd St Giles Housing needs Survey July 2007;
- noise and disturbance;
- barn owls and bats are frequently seen on the site;
- there is no mains gas;
- there is insufficient capacity at the school to cater for the children housed in the development;
- concerned that the local healthcare facility has insufficient capacity to cater for the proposal;
- there are better plots available closer to the village;
- loss of value to neighbouring properties;
- loss of view;
- no reference to an arboricultural report on the mature trees located towards the western boundary;
- flood risk;
- a detour will be required if the road is dug up;
- the land is not suitable for development as it is heavy clay and prone to flooding;
- erecting fences and houses within 9m of the water course would be illegal;
- increase in traffic;
- substantial change in character of area from rural to a housing estate;
- no facilities in the village for shopping;
- Tydd St Giles has reached its maximum of building plots;
- social problems with so many affordable houses in one location.

## 5. SITE DESCRIPTION

- 5.1 The site comprises an area of agricultural land beyond the established settlement of Tydd St Giles. The area is rural in character with a few sporadic houses within the vicinity. The site affords a long view across the open countryside and has open boundaries to the north, south and east. The western boundary, which adjoins Pinchpenny Farm, is formed by landscaping. The site is located within flood zone 3 and along the northern side of Broad Drove which is a narrow countryside carriageway.

## 6. PLANNING ASSESSMENT

- 6.1 This is a full application for the erection of 12 dwellings. The applicant is Roddons Housing Association and the proposal is for the site to provide 100% Affordable Housing to serve housing need in Tydd St Giles. The proposal will see a development of 8 x 2-bed dwellings and 4 x 3-bed dwellings in 6 semi-detached groups. All of the properties are to be 2-storey with private rear amenity space and 2 parking spaces for each dwelling.

The key considerations for this application are:

- Relevant Policy
- Layout and Design
- Flood Risk

### Relevant Policy

This application has been assessed in line with the Policies listed at the beginning of this report.

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) seeks to promote sustainable development in rural areas where it will maintain the vitality of rural communities. This is further supported by the policies within the Local Plan and Emerging Core Strategy where it is stipulated that new development in villages will be supported where it contributes to the sustainability of the settlement and does not harm the wide, open character of the countryside. The NPPF advises that Local Planning Authorities (LPAs) should deliver a wide choice of high quality homes, widen opportunities for home ownership and create sustainable, inclusive and mixed communities. (Paragraph 50)

Policy H14 of the Fenland District Wide Local Plan, 1993 advises that the District Council will 'in exceptional circumstances consider releasing unallocated land outside development area boundaries for the provision of affordable housing to meet special local needs.' The policy includes a number of criteria for the provision of affordable housing which includes the retention of the dwellings as affordable and availability for local people, the capability for long term management, and the need for the site to adjoin a settlement where there are adequate local services and facilities. The Policy advises that the scheme should meet highway requirements and the development must be subject to appropriate legal agreements.

Policy CS3 identifies Tydd St Giles as a small village where 'development will be considered on its merits but will normally be of a very limited nature and normally be limited in scale to residential infilling or a small business opportunity'. In addition Policy CS5 advises that the affordable housing mix should be informed by and be compatible with the latest government guidance and an up to date local Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA).

As the site is outside of any defined settlement core Policy CS12 is also relevant which lists the criteria for developments in the open countryside. This includes (amongst other things):

- i) that the site should be in or adjacent to the existing developed footprint of the village,
- ii) would not have an adverse impact on the character and appearance of the surrounding countryside and farmland,
- iii) is of a scale and in a location that is in keeping with the core shape and form of the settlement and would not adversely harm its character and appearance,
- iv) would not extend existing linear features of the settlement or result in ribbon development.
- v) Would not result in the loss of important spaces and would not result in the loss of high grade agricultural land without evidence to justify the loss.

The key consideration for this scheme, given that it is a fully affordable housing development in conjunction with the SHMA and local lettings needs, has to be the balance between the housing exceptions policy of the 1993 Local Plan (H14) and the rural housing policy of the emerging Core Strategy (CS12). Careful consideration has been given to both policies however it should be noted that policy H14 states that 'the District Council will, in exceptional circumstances, consider releasing unallocated land outside development area boundaries for the provision of affordable housing to meet special local needs... subject to the following provisions: ...the site should be in or adjoining a settlement where there are adequate local services and facilities (schools, shops, public transport, utilities, etc.), the development should also be of a scale appropriate to the size and character of the settlement and should not be harmful to the character of the settlement or the surrounding countryside... the scheme should meet all other planning and highway requirements.'

The proposal is completely detached from the continuous built up settlement of the village, is of a suburban nature (in a rural location), it fails to meet highway safety standards in terms of visibility, footway and lighting provision, and is within a high risk flood zone. It is therefore contrary to the provisions of H14 and CS12. These factors, when balanced against the need to deliver affordable homes within the area, are cumulatively afforded more weight on this occasion given their extent and range.

#### Layout and Design

The proposed layout of the site involves 6 pairs of semi-detached dwellings arranged in a cul-de-sac form. The suburban nature of this arrangement would appear incongruous and harmful to this countryside setting which is characterised by open land and a few sporadic housing units.

There will be 3 new accesses onto Broad Drove, 2 individual accesses serving plots 1 and 12 and a central shared access serving the majority of the development. CCC Highways have raised concerns as the turning areas for plots 1 and 12 are not workable and that sufficient visibility has not been shown on the drawings. In addition, CCC Highways have requested that a footpath and lighting which links the development site up with the village is provided. The need to provide a footpath demonstrates the unsuitability of the site in terms of its location in relation to the established settlement. Furthermore it raises further concerns in that the provision of a footpath and associated lighting would dramatically alter the character of this rural carriageway, to the detriment of the visual amenities of the countryside.

Amended drawings are currently being prepared by the Agent to overcome the objections raised by CCC Highways. It has been requested by Highways that reasons for refusal on highway safety grounds are imposed until such a time that their concerns have been satisfied. Members will be updated on the situation at the Committee meeting.

The design of the dwellings, their height, parking and garden provision raise no concerns.

#### Flood Risk

The application site is within Flood Zone 3 and, although the Flood Risk Assessment satisfies the site specific requirements, concerns are raised with regard to the suitability of the site for development when there other sequentially preferable sites within the area which are at lower risk of flooding within the village. CS14 stipulates (amongst other criteria) that development in Flood Zones 2 and 3 will only be permitted following the successful completion of a sequential test. There is other land available within the village which lies within lower flood risk areas and would have better links to the core of the village. The site is therefore not sequentially preferable in terms of flood risk and as such fails to comply with CS14 and Section 10 of the NPPF.

## **7. CONCLUSION**

- 7.1 The proposal has been assessed in line with the National and Local Policies listed at the beginning of the report. Whilst the provision of 12 affordable housing units is considered to be of benefit in terms of meeting an identified housing need, the wider concerns in terms of sustainability, flood risk and the impact on the character of the open countryside are considered to outweigh these benefits. It is therefore recommended that the application is refused.

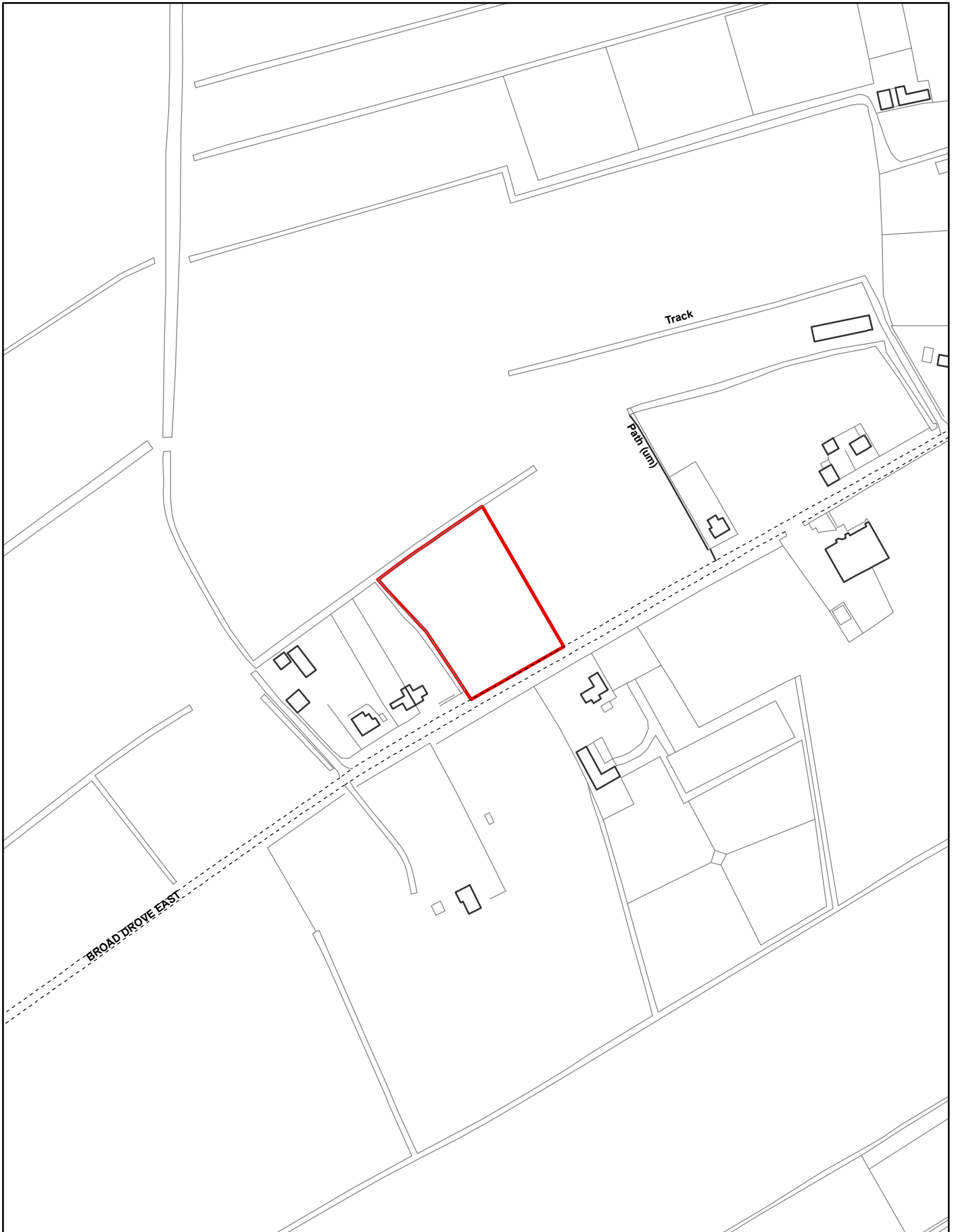
## **8. RECOMMENDATION**

### **Refuse**

1. **The proposed development, by virtue of its detachment from the main settlement would fail to comply with the provisions of Policy H3 of the Fenland Local Plan, 1993 and Policies CS3 and CS12 of the Fenland Local Plan Core Strategy – Submission Version September 2013.**



- 2. The development is located within Flood Zone 3 despite there being land available elsewhere in the settlement within areas of lower flood risk. The application is therefore contrary to CS14 of the Fenland Local Plan Core Strategy (proposed submission 2013) and Section 10 of the National Planning Policy Framework.**
- 3. By virtue of the number and layout of proposed dwellings the proposal would result in a development which is suburban in character. The development would therefore appear as an incongruous feature within the open countryside, to the detriment of the rural locality. The application is therefore contrary to E8 of the Fenland District Wide Local Plan, CS16 of the Fenland Local Plan Core Strategy (proposed submission 2013) and Section 07 of the National Planning Policy Framework.**
- 4. The proposal does not demonstrate adequate vehicular visibility or appropriate parking and turning for plots 1 and 12. The development therefore fails to address highway safety contrary to E8 of the Fenland District Wide Local Plan, CS15 of the Fenland Local Plan Core Strategy (proposed submission 2013) and Section 04 of the National Planning Policy Framework.**



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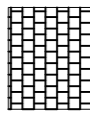
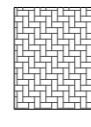

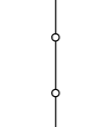


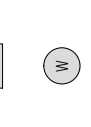







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DO NOT SCALE FROM THIS DRAWING  
 THE GENERAL CONTRACTOR IS TO CHECK ALL DIMENSIONS ON SITE AND REPORT ANY DISCREPANCIES TO THE SUPERVISING OFFICER.  
 ALL DIMENSIONS ARE SHOWN IN mm UNLESS OTHERWISE STATED.

**Plan Key:**

-  New adoptable roadway into site with 1.8m wide footpath to both sides
-  Tactical block paving to 6.0m wide shared surface roadway with 0.5m service strip and turning area
-  100 x 200mm block pavers in herring bone pattern to parking spaces
-  450x450mm paving slabs to footpaths and bin collection point
-  1.0m metal rail fencing
-  1.2m post, wire and chain link fencing
-  1.8m high close boarded fence. Gates to have minimum 1.0m clear opening and shall be lockable to Secured by Design standards.
-  Proposed location of wheeled bin storage (300 x 240 litre per dwelling)
-  Indicative location of 210 litre water out
-  Indicative location of 220 litre compost bin
-  Timber garden shed to provide cycle storage for a min. of two cycles and 1m² tool storage
-  Indicative location of rotary clothes drier
-  Proposed specimen tree to approval of Local Authority.
-  Existing trees of site unaffected by proposals
-  Proposed landscaping to approval of Local Authority

Indicative existing and proposed levels  
 e: 2.10  
 e: 2.07

Note: External lighting is to be provided in accordance with BS 5489  
 A lighting design is to be carried out by a Lighting Engineer following planning approval and further consultation with the Architectural Liaison Officer will be required to ensure conformity with Secured by Design.

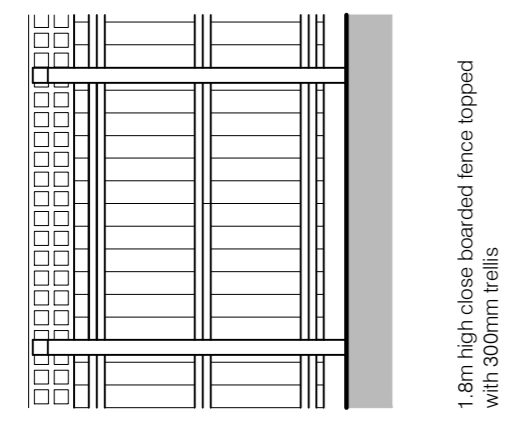
Revisions	Date	Amendments
A	Dec 13	Planning Validation

**The Design Partnership**  
 The Design Partnership (Ed) Ltd  
 100 High Street, Chatteris  
 Cambridgeshire PE16 6NN  
 Tel: 01354 693111  
 Fax: 01354 694672

Job Title  
 Proposed Affordable Housing Development  
 Broad Drive Tydd St Giles for  
 Roddons Housing Association

Drawing Title  
 PLANNING APPLICATION  
 Site and Location Plan

Date Oct 13  
 Scale 1:200 1:2500  
 Dwnn aw  
 Dwg No. CA-628-P01  
 Rev. A



**SITE PLAN**

NORTH  
 Indicative

scale 1:200