

**Application Number: F/YR13/0033/F**

**Minor**

**Parish/Ward: March Town Council/March North**

**Date Received: 14 January 2014**

**Expiry Date: 11 March 2014**

**Applicant: Mr & Mrs A Varney**

**Agent: Mr R Swann – Swann Edwards Architecture**

**Proposal: Erection of 2 x 2-storey 3-bed dwellings**

**Location: Land North West Of 321 Norwood Road Fronting, Smiths Chase, March, Cambridgeshire.**

**Site Area: 298m<sup>2</sup>**

**Reason before Committee: Called in by Cllr Owen in support of application on grounds of access, residential amenity and consistency.**

## 1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY/RECOMMENDATION

This application seeks full planning permission for the Erection of 2 no 2-storey 3 bedroom dwellings at Land North West Of 321 Norwood Road Fronting, Smiths Chase, March, Cambridgeshire.

The key issues to consider are;

- Policy Implications;
- Layout, Design and Impact on Amenity;
- Other matters

This application has been assessed in line with Local and National Planning Policies in relation to issues including the form and character of the area; the layout, design, scale and appearance of the proposal, the impact upon the residential amenities of the occupants of neighbouring properties.

The site lies within the settlement of March within an established residential area therefore the principal of further residential development in this area is acceptable subject to it meeting other relevant local and national planning policies.

In this instance, it is considered that the proposed development is not an acceptable form of development in light of the requirements of Policies E8 of the Fenland District Wide Plan (1993) and CS16 of the emerging Fenland Local Plan-Core Strategy (2014) and the requirement for 'good design' as outlined in paragraph 55 of the NPPF. It is therefore recommended for refusal.

## 2. HISTORY

Of relevance to this proposal is:

- 2.1 F/YR13/0813/F – 2 x 2-storey 3 bedroom dwellings at Land North West Of 321 Norwood Road Fronting, Smiths Chase, March, Cambridgeshire. –

Application Withdrawn

### 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 56: Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development
- Paragraph 64: Permission should be refused for development of poor design

#### 3.2 Emerging Fenland Core Strategy:

- CS3: Spatial Strategy, The Settlement Hierarchy and the Countryside.  
CS16: High Quality Environments

#### 3.3 Fenland District Wide Local Plan:

- H3: Development should be within existing settlement  
E8: Landscape and Amenity Protection

### 4. CONSULTATIONS

- |                                                       |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
|-------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 4.1 <b><i>March Town Council</i></b>                  | Recommend Approval                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
| 4.2 <b><i>Middle Level Commissioners</i></b>          | No comments received at time of going to Planning Committee                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| 4.3 <b><i>CCC Highways</i></b>                        | No objections in principle subject to the provision of 10m overall length of parking.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| 4.4 <b><i>FDC Contaminated Land Officer</i></b>       | No objections                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| 4.7 <b><i>Local Residents/ Interested parties</i></b> | 9 letters of objection from neighbouring properties raising the following concerns;<br><br>-Out of character with existing built form.<br>-Overlooking/ loss of privacy<br>-Increase in traffic<br>-Compromises the existing turning bay<br>-Cramped development/ lack of private amenity space<br>-Overshadowing<br>-Devaluation of property<br>-Issues over land ownership/ access rights |

## 5. **SITE DESCRIPTION**

- 5.1 This site currently forms approximately 1/3 of the rear garden space for an existing property at 321 Norwood Road which adjoins the existing turning head at Smiths Chase. Smiths Chase is a cul de sac comprising of 7 No single storey dwellings all of similar scale and age and 2 No 2 storey dwellings at the entrance linking to Norwood Road. The site lies within Flood Zone 1.

## 6. **PLANNING ASSESSMENT**

- 6.1 The key issues to consider are;
- Policy Implications;
  - Layout, Design and Impact on Amenity;
  - Other Matters

### 6.2 **Policy Considerations –**

The site, which has been the subject of pre-application advice, is located within the established footprint of March which under Policy CS3 is designated, along with the other market towns for the majority of new housing. Policy CS16 of the emerging Fenland Local Plan – Core Strategy (September 2013) seeks to ensure that high quality environments are delivered and protected throughout the district. It sets out relevant criteria including requiring development to be of a scale that is in keeping with the shape and form of the settlement pattern, does not adversely impact upon the amenity of neighbouring users, and provides sufficient private amenity space in line with policy requirements. It should be noted that development will only be permitted if it can be demonstrated that the proposal meets all of the listed criteria. Similarly Policy E8 of the existing Fenland District Wide Local Plan (1993) requires that proposals should be of a design compatible with their surroundings and have regard to the amenities of adjoining properties.

Furthermore, national policy in Section 7 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) attaches great importance and weight to the design of the built environment, a key aspect of sustainable development which is indivisible from good planning. Therefore, in light of national and local policies it is appropriate to assess the proposal in terms of form and character, design, layout and impact upon amenity.

### 6.3 **Design, Layout and Impact on Amenity –**

The proposal features 2 no. 2-storey semi-detached dwellings.

The character of the immediate area is predominantly single storey detached dwellings located within a small cul de sac. Whilst the applicant has pointed out that 2-storey dwellings are located at the entrance to Smiths Chase, it is clear that these front and are designed to continue the flow of 2-storey properties along Norwood Road and can be read separately to the built form within the cul de sac of Smiths Chase. It is therefore considered that the application site holds a stronger relationship with the single storey detached dwellings that characterise the bulk of Smiths Chase.

The design of the proposed dwellings will introduce 2-storey dwellings of a contemporary design, with dormer windows to the 1<sup>st</sup> floor bedrooms which are sited over the integral garage/ parking space. A mixture of brickwork and render finish is proposed with slate-type tiles to the roof (specifics to be agreed). Parking provision for 2 cars per property with 10m total length has been provided. Although the tandem parking arrangement is not ideal, it does meet with the Council's current parking standards.

The dwellings are proposed to be sited within what is rear garden land of No. 321 Norwood Road. They will front and be accessed however via Smiths Chase. Plot 2 to the east will be sited immediately behind an existing garage which serves No's 8 and 9 Smiths Chase. There is no proposal to remove this garage which will therefore leave the frontage of Plot 2 mostly obscured by this double garage and only 1m gap distance between the rear of the garage and the frontage of the proposed dwelling which is considered poor in design terms.

Plot 1 (west) will be sited approximately 7m from the front lounge window of No. 7 Smiths Chase. This is an unacceptable situation which will cause overbearing and overshadowing to this existing dwelling. In addition the functional private amenity space allocated for Plot 1 is approximately 22% of the total plot due mainly to the awkward plot shape and therefore far less than the 33% guidance as set out in section (h) of CS16. Given that a 3-bedroom dwelling has been proposed, this is considered to be unsatisfactory for future occupants of the dwelling.

Due to the narrow depth of the site, the dwellings will be positioned approximately 1m from the rear boundary and therefore will impose on the private amenity space of 323 Norwood Road. Although roof lights are proposed to mitigate against overlooking, the scale and siting of the dwellings will be overbearing on this private amenity space.

It is considered that the design, layout and siting of the proposed dwellings on the plot would result in an undesirable, cramped and poor relationship between both the existing and proposed dwellings thereby adversely impacting upon the amenity of the existing and future residents. In addition the proposal fails to respect the form and character of the area by introducing a design incongruous to the built form surrounding it.

Therefore, it is considered that the proposed development would be contrary to policy CS16 of the emerging Fenland Local Plan – Core Strategy and E8 of the existing Fenland District Wide Local Plan and would not be consistent with the 'good design' principles of the NPPF.

#### **6.4 Other Matters –**

Neighbours comments in respect of the impact of the development on the turning head have been considered, however the turning head will be unaffected by the proposal.

In addition, some residents have raised concerns over land ownership disputes and rights of access. These comments are also noted, however these are civil matters and it is considered that no prejudice has been suffered during the application. Likewise the perceived devaluation of a person's property as a result of development as raised by one resident, is not a material planning consideration.

## **7. CONCLUSION**

### **7.1**

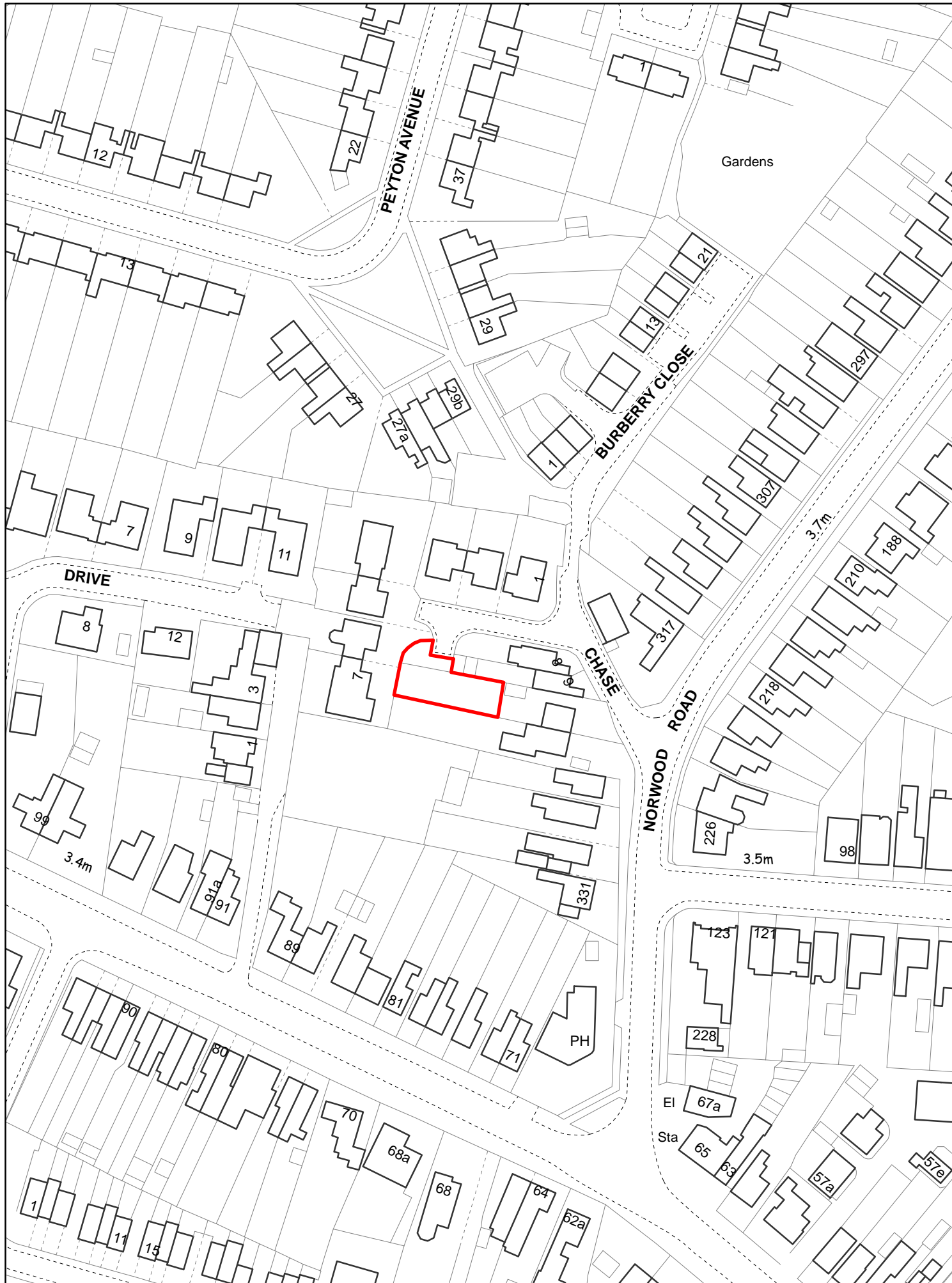
This application has been assessed in line with Local and National Planning Policies in relation to issues including the form and character of the area; the layout, design, scale and appearance of the proposal and the impact upon the residential amenities of the occupants of neighbouring properties.

In this instance, it is considered that the proposed development is not acceptable in light of the requirements of Policies E8 of the Fenland District Wide Plan (1993), criteria (d) of Policy CS12 and CS16 of the emerging Fenland Local Plan-Core Strategy (2013) and the provisions of Section 7 'Good Design' of the NPPF.

## **8. RECOMMENDATION**

### **Refuse**

- 1. The proposed development would result in a form of development that is out of keeping with the character and core shape of this area. The development of this site is therefore, unacceptable and is contrary to Policy E8 of the Fenland DWLP (1993) and CS16 of the emerging Fenland Local Plan-Core Strategy (Sept 2013) and the requirement for 'good design' within paragraph 56 of the NPPF.**
- 2. The proposed development by virtue of design, layout and siting of the dwellings on the site would result in an undesirable and poor relationship between both the existing and proposed dwellings. This would impact upon the amenity of the existing and future residents in terms of both the proposed and neighbouring properties. Therefore, it is considered that the proposed development would be contrary to policy CS16 of the emerging Fenland Local Plan – Core Strategy (Sept 2013), E8 of the existing Fenland District Wide Local Plan (1993), and would not meet the requirement for 'good design' as outlined within paragraph 56 of the NPPF.**



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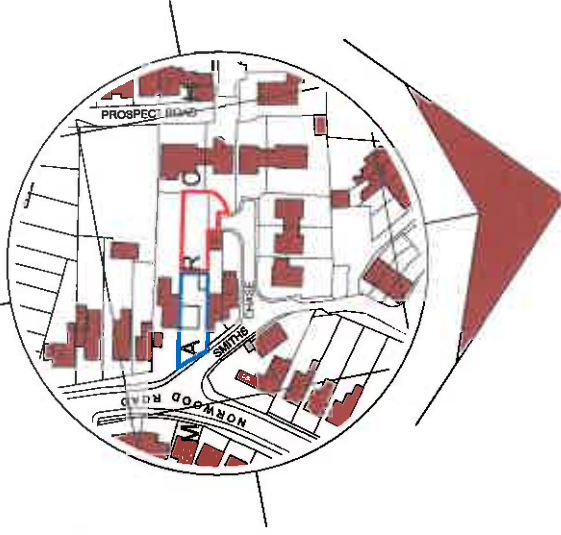
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Scale = 1:1,250





- General Notes**
1. This drawing shall not be scaled. Figure dimensions only to be used.
  2. All dimensions are shown in 'mm' unless otherwise stated.
  3. The contractor, sub-contractors and suppliers must verify all dimensions on site prior to the commencement of any work.
  4. This drawing is to be read in conjunction with all relevant engineers drawings and specifications.
  5. Any discrepancies are to be brought to the designers attention.



Revisions

A	Oct 2013
B	Dec 2013

Landscaping Details  
Street Elevation

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Job Title	Proposed Dwellings	Scale	Various
Date	October 2013	Sheet Size	A2
Job No.	SE-195	Drawn by	RS
Planning Drawing	SE-195	Revision	B
Site & Location Plans		Dwg No.	04

