

Application Number: F/YR14/0065/F
Minor
Parish/Ward: Parson Drove/Wisbech St Mary
Date Received: 28 January 2014
Expiry Date: 25 March 2014
Applicant: Mr K Bagg
Agent: Mr R Swann, Swann Edwards Architecture

Proposal: Erection of 2 x 3-storey 6-bed dwellings with integral garages.

Location: Land north of Meadow View, Gull Road, Guyhirn

Site Area/Density: 0.232ha / 9 dph

Reason before Committee: This application is before committee at the request of Cllr Booth as he feels it will fit in with the existing development and that due to be built in the near vicinity of the plot. In addition there have over 6 letters received in support of the application from local residents.

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY/RECOMMENDATION

The site lies beyond the established settlement of Guyhirn. The principle of the proposal given the location of the application site would lead to the creation of ribbon development and would result in unsustainable growth of the village which is contrary to policies with the emerging Core Strategy.

The site is positioned within Flood Zones 3. Both the emerging Core Strategy and the NPPF require new developments to be located within areas of lower flood risk before land at high risk of flooding is released. It is widely accepted that there is land available within the District which is at lower risk of flooding.

The proposal therefore fails in terms of flood risk and sustainability and accordingly the application is recommended for refusal.

2. HISTORY

None relevant to this particular piece of land however the following relates to the land to the south which accommodates the existing dwelling known as Meadow View:

F/YR03/1184/O – Erection of a house with attached Post Office – Granted
28.01.2004

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 32: Decisions should take into account whether safe and suitable access to the site can be achieved for all people.

Paragraph 100: Inappropriate development in areas at risk of flooding should be avoided.

3.2 **Draft Fenland Core Strategy:**

CS1: Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development

CS3: Spatial Strategy, The Settlement Hierarchy and the Countryside

CS4: Growth and Housing

CS5: Meeting Housing Need

CS12: Rural Areas Development Policy

CS14: Responding to Climate Change and Managing Flood Risk

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

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

3.3 **Fenland District Wide Local Plan:**

E8: Proposals for new development should:

respect the scale, style and character of the surrounding development;

allow for protection of site features;

provide adequate access.

H3: To resist housing development outside DABs. To permit housing development inside DABs provided it does not conflict with other plan policies.

H16: Outside the DAB new dwellings must be justified as required for agricultural, horticultural or forestry operations.

E1: To resist development likely to detract from the Fenland landscape.

4. **CONSULTATIONS**

- | | | |
|-----|---------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 4.1 | Parish Council: | Support this development and recommend approval. |
| 4.2 | Environment Agency: | No objection, a condition relating to the development being carried out in accordance with the Flood Risk Assessment is required. |
| 4.3 | North Level Internal Drainage Board: | No comments to make |

- 4.4 **CCC Highways:** No objections, conditions required relating to the widening of the existing footway, the construction of the access, the retention of the parking and turning spaces, the provision of temporary facilities and access drainage.
- 4.5 **FDC Scientific Officer:** No objections, unsuspected land contamination condition is required.
- 4.6 **Neighbours:** 8 letters of support received which are summarised as follows:
- planning permission for 9 properties to the south have already been granted;
2 houses will fit in with the surrounding area;
The development will be good for the village and will support local schools and businesses;
The plans look like those passed previously;
The proposal looks to infill this part of Guyhirn and makes sense;
Schemes like this are key to the economic recovery of the building industry;
Two new family homes will add to the diversity of the village;
It is important to keep the village growing.

5. **SITE DESCRIPTION**

- 5.1 The site is located on the western side of Gull Road, approximately 550m from the road junction where Gull Road leads to the A47. The site is a vacant piece of land which is currently laid to grass. The Gull Road frontage comprises a mature hedge which is managed at a height of approximately 1.5 to 2.0m in height. The rear of the site adjoins a small open drain. The site is positioned beyond the established settlement of Guyhirn albeit in an area where there is some housing present.

Gull Road is a classified road (Class B) and the site lies within Flood Zone 3 and is within 250m of a waste disposal site.

6. **PLANNING ASSESSMENT**

- 6.1 The key considerations for this application are:
- (a) Policy implications
 - (b) Design, layout and highways
 - (c) Flood Risk
 - (d) Other Matters

(a) Policy implications

The site is located outside the built-up limits of Guyhirn in an area where there are sporadic dwellings evident. The NPPF seeks to promote sustainable development in rural areas where it will maintain the vitality of rural communities. This is the general thrust of policies contained within the Local Plan and Core Strategy where 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.

Policy E1 of the Local Plan aims to protect the open character of the Fenland Landscape. The Local Plan acknowledges that there are existing housing developments along Gull Road however the Development Strategy states that it is necessary to protect the character of the open countryside by restricting further linear development along Gull Road. Members will recall a planning application for 9 dwellings to the south of the site which was granted planning permission at the July 2013 Committee meeting. Once built these dwellings will form a continuous built up frontage from the main settlement rendering the current application site the next piece of available land. Although the development does not comply with sustainability principles in terms of its location, it is considered that no harm will be caused to the open characteristics of the area for the purposes of policy E1 given the 2013 consent.

The hub of Guyhirn village is located along High Road, where the primary school, village hall and hotel/pub are located. Guyhirn does not contain a village shop apart from a small farm shop outlet, also on High Road. Although Guyhirn can accommodate some limited growth, the position of the site along Gull Road fails to contribute to the village sustainability given its significant distance from and relationship with the village hub. The proposal therefore fails on its inability to promote sustainable development due to the location of the site. CCC Highways have stated that an upgrade to the footpath would be necessary should permission be granted which further demonstrates the unsuitability of the location of the site.

Since the development for 9 dwellings has yet to be constructed the site cannot be considered to be located adjacent to the existing developed footprint of the village (Criteria a). The proposal would continue its built form further northwards in a linear manner. The proposal would therefore be in conflict with criteria (c), (d) and (e) of Policy CS12, which requires that any new proposal should be of a scale and siting that is in keeping with the core shape and form of the settlement, and will not adversely harm its character and appearance. In addition, it should not extend existing linear features of the settlement or result in ribbon development (criteria e).

(b) Design, layout and highways

The dwellings have been designed to have a scale and appearance which is similar to the neighbouring property known as Meadow View and to the development scheme which was approved in 2013. The scale, orientation of the buildings and location of first floor windows are such that overlooking and overshadowing of existing and proposed residential occupiers is not considered to be an issue. Each dwelling has been provided with a large garden area to the rear which will be made private by the proposed 1.8m close boarded fencing on the side boundaries and the existing conifer hedging.

Separate accesses together with parking and turning for three vehicles have been provided to the front of the site. The Local Highway Authority has raised no objections to the proposal and have asked that, in the event that planning permission is granted, several conditions are imposed one of which includes the upgrading of the footpath to the front of the site.

(c) Flood Risk

The site lies within Flood Zone 3 and the flood risk mitigation measures as set out in the Flood Risk Assessment have been confirmed as acceptable from the Environment Agency.

Whilst an acceptable Flood Risk Assessment has been received, it still falls to the Local Authority to carry out sequential and exceptions test due to the site's location in Flood Zone 3. This is required by paragraphs 99 to 104 in the NPPF, which seeks to direct inappropriate development in areas at risk of flooding, by directing development away from areas at highest risk.

There are areas within Guyhirn which are at lower risk of flooding and, subject to the criteria set out in CS12, these areas should be considered first. It is accepted that there is land available within the District at lower risk of flooding, some of which is within Guyhirn, and yet the proposal fails to consider these areas. The proposal therefore fails to accord with Paragraphs 99 to 104 of the NPPF and Policy CS14 of the emerging Fenland Core Strategy (Submission version 2013).

(d) Other Matters

The comments received from local residents relating to the benefits new housing will bring to the village have been noted however there are considered to be fundamental policy issues which outweigh the benefits gained from the proposal. As per 6.1 (c) there are sequentially better sites available within Guyhirn which could accommodate new development without putting future occupiers in a vulnerable position in terms of flooding. It is acknowledged that there are existing properties within the vicinity of the site, also located within Flood Zone 3, and it is considered that the situation should not be worsened by placing more residents at risk of flooding by allowing new housing in this particular location.

7. **CONCLUSION**

- 7.1 The site is located beyond the established settlement of Guyhirn. The extension of the established built settlement in a ribbon form into an area of open countryside, does not comply with the Development Strategy for the area and given its location some distance from the village core, it does not contribute to the sustainability or vitality of the community.

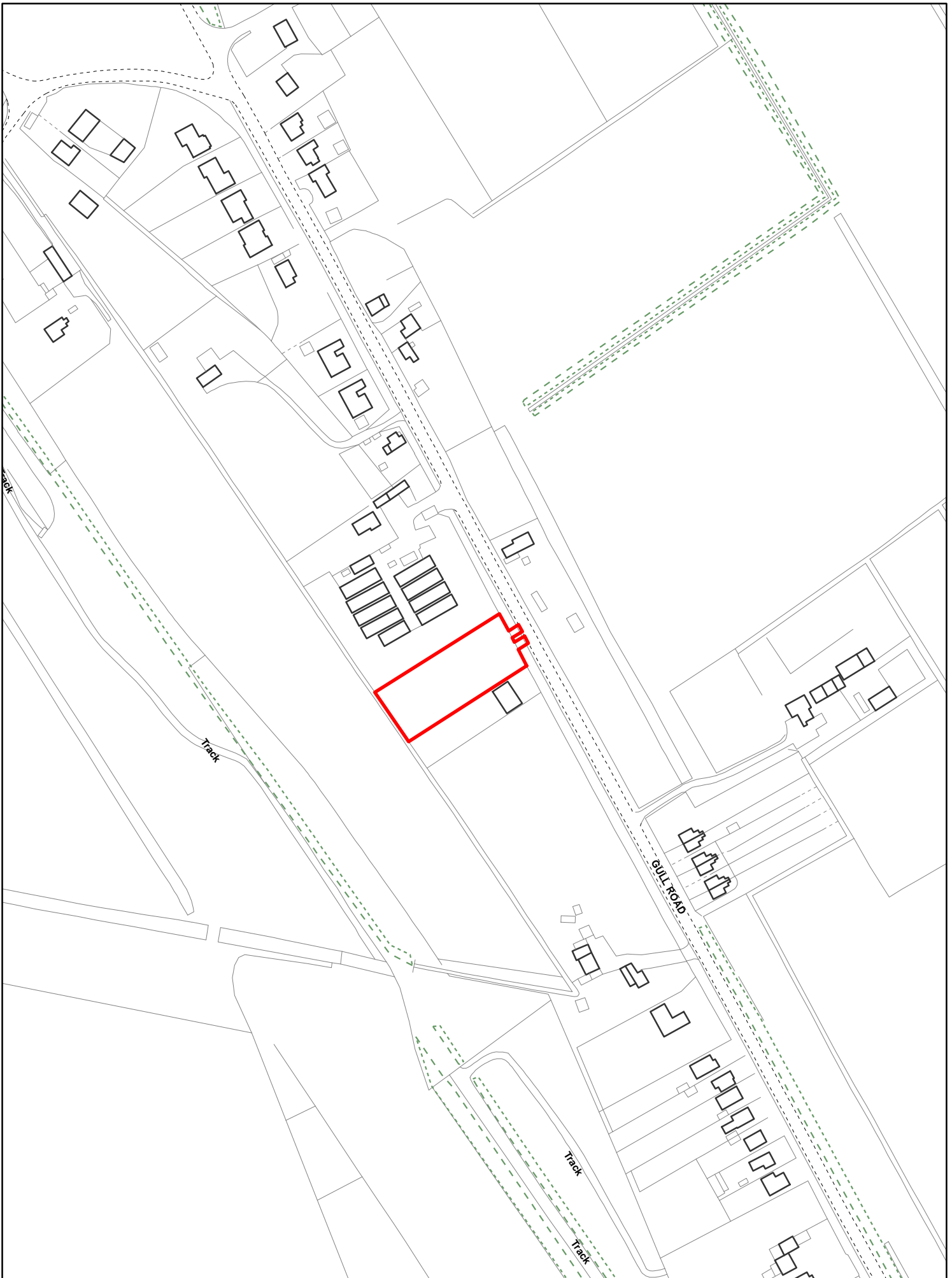
The proposal therefore fails on policy and sustainability grounds and is contrary to the National Planning Policy Framework. The development is therefore contrary to H3 and E8 of the Fenland District Wide Local Plan and the principles contained within the National Planning Policy Framework.

In addition, the site location in Flood Zone 3, fails to accord with Paragraphs 99 to 104 of the NPPF and Policy CS14 of the emerging Fenland Core Strategy (2012), given the availability of sequentially preferable sites in the District in Flood Zone 1, which have a lower probability of flooding.

8. RECOMMENDATION

Refuse

- 1. The proposal represents unjustified residential development beyond any established settlement and would result in ribbon development. The application is therefore contrary to H3 of the Fenland District Wide Local Plan, CS3 and CS12 of the Fenland Local Plan Core Strategy (proposed submission 2013) and Section 6 of the National Planning Policy Framework.**
- 2. The development is located within Flood Zone 3 despite there being land available elsewhere in the District 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.**



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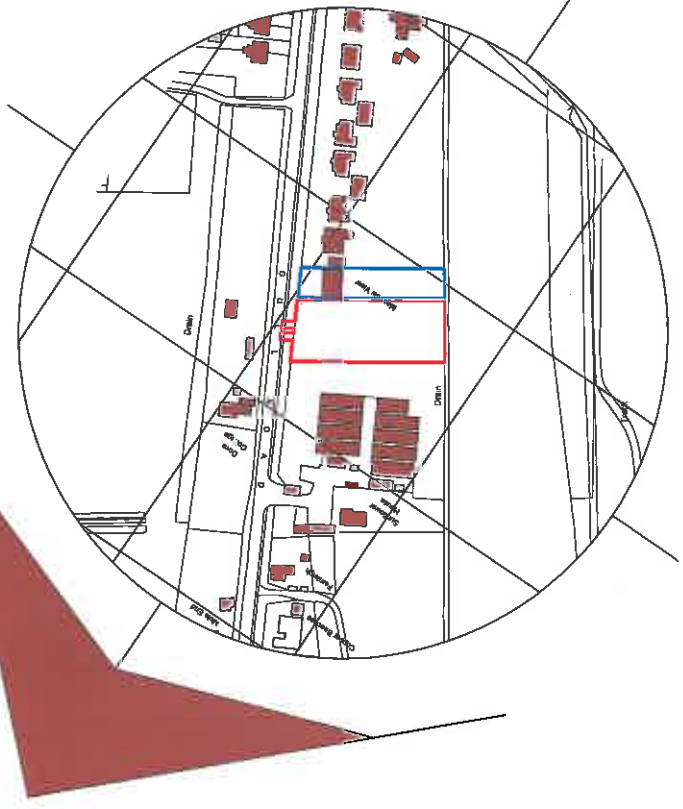
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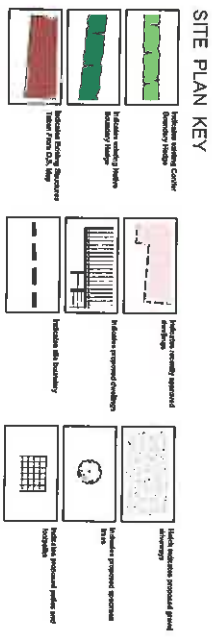
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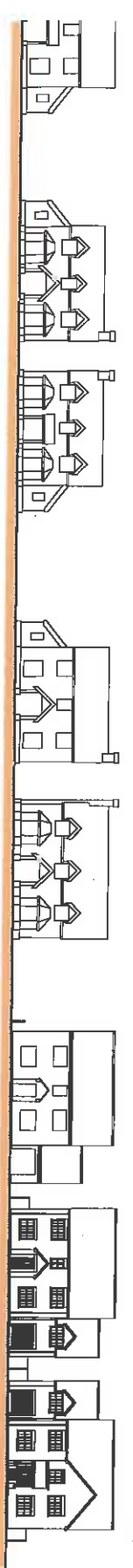
Location Plan
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PROPOSED NEW DWELLINGS



Site Plan
 Scale: 1:200



Indicative Gull Road Street Elevation
 Scale: 1:200

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Project Name	Project Number	Project Date	Project Status
Project 1	12345	2024	Completed
Project 2	67890	2023	In Progress
Project 3	11111	2022	On Hold
Project 4	22222	2021	Archived