

Application Number: FYR14/0134/F

Minor

Parish/Ward: Wimblington

Date Received: 14 February 2014

Expiry Date: 11 April 2014

Applicant: Ms K Grange

Agent: Mr D Upton, Peter Humphrey Associates Ltd.

Proposal: Erection of 2 x single-storey 3-bed and 2 x single storey 4-bed dwellings with attached garages.

Location: 2A Bridge Lane, Wimblington.

Site Area/Density: 0.45 hectares / 9 dwellings per hectare.

Reason before Committee: This proposal is before the Planning Committee as it was called in by Councillor Jolley as he believes it fits the core strategy and will not affect the open countryside in this area.

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY/RECOMMENDATION

This application seeks full planning permission for the erection of 4 dwellings, comprising of 2 x single-storey 3-bed and 2 x single-storey 4-bed dwellings with attached garages, at land west of 2A Bridge Lane in Wimblington.

The site is located on open agricultural land adjacent to the existing dwelling at 2A Bridge Lane in Wimblington and is roughly rectangular in shape. The eastern boundary abuts a fence and a line of poplar trees which forms the boundary of the property at 2A, with all other boundaries open. The application site is beyond the established settlement of Wimblington and within Flood Zone 1.

The key issues to consider are:

- Principle of Development
- Character and Appearance
- Residential Amenity
- Access and Sustainability
- Biodiversity

Relevant policy has been considered alongside the identified material considerations and as a result the proposal cannot be considered acceptable. The policy framework identifies 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; however this is on the proviso that it satisfies other applicable policy. The Fenland Local Plan (Core Strategy) Policy CS12 - Rural Areas Development Policy, requires development to conform with criteria (a) to (k).

The proposed development is located in an unsustainable location, outside of the main settlement core of Wimblington, where residential development is not normally supported unless justified.

Development in this location would introduce additional ribbon development, into an area that is currently open, agricultural in land use and has a strong relationship with the adjoining countryside. It would also lead to the loss of this important open gap and result in a form of development that would not properly relate to the overriding form and character of the existing developed footprint of Wimblington.

2. HISTORY

Of relevance to this proposal is:

- 2.1 F/1765/89/O Erection of a dwelling. Dismissed by
Secretary of State
on 17th January
1991.

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, unless material considerations indicate otherwise
- Paragraph 14 - Presumption in favour of sustainable development
- Paragraph 17 - Core planning principles
- Paragraph 18-22 - Building a strong competitive economy
- Paragraph 32, 34 - Promoting sustainable transport
– 37, 39
- Paragraph 47-50 - Delivering a wide choice of quality homes
- Paragraph 55 - Avoid isolated homes in the open countryside
- Paragraph 56-61 - Requiring good design
- Paragraph 69-70 - Promoting healthy communities
- Paragraph 109, - Conserving and enhancing the natural environment
111, 118, 120-125

3.2 Fenland Local Plan Core Strategy (Submission Version September 2013):

- CS1 - Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development
- CS3 - Spatial strategy, the Settlement Hierarchy and the Countryside
- CS4 - Housing
- CS12 - Rural Areas Development Policy
- CS13 - Supporting and Managing the Impact of a Growing District
- CS15 - Facilitating the Creation of a More Sustainable Transport Network in Fenland
- CS16 - Delivering and Protecting High Quality Environments across the District.
- CS19 - Natural Environment

3.3 Fenland District Wide Local Plan:

- H3 - To resist housing development outside DABs. To permit housing development inside DABs provided it does not conflict with other policies of the Plan.
- H16 - Dwellings in the Open Countryside
- E1 - Development likely to detract from the unique, open character of

the fenland landscape will not normally be permitted.

- E2 - Planning permission will not normally be granted for development on open spaces in the settlement which have intrinsically beneficial environmental qualities and are an important part of the settlement's character either in themselves or by virtue of the longer distance views they allow.
- E7 - Archaeological Investigation.
- E8 - Proposals for new development should:
 - allow for protection of site features;
 - be of a design compatible with their surroundings;
 - have regard to amenities of adjoining properties;
 - provide adequate access.
- TR3 - To ensure that all proposed developments provide adequate car parking in accordance with the approved parking standards.

4. CONSULTATIONS

- 4.1 ***Wimblington Parish Council:*** No comments received at time of writing this report.
- 4.2 ***Middle Level Commissioners:*** Will be commenting, however no formal comments received at time of writing this report.
- 4.3 ***FDC Environmental Health:*** No objection - Note and accept the submitted information and have no objections as the proposal is unlikely to have a detrimental effect on local air quality or the noise climate. From the information provided contaminated land is not considered an issue.
- 4.4 ***County Development Minerals & Waste Planning Group:*** No objection - Although the site lies within a Sand and Gravel Mineral Safeguarding Area (designated by the adopted Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Minerals and Waste Site Specific Proposals Plan 2012) its proximity to the road and to residential development makes it very unlikely that it would be a workable resource. We therefore have no comments to make in relation to this application.
- 4.5 ***CCC Archaeology:*** No objection - The site lies in an area of high archaeological potential. It is considered likely that important archaeological remains survive on the site and that these would be severely damaged or destroyed by the proposed development.

We therefore consider the site should be subject to a programme of archaeological investigation including a historic building recording. This programme of work can be secured by the inclusion of a condition.

4.6 **County Highways**

No comments received at the time of writing this report.

4.7 **Local Residents:**

No letters of representation have been received at time of writing this report.

5. **SITE DESCRIPTION**

5.1 The site is located to the west of 2A Bridge Street in Wimblington. The site currently comprises open agricultural land. The area is characterised by residential development to the north and west, with open land to the east and south of the site.

6. **PLANNING ASSESSMENT**

6.1 The proposal seeks full planning permission for 4 single-storey dwellings with attached garages at land west of 2A Bridge Lane in Wimblington.

The key considerations for this application are:

- Principle of Development
- Character and Appearance
- Residential Amenity
- Access & Sustainability
- Biodiversity

Relevant Policy and Guidance

Policy CS3 of the Core Strategy identifies Wimblington as a growth village where small village extensions of a limited scale will be appropriate as part of the strategy for sustainable growth. Policy CS3 must be read in conjunction with other policies in the Core Strategy which steer development to the most appropriate sites.

Bridge Lane is divorced from the main settlement of Wimblington; the nearest part of Wimblington village is located in excess of 250 metres south and is separated by agricultural fields. Bridge Lane is bounded by a development area boundary; however the boundary was tightly drawn to allow for infill development only. The application site is located outside of this boundary in open countryside. Bridge Lane is intrinsically rural in character, accessed via a narrow road with dwellings mainly fronting the lane. Agricultural fields surround Bridge Lane to the south and north-east which reaffirms this rural character.

The site does not immediately adjoin the existing built up form of the settlement and whilst there is residential development to the north and east of the application site it does not form part of the developed footprint of the main village; it is an agricultural field. Policy CS12 makes it clear that the developed footprint is defined as the continuous built form of the village and excludes the following:

- groups of dispersed or intermittent buildings that are clearly detached from the continuous built up area,
- gardens, paddocks and other undeveloped land within the curtilage of buildings on the edge of the settlement where the land relates more to the surrounding countryside than to the built up area of the settlement,
- agricultural buildings and associated land on the edge of the settlement,
- outdoor sports and recreation facilities and other formal open spaces on the edge of the settlement.

Policy CS12 also contains 11 criteria which must all be satisfied to ensure the proposed development can be supported. In this particular case criteria (a) which requires the site to be in or adjacent to the existing developed footprint of the village cannot be satisfied as demonstrated above. Criteria (c) and (d) requires that the development would not have an adverse impact on the character and appearance of the surrounding countryside and is of a scale and in a location that is in keeping with the core shape and form of the settlement.

Criteria (e) states development would not be supported were it to result in ribbon development or extend the linear features of the settlement. Criteria (g) states that any proposal respects and retains existing archaeological, ecological and biodiversity features of the site. There is a drainage ditch that runs along the northern and western boundary.

Whilst Policy CS3 identifies Wimblington as a growth village, Bridge Lane and the application site is physically detached from the village. The proposal would result in a ribbon style/linear form of development, it would develop an existing agricultural field and it would erode the space which separates Bridge Lane from Wimblington. As such the development, in principle, would have an unacceptably adverse impact on the character of the area and is contrary to Policy CS12 of the Fenland Core Strategy DPD (Submission 2013).

Character and Appearance

The scheme proposes four detached bungalows with attached double garages to front. The proposed layout would be linear in nature and takes its building line from No. 2A Bridge Lane, a detached bungalow with flat roof garage to side set some 20m from the road.

Properties along Bridge Lane are predominantly single storey bungalows however there are examples of chalet style and two storey properties. Whilst the principle of development is considered to be unacceptable, the proposed scale and layout of the dwellings would follow the context of neighbouring properties.

The scheme proposes Ibstock handmade Light Red Multi, Orchard Mix and Handmade Multi walling and Sandtoft Village, Humbar and Greenwood clay plains; these materials are considered to be representative of the area.

Residential Amenity

Subject to securing boundary treatment details each dwelling would be able to provide a dedicated primary amenity space. There would be a minimum distance of 30 metres between facing properties located on the north of Bridge Lane therefore the proposal would not have an unacceptably adverse impact on properties opposite. Further, as there exists a 2m high close board fence with intervening poplars on the eastern boundary Plot 4 would not have an unacceptably adverse impact on the amenity of No.2A Bridge Lane.

Access & Sustainability

Bridge Lane is relatively narrow with limited street lights and no footpaths. There is a Public Right of Way 100m to the east and the nearest made-up footway, which provides access to Wimblington Village, is located in excess of 200m west. It should be highlighted that the footway is located on the west of March Road therefore future occupiers would be required to cross a busy road to walk to shops and services available in Wimblington Village. This reinforces concerns about the sustainability of the location of this site.

At the time of writing this report comments have not been received from Cambs County Highways. These details will follow within the update report.

Biodiversity

It is noted within the Design and Access Statement that Swift boxes are proposed as well as a comprehensive landscaping scheme which would go towards providing habitat for wildlife. However, there is a drainage ditch that runs along the north and west of the site. Whilst a Biodiversity checklist has been completed the drainage ditch may contain habitat for water voles and/or reptiles; as this has not been surveyed by an ecological survey the application fails to demonstrate whether the scheme would have a harmful impact on protected species. The scheme is therefore contrary to Policy CS19 of the Fenland Local Plan (Submission 2013).

Other Matters

The County Archaeologist and Environmental Health Officer have raised no objections to the proposal. The County Archaeologist has requested a condition securing an archaeological investigation prior to works commencing on site should planning permission be granted.

The County Minerals and Waste Team have raised no objections to the scheme on the basis that the sites proximity to the road and neighbouring residential properties would make the site very unlikely to be a workable resource.

7. CONCLUSION

- 7.1 The positioning of the proposed housing development on this site would introduce additional ribbon development, into an area that is currently open agricultural land and has a strong relationship with the adjoining countryside, which currently provides an important visual gap and area of separation between Bridge Lane, March Road and Wimblington Village.

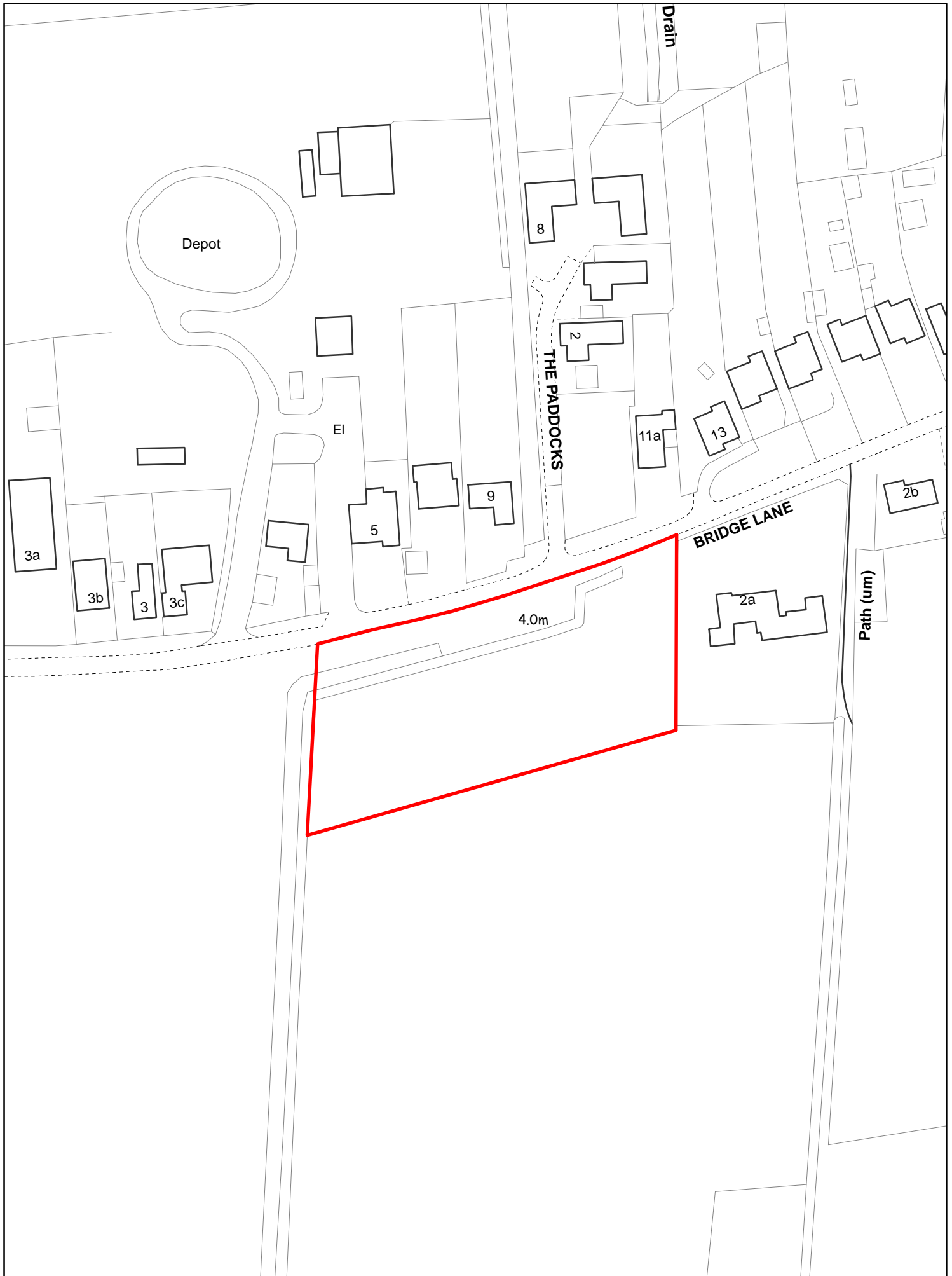
As a result it is not considered as being an appropriate location for residential development on the grounds that it would lead to the loss of this important visual gap and result in a form of development that would not properly relate to the overriding form and character of the developed footprint of Wimblington.

Consequently the proposal is in conflict with Policies H3, H16 and E8 of the Fenland Local Plan (1993) and Policies CS12 and CS16 of the Fenland Core Strategy (Submission 2013).

8. RECOMMENDATION

Refuse

- 1 The proposal development is located outside the existing developed footprint of Wimblington village and the Development Area Boundary. The proposal would result in a ribbon style development, into an area that is currently open agricultural land and has a strong relationship with the adjoining countryside. Further, the proposal would erode an important visual gap and area of separation between Bridge Lane, March Road and Wimblington Village. The proposal would have an unacceptably adverse impact on the character and appearance of the area and is contrary to Policies CS12 and CS16 of the Fenland Core Strategy DPD (Submission 2013) and H3, H16, E8 of the Fenland Local Plan (1993).**
- 2 The application has failed to demonstrate that there will be no adverse impact on any protected species that may be present on the site due to the lack of an appropriate biodiversity study. The proposal is therefore contrary to Policies CS12, CS16 and CS19 of the Fenland Core Strategy (Submission 2013).**



Created on: 07/03/2014

© Crown Copyright and database rights 2014 Ordnance Survey 10023778

F/YR14/0134/F

Scale = 1:1,250

