

**Application Number: F/YR14/0244/O**  
**Minor dwelling**  
**Parish/Ward: Manea Parish Council**  
**Date Received: 20 March 2014**  
**Expiry Date: 15 May 2014**  
**Applicant: Mr S Wilson**

**Proposal: Erection of 5 dwellings involving demolition of existing dwelling and outbuildings**

**Location: 35 Westfield Road, Manea**

**Site Area: 0.14ha**

**Reason before Committee: Called in by Cllr Newell as Manea is a growth village. There is adequate access and the applicant is willing to give 2 houses to affordable housing and the application complies with the Fenland Local Plan.**

**1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY/RECOMMENDATION**

This is an outline application with all matters reserved for the erection of 5 dwellings on land at 35 Westfield Road, Manea. The site is located within the built form of Manea and Policy LP3 of the Fenland Local Plan indicates that Manea is a growth village.

The development of 5 dwellings would include the provision of one affordable home on the site as set out in Policy LP5 of the Local Plan.

The main policy considerations are LP12 and LP16 of the Local Plan which seeks to deliver and protect high quality environments across the district.

Policy LP16 seeks to deliver and protect high quality environments which should make a positive contribution to the local distinctiveness and character of the area. Development should not adversely impact, either in design or scale, on the street scene, settlement pattern or landscape character of the surrounding area.

35 Westfield Road is located in part of the village which is formed mainly by frontage development and it is considered that the introduction of backland development will be at odds to the prevailing character in the area. The plot sizes do not reflect the adjoining development and the proposal will appear cramped and will have the potential to cause nuisance to adjoining occupiers by virtue of increased traffic movements and general noise and disturbance.

The indicative layout shows 5 small plots served off a private drive. The proposal does not comply with the guidance set out in the RECAP Waste Management Design Guide adopted in February 2012 in that two of the plots

will have to move their refuse bins more than the 30 metres recommended in the guidance.

The application is therefore recommended for refusal.

## 2. HISTORY

F/YR13/0882/O	Erection of 5 dwellings involving demolition of existing dwelling and outbuildings	Refused 20 January 2014
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## 3. PLANNING POLICIES

### 3.1 National Planning Policy Framework:

Section 6: Delivering a wide choice of high quality homes

Section 10: Meeting the challenge of climate change, flooding and coastal change

### 3.2 Fenland Local Plan 2014:

LP1: A presumption in favour of sustainable development

LP2: Facilitating Health and Wellbeing of Fenland Residents

LP3: Spatial strategy, the Settlement Hierarchy and the Countryside

LP5: Meeting housing need

LP12: Rural Areas Development Policy

LP13: Supporting and Managing the Impact of a Growing District

LP14: Responding to Climate Change and Managing the Risk of Flooding in Fenland

LP16: Delivering and Protecting High Quality Environments across the District

## 4. CONSULTATIONS

### 4.1 *Manea Parish Council:* Object to the application on the basis that:

- If approved the development would set a precedent for other proposals of a similar nature which would lead to an inappropriate change in the character of the area;
- The construction of 5 dwellings on this site would constitute overdevelopment;
- The access to the site is inadequate to serve the proposed development.

### 4.2 *Housing Strategy (FDC):*

The application should provide 20% affordable housing therefore 1 affordable home to be provided on site. Tenure should be one affordable rented.

4.3 ***Environmental Health:***

No objection as it is unlikely to have a detrimental effect on local air quality or the noise climate.

Records show that there may have been previous potentially contaminative usage (piggery), there are also a number of former/current structures that require demolition and there is a likelihood of made ground across the site, therefore a contaminated land condition should be applied if application approved.

4.4 ***Local Highway Authority:***

No objection in principle however in order to achieve the required visibility splays at the junction of the access road with Westfield Road, a new point of access will be required located away from the east/west boundaries together with the closure of the existing adjacent access. The existing front hedge is also likely to be required to be removed.

If consent is granted then conditions will be required to illustrate the siting of the buildings and the means of access thereto. Visibility splays of 2.4 m x 43 m shall be provided each side of the access and 2.0m x 2.0m pedestrian visibility splays will also be required.

4.5 ***Middle Level Commissioners:***

Notes that no pre-application discussions have taken place on this site and that no Flood Risk Assessment has been provided.

Considers that the water level/flood risk management system infrastructure downstream of this development may be absent and/or have insufficient capacity to cater for the increased rate of run-off created by this proposal and may detrimentally affect the local water level/flood risk management system.

Ground conditions in this area are not conducive to the use of soakaways or other infiltration devices for surface water and may not meet approved guidance contained within BRE Digest 365 Soakaway Design or SUDs.

Considers that insufficient information has been provided regarding disposal of surface water and the effect it could have on neighbouring properties.

The Middle Level Commissioners oppose the planning application on the Board's behalf.

4.6 ***Local Residents:***

No comments received.

5. **SITE DESCRIPTION**

- 5.1 The site lies on the southern side of Westfield Road and comprises a detached house with a range of brick built outbuildings along the eastern boundary. The site measures approximately 30 metres wide by 60 metres deep and is rectangular in shape.

The site lies within Flood Zone 1 and also within a flood warning area. The site is accessed off a C Class road.

## 6. **PLANNING ASSESSMENT**

This application seeks outline planning consent for the erection of 5 dwellings on land at 35 Westfield Road, Manea. The proposal involves the demolition of the existing dwelling.

The key issues for consideration to this application include:

- Principle of development and policy considerations
- History of the site and surrounding area
- Form and character of the area
- Planning proposal
- Health and Wellbeing
- Economic Growth
- Other considerations

### Principle of development and policy considerations

The site is located within the built settlement of Manea and accordingly Policies LP1, LP3, LP12 and LP16 of the Fenland Local Plan together with the National Planning Policy Framework are considerations in this respect.

Policy LP1 seeks to deliver sustainable growth and when considering development proposals will take a positive approach that reflects the presumption in favour of sustainable development as contained within the NPPF.

Policy LP3 identifies Manea as a growth village where development within the existing urban area or as a small village extension will be appropriate albeit of a considerably more limited scale than the market towns.

Policy LP12 sets out detailed criteria for the assessment of new housing proposals in and around villages such as Manea. This policy allows some new development in villages, where it contributes to the sustainability of that settlement and does not harm the wide open character of the countryside. Under this policy new development will need to satisfy the applicable thresholds set out in Policy LP3, as well as all of the criteria set out in Policy LP12 (a to k).

Policy LP16 seeks to deliver and protect high quality environments across the district and proposals should demonstrate that the development meets the

relevant criteria. In particular development should make a positive contribution to the local distinctiveness and character of the area, enhance its setting, responds to and improves the character of the local built environment and will not adversely impact, either in design or scale terms, on the street scene, settlement pattern or the landscape character of the surrounding area. Development should not adversely impact on the amenity of neighbouring users through, for example, loss of privacy or loss of light.

#### History of the site and surrounding area

The site is presently occupied by a detached 2-storey house fronting Westfield Road with a range of outbuildings to the rear. In 1981 permission was granted for change of use from garage to a craft workshop personal to Mr Wilson.

There have been a number of pre-application discussions on this site since 2008 when the Council has consistently advised the applicant that development in the rear garden could not be supported due to the form and character of the surrounding area. Similarly the applicant has been informed that the replacement of the existing dwelling, at a lower density, comprising 2 properties may be looked upon favourably.

The dwellings to the east and west of the site were approved in 1987 and 1994 respectively and continue the existing frontage development along Westfield Road.

The group of dwellings opposite, known as Dunvegan Close, were approved in 2004 under the former Local Plan policies.

#### Form and character of the area

The area on the southern side of Westfield Road is predominantly frontage development with some comprehensive development to the north east and a small development of houses on the opposite side of the road. The housing plots to the west of the site have a similar depth to the applicants dwelling although the plots have a narrower frontage.

The proposed development, consisting of 2 frontage dwellings, and 3 plots in the rear garden area, set out in a tandem formation would be most prominently viewed from the east and north which is presently open land.

The indicative layout shown on the 1:500 site plan shows 3 x 3-bed bungalows in the rear garden area of No.35 Westfield Road located along the western boundary of the site close to the existing dwelling known as 37C Westfield Road. It should be noted that this site plan is inaccurate in that the footprint of 2 dwellings to the rear of No.37/37C Westfield Road are shown. The applicant has been advised that the plans are incorrect but, to date, no amendments have been made. This inaccurate site and location plan is misleading in that it appears that existing backland development exists in the area which is not the

case.

The proposed layout of the bungalows will have a detrimental impact on the residential amenity of No. 37C Westfield Road but virtue of visual impact, noise and disturbance and overshadowing to the garden area.

There is inadequate private amenity space for each dwelling, with two plots having only 3 metres of rear amenity space and one plot having 5 metres. Furthermore, due to the orientation of the plots each plot significantly overlooks each other and will appear hemmed in and will not deliver a high quality environment for residents as set out in Policy LP16 of the Local Plan.

The 2 frontage plots generally respect the building line along Westfield Road, although slightly forward of No.37C, which is set back. However the layout shows inappropriate parking to the front of the site which will necessitate the need for vehicles to reverse out of the site onto Westfield Road, which is a classified road. These two plots also have minimal private amenity space.

The prevailing form and character of the area is for generally 2-storey dwellings set on good sized plots. The plot sizes of existing dwellings range in depth from approximately 45 metres to 60 metres with width sizes from 10 metres to 30 metres. The proposed plot size range in depth from 10 metres to 15 metres with width sizes of 15 metres which is completely out of character with the surrounding area. It is apparent that the private amenity areas of the proposed dwellings would be notably smaller than that which is typical in the area and would be at odds with the local character and reinforces the harm to that character which has been identified above.

### Planning Proposal

The proposal is for a total of 5 dwellings with a mix of 2 x 2-storey dwellings and 3 x 3-bed bungalows. Access will be formed on the eastern side of the development and will consist of a private drive. Each dwelling will require the provision of 2 parking spaces and turning will be required within the site to allow all vehicles to exit the site in forward gear.

All matters are reserved and therefore the Council is being asked to determine the principle of development. Therefore issues relating to potential overlooking will be assessed at Reserved Matters stage.

Policy LP5 requires the provision of 1 affordable home on sites of 5 dwellings and the applicant, whilst stating his willingness to provide 2 affordable homes, had not entered into an agreement with the Council to make the necessary provisions. A higher contribution is not a policy requirement in this case.

### Health and Wellbeing

Policy LP2 seeks to achieve development that positively contributes to creating a healthy, safe and equitable living environment and to promote high levels of residential amenity. The proposal fails to provide the required levels of residential amenity due to the cramped form of development and size of plots.

### Economic Growth

Whilst the development would bring an element of employment to the district during construction together with future new home bonus income etc. this does not overcome the significant issues relating to the unacceptable form of development proposed due to overdevelopment of the site.

### Other considerations

Pre-application discussions have taken place on this site since 2008 and the Council has been consistent in its advice to the applicant regarding building dwellings in the rear garden area. Advice was offered during these discussions which indicated that a potential for 2 dwellings on the frontage may be supported but this option has not been submitted.

The Local Highway Authority has no objection in principle to developing the site but considers that the access arrangements need committing as part of the application as they are unsure if the required visibility splays can be achieved. The application does not indicate whether the highway requirements can be met.

There are a variety of brick built outbuildings within the site and the applicant has been advised that a walkover of the site should be undertaken by an experienced ecologist to demonstrate the presence or otherwise of protected species. This has not been carried out and therefore in accordance with Policy LP19 of the Local Plan the application does not demonstrate the protection of, or any necessary mitigation towards, any protected species that might be on site.

The development will be served off a private drive 65 metres long and there is no provision for fire engine turning or a common turning area within the site. The proposal also does not comply with guidance set out in the RECAP Waste Management Design Guide in that householders will have to move their refuse bins in excess of 30 metres to a collection point adjacent to the public highway.

### **CONCLUSION**

This application seeks outline consent for the erection of 5 dwellings on land at 35 Westfield Road, Mane, with all matters reserved. The proposal involves the demolition of No.35 Westfield Road, March. An indicative site layout plan has been provided to inform the decision making process however layout has not been submitted for determination as part of this application.

It is considered that the proposal, as shown on the indicative layout plan, will result in a cramped form of development, which does not respect the character of the area. The plots are particularly small in nature with limited private amenity space and their presence in this backland setting will have a visual and amenity impact on neighbouring properties. An increase in traffic within this garden area will have the potential to result in noise and disturbance to neighbouring properties contrary to Policy LP16 ( e).

Policy LP5 of the Local Plan requires the provision of one affordable home to be provided on the site and the application has failed to demonstrate that this provision will be met.

The proposal fails to achieve an acceptable level of residential amenity for future residents by virtue of the cramped form of development proposed and overdevelopment of the site.

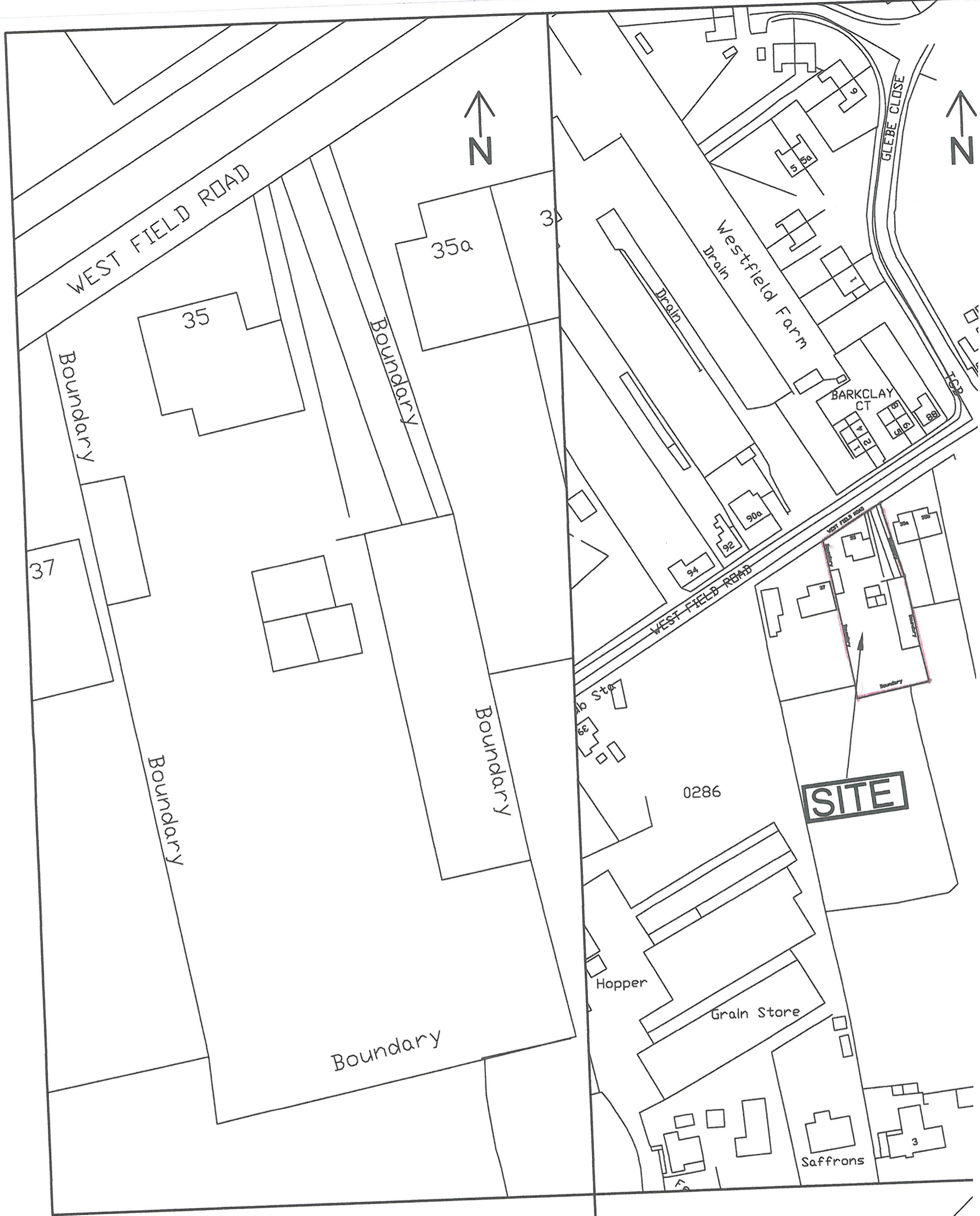
## **RECOMMENDATION**

### **REFUSE**

1. **The proposed development in its indicative form would result in a cramped form of development that is out of keeping with the form and character of this area. As a result the proposal would cause harm to the visual and residential amenities of neighbouring properties and of the area in general contrary to Policies LP12 and LP16 of the Fenland Local Plan 2014.**
2. **The proposed development in its indicative form does not promote a high level of residential amenity by virtue of its cramped form of development and overdevelopment of the site resulting in a lack of private amenity space for each dwelling contrary to Policy LP2 of the Fenland Local Plan 2014.**
2. **The proposed development in its indicative form will result in an increase in vehicle movements within the site to the detriment of adjoining neighbours by virtue of a potential for noise and disturbance. The proposal also fails to satisfy the guidelines set out in the RECAP Waste Management Design Guide (February 2012) in respect of drag distances for refuse bins. The proposal is therefore considered contrary to Policy LP16 (d) and (f) of the Fenland Local Plan 2014.**
3. **By virtue of the lack of completion of a legal agreement to secure the provision of affordable housing on the site, the proposal is considered contrary to Policy LP5 of the Fenland Local Plan 2014.**



4. **The application has failed to provide evidence 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 a biodiversity study. The proposal is therefore contrary to Policies LP16 and LP19 of the Fenland Local Plan 2014.**



SITE PLAN  
1:250

LOCATION  
PLAN  
1:1250

Scale  
as stated

Drawn rh

Drawing Number SW0001 plot

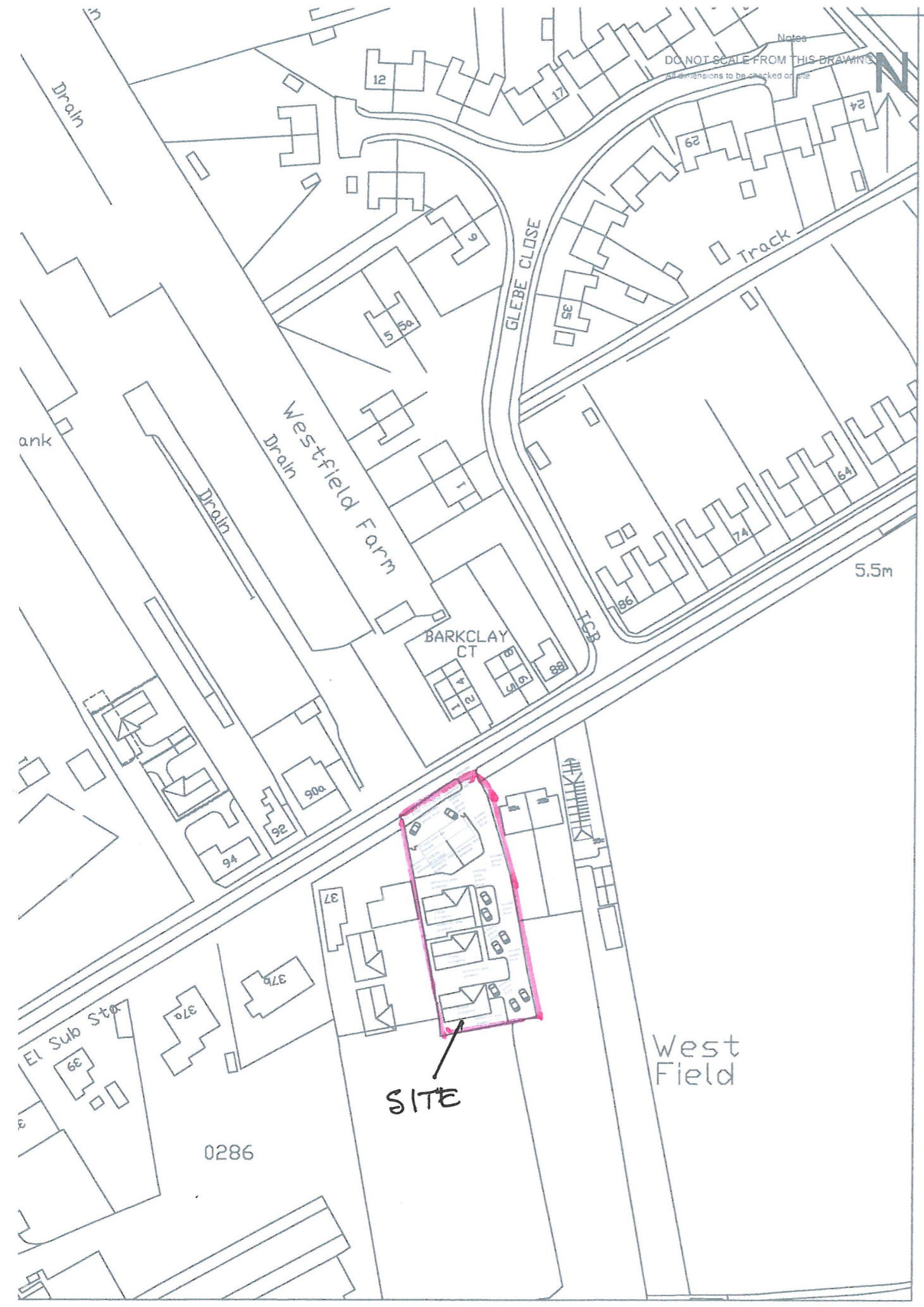
Drawing Site/Loc'n. plans c  
35 Westfield Road, Me

45 Westfield Road  
Cambridgeshire  
PE15 0LS  
Meneia, March  
Telephone/Fax (01354) 680273

RHD

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**SITE PLAN**  
1:500

**LOCATION PLAN**  
1:1250

Notes  
DO NOT SCALE FROM THIS DRAWING  
All dimensions to be checked on site

Drawings prepared  
for Mr. S. Wilson  
by RHD

**RHD Consultants**

45 Westfield Road  
Maneá, March  
Cambridgeshire  
CB31 4LS  
Drawing

Telephone/Fax (01354) 680273  
Client

**SITE/LOCATION PLANS**  
35 WESTFIELD ROAD

Scale	Drawn
As shown	Date
Drawing Number	
SW 0001	