

Application Number: F/YR15/0009/F

Minor

Parish/Ward: Wimblington

Date Received: 5 January 2015

Expiry Date: 2 March 2015

Applicant: Mr M Payne

Agent: C Rudd, Swann Edwards Architecture Limited

Proposal: Erection of 2 x 2-storey 4-bed dwellings with detached garages and formation of new access involving demolition of existing dwelling

Location: 14 Eastwood End, Wimblington

Site Area: 889 sq metres

Reason before Committee: This application is before committee due to the level of support received

1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY/RECOMMENDATION

1.1 This application seeks full planning permission for 2 dwellings involving the demolition of an existing dwelling at 14 Eastwood End, Wimblington.

The site is located outside the built area of Wimblington in a location that has been previously deemed as unsustainable by reason of a recent planning appeal.

Notwithstanding this fundamental policy objection the detailed elements of the scheme raise issues in terms of the impact that the dwellings will have on the street scene and the loss of a non-designated heritage asset without sufficient justification. As such the proposal fails to comply with Policies LP3, LP12 and LP16 of the Fenland Local Plan.

The application is therefore recommended for refusal.

2.0 HISTORY

F/YR14/0488/F	Erection of 3 x 2-storey 4-bed dwellings and the formation of new accesses involving the demolition of existing dwelling	Refused:
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3.0 PLANNING POLICIES

3.1 National Planning Policy Framework:

Paragraph 11 – Applications must be determined in accordance with the development plan unless other material considerations indicate otherwise
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 53 - Local Planning Authorities should set out policies to resist inappropriate development of residential gardens, for example where development would cause harm to the local area.

Paragraph 55 - Avoid isolated dwellings.

Paragraph 64 - Permission should be refused for development of poor design that fails to take the opportunities available for improving the character and quality of an area.

3.2 **Fenland Local Plan:**

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 Area Development Policy

LP14 – Responding to Climate Change and Managing the risk of Flooding in Fenland

LP15 – Facilitating the creation of a More Sustainable Transport Network in Fenland

LP16 – Delivering and Protecting High Quality Environments across the District

LP18 – The Historic Environment

LP19 – The Natural Environment

4.0 **CONSULTATIONS**

4.1 ***Wimblington Parish Council:*** No objections

4.2 ***Local Highway Authority (CCC):*** 4 bedroomed properties require 3 spaces to accord with FDC parking aspirations; therefore the single garage space and two parking spaces fronting the garage should be adequate. The single parking space to the plot frontages should be reduced in length and dedicated for turning provision only.

Makes the suggestion that the garage and two parking bay arrangement could be realigned so both parking bays do not obstruct the garage opening. Making the garage attached will help facilitate this. Purpose of this request is to allow a parked vehicle in the garage to move independently of one of the parking spaces.

4.3 ***Middle Level Commissioners:*** noted that they would be commenting but no comments received; comments on the earlier scheme indicated that Applicant has not provided evidence that a viable scheme for surface water disposal is achievable within the limited site area.

4.4 ***FDC Environmental Protection Team:*** No objections as unlikely to have a detrimental effect on local air quality or the noise climate. Given that the development involves the demolition of an existing building an unsuspected contaminated land condition should be imposed

4.5 ***CCC Archaeology:*** site lies in an area of high archaeological potential and recommend that the site be subject to a programme of archaeological investigation secured via condition

4.6 **Local Residents:**

11 Letters of support have been received, from 9 households, which may be summarised as follows:

- Having completed a self-build on Rhonda Park and have seen development and improvement of the hamlet consider development would be in keeping with this
- 2 more family homes will bring new life and meaning to the street
- Existing dwelling not fit for purpose, uninhabitable and it looks dangerous
- Would bring up-to-date new family homes to the village
- Do not see that this is any difference between developing this overgrown land and the land opposite Rhonda Park which was passed for 3 executive homes, this and other development surely sets a precedent
- Would enhance the street and be in keeping
- Site at present is an eyesore
- Would bring business to the village

3 Letters of objection have been received, from 2 households, which may be summarised as follows:

- Would lose an old beautiful rare red tiled cottage would be a real shame, should keep cottage and develop remainder of site with one dwelling
- Existing building should be renovated as part of the village heritage, houses built on this bend should respect the existing traditional properties
- Mature trees have been felled on the site and natural habitats lost prior to the application
- No footpaths and a reliance on cars, school children have to go to school by bus.
- No mention of demolition process and how adjacent properties would be protected – similarly no details given of foundation construction and likely impacts
- Seems wrong to support development within 200-300 metres of a proposed anaerobic digester which the planning officer has recommended for approval as the resultant development will not be one people would want to buy
- Development does not follow the original building line, is much higher and will cause overshadowing of adjoining gardens. It is not in keeping with the current footprint.
- Why haven't cottage style dwellings which follow the original footprint been designed
- Fails to consider biodiversity of the site
- Consider scheme overdevelopment
- Will result in a loss of privacy
- Questions adequacy of turning and considers scheme fails to consider highway safety
- Mature trees have been lost and bats are no longer evident
- Have they done a historic survey
- No footpaths so children have to go to school by bus
- Street scene will look very different

- Only one access to development
- Planning is not supposed to have an adverse impact on residents but this development will
- One car per resident is a reality so development will impact on highway safety, consider agents evaluation of the traffic/highway situation is incorrect
- Find it strange that the majority of people supporting the application live nowhere near Eastwood End

Contrary to NPPF as:

- It will cause long term adverse impact on close neighbours
- Has not considered light and noise impacts of development
- Considers design and layout will not fulfil the expectations of intended occupants
- There will be adverse impact on the area during the construction phase

5.0 SITE DESCRIPTION

5.1 The site is located away from the established settlement of Wimblington and comprises a detached vacant dwelling with associated outbuildings; a more detailed description of the property is contained under the 'heritage' section of this report.

5.2 The proposed development comprises two detached dwellings with associated single garages simple in style and detailing with a shared central driveway with turning to the frontages, landscaping is shown to these frontage areas.

6.0 PLANNING ASSESSMENT

6.1 Nature of Application

This application seeks full planning permission for 2 dwellings involving the demolition of the existing property 14 Eastwood End, which has been identified during the consultation process as a former village pub.

The main issues associated with this proposal are:

- **Principle, policy implications, sustainability and History**
- **Character and appearance of the area**
- **Heritage considerations**
- **Impact on residential amenity**
- **Highway safety matters**
- **Biodiversity**
- **Health and wellbeing**
- **Economic growth**

These are discussed in more detail below.

Principle, policy implications and sustainability: Wimblington is listed as a Growth Village in Policy LP3 the Fenland Local Plan, however the settlement at Eastwood End is physically detached from the main village/settlement by the A141 with no pedestrian linkages. Earlier committee decisions have upheld this view, with one of these previous refusals (land south-west of 32 Eastwood End) also being upheld at appeal (March 2014 – reference F/YR13/0422/F). In that case the Planning Inspector concluded that ‘Eastwood End does not amount to a sustainable community with any significant services and, other than via use of private motor vehicles, it has relatively poor access to services and facilities elsewhere’.

Overall the proposed development in this location would be contrary to the aims of achieving sustainable development as set out in the National Planning Policy Framework. This stance accords with the decision taken by the Planning Committee in respect of an earlier planning submission for 3-dwellings. This scheme having been refused as the location was considered unsustainable, the form of development was considered suburban and parking dominant and resulted in the loss of a building worthy of designation of a building of local interest; furthermore the scheme was considered to have an adverse impact on the residential amenities of the adjoining occupier at No 12 Eastwood End by virtue of overshadowing and over-dominance.

For this reason the proposed development is considered to be unacceptable and contrary to Policy LP1 and LP3 of the Fenland Local Plan, adopted May 2014 (FLP)

Character and appearance of the area: The immediate area is characterised by frontage development of varying styles, scale and design. The existing property contributes to the rural nature of the settlement and marks the transition between the more modern large scale dwellings which characterize the approach from the east and the more tightly knit terraces, albeit the street scene then demonstrates a return to larger detached dwellings. Immediately to the north west of the site is a property set back from the road and heavily landscaped which further contributes to the character of the area.

The current scheme has been reduced in amount from 3 units to 2 – albeit these are now wider; whilst this lessens the impact of the proposed development the scheme remains suburban in design with parking and turning remaining a prominent feature. This remains at variance to the character of the area.

As such the revised proposal remains contrary to Policy LP12 (d) and Policy LP16 (d) of the FLP.

Heritage Considerations: The earlier decision of the Planning Committee endorsed the view that the building is of significant architectural and historic interest. It represents a rare survival in amongst high-density modern ribbon development. It is certainly worthy of designation as a building of local interest and should be considered as a non-designated heritage asset. Whilst it has been neglected and is currently unused it would be capable of repair, refurbishment and reuse as a dwelling.

Given the significance of the building and the contribution of both the house and its garden to the streetscene there is no justification for its demolition. The current scheme asserts again that the dwelling is uneconomical to repair however no financial details have been provided to support this.

Accordingly the present scheme fails to overcome the earlier reason for refusal and remains contrary to Policy LP18 of the FLP.

Impact on residential amenity: The existing dwelling occupies a position on the edge of the footpath and its out shot, which brings the property down to single storey proportions as it extends into the site by 8 metres, has a negligible impact on the property to the west. Whilst further outbuildings sit along this boundary they again are no higher than 4 metres and as such do not have an over dominant impact on their neighbour.

The current proposal has been amended from the previously refused scheme with the depth of the properties being reduced by circa 1.5 metres and the two storey projection deleted. Whilst the original scheme was considered to dominate the outlook from No. 12 such impacts are now within a level that it is not considered would warrant resisting the scheme on residential amenity terms.

Accordingly the proposal, on balance, in design terms accords with policy LP16 (e) in terms of its impact on the amenity of neighbouring users such as noise, light pollution, loss of privacy and loss of light and overcomes the earlier reason for refusal

Highway safety matters: The speed survey and supporting information provided with regard to the earlier submission has been carried forward to this scheme. This satisfactorily addressed the initial concerns raised by the Local Highway Authority and no objections were raised regarding highway safety. Some layout issues have been raised with regard to the current scheme however these are restricted solely to the overprovision and layout of parking and revised plans have been forwarded to remove the parking spaces immediately in front of the dwellings. The suggestions made regarding the parking spaces to the front of the garages have been noted however the agent has clarified that they consider to attach the garages would be a retrograde step in design terms as it would increase the massing of the dwellings. Whilst the further comments of the LHA are awaited the amendments made are in the spirit of the consultation response.

There are no highway issues that would warrant refusal of the scheme; except of course the wider sustainability issues covered in the policy and principle section of this report. For this reason the scheme is policy compliant in respect of LP15 in terms of design, layout and highway safety.

Biodiversity: Due consideration has been given to biodiversity with an extended Phase 1 Habitat survey having been undertaken on the site. This comprised a walkover, building inspection and dusk emergence survey supported by a desk top study.

Whilst the survey made certain recommendations regarding best practice on site prior to and during construction as precautionary measures there were no species found on the site that would warrant the scheme being resisted on biodiversity grounds.

It should be noted that there was no protection afforded to the trees on site that residents highlight were removed prior to application.

In addition to the precautionary measures highlighted the study also made recommendations regarding biodiversity enhancements through the provision of both bat and bird boxes and retaining routes through any boundary fences for hedgehogs to forage. As such the scheme complies with Policy LP19 of the FLP.

Health and wellbeing: In accordance with Policy LP2 of the Local Plan development proposals should positively contribute to creating a healthy, safe and equitable living environment. In doing so development proposals, amongst other things, should create sufficient and the right mix of homes to meet people's needs, and in the right location. It is considered that Eastwood End represents an unsustainable location where residents will not be able to easily access local services and facilities without dependence on a private motor vehicle. Therefore the scheme fails to meet the requirements of Policy LP2 of the FLP.

Economic growth: Whilst the development would be likely to provide a degree of local employment during construction together with future new home bonus income etc, there has been no significant evidence submitted with the application to suggest as to how development in this location would support the continued sustainability and economic growth of Wimblington. Although reference is made to each property benefiting from home office space this is in reality a room annotated 'dining /office' As such this does not overcome the significant issues relating to the principle of development as discussed in this report.

7.0 CONCLUSION

- 7.1 Whilst this revised scheme reduces the amount of development and addresses previous concerns regarding residential amenity it remains non policy compliant in terms of the character of the area whilst also failing to be acceptable when considering heritage and sustainability issues. Accordingly the only recommendation that can be made is one of refusal as the scheme is clearly remains contrary to the Development Plan.

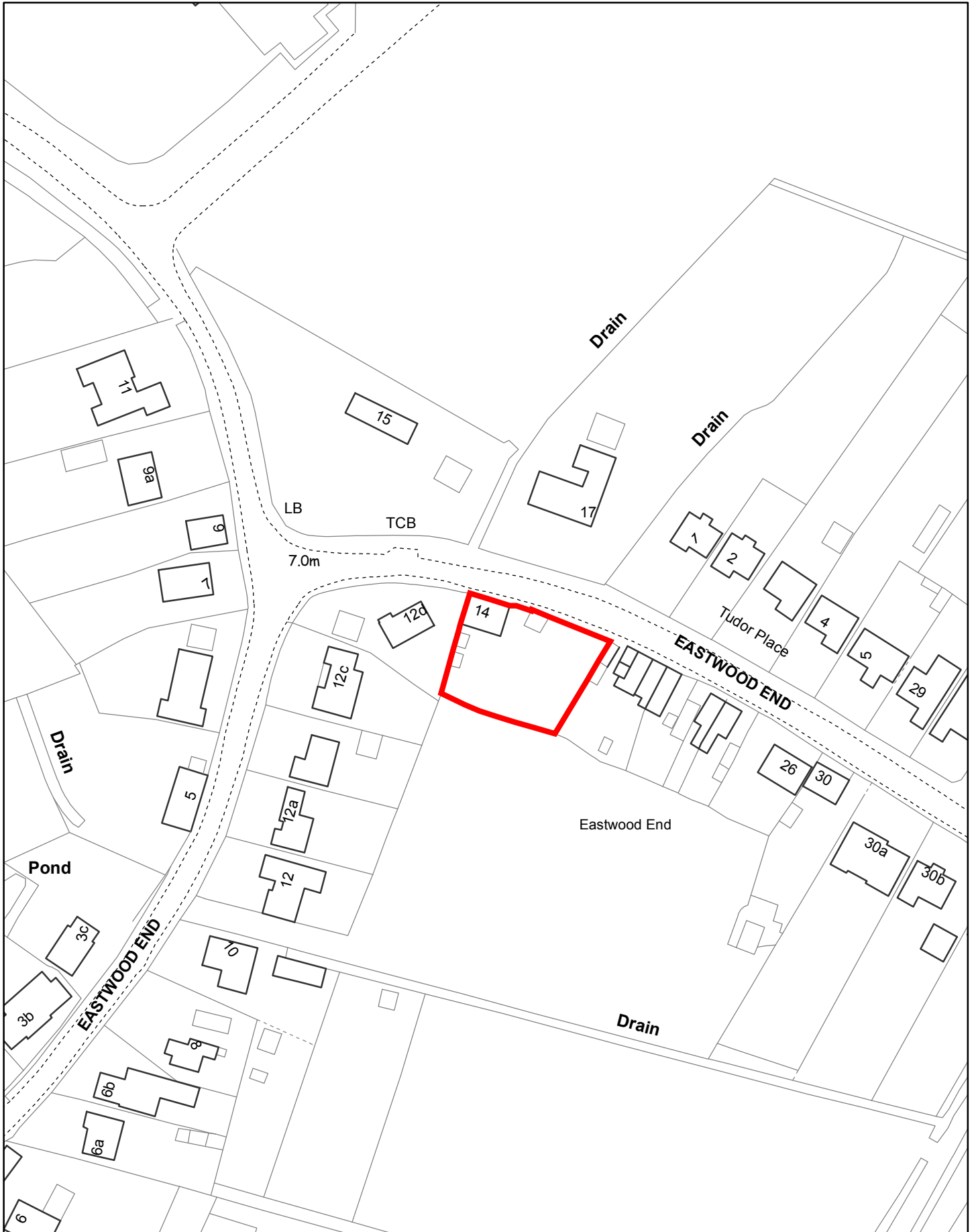
8.0 RECOMMENDATION

REFUSE

- 1 The proposed scheme, which details development located outside the main settlement of Wimblington has not been supported by sufficient justification for the introduction of further dwellings within an unsustainable location. As a result the proposal is contrary to the provisions of the National Planning Policy Framework paragraph 55 and Policies LP12 and LP16 of the emerging Fenland Local Plan Core Strategy Proposed Submission February 2013.**

- 2 The development is of a scale and in a location which would introduce a suburban form development, which is overly dominated by parking, within a rural setting resulting in adverse harm to the character and appearance of the area. Accordingly the proposed development is contrary to Policies LP12 (a) and (d) and LP16 (d) of the Fenland Local Plan 2014 which both seek to secure high quality development which contributes to the sustainability of each settlement and does not harm the character of the locality.**

- 3 The proposal would result in the unjustified loss of a dwelling which has been identified through the consultation process as being worthy of designation as a building of local interest by virtue of its significance and the contribution that it makes to the streetscape. Accordingly the scheme is contrary to Policy LP16 and LP18 of the Fenland Local Plan 2014 which both seek to protect, conserve and enhance the historic environment of the District.**



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