

F/YR16/0130/F

Applicant: Mr & Mrs J Channing

**Agent : Mr Russell Swann
Swann Edwards Architecture Limited**

Land South East Of The Chase, Gull Road, Guyhirn, Cambridgeshire

Erection of 4no 2-storey dwellings comprising of 1 x 5-bed and 3 x 4-bed with garages

Reason for Committee: Due to the level of support received contrary to Officer recommendation.

1 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This is a full application for the development of land at The Chase, Gull Road in Guyhirn for 4 detached 2-storey dwellings. The site currently forms residential land which serves the host dwelling, The Chase. The key issues for consideration are:

- Principle of Development
- Village Thresholds
- Layout and Design
- Impacts on Residential Amenity
- Highway Safety
- Flood Risk

The proposal would introduce the dwellings to the rear of existing dwellings fronting onto Gull Road. This part of Guyhirn is characterised predominantly by road frontage dwellings in a linear form, with a small number of sporadic dwellings located further back, which is a historic arrangement. As such the proposal is considered to be out of keeping with the existing form and character of this part of Guyhirn and therefore fails to comply with Policies LP3, LP12 and LP16 of the Fenland Local Plan. The proposal is therefore recommended for refusal.

2 SITE DESCRIPTION

- 2.1 The site is located to the western side of Gull Road in Guyhirn. The site is located to the rear of existing residential development and currently comprises a residential site which is occupied by one dwelling to the rear of the existing frontage development. The site is landscaped and access is via an existing access point between two existing properties, Copper Beeches and Fernleigh. The site is within Flood Zones 1 and 2.

3 PROPOSAL

- 3.1 The proposal is for the erection of 4 x 2-storey dwellings with garages, comprising 1 x 5-bed dwelling and 3 x 4-bed dwellings. The dwellings are located towards the western part of the site, in the area which comprises Flood Zone 1. The dwellings are to be arranged in a relatively linear fashion. Each dwelling will have an area of rear amenity space and parking and turning areas to the front and side of the dwellings. Access into the site will be via the existing access point off Gull Road

and there will be 3 driveways formed off the existing access leading to the dwellings. In between each driveway is proposed a pond.

- 3.2 The dwellings will all be 2 storey and will have variations in design and size. Plot 1 has been designed to have the appearance of a chalet style dwelling with a modest porch feature and dormer windows to the front elevation at first floor level. It will be located to the southern end of the site and have an approximate footprint of 9m x 11.2m. It will be located approximately 12.2m from Sunflower House to the south east. The dwelling will have a maximum ridge height of approximately 7.5m and eaves heights of 3.7m and 2.5m. The dwelling will provide a lounge, dining room, family room, kitchen, utility and wc at ground floor and 4 bedrooms, a bathroom and 1 ensuite at first floor. Plot 1 also has a detached double garage located to the south easternmost corner of the plot which has an approximate footprint of 6 x 6m and a maximum ridge height of 5.4m.
- 3.3 Plot 2 is sited approximately 5.8m north of the proposed dwelling on Plot 1 at its closest point. Its main footprint measures approximately 8m x 7.8m with a rear extension extending approximately 4m beyond the main dwelling, and a single storey side element to the north. The dwelling also has a detached garage to the north of the dwelling. The dwelling provides some alternative design features from Plot 1 with an open porch instead of an enclosed one and catslide dormers to the front of the dwelling. This dwelling will provide a lounge, study, wc, kitchen, dining room, snug and utility room at ground floor and 4 bedrooms, an en-suite and bathroom at first floor.
- 3.4 Plot 3 is a larger dwelling in terms of footprint, measuring approximately 9m x 11m, however it still retains the character of a chalet style dwelling with dormer windows to the front and rear elevation. This dwelling has a maximum ridge height of approximately 7.2m and this plot includes an attached garage to the northern side of the dwelling with a bedroom above. This dwelling also provides 4 bedrooms.
- 3.5 Plot 4 is also a larger dwelling with a detached garage. The footprint of the dwelling is approximately 13.4m x 9.8m at its maximum and will have a maximum ridge height of 8.2m. This dwelling will provide 5 bedrooms at first floor level and is sited to the northernmost point of the site, approximately 5m from the boundary with the existing dwelling, The Chase, at its closest point. The design of this dwelling is of a 2 storey dwelling with no dormers proposed for this plot. The dwelling replicates some of the features of the other 3 plots in terms of porch design and materials.
- 3.6 The proposal retains hedging around the boundaries of the site and some of the trees present to the eastern side of the site.

Full plans and associated documents are available at:

<https://www.fenland.gov.uk/publicaccess/applicationDetails.do?activeTab=documents&keyVal=O2SU6SHE01U00>

4 SITE PLANNING HISTORY

F/YR07/1293/F	Erection of 2-storey side extension to existing dwelling The Chase Gull Road Guyhirn Cambridgeshire PE13 4ER	Granted	23/01/2008
F/YR00/0725/F	Alterations including 2-storey side and rear, extension the Chase Gull Road, Guyhirn, Cambs PE13 4ER		27/09/2000

5 CONSULTATIONS

5.1 Parish Council

Recommend refusal on the grounds of back land development and loss of privacy and overlooking.

5.2 FDC Environmental Health

No objections in terms of local air quality or the noise climate. As the site is close to filled land the unsuspected contamination condition is required.

5.3 Environment Agency

The comments are based on the assumption that the LPA consider the site has passed the sequential test. The site is within Flood Zone 2 and the EA have no objections but advise that additional flood risk mitigation measures are incorporated into the development.

5.4 North Level IDB

Not received at the time of writing this report.

5.5 CCC Highways

Improvements are made to the access to make it suitable for shared use. No objections subject to conditions relating to temporary parking facilities during construction, access construction, provision of parking and turning prior to occupation, restriction of gates and access drainage.

5.6 CCC Archaeology

The site lies in an area of high archaeological potential. We do not object to the proposal but consider it should be subject to a programme of archaeological investigation secured through a condition.

5.7 Local Residents/Interested Parties

Objectors

5 letters of objection received concerning (in summary):

- Highway safety from the additional traffic accessing Gull Road from the narrow access road;
- Main bedrooms adjoin this access road which would result in noise and light pollution from the additional traffic entering and leaving the site;
- Loss of natural light to the back of the existing properties;
- The site has a higher land level than the existing dwellings and with the required finished floor levels this would result in overlooking.
- Concerns over drainage;
- Guyhirn has had no additional amenities to support its growth;
- Concerns over bins being collected or left in front of existing properties;

- Out of character as it is back land development;
- The development would adversely affect the amenities of the residents of the existing dwellings;
- The development will overload the existing electrical infrastructure;
- Concerns over disturbance to existing wildlife and habitats;
- Further damage to Gull Road which is in poor condition;
- This may set a precedent for further back land development;
- Guyhirn is already over its quota of new housing;

Supporters

6 letters of support received concerning (in summary):

- It is difficult to find housing in Guyhirn;
- The village needs to grow to support the futures of the local young people;
- The dwellings proposed are larger family homes which are in keeping with this part of Guyhirn;
- Guyhirn has great transport links and it is important to keep the village growing and help keep the primary school and businesses running;
- It is a natural way to expand the village;
- It will support the economic recovery of the building industry;

6 POLICY FRAMEWORK

6.1 National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

Paragraph 14: A presumption in favour of sustainable development;

Paragraph 17: Core Planning Principles

Section 6: Delivering a wide choice of high quality homes;

Section 7: Requiring good design;

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

6.2 National Planning Policy Guidance (NPPG)

Design;

Flood Risk and Coastal Change;

Health and Wellbeing;

Rural Housing.

6.3 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;

LP4: Housing;

LP12: Rural areas 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;

LP17: Community safety;

LP19: The natural environment.

6.4 SPD: Delivering and Protecting High Quality Environments in Fenland (July 2014)

DM2: Natural features and landscaping schemes;

DM3: Making a positive contribution to local distinctiveness and character of the area;

DM4: Waste and recycling facilities.

7 KEY ISSUES

- **Principle of Development**
- **Village Thresholds**
- **Layout and Design**
- **Residential Amenity**
- **Highway Safety**
- **Flood Risk**
- **Health and wellbeing**
- **Economic Growth**
- **Other Considerations**

8 ASSESSMENT

Principle of Development

- 8.1 Policy LP3 of the Local Plan identifies Guyhirn as a 'Small Village' where development will be considered on its merits but will normally be limited in scale to residential infilling or a small business opportunity.
- 8.2 Furthermore, Policy LP12 is also relevant which outlines the criteria to be met for supporting development in villages. LP12 Part A requires that new development should be in or adjacent to the existing developed footprint, is of a scale and in a location that is in keeping with the core shape and form of the settlement and will not adversely harm its character and appearance amongst other criteria.
- 8.3 This proposal will see 4 dwellings introduced into a site which is considered to be back land when considered against the prevailing form and character of this part of Guyhirn, which is characterised by linear, road frontage development. It is noted that there are some sporadic dwellings sited back from Gull Road, namely the host dwelling The Chase and Sunflower House, however these are historic and do not override the prevailing form of road frontage developments. Policy LP3 requires development in Small Villages to be infill and whilst the presence of these 2 properties are noted, as the site is not within the main built up frontage it is not considered to be infill.
- 8.4 The proposal is therefore considered to be out of keeping with the core shape and form of the settlement and is out of character with this part of Guyhirn. It is therefore considered to be contrary to Policy LP3 and Part A (d) of Policy LP12 for these reasons and as such is considered to be unacceptable in principle.

Village Thresholds

- 8.5 Policy LP3 provides that the majority of housing growth will be in and around the market towns. Paragraph 3.3.10 of the Local Plan states this is to steer most new development to those larger places that offer the best access to services and facilities. This can help reduce the need to travel, as well as making best use of existing infrastructure.
- 8.6 Policy LP12 Part A also provides that if proposals within or on the edge of a village, in combination with other development built since April 2011 and committed to be built, increase the number of dwellings in a small village by 10% then the proposal should have demonstrable evidence of clear local community

support for the scheme and if, despite a thorough pre-application consultation exercise, demonstrable evidence of support or objection cannot be determined, then there will be a requirement for support from the relevant Parish Council.

- 8.7 The threshold for Guyhirn has been breached with the current figures, as of 29 March 2016, allowing for 25 new dwellings and the number of dwellings built or committed being at 46, as such any application requires demonstrable community support in accordance with the Policy.
- 8.8 This application has been the subject of pre-application community consultation where a notice was displayed at the site to advertise the proposal as well as consultation letters being delivered to 63 neighbouring residents. Of the consultation carried out to the neighbours, 12 responses were received and of these, 8 were in support of the proposal and 4 were against. As such this represented community support for the scheme in accordance with the requirements of LP12 Part A. It is noted that in their response to the planning application, the Parish Council have objected to the scheme, however it is considered the requirements of the community consultation and LP12 have been met in this instance.

Layout and Design

- 8.9 Policy LP16 seeks to ensure that new development makes a positive contribution to the local distinctiveness and character of the area, enhances its local setting, responds to and improves the character of the local built environment, provides resilience to climate change, reinforces local identity and does not adversely impact, either in design or scale terms, on the street scene, settlement pattern or the landscape character of the area (part (d)). Furthermore, parts (e) and (h) of Policy LP16 require new development to not adversely impact on the amenity of neighbouring users, through noise, light pollution, loss of privacy and loss of light, and provide sufficient private amenity space.
- 8.10 In design terms, this part of Gull Road is characterised by a variety of dwelling designs and scales with little uniformity. The proposed dwellings themselves have been designed to show variety between the dwellings, whilst retaining certain features, such as the dormer windows and porch detailing, to ensure the development is comprehensive. No objections are raised to the design of the dwellings, which is unlikely to have any adverse impacts on the surroundings due to the different dwelling designs present around the site. In terms of the proposed garages, the dimensions shown on the plan would not meet the requirements of the local plan in terms of internal dimensions, and as such cannot currently be considered as parking spaces. However the site could accommodate larger garages therefore this aspect could be addressed.
- 8.11 The layout of the site itself is considered to be acceptable in terms of the spacing of the dwellings and the amount of amenity space and parking and turning areas available for the proposed dwellings. In this regard the proposal complies with part (h) of Policy LP16. In the wider context of the area however, the layout is considered to be out of keeping as it would introduce 4 dwellings in a back land location which would result in tandem development that would be at odds with the prevailing layout of the area, i.e. road frontage, linear developments. As such, whilst the site can accommodate 4 dwellings in this location, the proposed layout is not in keeping with its surroundings and as such fails to comply with Policy LP16 part (d). Furthermore, as part of the Flood Mitigation Measures the finished floor levels of the development will be required to be raised. This is discussed further in the Flood Risk section below however it is noted that the submitted site

plan indicates that the site levels for the existing frontage properties are approximately 0.85m and the application site has levels varying from 1.7m to 2.21m which shows the application site being higher than the existing residential sites to the east. As such, raising the floor levels within the properties to comply with the mitigation measures required by the EA give some concern as to the impact on the amenities of the properties to the east and the visual impact on the surrounding area when glimpses of the proposed dwellings are seen between the existing on Gull Road.

Residential Amenity

- 8.12 The proposed development would introduce 4 dwellings to the rear of a number of existing frontage properties along Gull Road. It is noted that a number of the points of objection relate to the potential for adverse impacts on the amenities of the existing residents along Gull Road. Part (e) of Policy LP16 states that new development should not adversely impact on the amenity of neighbouring users, such as through noise, light pollution, loss of privacy and loss of light.
- 8.13 The dwellings have been sited towards the western part of the site, with the existing access being located to the eastern side of the site, adjacent to the rear boundaries of the existing properties. In terms of dwelling to dwelling distances, Plot 1 is located approximately 13m from the adjacent dwelling to the south east, Sunflower House. Plot 2 is sited approximately 46.4m from the rear elevation of the closest dwelling, Fernleigh, Plot 3 is located approximately 46m from the rear elevation of the closest dwelling, Copper Beeches, and Plot 4 is located approximately 45.6m from Maple Cottage and 24.6m from The Chase. It is considered that, given these distances, it is unlikely that there would be any issues with overlooking or loss of privacy from the proposed dwellings to the existing dwellings along Gull Road. This could be further mitigated against by additional landscaping along this boundary to add screening. However, it is acknowledged that there could be a perceived impact on the amenities of the existing dwellings through the introduction of these dwellings to the rear.
- 8.14 It is noted however that the existing access runs between 2 of the frontage properties, Fernleigh and Copper Beeches. The development would result in an intensification of the use of this access, which currently only serves the dwelling The Chase. This would introduce a number of additional vehicular movements between these 2 properties, with Fernleigh being sited approximately 4.6m from the access and Copper Beeches sited approximately 8.4m from the access. As such, there could be potential for noise disturbance from the intensification of this access for these properties. However it is noted that the access is some distance from the existing dwellings adjoins an existing driveway to the north and as such it is not considered that this would be to the level where it represents a significant adverse impact and therefore would not warrant a refusal in this instance. It is noted that the Environmental Health Team have raised no concerns with regards to the impacts of the development on the noise climate also.

Highway Safety

- 8.15 The proposal will utilise the existing access which currently serves The Chase. The access, highway safety and parking considerations have been assessed by the Local Highway Authority who raise no objections to the proposed access subject to conditions being applied. The application proposed improvements to the access point, including widening it to 5m for the first 10m back from the highway which will allow for two way vehicle flow at the access with Gull Road. As such, there are no concerns in relation to highway safety and the proposal complies with the provisions of LP15 in this regard.

Flood Risk

- 8.16 The site is located within Flood Zones 1 and 2, with all of the dwellings being located within Flood Zone 1 and the access being located in Flood Zone 2. It is noted however that the access is existing and the improvement works relate to the first 10m from Gull Road.
- 8.17 The EA have considered the proposal and have raised no objections subject to mitigation measures being implemented, namely:
- Raising finished floor levels above the flood level;
 - A specific warning system and evacuation plan being put in place;
 - Raising sensitive equipment above the flood level;
 - The use of flood proofing measures;
 - Registration with the EAs flood warning service.
- 8.18 Whilst these measures have been noted, regard to the comments made from neighbouring residents in relation to site levels have been given and discussed at paragraph 8.11 above. It is considered that raising the floor levels within the properties to comply with the mitigation measures required by the EA give rise to some concern as to the impact on the amenities of the properties to the east and the visual impact on the surrounding area when glimpses of the proposed dwellings are seen between the existing on Gull Road.
- 8.19 It is noted however, that the proposed dwellings are located within Flood Zone 1 and as such the proposal accords with LP14 in terms of Flood Risk, although the mitigation measures cause some concerns in relation to the visual and residential amenities of the area.

Health and wellbeing

- 8.20 The proposal will introduce 4 dwellings which will be of quality construction and easy to warm. Each dwelling has an ample area of private amenity space and parking and turning areas. The proposal complies with Policy LP2 in this regard. Some concern is raised as to the impact of the development on the existing dwellings, however it is considered that the main concerns are via the intensification of the access and the siting of the dwellings would not result in any severe harm upon the amenities of the existing dwellings.

Economic Growth

- 8.21 This development will provide additional housing stock for Fenland and will therefore contribute to the local economy in accordance with Policy LP6 of the Local Plan.

Other Considerations

- 8.22 The comments made in support of the application are noted and with regards to the development bringing additional homes and ensuring the growth of Guyhirn and boosting the local construction businesses, these are considered to be benefits to the development, however these do not override the principle and form and character issues in this instance.

9 CONCLUSIONS

- 9.1 The proposal fails to comply with the provisions of Policies LP3, LP12 and LP16 in relation to the principle of residential development in this location. Whilst it is noted that the design of the dwellings and the highway safety considerations are acceptable, the site is not considered to be infill and will be at odds with the prevailing form and character of the surrounding area and would result in a

tandem form of development. This would result in an intensification of the use of the access in close proximity to nearby dwellings and would have an adverse visual impact on the surrounding area. The proposal therefore fails to comply with Policies LP3, LP12 and LP16 in this instance.

10 RECOMMENDATION

Refuse

- 1. Policy LP3 of the Local Plan identifies Guyhirn as a Small Village where development will be considered on its merits but will normally be of a very limited nature and normally be limited in scale to residential infilling. The proposal would introduce a back land form of development which would be harmful to the character of the surrounding area and the dwellings to the north and south of the development site are sporadic dwellings and do not form a continuous area of development. As such the proposal is not considered to result in residential infilling. Therefore the proposal fails to comply with the provisions of Policy LP3 of the Fenland Local Plan, (2014).**
- 2. Policies LP12 Part A (d) and LP16 (d) resists new development which adversely impacts on the character of the area and requires development to respond to and improve the character of the built environment. The prevailing form and character of the area comprises frontage development. The tandem positioning of the dwellings, which are behind the established built form would be out of keeping with the character of the area. This would result in an incongruous development and is therefore contrary to Policies LP12 (d) and LP16 (d) of the Fenland Local Plan (2014).**



Created on: 01/03/2016

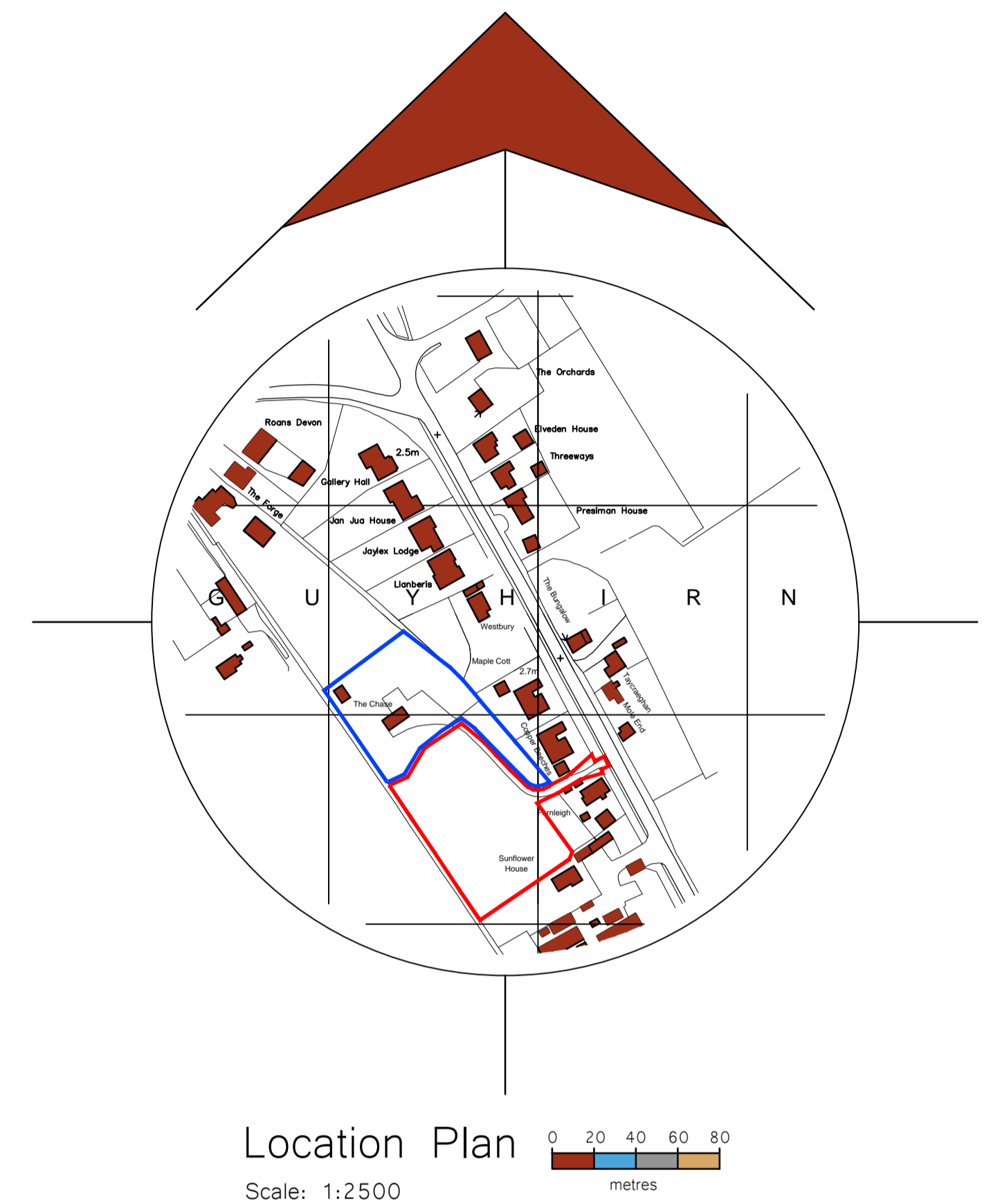
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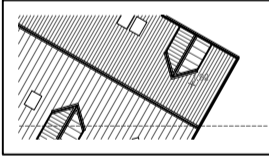
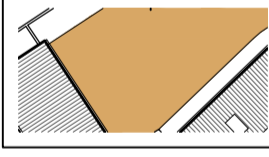
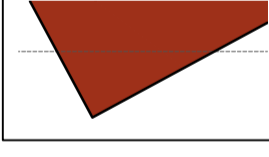

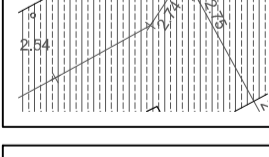
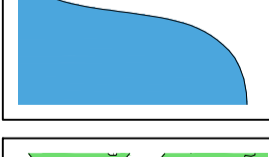

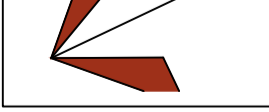
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- General Notes
1. This drawing shall not be scaled, figured dimensions only to be used.
 2. All dimensions are shown in 'mm' unless otherwise stated.
 3. The contractor, sub-contractors and suppliers must verify all dimensions on site prior to the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



SITE PLAN KEY

-  Indicates proposed dwellings
-  Indicates parking spaces and access
-  Indicates existing neighbouring dwellings
-  Indicates trees and hedges to remain
-  Indicates widened shared access driveway to be constructed to Cambridge County Council specification to a width of 5.0m, 10.0m into the site
-  Indicates proposed water features
-  Indicates proposed landscaping
-  Indicates site access

Revisions

A	Feb 2016	Revised Following Public Consultation
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Status
FOR APPROVAL

SWANN EDWARDS
ARCHITECTURE

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Job Title Proposed Residential Development The Chase, Gull Road, Guyhirn Wisbech, Cambs for Mr & Mrs J Channing	Date November 2015	Scale As Shown Sheet Size A1
Drawing Title Planning Drawings Site and Location Plans	Job No. SE-338 Dwg No. 20	Drawn by RS Revision A

Site Plan
Scale: 1:200