

F/YR16/0091/F**Applicant: Mr P Baxter****Agent : Mr Ken Elener
KL Elener Architectural Design****Land East Of Horseway Farm, Horseway, Chatteris, Cambridgeshire****Change of use of existing garage to 3 x holiday lets****Reason for Committee:** The Parish Councils views are contrary to the Officer's recommendation

1 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The application seeks full planning permission to change the use of the existing residential garage to 3 holiday Lets.

The site lies approximately 3km east of Chatteris and comprises a small area of land set within the residential curtilage of Horseway Farm.

The proposal would introduce further tourism accommodation into the district which could be occupied by visitors to the various attractions, sporting venues and interests that Fenland offers. However, the development is located in the open countryside and The Local Plan supports visitor accommodation only where it meets the sustainability aims which include its alignment to the spatial strategy providing good access to public transport and services or where it would enhance an existing visitor attraction. The proposal fails to meet these requirements and as such is not supported through relevant policies LP3 and LP6 of the Fenland Local Plan.

The application is recommended for refusal.

2 SITE DESCRIPTION

- 2.1 The site lies approximately 3km east of Chatteris and comprises a small area of land set within the residential curtilage of Horseway Farm. Horseway Farm previously formed a small farmstead and an agricultural barn still exists adjacent to the site and is used for the storage of hay and feed for the horses adjacent to the land. The dwelling on the site replaced the former farmhouse. The residential curtilage extends across the access to the front eastern side of the site where a large detached garage has been partially erected and adjoins a cart shed/stable building.
- 2.2 The garage building, subject to this application, was granted permission in 2014 and its outer shell has been constructed leaving open garages without doors. The garage backs onto Byall Fen Drove with its rear wall forming the front boundary to the site. Only the rear and western side blank walls are visible from the main road with the garage access facing into the yard
- 2.3 The area is sparsely populated with small farmsteads and isolated dwellings in the vicinity, the nearest being approximately 90m to the east.
- 2.4 The site lies in flood zone 1

3 PROPOSAL

- 3.1 The application seeks full planning permission to change the use of the garage to 3 holiday lets.
- 3.2 Minimal external alterations are required requiring only the infilling of the garage openings with brick, windows and doors which would face into the yard. Therefore the majority of works would be internal alterations including the erection of partition walls and utilities. Each holiday let would comprise a bedroom, shower and kitchen, dining lounge area with the central let being more open plan.
- 3.3 Access to the site would be by the existing access which serves the host dwelling and agricultural barn and on-site parking for 4 cars including a disabled bay is proposed directly in front of the premises.
- 3.4 The application form states that the development would create 1 part time position of employment.
- 3.5 Holiday Lets are classed as dwellinghouses under a C3 Use Class but with restrictions over permanent occupancy.
- 3.6 Full plans and associated documents for this application can be found at:
<https://www.fenland.gov.uk/publicaccess/applicationDetails.do?activeTab=documents&keyVal=O0WJC2HE06P00>

4 SITE PLANNING HISTORY

Reference	Description	Decision	Date
F/YR14/0654/F	Erection of garage involving demolition of existing building Horseway Farm Horseway Chatteris Cambridgeshire PE16 6X	Granted	03/10/2014
F/YR14/0073/F	Change of use of agricultural courtyard to extend the residential curtilage Land East Of Horseway Farm Horseway Chatteris Cambridges	Granted	17/06/2014

5 CONSULTATIONS

5.1 Middle Level Commissioners

No comments received within the determination period

5.2 Parish/Town Council

Supported subject to the imposition of a condition restricting the permanent residential use of the holiday lets.

5.3 Cambridgeshire County Council Highways Authority

The applicant has provided plenty of parking for both the parent property and the proposed holiday let accommodation to accord with FDC's parking policy.

The access is unchanged and unaltered as part of the application however the holiday lets will intensify the use of the access. The applicant will be able to

achieve 2.4m x 120m visibility splays within the public highway. However they will be required to cut back/remove a substantial amount of vegetation to achieve clear visibility in both directions – secured via planning condition.

5.4 Environment & Health Services (FDC)

No objections subject to the imposition of an unsuspected contaminated land condition.

5.5 Tourism And Culture Officer

There is limited accommodation on offer to tourists in this area of Fenland, I do not have any evidence to say it is required/not required.

5.6 Local Residents/Interested Parties

5 letters of support received raising the following matters;

- The proposal could be of assistance to customers of the sky-diving business nearby
- Advises that there is not enough of this type of accommodation in the area and the opportunities are good for the local economy
- Advises wildlife sites exist nearby which are good for birdwatching, walking, angling, quiet enjoyment and family education.
- Would benefit Anglers who visit the area and fish the rivers nearby
- Would benefit local tourism
- Tourism is one of the fastest growing businesses in Fenland
- Not everyone wants to stay in a town
- Holiday lets of this type provides freedom to residents
- The area of Manea is increasingly a tourist attraction
- Advises that a substantial B & B recently closed

6 POLICY FRAMEWORK

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

National Planning Policy Guidance (NPPG)

Fenland Local Plan 2014:

LP3: The Settlement Hierarchy

LP6: Employment

LP15: Transport

LP16: Delivering and Protecting High Quality Environments

7 KEY ISSUES

- **Principle of Development**
- **Access**
- **Scale, layout and appearance**
- **Other Considerations – letters of support**
- **Health and wellbeing**
- **Economic Growth**

8 ASSESSMENT

8.1 Principle of Development

8.1.1 Policy LP3 defines the settlement hierarchy for the district aiming to deliver a majority of development to the sustainable market towns and then to identified villages and settlements. LP3 supports development in the open countryside

(‘Elsewhere’) where it is demonstrably essential for the effective operations of agriculture, horticulture, forestry, outdoor recreation, transport or utility services. The site lies outside any settlement and as such constitutes ‘Elsewhere’ development for which there is no evidence to suggest that it is essential for any of the enterprises as listed under LP3.

8.1.2 Policy LP6 of the FLP supports the tourism and visitor industry, welcoming new accommodation subject to the assessment against 9 criteria which are as follows;

1. Fit with the Council’s spatial strategy (in terms of distribution and scale)
2. Fit with the specific and broad locations for growth identified in this Local Plan, or in other suitable locations on the edge of Market Towns where it can be demonstrated that such growth would be compatible with adjacent urban land uses
3. The size of the settlement and scale of housing growth proposed
4. Availability of and accessibility to public transport services
5. Site suitability in terms of physical constraints (e.g. access, flood risk)
6. Impact on natural and heritage assets
7. Impact in terms of urban/landscape character, and setting of settlements
8. Infrastructure capacity (see LP13)
9. Availability and deliverability of sites

8.1.3 In considering the proposal against the above criteria it is concluded that the development does not accord with the Councils’ spatial strategy (see assessment against LP3 above), is not on the edge of a market town or settlement and has limited access to public transport services; the nearest recorded bus stop being at New Road Chatteris c.4Km from the site and the nearest train station at Manea c.7.5Km from the site. In respect of the other criteria, the site lies in Flood Zone 1 and is an existing building with limited external alterations and therefore would not cause harmful impacts on natural or heritage assets and would not harm the character of the area. Furthermore the development is served by an adequate access road, Byall Fen Drove.

8.1.4 In summary, the Local Plan does not support the principle of visitor accommodation in the open countryside unless it is to enhance an existing tourism/ visitor facility. There is no evidence within the application that indicates this is the case. As such the principle of the development is not supported.

8.2 Access and layout

8.2.1 The LHA has provided comments in respect of the access and layout identifying that the development would provide adequate parking and manoeuvrability within the site.

8.2.2 The LHA have raised no objections to the principle of the proposal and have confirmed that subject to the imposition of a condition securing adequate visibility the development would be acceptable in transport terms. A such and subject to a suitable worded condition the development would satisfy policies LP2 and LP15 of the Fenland Local Plan 2014 in respect of highways impacts.

8.3 Scale and appearance

8.3.1 The proposal would utilise an existing building whose rear and western side facet walls only are visible from the streetscene. As such given that the building already exists and wil appear relatively unaltered, the scale and appearance of

the development does not cause harm to the streetscene or general character of the area. Furthermore due to the isolated location of the site and the size and nature of the proposed use as tourism accommodation it is not anticipated to give rise to amenity harm for residents, the nearest being c.90m away to the east.

8.4 Other Considerations – letters of support

- 8.4.1 The applicant has provided 5 letters of support for the development which come from local residents and businesses and these have been carefully considered. It is acknowledged that there is little tourism accommodation in the area and the development would provide accommodation which could be occupied by those wishing to access the array of attractions, sports facilities and pursuits in the locality.
- 8.4.2 However, there is nothing to suggest that a remote, open countryside location such as this which conflicts with the sustainability aims of the Local Plan is strictly necessary to achieve business success in this instance. It does not for example indicate that to locate the development on the edge of a settlement; be that Chatteris Town or Manea village for example which would meet the sustainability aims of the Local Plan, would be any less effective at achieving this business success.
- 8.4.3 As such it is concluded that the application does not provide adequate justification that any benefits that may arise from the development would outweigh the policy conflict.

8.5 Health and wellbeing

- 8.5.1 The proposal would provide additional tourism accommodation for the district which could be considered to have leisure implications. However, there is little evidence to demonstrate a clear need for such accommodation in this particular location and it is considered that the same type of development on the edge of a settlement and with better infrastructure links and services would be preferable and which could contribute more directly towards enabling communities to flourish (see policy LP2 of the FLP).

8.6 Economic Growth

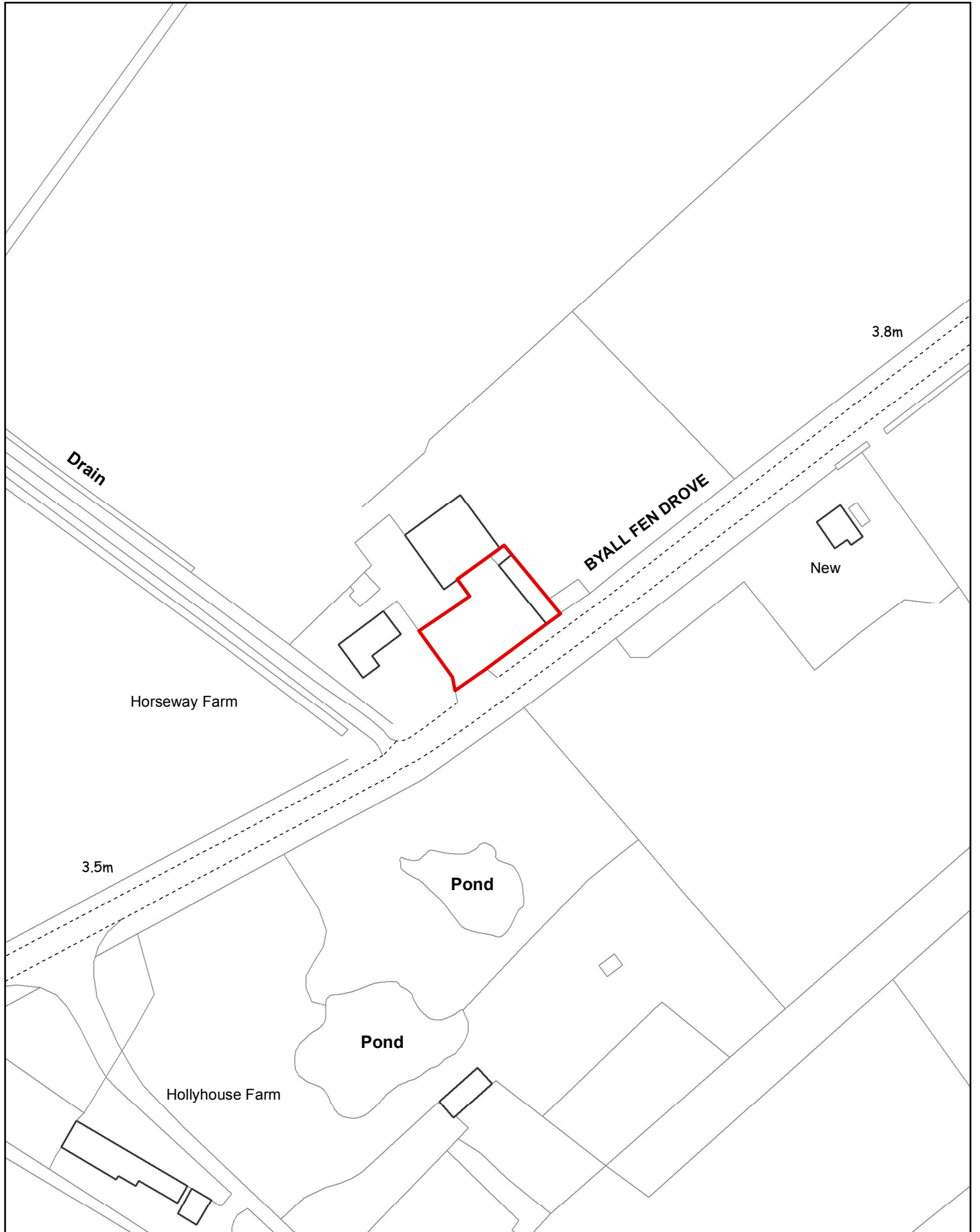
- 8.6.1 The proposal would assist towards economic growth for the local economy with occupiers likely to access visitor attractions and local venues and would provide small-scale employment.

9 CONCLUSIONS

- 9.1 The proposal would introduce further tourism accommodation into the district which could be occupied by visitors to the various attractions, sporting venues and interests that Fenland offers. However, the development is located in the open countryside and The Local Plan supports visitor accommodation only where it meets the sustainability aims as set out in policy LP6 which include its alignment to the spatial strategy where there is good access to public transport and services or where it would enhance an existing visitor attraction. The proposal fails to achieve this and as such is not supported through relevant policies LP3 and LP6 of the Fenland Local Plan.

10 RECOMMENDATION

1. Policy LP3 supports development in the open countryside ('Elsewhere') where it is demonstrably essential for the effective operations of agriculture, horticulture, forestry, outdoor recreation, transport or utility services. The site lies outside any settlement and as such constitutes 'Elsewhere' development for which there is no evidence to suggest that it is essential for any of the enterprises as listed under LP3. Furthermore policy LP6 supports the creation of tourist accommodation subject to the proposal conforming to the Council's spatial strategy and having good access to public transport services. The proposal by reason of its remote open countryside location fails to meet these requirements. As such the proposal would constitute unsustainable development in the open countryside without justification contrary to policies LP3 and LP6 of the Fenland Local Plan (adopted May 2014).



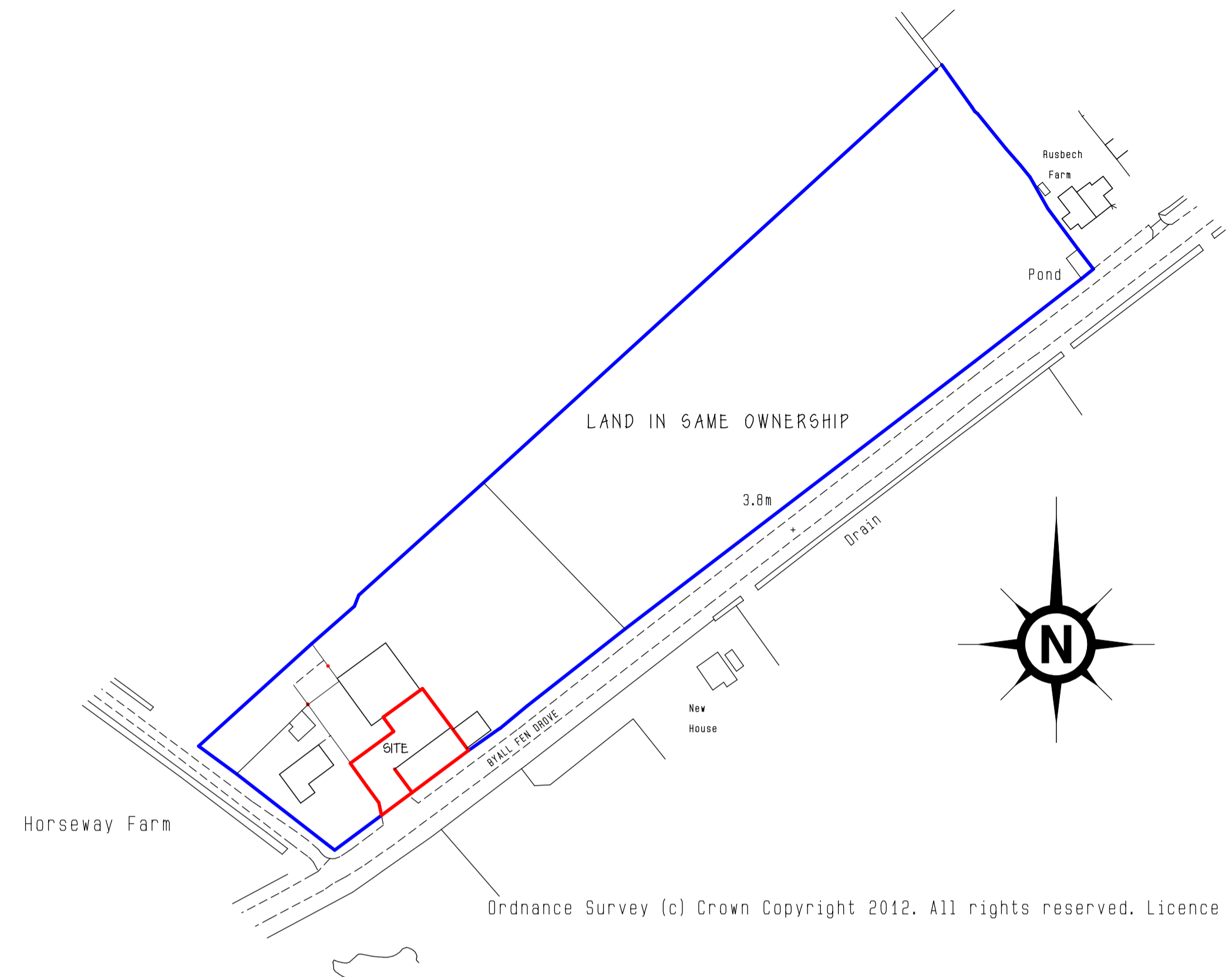
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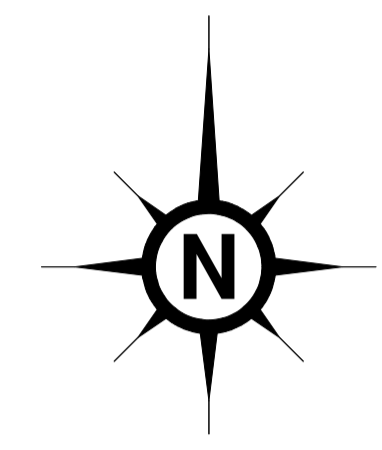
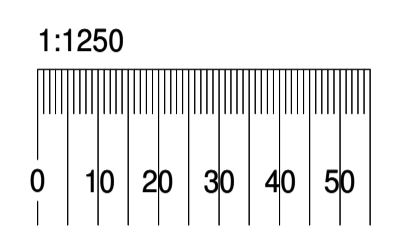
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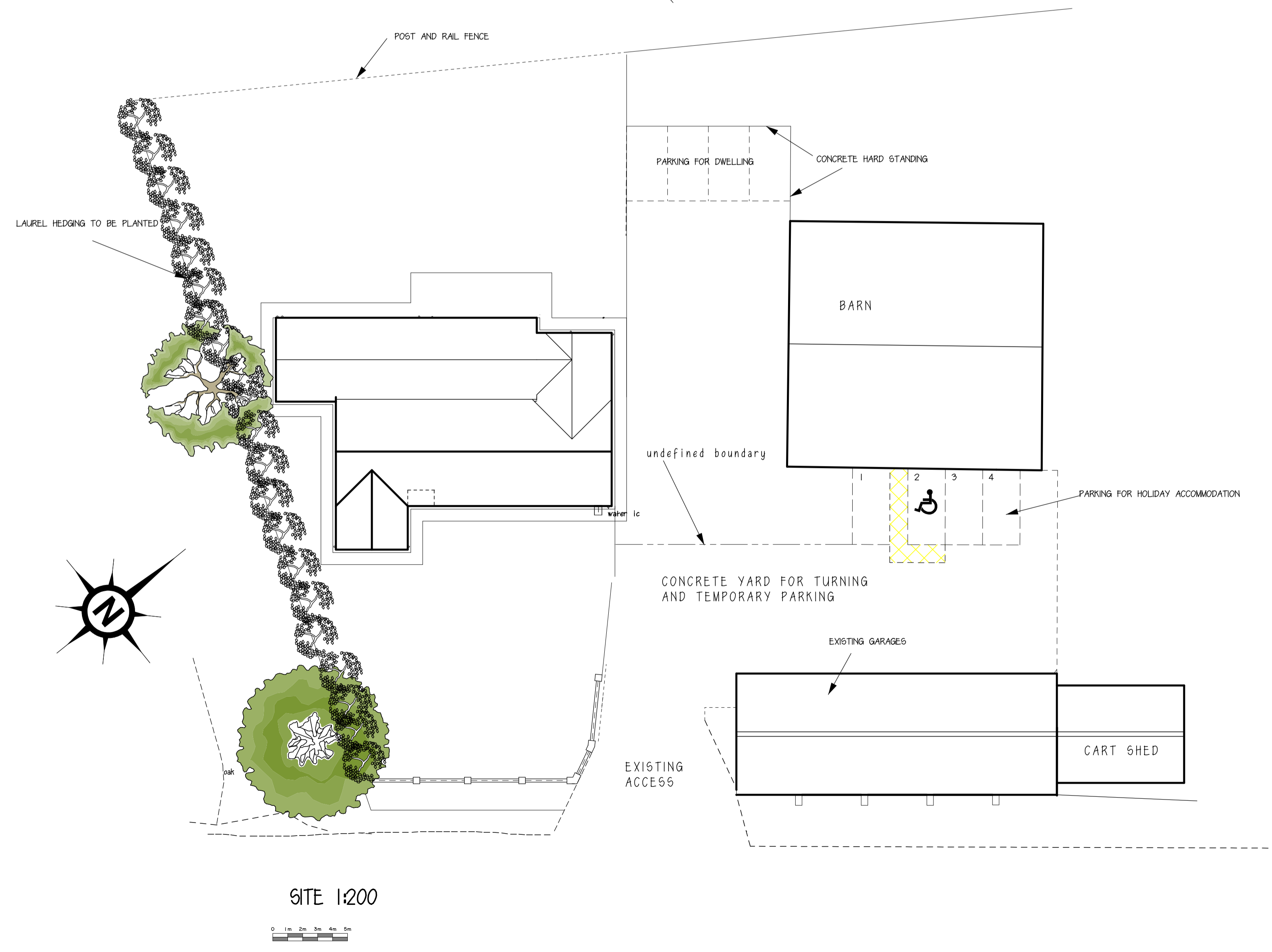




LOCATION



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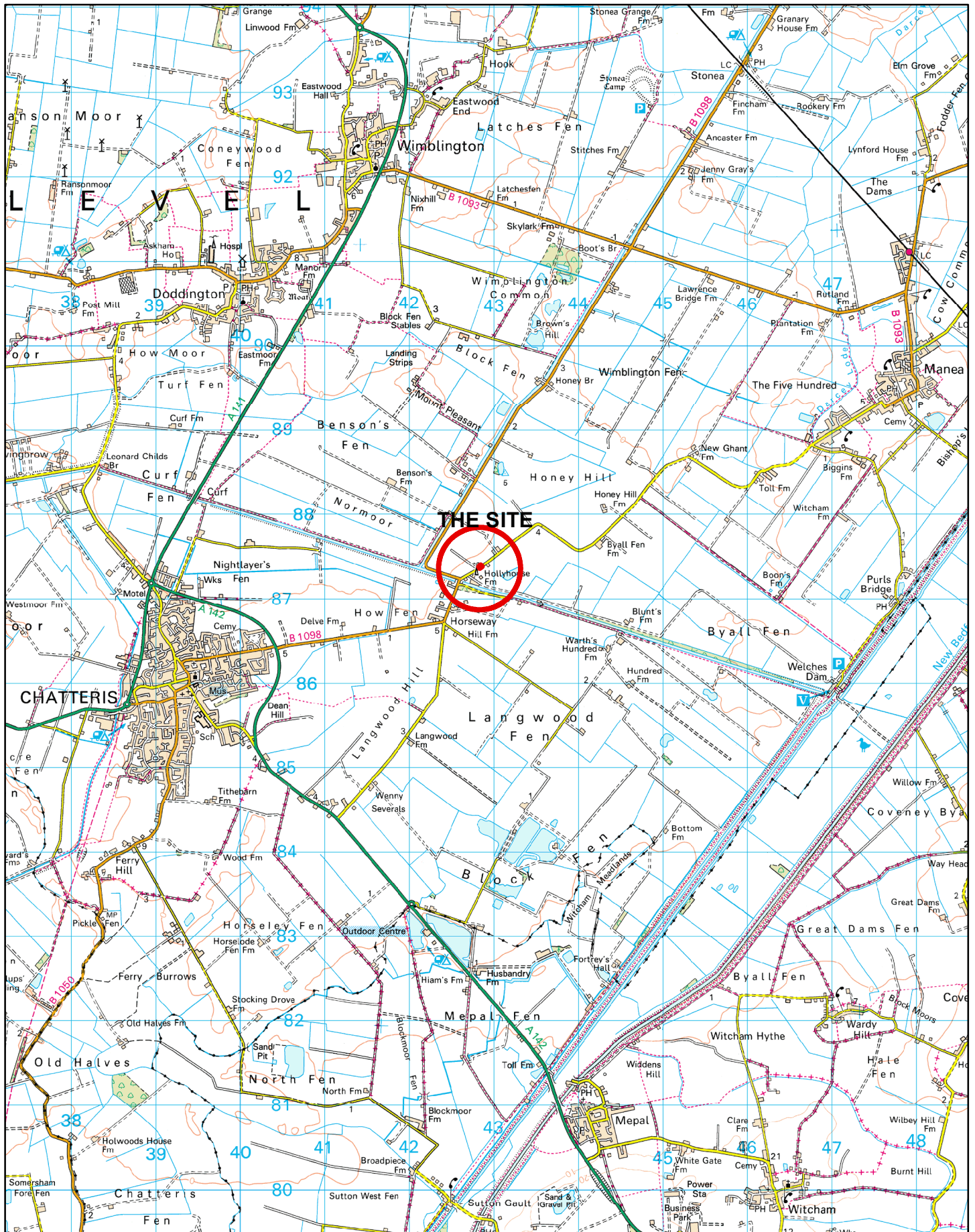
Project
 CHANGE OF USE
 GARAGES TO HOLIDAY LETS
 HORSEWAY FARM
 HORSEWAY
 CHATTER IS PE16 6XG

Client
 P BAXTER

Title
 SITE AND LOCATION PLAN

Ref
 B3322-2

Rev
 Sheet A1
 Scale: 1:50,100,200,1250 Date: DEC 2015



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