

**F/YR15/1109/F**

**Applicant: Mr Alan Quince**

**Agent : Mr Robin Briscoe  
Peter Humphrey Associates Ltd**

**Land North Of 19 To 29, Chapel Avenue, Wisbech St Mary, Cambridgeshire**

**Erection of 4 x 2-storey 4-bed dwellings with double garages and paddock facilities including stable blocks**

**Reason for Committee: The Parish Council's comments are at variance with Officer Recommendation.**

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## **1 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

This is a full application for the introduction of 4 x 2-storey dwellings, plus paddocks and stable blocks for each dwelling on land to the north of Chapel Avenue in Wisbech St Mary.

The key considerations for this application are:

- Principle of development and village thresholds
- Design and Layout
- Form and Character
- Flood Risk
- Highway Safety
- Health and Wellbeing
- Economic Growth.

Wisbech St Mary is a growth village and the site adjoins the main settlement. The site is currently agricultural land with an existing field access. The proposed dwellings have been sited to minimise impacts on the surrounding area and neighbouring residential amenity. The site is located within Flood Zones 2 and 3 and it has not been demonstrated that the sequential and exceptions tests have been met as required by the NPPF and Policy LP14. As such the proposal is recommended for refusal on grounds of flood risk and is contrary to Policy LP14.

## **2 SITE DESCRIPTION**

2.2 The site is located to the north of Chapel Avenue in Wisbech St Mary, and adjoins the existing settlement. The site is currently agricultural with access from Chapel Avenue between Nos 2 and 19. The site is open to the north and the area to the south is characterised by residential development, with those adjacent to the site being single-storey in nature. The local school is located to the south east of the application site. The site is located within Flood Zones 1, 2 and 3.

## **3 PROPOSAL**

- 3.1 The application proposes 4 x 2-storey 4-bed dwellings with double garages and paddock facilities including stable blocks. Access into the site will be via Chapel Avenue and will run between No 2 The Birches and No.19 Chapel Avenue. The dwellings are to be located off a shared access road leading to individual driveways for each property. Each dwelling will have an area of private residential amenity space plus individual paddocks and stable blocks. The paddocks will be delineated by timber post and rail fencing and landscaping is proposed throughout the site. There is an IDB drain that runs to the north and part of the western boundary of the site and it is proposed to run a footpath link along this area to link the land to the west and the school and playing field to the east and north east of the site.
- 3.2 In design terms the proposed dwellings are large dwellings with Plots 1, 3 and 4 having detached garages and Plot 2 having an attached garage. Plot 1 has been designed to be a 2-storey chalet style dwelling with accommodation in the roof space. Plot 1 has gable features to the front elevation with a partially open, cart shed style garage. It will provide a lounge, kitchen/family room and study/office at ground floor and 4 bedrooms, 2 en-suites and a bathroom to first floor. Plot 2 is also a chalet-style dwelling which replicates the gable features seen on Plot 1 but this time has the garage/cart shed attached. The internal provisions are as Plot 1. Plots 3 and 4 also reflect the design of Plots 1 and 2 however have detached double garages instead of a garage/cart shed arrangement. The proposed dwellings are approximately 7.1m to ridge in height.
- 3.3 The proposed stable blocks are of standard stable design and will provide 2 stables, a tack room and feed store, and have an overall height of 4.1m approximately to the ridge.

#### 4 SITE PLANNING HISTORY

F/YR13/0252/O	Residential Development (1.35ha) – 20 dwellings.	Refused 05.06.2015.
F/YR04/3982/F	Erection of 4 x 2-bed semi-detached bungalows and 4 x 3-bed detached bungalows with associated garages and car parking and sewage treatment plant.	Granted 14.01.2005.
F/1055/86/F	7 bungalows and layout of 2 building plots.	Approved 26.02.1987

#### 5 CONSULTATIONS

##### Parish Council:

- 5.1 Recommend approval subject to the access being considered safe and suitable.

##### FDC Environmental Health

- 5.2 Noted that the application is for domestic usage, if the stables are to be used for commercial purposes (livery yard/riding lessons) then it is likely the site would require a licence. No objections in principle to the development but details of how stable waste will be disposed of should be provided.

##### North Level IDB

- 5.3 No objections in principle however it should be noted that the Board's Sayers Field Drain forms the northern boundary of the site, of which development is not permitted within 9 metres without consent. Formal land drainage consent will be required to construct any future footpaths across the riparian drain to the west of the site.

#### **Environment Agency**

- 5.4 Development must be carried out in accordance with the submitted Flood Risk Assessment which should be secured by condition. The Sequential and Exceptions Tests should be applied in accordance with the NPPF.

#### **FDC Valuation and Estates**

- 5.5 No response received.

#### **CCC Highways**

- 5.6 No objections however advise that the LHA will not support adoption of any part of the road. The applicant should consider locating a bin collection area closer to the public highway. Requires conditions relating to the construction of the access road, provision of parking and turning areas, submission of a construction management plan and off-site highway works.

#### **CCC Archaeology**

- 5.7 Require an archaeological condition be attached to any permission as the site lies in an area of high archaeological potential.

#### **Local Residents/Interested Parties**

#### **5.8 Objectors**

3 letters of objection received concerning (in summary):

- The adjoining development is made up of bungalows;
- Chapel Avenue is inappropriate as an access road.
- Chapel Avenue has a blind bend and parked cars and is barely adequate for the present residents without the possibility of horse boxes added.
- Concern over further damage to the surrounding area from construction vehicles accessing the site;
- Additional traffic will be considerable including delivery of fodder and bedding for horses;
- Concern over proximity of paddocks to residential properties;
- The site is close to the school who host a fireworks event each year which is likely to cause issues between the horse owners and the school;
- More hardstandings will increase flooding;
- Access into the site is only 7.2m wide and to achieve an access of 10m part of The Birches will have to be used;
- Chapel Avenue is in a poor condition.

## **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;  
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.

## **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 and Village Thresholds**
- **Design and Layout**
- **Form and Character**
- **Flood Risk**
- **Highway Safety**
- **Health and wellbeing**
- **Economic Growth**

## **8 BACKGROUND**

- 8.1 An application was submitted in 2013 on this site for residential development up to 20 dwellings under planning reference F/YR13/0252/O. This application was refused on flood risk grounds in that the development did not demonstrate compliance with the exceptions test as detailed within the NPPF.

## **9 ASSESSMENT**

### **Principle of Development and Village Thresholds**

- 9.1 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.
- 9.2 Policy LP3 allows for development within the existing urban area of growth villages, or as a small village extension, although of a considerably more limited scale than that appropriate to market towns. Wisbech St Mary is identified as a

Growth Village in the Fenland Local Plan. Therefore, the principle of development may be acceptable, subject to consideration against Policy LP12 Part A.

- 9.3 Policy LP12 identifies the criteria for which development in villages should be assessed against and includes that the development should be in or adjacent to the developed footprint and should be in keeping with the core shape and form of the settlement amongst other things. 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 limited growth 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.
- 9.4 Wisbech St Mary was assessed most recently on 7<sup>th</sup> December 2016 and was found to be under threshold, with 65 out of a potential 85 dwellings built or permitted, and as such there is no requirement for a pre-application community consultation in this instance. The proposal is therefore considered to comply with the provisions of Policies LP3 and LP12 and is acceptable in principle.

#### **Design and Layout**

- 9.5 The proposed dwellings are relatively large, situated on large plots with additional paddocks and stables for each dwelling. The design of the dwellings result in a comprehensive development and the site can easily accommodate the proposed development. Each dwelling has ample private amenity space and parking and turning provision and complies with Policy LP16 in this regard.
- 9.6 The proposal has been amended from originally submitted to reduce the impacts on the existing bungalows to the south of the site, which has involved the relocation of the garage to Plot 4 to the north of the site away from the boundary with the rear gardens of the bungalows. The proposed southern boundary is to be landscaped with a number of trees to further reduce any impacts on the amenities of adjoining residents. The garage and dwelling for Plot 1 are sited approximately 5m and 16m from the southern boundary and the dwelling and stable block for Plot 4 are located approximately 10m and 7m from the southern site boundary. Given the proposed landscaping and the distances between the dwellings, garages and site boundaries it is considered that the proposal will, on balance, not have an adverse impact on the residential amenities of nearby residents or the visual amenities of the surrounding area. As such, the proposal complies with Policy LP16 in this regard.

#### **Form and Character**

- 9.7 Policy LP12 (d) seeks to ensure that development 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. This development would introduce 4 large properties into a site that adjoins existing development which is modest in character and comprises predominantly small bungalows, some semi-detached and terraced, on modest plots and of a higher density than proposed. However, the site forms a comprehensive development which is clearly separate from the existing adjoining development and, when considered against nearby developments, the highway implications of a lower density development and the impacts on residential amenity it is considered that a development of this nature is, on balance, acceptable.

### **Flood Risk**

- 9.8 The site is located predominantly within Flood Zone 3, with part of the site located in Flood Zone 2 and the application has been accompanied by a flood risk assessment. Policy LP14 of the Fenland Local Plan and the NPPF seek to direct development to areas of lower flood risk and sites within flood zones 2 and 3 should only be permitted following the completion of a sequential test, and if appropriate an exceptions test, to demonstrate that there are no alternative sites available within lower risk flood zones. A sequential test report has been submitted for this application which has assessed a number of sites in and around Wisbech St Mary. However, many of these sites are discounted as they are either too large or too small to accommodate the development as a whole. The newly adopted Cambridgeshire Flood and Water SPD advises that in order to pass the sequential test, an accumulation of smaller sites or parts of larger sites should be considered to accommodate the development. As such it has not been demonstrated that there are no alternative sites in lower flood risks as required by local and national planning policy. The proposal therefore fails to accord with LP14 and the NPPF in this regard and as such is unacceptable in flood risk terms.

### **Highway Safety**

- 9.9 It is noted that some of the points of objection relate to the condition and capacity of Chapel Avenue and its ability to cope with construction traffic and additional daily vehicular movements resulting from the development, including horseboxes and deliveries for the keeping of horses. Access into the site is off Chapel Avenue between 2 existing properties and each dwelling is provided with an adequate level of parking and turning within the site. The access road width is shown to be 5.5m approximately.
- 9.10 The Local Highway Authority have assessed the proposal and raise no objections to the scheme. However they do point out that the County would not adopt the proposed road and as such consideration would need to be given to the relocation of the bin stores within the site. As such the proposal is considered to accord with Policy LP15 in this instance.

### **Health and wellbeing**

- 9.11 Policy LP2 seeks to ensure that development proposals positively contribute to creating healthy, safe and equitable living environments. It is considered that this development will provide new dwellings that would be easy to heat and provide good amenity levels, however the development would not be considered to be safe from flooding and as such the proposal only partially complies with LP2.

### **Economic Growth**

- 9.12 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.

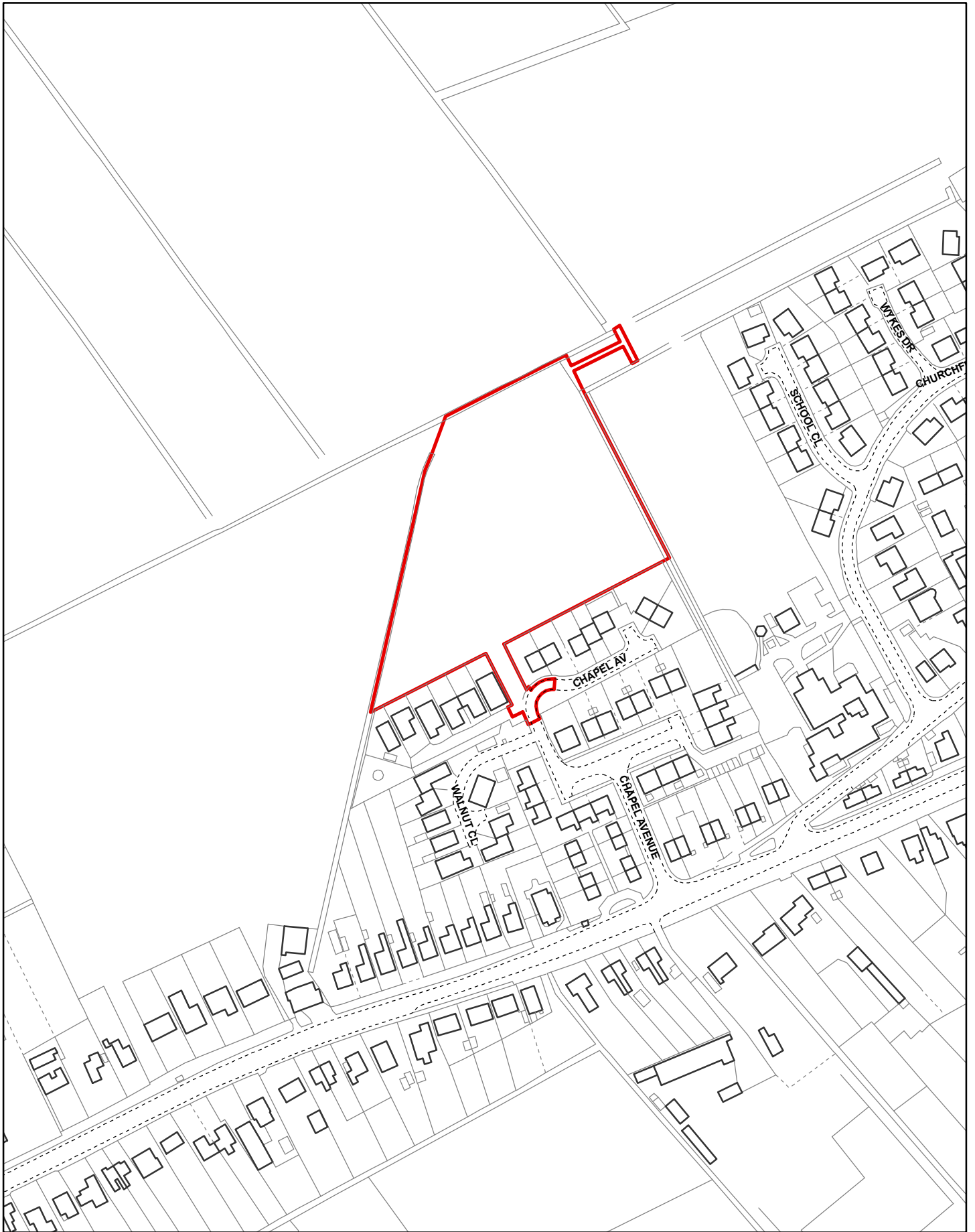
## **10 CONCLUSIONS**

- 10.1 The proposal has been considered against the relevant local and national planning policies, and whilst the development would provide new dwellings with good levels of amenity for any future occupants, the application has failed to address the sequential test and flood risk concerns. As such the proposal is considered to be contrary to the provisions of LP14.

## 11 RECOMMENDATION

**Refuse.**

- 1. Policy LP14 (Part B) of the Fenland Local Plan 2014 requires development proposals in high flood risk areas to undergo a sequential test to demonstrate through evidence that the proposal cannot be delivered elsewhere in the settlement at lower risk of flooding. Policy LP2 seeks to deliver high quality environments, ensuring that people do not suffer adverse impacts arising from development in the interests of health and wellbeing. The site lies within Flood Zones 2 and 3 which are high risk flood areas. The applicant has failed to demonstrate that the development could not be delivered in an area of lower flood risk thereby failing LP14 (Part B). Consequently, the proposal also fails to satisfy policy LP2 of the Fenland Local Plan as it fails to demonstrate that it would deliver a high quality environment and not unjustifiably put future occupants and property at a higher risk of flooding.**



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 **Fenland**  
CAMBRIDGESHIRE  
Fenland District Council



Drain

New Footpath Link to school and playing field carried across proposed development site

Footpath Link to WSM School and Playing Fields

New Footpath Access to School

IDB Drain Maintenance Strip

New Footpath Link to school and playing field carried across proposed development site

Paddock for Plot 2

1.55m

1.53m

Timber Framed Stable Block

1500mm high Timber Post and Rail Paddock Fencing

Plot 2

Native Hedging species

1500mm high Timber Post and Rail Paddock Fencing

Future Footpath Link to the west

Paddock for Plot 3

1500mm high Timber Post and Rail Paddock Fencing

Gravel Drive

Detached garage see (P) 26

Timber Framed Stable Block

1500mm high Timber Post and Rail Paddock Fencing

Timber Framed Stable Block

Paddock for Plot 1

1.58m

Gravel Drive

Plot 3

Plot 1

Native Hedging species

1500mm high Timber Post and Rail Paddock Fencing

Native Hedging species

Gravel Drive

Native Hedging species

Gravel Drive

1500mm high Timber Post and Rail Paddock Fencing

Paddock for Plot 4

Plot 4

Timber Framed Stable Block

Detached garage see (P) 26

Native Hedging species

1.70m

1.53m

Refer to (P) 19 for new junction

19 21

Accommodation  
New Homes - 4 bedroom detached - 2000sq ft  
  
Total 4 homes

**Peter Humphrey Associates**  
ARCHITECTURAL DESIGN AND BUILDING

PROJECT Proposed Residential Development  
SITE Land North West of High Road Wisbech St Mary, Cambs

DRAWING Site Layout

CLIENT Mr Alan Quince

DATE Nov 2015 SCALE 1:250 A1 4874/(P) 24

REV.	DETAILS	DATE
A	Plot 1 and 4 internal arrangement / layout adjusted	Feb 2016
B	Plot 4 layout adjusted to reposition garage away from southern boundary	March 2016

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