
F/YR25/0058/O

Applicant: Mr P Gumbley

**Agent: Mr G Edwards
Swann Edwards Architecture Ltd**

Land South Of 2B And 2C, Bridge Lane, Wimblington, Cambridgeshire

Erect up to 9 x dwellings (outline application with all matters reserved)

Officer recommendation: Refuse

Reason for Committee: Deferral from previous Committee meeting

1 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1. This application was heard at Planning Committee on 30th April 2025, where Members agreed to defer determination of the application to provide the applicant an opportunity to provide a sequential test and drainage details.
- 1.2. Further to this, the applicant has subsequently provided a flood risk assessment, a separate sequential and exceptions test, a surface water flood study, and drainage strategy in support of the development, along with a revised indicative site layout plan to accommodate the proposed drainage scheme which have been supported by the relevant consultees.
- 1.3. Accordingly, there are no reasonable reasons to refuse planning permission on the basis of unacceptable surface water flood risk and as such this reason for refusal falls away.
- 1.4. However, the submission does not address the first reason for refusal in respect of the detrimental impact on the countryside character, and as such the proposal remains contrary to Policies LP3, LP12 and LP16 of the adopted Fenland Local Plan, and as such reason for refusal 1 is maintained. The application is therefore recommended for refusal.

2 UPDATE

- 2.1. During the Planning Committee meeting of 30th April 2025, Members were presented with the above application, that was recommended for refusal for the following reasons:
 1. The proposal would result in large scale in-depth development in an area rural in character and characterised mainly by frontage development and would erode an important visual gap and area of separation between this part of Bridge Lane and the main built form of Wimblington. The proposal is therefore contrary to Policies LP3, LP12 and LP16 of the adopted Fenland Local Plan.

2. The proposed development is located partly within a known area of medium-high risk of surface water flood risk. The application fails to pass the Sequential Test in relation to surface water flood risk and fails to demonstrate that acceptable safe access and egress from the site can be achieved. The proposed development therefore has unacceptable surface water flood risks, placing future occupiers at an unwarranted risk of flooding, contrary to policies LP12 and LP14 of the Local Plan, Paragraphs 174 & 181 of the National Planning Policy Framework, Paragraph 023 of National Planning Practice Guidance and Section 4 of the Cambridgeshire Flood and Water Supplementary Planning Document.
- 2.2. Members resolved to defer determination of the application to provide the applicant an opportunity to provide a sequential test and for the drainage to be considered by the consultees.
- 2.3. Further to this, the applicant has subsequently provided a flood risk assessment, a separate sequential and exceptions test, a surface water flood study, and drainage strategy in support of the development, along with a revised indicative site layout plan to accommodate the proposed drainage scheme.
- 2.4. For reference, the original Committee Report, recommendation and suggested conditions are included as an appendix following this update.

3 CONSULTATIONS

3.1. **Environment Agency (dated 12.08.2025)**

We have reviewed the documents as submitted and we have no objection to this planning application.

Our comments from our previous letter, referenced AC/2025/132583/01, dated 14 February 2025, remain pertinent.

3.2. **Anglian Water (dated 18.08.2025)**

ASSETS

Section 1 - Assets Affected

There are assets owned by Anglian Water or those subject to an adoption agreement within or close to the development boundary that may affect the layout of the site. Anglian Water would ask that the following text be included within your Notice should permission be granted.

Anglian Water has assets close to or crossing this site or there are assets subject to an adoption agreement. Therefore the site layout should take this into account and accommodate those assets within either prospectively adoptable highways or public open space. If this is not practicable then the sewers will need to be diverted at the developers cost under Section 185 of the Water Industry Act 1991. or, in the case of apparatus under an adoption agreement, liaise with the owners of the apparatus. It should be noted that the diversion works should normally be

completed before development can commence.

WASTEWATER SERVICES

Section 2 - Wastewater Treatment

This site is within the catchment of Doddington Water Recycling Centre (WRC), which currently can accommodate the additional flows generated by the proposed development. Doddington WRC is included within our Business Plan as a named growth scheme with investment delivery planned between 2025-2030. To ensure there is no pollution or deterioration in the receiving watercourse due to the development foul flows we recommend a planning condition is applied if permission is granted.

Condition: Prior to occupation written confirmation from Anglian Water must be submitted confirming there is sufficient headroom at the water recycling centre to accommodate the foul flows from the development site. This condition shall cease to have effect if the development is first occupied after April 2030.

Reason: to protect water quality, prevent pollution and secure sustainable development having regard to paragraphs 7/8 and 187 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

Section 3 - Used Water Network

This response has been based on the following submitted documents: Proposed Drainage Layout WECE/24/398/A1/C/100 Rev P11 and Anglian Water Pre-Planning Assessment Report PPE-0224530. Anglian Water has worked with the applicant to establish a Sustainable Point of Connection (SPOC) for the proposed development site. The required foul network connection point is manhole (mh 6002) located at NGR TL 41650 93005. This will avoid the constrained network which could cause pollution and flood risk downstream. We therefore request the following foul drainage condition is applied if permission is granted: Recommended Planning Condition

Condition: No development shall commence until a strategic foul water strategy has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority, in consultation with Anglian Water. This strategy should identify the connection point to the manhole (mh 6002) located at NGR TL 41650 93005. Prior to occupation, the foul water drainage works must have been carried out in complete accordance with the approved scheme.

Reason: To reduce the impacts of flooding and potential pollution risk

Section 4 – Surface Water Disposal

The preferred method of surface water disposal would be to a sustainable drainage system (SuDS) with connection to sewer seen as the last option. Building Regulations (part H) on Drainage and Waste Disposal for England includes a surface water drainage hierarchy, with infiltration on site as the preferred disposal option, followed by discharge to watercourse and then connection to a sewer.

From the details submitted to support the planning application the proposed method of surface water management does not relate to Anglian Water operated assets. As such, we are unable to provide comments on the suitability of the surface water management. The Local Planning Authority should seek the advice of the Lead Local Flood Authority or the Internal Drainage Board. The Environment Agency should be consulted if the drainage system directly or indirectly involves the discharge of water into a watercourse. Should the proposed method of surface water management change to include interaction with Anglian Water operated assets, we would wish to be reconsulted to ensure that an effective surface water drainage strategy is prepared and implemented.

3.3. Cambridgeshire Lead Local Flood Authority (dated 09.09.2025)

We have reviewed the following documents:

- Surface Water Flood Study, prepared by McCloy Consulting, ref: M03569- 01_FL01, REV: 02, dated 1st September 2025.*
- Surface Water Drainage Strategy, prepared by WE Consulting Engineers, ref: WECE/24/398/RP/C/001, REV: 06, dated September 2025.*

Based on these, as Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA) we can remove our objection to the proposed development. The above documents demonstrate that surface water from the proposed development can be managed through the use of permeable paving and an attenuation pond, restricting surface water discharge to 0.98 l/s. The LLFA is supportive of the use of permeable paving as an addition to controlling the rate of surface water leaving the site it also provides water quality treatment which is of particular importance when discharging into a watercourse.

The proposals are looking to improve an existing flooding issue of blocked culverts and better the flow routes from the site, as well as providing high levels of flood mitigation from existing surface water flood risk. This whole approach is supported by the LLFA as this will ensure the wider drainage is improved, and the existing flooding issues on the field are alleviated. We request the following conditions are imposed:

Condition 1

No laying of services, creation of hard surfaces or erection of a building shall commence until a detailed design of the surface water drainage of the site has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Those elements of the surface water drainage system not adopted by a statutory undertaker shall thereafter be maintained and managed in accordance with the approved management and maintenance plan. The scheme shall be based upon the principles within the agreed Surface Water Drainage Strategy prepared by WE Consulting Engineers (ref: WECE/24/398/RP/C/001) dated September 2025 and shall also include:

- a. Full calculations detailing the existing surface water runoff rates for the QBAR, 3.3% Annual Exceedance Probability (AEP) (1 in 30) and 1% AEP (1 in 100) storm events;*
- b. Full results of the proposed drainage system modelling in the above-referenced storm events (as well as 1% AEP plus climate change), inclusive of all collection, conveyance, storage, flow control and*

- disposal elements and including an allowance for urban creep, together with an assessment of system performance;*
- c. Detailed drawings of the entire proposed surface water drainage system, attenuation and flow control measures, including levels, gradients, dimensions and pipe reference numbers, designed to accord with the CIRIA C753 SuDS Manual (or any equivalent guidance that may supersede or replace it);*
 - d. Full detail on SuDS proposals (including location, type, size, depths, side slopes and cross sections);*
 - e. Site Investigation and test results to confirm infiltration rates;*
 - h. [sic] Details of overland flood flow routes in the event of system exceedance, with demonstration that such flows can be appropriately managed on site without increasing flood risk to occupants;*
 - i. [sic] Demonstration that the surface water drainage of the site is in accordance with DEFRA non-statutory technical standards for sustainable drainage systems;*
 - k. [sic] Permissions to connect to a receiving watercourse or sewer;*
 - l. [sic] Measures taken to prevent pollution of the receiving groundwater and/or surface water*

Reason

To ensure that the proposed development can be adequately drained and to ensure that there is no increased flood risk on or off site resulting from the proposed development and to ensure that the principles of sustainable drainage can be incorporated into the development, noting that initial preparatory and/or construction works may compromise the ability to mitigate harmful impacts.

Condition 2

Details for the long-term maintenance arrangements for the surface water drainage system (including all SuDS features) to be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority prior to the first occupation of any of the dwellings hereby permitted. The submitted details should identify runoff sub-catchments, SuDS components, control structures, flow routes and outfalls. In addition, the plan must clarify the access that is required to each surface water management component for maintenance purposes. The maintenance plan shall be carried out in full thereafter.

Reason

To ensure the satisfactory maintenance of drainage systems that are not publicly adopted, in accordance with the requirements of paragraphs 169 and 173 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

4 ASSESSMENT AND CONCLUSIONS

National Planning Practice Guidance Change

- 4.1. Between the original deferral by Members and this update, on 17th September 2025, the National Planning Practice Guidance on Flood Risk and Coastal Change has been updated.

- 4.2. The updates, inter alia, provide stronger clarity on when the sequential test need not be applied. In line with NPPF Paragraph 175, a sequential test is *not* required if a site-specific flood risk assessment (FRA) demonstrates that the development would through design and mitigation measures be safe from current and future surface water flooding.
- 4.3. Therefore, on the basis of the revised guidance, there is no requirement for the applicant to provide a sequential test – providing that appropriate flood risk mitigation from the known issues of surface water flooding, discussed in more detail below.

Site Specific Flooding and Drainage

- 4.4. The application site is located within Flood Zone 1 (low probability of flooding from rivers and sea); however, part of the application site comprises an area of high and medium risk of surface water flooding.
- 4.5. Matters of surface water flooding were noted as concerns within the original officer report. During the deferral, the applicant provided a revised drainage strategy, outlining that surface water from the proposed development can be managed through the use of permeable paving and an on-site attenuation pond, with throttled surface water discharge to 0.98 l/s to a nearby watercourse. In addition, the proposals seek to improve an existing flooding issue of blocked culverts and improve flow routes from the site and surrounding area, as well as providing high levels of flood mitigation from existing surface water flood risk.
- 4.6. These details were reviewed by the Environment Agency, Anglian Water and the CCC Lead Local Flood Authority, and none raised any objection to the revised proposals, subject to appropriate conditions.
- 4.7. Accordingly, reason for refusal 2, with respect to a lack of sequential test and unacceptable surface water flood risk, can be withdrawn as the details submitted are considered to comply with the updated PPG, NPPF and Policy LP14 of the Fenland Local Plan, subject to conditions.

5 Conclusion

- 5.1. On the basis of the above, all technical matters for surface water drainage and flood risk mitigation have been resolved by the applicant or can be secured by conditions. As such, there are no reasonable reasons to refuse planning permission on the basis of unacceptable surface water flood risk and as such this reason for refusal falls away.
- 5.2. Notwithstanding this, the scale and location of the proposed development remain unchanged from the original application. Accordingly, it remains that the proposal would result in large scale in-depth development in a rural area characterised mainly by frontage development. The proposed development would therefore erode an important visual gap and area of separation between this part of Bridge Lane and the main built form of Wimblington. The proposal therefore remains contrary to Policies LP3,

LP12 and LP16 of the adopted Fenland Local Plan, and as such reason for refusal 1 is maintained.

6 RECOMMENDATION

Refuse; for the following reason:

1	The proposal would result in large scale in-depth development in an area rural in character and characterised mainly by frontage development and would erode an important visual gap and area of separation between this part of Bridge Lane and the main built form of Wimblington. The proposal is therefore contrary to Policies LP3, LP12 and LP16 of the adopted Fenland Local Plan.
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Swann Edwards Architecture Ltd**

Land South Of 2B And 2C, Bridge Lane, Wimblington, Cambridgeshire

Erect up to 9 x dwellings (outline application with all matters reserved)

Officer recommendation: Refuse

Reason for Committee: Number of representations contrary to officer recommendation

Government Planning Guarantee

Statutory Target Date For Determination: 20 March 2025

EOT in Place: Yes

EOT Expiry: 09 May 2025

Application Fee: £6240

Risk Statement:

This application must be determined by 9th May 2025 otherwise it will be out of time and therefore negatively affect the performance figures.

7 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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| <p>2.1. This application seeks outline planning permission for up to 9 dwellings with all matters reserved on an area of land covering some 1ha to the rear of 2b and 2c Bridge Lane. A previous application, seeking outline approval with all matters reserved, for a development of up to 9 dwellings was refused in March 2023.</p> <p>2.2. The proposal would result in large scale in-depth development in an area rural in character and characterised mainly by frontage development. Development on this land would erode an important visual gap and area of separation between this part of Bridge Lane and the main built form of Wimblington. The proposal is therefore contrary to Policies LP3, LP12 and LP16 of the adopted Fenland Local Plan.</p> <p>2.3. The application site is identified as being in an area of high and medium risk of surface water flooding. The Lead Local Flood Authority have objected to the application on the basis of a number of concerns; notably the known and extensive risk of surface water flooding at the site. The application fails to pass the Sequential Test in relation to surface water flood risk and fails to</p> |
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demonstrate that safe access and egress can be achieved. The proposed development therefore has unacceptable surface water flood risks, placing future occupiers at an unwarranted risk of flooding contrary to Policies LP12 and LP14 of the Local Plan, Paragraphs 174 & 181 of the National Planning Policy Framework, Paragraph 023 of National Planning Practice Guidance and Section 4 of the Cambridgeshire Flood and Water Supplementary Planning Document.

2.4. The application is therefore recommended for refusal.

8 SITE DESCRIPTION

- 3.1. This section of Bridge Lane is a fringe rural location, which is abutted by dwellings characteristic of roadside ribbon development. The lane is single track with some passing places, but no separate footway. Sporadic dwellings of various types, styles, and sizes line the road. In contrast the application site and the adjoining land to the west of 2a Bridge Lane is open and agricultural in character.
- 3.2. The site is located away from the established settlement of Wimblington and is currently in agricultural use. The site is situated behind two existing dwellings at 2b and 2c Bridge Lane and is roughly 'L' shaped covering about 1ha. The site will be served by an existing access to the west of 2b Bridge Lane. The site boundaries are defined by mature hedging/planting. A public footpath and watercourse run parallel with the western boundary of the site which is within Flood Zone 1 and within an area identified with groundwater vulnerability.
- 3.3. The aerial view of the site and surrounding area, included below, shows the application site (outlined in red) in the context of the nearby applications in the surrounding area (clockwise from bottom);

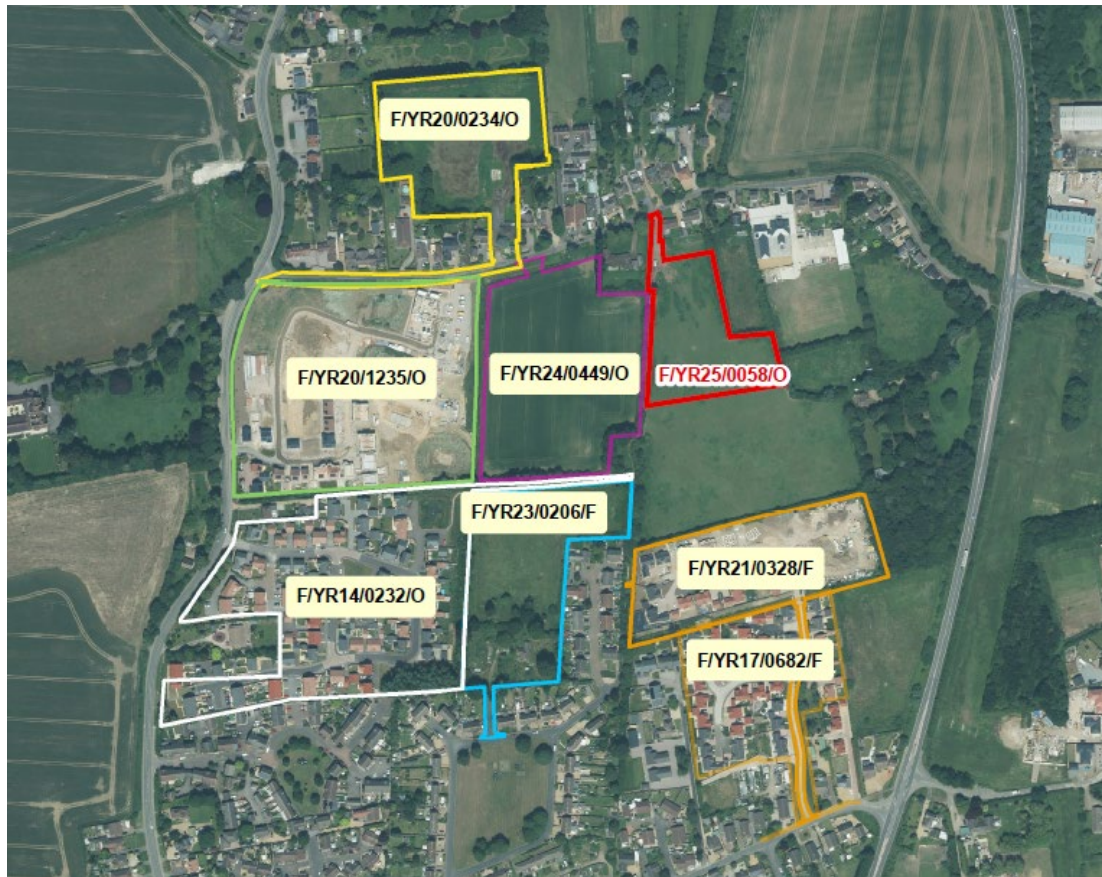
Approved / Pending

- Orange outline - F/YR21/0328/F, the northward expansion of Willow Gardens development, which together with the phase 1 scheme, F/YR17/0682/F totals 58 dwellings. This is approximately 90m south of the application site (with the separating land also under the ownership of the applicant for the application considered herein);
- Blue outline - F/YR23/0206/F, a pending approval of 48 dwellings, subject to S106 negotiations;
- White outline - F/YR14/0232/O, the substantially complete Lily Avenue development, including 67 dwellings;
- Green outline - F/YR20/1235/O, the Bellway development currently under construction, including 88 dwellings;

- Yellow outline - F/YR20/0234/O, a pending application for 16 dwellings to the north of Bridge Lane, where previously 7 dwellings were approved under F/YR18/0385/O.

Refused

- Purple outline - F/YR24/0449/O, a recently refused application for up to 44 dwellings, this site also includes an area relating to application F/YR15/0281/F, which was refused and dismissed at Appeal for the erection of 3 dwellings.



- 3.4. The aerial view emphasizes that the gap between the settlement of Wimblington and Bridge Lane has significantly closed in over the years to the point where the application site (shown red) and the adjoining land to the west (shown purple) remain the only remaining substantial parcels of open land that contribute to the rural character; as emphasised by reason for refusal 2 of F/YR24/0449/O and previous Appeal decisions for development on the same land (discussed in more detail below).

9 PROPOSAL

- 4.1. This application seeks outline planning permission for up to 9 dwellings with all matters reserved.
- 4.2. An indicative plan accompanies the application. This shows a shared private drive running along the western site boundary to serve 4 dwellings before spurring off eastwards and then south to serve a further 5 plots. A public

right of way runs along the western boundary of the site, a section of the right of way near the junction with Bridge Lane merges with the site access and is to be hard surfaced.

- 4.3. The indicated houses are large, detached dwellings set in sizable plots of a suburban nature.
- 4.4. A further strip of land to the south of the application and some 85m deep has been outlined in blue on the location plan, denoting that it is under the ownership of the applicant. Continued vehicular access to this land is denoted on the indicative site plan. Further to the south development of 21 dwellings at the northern end of Willow Gardens is currently taking place under permission F/YR21/0328/F.
- 4.5. Full plans and associated documents for this application can be found at:
<https://www.publicaccess.fenland.gov.uk/publicaccess/>

10 SITE PLANNING HISTORY

F/YR23/0241/O	Erect up to 9 x dwellings (outline application with all matters reserved) <i>Land South Of 2B And 2C Bridge Lane Wimblington</i>	Refused 07.03.2024
F/0446/88/O	Outline application for Erection of a speedway museum <i>Adj 2A Bridge Lane Wimblington</i>	Refused
F/0340/83/F	Erection of a stable block <i>2A Bridge Lane Wimblington</i>	Granted

11 CONSULTATIONS

6.1. Parish/Town Council

Further to Tuesday evenings Parish Council meeting, Cllr wish to object to the above application as follows: Previous planning application F/YR23/0241/O was refused, but it is noted that although the expiry on consultations was dated 19.04.23 there were a number of entries added after this date both from the applicant and from consultants - from 19th Jul 23 through to 29th Feb 24. These additional documents referred to a number of points that were not made available to the public prior to their comments i.e. Changes to the PRow, passing place, lighting, management and maintenance company.

Although the applicant's Design and Access statement from Swann Edwards Architecture Ltd has added some amendments, these do not change the reasons for initial refusal of previous planning application. Also, FDC planning are directed towards the refusal of planning application F/YR24/0449/O and the reasons relating to this refusal which will reflect on the position of this site.

After the Parish Council meeting last night, 11th February 2025, councillors discussed this second planning application and still uphold the objections made against planning application F/YR23/0241/O and add the following additional objections reflected against the applicants Design and Access Statement:

2.1 SITE CONTEXT

There is established landscaping to all boundaries. The site is within a residential location.

These comments contradict each other, this site has a few dwellings on the north edge that face onto Bridge Lane otherwise there are fields on all the other boundaries. The south east corner has a substantial copse of trees that edge the A141.

The Land is located within Flood Zone 1.

Although it is located in Flood Zone 1 the site is known to experience surface, pluvial flooding which has had an impact on the dwellings along Bridge Lane. The LLFA raised concerns at the previous planning applications and please refer to the reasons planning application F/YR24/0449/O was refused, this site sits to the west boundary of the proposed site.

2.4 PROPOSAL

The dwellings will be of an executive style and size These types of dwellings are not characteristic of the area or the village historic, heritage environment. These dwellings will impose on the landscape of country lane environment, Bridge Lane.

2.4 - access to the site is via an existing access off of Bridge Lane. The access measurements stated to this site is inclusive of the PRow, narrowing the public use, plus having a site access at the entrance to a PRow could cause a hazard to users, this includes horse riders, cyclists, runners etc. plus there is a telegraph pole alongside the PRow that would encroach on the access width. CCC Definitive Map Officer has stated that an application would have to be made to 'Change the Surface'.

2.5 PRINCIPLE

The site is located along Bridge Lane, surrounded by existing development This is incorrect, the only development that adjacently impacts on Bridge Lane is the Bellway construction at the west entrance end of Bridge Lane. But regardless, previously granted village developments should not be set as a precedence to the subsequence planning applications.

2.5 There is an existing pedestrian footpath link into the heart of the village There is not a pedestrian footpath, there is a PRow countryside path which is subject to flooding in wet weather and not necessarily useable by all local residents. So, the application does not accord to the principle of LP3.

3.0 DESIGN

3.1 Use & Amount

It also retains a sense of space and openness which is more appropriate in this rural village setting. It is reducing the sense of space and openness within the village's rural environment, introducing executive dwellings out of character with the local environment of Bridge Lane. Therefore, NOT complying with LP12 and LP16.

3.2 Layout

The access road and one of the dwellings will run along the boundary of the PRow, the present outlook over fields and beautiful countryside, regularly used village asset will have its views impaired from dwellings and also have an impact on noise, lighting and air pollution from vehicles using the access road to the site.

3.3 Scale

The application is in outline format with only access committed at this stage. This means that at the next stage in the planning application, 'reserve matters', could see a massive change of implications on design, size and other aspects of the application.

3.4 Landscape

The proposal takes full advantage of its natural aesthetics. The proposal removes the natural aesthetics of the landscape. Stating that it will have a backdrop of other dwellings is incorrect, the site is part of the open gap necessary in maintaining the open landscape of the Fens between dwellings. The site has fields on three sides and only a few dwellings on the north Bridge Lane side. Noncompliant to LP16 (c).

3.5 Appearance

The dwellings will be designed to have a style and appearance which is more typical of a rural village. The proposed 'large executive dwellings' are not in keeping with the typical rural environment of the historic, heritage village of Wimblington or the historic Bridge Lane. It is more along the lines of what would be expected in an 'executive urban development'. It is not acceptable in terms of form and character as highlighted in the Design Guidance and Code document adopted by Wimblington Parish Council therefore not compliant to LP12 and LP16.

3.6 Flood Risk

Section 14 of the NPPF and Policy LP14 of Local Plan requires sequential approach, directing new development to areas at lowest risk of flooding before land at higher risk is considered.

These policies refer to fluvial flooding but this site is prevalent to pluvial flooding from surface water, runoff water and a rising water table. Residents have raised their concerns from the long-term impact of constant development in the neighbourhood area. LP12 Rural Developments - it would put people or properties in danger from identified risks. A risk has already been identified through planning application F/YR24/0449/O and this has to be strongly considered. The initial planning application objections raised a number of residents' concerns regarding flooding in the field, sewage raising up in residents gardens and inside their homes.

3.8 Environmental Consideration

An area is to be provided in the rear enclosed garden for bins, ... the proposed dwellings will benefit from mains sewers CCC Highways have already stated that they would not adopt the access road therefore FDC Waste Team will not collect from the dwellings. This will mean rubbish containers having to be collected from the access entrance to the site or private rubbish collection The sites mains sewers are to be managed and maintained by the developments 'management team', this could have consequences on the local environment and properties.

The street and security lighting on the proposed site will have an impact on the natural environment, surrounding countryside, remaining open spaces and the local residents close by.

There is no pedestrian pathway along the length of Bridge Lane which puts users at risk due to the narrow lane where two vehicles struggle to pass, there will be an increase in traffic from the far east end of the lane, the use of the lane by heavy delivery vans and the initial construction vehicles, this will be dangerous for all lane users. Residents of Bridge Lane who were previously HGV drivers state that it is not possible for two HGV to pass each other on the lane and that they would struggle to enter or exit the access point to the site.

Although the applicant states that the development is close to the A141, access to the A141 would mean all vehicles having to travel along the lane and through the village, another increase in traffic in various areas.

The village is no longer sustainable and is struggling with the constant increase in planning applications that have been granted. There is no acceptable, regular public transport, the surgeries are struggling as is the infrastructure.

There are a number of LP policies, NPPF policies, EA and historic/heritage aspects that uphold the objections made to this proposed planning application.

6.2. Senior Archaeologist (CCC)

Thank you for the consultation with regards to the archaeological implications of the above referenced planning application. Our advice remains the same as that issued for the similar development within the same redline - F/YR23/0241/O.

Our records indicate that the site lies in an area of archaeological potential, known from investigations undertaken in the immediate vicinity. Archaeological investigations to the west revealed the remains of a ring-ditch, potentially a Bronze Age barrow and later middle Iron Age settlement remains (Cambridgeshire Historic Environment Record reference MCB20356). The settlement developed into a larger settlement into the Roman period where a rectilinear enclosure system, post-built structures and a metalled trackway were uncovered (CHER ref. MCB20356). The Roman trackway was also identified during investigations to the adjacent north, as well as further settlement features (CHER ref. MCB31818). Further Roman features were identified during the construction of a water pipeline to the adjacent south of the development (CHER ref. MCB17554), as well as a series of undated ditches and medieval remains identified during investigations in advance of housing in the same area (CHER ref. MCB27950). Further medieval remains are known to the east, where the deserted medieval village of Eastwood End is known from investigations revealing 14th to 15th century buildings (CHER ref. MCB13422).

Due to the archaeological potential of the site a further programme of investigation and recording is required in order to provide more information regarding the presence or absence, and condition, of surviving archaeological remains within the development area, and to establish the need for archaeological mitigation of the development as necessary. Usage of the following condition is recommended:

Archaeology Condition

No demolition/development shall commence until the applicant, or their agents or successors in title, has implemented a programme of archaeological work, commencing with the evaluation of the application area, that has been secured in accordance with a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) that has been submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority in writing. For land that is included within the WSI, no demolition/development shall take place other than under the provisions of the agreed WSI, which shall include:

- a. The statement of significance and research objectives;*
- b. The programme and methodology of investigation and recording and the nomination of a competent person(s) or organisation to undertake the agreed works;*
- c. The timetable for the field investigation as part of the development programme;*
- d. The programme and timetable for the analysis, publication & dissemination, and deposition of resulting material and digital archives.*

REASON: To safeguard archaeological assets within the approved development boundary from impacts relating to any demolitions or groundworks associated with the development scheme and to ensure the proper and timely preservation and/or investigation, recording, reporting, archiving and presentation of archaeological assets affected by this

development, in accordance with national policies contained in the National Planning Policy Framework (MHCLG 2021).

Informatives: Partial discharge of the condition can be applied for once the fieldwork at Part c) has been completed to enable the commencement of development. Part d) of the condition shall not be discharged until all elements have been fulfilled in accordance with the programme set out in the WSI.

**6.3. Cambridgeshire County Council Highways Authority
Recommendation**

On the basis of the information submitted, from the perspective of the Local Highway Authority, I consider the proposed development is acceptable.

Comments

As part of this planning consultation investigation for this proposal. I have reviewed the comments made by the highways authority on previous application number F/YR23/0241/O. As far as I can determined there is no changes proposed to what was found to be acceptable to the Highways Development Management team during that application. Therefore from the perspective this team I find the proposed to the highway to be acceptable, subject to the following Conditions.

However, I would note that there appears to have been a change to the access layout. This is relevant as Public Footpath No. 5 runs through this proposed access. As such I would recommend that the CCC Rights of Way team are consulted prior to the determination of this application.

Conditions

Access Road Details: *Prior to the commencement of the use hereby approved the access road shall be constructed to a minimum width of 5 metres for a minimum distance of 10 metres measured from the near edge of the highway carriageway and thereafter maintained in perpetuity.*

Construction Facilities: *Prior to the commencement of the development hereby approved adequate temporary facilities area (details of which shall have previously been submitted to and agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority) shall be provided clear of the public highway for the parking, turning, loading and unloading of all vehicles visiting the site during the period of construction.*

Management of Estate Roads: *Prior to the occupation of the first dwelling hereby approved, full details of the proposed arrangements for future management and maintenance of the proposed streets within the development shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The streets shall thereafter be maintained in accordance with the approved management and maintenance details until such time as an Agreement has been entered into unto Section 38 of the Highways Act 1980 or a Private Management and Maintenance Company has been established.*

Wheel Wash Facilities: Development shall not commence until fully operational wheel cleaning equipment has been installed within the site. All vehicles leaving the site shall pass through the wheel cleaning equipment which shall be sited to ensure that vehicles are able to leave the site and enter the public highway in a clean condition and free of debris which could fall onto the public highway. The wheel cleaning equipment shall be retained on site in full working order for the duration of the development.

Off-Site Highway Works: No development shall take place until details of works to provide a passing place on Bridge Lane, in accordance with the principle set out on PP1000 Revision C, have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall not be occupied/brought into use until all of the works have been completed in accordance with the approved details.

6.4. **Definitive Map Team (CCC)**

The Definitive Map Team has no objection to this proposal, because the proposal offers little change to the current situation of the public footpath – informatives to this effect were recommended.

6.5. **Environment & Health Services (FDC)**

The Environmental Health Team note and accept the submitted information and have 'No Objections' to the proposal, as it is unlikely to have a detrimental effect on local air quality, be affected by ground contamination or adversely impact the local amenity due to excessive artificial lighting.

Construction Noise, Dust and Vibration:

There are certain aspects that need to be considered given the nature and scale of the proposed development, with the issues of primary concern to this service during the construction phase being the potential for noise, dust and possible vibration to adversely impact on the amenity of the occupiers at the nearest residential properties.

Therefore, this service would welcome a condition requiring the submission of a robust Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) that shall include working time restrictions in line with the template for developers, now available on Fenland District Council's website at: Construction Environmental Management Plan: A template for development sites (fenland.gov.uk)

6.6. **Lead Local Flood Authority (CCC)**

*Thank you for your consultation which we received on 19th March 2025. At present we **object** to the grant of planning permission for the following reasons:*

1. Existing Surface Water Flood Risk

The site has extensive risk of surface water flooding across the area to the north east and along the eastern boundary. It is acknowledged that development in the area will be built to ensure it is above the expected flood levels. However, there is still a risk that this could displace surface water, along with the risk to future site users, ensuring safe access and egress from the site for the lifetime of the development. It must be clear that the

development will be safe, and construction of any dwellings is not within areas at risk of surface water flooding.

2. Climate Change Allowance

Climate change for the 3.3% AEP storm should be included in the hydraulic calculations. This is to account for shorter term impacts of climate change.

3. Hydraulic Calculations

There is excessive surcharging in the 1 year storm event within the hydraulic calculations. This should be limited as much as possible in this storm event in line with best practice guidance. It is noted this may be related to the permeable paving structures, but this should be clearly set out to provide reassurances around the design of the system.

4. Water Quality

The use of permeable paving and the proposed basin are supported by the LLFA. However, the basin is positioned in an area that will only benefit a small section of the drained highway. It is acknowledged that the gully's have silt traps in, but these are not viewed as a source of treatment as a small storm can flush out the pollutants stored within the gully pot. All water must be treated suitably, in line with sustainable drainage best practices, to ensure the receiving watercourse is suitably protected from pollutants for the lifetime of the development. The simple index approach, as set out in Chapter 26 of the CIRIA SuDS Manual (C753) should be followed and all surfaces should be fully treated.

5. Flow Control Diameter

The proposed flow control has a diameter of 50mm, which could pose a risk to blockage from litter or debris that may be flushed through the system. From private systems, the LLFA accepts a minimum flow control diameter of 75mm to reduce this risk. This should not further implicate the ability to manage water sustainably from the site.

6.7. Environment Agency

Thank you for your consultation dated 30 January 2025. We have reviewed the documents as submitted and we have no objections to this planning application. Please find further information on flood risk and water resources below.

Flood Risk

The proposed development is located within Flood Zone 1 and within a dry island, therefore this is treated as indicative Flood Zone 3a in regards to access and egress. We have reviewed the documents submitted and have determined that there are no concerns related to flood risk with the proposed development.

6.8. Anglian Water Services Ltd ASSETS

Section 1 - Assets Affected

There are assets owned by Anglian Water or those subject to an adoption agreement close to the development boundary that may affect the layout of

the site. Anglian Water would ask that the following text be included within your Notice should permission be granted.

Anglian Water has assets close to or crossing this site or there are assets subject to an adoption agreement. Therefore the site layout should take this into account and accommodate those assets within either prospectively adoptable highways or public open space. If this is not practicable then the sewers will need to be diverted at the developers cost under Section 185 of the Water Industry Act 1991. or, in the case of apparatus under an adoption agreement, liaise with the owners of the apparatus. It should be noted that the diversion works should normally be completed before development can commence.

WASTEWATER SERVICES

Section 2 - Wastewater Treatment

This site is within the catchment of Doddington water recycling centre (WRC), which currently can accommodate the additional flows generated by the proposed development. Doddington WRC is included within our Business Plan as a named growth scheme with investment delivery planned between 2025-2030.

To ensure there is no pollution or deterioration in the receiving watercourse due to the development foul flows we recommend a planning condition is applied if permission is granted.

Condition: Prior to occupation written confirmation from Anglian Water must be submitted confirming there is sufficient headroom at the water recycling centre to accommodate the foul flows from the development site.

Reason: to protect water quality, prevent pollution and secure sustainable development having regard to paragraphs 7/8 and 180 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

Section 3 - Used Water Network

Anglian Water objects to any connection into our foul network from the proposed development, due to capacity constraints and pollution risk.

In order to overcome our objection we require that the applicant consults Anglian Water in a form of a Pre_Development enquiry (PPE) in order to define a Sustainable Point of Connection (SPOC). This will avoid the constrained network which could cause pollution and flood risk downstream. The developer is to be responsible for the infrastructure to convey foul water flows from the proposed development to the receiving network. Once a SPOC has been identified and a strategy has been agreed with Anglian Water, we would expect the applicant to submit this PPE as part of their submitted documents for this application, we will the review and respond appropriately. Anglian Water is committed to supporting sustainable growth and in doing so we must continue to meet the statutory obligations whilst balancing factors such as climate change as environmental protection.

However, if the LPA are minded to approve the application, despite our objection and risk of pollution, we recommend the following condition is applied:

Condition: no development shall commence until a strategic foul water strategy has been submitted to and approved in writing by the local Planning Authority, in consultation with Anglian Water. This strategy will identify a sustainable point of connection to the public foul network. Prior to occupation, the foul water drainage works must have been carried out in complete accordance with the approved scheme.

Reason: to protect water quality, prevent pollution and secure sustainable development having regard to paragraphs 7/8 and 180 of the National Planning Policy Framework. If permission is granted, we require the applicant to engage with us via our pre-development services and to submit a pre development enquiry.

Section 4 - Surface Water Disposal

The preferred method of surface water disposal would be to a sustainable drainage system (SuDS) with connection to sewer seen as the last option. Building Regulations (part H) on Drainage and Waste Disposal for England includes a surface water drainage hierarchy, with infiltration on site as the preferred disposal option, followed by discharge to watercourse and then connection to a sewer.

From the details submitted to support the planning application the proposed method of surface water management does not relate to Anglian Water operated assets. As such, we are unable to provide comments in the suitability of the surface water management. The Local Planning Authority should seek the advice of the Lead Local Flood Authority or the Internal Drainage Board. The Environment Agency should be consulted if the drainage system directly or indirectly involves the discharge of water into a watercourse. Should the proposed method of surface water management change to include interaction with Anglian Water operated assets, we would wish to be reconsulted to ensure that an effective surface water drainage strategy is prepared and implemented.

6.9. FDC Ecology

The Ecological Impact Assessment report is acceptable and reasonable.

Suggested conditions

Enhancements referred to in Section 7 (page 17) regarding the installation of bat and bird boxes should be adhered to.

Biodiversity Net Gain

The current metric does not show significant net gain (i.e. >0.5 biodiversity units). Also, it is not supported by an appropriate BNG Assessment report.

Biodiversity Net Gain Plan & Habitat Management and Maintenance Plan

A condition for the submission of a Biodiversity Net Gain Plan and accompanying documentation is required, e.g., Prior to the commencement

of works on site (including site clearance), the submission of following Plans and statutory tools is required:

- 1) A Biodiversity Net Gain Plan*
- 2) A Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment - addressing mitigation hierarchy and habitat conditions assessment*
- 3) a revised BNG metric, displaying significant net gain*
- 4) Pre-development and post-development plans showing the location of on-site habitat, scaled to an appropriate size*
- 5) A Habitat Management and Maintenance Plan*

Reason: In order that the proposals are implemented in accordance with the Environment Act 2021.

6.10. Local Residents/Interested Parties

Objectors

The application has resulted in the LPA receiving 25 letters of objection to the development from 20 local address points, including Bridge Lane, Lily Avenue, Eaton Estate and March Road, Wimblington and Hassock Way, March.

Reasons for objection can be summarised as:

- Minimal changes since last submission;
- Flooding and surface water drainage concerns;
- Foul water drainage concerns;
- Risk of SuDS scheme not being appropriately maintained;
- Traffic along Bridge Lane;
- Visibility and width constraints at access;
- Supporters of the application do not live nearby and will not be impacted;
- Wimblington infrastructure and services unable to cope;
- Bridge Lane is only single track; limited passing places;
- No footpaths along Bridge Lane;
- Loss of countryside character and green space; particularly along public right of way;
- Environmental and ecological impacts;
- Land ownership/boundary discrepancies;
- Residential amenity impacts;
- Potential impact on historic public footpath; feeling of enclosure from development both sides would impact amenity, could become unsafe due to lack of surveillance, flooding, or being 'penned' in by fencing;
- Concern over potential extension to the development in blue lined land with intended access point;

Supporters

The application has garnered 18 letters of support from 16 address points, including Bridge Lane and New Woods Drive in Wimblington, Wimblington Road in Doddington, and Cavalry Drive, Hundred Road, Eastwood Avenue, Elwyndene Road, Kingswood Road, Wisbech Road, Station Road, Upwell Road, Elm Road and Mill Hill Lane in March.

Reasons for support can be summarised as:

- Much needed housing close to March;

- Will compliment rural setting and a nice community;
- Employment opportunity in construction;
- A small development will make a nice contribution to the village;
- Nice to see;
- Well-spaced houses;
- Close proximity to the future Fens Reservoir;
- Good layout;
- No impact on countryside;
- Limited impact on traffic;

Four letters of support received stated no reasons for supporting the scheme.

Representations

One letter was received from a resident of Eastwood End, highlighting 'observations' to the letters received; summarised as follows;

- Many of the letters received are not 'local' to the site;
- 'Quality' executive homes are not needed, but instead affordable houses to encourage younger residents to Wimblington;
- Bridge Lane residents have already objected to a larger development on Bridge Lane owing to sewerage concerns;
- Small developments, cumulatively, have a big impact on local services and infrastructure such as doctors, schools, etc.

12 STATUTORY DUTY

- 7.1. Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires a planning application to be determined in accordance with the Development Plan unless material planning considerations indicate otherwise. The Development Plan for the purposes of this application comprises the adopted Fenland Local Plan (2014) and the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Minerals and Waste Local Plan (2021).

13 POLICY FRAMEWORK

8.1. National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2024

Chapter 2 - Achieving sustainable development

Chapter 4 – Decision-making

Chapter 5 – Delivering a sufficient supply of homes

Chapter 8 – Promoting healthy and safe communities

Chapter 9 – Promoting sustainable transport

Chapter 11 – Making effective use of land

Chapter 12 – Achieving well-designed places

Chapter 14 – Meeting the challenge of climate change, flooding and coastal change

Chapter 15 – Conserving and enhancing the natural environment

8.2. National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG)

Determining a Planning Application

8.3. National Design Guide 2021

Places great emphasis on well-designed places which are integrated into their surroundings, so they relate well to them. To this extent its Policy C1 requires development to relate well to existing built development and landscape character.

8.4. 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
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
LP15 – Facilitating the Creation of a More Sustainable Transport Network
LP16 – Delivering and Protecting High Quality Environments
LP17 – Community Safety
LP19 – The Natural Environment

8.5. Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Minerals and Waste Local Plan 2021

Policy 14 - Waste management needs arising from residential and commercial Development

8.6. Delivering and Protecting High Quality Environments in Fenland SPD 2014

DM3 – Making a Positive Contribution to Local Distinctiveness and character of the Area

8.7. Cambridgeshire Flood and Water SPD 2016

8.8. Emerging Local Plan

The Draft Fenland Local Plan (2022) was published for consultation between 25th August 2022 and 19 October 2022, all comments received will be reviewed and any changes arising from the consultation will be made to the draft Local Plan. Given the very early stage which the Plan is therefore at, it is considered, in accordance with Paragraph 49 of the NPPF, that the policies of this should carry extremely limited weight in decision making. Of relevance to this application are policies:

LP1: Settlement Hierarchy
LP2: Spatial Strategy for the Location of Residential Development
LP4: Securing Fenland's Future
LP5: Health and Wellbeing
LP7: Design
LP8: Amenity Provision
LP11: Community Safety
LP12: Meeting Housing Needs
LP18: Development in the Countryside
LP20: Accessibility and Transport
LP21: Public Rights of Way
LP22: Parking Provision

LP24: Natural Environment
LP25: Biodiversity Net Gain
LP30: Local Green Spaces and Other Existing Open Spaces
LP32: Flood and Water Management

14 KEY ISSUES

- **Principle of Development**
- **Character and Appearance**
- **Residential Amenity**
- **Flood Risk and Drainage**
- **Public Right of Way**
- **Biodiversity Net Gain & Ecology**

15 BACKGROUND

Previous application – F/YR23/0241/O

- 10.1. A previous application, seeking outline approval with all matters reserved, for a development of up to 9 dwellings was refused by Members in March 2023; in line with Officer recommendation.
- 10.2. Reasons for refusal can be summarised as follows:
- 1) In depth development within an area of rural character, contrary to Policies LP3, LP12 and LP16.
 - 2) Lack of ecological surveys to evidence that no habitats or species would be detrimentally impacted by the development, contrary to Policies LP16 (b) and LP19.
 - 3) Lack of appropriate assessment of flooding from all sources at the site, (in particular surface water flooding) contrary to Policy LP12 Part A (k) and Policy LP14.
- 10.3. The current application also seeks outline permission for the erection of up to 9 dwellings but is supported by relevant surveys and an FRA in an attempt to address reasons for refusal 2 and 3. Full assessment of the submitted details follow in Section 10.
- ### **Other relevant site history**
- 10.4. With regard to reason for refusal 1, with respect to landscape character, the planning history of land to the west of 2a Bridge Lane however is pertinent given the similarities and proximity to the application site. A previous planning application for 3 dwellings was refused on land to the west of 2a Bridge Lane in 2015 (F/YR15/0281/F) and dismissed at appeal in January 2016 (APP/D0515/W/15/3132906).
- 10.5. The Planning Inspector noted that the appeal site is open and agricultural in character and the boundary of No.2A adjacent to the site acts as a “strong punctuation mark” separating the agricultural character of the site from the domestic character of the adjacent dwelling. Although the proposed dwellings were set in a line fronting Bridge Lane the Inspector took the view that development of this land would result in a visually jarring form of

development that would intrude into open countryside and would be harmful to the character of the area. In looking at policy concerns, the Inspector concluded that the development would be contrary to policies LP12 and LP16 of the Local Plan, due to the impact on the open character of the land.

- 10.6. The Inspector did not consider that the provision of additional executive housing would be of sufficient benefit to outweigh the significant harm to the character and appearance of the area.
- 10.7. The site north of 3A – 9 Bridge Lane (marked yellow F/YR20/0234/O on the aerial view included at paragraph 2.4 above) is also relevant to this application. Although subsequently granted permission for redevelopment of a non-confirming use on a brownfield site it was originally refused (under Ref F/YR15/0798/O) on the grounds that the proposal would result in large scale in-depth development into an area that is currently rural in character and characterised by mainly frontage development. The Inspector in deciding the appeal (APP/D0515/W/16/3146008) against the refusal of F/YR15/0798/O referred to recent residential schemes that resulted in the continuity of frontage schemes along March Road and the north side of Bridge Lane. In particular, the Inspector remarked that Bridge Lane remains significantly separated by open agricultural fields from the main core of the village to the south. For this reason, the Inspector concluded that the appeal site was not adjacent to the development footprint of the village, and in an area strongly controlled where it did not comprise an appropriate form of development and would unacceptably consolidate ribbon development.
- 10.8. In summary, the appeal decision supports the position that the application site does not lie within or adjacent the developed core of Wimblington but in open countryside notwithstanding the recent Bellway development to the south of the junction of Bridge Lane and March Road.

16 ASSESSMENT

Principle of Development

- 11.1. Matters of principle and the relevant policies of the Fenland Local Plan have not changed since the earlier refusal of F/YR23/0241/O on this site; the revised details within the current application do not address these matters.
- 11.2. Policy LP3 of the Fenland Local Plan identifies Wimblington as a growth village where small village extensions of a limited scale will be appropriate as part of the strategy for sustainable growth. Policy LP3 must be read in conjunction with other policies in the Local Plan which steer development to the most appropriate sites.
- 11.3. Policy LP12 seeks to protect the sustainability of settlements and the open character of the countryside. To this end, in this instance it requires that:
 - a) The site is in or adjacent to the existing developed footprint of the village.
 - b) It would not result in coalescence.
 - c) It would not have an adverse impact on the character and appearance of the surrounding countryside and farmland.

- d) It is in keeping with the core shape of the settlement, and not harm its character and appearance.
- 11.4. Policy LP12 sets out that the developed footprint is defined as the continuous built form of the village and excluding groups of dispersed or intermittent buildings that are clearly detached from the continuous built-up area.
- 11.5. The requirements of Policy LP12 are reinforced by Policy LP16 which stipulates that new development must make a positive contribution to the local distinctiveness and character of the area. The application site and the blue lined field beyond comprise an area of open land some 230m deep from the rear of 2b Bridge Lane to the northern boundary of the development currently being implemented at Willow Gardens. This part of Bridge Lane remains intrinsically rural in character, and the application site does not immediately adjoin the existing built-up form of the settlement, adding to its detachment from the built form of the village and relationship with the open countryside. Although there are established dwellings around the site it does not form part of the developed footprint.
- 11.6. Whilst Policy LP3 identifies Wimblington as a growth village, Bridge Lane and the application site are physically detached from the village. The proposal would result in the development of an existing agricultural field and would erode the space that separates Bridge Lane from the wider settlement. As such the development would have an unacceptably adverse impact on the character and local distinctiveness of the area and would be contrary to Policy LP12 and LP16 of the Fenland Local Plan. This assessment of the site is supported by the Inspector's appeal decision relating to F/YR15/0281/F and discussed above.
- 11.7. Whilst the policies of the emerging local plan carry extremely limited weight in decision making it should be noted that Policy LP1, Part A identifies the settlement boundary for Wimblington as a large village, the application site is not included within the settlement boundary or residential site allocations for Wimblington.

Character and Appearance

- 11.8. The scheme is outline in nature, with no matters committed, and thus only the general impact of the development on the character and appearance of the area can be considered, as opposed to direct design details that are reserved for later consideration. Notwithstanding, the current proposal seeks the same quantum of development in the same location as the earlier refused scheme under F/YR23/0241/O, with dwellings indicatively shown as a similar scale and layout as the earlier scheme.
- 11.9. The proposal would result in large scale in-depth development, into an area that is currently rural in character and characterized mainly by frontage development. At present the application site, and the wider fields of which it is a part, contribute strongly to the rural character of the area and provide a visual break between the sporadic residential development along Bridge Lane, and the developed core of Wimblington. Through the intensification of

residential buildings and associated development the scheme would result in a visually jarring form of development that would intrude into the open countryside and would be harmful to the character of the area.

- 11.10. Far from being within the developed village of Wimblington as required by Policy LP12 the proposal would intrude into open countryside and be harmful to the character of the area, in conflict with the objectives of LP12 and LP16 of the Local Plan.

Residential Amenity

- 11.11. Detailed matters of residential amenity would be fully considered at Reserved Matters stage.
- 11.12. The indicated proposed site layout shows that the site would be large enough to reasonably accommodate the quantum of development proposed with appropriately sized rear gardens, separation distances and general layout. Whilst comments regarding possible overlooking are noted, the submitted plans illustrate a scheme which with appropriate detailed design is considered to have the potential to be acceptable in this regard.
- 11.13. Any residential impacts which were to occur could be lessened with appropriate boundary treatments and vegetation/landscaping. Additionally, a Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) condition could be imposed on any planning permission granted for the submitted scheme to lessen the incidence of noise and disturbance arising from the development, such as working times, delivery times, storage of plant and machinery and dust prevention measures.

Flood Risk and Drainage

- 11.14. The application site is located within Flood Zone 1 (low probability of flooding from rivers and sea); however, part of the application site comprises an area of high and medium risk of surface water flooding. The current application includes an FRA and Surface Water Drainage Strategy to address earlier reasons for refusal on grounds of flood risk.
- 11.15. Policy LP14 of the Local Plan states that all development proposals should adopt a sequential approach to flood risk from all forms of flooding and development in areas known to be at risk from any form of flooding will only be permitted following:
- (a) the successful completion of a sequential test (if necessary), having regard to actual and residual flood risks
 - (b) an exception test (if necessary),
 - (c) the suitable demonstration of meeting an identified need, and
 - (d) through the submission of a site specific flood risk assessment, demonstrating appropriate flood risk management and safety measures and a positive approach to reducing flood risk overall, and without reliance on emergency services.

- 11.16. Policy LP14 of the Local Plan is consistent with the requirements set out within the NPPF and guidance set out within NPPG in that they require the Sequential Test (and the Exception Test, if necessary) to be applied, where development is proposed in areas at risk from **any** form of flooding.
- 11.17. Within paragraph 174 of the NPPF, it states:
“...the aim of the sequential test is to steer new development to areas with the lowest risk of flooding **from any source**. Development should not be allocated or permitted if there are reasonably available sites appropriate for the proposed development in areas with a lower risk of flooding.”
- 11.18. Within paragraph 181 of the NPPF, it states:
“... Development should only be allowed in areas at risk of flooding where, in the light of this assessment (and the sequential and exception tests, as applicable) it can be demonstrated that: ... e) safe access and escape routes are included where appropriate, as part of an agreed emergency plan.”
- 11.19. Within paragraph 023 of National Planning Practice Guidance, it states:
“The approach is designed to ensure that areas at little or no risk of flooding from any source are developed in preference to areas at higher risk. This means avoiding, so far as possible, development in current and future medium-high flood risk areas **considering all sources of flooding including areas at risk of surface water flooding**.”
- 11.20. Guidance contained within Section 4 of the Cambridgeshire Flood and Water SPD is consistent with Policy LP14 of the Local Plan, Paragraphs 174 & 181 of the NPPF and Paragraph 023 of National Planning Practice Guidance.

Sequential Test

- 11.21. Due to the proposed development being located within an area of medium-high risk of surface water flooding, the flood risk impacts of the proposed development may only be acceptable if the application demonstrated that the Sequential Test has been passed.
- 11.22. The application is accompanied by a Flood Risk Assessment, which includes a section relating to the Sequential Test. The assessment states that the applicant considers the Sequential Test to be passed as the site is positioned in Flood Zone 1. However, the Sequential Test was silent regarding matters of surface water flooding and is therefore contrary to the requirements of the NPPF, NPPG and FLP. As such, the Local Planning Authority consider the Sequential Test failed on the basis that there is no assessment of reasonably available sites appropriate for the proposed development that may be located in areas with a lower risk of pluvial flooding.
- 11.23. With due regard given to national and local planning policies and guidance relating to flood risk (as specified above), in addition to recent case law (*Mead Realisations Limited v The Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities & Anor*, February 2024) and various subsequent planning appeal decisions, it is considered that the proposed development fails the Sequential Test and would have unacceptable surface water flood risks.

Surface water

- 11.24. When considering applications for outline planning permission where details of layout are not being committed, the Local Planning Authority must consider whether an acceptable scheme for the proposed quantum of development could be delivered around flood risk areas (i.e. not within the areas of medium and high risk of surface water flooding). Within their objection to the proposed development, the Lead Local Flood Authority acknowledged the extensive risk of surface water flooding at the northeast of the site and long the eastern boundary.
- 11.25. Evidential proof of instances of surface water flooding, prior to any development of the site, were received through representations during consideration of the earlier refused application F/YR23/0241/O. The likelihood and extent of potential surface water flooding events are supported by the EA's surface water flood risk map, as below;

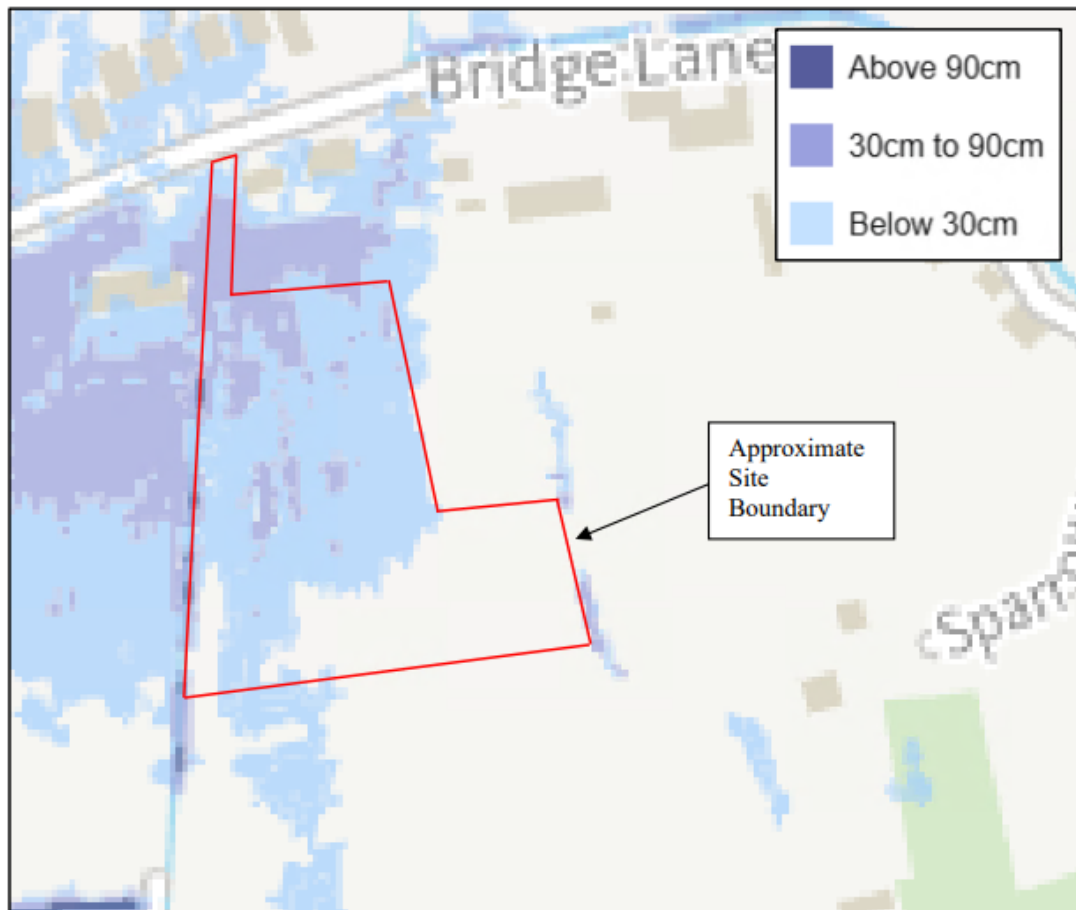


Figure 3 – Environment Agency Surface Water Flood Risk Map
– 0.1% Annual Probability

- 11.26. The submitted FRA makes reference to this potential, summarising that the maximum flood depth during the 1% annual probability (1 in 100 chance each year) event with climate change on the access and in the northwestern corner of the site is estimated to be 0.4m. Within the remainder of the site the flood depths are below 0.3m.

- 11.27. The indicative site layout plan accompanying this application shows some of the intended dwellings and parts of the proposed access road being located within the area of medium risk of surface water flooding. Whilst matters of access and layout are not committed, in particular with regard to access specifically, the locational circumstances of the site are such that it would not be practicably possible to design a suitable road layout which avoids the access passing through the area of medium risk of surface water flooding. As such it is considered that, on the balance of probabilities, the proposed development fails to demonstrate that safe access and egress can be achieved, notwithstanding any surface water flooding which may occur within intended dwellings.
- 11.28. The application is accompanied by a Flood Risk Assessment and Drainage Strategy. The Lead Local Flood Authority consider that the proposed climate change allowance and hydraulic calculations have not been appropriately included to design the system, and that the position of the basin is such that it will only benefit a small section of the site. Furthermore, there are concerns regarding appropriate water quality owing to a lack of appropriate water treatment within the intended system. Finally, the LLFA have concerns that the proposed flow control is too narrow which may be at risk from blockage. As such, there are concerns that the proposed system will mitigate risk and effectively drain the site.
- 11.29. In order to address the objection by the LLFA, the applicant submitted a revised indicative site plan, drainage layout and calculations. However, owing to the late stage of this submission in the planning process the LPA did not accept these amendments. It is understood that these technical details may be acceptable to the LLFA, subject to any formal reconsultation.
- 11.30. Notwithstanding, whilst the concerns raised by the Lead Local Flood Authority in respect of matters of design of the surface water drainage system and the attempts by the applicant to address these concerns are acknowledged; the Local Planning Authority do not consider there to be sufficient planning reasons to refuse the planning application in respect of the *design* of the surface water drainage scheme specifically, as the layout of the proposed development is not being committed by this outline planning application and there is no evidence to suggest that the scheme could not be appropriately designed.
- 11.31. However, conflict arises with respect to the *principle* of proposing residential dwellings in an area of known risk, and a lack of an appropriate Sequential Test that considers **all** forms of flooding, as required by both local and national planning policy and guidance, rather than as a result of matters that could be addressed at the detailed design stage. Furthermore, matters of safe access and egress have not been satisfactorily addressed (and given the site geometry are unlikely to be).
- 11.32. As such the LPA consider these conflicts are justified as a reason for refusal, contrary to the requirements of policies LP12 and LP14 of the Local Plan, Paragraphs 174 & 181 of the National Planning Policy Framework, Paragraph 023 of National Planning Practice Guidance and Section 4 of the Cambridgeshire Flood and Water Supplementary Planning Document.

Foul water

- 11.33. In respect of foul water drainage, the applicant proposes to discharge foul water into the existing mains sewer, which is the most sustainable foul water drainage solution providing there is available capacity for the required flows. It is noted that the objections received from Wimblington Parish Council and several residents raise concerns regarding existing foul water drainage issues and foul water drainage impacts of the proposed development.
- 11.34. There is conflicting response within the above comments from Anglian Water regarding the potential capacity at Doddington WRC, which officers sought to clarify, but received no direct response. However, the applicant has provided additional evidence in the form of a Pre-Planning Assessment Report from Anglian Water (dated 07.04.25) which states: "This site is within the catchment of Doddington water recycling centre (WRC), which currently can accommodate the additional flows generated by the proposed development."
- 11.35. Notwithstanding, Anglian Water have considered the use of a condition relating to a foul water scheme to be submitted and approved prior to commencement should the application be recommended for approval. On the basis that Officers have not been provided with any technical grounds with which to challenge the foul water drainage impacts of the proposed development, there are no sufficient planning reasons to refuse the planning application on this basis. However, any approval should include an appropriate negative condition to ensure the proposed foul water drainage scheme can be accommodated, in consultation with Anglian Water.

Flooding and Drainage Conclusion

- 11.36. The proposed development is located partly within a known area of medium-high risk of surface water flood risk. The application fails to pass the Sequential Test in relation to surface water flood risk and fails to demonstrate that acceptable safe access and egress from the site can be achieved.
- 11.37. The proposed development therefore has unacceptable surface water flood risks, placing future occupiers at an unwarranted risk of flooding, contrary to policies LP12 and LP14 of the Local Plan, Paragraphs 174 & 181 of the National Planning Policy Framework, Paragraph 023 of National Planning Practice Guidance and Section 4 of the Cambridgeshire Flood and Water Supplementary Planning Document.

Public Right of Way

- 11.38. A public right of way runs along the western boundary of the site, it would appear that a section of the right of way near the junction with Bridge Lane merges with the site access and is to be hard surfaced. The Definitive Map Officer has been reconsulted and has stated that surface change will require separate authorisation.
- 11.39. Policy LP2 and LP15 of the FLP and paragraph 115 of the NPPF seek to achieve safe and suitable access for all users. The legal width of the PROW

is unknown and as such there is no guarantee that a well-designed, safe and sustainable access can be achieved. However, as the Definitive Map Officer has not objected to the scheme the matter has not been included as a reason for refusal.

Biodiversity Net Gain & Ecology

- 11.40. Local Plan policies LP16 and LP19 outline a primary objective for biodiversity to be conserved or enhanced and provides for the protection of Protected Species, Priority Species and Priority Habitat with respect to development within Fenland.
- 11.41. In accordance with the requirements of the Biodiversity Checklist, the applicant submitted an Ecological Impact Assessment (EIA) by a qualified ecologist that concluded that subject to successful implementation of mitigation measures and other safeguards, that can be secured by condition, no significant adverse effects are predicted to ecology or biodiversity as a result of the proposed. The EIA was reviewed by the Council's Ecology team who considered the EIA to be acceptable and reasonable.
- 11.42. The Environment Act 2021 requires development proposals to deliver a net gain in biodiversity following a mitigation hierarchy which is focused on avoiding ecological harm over minimising, rectifying, reducing and then off-setting. This approach accords with Local Plan policies LP16 and LP19.
- 11.43. There are statutory exemptions, transitional arrangements and requirements relating to irreplaceable habitat which mean that the biodiversity gain condition does not always apply. In this instance however, none of the exemptions / transitional arrangements are considered to apply and a Biodiversity Gain Condition is required to be approved before development is begun.
- 11.44. Notwithstanding, a recommended condition could be imposed, which would require a consideration of achieving measurable net gain and biodiversity enhancements in accordance with Local Plan policies LP16 and LP19 and Chapter 15 of the NPPF.

17 CONCLUSIONS

- 12.1. This application seeks to provide up to 9 dwellings in an area of open countryside away from the established settlement of Wimblington and in an area at risk of surface water flooding.
- 12.2. The previous refusal of an application on this site for a similar development (F/YR23/0241/O) included a number of reasons, summarised as:
 - 1) In depth development within an area of rural character, contrary to Policies LP3, LP12 and LP16.
 - 2) Lack of ecological surveys to evidence that no habitats or species would be detrimentally impacted by the development, contrary to Policies LP16 (b) and LP19.

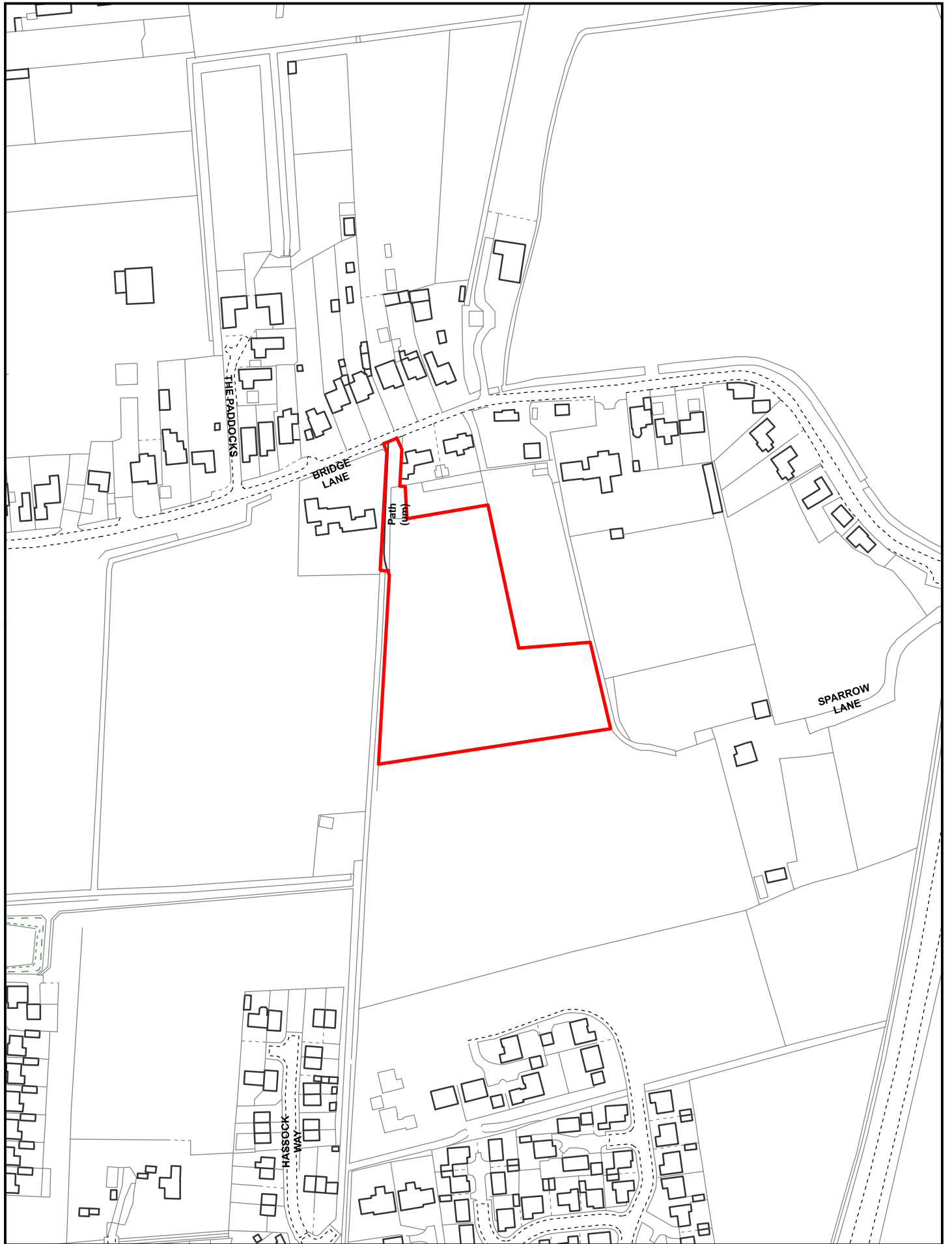
- 3) Lack of appropriate assessment of flooding from all sources at the site, (in particular surface water flooding) contrary to Policy LP12 Part A (k) and Policy LP14.
- 12.3. With respect to reason for refusal 1, the locational circumstances of the site and the unacceptable principle of development in such a location has not changed since the earlier refusal. The proposal would result in large scale in-depth development in an area rural in character and characterised mainly by frontage development and would erode an important visual gap and area of separation between this part of Bridge Lane and the main built form of Wimblington, contrary to Policies LP3, LP12 and LP16 of the adopted Fenland Local Plan. Thus, this reason for refusal must remain.
- 12.4. Details submitted with the current application have reconciled concerns regarding a lack of demonstrable evidence in respect of matters of ecology and biodiversity (reason for refusal 2 above); the details have been agreed by the relevant statutory consultees. Accordingly, this reason for refusal can be removed.
- 12.5. Finally, notwithstanding the submitted flood risk assessment and drainage strategy, the application fails to pass the Sequential Test in relation to surface water flood risk and fails to demonstrate that acceptable safe access and egress from the site can be achieved, contrary to policies LP12 and LP14 of the Local Plan, Paragraphs 174 & 181 of the National Planning Policy Framework, Paragraph 023 of National Planning Practice Guidance and Section 4 of the Cambridgeshire Flood and Water Supplementary Planning Document. Accordingly, this reason for refusal must remain.
- 12.6. As evidenced by the previous refusal it is considered that there are 'in-principle' objections to developing this site, along with remaining concerns regarding surface water flood risk and as such the recommendation is to refuse the application.

18 RECOMMENDATION

Refuse; for the following reasons:

1	The proposal would result in large scale in-depth development in an area rural in character and characterised mainly by frontage development and would erode an important visual gap and area of separation between this part of Bridge Lane and the main built form of Wimblington. The proposal is therefore contrary to Policies LP3, LP12 and LP16 of the adopted Fenland Local Plan.
2	The proposed development is located partly within a known area of medium-high risk of surface water flood risk. The application fails to pass the Sequential Test in relation to surface water flood risk and fails to demonstrate that acceptable safe access and egress from the site can be achieved. The proposed development therefore has unacceptable surface water flood risks, placing future occupiers at an unwarranted risk of flooding, contrary to

	policies LP12 and LP14 of the Local Plan, Paragraphs 174 & 181 of the National Planning Policy Framework, Paragraph 023 of National Planning Practice Guidance and Section 4 of the Cambridgeshire Flood and Water Supplementary Planning Document.
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F/YR25/0058/O

Scale = 1:2,500





General Notes

1. All dimensions are shown in 'mm' unless otherwise stated.
2. The contractor, sub-contractors and suppliers must verify all dimensions on site prior to the commencement of any work.
3. This drawing is to be read in conjunction with all relevant engineers and specialist sub-contractors drawings and specifications.
4. Any discrepancies are to be brought to the designers attention.

Schedule

9 No. 4 bed detached dwellings

SITE PLAN KEY

- Indicates surrounding buildings - from OS Location Plan
- Indicates existing trees to be protected and retained
- Indicates site access to Cambs Highways specification
- Indicates proposed new dwellings
- Indicates proposed 1.8m high close boarded fence
- Indicates position of proposed trees
- Indicates proposed permeable block paving
- Indicates proposed parking spaces
- Indicates proposed grassed areas
- Indicates visitor parking spaces
- Indicates private access road built to adoptable standard, finished with permeable tarmac
- Indicates public seating area
- Indicates 1.5m tarmac planings footpath adj. to shared access road
- Indicates proposed hedge
- Indicates proposed dyke to be reinstated

Status

FOR APPROVAL

SWANN EDWARDS ARCHITECTURE

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Job Title	Date	Drawn by
Proposed Residential Development	December 2022	G.E.
Bridge Lane, Wimblington		Checked by
March, Cambs		J.B.
For: Mr P Gumbley		
Drawing Title	Job No.	Sheet Size
Outline Planning Drawing	SE-1896	A1
Site and Location Plan	Dwg No.	Revision
	PP1000	K