
F/YR25/0274/F

**Applicant: Bowsall Developments
Ltd & Housing 21**

**Agent: Mrs Beverley Moss
Hourigan Planning**

Land West of Playing Field, Barton Road, Wisbech, Cambridgeshire

Erect x 42 affordable dwellings, 1 x office/communal space including cycle stores, landscaping, highways improvements and associated works and demolition of all existing buildings

Officer recommendation: Grant

Reason for Committee: Town Council comments contrary to Officer recommendation

1 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1. This application is a full application for 42 affordable dwellings on previously developed land located in the West Wisbech broad location for growth.
- 1.2. The proposed development seeks to provide a total of 42 single storey dwellings for occupation by over-55s only within a 100% social rent development in the West Wisbech broad location for growth. The 100% social rent dwellings will be secured by a S.106 agreement and due to the fact that the whole site will be for affordable dwellings no additional S.106 obligations are sought.
- 1.3. The site lies within Flood Zone 3. At the time the application was submitted and validated the Draft Approach to the Sequential Test for Housing' (DAST) guidance was in place, meaning that at the time no Sequential or Exception Test were required. Notwithstanding the lack of a Sequential and Exception Test, it is concluded that there are no sequentially preferable sites within the West Wisbech broad location for growth that could provide for 42 social rent dwellings with on-site management arrangements. It has been demonstrated that the proposal would pass both criteria of the Exception Test by virtue of providing six M4(3) dwellings, which would be a sustainable community benefit, in accordance with the Cambridgeshire Flood and Water SPD.
- 1.4. The application site is located within the West Wisbech broad location for growth and therefore residential development on this site is considered to be acceptable in principle.
- 1.5. It is demonstrated below that when taking all elements of the proposal into consideration that, on balance, the benefits that would arise from the proposal outweigh the harms, such as the site being located within Flood Zone 3, which can be mitigated through measures identified in the Flood Risk Assessment submitted as part of the application, in addition to the public benefits of six M4(3) dwellings, which are fully wheelchair-user adapted.

2 SITE DESCRIPTION

- 2.1. The application site is located on the south side of Barton Road, less than 1 mile to the west of Wisbech town centre. The site is accessed from Barton Road and is bounded by Barton Road playing fields to the east, Magazine Lane to the south and Grove Park to the west.
- 2.2. The site is approximately 1.87 hectares and is currently in use as a plant nursery with retail sales. The site comprises a mix of greenhouses and open fields for the growing of plants and some single storey brick outbuildings to the south of the site which have also been used for the purposes of growing plants/shrubs for the nursery business.
- 2.3. The site is relatively flat, with a slight fall from north to south, although there are localised higher points within the site, albeit the variance in height is minimal.
- 2.4. The existing dwellinghouse, no. 67 Barton Road, which is associated with the existing business and is located to the northeast of the site, does not form part of the planning application.
- 2.5. The site is crossed with existing drainage for the greenhouses and footpaths to and from the greenhouses, which are in varying states of repair. There are also a number of areas of hardstanding, which are the previous footprints of former greenhouses.
- 2.6. Fronting onto Barton Road are a number of existing mature trees including at either side of the existing vehicular access to the site. On the eastern boundary of the site there is also a line of mature trees. The western boundary, between the site and Grove Park, is a 1.8-metre-high timber fence. The southern boundary is heavily vegetated and screens views of the site from Magazine Lane.

3 PROPOSAL

- 3.1. The application proposes the development of 42 no. affordable dwellings with the following description of development:
- 3.2. *"Demolition of all existing buildings and structures and the erection of 42 no. affordable dwellings to be occupied by people aged 55 and over, 1 no. unit functioning as a manager's office, landscaping, highways improvements and associated works".*
- 3.3. The scheme comprises a total of 42 no. residential single storey dwellings in the form of bungalows with a mix comprising of 35 no. 1 bed bungalows and 7 no. 2 bed bungalows. All of the proposed dwellings would be occupied social rent dwellings and all residents would be aged 55 or older.
- 3.4. The site will be accessed from the north, along Barton Road, and this will function as the main vehicular access to site, along with footpath connections to the east and west along Barton Road. There will be a secondary pedestrian/cycle entrance to the south onto Magazine Lane.
- 3.5. In the northwest corner of the site, to the west of the Barton Road entrance, there will be a small area of amenity space, which will function as a landscaped gateway into the site. To the south of this area of Public Open Space (POS) there will be a narrow, linear swale to provide drainage as part of an on-site Sustainable Urban Drainage System (SuDs) for the development.

- 3.6. There are two main existing boundaries to the site from where the site is publicly visible. These boundaries are the northern, onto Barton Road, and the southern, onto Magazine Lane. The layout of the site has been designed so that the northern boundary will have the landscape gateway with dwellings fronting onto it presenting on Barton Road. The southern boundary will have dwellings fronting towards Magazine Lane, thereby both boundaries positively address the areas which they front onto.
- 3.7. In addition to the 42 dwellings proposed, Plot 6 would provide a site manager's office to be available on site and for the site manager to perform their daily managerial work in supporting the residents with their tenancy needs. Plot 6 would also provide an internal communal space and kitchen facilities so that residents can meet.
- 3.8. Full plans and associated documents for this application can be found at:

<https://www.publicaccess.fenland.gov.uk/publicaccess/>

4 SITE PLANNING HISTORY

- 4.1. The site has a long planning history, the most pertinent applications relevant to this proposal being as follows:

Reference	Description	Decision	Date
F/YR06/0034/O	Residential Development (1.61 ha)	Withdrawn	21.02.2006
23/0099/PREAPP	Erect 42 dwellings, 1x unit functioning as a managers office and providing communal space and kitchen facilities for residents; landscaping, highways improvements and associated works involving demolition of existing buildings	Advice Given	

5 CONSULTATIONS

5.1. Wisbech Town Council

Object for the following reasons:

- The proposal would constitute overdevelopment of the site
- There is insufficient highway infrastructure to support additional residential development in this area
- There is inadequate drainage infrastructure in the vicinity of the site
- There is insufficient community infrastructure to support development of this scale

5.2. FDC Housing Strategy and Enabling Officer

Support this application as it provides 100% affordable housing with much needed 1 and 2 bed bungalows for over 55-year-olds, with all dwellings being offered as social rent.

5.3. CCC Archaeology

14.04.2025: Support, as follows:

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.

14.08.2025 Update:

Thank you for your consultation in regard to the amendments made to the above referenced planning application.

The amendments include an approved Written Scheme of Investigation. Please note that the WSI is for the evaluation phase of works only, which will determine the need for further mitigation. If required these works will need to be led by a new WSI.

Therefore our comments remain the same as previously advised, namely that 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.

5.4. Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Integrated Care System (ICS)

The proposed development is likely to have an impact on the services of the 3 x GP Practices operating within the vicinity of the application: Clarkson Surgery, Trinity Surgery, North Brink Practice. There is zero capacity in the Wisbech area to take on additional patients and this development of 42 dwellings would see an increase in patient pressure of circa 100 of new residents, which would require additional Whole Time Equivalent GP/Nurse / Admin support workforce to support increase in appointments as follows: GP = 0.05 / Nurse = 0.03 and Admin = 0.10 with a resulting increase on estate demand of 6.91sqm net internal area.

A developer contribution will therefore be required to mitigate the impacts of this proposal. CAPICS calculates the level of contribution required, in this instance to be £36,108.29 (6.91sqm at £5224 per sqm). A developer contribution will therefore be required to mitigate the impacts of this proposal. CAPICS calculates the level of contribution required, in this instance to be £36,108.29 (6.91sqm at £5224 per sqm).

5.5. FDC Ecology

No objection but propose conditions requiring a Construction Environmental Method Statement (CEMP), the statutory BNG requirements and a Habitat Management and Monitoring Plan (HMMP).

5.6. Cambridgeshire Fire and Rescue

No objection. Advise that a condition requiring fire hydrants is imposed should permission be granted.

5.7. Environment Agency

No objection:

Flood Risk

We strongly recommend that the development should be carried out in accordance with the submitted Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) (Ref: 23007-FRA-001 Rev A; dated February 2025; submitted by Dart Engineers LTD) and the following mitigation measures it details:

- *Finished floor levels shall be set to 3.0mAOD*

Sequential Test

In accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework (paragraph 162), development should not be permitted if there are reasonably available sites appropriate for the proposed development in areas with a lower probability of flooding. It is for you to determine if the sequential test needs to be applied and whether there are other sites available at lower flood risk.

Flood Resilience

We strongly recommend the use of flood resistance and resilience measures. Physical barriers, raised electrical fittings and special construction materials are just some of the ways you can help reduce flood damage.

Water Resources

The location of this development is in an area of serious water stress (as identified in our report Water stressed areas – 2021 classification) and has the potential to increase abstraction from groundwater sources. We have evidence which indicates that groundwater abstraction to meet current needs of the population is already in some cases causing ecological damage to Water Framework Directive designated waterbodies or there is a risk of causing deterioration in the ecology if groundwater abstraction increases. Therefore, the water resource demand of the development should be considered. This supply needs to be sustainable and have no adverse impact to WFD waterbodies including chalk streams.

Residential/Domestic

We strongly support all efforts to make new residential developments as water efficient as possible. As a minimum, the higher standard of a maximum of 110 litres per person per day should be applied to this development as set out in the Building Regulations &c. (Amendment) Regulations 2015. This standard is already a requirement of Policy LP7, Part J in the Fenland Local Plan and can be checked by Local Planning Authority's Building Regulations teams for compliance.

5.8. North Level IDB

29.04.2025: Holding objection to the proposal for the following reason:

It is noted that the planned surface water systems for this development discharge to an Anglian Water surface water sewer in Magazine Lane. That sewer runs

generally westwards before outfalling into a Board-maintained watercourse known as Cox's Lane Drain.

Concerns have been raised in recent months by Anglian Water about watercourse levels and water levels/flows in this area. Any proposed discharge from this development will need to be agreed with Anglian Water and the Board.

Pending at least an 'in principle' agreement for how surface water run-off will be effectively discharged from this development, the Board must note a holding objection to the application. Should you wish to favourably determine this application in advance of surface water matters being resolved, the Board would request that appropriate pre-commencement conditions are attached to any permission.

Update 29.05.2025:

Thank you for your re-consultation about these proposals. Comments made by North Level District Internal Drainage Board in its letter of 29 April 2025 still apply. I would be grateful if you would continue to take them into account when considering this application.

5.9. FDC Arboriculture

24.05.2025: No objection, subject to a condition requiring the submission of a comprehensive Arboricultural Method Statement:

The arboricultural report satisfactorily identifies the quality and constraints of the existing tree stock and acknowledges that some tree losses will occur. These losses are considered acceptable in the context of the overall scheme. Replacement planting has been incorporated into the soft landscape design, which provides suitable mitigation.

The submitted method statement outlines the required tree protection measures; however, it lacks sufficient detail regarding how ground disturbance within root protection areas (RPAs) will be managed.

To ensure the protection measures are clearly understood and properly implemented, more robust guidance is required. This should include detailed methodologies in line with BS5837:2012, supported by a supervision schedule setting out when an arboricultural consultant is to be present on site to oversee critical stages, including the installation and maintenance of protective measures.

30.06.2025 Update:

No objection: The Tree Report identifies suitable measures that will be put in place to protect the trees to be retained.

5.10. CCC Lead Local Flood Authority

30.04.2025, 03.06.2025 and 10.07.2025: Comments received objecting to the application. Further information has been received and updated comments provided.

07.08.2025 Update:

We have reviewed the following documents:

- *Drainage Strategy, DART, Ref: 23007-DR-C-0100, Rev: P8, Dated: January 2025*
- *Impermeable Area, DART, Ref: 23007-DR-C-01010, Rev: P4, Dated: January 2025*
- *Construction Drainage Strategy, DART, Ref: 23007-DR-C-0102, Rev: P1, Dated: January 2025*
- *Flood Risk Assessment, DART, Ref: 23007-FRA-001, Rev: A, Dated: February 2025*

Based on these, as Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA) we have no objection in principle to the proposed development. The above documents demonstrate that surface water from the proposed development can be managed through the use of a swale and geocellular attenuation before discharging via flow control at 2l/s into the existing surface water sewer. A maintenance plan has also been provided detailing maintenance practices and adoption details of the surface water drainage features on site.

We request the imposition of three conditions.

5.11. Education, Library and Strategic Waste

The following table sets out the requested s106 contributions:

	Contribution	Project	Indexation Date	Trigger
Early Years	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Primary Ed.	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Secondary Ed.	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
SEND Ed.	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Libraries	£6,195	Enhancement of Wisbech Library	1 st Quarter 2019	100% prior to occupation of 50% of the development
Strategic Waste	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Monitoring Fee	£600	N/A	1 st Quarter 2025	10 days after commencement of development

The contributions sought are towards libraries only and Cambridgeshire County Council provide justification for the above figure based on Department of Culture, Media and Sport guidelines.

5.12. Designing Out Crime

No objection, provided that should the proposal be approved a condition requiring the development to be undertaken in accordance with Secured by Design is imposed.

5.13. CCC Highways

No objection for the following reasons:

- *References have been made to the relevant policies and guidance.*
- *The access arrangements through the site are noted. The two sets of uncontrolled crossing points on Barton Road and Magazine Lane are noted. The internal network of footways will be accessible to residents and nearby residents connecting Barton Road to Magazine Lane are noted. The details of this section are acceptable.*
- *The applicant during the pre-app phase was asked to redo their trip generation assessment on TRICS using Retirement and Care Community category. The submitted details for this application highlight the trip rates to be 0.152 arrivals in the AM Peak (10 two-way trips) and 0.102 departures (6 two-way trips) in the PM peak are low but are noted and acceptable.*

5.14. Anglian Water

06.05.2025 and 09.06.2025: Comments received objecting to the proposal.

01.08.2025: Updated comments received with no objection to the proposal. The comments are as follows:

Based on the above assessment West Walton WRC is within the acceptance parameters and can accommodate the flows from the proposed growth.

Informatives are suggested to protect Anglian Water's assets, to manage connections to the public sewer network and regarding surface water disposal.

5.15. FDC Environmental Health

No objection subject to the imposition of conditions covering the following matters, should permission be granted:

- No occupation of the development until the recommendations of the e3p Phase II Geoenvironmental Site Assessment dated March 25th 2025 (Ref 30-048-R1) have been undertaken.
- A Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) shall be submitted.
- A lighting scheme shall be submitted.

5.16. East of England Ambulance Service

No objection. Financial contributions are requested as follows:

This proposed development is likely to impact on the services of 3 ambulance stations (Wisbech, March and Peterborough Hub) operating within the vicinity: travel times from Wisbech Ambulance Station in rush hour traffic to the development location are circa 10 minutes, 20 minutes from March and 30 minutes

from Peterborough Hub (Reference ShapeAtlas) (NB this is a standard reference point and does not mean ambulances come from these locations in order to respond to calls). Wisbech Ambulance Station has capacity for 4 emergency ambulance vehicles and more will be required to manage population growth from this development. Each ambulance requires 78.46m² GIA at a cost of £5,167 per m² and additional ambulance vehicles are likely to be supplied from the Peterborough Hub.

This application for 42 dwelling development could generate another 92 residents and will generate an anticipated additional 5 calls per annum which combined with other developments in Fenland places significant pressure on March and Wisbech ambulance stations and others in the local area to maintain mandated response times. 2023/24 activity is currently calculated at population level across the East of England (residents 6.3m) / number of Incidents in (1.4m) = 0.23 incidents per person per annum. This is an increase of 10.5% per annum compared to existing activity, postcode area PE131 indicates 986 incidents per annum between 1st April 2024 and 31st March 2025.

A developer contribution will be required to mitigate the impacts of this proposal and is calculated at £9,520 (discounted rate).

18.07.2025 Clarification: The sum requested is not £9,520, but £13,734 as referred to in the response.

5.17. Local Residents/Interest Parties

A total of 4 letters of objection have been received from residents of Grove Park and Ashdale Park, Wisbech and one set of comments from an address in Magazine Lane, Wisbech. The objections raise the following concerns:

Comment Received	Officer Comments
Increased volumes of traffic in the local area.	Covered in Transport Statement
Construction phase will exacerbate existing traffic levels.	CEMP required by condition
Insufficient capacity in existing GP surgeries.	Addressed in s106 considerations below
Existing sewerage systems cannot cope.	Drainage details provided and conditions proposed
Noise and dust from construction.	CEMP required by condition
Impact upon local wildlife.	See Ecology section below
Overdevelopment of the area.	Covered in Principle section below
Insufficient infrastructure.	Covered in s106 considerations below

In addition to the concerns raised above the following points, which are not considered to be material planning considerations, were made:

- Unattractive views out onto the proposed development.
- The impact upon the foundations of existing parkhomes to the west.

6 STATUTORY DUTY

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) the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Minerals and Waste Local Plan (2021).

7 POLICY FRAMEWORK

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

National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG)

Determining a Planning Application

National Design Guide 2021

Context

Identity

Built Form

Movement

Nature

Homes and Buildings

Resources

Lifespan

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

LP8 – Wisbech

LP13 – Supporting and Managing the Impact of a Growing District

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

Delivering and Protecting High Quality Environments in Fenland SPD 2014

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

Developer Contributions SPD 2015

Cambridgeshire Flood and Water SPD 2016

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
LP7: Design
LP8: Amenity Provision
LP12: Meeting Housing Needs
LP20: Accessibility and Transport
LP21: Public Rights of Way
LP22: Parking Provision
LP25: Biodiversity Net Gain
LP27: Trees and Planting
LP28: Landscape
LP32: Flood and Water Management
LP36: Residential Site Allocations for Wisbech

8 KEY ISSUES

- **Principle of Development**
- **Flood Risk and Drainage**
- **Housing Need and Supply**
- **Affordable Housing and Housing Mix**
- **Design, Character and Appearance**
- **Residential Amenity**
- **Highway Safety**
- **Archaeology**
- **Ecology**
- **Landscape**
- **Contamination**
- **Developer Contributions**
- **Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG)**

9 BACKGROUND

- 9.1. A planning application was submitted for this site in 2006 under reference F/YR06/0034/O for residential development. The application was subsequently withdrawn on 21.02.2006.
- 9.2. The applicant applied for pre-application advice for this scheme in 2023 under reference 23/0099/PREAPP. The advice offered was positive and at that time the site was considered to be acceptable in policy terms as the proposal could be brought forward as a stand-alone development, which would not hinder the strategic planning of the West Wisbech BCP.

10 ASSESSMENT

Principle of Development

- 10.1. The proposal seeks full planning permission for 42 single storey affordable dwellings along with 1 x office/communal space including cycle stores,

landscaping, highways improvements and associated works and demolition of all existing buildings on site.

10.2. The application site is located on the edge of the town of Wisbech, which is identified as one of the two main 'Market Towns' along with March in Policy LP3 of the Fenland Local Plan, with the two 'Other Market Towns' being Chatteris and Whittlesey. As such, it is one of the main areas for growth within the district. The key statement in Policy LP3 in respect of the location of the proposal is that 'the focus for the majority of growth is in and around the four market towns. Development should create strong, sustainable, cohesive and inclusive communities, making the most effective use of previously developed land (except where that land is of high environmental value), and enabling a larger number of people to access jobs, services and facilities locally'.

10.3. The site is currently a plant nursery and features a number of internal roads and driveways, areas of hardstanding and greenhouses and also areas of grass and for the growing of plants and flowers. For the purposes of this planning application it is considered to be a mix of brownfield and greenfield land, although given the quantum of existing buildings and structures onsite there are more previously developed areas than not. The applicant has provided both a Planning Statement and appendix to it which clarify why the site is considered to be previously developed. In the appendix the applicant refers to appeal decision APP/H1033/W/23/3317979, which concerned the proposal for 2 no. dormer bungalows in Charlesworth, Derbyshire. The site was a former nursery and garden centre. The inspector confirmed that no definition of 'previously developed site' was provided as part of the appeal. However, the inspector did state the following:

At the time of my visit, the site was occupied by a large, dilapidated building on the eastern boundary, a greenhouse, sections of a collapsed building, various pieces of equipment and significant areas of hardstanding. There was a substantial amount of vegetation and self-seeded bushes on the site. Nevertheless, the buildings and equipment are visible, and I was largely able to traverse the site on hard standing such that I do not consider the site has returned to its natural state or that structures on site blend into the landscape. For these reasons, I find that for the purposes of LP Policy EQ 3 the appeal site is previously developed.

10.4. The officer's site visit for this application took place during ordinary working hours and the garden centre/nursery was trading, with several staff on site and a large range of plants and flowers for sale, along with a number of greenhouses with plants and flowers at various stages of maturity. The site was walked both from north to south and east to west and was predominantly carried out whilst walking on existing hardstanding.

10.5. Like the appeal site referred to above by the applicant, it was possible to traverse the site on hardstanding and the site continued to function as an operating business with a number of permanent structures on site including sheds, greenhouses, other storage buildings and reception area for payments etc. As such, the site has not blended back into the landscape as would be the case had the current use ceased, and it is considered to be more developed than an area for growing of plants functioning as a plant nursery would expect to be. As such, it is considered to accord with Policy LP3 as the location is 'in and around' the town of Wisbech and the site itself is predominantly previously developed.

10.6. In addition to Policy LP3 directing development to the larger towns within the district, Policy LP8 of the Fenland Local Plan, which covers Wisbech specifically,

identifies the area within which the site is located, as part of the West Wisbech broad location for growth. It states that 'the area will provide a high-quality living environment and be predominantly open space and residential although there may be opportunities for some business use'. The policy then adds that the area indicated on the Key Diagram is 'very indicative, with the final extent subject to the preparation of a broad concept plan for the area. This scheme should be informed in particular by an assessment of flood risk and transport issues'. It is considered that Policy LP8 of the Fenland Local Plan supports the principle of developing this site for housing, subject to satisfactorily addressing flood risk and transport.

- 10.7. Changes to the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) since 2018 have placed greater emphasis on the acceptability of re-developing brownfield sites. Paragraph 125 of the NPPF states that "planning policies and decision should... give substantial weight to the value of using suitable brownfield land within settlements for homes... proposals for which should be approved unless substantial harm would be caused." Again, it is considered that due to the site primarily consisting of previously developed land the proposal is acceptable in principle.

Flood Risk and Drainage

Context

- 10.8. The site lies within Flood Zones 1 and 3, with the area of low flood risk at the front (north) end of the site connecting onto Barton Road, and the area of highest flood risk, Flood Zone 3, to the south of this area comprising the rest of the site. Furthermore, there are some areas of the site that may be subject to a low chance of surface water flooding, as depicted on the Environment Agency flood maps. The application proposes a 42 dwelling scheme comprising 100% affordable housing units.

Policy Considerations

- 10.9. Policy LP14 of the Fenland Local Plan (2014) and Chapter 14 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) set out the policy approach towards development in areas of flood risk. Policy LP14 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, 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.
- 10.10. The NPPF includes an over-arching principle that development should be directed away from areas at highest risk of flooding. To achieve this a sequential, risk-based approach is to be taken to individual applications in areas known to be at risk now or in the future from flooding. Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) confirms that this means avoiding, so far as possible, development in current and

future medium and high flood risk areas. The PPG furthermore confirms that the underlying purpose includes placing the least reliance on measures like flood defences, flood warnings and property level resilience features. Therefore, even where a flood risk assessment shows the development can be made safe throughout its lifetime without increasing risk elsewhere, the Sequential Test still needs to be satisfied.

Sequential Test

- 10.11. The north section of the site, from where the development will be accessed, lies in Flood Zone 1 and the rest of the site to the south, where the proposed dwellings will be situated, lies within Flood Zone 3. The NPPF seeks to direct development away from areas at highest flood risk. Paragraph 173 of the NPPF states that 'a sequential risk-based approach should also be taken to individual applications in areas known to be at risk now or in future from any form of flooding'. In addition to Section 14 of the NPPF regarding flood risk, Part B of 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 should be informed by a Sequential Test and Exception Test if necessary, along with the suitable demonstration of meeting an identified need and the submission of a site specific flood risk assessment.
- 10.12. The applicant has not submitted a Sequential Test or Exception Test with this application due to the fact that at the time of the submission the 'Draft Approach to the Sequential Test for Housing' (DAST) guidance document was in place. The guidance document has since been withdrawn, but this application had been validated and consultations provided by the time the guidance was withdrawn on 27th June 2025. Whilst confirmation of the withdrawal of the guidance stated that it is no longer a material planning consideration it is deemed reasonable to not expect the applicant to undertake a Sequential Test for this proposal so far into the process.
- 10.13. Taking the DAST guidance into consideration no Sequential Test is required for this proposal as it lies within an urban extension site identified in Policy LP8 of the Local Plan and the guidance states 'these sites do not have to go through sequential testing in terms of the principal of development as this was done at the time the sites were identified for inclusion in the adopted Local Plan. However, site specific flood risk assessments should be undertaken so that the higher risk areas within the sites are avoided as far as possible and these can be made safe from flooding and do not cause flooding elsewhere'. A site-specific flood risk assessment has been carried out and has been submitted with this application and this is discussed in further detail in the Flood Risk section of this report.
- 10.14. Returning to the need for a Sequential Test for this site, given that the majority of the site where dwellings will be located is Flood Zone 3, it is considered that the area of search for a Sequential Test would be the West Wisbech broad location for growth, which is defined by Policy LP8 as the area broadly to the north of Mile Tree Lane, south of the B1169, and east of Gadd's Lane and Barton Road. A significant portion of this broad location for growth is Flood Zone 3. The National Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) for flood risk was recently updated, on 17.09.2025. It clarifies the area for search and, in this case, the implications for the area of search for this site is that it would remain the West Wisbech broad location for growth.
- 10.15. Therefore, were the applicant to undertake a Sequential Test within the broad location for growth it is unlikely that a site for 42 dwellings that is sequentially preferable would be identified and thus the Sequential Test would be passed.

Nevertheless, a Sequential Test has not been undertaken and there may be sequentially preferable sites; in addition, if the area of search were to be expanded to include the whole of Wisbech then it is almost certain that a sequentially preferable site would be identified, and the Sequential Test would be failed.

Exception Test

10.16. Notwithstanding the fact that the applicant has not undertaken a Sequential nor Exception Test, had the Sequential Test have been deemed to have been passed, it would then be necessary for the application to pass the Exception Test, which comprises of demonstration of the following:

- (a) the development would provide wider sustainability benefits to the community that outweigh the flood risk; and
- (b) the development will be safe for its lifetime taking account of the vulnerability of its users, without increasing flood risk elsewhere, and where possible, will reduce flood risk overall.

10.17. In respect of (a); the most recent Fenland District Council Five Year Housing Land Supply (June 2025) demonstrates a 6.6-year supply of housing land over the five-year period within the district. The Council therefore has a sufficient supply of housing delivery land and is meeting its requirement as demonstrated through recent housing delivery test results. The SPD explicitly states that “the general provision of housing itself would not normally be considered as a wider sustainability benefit”. Therefore, whilst the community benefits of the provision of housing are noted these are considered to be of very limited weight in this context.

10.18. In terms of part a) the test in Paragraph 178 of the NPPF requires applications to demonstrate that ‘the development would provide wider sustainability benefits to the community that outweigh the flood risk’. The Cambridgeshire Flood and Water SPD seeks to define what constitutes ‘wider sustainability benefits’ at a local level and lists the following:

- Land and water resources
- Biodiversity and green infrastructure
- Landscape, townscape and historic environment
- Climate change mitigation and renewable energy
- Flood risk and climate change adaptation
- Pollution
- Healthy and inclusive and accessible communities
- Economic activity
- Transport

10.19. The proposal seeks to regenerate an existing previously developed site and would provide 42 affordable dwellings, proposed to be for social rent, for over 55's. The Cambridgeshire Flood and Water SPD is clear; in Paragraph 4.5.9 it states that the general provision of housing by itself would not normally be considered as a wider sustainability benefit to the community which would outweigh flood risk. However, the themes and issues are quite broad and there is no specific, detailed requirements to achieve the objectives and thus every proposal is assessed on its own merits.

10.20. The proposed scheme provides accommodation exclusively for residents aged 55 and over, addressing a clear and growing demand within the community for accommodation that meets the need of the aging population. With this ageing

population, there is increasing demand for housing specifically designed to meet the needs of older people, including considerations of accessibility, safety and appropriate scale. By delivering a dedicated 55+ development, the scheme will help meet this demographic requirement, ensuring that older residents have suitable and sustainable housing options.

- 10.21. In addition, the scheme will facilitate greater churn within the wider housing market. By providing older residents with housing tailored to their needs, at this scale, the proposal is likely to free up larger family homes elsewhere, thereby helping younger households and families access accommodation more appropriate to their requirements. This dual benefit supports a more efficient and responsive local housing market while also enhancing wellbeing and independence for older residents.
- 10.22. The proposal is seeking to provide six dwellings which would be M4(3) compliant under Building Regulations. This means that they would be fully adapted for wheelchair use. For a development of this scale a total of six dwellings to be M4(3) is considered to be significant and would fall within the theme of 'healthy and inclusive and accessible communities' of the Cambridgeshire Flood and Water SPD and so, were the proposal be required to demonstrate it could pass the Exception Test if it was considered to fail the Sequential Test, it is considered that it would provide a wider sustainability benefit by virtue of providing six M4(3) compliant dwellings – i.e. fully adapted for wheelchair use.
- 10.23. It is noted, however, that the scheme will offer 42 affordable housing units, as the primary benefit of the development, which will be for over 55's and 6 of the dwellings will be M4(3), which means that they are fully adapted for wheelchair users. The scheme represents a sizeable contribution to the district's overall affordable housing needs. In addition, the site is located within an area identified for housing growth, it is sustainably located being close to the centre of Wisbech and it involves the reuse of previously developed land.
- 10.24. It is generally expected that housing is delivered on suitable, low-risk sites in respect of flooding. Development on a high-risk site requires exceptional circumstances that demonstrate the public benefits outweigh the harm. In this case weight should be given to the quantum of affordable housing units, the fact that this housing is for over 55's and the fact that a significant number of these dwellings will be adapted for wheelchair use (M4(3)).
- 10.25. As discussed below, where a scheme is wholly comprised of affordable housing, the Council would not normally seek s106 obligations. The absence of any contributions, for this application, is considered to be less problematic with this proposal than might be in other cases. This is because the proposal is for over 55's housing and therefore, there will be no burden placed on the education system and thus contributions towards education would be unjustified.
- 10.26. However, although the absence of NHS contributions is consistent with the Council's policy, the additional pressure this development would place on already overstretched NHS services, without the benefit of financial support, weighs against the scheme when considering its overall public benefits.
- 10.27. In respect of criterion (b) of the Exception Test The inclusion of flood mitigation measures including raised finished floor levels, flood resilient construction measures and sustainable drainage systems within the proposal are highlighted within the flood risk assessment technically address the need for safety in times of flooding at the site, and as such would satisfy the Exception Test in this regard.

- 10.28. Overall, having considered the relevant policies, material considerations, and the specific circumstances of the site and scheme, it is concluded that, on balance, the development satisfies the exceptions test.
- 10.29. Accordingly, it is considered that the proposal is acceptable in principle having regard to policies LP3, LP8 and LP14 of the Fenland Local Plan, guidance within the now-removed Draft Approach to the Sequential Test for Housing' (DAST), the Cambridgeshire Flood and Water SPD and when giving consideration to recent approvals in the surrounding area.

Drainage

- 10.30. In addition to the requirements of the NPPF and associated technical guide, all applications for relevant developments must include a drainage strategy to demonstrate that:
- (a) suitable consideration has been given to surface water drainage;
 - (b) appropriate arrangements for attenuating surface water run-off can be accommodated within the site; and
 - (c) issues of ownership and maintenance are addressed. For foul drainage private infrastructure managed by residents groups or management companies should be avoided.
- 10.31. The Environment Agency has been consulted on this application and confirm that the development should be carried out in accordance with the submitted Flood Risk Assessment (Revision A) with the mitigation of the Finished Floor Levels set to 3.0m Above Ordnance Datum (AOD). The Environment Agency advises that these mitigation measures should be fully implemented prior to occupation and subsequently in accordance with the scheme's timing/ phasing arrangements. The measures detailed above should be retained and maintained thereafter throughout the lifetime of the development. This is to reduce the risk of flooding to the proposed development and future occupants. It is considered that these mitigation measures can be successfully required by condition in order to make the development acceptable in respect of flood risk.
- 10.32. In addition to the Environment Agency the Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA) has considered the scheme and confirmed in its latest response dated 7th August 2025 that there is no objection to the proposal, subject to the use of a swale and geocellular attenuation to limit discharge from site via a flow control mechanism of 2 litres per section into the existing surface water sewer. Conditions relating to a detailed surface water drainage scheme, details of controlling surface water run-off during construction and a final surface water drainage system are proposed, should permission be granted, to ensure that the development is acceptable in respect of flood risk from surface water. In addition to the Environment Agency and the LLFA the North Level Internal Drainage Board has been consulted and confirms in its latest response that the Board does not object to the proposal and supports the LLFA's request for drainage-related conditions. It is therefore considered that the scheme for surface water drainage is acceptable in principle in this instance.
- 10.33. Finally, in respect of flood risk and drainage Anglian Water confirms in its latest response dated 1st August 2025 that there is no objection to the proposal provided that surface water discharge from site is limited to 2 litres per second.

10.34. It is therefore concluded that the proposal accords with Policy LP14 of the Fenland Local Plan and Section 14 of the NPPF in respect of flood risk and drainage.

Housing Need and Supply

10.35. In June 2025 Fenland District Council updated its Five-Year Housing Land Supply. The Council can demonstrate a 6.6-year supply of housing land over the five-year period.

10.36. Policy LP4 of the Fenland Local Plan identifies a need for 11,000 new homes to be built in the district between 2011 and 2031, with 3,000 of those being planned for in and around Wisbech. The policy states that at the time 3,527 affordable dwellings were required across the district (The Strategic Housing Market Assessment for the Cambridge Housing Sub-Region (SHMA: 2012)).

10.37. Fenland District Council's latest housing needs assessment for the area (Housing Needs of Specific Groups GL Hearn, October 2021) identifies that for Fenland the affordable housing need for the period 2020 to 2040 is now 289 dwellings per annum out of a total of 538 which, if applied across the 20 year period that the report covers, would equate to 5,780 affordable dwellings required, demonstrating not only a significant need, but an increasing need since the adoption of the Local Plan.

10.38. The proposed development seeks to provide 42 dwellings which will be in the form of bungalows. There will be a mix of 35 one bed bungalows and 7 two bed bungalows. It is intended that the dwellings will be occupied on a 100% social rent basis and that all occupants will be 55 or over.

10.39. It is demonstrated in the Housing Needs of Specific Groups GL Hearn, October 2021, report that there is a clear and demonstrable need for affordable housing of all tenure types within the district. This proposal will contribute somewhat towards that need, albeit there is no specific demand identified with the report for affordable housing for 55-year-olds and over. Fenland's Housing Strategy and Enabling Officer has been consulted on the proposal, based on it providing 100% affordable housing, and has confirmed that the proposal is supported.

10.40. In summary there is not a policy requirement for this housing were it to be solely private market housing, as Fenland District Council can demonstrate a 6.6-year Housing Land Supply. However, as the proposal is for 100% affordable housing and the Housing Strategy and Enabling Officer confirms there is a need, the proposal is considered to accord with Policy LP5 – Meeting Housing Need of the Local Plan.

Affordable Housing and Housing Mix

10.41. Fenland District Council's latest housing needs assessment for the area (Housing Needs of Specific Groups GL Hearn, October 2021) broadly identifies the following suggested strategic affordable housing mix for the 2020-2040 period;

Size	Market	Affordable Homes to Buy	Affordable Homes to Rent
1 Bed	0-10%	20-25%	35-45%

2 Bed	20-30%	35-45%	35-45%
3 Bed	40-50%	25-35%	10-20%
4 Bed+	20-30%	5-10%	0-10%

10.42. The proposal is for 35 one bed bungalows and 7 two bed bungalows, which equates to one bed bungalows forming 83% of the scheme and two bed bungalows forming 17%. Whilst this does not fit the strategic affordable housing mix for the area as identified by the GL Hearn report, it has to be considered against the needs of the district as a whole and for all types of housing. The proposed development will provide solely one or two bed bungalows for over 55's for social rent that this application proposes. Given that the proposal is intended to address a defined housing need and demographic, it would be inappropriate to require a housing mix that accords with the general proportions set out in the table above.

10.43. The Housing Strategy and Enabling Officer has been consulted on the proposed tenure and mix of dwellings and fully supports the proposal as it will deliver much needed social housing for the district and, in particular, the market town of Wisbech.

10.44. The proposal will provide 100% affordable housing in the form of social rent, and this is considered to exceed those policy requirements of Policy LP5 – Meeting Housing Need of the Fenland Local Plan. The policy requirement for sites of more than 10 dwellings requires a minimum of 25% of the dwellings on site to be affordable and the exact tenure mix should be informed by the latest Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA). In this case that is the GL Hearn report referenced above, and this proposal exceeds the identified need for 1 and 2 bed social rent properties for this site as a whole, but not for the wider area.

10.45. It is considered that the proposed housing mix does not necessarily follow that identified by the GL Hearn report and thus is contrary to the requirements of Policy LP5 of the Local Plan. However, the development is seeking to provide a mix and tenure of housing that is underprovided in the District, namely affordable housing of 1 and 2 beds with a social rent tenure which meets the need of the aging population. As such the housing mix does not comply with policy but would help to meet policy objectives across the wider District.

Design, Character and Appearance

10.46. The layout provides for adequate manoeuvrability, with tracking plans provided for a range of vehicle types, including refuse and fire appliances. No concerns are raised in respect of the general layout of the proposal, which provides adequate manoeuvrability in respect of matters such as parking, waste collection, emergency vehicle access and logical pedestrian and cycle manoeuvrability, although highway matters are discussed in further detail in the subsequent sections below, as is the layout in respect of density and design.

10.47. It is proposed that the dwellings will all be 'true' bungalows, in that they will be single storey only and there will be a total of three designs across the site. All three types will have simple, accessible internal layouts and will have simple designs externally, although not devoid of architectural features. Type A will have canopies on the front elevation, windowcills and brick headers and corbelled eaves. Type B

will be similar, although they will include cladding or render in sections to add variety to the external appearance and will have a higher ridge height to add prominence. Type C will be similar in design to Type A, although these will include cladding or render sections too. All of the proposed dwelling types are considered to be an appropriate design for the site and surrounding area and will not result in a development with an appearance that would have a detrimental impact upon the character of the area.

- 10.48. The proposed development seeks permission for 42 single storey dwellings and manager's office arranged around a central spine road. The surrounding area is a mix of house types, with a recently constructed care home to the west, an existing parkhome site on the immediate western boundary and a number of purpose-built cul-de-sacs of bungalows to the south. To the east of the site beyond the mature vegetation on the boundary there is an existing park. As such the site is surrounded by a mixture of land uses and developments and the proposal for additional bungalows within this area would not result in a detrimental impact upon the character and appearance of the area. In fact, this type of development is not untypical for the area. As such, the proposed layout and design of the dwellings is considered to accord with Policy LP16 of the Local Plan, as it would be appropriate within its context.

Residential Amenity

- 10.49. The proposal is for 42 single storey dwellings. The dwellings would not have a detrimental impact on the amenity of existing residents to the north or south of the site due to the scale of the proposed dwellings and distance between them. To the east of the site is an existing park which again will experience no detriment to its amenity. However, several objections have been raised by residents of the parkhome site to the west. It is considered that due to the single storey nature of the dwellings, and the distance between the proposed dwellings and existing parkhomes, there will be no loss of light, privacy, overshadowing or overbearing impact as a result of this proposal.
- 10.50. The proposed spine road of the development is located to the east of the parkhome site and concerns have been raised regarding traffic noise as a result. However, the spine road will be a cul-de-sac providing vehicular access to the 42 one and two bed dwellings. Due to the overall scale of the development the number of traffic movements will not result in the levels of noise generated by traffic on nearby roads such as Barton Road. In addition, the positioning of a swale between the site to the west and the proposed dwellings to the east will lessen the impact of noise upon existing residents to the east by virtue of the spine road being located away from the parkhomes and there being dwellings in between the parkhome site and the proposed spine road. As such, the impact of noise and disturbance from the spine road upon existing residents to the west is considered to be minimal, and no objections have been received from the Council's EH Team in respect of this.
- 10.51. Comments relating to disturbance during the construction period from neighbouring residents are noted and therefore a condition is proposed to require the applicant to submit a Construction Environment Management Plan (CEMP) prior to commencement of development in order to minimise noise, dust and odour impact on neighbouring residents during construction, such as noise and dust generated from Barton Road during said period.
- 10.52. The submitted layout plan demonstrates that each of the proposed dwellings will have appropriately sized private rear gardens commensurate with 1 and 2 bed

dwelling for over 55s. The layout demonstrates that all of the proposed dwellings will have private amenity space which will ensure that back-to-back and back-to-side distances of the proposed dwellings will not have a detrimental effect upon future occupants of the development in respect of privacy, loss of light or overbearing impact.

- 10.53. As such, the proposal is considered to accord with Policy LP16 in respect of residential amenity, both for existing neighbouring residents and future occupants of the proposed development.

Highway Safety

- 10.54. The submitted layout demonstrates that the development will be accessed by car, bike and foot from Barton Road. In addition, there will be pedestrian and cycle access to and from Magazine Lane to the south.
- 10.55. Cambridgeshire County Council Highways has been consulted upon the proposal and has raised no objection to the proposal. It is therefore considered that provided a condition requiring the access to be carried out in accordance with the submitted Access Drawing (Revision B) the development will provide acceptable access to Barton Road in accordance with the requirements of Policy LP8 and LP15 of the Local Plan.

Archaeology

- 10.56. The applicant has submitted a Written Scheme of Archaeological Investigation (WSI) with this application in order to address Cambridgeshire County Council Archaeology's requirement for such work. The County has been consulted upon the WSI and whilst it confirms the WSI is acceptable 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. As such a condition is proposed to ensure that no development commences until a programme of archaeological work has been secured.
- 10.57. It is considered that with the imposition of said condition the development would be in accordance with Policy LP8 and LP18 of the Local Plan.

Ecology

- 10.58. Policy LP19 of the Local Plan states that the Council will conserve, enhance and promote the biodiversity and geological interest of the natural environment.
- 10.59. The site is not subject to any site-specific ecological designations and there are none nearby. The applicant has submitted Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) Metric in accordance with the mandatory net gain requirements as set out in the Environment Act 2021 with the application and Fenland District Council's Ecologist has assessed the submission.
- 10.60. The planning application is supported by an Ecological Appraisal and Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) Assessment as well as the requisite BNG Metric. The Ecological Appraisal notes: that it is unlikely that the proposed development will have any direct or indirect impact on any local designated sites. It adds that the site has a moderate level of ecological interest with a range of ecological features including trees and hedgerows, which are in 'poor' ecological condition. Some trees are in

'moderate' condition, grassland is 'poor' condition, ruderal vegetation is in 'moderate' condition and existing ditches are in 'poor' condition. Mitigation is proposed for the loss of some trees and hedgerows, which will be in the form of new tree and hedgerow planting throughout the site and existing trees and hedgerows will be protected during construction.

- 10.61. The Council's Ecologist has raised no objections to the submitted information and the proposed development and has recommended the imposition of a condition to protect wildlife during clearance and construction work, which is considered to be acceptable in order to achieve development that accords with Policy LP16 and LP19 of the Local Plan.

Landscape

- 10.62. The application is accompanied by three detailed planting plans, a planting plan overview and an Arboricultural Impact Assessment and Method Statement. The landscaping details shown on the submitted plans, along with the AIA demonstrate that where possible existing vegetation and mature trees will be retained. These will be protected during the construction phase and following completion of the dwellings the landscaping scheme will be implemented. It involves the creation of a small woodland area at the front of the site, screening it from Barton Road, and areas of communal planting throughout the site, along with plot-specific planting too.
- 10.63. Fenland District Council's Arboricultural Officer has been consulted on the plans and considers the amount of vegetation to be removed, and that to be provided, as acceptable mitigation as a result of the proposed development. The proposed species are considered acceptable, and no objections are raised regarding the trees to be removed to facilitate the development of the site, in particular those self-set trees in poor condition towards the south of the site.
- 10.64. Given the level of information submitted as part of the application it is considered prudent to condition the development to be carried out in accordance with the plans so that the development is in accordance with Policy LP19 of the Local Plan in respect of landscaping.

Contamination

- 10.65. A Phase 1 Site Appraisal and Phase 2 Geoenvironmental Site Assessment has been submitted with this planning application in order to assess the likelihood and nature of any potential contamination on the site. The site is partly previously developed as a garden centre, and the assessment has taken the existing site conditions into account.
- 10.66. Fenland District Council's Environmental Health Officer has assessed the submitted reports and has confirmed that the conclusions are satisfactory and that a condition requiring the recommendations of the Phase 2 report are implemented. It is considered that this suggestion is both reasonable and necessary, particularly for a site of this scale and nature, as are the subsequent two suggested conditions regarding the need for a Construction Environment Management Plan (CEMP) and details of any external lighting scheme.
- 10.67. It is therefore considered that the proposal accords with Policy LP16 in terms of land contamination, subject to the imposition and undertaking of the development in accordance with the proposed conditions.

Developer Contributions

- 10.68. This proposal is for a development of 100% affordable housing. As such, Paragraph 4.2 of the Developer Contributions SPD identifies affordable housing where additional planning obligations other than the affordable housing itself will not normally be sought. A summary table has been provided in a previous section of this report as to what a number of consultees have requested, but due to the proposal seeking to provide 100% affordable housing due weight must be given to Paragraph 4.2 of the SPD. Therefore, whilst a number of consultees have sought planning obligations, this proposal will seek to provide 100% affordable housing only, in accordance with the Developer Contributions SPD.
- 10.69. In terms of NHS contributions, the occupants of the proposed dwellings will be relocating from elsewhere, likely to be elsewhere in the district. As such, the burden placed on the NHS from future residents of this proposal has already been taken into account as part of the district as a whole. That said, as discussed previously, the fact that this scheme is for over 55s will place a burden on the NHS and the fact that the proposal will not financially contribute directly towards the NHS has to be given weight and considered as a negative aspect of the proposal. However, even though the proposal will not provide and s106 financial obligations, the overall community benefits arising from the development of 42 affordable housing units for over 55s is still considered to be significant.
- 10.70. The s106 agreement will secure 100% affordable housing and will confirm the tenure of the housing. It will also ensure that that development is for over 55s. There will be no other financial contributions, save for the monitoring fee, that will be secured by the s106.

Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG)

- 10.71. 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 which outlines a primary objective for biodiversity to be conserved or enhanced and provides for the protection of Protected Species, Priority Species and Priority Habitat.
- 10.72. 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 which outlines a primary objective for biodiversity to be conserved or enhanced and provides for the protection of Protected Species, Priority Species and Priority Habitat.
- 10.73. A Biodiversity Net Gain Metric has been provided with the application and Fenland District Council's Ecologist has assessed the submitted information, concluding that the development could achieve an overall 10% net gain in biodiversity through new landscaping, particularly new tree and shrub planting and the creation of a wetland swale feature along the western boundary of the site.
- 10.74. The proposal is therefore considered to have appropriate regard to Policy LP19 of the Fenland Local Plan (2014) in terms of the biodiversity impacts of the scheme.
- 10.75. In this instance the Biodiversity Gain Condition will apply, should permission be granted, which will require the submission of a final Biodiversity Gain Plan to be

approved before development is begun. In addition, a Habitat Management and Monitoring Plan will be required by condition to secure the long-term management of the habitats.

11 CONCLUSIONS AND PLANNING BALANCE

- 11.1. The proposed development seeks to provide a total of 42 single storey dwellings for occupation by over 55s only within a 100% social rent development in the West Wisbech broad location for growth. The 100% social rent dwellings will be secured by a S.106 agreement and due to the fact that the whole site will be for affordable dwellings no additional S.106 obligations are sought.
- 11.2. The site lies within Flood Zone 3 and therefore current planning policy requires the application to be supported by a Sequential Test. However, the application was submitted and validated when the Draft Approach to the Sequential Test for Housing (DAST) guidance was in place and at that time a Sequential and Exception Test was not required. Notwithstanding the lack of a Sequential Test, it is concluded that the proposal would, on balance, pass both criteria of the Exception Test by virtue of delivering a significant number of affordable housing units, providing a specific type and tenure of accommodation to meet an identified need for housing, providing six M4(3) dwellings and facilitating churn in both the existing affordable housing provision within the District and market housing, which would be a sustainable community benefit in accordance with the Cambridgeshire Flood and Water SPD.
- 11.3. Fenland District Council can demonstrate a 6.6-year Housing Land Supply. However, this site is within the West Wisbech broad location for growth. Even if it were to be considered that due to the site lying within Flood Zone 3 private market housing should not be supported, it is considered that the sustainable community benefits which would be provided by the proposal, namely 42 social rent dwellings, six of which will be constructed to M4(3) standards, for a specific need within the community (i.e. for over 55s) would, on balance, outweigh the fact that Fenland has a 6.6-year Housing Land Supply.
- 11.4. Therefore, when taking all elements of the proposal into consideration it is considered that, on balance, the benefits that would arise from the proposal outweigh the harms, such as the site being located within Flood Zone 3, which can be mitigated through measures identified in the Flood Risk Assessment submitted as part of the application.
- 11.5. As such, the proposal is recommended for approval.

12 RECOMMENDATION

- 12.1. Members are recommended to APPROVE the application in accordance with the following terms;
1. The Committee delegates authority to finalise the terms and completion of the s106 legal agreement and planning conditions to the Head of Planning; and,
 2. Following the completion of the s106 application F/YR25/0274/F be approved subject to planning conditions set out in draft at Appendix 1; or,
 3. The Committee delegates authority to refuse the application in the event that the Applicant does not agree to any necessary extensions to the

determination period to enable the completion of the s106 legal agreement, or on the grounds that the applicant is unwilling to complete the obligation necessary to make the development acceptable.

Planning Conditions

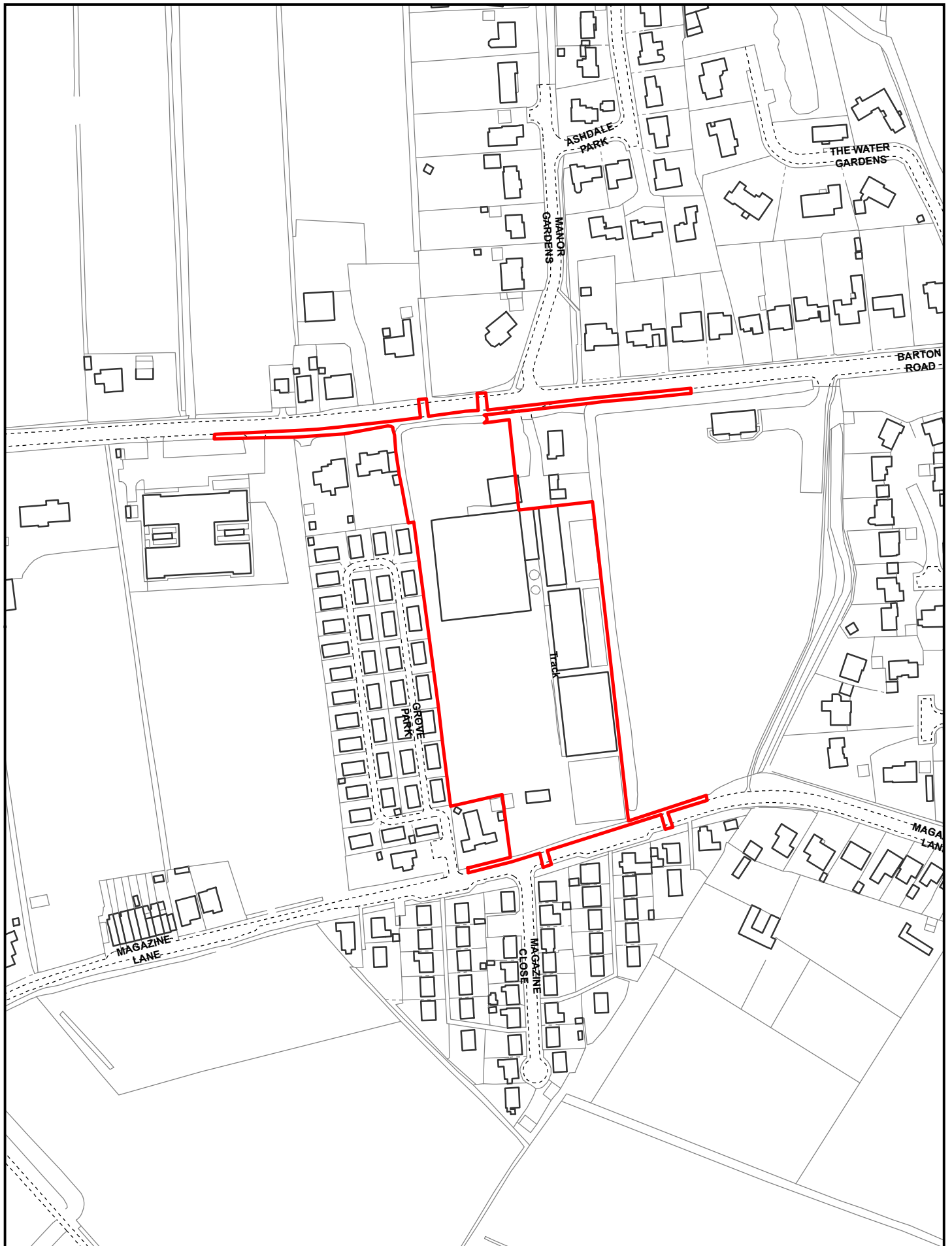
1	<p>The development permitted shall be begun before the expiration of 3 years from the date of this permission.</p> <p>Reason - To ensure compliance with Section 51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.</p>
2	<p>Prior to the commencement of the development hereby approved a scheme and timetable for the provision of the six M4(3) dwellings shall be submitted to and agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The provision of the six M4(3) dwellings shall be made in accordance with the approved scheme and timetable.</p> <p>Reason - To ensure a satisfactory form of development.</p>
3	<p>No development or preliminary groundworks of any kind shall take place until the applicant has secured the implementation of a programme and timetable of archaeological work and recording in accordance with a written scheme of investigation which has been submitted by the applicant and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The approved programme shall then be implemented in accordance with the approved timetable prior to any other works taking place on site.</p> <p>Reason - To secure the provision of the investigation and recording of archaeological remains threatened by the development and the reporting and dissemination of the results in accordance with Policy E7 of the Fenland District Wide Local Plan.</p>
4	<p>No development shall take place (including demolition, ground works, vegetation clearance) until a Construction Environmental Method Statement (CEMS: Biodiversity) has been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The CEMS (Biodiversity) shall include the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Summary of potentially damaging activities. b) Identification of "biodiversity protection zones". c) The location and timing of sensitive works to avoid harm to biodiversity features. d) The times during construction when specialist ecologists need to be present on site to oversee works. e) Responsible persons and lines of communication. f) The role and responsibilities on site of an ecological clerk of works (ECoW) or similarly competent person. g) Use of protective fences, exclusion barriers and warning signs. <p>The approved CEMS shall be adhered to and implemented throughout the construction period strictly in accordance with the approved details.</p> <p>Reason - In the interests of the conservation of the natural environment (Policies LP 16 and LP19).</p>
5	<p>Prior to the occupation of the development, a Habitat Management and</p>

	<p>Monitoring Plan (HMMP), including details of measures to protect and enhance existing flora, fauna and habitats within the development site shall be submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority in writing. The Habitat Management and Monitoring Plan (HMMP) shall be carried out as approved in accordance with the specified schedule contained therein.</p> <p>Reason - To protect the visual amenity value of the landscaping, and the biodiversity value of the habitat within the site in accordance with Policy LP16 of the Fenland Local Plan, 2014.</p>
6	<p>All vegetation clearance at the site shall only take place outside the bird breeding season of March to September inclusive, unless a nesting bird survey has been undertaken by an experienced ecologist 24-48 hours prior to clearance and the report submitted to the local Planning Authority for approval.</p> <p>Reason - To ensure compliance with Section 1 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act with respect to nesting birds and to provide biodiversity mitigation in line with the aims of the National Planning Policy Framework.</p>
7	<p>All hard and soft landscape works including any management and maintenance plan details, shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details. All planting seeding or turfing and soil preparation comprised in the above details of landscaping shall be carried out in the first planting and seeding seasons following the occupation of the buildings, the completion of the development, or in agreed phases whichever is the sooner, and any plants which within a period of five years from the completion of the development die, are removed or become seriously damaged or diseased shall be replaced in the next planting season with others of similar size and species, unless the local planning authority gives written consent to any variation. All landscape works shall be carried out in accordance with the guidance contained in British Standards, unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.</p> <p>Reason - To ensure proper implementation of the agreed landscape details in the interest of the amenity value of the development in accordance with Policy LP16 of the Fenland Local Plan, 2014.</p>
8	<p>Provision shall be made on the site for communal open space for the benefit of the occupiers of the dwellings comprised in this permission and shall be to the standards adopted by the Local Planning Authority at the date of this decision notice.</p> <p>Reason - To ensure compliance with the Council's policy for the provision of open space and to ensure that the occupants of the permitted dwellings are afforded an acceptable measure of amenity.</p>
9	<p>Prior to the commencement of the development a scheme and timetable for the provision of fire hydrants shall be submitted to, and agreed in writing by, the Local Planning Authority in consultation with the Chief Fire Officer and provision of the fire hydrants shall be made in accordance with the scheme and timetable.</p>

	Reason - To ensure a satisfactory form of development.
10	<p>Prior to the commencement of development a detailed scheme for the construction of estate road(s), associated footway(s) and cycleway(s) shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The approved detailed scheme shall be constructed to at least binder course surfacing level to the adjoining highway prior to the first occupation of any dwelling served by the estate road.</p> <p>Reason - In the interests of highway safety and the amenities of occupiers.</p>
11	<p>Prior to the first occupation of each dwelling hereby approved, the proposed on-site parking for that individual dwelling shall be demarcated, levelled, surfaced and drained in accordance with the approved plans. Thereafter, these spaces shall be permanently retained and available for the parking of vehicles of residents/occupiers of the approved scheme and shall not be used for any other purpose.</p> <p>Reason - In the interests of highway safety.</p>
12	<p>The ground floor level of any buildings involved in the development shall be at least 3.0m AOD and shall thereafter be retained as such in perpetuity.</p> <p>Reason - To provide a reasonable freeboard against flooding.</p>
13	<p>No development approved by this permission shall be occupied prior to the completion of the recommendations detailed in the e3p Phase II Geoenvironmental Site Assessment dated March 25 (Ref 30-048-R1). No development approved by this permission shall be occupied prior to the completion of any remedial works and a validation report/s being submitted to the LPA and receipt of approval of the document/documents from the LPA. This applies to paragraphs d), e) and f) below:</p> <p>(d) Approved remediation works shall be carried out in full on site under a quality assurance scheme to demonstrate compliance with the proposed methodology and best practice guidance.</p> <p>(e) If, during the works, contamination is encountered which has not previously been identified then the additional contamination shall be fully assessed and an appropriate remediation scheme agreed with the LPA.</p> <p>(f) Upon completion of the works, this condition shall not be discharged until a validation/closure report has been submitted to and approved by the LPA. The closure report shall include details of the proposed remediation works and quality assurance certificates to show that the works have been carried out in full in accordance with the approved methodology. Details of any post-remedial sampling and analysis to show the site has reached the required clean-up criteria shall be included in the closure report together with the necessary documentation detailing what waste materials have been removed from site, and what has been brought on to site.</p> <p>Reason - To control pollution of land or water in the interests of the environment and public safety.</p>

14	<p>Prior to the commencement of development, including any demolition works, a Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) shall be submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority in writing. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP).</p> <p>Reason - To ensure the safe operation of the development site and to control pollution of land or water in the interests of the environment and public safety in accordance with Policy LP16 of the Fenland Local Plan, 2014.</p>
15	<p>Prior to the commencement of development, a scheme for the provision of external lighting shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Such approved details shall be installed prior to commencement of use/occupation of any dwellings and retained thereafter in perpetuity.</p> <p>Reason - In order to ensure that the site meets the crime prevention guidelines.</p>
16	<p>Prior to the commencement of any works or storage of materials on the site all trees that are to be retained shall be protected in accordance with British Standard 5837:2012. Moreover, measures for protection in accordance with that standard shall be implemented and shall be maintained to the Local Planning Authority's reasonable satisfaction until the completion of the development for Building Regulations purposes.</p> <p>Reason - To ensure that retained trees are adequately protected.</p>
17	<p>Prior to the commencement of the development hereby approved, details of the location and design of the refuse bin and recycling materials storage areas and collection points shall be submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority. This should include provision for the storage of three standard sized wheeled bins for each new property with a collection point no further than 25 metres from the public highway. Where the refuse collection vehicle is required to go onto any road that road shall be constructed to take a load of 26 tonnes. The refuse storage and collection facilities and vehicular access where required shall be provided prior to the first occupation of the units to which they relate and shall be retained in the approved form thereafter.</p> <p>Reason - To meet the District Council requirements for recycling, to prevent the unsightly storage of refuse containers and in the interests of amenity and sustainability.</p>
18	<p>Prior to the commencement of any development, a scheme for the provision and implementation of foul water drainage shall be submitted and agreed in writing with the Local Authority. The scheme shall subsequently be implemented in accordance with the approved details before the relevant parts of the development are first brought into use and thereafter retained in perpetuity.</p> <p>Reason - To ensure a satisfactory method of foul water drainage and to prevent the increased risk of pollution to controlled waters.</p>

19	<p>Prior to the commencement of any development, a scheme for the provision and implementation of surface water drainage shall be submitted and agreed in writing with the Local Authority in consultation with the Drainage Authority. The scheme shall subsequently be implemented in accordance with the approved details before the relevant parts of the development are first brought into use and thereafter retained in perpetuity.</p> <p>Reason - To ensure a satisfactory method of surface water drainage and to prevent the increased risk of flooding.</p>
20	<p>Notwithstanding the provisions of the Town & Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015, (or any Order or Statutory Instrument revoking and re-enacting that Order with or without modification), planning permission shall be required for the following developments or alterations:</p> <p>i) alterations including the installation of additional windows or doors, including dormer windows or roof windows (as detailed in Schedule 2, Part 1, Classes A and B);</p> <p>ii) alterations to the roof of the dwellinghouse (as detailed in Schedule 2, Part 1, Class C);</p> <p>Reason - To prevent overlooking of neighbouring properties, in the interest of the protection of residential amenity and in order to control future development and to prevent the site becoming overdeveloped. Also to ensure that the development is single level accommodation, which was a reason for granting this planning permission.</p>
21	<p>Development may not be begun unless:</p> <p>(a) a biodiversity gain plan has been submitted to the planning authority, and</p> <p>(b) the planning authority has approved the plan.</p> <p>Reason: To ensure compliance with Schedule 7A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (inserted by the Environment Act 2021).</p>
22	<p>The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans and documents:</p>



Created on: 10/04/2025

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F/YR25/0274/F

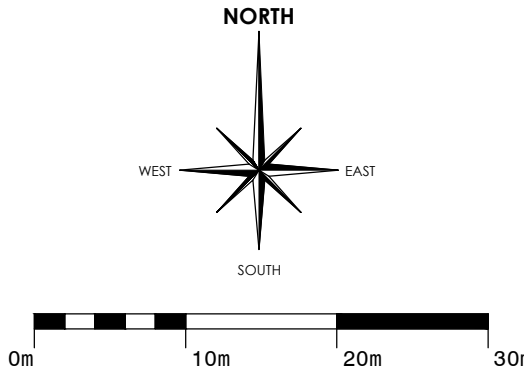
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schedule of plots			
Plot 1	Type B	2B3P	66.4 sqm
Plot 2	Type A	1B2P	54 sqm
Plot 3	Type A	1B2P	54 sqm
Plot 4	Type A	1B2P	54 sqm
Plot 5	Type C	1B2P	62 sqm
Plot 6	Type D	MANAGERS OFFICE	66.4 sqm
Plot 7	Type A	1B2P	54 sqm
Plot 8	Type A	1B2P	54 sqm
Plot 9	Type A	1B2P	54 sqm
Plot 10	Type A	1B2P	54 sqm
Plot 11	Type B	2B3P	66.4 sqm
Plot 12	Type B	2B3P	66.4 sqm
Plot 13	Type A	1B2P	54 sqm
Plot 14	Type A	1B2P	54 sqm
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Plot 18	Type A	1B2P	54 sqm
Plot 19	Type A	1B2P	54 sqm
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Plot 21	Type A	1B2P	54 sqm
Plot 22	Type A	1B2P	54 sqm
Plot 23	Type A	1B2P	54 sqm
Plot 24	Type A	1B2P	54 sqm
Plot 25	Type A	1B2P	54 sqm
Plot 26	Type B	2B3P	66.4 sqm
Plot 27	Type A	1B2P	54 sqm
Plot 28	Type A	1B2P	54 sqm
Plot 29	Type A	1B2P	54 sqm
Plot 30	Type C	1B2P	62 sqm
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Plot 33	Type A	1B2P	54 sqm
Plot 34	Type A	1B2P	54 sqm
Plot 35	Type A	1B2P	54 sqm
Plot 36	Type A	1B2P	54 sqm
Plot 37	Type B	2B3P	66.4 sqm
Plot 38	Type B	2B3P	66.4 sqm
Plot 39	Type C	1B2P	62 sqm
Plot 40	Type A	1B2P	54 sqm
Plot 41	Type A	1B2P	54 sqm
Plot 42	Type A	1B2P	54 sqm
Plot 43	Type B	2B3P	66.4 sqm



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SITE AREA
18351 sqm - 1.83 Ha - 4.5 acres RED LINE

17147 sqm - 1.71 Ha - 4.5 acres SITE
POS 3235 sqm / 0.79 acres (inc drain)
SUDS 900 sqm
12837 sqm - 1.28 Ha - 3.1 acres Net

MIX
1B x 35No @ 83%
2B x 7No @ 17%
42NO TOTAL

BUNGALOW
TYPE A 29 x 1B2P - 581 sqft - 54 sqm
TYPE B 07 x 2B3P - 715 sqft - 66.4 sqm
TYPE C 06 x 1B2P - 667 sqft - 62 sqm

TOTAL 42No @ 32.8 DPH net

MANAGERS OFFICE
01 - 715 sqft - 66.4 sqm

Gross Internal Area 26,578 sqft - 2469.2sqm
including managers office
coverage = 7382sqft per acre

PARKING - 73 No @ 1.7 average

i	13/05/25	sub station removed	jw	
	01/04/25	changes as validation letter	jw	
H	25/02/25	plot Schedule and dimensions added	jw	
G	22/02/25	Schedule amended/ density changed	jw	
F	28/01/25	amended as Prime comments/ dwg 24-1-25	jw	
E	23/01/25	redrawn and roof plans amended as elevations	jw	
D	09/01/25	highway preap comments as Prime Transport email-9 jan 25 and red line amended as legal agreement	jw	
C	08/01/25	plot 38 parking amended as Hourigan Planning comments	jw	
B	06/01/25	M4(3) parking amended to 6x3.3m as AD	jw	
Rev.	Date	Description	Drawn	Check

4ward Architects
Forward Thinking Design
The Firm: 33 Priorities Village
Telford, TF1 2JH
T 01952 289076 M 07505 124691
jeremy_ward@4wardarchitects.com
Architecture & Urban Design

Contract
**PROPOSED RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT
BARTON ROAD WISBECH**

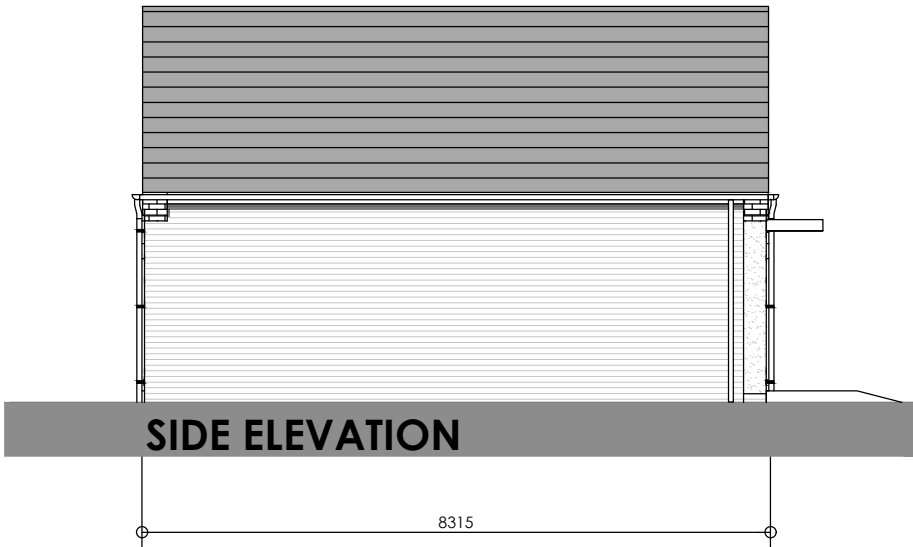
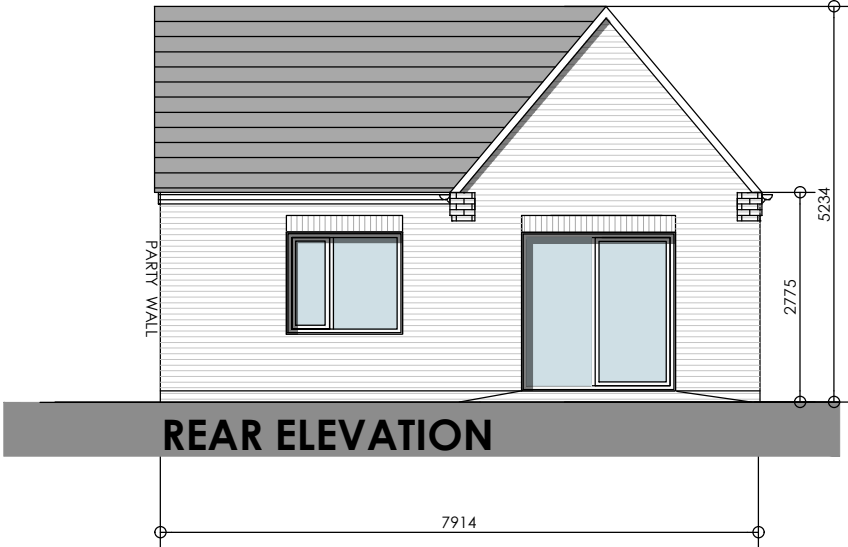
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SITE LAYOUT- BLOCK PLAN

Client
**bowsall
developments ltd**

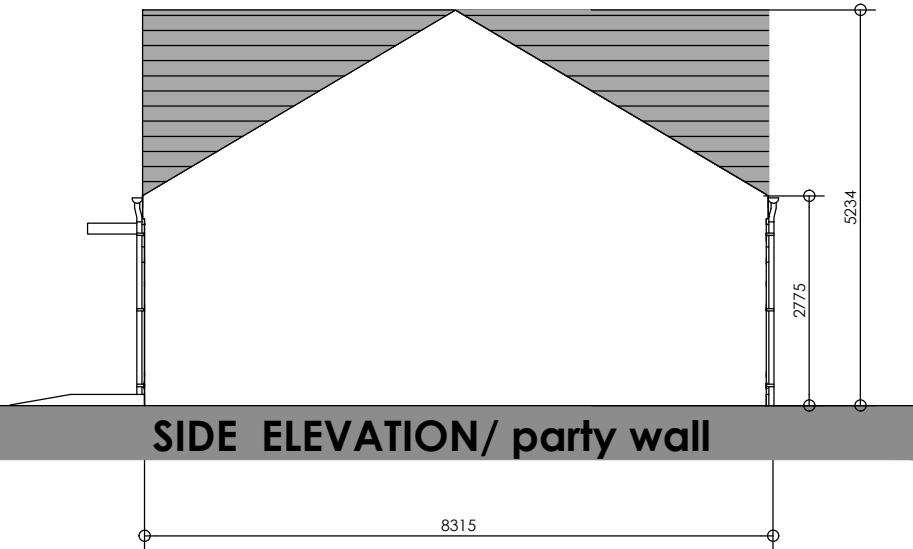
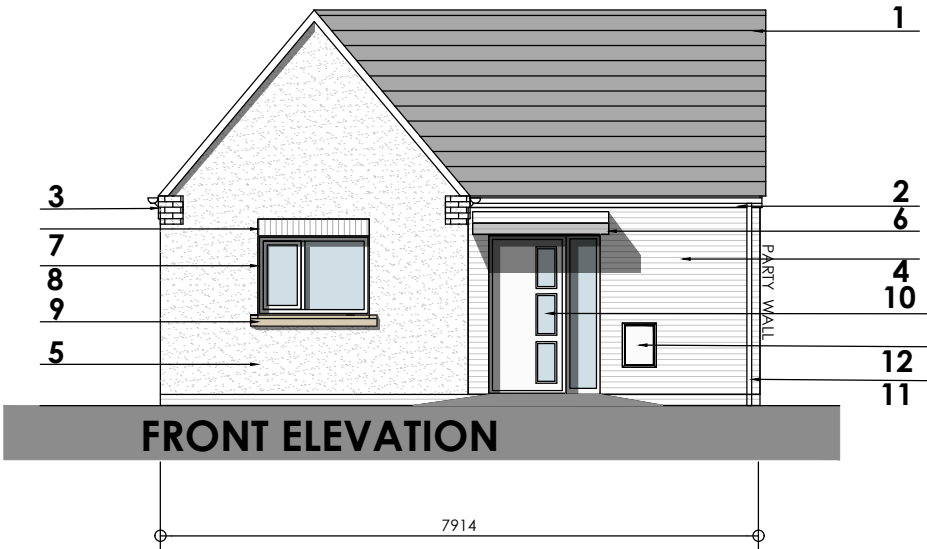
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Drawn By
JDW
Checked By

Drawing Number
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HOUSE TYPE A

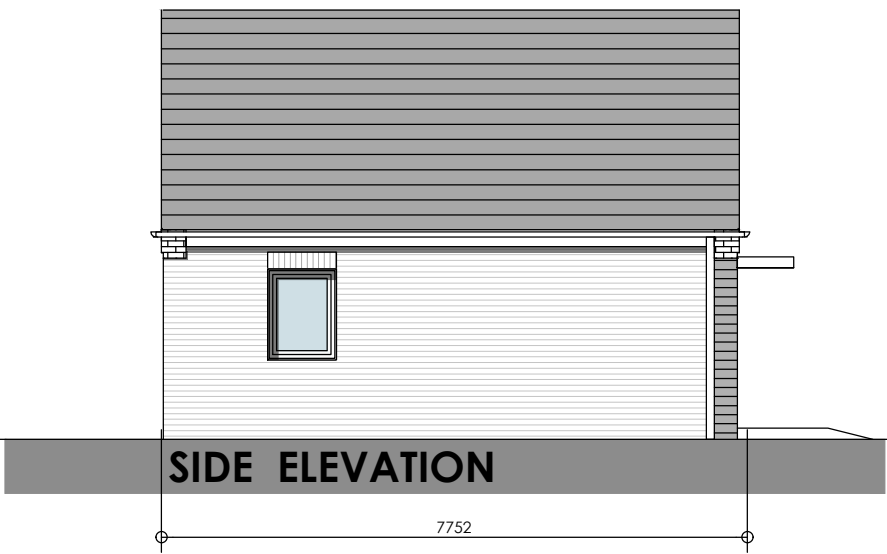


- EXTERNAL MATERIALS**
- 1 **ROOF TILES** - CONCRETE INTERLOCKING TILES IN GREY COLOUR
 - 2 **SOFFIT & FASCIAS** - BLACK
 - 3 **CORBELLED EAVES**
 - 4 **FACING BRICKWORK**- refer to materials plan
 - 5 **RENDER OR TIMBER CLADDING**
 - 6 **CANOPY**- GRP WITH GREY FASCIA
 - 7 **WINDOW HEADERS** - red facing brick
 - 8 **WINDOWS** - White UPVC
 - 9 **WINDOW CILLS** - Recon Stone cills
 - 10 **FRONT DOORS**- refer to materials plan
 - 11 **RAINWATER GOODS**- black upvc
 - 12 **ELECTRIC METER** - White

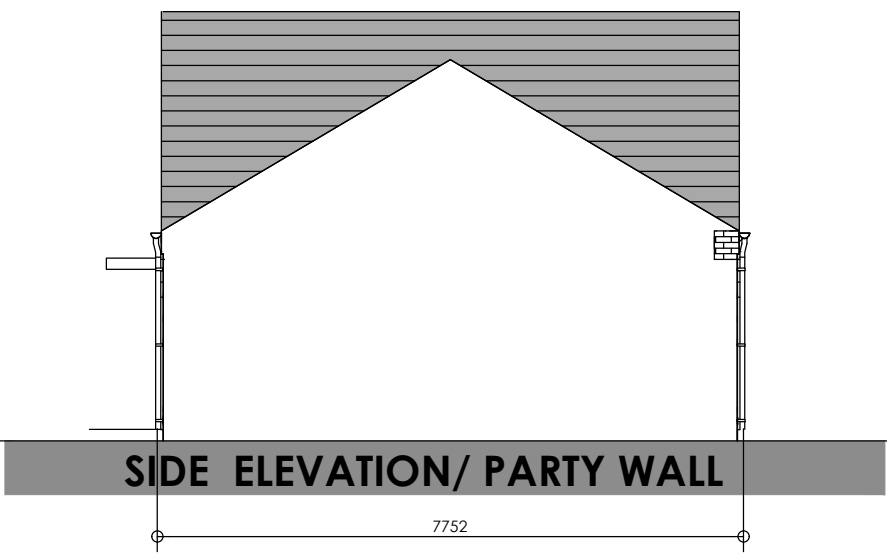
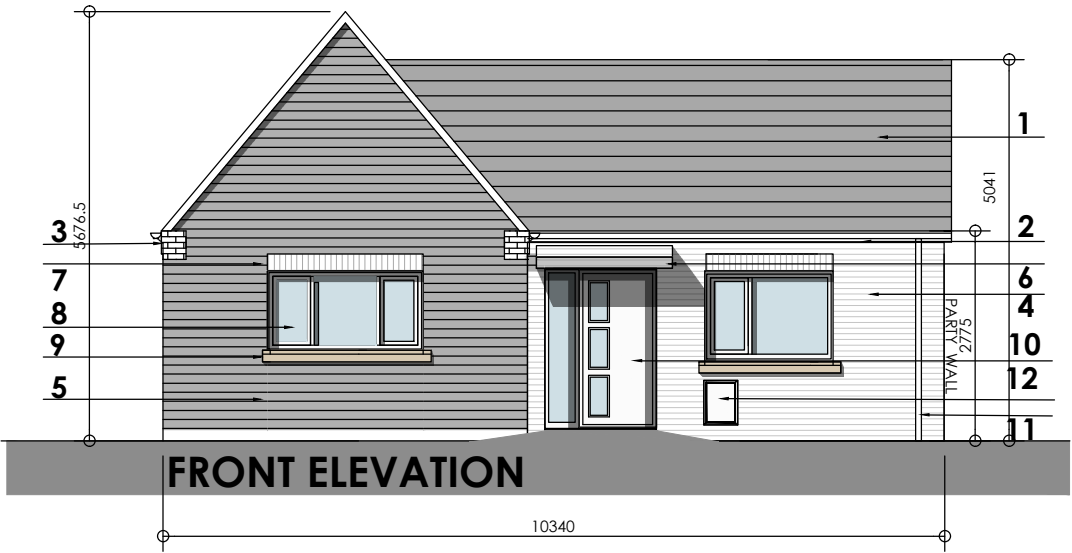


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HOUSE TYPE B

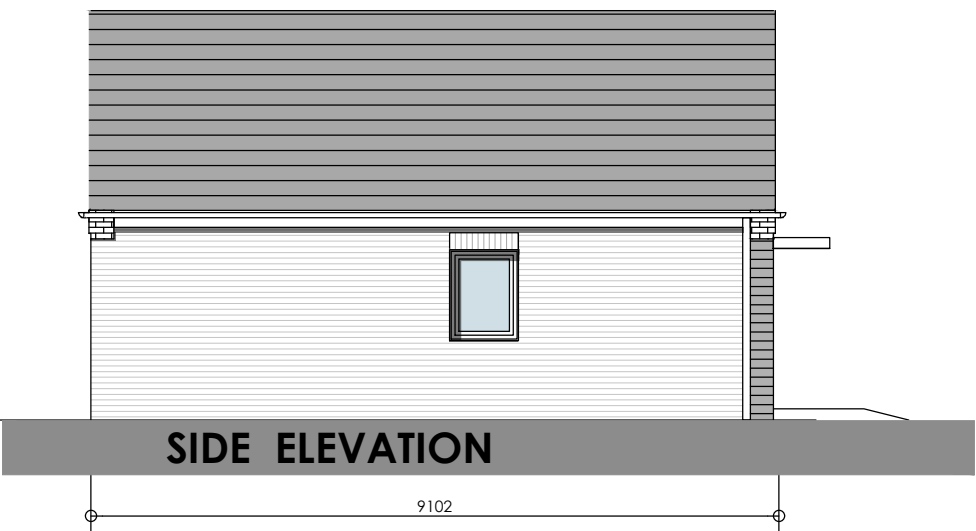
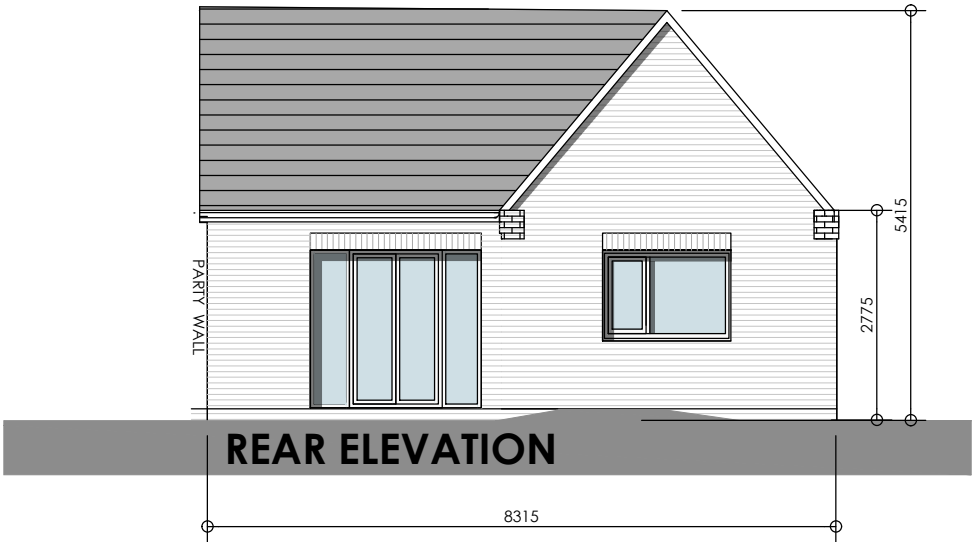


- EXTERNAL MATERIALS**
- 1 **ROOF TILES** - CONCRETE INTERLOCKING TILES IN GREY COLOUR
 - 2 **SOFFIT & FASCIAS** - BLACK
 - 3 **CORBELLED EAVES**
 - 4 **FACING BRICKWORK**- refer to materials plan
 - 5 **RENDER OR TIMBER CLADDING**
 - 6 **CANOPY**- GRP WITH GREY FASCIA
 - 7 **WINDOW HEADERS** - red facing brick
 - 8 **WINDOWS** - White UPVC
 - 9 **WINDOW CILLS** - Recon Stone cills
 - 10 **FRONT DOORS**- refer to materials plan
 - 11 **RAINWATER GOODS**- black upvc
 - 12 **ELECTRIC METER** - White

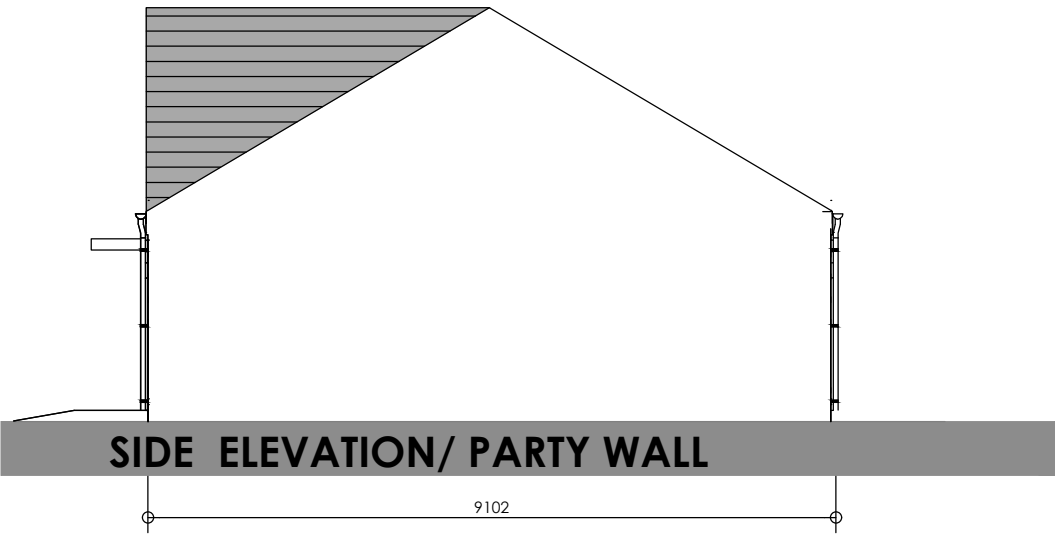
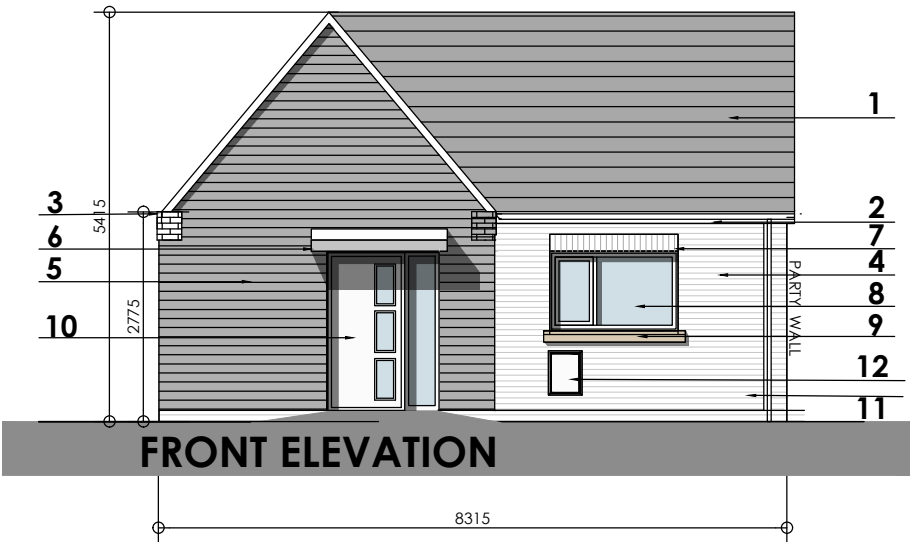


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HOUSE TYPE C



- EXTERNAL MATERIALS**
- 1 **ROOF TILES** - CONCRETE INTERLOCKING TILES IN GREY COLOUR
 - 2 **SOFFIT & FASCIAS** - BLACK
 - 3 **CORBELLED EAVES**
 - 4 **FACING BRICKWORK**- refer to materials plan
 - 5 **RENDER OR TIMBER CLADDING**
 - 6 **CANOPY**- GRP WITH GREY FASCIA
 - 7 **WINDOW HEADERS** - red facing brick
 - 8 **WINDOWS** - White UPVC
 - 9 **WINDOW CILLS** - Recon Stone cills
 - 10 **FRONT DOORS**- refer to materials plan
 - 11 **RAINWATER GOODS**- black upvc
 - 12 **ELECTRIC METER** - White



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