

PLANNING COMMITTEE DATE: 15th November 2023

APPLICATION NO: F/YR22/0730/O

SITE LOCATION: Land South East Of Highfield Lodge, Doddington Road, Chatteris, Cambridgeshire

UPDATE

Email received from Agent dated 01.11.2023

An email was received from the agent in respect of concerns raised by the case officer in relation to the approved development to the southeast of the site and in respect of the concerns raised by the Highways Authority comments (as set out within the officer report);

Thank you for your recent email on the above, I take this opportunity to attach the revised drawing PP-1000C, which I have added the adjacent dwellings from the original applications on as they are either approved or being considered for approval.

I also have revised the layout to take into account the comments from the highways officer, the above plan shows the revised access with bell mouth junction along with the 2.4 x 215m vision splays in both directions, you will also see a separate drawing PP-1001 which is solely showing the full extent of the vision splays required which as can be seen are all within either the highways verge or road itself.

With regards to the footpath, the private footpath was agreed with highways on the outline application for the 3 plots, as it was not possible to have a footpath on the grass verge without piping and filling the drain which was not supported by Middle Level so as an alternative a private footpath was provided, this has natural surveillance over it from the plots and is open to use for all pedestrians and should in the future there be a requirement to further extend the footpath northwards, this can be do and link to our private footpath. Should highways feel there is a need for the existing hedge to be trimmed we would be more than happy to accept this as a condition.

Highway safety

The agent included a revised indicative site plan to address the concerns raised by the Highways Authority, including a new bellmouth access geometry and an additional drawing showing available visibility splays, along with justification for the proposed private footpath. The drawings and related correspondence are available to view on:

[F/YR23/0730/O | Erect up to 6 x dwellings and the formation of 2 x accesses \(outline application with matters committed in respect of access\) | Land South East Of Highfield Lodge Doddington Road Chatteris Cambridgeshire \(fenland.gov.uk\)](#)

Owing to the short amount of time between receiving the information and the Committee meeting, informal comments in respect of the revised details were provided by the HA, as follows;

For clarity, it is always preferential to place footways between the carriageway and any vegetation line or ditch as such private paths can be legally ambiguous in regards to rights of use, liability, etc and can also have crime implications due to lack of oversight (although not necessarily in this case). On the neighbouring site the private path was accepted due to the constraint of the ditch, although I would challenge whether the option to re-align the ditch further into their site rather than culvert it was considered by the applicant. In any case, we are where we are.

The access inter-vehicular visibility is accepted but I will require the hedge to be removed for a length either side of the access to ensure vehicles turning into and out of the site have sufficient forewarning of any crossing pedestrian. The applicant will need to give thought to the appropriate length considering both the speed at which vehicles are likely to make the turn and the corresponding stopping distance. The LPA should also give consideration to the ecological implications of any such loss in hedgerow.

It still remains unclear why a path is included in the north-west of the scheme across from plot 6 as there is no footway on Doddington Road to connect to. As such, either the pedestrian access at this location should be removed or connecting infrastructure provided on the opposing side of the road.

Officer response

Given the above, the revised details address the HA concerns in respect of visibility splays, and as such the reason for refusal pertaining to access falls away. Accordingly, if Members resolve to approve the application, then matters pertaining to the hedge removal and/or retention and amendments to the footpath arrangement(s) can be conditioned to be submitted with the Reserved Matters.

Notwithstanding, whilst the submitted access information reconciles one of the reasons for refusal, the fundamental locational issue and unacceptable urbanisation of the site forming the other reason for refusal has not been reconciled.

Recommendation: REFUSAL – The above update does not alter the original recommendation as set out on page 208 of the agenda, although the reason for refusal in respect of highway safety can be discounted.