
F/YR23/0879/O

Applicant: Mr P Russell

**Agent: Mr R Papworth
Morton & Hall Consulting Ltd**

Land North West Of The Ferns, Padgetts Road, Christchurch,

Erect up to 6 x dwellings (outline application with matters committed in respect of access) and the formation of 5 x accesses and footpath

Officer recommendation: Refuse

Reason for Committee: Parish Council recommendation and number of representations contrary to Officer recommendation

1 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1. The application site is an area of paddock land positioned to the northwest of a chalet bungalow known as The Ferns along Padgetts Road, which is the northernmost dwelling that comprises the main built form of the settlement of Christchurch at the Padgetts Road/Church Road junction.
- 1.2. The proposal seeks outline planning permission for the erection of up to six dwellings and the formation of five access points including a footpath. The application commits the details of the access points only for consideration at this stage.
- 1.3. Part of this application site was subject to a previously refused scheme and subsequent dismissed appeal for the development of up to two dwellings as recently as 2017 (F/YR16/0472/O).
- 1.4. It is acknowledged that since the earlier appeal, the site has been allocated within Policy LP59 of the Emerging Local Plan for possible residential development, which forms the crux of the justification by the applicant for this development proposal. However, given the very early stage which the Plan is therefore at, in accordance with Paragraph 48 of the NPPF, it is considered that policies within this plan should carry extremely limited weight in decision making at this time.
- 1.5. The site is contrary to the policies of the current adopted development plan with respect to the settlement hierarchy (LP3), rural areas development (LP12) and the impact of the proposal on the character of the area (LP16). Accordingly, the application is recommended for refusal.

2 SITE DESCRIPTION

- 2.1. The application site is an area of paddock land positioned to the northwest of a chalet bungalow known as The Ferns along Padgetts Road, which is the

northernmost dwelling that comprises the main built form of the settlement of Christchurch at the Padgetts Road/Church Road junction. Padgetts Road runs in a northwest to southeast direction forming the westernmost boundary of the built form of Christchurch. The main built form of the settlement runs in a northeasterly direction from the junction of Padgetts Road and Church Road. To the east and north of the application site is sporadic residential development, agricultural and paddock land.

- 2.2. The site is part of a wider agricultural field and is used as paddock, bounded by post and rail fencing, with tall conifer hedging to the southern side boundary. There is a small field shelter within the site, a storage container sited to the south of the site and associated equestrian paraphernalia throughout.
- 2.3. The site is located in Flood Zone 1.

3 PROPOSAL

- 3.1. The proposal seeks outline planning permission for the erection of up to six dwellings and the formation of five access points and a footpath. The application commits the details of the access points only for consideration at this stage. An indicative plan has been submitted with the application which shows a possible layout of dwellings with associated amenity, parking and turning areas.
- 3.2. Full plans and associated documents for this application can be found at: [F/YR23/0879/O | Erect up to 6 x dwellings \(outline application with matters committed in respect of access\) and the formation of 5 x accesses and footpath | Land North West Of The Ferns Padgetts Road Christchurch \(fenland.gov.uk\)](https://fenland.gov.uk/F/YR23/0879/O)

4 SITE PLANNING HISTORY

APP/D0515/W/16/3165392	Appeal against refusal of F/YR16/0472/O	Dismissed 06.04.2017
F/YR16/0472/O	Erection of 2 x dwellings (max) and the formation of two new access (Outline with matters committed in respect of access only)	Refused 02.08.2016

5 CONSULTATIONS

5.1. Christchurch Parish Council

The Parish Council considered this application at their recent meeting. Members noted that the site was identified in the Emerging Local Plan process as suitable for residential development. Concern has been expressed about traffic speeds on this part of Padgetts Road and this development would strengthen the Parish Council's case for a reduction in the speed limit. Members welcomed the inclusion of a pavement connecting the site to the existing pavement in Church Road and wondered whether street lighting could be included in the proposal to further aid road safety.

Members resolved to offer no objection to this proposal.

5.2. Environment & Health Services (FDC)

The Environmental Health Team note and accept the submitted information and have 'No Objections' to the proposed scheme as it is unlikely to have a detrimental effect on local air quality.

It is however recommended that the following conditions are imposed in the event that planning permission is granted:

UNSUSPECTED CONTAMINATION

If during development, contamination not previously identified, is found to be present at the site then no further development (unless otherwise agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority (LPA)) shall be carried out until the developer has submitted, and obtained written approval from the LPA, a Method Statement detailing how this unsuspected contamination shall be dealt with.

WORKING TIMES

No construction work shall be carried out and no plant or power operated machinery operated other than between the following hours: 08:00 hours and 18:00 hours on Monday to Friday, 08:00 hours and 13:00 hours on Saturday and at no time on Sundays, Bank or Public Holidays, unless otherwise previously agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority.

5.3. Cambridgeshire County Council Highways Authority

Upon reviewing the plans and information submitted for this application, I have no objections in principle.

I note the proposals within plan reference: H9267/03A include a 1.8m footway on the eastern side of Padgetts Road. This footway will require kerbing for the entire length until it reaches the existing footway along Church Road. This will impact the drainage arrangements currently in place, consideration will need to be given to drainage proposals following the implementation of the footway.

Whilst the current footway proposals are laudable the engineering works are such that they may impact of the scheme's viability due to the cost implications associated with the required drainage works.

Please append the following condition and informative should this application gain benefit of planning permission.

Condition

Off-Site Highway Works: No development shall take place until details of the off-site highway works have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall not be occupied until all the works have been completed in accordance with the approved details.

5.4. Senior Archaeologist (CCC)

Thank you for the consultation with regards to the archaeological implications of the above referenced planning application. The proposed development lies to the south west of the main settlement of Christchurch which itself has built

along the route of the Old Croft River to the northeast of the proposed development. The Old Croft River itself is the main spin in a network of silted ancient river channels. These ancient river channels form slightly raised firmer ground as the surrounding fen begins to shrink and drop away. These areas have therefore been favoured building and settlement locations throughout the past, from prehistory but also particularly in the Roman period. A relatively high number of cropmark remains have therefore been recorded in the surrounding area, including what appears to be dispersed Roman settlement to the north (Cambridgeshire Historic Environment Record 10629, 06848, 10638, 10697). Closer to the proposed development a number of ring features have been recorded as cropmarks, it is possible that these features represent the sites of late medieval or post medieval hay ricks, but this is untested (CHER MCB29368, MCB29367).

Whilst we do not object to development from proceeding in this location, we consider that the site should be subject to a programme of archaeological investigation secured through the inclusion of a negative condition, such as the example condition approved by DCLG.

Archaeology Condition

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

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

REASON: To safeguard archaeological assets within the approved development boundary from impacts relating to any demolitions or groundworks associated with the development scheme and to ensure the proper and timely preservation and/or investigation, recording, reporting, archiving and presentation of archaeological assets affected by this development, in accordance with national policies contained in the National Planning Policy Framework (MHCLG 2019).

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

5.5. Natural England

NO OBJECTION

Based on the plans submitted, Natural England considers that the proposed development will not have significant adverse impacts on statutorily protected nature conservation sites or landscapes.

5.6. CCC Ecology

The proposal is acceptable on ecology grounds, providing that the follow information to protect and enhance biodiversity is secured through suitably worded planning condition(s):

- 1. Construction Ecological Management Plan / Compliance with mitigation in Ecological Impact Assessment*
- 2. Landscape and Biodiversity Enhancement Scheme*
- 3. Lighting Design Strategy for Biodiversity*
- 4. Time Limit on Development - Further Biodiversity Surveys Required*
- 5. Informative - Breeding Birds*

1. Construction Ecological Management Plan (condition)

Section 6.2 of the Ecological Impact Assessment recommends mitigation measures to protect the following biodiversity features / species during construction:

- habitats - trees*
- species – amphibians, bats, nesting birds and reptiles*

If planning permission is granted, we recommend these mitigation measures are secure through:

- a. Compliance condition to implement recommendations of PEA/EcIA; or*
- b. Construction Environment Management Plan, which should be secured through a suitably worded planning condition.*

2. Landscape and Biodiversity Enhancement Scheme (condition)

Section 6.2 and 6.3 of Preliminary Ecological Appraisal / Ecological Impact Assessment recommends a series of mitigation measures, as well as enhancement measures for:

- habitats – grassland, new hedgerows*
- species – bat / bird boxes*

Opportunities for other species, such as hedgehogs should also be considered.

Details of the proposed mitigation measures / enhancement, along with their management, should be secured as part of a Landscape and Biodiversity Enhancement Scheme, through a suitably worded condition.

3. Lighting Design Strategy for Biodiversity (condition)

The lighting scheme should demonstrate how it's been sensitively design for wildlife (particularly bats) and meet recommendations of the section 6.2 of the Ecological Impact Assessment. This should be secured through a suitably worded condition.

4. Time Limit on Development - Further Biodiversity Surveys Required (condition)

The ecological survey work was undertaken in October 2023. Wildlife is dynamic and therefore, if there is a delay to the development, the ecological surveys will need to be updated to ensure the proposed ecological mitigation is still appropriate. We suggest this is captured through a suitably worded planning condition.

5. Breeding Birds (informative)

The PEA identified the potential impact of the scheme on breeding birds. The protection of these birds should be dealt with in the Construction Environment Management Plan (recommended to be secured through planning conditions).

Alternatively, it can be dealt with as an informative to a planning permission.

5.7. **Local Residents/Interested Parties**

Objectors

There have been 12 letters of objection received in respect of this application, from 11 address points. It should be noted that all of these letters were received from addresses within Padgetts Road and Church Road local to the application site, with a further letter from an address on Sixteen Foot Bank, all within the electoral ward.

The reasons for objection can be summarised as follows:

- Previous refusal and appeal dismissal of F/YR16/0472/O;
- Character harm;
- Countryside encroachment;
- Approval of development will set a precedent for further development in the countryside;
- Loss of agricultural land;
- Christchurch has inadequate amenities and infrastructure to support new development;
- The proposal does not constitute infill development;
- Access and highway safety concerns on a derestricted road;
- More homes will not reduce speeding traffic;
- Potential residential amenity impacts;
- Impact to watercourses;
- Letters of support received are not local to the site – will not be affected;
- Homes proposed are not ‘starter homes’;
- Already homes in Christchurch that have been built but are unable to sell;
- Emerging plan should be given no weight.

Supporters

There have been 18 letters of support received in respect of this application, from 18 address points. Letters of support were received from addresses including Padgetts Road, Church Road, Crown Drove, Euximoor Drove, Upwell Road, Elm Road, and March Road, all within the electoral ward or an adjacent ward.

The reasons for support can be summarised as follows:

- Good mix of houses proposed;

- Will assist in securing better infrastructure and amenities for the village;
- The development will help sustain the future of the village;
- The dwellings will be aesthetically pleasing;
- No flooding or drainage issues; flood zone 1;
- Within the proposed settlement boundary within emerging local plan;
- Frontage development in keeping with the area;
- New dwellings will reduce speed into the village;
- The dwellings will address the housing shortage; starter homes;

Two letters received included no reasons for support.

6 STATUTORY DUTY

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

7 POLICY FRAMEWORK

7.1. National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) Sept 2023

Para. 2 - Planning law requires that applications for planning permission be determined in accordance with the development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

Para. 11 - Presumption in favour of sustainable development.

Para. 12 - The presumption in favour of sustainable development does not change the statutory status of the development plan as the starting point for decision-making.

Para. 47 - Planning law requires that applications for planning permission be determined in accordance with the development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

Para. 79 - In rural areas, housing should be located where it will enhance or maintain the vitality of rural communities.

Para 111 - Development should only be prevented or refused on highways grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety, or the residual cumulative impacts on the road network would be severe.

Para. 130 - Planning policies and decisions should ensure high quality development.

Para. 174 - Planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment.

7.2. National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG)

Determining a Planning Application

7.3. National Design Guide 2021

Context

Identity

Built Form

Movement

Nature

Homes and Buildings

Resources
Lifespan

7.4. **Fenland Local Plan 2014**

LP1 – A Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development
LP2 – Facilitating Health and Wellbeing of Fenland Residents
LP3 – Spatial Strategy, the Settlement Hierarchy and the Countryside
LP12 – Rural Areas Development Policy

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

7.5. **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 48 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
LP18 – Development in the Countryside
LP20 – Accessibility and Transport
LP22 – Parking Provision
LP24 – Natural Environment
LP28 – Landscape
LP59 – Residential site allocations in Christchurch

7.6. **Delivering and Protecting High Quality Environments in Fenland SPD 2014**

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

8 **KEY ISSUES**

- **Principle of Development**
- **Impact on the Character and Appearance of the area**
- **Access and Highway Safety**
- **Sustainability**
- **Biodiversity**
- **Other Considerations**

9 **BACKGROUND**

- 9.1. A previous outline application for the erection of two dwellings and the formation of two accesses was refused under delegated powers in August 2016 (F/YR16/0472/O). The reasons for refusal were on the basis of the

principle of development (in that the scheme was not considered as infill and would result in ribbon development), the impact of the development on the character and appearance of the area, and a lack of sufficient evidence in respect of the biodiversity impact of the scheme.

- 9.2. This refusal was subject of an appeal (APP/D0515/W/16/3165392) in April 2017, in which within the Appeal Decision the Inspector remarked that: *This proposal would not be infill development and there is not the demonstrable evidence of clear local community support for the addition of housing at the edge of the village as proposed. Consequently, this would not be the form and location of development supported under development plan policy* (Para. 13). The Inspector concluded that the development would not contribute to the achievement of sustainable development, stating: *The proposal would provide some limited social benefit in the provision of new housing, the construction and servicing of which offer some modest local economic benefits. However, this would not outweigh the environmental harm found to the character and appearance of the area and from permitting further housing in an area without reasonable access to services and facilities* (Para. 18).
- 9.3. Matters in respect of the impact on biodiversity were reconciled within the appeal. However, the outstanding matters in respect of the principle of development and the harm caused the character of the area remained as is clear from the Inspector's dismissal of the appeal in respect of the above.
- 9.4. The current application, by the same applicant as the earlier appeal on a larger area of land (which includes the appeal site), is an outline application for the erection of up to six dwellings with the formation of five accesses. The submitted Design and Access statement considers that the inclusion of the site within the Emerging Local Plan provides reasonable justification for the development.
- 9.5. It should be noted that there has been no change to the adopted development plan since the earlier appeal.

10 ASSESSMENT

Principle of Development

- 10.1. The site is located on the edge of the village of Christchurch. Policy LP3 of the Local Plan seeks to promote sustainable growth in the District and to restrict development within the open countryside, unless it is justified by special circumstances. Policy LP3 also states that new residential development in Christchurch will be considered on its merits but will normally be of a very limited nature and normally be limited in scale to residential infilling.
- 10.2. Although the proposed dwellings would be situated adjacent to an existing chalet bungalow to the south (known as The Ferns) they would not constitute infill development as required by Policy LP3 because it is not development in-between existing buildings as there is open land to one side of the site (to the north). Accordingly, the proposal would conflict with Policy LP3 in this regard.

- 10.3. There is no evidence within the submission to justify the need for the new dwellings on the site. There are limited services and community facilities in the village, with no apparent public transport provision, as such future residents of the proposed dwellings would have to rely mainly on the use of the private car. This would also be contrary to the principles of sustainable development.
- 10.4. For villages, Policy LP12 Part A supports development where it contributes to the sustainability of the settlement and does not harm the wide-open character of the countryside. It sets out specific criteria, the first of which states that the site must be in or adjacent to the developed footprint of a village. The footnote to these criteria defines the developed footprint of a village as the continuous built form of the settlement and excludes:
 - (b) gardens, paddocks, and other undeveloped land within the curtilage of buildings on the edge of the settlement where the land relates more to the surrounding countryside than to the built-up area of the settlement.
- 10.5. The application site comprises a paddock land to the northwest of The Ferns, a dwelling which represents the end of the linear built form of Christchurch. The application seeks to develop up to six dwellings beyond this, representing an incursion into established paddock land and extension of ribbon development into the open countryside to the northwest of Christchurch. As such, the application proposal would be incongruous to the prevailing local built form, in clear contravention to the aforementioned (b) above. Accordingly, the does not comply with Policy LP12 Part A.
- 10.6. This policy also advises that if a proposal is within or on the edge of a village, in conjunction with other development built since 2011 and committed to be built (i.e. with planning permission) increases the number of dwellings in a village by 10% or more then the proposal should have demonstrable evidence of clear local community support for the scheme. Christchurch has already exceeded its 10% threshold. However, an appeal decision received in respect of an application that was refused purely on this basis (F/YR14/0838/O) indicates that the threshold considerations and requirement for community support should not result in an otherwise acceptable scheme being refused and against this backdrop the absence of community support does not render the scheme unacceptable in planning terms.
- 10.7. As established above, the current application does not comply with Policies LP3 and LP12 in terms of principle, and as such cannot be regarded as an acceptable scheme. However, this appeal decision does justify the removal of any reference to a lack of evidence in respect of community support in any subsequent reason for refusal.
- 10.8. It is acknowledged that support for the proposal can be found within Policy LP59 of the Emerging Local Plan which allocates the application site for residential development. At present, the emerging plan is at draft stage and as such, in accordance with Paragraph 48 of the NPPF, carries limited weight in the assessment. The application must therefore be assessed against the existing policy requirements of the current adopted Fenland Local Plan (2014). Therefore, it is considered that the emerging plan would not outweigh the proposal failing to comply with the adopted local plan policies.

10.9. Given the above and noting the Inspector's decision with regard to the appeal of the previous outline application relating to this site for a lesser scheme, it is considered that the proposal remains contrary to Policies LP3 & LP12 and as such cannot be supported in principle.

Impact on the Character and Appearance of the area

10.10. Details of appearance, layout and scale are to be submitted at Reserved Matters stage, however the submitted indicative site plan suggests a mix of dwellings proposed, including both semi-detached and detached.

10.11. Policy LP12 of the Local Plan provides guidance as to the restriction of rural areas development to ensure that it has an acceptable impact on the settlement and its character.

10.12. Policy LP12 requires development to meet certain criteria in order to be supported. The site must not have an adverse impact on the character and appearance of the surrounding countryside and farmland. Similarly, the proposal must be in keeping with the core shape and form of the settlement, without resulting in the extension of linear features or create ribbon development, and must retain natural boundaries, respect ecological features, important spaces etc. Finally, the proposal must be served by sustainable infrastructure, and must not put people or property in danger from identified risks.

10.13. The development proposed would extend the existing linear feature of the developed footprint of the settlement, by adding a further six dwellings to a line of ribbon development along Padgetts Road, into an area of agricultural grassland. This area of grassland at the site is mirrored by open agricultural land opposite, and forms a distinct and natural demarcation between the developed built form of Christchurch and the countryside beyond; save for sporadic rural development to the northwest, such as Brimstone Lodge, Acorn Farm and High Lots Farm that are not considered to be within the built form of Christchurch.

10.14. Development encroaching into this land would be to the detriment of the character and appearance of the area that would arguably perpetuate a damaging precedent of advancing ribbon development along Padgetts Road, , yet further eroding the rural character, contrary to the requirements of policy LP12.

10.15. Policy LP16 seeks to ensure that development makes a positive contribution to the local distinctiveness and character of the area. There are clear views across the site and to the countryside beyond it. This is due to the absence of any significant landscaping. Therefore, impact of the development of up to six dwellings on the character and appearance of the currently open area will be significant.

10.16. The site sits at the transition between the existing built form of Christchurch and the open countryside and is more closely associated with the undeveloped rural landscape. The introduction of up to 6 additional dwellings (illustrated in a linear orientation) with a new vehicular access from Padgetts

Road and likely changes needed to the drainage of the highway in this location would result in a significant urbanisation of the area, detrimentally eroding the countryside character. This would be contrary to Policy LP16 of the Fenland Local Plan 2014 and DM3 of the High Quality Environments SPD.

Access and Highway Safety

- 10.17. Policy LP15 of the Fenland Local Plan 2014 seeks to ensure safe and convenient access for all within the district.
- 10.18. The indicative site plan suggests that there would be sufficient parking/turning room available to service the dwellings.
- 10.19. Several concerns were raised from local residents with respect to the fact that Padgetts Road is derestricted road and the impact that 5 additional accesses may have on highway safety.
- 10.20. The Highways authority have considered the submitted plans, including details of the proposed visibility splays for the accesses and raise no objection in principle.
- 10.21. However they did raise the point that the viability of the scheme may be compromised owing to the engineering works required to accommodate the required drainage and kerbing for the intended footway.
- 10.22. Notwithstanding, this matter can be reconciled through the imposition of a condition requiring details of the off-site highway works to be submitted prior to development, and thus the scheme can be considered acceptable in respect of Policy LP15, subject to conditions.

Sustainability

- 10.23. Whilst the site would not be considered as 'isolated' having regard to paragraph 80 of the NPPF, nonetheless it does not follow the rural areas development strategy as set out under LP12. With regards to paragraph 80 of the NPPF; whilst the future occupiers of the development would likely support the existing facilities and services of Christchurch, no evidence that these facilities are under any kind of threat to justify an exception to the policy in this case has been provided, notwithstanding that, any benefits would be modest through the introduction of 'up to' 6no. dwellings.

Biodiversity

- 10.24. The application was supported by an ecology report which concluded that the proposal would result in no significant adverse effects to the local ecology and included enhancements and mitigation measures to limit any impact. The CCC Ecology team considered the submitted details and mitigation measures were acceptable, subject to conditions.
- 10.25. Matters in respect of landscaping proposals and any management /maintenance of trees on the site will be considered at Reserved Matters stage.

10.26. Accordingly, it is considered that subject to conditions, the proposal is acceptable with regard to its impact on local ecology and biodiversity in accordance with Policy LP19.

Other Considerations

Parish Council Support

10.27. It is acknowledged that the Parish Council resolved to offer no objection to this proposal, noting the provision of an intended footway and potential for the development (if approved) to enable the Parish Council to apply for a speed restriction along Padgetts Road. This is not a material planning consideration when determining planning applications. Notwithstanding, this possible eventuality would not outweigh the clear policy contraventions as discussed above. Accordingly, consideration of this application must solely be based on the merits of the application, and the approval of development cannot be considered on the basis of supposition.

10.28. It is also noted that the Parish would prefer to see the inclusion of street lighting to further aid road safety. This was not raised as a matter for concern by the highways authority and lighting proposals were not included within the indicative proposals. However, if approved, this could be included as a condition to be submitted with reserved matters.

Amenity

10.29. The development would be capable of accommodating the dwellings without unacceptable compromise residential amenity of existing dwellings by virtue of impacts such as overlooking, overshadowing or overbearing impacts.

11 CONCLUSIONS

11.1. Part of this application site was subject to a previously refused scheme, and subsequent dismissed appeal for the development of up to two dwellings as recently as 2017. The current application seeks outline planning permission for the erection of up to six dwellings and the formation of five accesses and footpath, committing the details of access only at this stage.

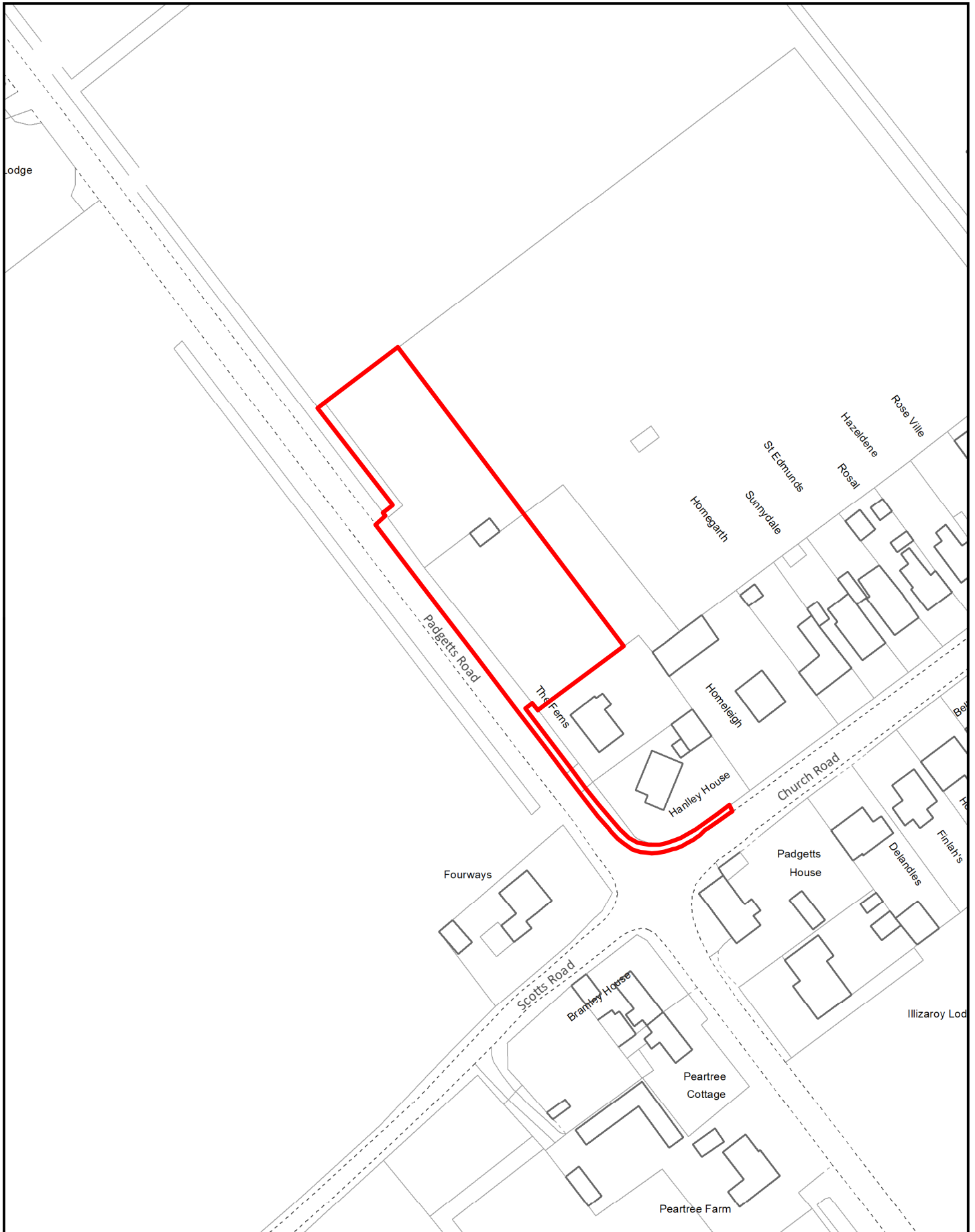
11.2. It is acknowledged that since the earlier appeal, the site has been allocated within Policy LP59 of the Emerging Local Plan for possible residential development, which forms the crux of the justification by the applicant for this development proposal. However, given the very early stage which the Plan is therefore at, in accordance with Paragraph 48 of the NPPF, it is considered that policies within this plan should carry extremely limited weight in decision making at this time.

11.3. The above assessment has established that the site is contrary to the policies of the current adopted development plan with respect to the settlement hierarchy (LP3), rural areas development (LP12) and the impact of the proposal on the character of the area (LP16). Accordingly, the application must be recommended for refusal.

12 RECOMMENDATION

Refuse, for the following reasons:

1	<p>Policy LP3 of the Fenland Local Plan (2014) sets out the settlement hierarchy within the district and defines Christchurch as a 'small village' where development may be permitted on its merits but normally limited to small scale residential infilling. Policy LP12 seeks to support development that does not encroach into or harm the character of the countryside. The application site constitutes an area of land located outside the developed footprint of the settlement of Christchurch. The development proposal would result in an incursion into the rural countryside rather than small scale residential infilling causing unwarranted harm to the rural character and sporadic form of development of the area. The proposal is therefore considered to be contrary to Policies LP3 and LP12 of the adopted Fenland Local Plan (2014).</p>
2	<p>Policy LP12 seeks to support development that does not harm the character of the countryside. Policy LP16 (d) of the Fenland Local Plan (2014) requires development to deliver and protect high quality environments through, amongst other things, making a positive contribution to the local distinctiveness and character of the area. The proposal is for the construction of up to six new dwellings and five new access points resulting in the urbanisation of currently undeveloped paddock land which has a close relationship to the wider open countryside. Development on this land would be to the detriment of the character and appearance of the rural area as it would directly contradict the current settlement pattern and would arguably create a precedent for further development into the countryside, eroding the existing rural character along this part of Padgetts Road, contrary to the requirements of policy LP12 and Policy LP16(d).</p>



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PLOT LEGEND

PLOT 1 = 3 BED SEMI DETACHED DWELLING

PLOT 2 = 3 BED SEMI DETACHED DWELLING

PLOT 3 = 4 BEDROOM DWELLING

PLOT 4 = 4 BEDROOM DWELLING

PLOT 5 = 3/4 BEDROOM LINK DWELLING

PLOT 6 = 3 BEDROOM LINK DWELLING

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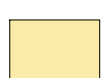


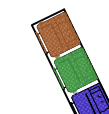
Please read, if in doubt ask. Change nothing without consulting the Engineers.

Contractor to check all dimensions on site before work starts or materials are ordered. If in doubt ask. All dimensions are in mm unless stated otherwise.

Where materials, products and workmanship are not fully specified they are to be of the standard appropriate to the works and suitable for the purpose stated in or reasonably to be inferred from the drawings and specification. All work to be in accordance with good building practice and BS 8000 to the extent that the recommendations define the quality of the finished work. Materials, products and workmanship to comply with all British Standards and EOTA standards with, where appropriate, BS or EC marks.

All products and materials to be handled, stored, prepared and used or fixed in accordance with the manufacturers current recommendations.


The contractor is to arrange inspections of the works by the BCO (or NHBC) as required by the Building Regulations and is to obtain completion certificate and forward to the Engineer

- LEGEND**
-  GRAVEL (PERMEABLE COVERING)
 -  TARMAC
 -  GRASS
 -  PERMEABLE BLOCK PAVING
 -  PATHS/PATIO AREA
 -  APPLICATION SITE
 -  LAND OWNED BY APPLICANT
 -  HOUSEHOLDER BIN LOCATIONS

A	PLANNERS COMMENTS	OCT 23
	REVISIONS	DATE

MORTON & HALL CONSULTING LIMITED
CONSULTING STRUCTURAL ENGINEERS

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Tel: 01354 655454 Fax: 01354 660467
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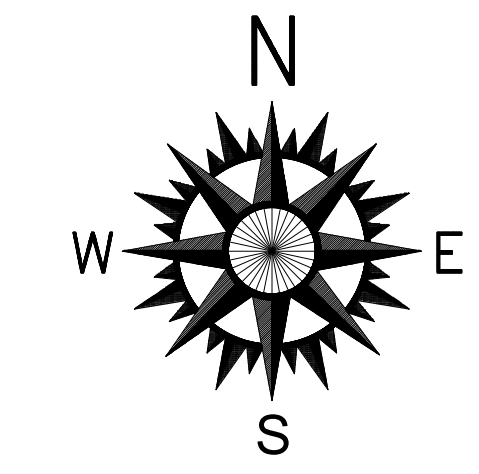
 Fenland District Council Building Design Awards winner

CLIENT
Mr P Russell

PROJECT
Land North West Of The Ferns Padgetts Road Christchurch Cambs PE14 9PL

TITLE
Proposed Site Plan With Indicative Layout

DRAWN	MH	DATE OF ISSUE
CHECKED		
DATE	September 2023	DRAWING NUMBER
SCALE	AS SHOWN AT A1	H9267/03a



PROPOSED SITE PLAN WITH INDICATIVE LAYOUT 1:200