
F/YR25/0750/F

Applicant: Mrs Carver

**Agent : Mr G Boreham
Morton & Hall Consulting Ltd**

Bromsgrove House , Honeysome Road, Chatteris, Cambridgeshire PE16 6SB

Change of use of land for residential use, siting of a mobile home to be used as an annexe and removal of existing mobile home

Officer recommendation: Refuse

Reason for Committee: Number of representations received contrary to Officer Recommendation

1 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 The application seeks permission for the siting of a residential caravan and associated curtilage on land serving Bromsgrove House, accessed via Fenton Lode (an unadopted byway north of Honeysome Road).
- 1.2 The site sits within an isolated cluster comprising two existing dwellings and various agricultural and commercial uses, surrounded predominantly by open countryside and lying outside the established built-up area of Chatteris. Although a past permission for an annexe (F/YR21/1346/F) was granted on personal-need grounds, this consent has lapsed and carries limited weight. More recent proposals for similar development (F/YR25/0352/F) were refused.
- 1.3 The current scheme is materially comparable to the previously refused proposal. The development would introduce a separate residential unit on land beyond the established curtilage, with no functional dependency on the host dwelling.
- 1.4 The siting, scale and domestic curtilage proposed would extend built form into agricultural land, resulting in unwarranted domestication of open countryside, contrary to Policies LP1, LP3 and LP16. No evidence has been provided to justify the need for ancillary accommodation or to demonstrate an essential rural requirement.
- 1.5 The proposal would also result in moderate harm to the rural character and landscape, with the introduction of a domestic caravan, boundary treatments and associated paraphernalia eroding the open setting. While residential amenity and parking arrangements are acceptable, these factors do not outweigh fundamental policy conflicts.
- 1.6 The site lies wholly within Flood Zone 3. No Sequential Test has been undertaken and the development cannot be considered ancillary, meaning the requirement applies in full. Reasonably available sites exist in areas of lower flood risk, and the scheme therefore fails the Sequential Test. Furthermore, the proposal does not demonstrate wider sustainability benefits required to pass Part 1 of the Exception Test, although Part 2 could potentially be satisfied through mitigation. As both

limbs must be met, the Exception Test is not passed.

1.7 Overall, the proposal fails to address the previous reasons for refusal and is considered unsustainable, contrary to key Local Plan policies and national planning guidance.

1.8 Therefore, the application is recommended for Refusal.

2 SITE DESCRIPTION

- 2.1 The application site is situated to the northern end of Fenton Lode or Twenty Foot Drain, approximately 170m North of the junction with Honeysome Road. The access road to the site incorporates C & G Coaches on its western corner and an electricity substation to its eastern side. The Lode is an unadopted byway serving agricultural buildings and two detached dwellings at its northern end and provides access for maintenance of the adjacent drain.
- 2.2 Between the application site and Fenland Way to the East there is a variety of commercial units on the Honeysome Industrial Estate, including SS Motors' fuel depot, Stainless Metalcraft to the south and a variety of mixed engineering firms and a larger retail outlet to the north.
- 2.3 The two houses along the Lode are in an isolated position away from other new and established housing development situated on the eastern side of Fenland Way, comprising the main built-up area of the town. To the North, West and mainly to the South of the application site there is currently open agricultural land.
- 2.4 It is acknowledged that permission has been granted for a large housing development at Womb Farm, further to the north, and west of Fenland Way. This is the other side of the Twenty Foot Drain and is a comprehensively planned development closely associated with established links into the town itself.
- 2.5 The application site itself comprises a detached bungalow served off the Lode and established rear curtilage and small front garden. There is one un-associated detached frontage dwelling to the immediate south of the site, then an assortment of farm buildings, with the established coach company at the junction with Honeysome Road.
- 2.6 Along the northern side of the red-lined application site there is an older, utilitarian single-skinned brick, former agricultural building. The application site includes this outbuilding, plus agricultural land adjacent to its south, of a slightly larger scale to that of the defined rear garden to the dwelling at Bromsgrove House itself.

3 PROPOSAL

- 3.1 Planning permission is sought for the change of use of land, to extend the residential curtilage of the host dwelling, and the siting of a caravan to be used as an annexe. This would include the removal of the existing mobile home situated to the south of the host dwelling.
- 3.2 The proposed change of use relates to a rectangular parcel of land north of the existing curtilage associated with Bromsgrove.

- 3.3 The proposed caravan would have a maximum height of 4.11 metres with an eaves height of 2.95 metres, with a depth of 16.16 metres and a width of 4.2 metres. This would be finished with a 0.6 metres brickwork skirt all round, clay stone cladding and dark grey flat roof tile and would feature three gable features to the front elevation. The proposed caravan would provide two bedrooms, a bathroom and open plan living room and kitchen.
- 3.4 Other associated works include the installation of a 1.2 metre high post and rail fence to the northern, southern and western boundaries, the extension of the existing gravel driveway to the north and west to serve the proposed annexe and an area to the south of the proposed annexe to provide an area for biodiversity enhancements, namely the planting of trees.
- 3.5 The main amendments as part of this current application are a reduction in the proposed area for the extension of residential curtilage and footprint of proposed accommodation and rather than constructing an annexe, the proposal relates to the siting of a caravan and a reduction in the accommodation provided and is now a two bed. Furthermore, the proposed accommodation has been moved closer to the boundary with the host dwelling.

Full plans and associated documents for this application can be found at:

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

4 SITE PLANNING HISTORY

Reference	Proposal	Decision
F/YR25/0352/F	Change of use of land for residential use, construction of a single storey building (annexe) and associated development	Refuse
F/YR21/1346/F	Change of use of land to domestic and erect a two-storey self-contained residential annex involving the demolition of existing outbuilding	Approved

5 CONSULTATIONS

5.1 Chatteris Town Council

Recommend Approval

Internal Consultees

5.2 FDC Environmental Health

No objections

External Consultees

5.3 Middle Level Commissioners

No response received at the time of writing this report

5.4 Local Residents/Interested Parties

Eleven letter of support have been received from residents in Sycamore Crescent, Heronshaw, Green Park, Station Street, Barley Close, Fairway, St James Close, Birch Avenue – Chatteris and Watermoor Point in Cirencester.

Supporting Comments	Officer Response
Enables family to remain living at the same address – multi generational living and support.	Comments noted and discussed in below report.
Uncertainty around land adjacent future use – this location is more shielded	Comments noted and discussed in the below report
Minimal disruption to the surrounding area	Comments noted and discussed in below report.
Applicant valued member of the community	Comments noted.
Superstore proposed to the rear, solar farm to the front, an allotment to the left and housing to the right – how is this unacceptable in rurality	Comments noted and discussed in the below report
Site previously received approval for an annexe	Comments noted however as discussed below, the previous permission related to the conversion of an existing building on site and was materially different to that proposed under the current application
Existing caravan removed will improve the area	Comments noted and discussed in the below report
Reduction and amendments to scheme result in improvements	Comments noted and discussed in the below report
Cost efficient living	Comments noted
Mobile home is clearly ancillary and it is important this is retained.	Comments noted and discussed below.

One letter of representation from a local resident on Honeysome Road has been received and is summarised below:

Comments	Officer Response
No objection to the principle – concerns regarding the delivery of parts and associated impact on trees	Comments noted. Should the application be approved, this matter could be dealt with via condition.

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).

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 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

Nature

Homes and Buildings

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

LP10 – Chatteris

LP12 – Rural Areas Development Policy

LP13 – Supporting and Managing the Impact of a Growing District

LP14 – Responding to Climate Change and Managing the Risk of Flooding in Fenland

LP15 – Facilitating the Creation of a More Sustainable Transport Network in Fenland

LP16 – Delivering and Protecting High Quality Environments across the District

LP19 – The Natural Environment

Cambridgeshire Flood and Water SPD 2016

8 KEY ISSUES

- **Principle of Development**
- **Visual Amenity/Form**
- **Types of Development**
- **Flood Risk**

9 BACKGROUND

- 9.1 As denoted above, a recent planning decision for additional claimed annexe accommodation on the site was refused under the terms of application F/YR25/0352/F for the following reasons:

1. *The application site is located in an 'Elsewhere' location as identified in Policy LP3, where development is restricted to that which is essential for agriculture, or other uses requiring a rural location. The proposal is supported by insufficient justification to demonstrate that there is an essential need for the development as required by Policy LP12 of the Fenland Local Plan (2014). The proposal would therefore result in unwarranted development in an unsustainable rural location contrary to the aforementioned policies.*
 2. *The proposal, by virtue of the inherent domestication of an open site in a rural location, would be harmful to the character of the open countryside, contrary to Policies LP12 and LP16 of the Fenland Local Plan.*
 3. *The application site is located within Flood Zone 3 and fails to fully satisfy the sequential or exception test. It is considered that the proposal is at an unacceptable risk of flooding without sufficient justification. The proposal is therefore considered to be contrary to Policy LP14 of the Fenland Local Plan (2014) and Chapter 14 of the NPPF (2024).*
- 9.2 As discussed in the preceding section of this report, the proposal the subject of the current application remains similar to that of the refused scheme, in that it relates to the change of use of land, the provision of residential accommodation and associated works.
- 9.3 During the assessment of the previously refused permission F/YR25/0352/F, reference was made to a previous planning permission for the provision of an annexe on the site, under the terms of application F/YR21/1346/F, this was approved at committee of April 2022 for the following reasons:
- 'The health and wellbeing of the residents will be improved, it will enhance the environment, it is not detrimental to the character of the area and does not have any impact on the neighbours.'*
- 9.4 It is also pertinent to note that the amendment statement accompanying this application states that significant reductions in terms of footprint and extension to residential curtilage have been made, the LPA acknowledges that there has been a reduction to both, however this is not deemed significant but will be discussed further within the relevant sections of the below report.

10 ASSESSMENT

Principle of Development

- 10.1 Policy LP1 overarching policy supporting a presumption in favour of sustainable development, planning applications that accord with the policies within the Local Plan will be approved without delay unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Policy LP3 of the Fenland Local Plan (2014) sets out the settlement hierarchy within the District, setting out the scale of development appropriate to each level of the hierarchy. The application site is located to the edge of Chatteris, in what is considered an outlying area to the town. However, broadly it is a location whereby ancillary residential development may be considered acceptable, subject to other material considerations.

- 10.2 Furthermore, Policy LP16 supports the principle of providing ancillary accommodation on the provision that the proposal does not cause adverse harm to the local character, or to the general environment and is ancillary to the host dwelling.
- 10.3 It is a conventional expectation that annexe accommodation will be ancillary to the host dwelling and good practice for the accommodation to have a functional link, shared services, amenities and facilities. It is also an expectation for there to be a level of dependence on the occupants of the host dwelling by the occupants of the annexe.
- 10.4 The annexe must maintain a strong relationship to the host dwelling by relying on the facilities, garden land and driveway of the host dwelling. This is to restrict the opportunity for it to become a separate planning unit over time. From the plans submitted, the proposed annexe would utilise the same access and driveway. However, the annexe proposed falls outside the established residential curtilage of the existing dwelling and proposes the siting of a caravan with its own associated curtilage, rear of and separate to the main dwelling and proposed on what is currently considered to be agricultural land.
- 10.5 The application is not accompanied by any justification for the proposal or demonstrable need or any functional link with the host dwelling, outside of the proposed accommodation being occupied by family members. The scale and form, location beyond the curtilage and on agricultural land, and lack of dependency is not considered to comprise annexe accommodation but a separate residential unit in its own right.
- 10.6 It is pertinent to note that whilst it is noted that the site benefitted from an expired planning permission. Given this scheme has not been implemented, this is of limited weight as a fallback position. Notwithstanding the above, the previously approved application is materially different to that the subject of this application, namely that this application relates to the siting of a caravan for residential purposes on land which is currently open and free from built form, whereas the previously approved scheme largely utilised the footprint of an existing outbuilding. Furthermore, the previous decision was based upon demonstrable personal need and improved living conditions for the family members currently residing in the caravan, no evidence has been submitted as part of this application that this is still the case, this alongside the lack of evidence or supporting information, can no longer be a material consideration of this application.
- 10.7 Furthermore, despite the amendments to the proposal as discussed in section 9 above, these are not considered sufficient to overcome the in-principle concerns raised under the terms of application F/YR25/0352/F. For the purposes of clarity, in respect of planning permission F/YR21/1346/F as discussed above, this is considered to be of limited weight in terms of its fallback position given the material differences between the schemes and that it has expired.
- 10.8 Taking into account the above assessment, it is considered that the proposal goes beyond providing ancillary accommodation and would be tantamount to a new residential unit. The principle of providing an independent residential unit, in this location is not accepted. The proposal would be contrary to policies LP1, LP3 and LP16 of the Fenland Local Development Plan. Other material considerations are discussed below.

Design and Impact on Character and Appearance of the Area

- 10.9 Policy LP16 of the Fenland Local Plan, sets out a number of criterion in which proposals are required to meet, to ensure that high quality environments are provided and protected. Most relevant to the proposal are:

(d) makes a positive contribution to the local distinctiveness and character of the area, enhances its local setting, responds to and improves the character of the local built environment, provides resilience to climate change, reinforces local identity and does not adversely impact, either in design or scale terms, on the street scene, settlement pattern or the landscape character of the surrounding area.

- 10.10 Further guidance is provided within the Delivering and Protecting High Quality Developments SPD.
- 10.11 The site of the proposed annexe is visible from the west across open agricultural land. From the south, the site is mainly screened by larger industrial units, similarly from the approach to the north and east with the intervening structures on site largely obstruct any views from the west. Significant space is proposed to be used as a separate domestic curtilage, this will be located on undeveloped agricultural land and its domestication will undermine the rural character and appearance of the area. This is exacerbated by the introduction of domestic fencing, planting and ancillary domestic structures and paraphernalia.
- 10.12 The proposed caravan is also of a design and form which fails to respect the rural characteristics of the locality, incorporating significant domestic scale uPVC fenestration with features and materials discordant with a rural location. Whilst the accommodation type has changed (previously a structure requiring building was proposed now it is the siting of a caravan) its appearance is similar in terms of materials and fenestration.
- 10.13 It is noted that the proposed change of use, was granted planning permission under application F/YR21/1346/F, as discussed in section 9 of this report, this is afforded limited weight in the assessment of this application, which does not overcome the harm identified above. Similarly, it is noted that the existing caravan is proposed to be removed as part of this application, this is considered to have a neutral impact in terms of design and impact on the character and appearance of the area, namely, that the siting of a caravan on residential land does not require planning permission, so a condition requiring its removal from site would be unreasonable.
- 10.14 It is therefore considered that the proposal would have a detrimental impact on the character and appearance of the site, which is currently classed as open countryside, contrary to policy LP16 of the LDP.

Residential Amenity and Private Amenity Space

- 10.15 Policy LP2 of the Fenland Local Plan seeks to promote high levels of residential amenity. Similarly, Policy LP16 requires development proposals to not adversely impact on the amenity of neighbouring users such as noise, light pollution, loss of privacy and loss of light.

- 10.16 The application proposes the creation of a separate area of curtilage for the annexe which would provide an appropriate level of amenity space for future occupiers.
- 10.17 As discussed in paragraphs 10.1 -10.8, the proposal is considered to result in an independent, self-contained residential unit and therefore, the relationship with Bromsgrove House also needs to be considered. Given the single storey nature of the proposal, alongside the degree of separation and established planting (which is proposed to be retained) it is not considered that the development would result in a detrimental impact on the amenity of current or future occupiers of Bromsgrove House or the future occupants of the proposed building. It is therefore, considered the proposal would be in accordance with policy LP2 and LP16 of the LDP.

Parking, Access and Highway Safety

- 10.18 Policy LP15 requires all new development proposals to contribute to the delivery of the sustainable transport network by providing well designed, safe, convenient access for all. Development proposals should provide well designed car and cycle parking appropriate to the amount of development proposed, ensuring parking provision is provided in accordance with the standards. Appendix A sets out that parking provision for two cars is required for up to a three bedroom dwelling.
- 10.19 The extended driveway is shown to provide parking provision for three vehicles and would not alter the parking provision currently provided for the host dwelling. It is therefore considered that there would still remain suitable parking provision for at least two vehicular spaces to serve the host dwelling with sufficient manoeuvring space and therefore, there are no objections in this respect.

Flood Risk

- 10.20 Policy LP14 of the Fenland Local Plan and paragraphs 170-182 of the National Planning Policy Framework set out the approach to developing land in relation to flood risk, with both documents steering development in the first instance towards land at a lower risk of flooding. This is achieved by means of requiring development proposals to undertake a sequential test to determine if there is land available for development at a lower risk of flooding than the application site and only resorting to development in those higher flood risk areas if it can be demonstrated that there are no reasonably available sites at a lower risk of flooding. This stance is supported by the guidance contained within the Cambridgeshire Flood and Water SPD 2016.
- 10.21 The Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) advises that a Sequential Test is required for planning applications in areas at risk from flooding from any source. In the case of river and sea flooding, this specifically includes land within Flood Zones 2 and 3. The fundamental objective of the Sequential Test is to steer new development to areas with the lowest risk of flooding (i.e. Flood Zone 1), in line with the risk-based approach advocated by paragraph 172 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, 2024).
- 10.22 The application site lies within an area of identified flood risk and, as such, the Sequential Test is engaged. However, no Sequential Test has been submitted in support of the application. It is noted that the proposal seeks permission for

ancillary residential accommodation, and in those instances, a sequential test is not appropriate for any formal submission as the development is limited in where it can be located to still be in conjunction with the dwelling.

- 10.23 However, as discussed above the proposal is not deemed to be ancillary in nature and is therefore considered to relate to the provision of an independent residential unit. As such, the application fails to satisfy the first key test for residential-led development in areas liable to flooding. It is pertinent to note that under the terms of application F/YR25/0352/F, this did form a reason for refusal and therefore, given there has been no change in Agent/Applicant, is something they were aware of. The applicant has not approached the Council to agree reasonable parameters for the Sequential Test area or to discuss what alternative sites may be considered 'reasonably available'. Any such test should be informed by the Council's spatial strategy, local plan policies, and up-to-date evidence of land availability. Decisions on site suitability must be rooted in planning judgment, having regard to the specific nature of the development and the need for flexibility in site comparison.
- 10.24 Furthermore, it is worth noting that the accompanying flood risk assessment provided dated 13 February 2025 makes a number of minor incorrect claims; namely, references the proposal as a two storey residential annexe, and, in referencing adjacent approvals F/YR19/0670/F is stated as being less than 2 years ago, this was approved on 25.09.2019 and is obviously 6 years old and references application F/YR21/01346/F as will be expiring on 14th April 2025. Based on the above, it does not appear that the supporting FRA has been updated to accurately reflect the proposal the subject of this application.
- 10.25 The Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) is clear that a Sequential Test is required for all planning applications in areas at risk of flooding from any source, including land within Flood Zones 2 and 3. The core purpose of the Sequential Test is to steer new development to areas of lowest risk (Flood Zone 1), consistent with the risk-based approach set out in paragraph 173 and 175 of the NPPF.
- 10.26 As the site lies within an area of identified flood risk, the Sequential Test is engaged. The fact that flood mitigation measures may be possible does not remove the need for the Sequential Test; such measures fall to be considered under the Exception Test. In the absence of a robust Sequential Test, the proposal fails to meet a fundamental requirement for residential development in high-risk flood areas and is contrary to Policy LP14 of the Fenland Local Plan, the NPPF, and associated PPG.
- 10.27 Since the determination of the most recent application, updated guidance published on the Council's website (June 2025) clarifies the approach to the Sequential Test. It confirms that the applicant must define and justify an appropriate area of search, which will vary depending on the settlement type and scale of development:
- For Market Towns and Growth Villages, the search area will normally be limited to land within or adjacent to the settlement.
 - **For all other locations—including Small Villages, Limited Growth Villages, and Elsewhere locations—the search area will normally be districtwide.**(emphasis added)

To pass the Sequential Test, applicants must demonstrate that no reasonably available sites exist within the defined area of search at lower risk of flooding.

- 10.28 Since the publication of the updated guidance outlined above, further revisions to the PPG have been introduced to provide additional clarification on the application of the Sequential Test. Notwithstanding this, given that the proposed development is considered to be tantamount to a new dwelling, in an area which has exceeded housing delivery envisaged by the spatial strategy, it remains appropriate for the area of search to be considered on a district-wide basis. This approach reflects both the strength of the district's overall housing supply and the need to maintain a balanced approach to delivering the adopted spatial strategy. The scheme will therefore be assessed on this basis.
- 10.29 Notwithstanding the above, it is acknowledged that a degree of flexibility may be justified in certain circumstances. Where proposals are specifically intended to address an identified local housing need, a more localised area of search may be appropriate, provided it is proportionate to the scale and purpose of the development. In the absence of robust evidence demonstrating that this application is required to meet a defined local housing need, it is not considered appropriate to apply a reduced search area in this instance.
- 10.30 It should be noted that there are a number of sites within Chatteris (With extant consents and sites readily available within Chatteris on land which is categorised at a lower risk of flooding (in particular Flood Zones 1 and 2), the proposal essentially involves the construction of a new dwelling on land which is at greater risk of flooding and the Sequential Test has not therefore been met), with a lower risk of flooding than the application site. It is therefore, not considered the sequential test has been met.
- 10.31 Notwithstanding the above, the NPPF confirms that where it is not possible to locate development in zones of lower flood risk, the Exception Test may be applied. This test provides a framework for assessing whether development can proceed safely, whilst recognising the wider sustainability needs of a community.
- 10.32 The Exception Test comprises two elements, both of which must be satisfied:
- a) Development to demonstrate that it achieves wider community sustainability benefits having regard to the district's sustainability objectives, and
 - b) That it can be made safe for its lifetime and will not increase flood risk elsewhere ('flood risk management')
- 10.33 The first limb of the Exception Test requires that the development provides wider sustainability benefits to the community that clearly outweigh the flood risk. The second limb requires that the development will be safe for its lifetime, taking account of the vulnerability of its users, without increasing flood risk elsewhere, and where possible, reducing overall flood risk. Whilst it is ordinarily the applicant's responsibility to demonstrate compliance with both elements, the Local Planning Authority must still make its own objective assessment of the evidence and reach a reasoned conclusion on whether both parts of the test are met
- a) Wider community sustainability benefits

- 10.34 Given the proposal is to provide one dwelling, in an elsewhere location it is not considered that the proposal achieves a wider community sustainability benefit, as discussed in the previous sections of this report, the proposal would not contribute to the Districts sustainability objectives and therefore, it is not considered the proposal would satisfy this limb of the exceptions test.
- b) That it can be made safe for its lifetime and will not increase flood risk elsewhere ('flood risk management')
- 10.35 The accompanying Flood Risk Assessment advises that the following mitigation will be provided:
- The proposed finished floor level of the building will be raised above the existing ground level by 0.6m.
 - The main dwelling and annexe owner will be made aware of the Environment Agencies Flood Warning Service, which will notify them of a potential flood risk at the appropriate times
- 10.36 It is considered that subject to suitably worded conditions, the above would be sufficient to ensure the development would not increase flood risk elsewhere and would therefore, satisfy this limb of the exceptions test.
- 10.37 Notwithstanding the above, based on the information submitted, insufficient information has been submitted to adequately satisfy the sequential test. Furthermore, the Applicant has failed to demonstrate any further public benefit of the proposal and has not satisfied part 1 of the exceptions test. Whilst the LPA have been proactive and undertaken their own assessment in this respect and found the proposal does satisfy part b, given the lack of information and clarity surrounding the matter, it is not considered that the proposal satisfies both parts of the exceptions test. The proposal is therefore contrary to policy LP14 of the LDP, and the guidance contained within the NPPF.

Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG)

- 10.38 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.
- 10.39 In this instance, given the above assessment and that the proposal is considered to be tantamount to an independent residential unit, a Biodiversity Gain Condition is required to be approved before development is begun. The application is accompanied by a BNG Metric and report which concludes that providing the scheme is carried out in accordance with the details and mitigation shown the development would result in a gain of both hedgerow.
- 10.40 The area proposed for enhancement to secure the gains as mentioned above would fall outside of the current residential curtilage and the land proposed as part of the change of use to serve the dwelling. Therefore, subject to suitably worded conditions, there are no objections in this respect.

Other Matters

- 10.41 It is noted that representations received refer to other consented or proposed developments in the wider vicinity, raising concerns about future land uses and questioning why the current proposal would be considered unacceptable in a rural context. Comments reference a superstore to the rear, a solar farm to the front, allotments to one side and housing to the other.
- 10.42 While each planning application must be assessed on its own merits, it is important to clarify the status and relevance of these schemes. The superstore approved under F/YR11/0661/F to the north does not appear to have been implemented and therefore carries limited weight. The solar farm to the west is located over 200 metres from the application site and, in any event, represents a fundamentally different form of development in terms of scale, character and function. Housing within the wider area largely comprises long-established developments dating from the 1990s and does not alter the rural character or Elswere location as described by policy, of the application site.
- 10.43 As outlined within the design and character section of this report, the current proposal would introduce an inappropriate form of residential development that would domesticate open countryside and conflict with the established settlement pattern. Consequently, the cited neighbouring developments do not justify or mitigate the identified harm arising from this scheme.
- 10.44 It is also noted that representations raise concerns regarding potential damage to the mature trees along the access road arising from the movement of larger vehicles. These trees make a valuable contribution to the amenity and character of the area. However, should the application be approved, appropriate measures to safeguard these trees during delivery and construction activities could be secured through a suitably worded planning condition.

Planning Balance

- 10.45 In terms of sustainability the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) states that the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. Achieving sustainable development means that the planning system has three overarching objectives; economic, social and environmental, which are interdependent and need to be pursued in mutually supportive ways (so that opportunities can be taken to secure net gains across each of the different objectives)
- 10.46 This stance is supported by Local Plan Policy LP1. In respect of the first of these, the current proposal would provide negligible economic benefits, for example support for existing and future businesses, services, and facilities by introducing additional residents that would make use of them and provide future spend in the local economy. However, given the proposal would relate to one unit, and would facilitate family members who already utilise these services and facilities, it is considered this would be negligible.
- 10.47 In respect of the social strand, it is noted that the proposal would enable the family to live in close proximity to one another, however, this is considered to be negligible and outweighed by other factors such as being located within Flood Zone 3 putting future residents at risk and is not located within close proximity to

services and therefore, does not support the current and future needs of the wider community.

- 10.48 Lastly, in respect of the environmental objective; the proposal would result in the inherent domestication of the site, to the detriment of the character and appearance of the surrounding area, this is considered to result in moderate harm. This harm is further exacerbated by the location of the development, outside the built-up area of Chatteris, whereby occupants would be reliant on private vehicle to access many of the day-to-day facilities and services.
- 10.49 Notwithstanding the above, it is noted that the proposal includes in excess of 10% BNG uplift, however, this is considered to be of a minor benefit that does not outweigh the harm identified above.

11 CONCLUSIONS

- 11.1 Taking into account the above assessment, the proposed development does not overcome the previous reasons for refusal and therefore is not considered to represent sustainable development and can therefore not be supported in principle. Furthermore, the proposal, is considered to result in the inherent domestication, of what in policy terms, is open countryside, resulting in detrimental harm to the character and appearance of the site and surrounding area.
- 11.2 The application site is located entirely within Flood Zone 3 and fails to meet the sequential test by virtue of alternative sites being available elsewhere in the district to accommodate the development that are at lower risk of flooding. The proposal is therefore considered to be contrary to Policy LP14 of the Fenland Local Plan (2014) and Chapter 14 of the NPPF.

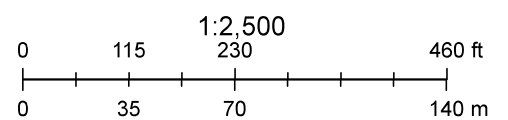
12 RECOMMENDATION

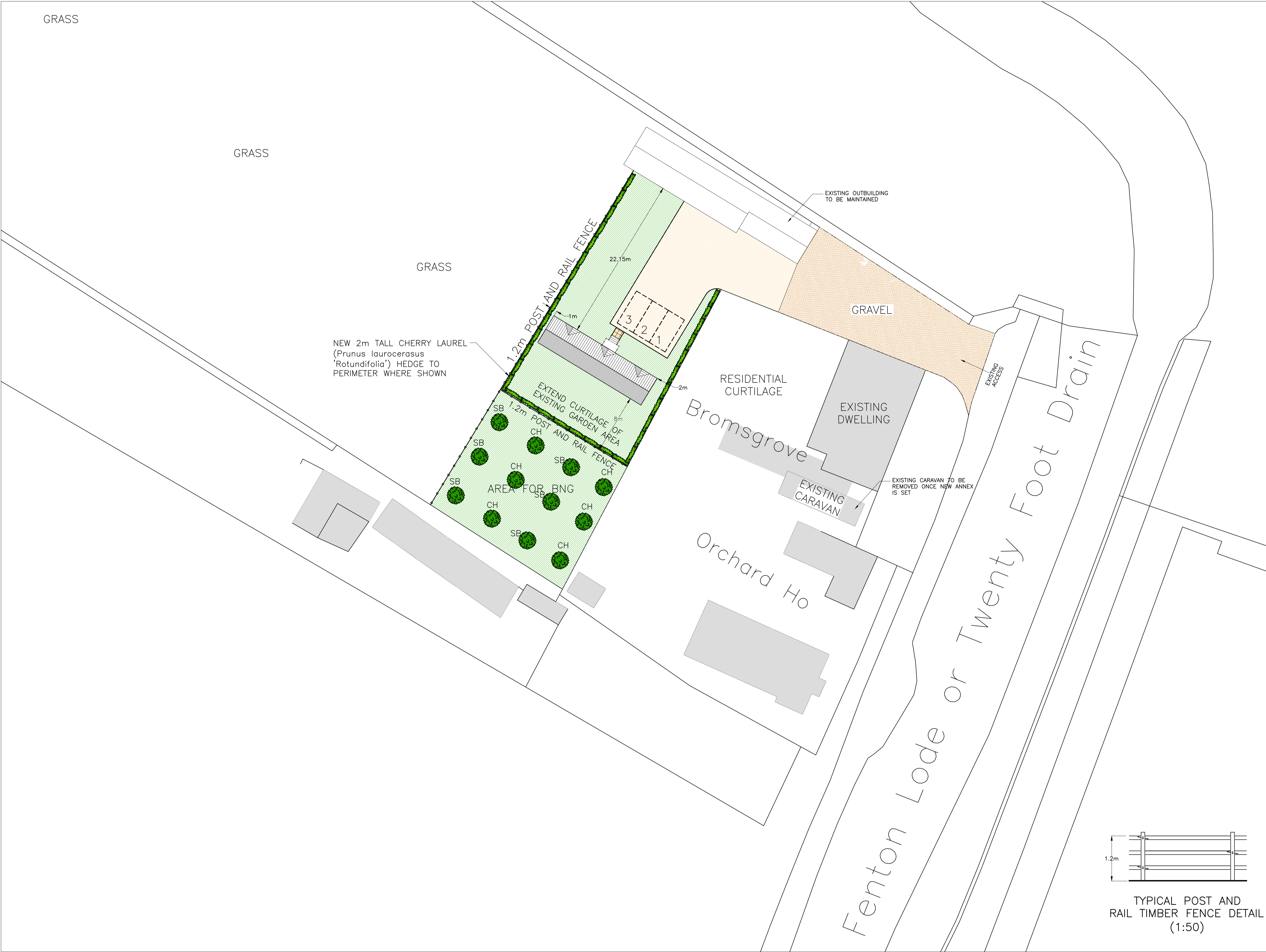
Refuse, for the following reasons:

1.	The application site is located in an 'Elsewhere' location as identified in Policy LP3, where development is restricted to that which is essential for agriculture, or other uses requiring a rural location. The proposal is supported by insufficient justification to demonstrate that there is an essential need for the development as required by Policy LP12 of the Fenland Local Plan (2014). The proposal would therefore result in unwarranted development in an unsustainable rural location contrary to the aforementioned policies.
2.	The proposal, by virtue of the inherent domestication of an open site in a rural location, would be harmful to the character of the open countryside, contrary to Policies LP12 and LP16 of the Fenland Local Plan.
3.	The application site is located within Flood Zone 3 and fails to fully satisfy the sequential or exception test. It is considered that the proposal is at an unacceptable risk of flooding without sufficient justification. The proposal is therefore considered to be contrary to Policy LP14 of the Fenland Local Plan (2014), the guidance contained within the Cambridgeshire Flood and Water SPD 2016 and Chapter 14 of the NPPF (2024).



10/15/2025, 12:33:11 PM





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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

All finishes, insulation and damp-proofing to architect's details

A	DRAWINGS UPDATED	SEP 2025
	REVISIONS	DATE
<div><div><div>MORTON & HALL</div><div>CONSULTING LIMITED</div><div>CONSULTING STRUCTURAL ENGINEERS</div></div><div><div>1 Gordon Avenue, March, Cambridgeshire, PE15 8AJ</div><div>Tel: 01354 655454 Fax: 01354 660467 E-mail: info@mortonandhall.co.uk Website: www.mortonconsultingengineers.co.uk</div></div><div><div><div>LABC</div><div>LABC</div><div>LABC</div></div><div><div>Fenland District Council</div><div>Building Design Awards</div><div>winner</div><div>Building Excellence in Fenland</div></div></div></div>		
CLIENT		
Mrs Carver		
PROJECT		
Broomsgrove House, Honeyside Road, Chatteris, Cambs PE16 6SB		
TITLE		
Proposed Site Plan		
DRAWN J.Scotcher		DATE OF ISSUE
CHECKED		
DATE Feb 2025	DRAWING NUMBER H10269/02_A	
SCALE As Shown		

