

**Applicant: Mr N Bowers**

**Agent : Mr Matthew Hall  
Morton & Hall Consulting Ltd**

**Land South Of 6, Bridge Lane, Wimblington, Cambridgeshire**

**Permission in principle to erect up to 7 x dwellings**

**Officer recommendation: Refuse**

**Reason for Committee: Number of representations contrary to Officer recommendation**

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## **1 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

- 1.1. The application seeks permission in principle for the erection of up to 7no. dwellings on Land South of 6 Bridge Lane, Wimblington. As the application is only for permission in principle, it is only possible to assess the location, land use and amount of development proposed.
- 1.2. The location of the site is detached from the built form of the settlement of Wimblington and would subsequently result in an erosion of the landscape character of the area, therefore rendering the location of development unacceptable in respect of Policies LP3 and LP12 of the Fenland Local Plan (2014). In this regard, it is considered that the proposal would result in a backland form of development that would run contrary to the settlement pattern in the area, further emphasising that the use of the site for residential purposes is unacceptable.
- 1.3. Further to this, Bridge Lane as a highway is incapable of accommodating further development without the implementation of highway mitigation measures due to the narrowness of the lane and limited opportunities for two-way vehicle movements. As such, it is considered that the location of the site and use for residential is also contrary to Policies LP15 and LP16 of the Fenland Local Plan (2014).
- 1.4. The proposal is therefore considered to be unacceptable in planning terms, and it is accordingly recommended that permission in principle is refused in this instance.

## **2 SITE DESCRIPTION**

- 2.1. The application site is located on the southern side of Bridge Lane, Wimblington, and comprises amenity space associated with 6 Bridge Lane, an area of hardstanding and a large shed with more open and undeveloped land to the south of this.
- 2.2. The use of the land, hardstanding and detached outbuilding was permitted under application reference F/YR25/0084/F. The area included within the red line on

25/0084 encompasses the host dwelling, 6 Bridge Lane, and the land immediately south and east of the dwelling. Additional land was included within the blue line that comprised further amenity space land, which forms part of the red line for this Permission in Principle application.

- 2.3. It should also be noted that there was a historic enforcement notice on the site, which was subsequently dismissed at appeal, with the red line for this covering the majority, but not entirety, of the land included within the red line for this application.
- 2.4. The site area measures 0.69 hectares and is set back from the highway, behind a linear pattern of residential development fronting onto Bridge Lane.

### **3 PROPOSAL**

- 3.1. The application seeks permission in principle for the erection of up to 7 x dwellings.
- 3.2. The application is supported by an indicative site layout plan, although it should be noted that this is not a requirement of applications for Permission in Principle. This shows a cul-de-sac style development extending south, away from the public highway utilising the existing access to 6B, with this then separated off. The access drive then extends past the side of the dwelling with the dwellings wrapping around the retained rear garden for the existing dwelling.
- 3.3. Full plans and associated documents for this application can be found at:  
<https://www.publicaccess.fenland.gov.uk/publicaccess/>

### **4 SITE PLANNING HISTORY**

ENF/063/22/UW APP/D0515/C/23/3317077	Material change of use of land from agricultural land and domestic garden land to a mixed use of domestic garden land and land used for storage and dismantling of vehicles.	Appeal dismissed & Enforcement notice upheld
F/YR25/0084/F	Change of use of land to domestic land, erection of a shed and formation of hardstanding involving the demolition of existing garage (retrospective)	Granted 04.11.25

### **5 CONSULTATIONS**

#### **5.1. Wimblington Parish Council – 12.11.25**

Objection on following grounds:

- Other applications in vicinity of Bridge Lane do not set precedent
- Bridge Lane is a narrow highway – other granted applications will impact on safety of highway
- Drainage and flooding concerns
- Detrimental impact on local wildlife

- Site forms part of the countryside environment

**5.2. Environmental Health – 30.10.25**

No objection

**5.3. Cambridgeshire County Council Archaeology – 13.11.25**

No objection. However, subsequent technical details application would be required to secure archaeology mitigation

**5.4. Cambridgeshire County Council Minerals and Waste – 19.11.25**

*The proposed development site is within a Mineral Safeguarding Area (MSA) for sand and gravel under Policy 5 of the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Minerals and Waste Local Plan (July 2021). This policy seeks to prevent mineral resources of local and/or national importance being needlessly sterilised. The application documentation does not make any reference to the safeguarded minerals but owing to the limited size of the site and its proximity to existing dwellings the MWPA considers that the prior extraction of the underlying mineral is unlikely to be feasible. If the Local Planning Authority is of the view that there is an overriding need for the development, the MWPA will be content that Policy 5 criterion (l) has been satisfied.*

**5.5. Cambridgeshire County Council Highways – 28.11.25**

*Following a careful review of the documents provided to the Highway Authority as part of the above planning application the Highway Authority requests that the application be refused in its present format for the following reasons:*

*1. Bridge Lane is considered to be inadequate to serve the development proposed, by reason of its restricted width, lack of passing places and lack of footway provision which would lead to unsafe and unsuitable access for all users, increased risk of vehicle overrun and damage to highway verges, and an unacceptable impact on highway safety, contrary to paragraph 116 of the National Planning Policy Framework.*

*2. Bridge Lane lacks any footway, and further development without such provision would fail to provide safe and convenient pedestrian access. This would result in an unsustainable form of development, contrary to paragraph 117 of the National Planning Policy Framework.*

**5.6. Anglian Water – 05.12.25**

No objection

**5.7. Local Residents/Interested Parties**

A total of 4no. letters of objection were received on the application from residents of Bridge Lane & Pond Close, Wimblington. The following points were raised:

Objecting Comments	Officer Response
Bridge Lane is a single-track road with potholes and no passing places	See 'Location' section of Assessment
Absence of lighting and footpath does not allow safe travel down Bridge Lane	See 'Location' section of Assessment
Harm to landscape character of the area	See 'Location' section of Assessment

Drainage and sewerage issues along the lane	See 'Other Matters' section of Assessment
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A total of 11no. letters of support were received on the application from residents of Gorefield Road, Leverington; Bridge Lane, Wimblington; Elwyn Road, Steeple View, Cavalry Drive, Coldham Bank & Stephenson Close, March; and Hook Road, Wimblington. The following points were raised:

Supporting Comments	Officer Response
Efficient use of unused land	See 'Other Matters' section of Assessment
Already development happening in the area	See 'Location' section of Assessment

## 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) the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Minerals and Waste Local Plan (2021) and the Wimblington and Stonea Neighbourhood Plan (Pre-Submission Draft October 2024).

## 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

Chapter 17 – Facilitating the sustainable use of minerals

### National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG)

Determining a Planning Application

### National Design Guide 2021

Context

Identity

Built Form

Movement

Nature

Uses

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

LP12 – Rural Areas Development Policy

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

### **Wimblington and Stonea Neighbourhood Plan (Pre-Submission Draft October 2024)**

Wimblington & Stonea Parish Council has carried out a pre-submission consultation on the draft plan, as required by Regulation 14 of the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012. The draft plan has not yet been submitted for examination. Given the very early stage which the draft plan is therefore at, it is considered, in accordance with Paragraph 49 of the NPPF, that the policies of this should carry very limited weight in decision making. Of relevance to this application are policies:

Policy RE1 – Rural Character

Policy NE1 – Protecting the Landscape

Policy NE2 – Biodiversity

Policy SD3 – High-quality design

Policy SD5 – Flood Risk

Policy TT1 – Car Parking

### **Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Minerals and Waste Local Plan 2021**

Policy 5 - Mineral Safeguarding Areas

### **Delivering and Protecting High Quality Environments in Fenland SPD 2014**

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

### **Cambridgeshire Flood and Water SPD 2016**

## **8 KEY ISSUES**

- **Location**
- **Land Use**
- **Amount**
- **Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG)**

## **9 BACKGROUND**

- 9.1. The proposal is an application for Permission in Principle to develop the site for up to 7no. dwellings. The Permission in Principle route has 2 stages: the first stage (or Permission in Principle Stage) establishes whether the site is suitable in principle and assesses the principle issues namely:

- (1) Location
- (2) Use, and
- (3) Amount of development proposed

And the second (Technical Details Consent) stage is when the detailed development proposals are addressed. Technical details consent would need to be applied for should the application be granted.

- 9.2. Evaluation of a PIP must be restricted to the issues highlighted above; even if technical issues are apparent from the outset these can form no part of the

determination of Stage 1 of the process, Accordingly, some matters raised via statutory bodies may not be addressed at this time.

## **10 ASSESSMENT**

- 10.1. Noting the guidance in place regarding Permission in Principle submissions, assessment must be restricted to (a) location, (use) and (c) amount, and these items are considered in turn below.

### **Location**

- 10.2. Policy LP1 is the overarching policy supporting a presumption in favour of sustainable development. Planning applications that accord with the policies within the LPD 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.
- 10.3. Policy LP3 of the Fenland Local Plan identifies Wimblington as a growth village where small village extensions of a limited scale will be appropriate as part of the strategy for sustainable growth. Policy LP3 must be read in conjunction with other policies in the Local Plan which steer development to the most appropriate sites.
- 10.4. Policy LP12 seeks to protect the sustainability of settlements and the open character of the countryside. To this end, in this instance it requires that:
- a) The site is in or adjacent to the existing developed footprint of the village.
  - b) It would not result in coalescence.
  - c) It would not have an adverse impact on the character and appearance of the surrounding countryside and farmland.
  - d) It is in keeping with the core shape of the settlement and not harm its character and appearance.
- 10.5. Policy LP12 sets out that the developed footprint is defined as the continuous built form of the village and excluding groups of dispersed or intermittent buildings that are clearly detached from the continuous built-up area.
- 10.6. The requirements of Policy LP12 are reinforced by Policy LP16 which stipulates that new development must make a positive contribution to the local distinctiveness and character of the area. The northernmost extremity of the application site is set back some 40m from Bridge Lane, behind existing frontage residential development, which in itself is considered divorced from any consolidated built area, and extends southwards to a distance of 140m from the highway. Notwithstanding the developments permitted elsewhere on Bridge Lane to the west of the site under applications F/YR25/0058/O & F/YR20/0234/F, the eastern part of Bridge Lane remains rural in character. Further, the application site does not immediately adjoin the existing built-up form of the settlement, adding to its detachment from the built form of the village and relationship with the open countryside. It is noted that there are established dwellings around the site, but it is not considered these form part of the developed footprint of the settlement.
- 10.7. Whilst Policy LP3 identifies Wimblington as a growth village, the eastern end of Bridge Lane and the application site are considered physically detached from the village. The proposal would result in the development of a parcel of land that, aside from the domestic development at the northern end of the site, is currently

open and undeveloped. As such, it would erode the space that separates Bridge Lane from the wider settlement. As such, the location of the site would have an unacceptable adverse impact on the character and local distinctiveness of the area and would be contrary to Policy LP12 and LP16 of the Fenland Local Plan.

10.8. A further consideration in this regard is that the development of the site for residential purposes would result in the creation of a form of back land development that would run contrary to the settlement pattern in this location, where residential development is generally characterised by linear, highway fronting development. Again, this would be contrary to Policy LP16 of the Fenland Local Plan.

10.9. Furthermore, the Highway Authority have objected to the application on the basis that Back Lane is unsuitable to accommodate further development at this time. As such, the location of the site for residential purposes would result in a conflict with Policy LP15 of the Fenland Local Plan in this regard.

10.10. As such, it is considered that the unacceptability of the site for residential purposes is unacceptable in principle arising from the detrimental impact on highway safety in the location, with the proposal therefore contrary to Policy LP15 of the Fenland Local Plan (2014) and Paragraphs 116 & 117 of the NPPF (2024) in this regard.

### **Use**

10.11. As identified in the 'Location' section of this report, there are a number of conflicts with local and national planning policy arising from the location of the site. These issues identified (Highway Impact, Character Impact) would inherently render the use of the site for residential purposes contrary to Local Policy and therefore unacceptable in planning terms.

10.12. It is therefore considered that the proposal is contrary to Policy LP16 of the Fenland Local Plan (2014) and that the site is not acceptable for a residential use.

### **Amount**

10.13. The assessment of the site in respect of location and use have identified a number of issues inherent with the development of the site for residential purposes. The principle of development has therefore already been deemed to be unacceptable on this basis. However, it is considered that the overall quantum of development does not add to the unsuitability of the site in this instance.

### **Other Matters**

10.14. It is noted that representations have been received on the application objecting to the proposal on flood risk and drainage grounds. Comments have also been received supporting the proposal on the basis that the development would represent an efficient use of land.

10.15. In respect of the flood risk and drainage issues, the site lies within Flood Zone 1 and is at very low risk of surface water flooding. Therefore, it is not considered to be at risk of flooding. Further to this, a detailed drainage scheme is not a consideration at the PiP stage, although it would be expected that an application for Technical Details Consent would include a drainage scheme to manage surface and foul water.

- 10.16. In respect of the efficient use of land, whilst the density of development that would occur on the site is considered to be acceptable and efficient, it is not considered that this outweighs the harm identified in the assessment above.

## 11 CONCLUSIONS

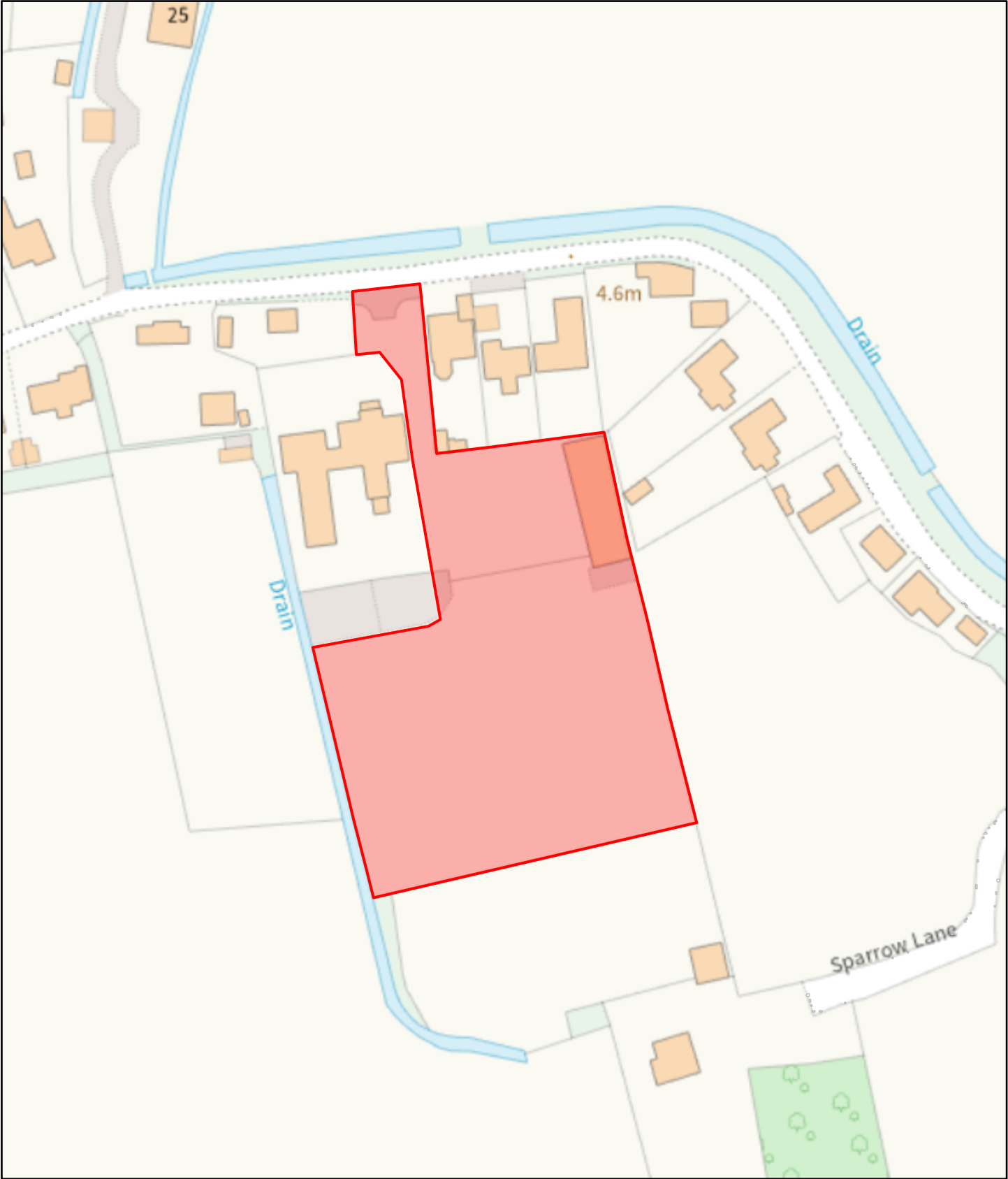
- 11.1. The application seeks permission in principle for the erection of up to 7no. dwellings on Land South of 6 Bridge Lane, Wimblington. As the application is only for permission in principle, it is only possible to assess the location, land use and amount of development proposed.
- 11.2. As assessed above, the location of the site is detached from the built form of the settlement of Wimblington and would subsequently result in an erosion of the landscape character of the area, therefore rendering the location of development unacceptable in respect of Policies LP3 and LP12 of the Fenland Local Plan (2014). In this regard, it is considered that the proposal would result in a back land form of development that would run contrary to the settlement pattern in the area, further emphasising that the use of the site for residential purposes is unacceptable, contrary to Policy LP12 & LP16 of the Fenland Local Plan (2014).
- 11.3. Further to this, Bridge Lane as a highway is incapable of accommodating further development without the implementation of highway mitigation measures due to the narrowness of the lane and limited opportunities for two-way vehicle movements. As such, it is considered that the use of the site for residential purposes and amount of development is also contrary to Policies LP15 of the Fenland Local Plan (2014).
- 11.4. The proposal is therefore considered to be unacceptable in planning terms, and it is accordingly recommended that permission in principle is refused in this instance.

## 12 RECOMMENDATION

**Refuse;** for the following reasons:

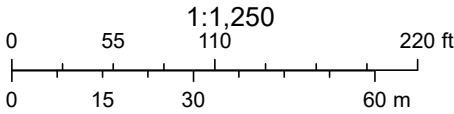
1.	The proposal would result in large scale in-depth development in an area rural in character and characterised mainly by frontage development and would erode an important visual gap and area of separation between this part of Bridge Lane and the main built form of Wimblington. The proposal is therefore contrary to Policies LP3 and LP12 of the adopted Fenland Local Plan.
2.	The proposed development, by virtue of its location away from the public highway, behind an existing, road-fronting and linear form of development, would result in a back land form of development, contrary to the settlement pattern in the area, that would inherently result in the erosion of the landscape character of the area, contrary to Policies LP12 and LP16 of the Fenland Local Plan (2014).
3.	Bridge Lane is a narrow highway with limited opportunities for two-way vehicular movements and is incapable of accommodating further development without a detrimental impact on highway safety in this location. Therefore, the location and use of the development proposed is considered unacceptable having regard to Policies LP15 of the Fenland Local Plan (2014).





10/29/2025, 12:39:56 PM

 Fenland District Boundary



Fenland District Council







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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 CEN 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 BCU (or MHC) as required by the Building Regulations and is to obtain completion certificate and forward to the Engineer.

**LEGEND**

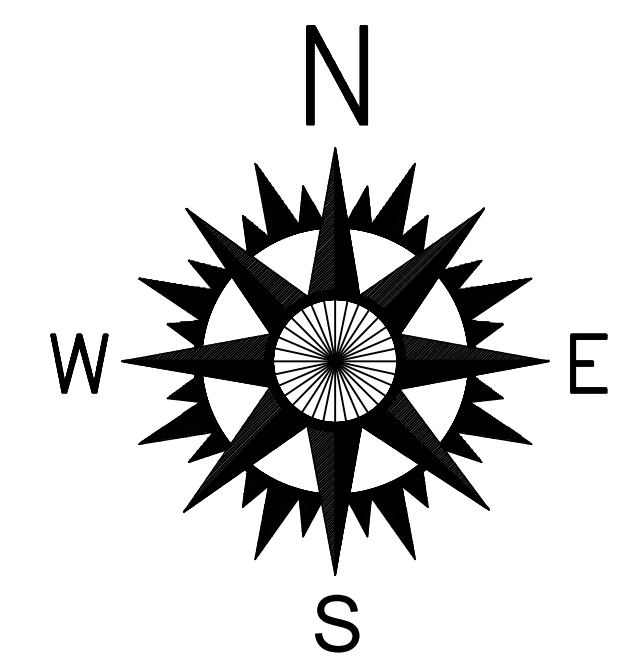
- GRAVEL (PERMEABLE COVERING)
- TARMAC
- GRASS
- BLOCK PAVING
- PATHS/PATIO AREA
- APPLICATION SITE
- LAND IN THE SAME OWNERSHIP
- HOUSEHOLDER BIN LOCATIONS

REVISIONS		DATE
<b>MORTON &amp; HALL CONSULTING LIMITED</b>		
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 Fenland District Council		
 Building Design Awards Building Excellence in Fenland		
DRAWN BY: MH		
CHECKED BY: October 2025		
SCALE: As Shown AT A0		
DATE OF ISSUE: H10803/04		

Mr N Bowers

Land South of 6 Bridge Lane Wimblington Cambridgeshire PE15 0RS

Proposed Indicative Site Plan



PROPOSED INDICATIVE SITE PLAN 1:250