

REFERENCE NO: F/YR25/0594/O

SITE ADDRESS: Land North Of 450 To 454, March Road, Turves, Cambridgeshire

PROPOSAL: Erect 3 x dwellings involving the formation of accesses (outline application with all matters reserved)

UPDATE

On 15 December 2025, the Council decided to withdraw the emerging Local Plan. The original officers' report set out a list of relevant policies from the emerging plan; however, given its early stage, these policies carried limited weight in the determination. The withdrawal of the emerging Local Plan is not considered to materially affect the determination of this application or the recommendation.

On 23 December 2025 an email was received from the applicant, the substance of which is summarised below for Members' information.

The applicant refers to the Planning Committee meeting held on 15 October 2025, during which the Chairman, Councillor David Connor, proposed that the determination period be extended to 30 September 2026 in order to allow sufficient time for the required ecological surveys to be undertaken within the appropriate survey season. As noted at that meeting, the relevant survey window runs from March to October.

The applicant has highlighted that the current agreed extension of time to 9 January 2026 does not allow for the completion of the required ecological surveys within the correct seasonal window, as previously advised by the Council's ecologist in correspondence dated 3 November 2025. The applicant considers that this results in further delay outside of their control and advises that ongoing delays are having a material impact on the financial viability of the scheme, particularly in the context of rising construction costs and associated expenses.

In light of this, the applicant has requested that the outstanding ecological surveys be secured by way of a suitably worded planning condition, to be discharged prior to commencement of development and no later than 30 September 2026, once surveys can be undertaken during the appropriate season. The applicant considers this approach would align with the discussion at the October committee meeting and would allow the development to progress without further delay.

Officers note the applicant's request. However, it is a well-established principle in planning law that where ecological information is required to assess the acceptability of a proposal, such information must be available prior to determination and cannot be deferred to a post-permission condition. Accordingly, Officers advise that the outstanding ecological surveys cannot properly be secured by condition and are required prior to determination of the application.

Notwithstanding the applicant's representations, and while the Chairman's comments during the October committee discussion are noted, Members resolved to defer the application for

a period of three months. It is pertinent to note that it is the applicant's responsibility to submit an application with the necessary information to allow for determination. The application is therefore reported back to this Committee in accordance with that resolution.

Recommendation: Refuse