
F/YR25/0840/O

Applicant: Mr Upton

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

The Piggeries, Flaggrass Hill Road, March, Cambridgeshire

Erect up to 4 x dwellings and the formation of an access (outline application with matters committed in respect of access)

Officer recommendation: Grant

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

1 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 The application seeks outline planning permission, with access as the only matter for approval, for the erection of up to four single storey dwellings on a 0.25-hectare site located to the north-east of March outside the built form of the settlement. The site previously operated as a piggery and has been cleared of former buildings and vegetation. It is accessed via a single track from Flaggrass Hill Road and lies within Flood Zone 1. The site previously benefited from an outline planning permission under F/YR22/0755/O for four dwellings which is a significant material consideration.
- 1.2 The proposal is contrary to the settlement hierarchy set out in Policy LP3 of the Fenland Local Plan due to its Elsewhere location with limited pedestrian connectivity. The backland form of development also does not reflect the established frontage settlement pattern. However, the principle of residential development is afforded substantial weight due to the previous planning permission and there has been no material change in policy context since that decision.
- 1.3 The development is capable of being accommodated without unacceptable harm to neighbouring amenity, highway safety, flood risk or drainage. The proposed access is acceptable, and the site is at a low flood risk. Foul and surface water drainage can be secured by condition. The contaminated land assessment confirms the site is suitable for residential use subject to an unexpected contamination condition.
- 1.4 Ecological impacts are low and no objections have been raised by Natural England or the Council's Ecologist. Biodiversity Net Gain including off site provision where required can be secured through condition. Archaeological investigation will be required prior to development due to the presence of the Fen Causeway and the high archaeological potential of the area. Landscaping details will also be secured at the reserved matters stage.
- 1.5 While the proposal conflicts with policies relating to settlement hierarchy and sustainability, these harms are outweighed by the significant weight of the previous permission, the modest scale of development, the limited visibility of the site, the ability to mitigate impacts through condition and the economic and

housing benefits of providing up to four new dwellings.

1.6 On balance, the proposal is considered to be acceptable in planning terms and is recommended for approval subject to conditions.

2 SITE DESCRIPTION

- 2.1 The site comprises approximately 0.25 hectares of agricultural land located to the north-east of March but outside the main settlement. The land was last used as a piggery and was previously partially occupied by dilapidated buildings and overgrown vegetation. These structures and vegetation have been cleared. At the time of the case officer's site visit, the site comprised overgrown scrub with several piles of debris present across the land.
- 2.2 The site is accessed via a single track from the eastern side of Flaggrass Hill Road. This connects to Creek Road approximately 130 metres south of the proposed site access point.
- 2.3 The surrounding area along Flaggrass Hill Road and Creek Road is characterised by relatively modest single storey dwellings which front directly onto the highway. The site lies within Flood Zone 1, having regard to the latest Environment Agency Flood Maps for Planning. A drain runs along the eastern boundary of the site. The route of the Fen Causeway, an important Roman road within an area of exceptional archaeological interest, crosses the site to the south. The site is subject to a low, high and medium risk of surface water flooding. This is primarily located at the proposed access to the west and adjacent to the drain at the rear eastern boundary of the site.

3 PROPOSAL

- 3.1 The application seeks outline planning permission for the erection of up to four single storey dwellings, with all detailed matters reserved for subsequent consideration except for access, which is proposed via the existing vehicular access into the site from Flaggrass Hill Road.
- 3.2 An indicative site layout plan has been submitted in support of the application. This shows four dwellings arranged within the site, with two positioned towards the front, either side of the access road, and two set to the rear with the access road terminating in front of these with a turning area. However, this drawing is provided for illustrative purposes only and does not form part of the application for approval other than in respect of the access.
- 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

Reference	Proposal	Decision
F/YR22/0755/O	Erect up to 4 x single storey dwellings involving demolition of existing buildings (outline application with matters committed in respect of access) (part retrospective)	Approve
F/YR21/1057/F	Erect 2 x 2-storey 4-bed dwellings with covered parking involving demolition of existing outbuildings	Refused
F/YR17/1230/F	Erection of 2 x 2 storey 4-bed dwellings with attached double garages involving demolition of outbuildings	Refused
F/YR16/0999/F	Erection of 2no x 2-storey, 4 bed dwellings with attached double garages involving demolition of existing outbuildings	Refused

5 CONSULTATIONS

5.1 March Town Council – 18 November 2025

Recommends Approval

Internal Consultees

5.2 FDC Environmental Services – Refuse – 03 December 2025

No objection

5.3 FDC Ecologist – 14 November 2025

No objection subject to suitable conditions in terms of vegetation clearance and precautionary pre-commencement survey for badger activity, should the application be approved.

5.4 FDC Environmental Health – 13 November 2025

No objection and agree with the conclusions of the Goldfinch Environmental Ltd Tier 1 Contaminated Risk Assessment (Report Ref: 1036/1) and recommends a condition securing compliance with Section 8 is included should the application be approved alongside a condition securing demolition and construction hours and burning of waste.

External Consultees

5.5 Natural England – 24 November 2025

No objections.

5.6 CCC Highways – 18 November 2025

No objection, subject to the inclusion of conditions securing additional details in terms of Highway Drainage, parking and turning areas and visibility splays, should the application be approved.

5.7 CCC Archaeology – 14 November 2025

No objection, subject to a condition requiring a further programme of investigation and recording of archaeological remains, should the application be approved.

5.8 Environment Agency – 12 November 2025

No objection and note the main source of flooding is associated with watercourses under the jurisdiction of the IDB.

5.9 Local Residents/Interested Parties

Seven letters of objection have been received from residents of Creek Fen, March, these comments are summarised below:

Objecting Comments	Officer Response
Change from single storey to two storey	Comments noted however based on indicative plans and the supporting information provided these remain as single storey and can be conditioned as such should the application be approved.
Not in keeping	Comments noted and discussed below.
Impact on neighbouring amenity	Comments noted and discussed below.
No access to drainage ditch without entering neighbouring properties residential curtilage	Comments noted. However, this is not a planning matter and would need to be dealt with between parties independently.
Should be retained as a small holding or other rural pursuits	Comments noted.
Land floods	Comments noted and discussed below
Highway Impacts due to intensification including safety and condition	Comments noted and discussed below

Sixteen Letters of support have been received from residents on Kingswood Road, Knights End View, Worsley Chase, Gaul Road, Berryfield, Grounds Avenue, Cross Road, Dartford Road, Coldham Bank, Norwood Avenue, Upwell Road, College Gardens, Cavalry Drive, Ellingham Avenue and Westwood Avenue, March and Luckily Lane, Wisbech. These are summarised below:

Supporting Comments	Officer Response
Already been granted permission	Comments noted and discussed below.
Housing Need	Comments noted and discussed below.
Effective use of land	Comments noted and discussed below.
Enhance the area	Comments noted and discussed

	below.
Bungalows welcomed	Comments noted and discussed below.
Support local businesses	Comments noted and discussed below.
Work for local trades	Comments noted and discussed below.
Close to Schools and Transport	Comments noted and discussed below
Amenity for Future Residents	Comments noted and discussed below
High Quality	Comments noted and discussed below
Small Builder rather than national house builder	Comments noted.

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) and the March Neighbourhood Plan (2017)

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 8 – Promoting healthy and safe communities

Chapter 9 – Promoting sustainable transport

Chapter 10 - Supporting high quality communications

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 16 - Conserving and enhancing the historic environment

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
- LP9 – March
- 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
- LP18 – The Historic Environment
- LP19 – The Natural Environment

March Neighbourhood Plan 2017

- H2 – Windfall Development
- H3 – Local Housing Need

Delivering and Protecting High Quality Environments in Fenland SPD 2014

- DM2 – Natural Features and Landscaping Schemes
- DM3 – Making a Positive Contribution to Local Distinctiveness and character of the Area
- DM4 – Waste and Recycling Facilities
- DM6 – Mitigating Against Harmful Effects

Cambridgeshire Flood and Water SPD 2016

8 KEY ISSUES

- **Principle of Development**
- **Design and Impact on Character and Appearance of The Area**
- **Neighbouring Amenity**
- **Amenity Space**
- **Parking, Access and Highway Safety**
- **Flood Risk and Drainage**
- **Landscaping**
- **Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG)**
- **Archaeology**
- **Contamination**

9 BACKGROUND

- 9.1 As set out in the site history above, the application site benefits from a previous outline planning permission for the construction of up to four dwellings, with the detailed matters of access approved. It is noted that officers recommended this application, reference F/YR22/0755/O, for refusal on the grounds that the site lies within an unsustainable location outside the built-up area of March, and due to the associated harm to the character and appearance of the surrounding area. This application was approved at Planning Committee on 24 August 2022. The permission has subsequently expired.

10 ASSESSMENT

Principle of Development

- 10.1. Policy LP3 of the Fenland Local Plan 2014 sets out the settlement strategy for the district and forms a fundamental part of the Council's approach to delivering

sustainable development. Under LP3, March is identified as a Market Town and one of the main locations for growth within the district, where development is directed to the built-up area in order to make efficient use of existing services and infrastructure.

- 10.2. Policy LP5 sets out the housing targets for the District and the Council has undertaken a full assessment of the Five Year Housing Land Supply in the District and has concluded that the Council is able to demonstrate a supply of specific deliverable sites sufficient to provide for more than Five Years' worth of housing against the Council's identified requirements. This is a material consideration and means that any application for new development must be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise
- 10.3. The application site is located outside the defined settlement boundary of March and is physically separated from the main built-up area. The site forms part of a small, isolated cluster of development accessed via a narrow, single track and unlit road. By reason of its location and relationship to the wider settlement, the site is considered to fall within an 'Elsewhere' location for the purposes of Policy LP3. In such areas, development is expected to be strictly limited and is generally restricted to that which is essential to the effective operation of agriculture, horticulture, forestry or other land based enterprises. As the proposal seeks residential development unrelated to any land based enterprise, it is considered to be in conflict with the provisions of Policy LP3.
- 10.4. However, it is also a material consideration that the site previously benefited from an outline planning permission for residential development. Although this permission has now expired, it is afforded significant weight in the planning balance. Since the granting of that permission, there have been no fundamental changes to the development plan policy context, and while amendments have been made to the National Planning Policy Framework, the overarching principles relating to sustainable development and the restraint of new housing in the countryside remain largely unchanged. As such, the extant policy position does not differ materially from that which applied at the time the previous permission was granted, it is therefore considered that the principle of providing four dwellings on this site, is accepted, subject to other material considerations which are discussed below.

Design and Impact on Character and Appearance of the Area

- 10.5. Policy LP16 of the Fenland Local Plan, sets out a number of criterion 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.
- 10.6. Further guidance is provided within the Delivering and Protecting High Quality Developments SPD.

- 10.7. Given the outline nature of the application, with all matters reserved except access, the scope of detailed design assessment at this stage is limited. Accordingly, the key considerations are whether the proposed quantum of development is appropriate in principle and whether the site is capable of accommodating the scale of development proposed in an acceptable manner.
- 10.8. The character of the immediate locality is predominantly defined by modest, traditional frontage development, largely comprising single storey dwellings which align Flaggrass Hill Road and wrap around the northern part of Creek Road. This creates a tight knit linear form of development with open countryside to the rear, where only sporadic and modest structures are present. This frontage pattern is a defining element of local character. This contrasts with the presence of a single, larger two storey dwelling and associated farmstead structures opposite on the western side of Flaggrass Hill Road and the linear group of two storey dwellings approximately 300 metres to the west along Creek Road. Although Wood Paddock incorporates a dormer within its roof space, its overall form remains that of a single storey dwelling and is consistent with the prevailing character of the area.
- 10.9. The submitted Design and Access Statement confirms that the development would comprise single storey dwellings only. Whilst the description of development states dwellings, it is clear from the supporting documentation these are proposed to be single-storey dwellings and a condition can be included to secure this detail, should the application be approved. The proposed dwellings would be located to the rear of the existing frontage development on Creek Fen and Flaggrass Hill Road. If delivered as genuine single storey dwellings, as proposed, they would have limited visibility within the wider public realm and would largely be screened by the existing frontage properties, with only glimpsed views available through the access.
- 10.10. Notwithstanding this, residential development in a backland form is not characteristic of the established settlement pattern in this location, which is defined exclusively by frontage development. There are no existing residential properties in the locality positioned to the rear of other dwellings and therefore, the proposal fails to fully reflect or reinforce the locally distinctive frontage based settlement pattern. As such, in pure character terms, the proposal conflicts with Policy LP16 (d) of the Fenland Local Plan and Policy DM3 of the Delivering and Protecting High Quality Environments in Fenland SPD.
- 10.11. It is acknowledged that representations have been received which suggest that the development would improve the appearance of the site and tidy up an area which has fallen into disrepair. The site is poorly maintained land and whilst not immediately visible from the highway is detrimental to the visual amenity of the dwellings which border the site due to the untidy, overgrown appearance of the land. It is considered that material weight should not be given to this issue however as land does not need to be developed to be kept in an appropriate visual condition.
- 10.12. Notwithstanding the above, when giving appropriate weight to the Council's previous decision to grant outline planning permission on the site and having regard to the overall limited visibility of the proposed development within the public realm, it is considered that, on balance, it would be unreasonable to sustain an objection to the proposal solely on character and design grounds in this instance.

Neighbouring Amenity

- 10.13. 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.
- 10.14. The application site is bordered by a number of neighbouring residential properties. To the north lies Wood Paddock, to the southwest are The Willows and Bourne Cottage and to the south are properties numbered 4 to 11 Creek Fen.
- 10.15. As the application is submitted in outline with all matters reserved except for access, the detailed assessment of the relationship between the proposed dwellings and neighbouring properties, including separation distances, window positions and levels of overlooking, would be undertaken at the reserved matters stage. Notwithstanding this, the indicative layout and provision of single storey dwellings only, demonstrates that the site is of sufficient size and configuration to accommodate development without resulting in unacceptable harm to the amenity of neighbouring occupiers. It is also material that the proposal is for single storey dwellings only, which significantly reduces the potential for overlooking, overbearing impacts and loss of light. Should the application be approved, a condition securing the single storey nature of the dwellings will be included to ensure the amenity of neighbouring residents is retained.
- 10.16. On this basis, it is considered that the development has the potential to be designed in a manner that would safeguard neighbouring residential amenity and comply with the requirements of Policies LP2 and LP16 of the Fenland Local Plan 2014. Any detailed impacts relating to layout, design and fenestration would be appropriately assessed and controlled through the reserved matters process.

Amenity Space

- 10.17. Policy LP16 (h) states that development should provide sufficient private amenity space, suitable for the type and amount of development proposed and for dwellings other than flats, a minimum of a third of the plot curtilage should be set aside as private amenity space.
- 10.18. It is acknowledged that the plans submitted with the application are indicative only, however it is considered that these do show a that a detailed scheme could be designed which would achieve appropriate levels of amenity space for future occupiers.
- 10.19. It is therefore considered that the proposal has the potential to comply with the requirements of Policy LP16 (h) of the Fenland Local Plan 2014 in respect of private amenity space provision.

Parking, Access and Highway Safety

- 10.20. 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 for up to three-bedroom properties, parking provision for two vehicles is required.

Access and Highway Safety

- 10.21. The proposed access to the site is to be taken from the existing vehicular access off Flaggrass Hill Road. Although detailed visibility splays have not been explicitly shown on the submitted drawings, it is considered that visibility splays of 2.4 metres by 43 metres would be achievable within the limits of the highway and the applicant's control. This level of visibility is considered to be appropriate given the nature of the road and the expected traffic generation associated with the proposed development.
- 10.22. The access is shown to be 5.5 metres in width and hard surfaced for the first 10 metres from the highway boundary. This width is sufficient to accommodate the two-way movement of vehicles and is considered acceptable for a shared private access serving up to four dwellings. Subject to appropriate conditions to secure detailed construction and surfacing, the proposed access arrangements are not considered to result in any unacceptable highway safety impacts.
- 10.23. It is noted that there are no formal footpaths or street lighting for approximately 300 metres from the site until the row of terraced dwellings along Creek Road to the west is reached. As a result, future occupiers would be required to walk along a section of highway that does not prioritise pedestrian movement, with reliance placed on the highway verge for passing vehicles and limited visibility during hours of darkness due to the absence of street lighting. This arrangement is contrary to the aims of paragraph 115 of the National Planning Policy Framework and Policy LP15 of the Fenland Local Plan, which seek to promote safe, inclusive and sustainable modes of transport.
- 10.24. Notwithstanding this, and having regard to the previously approved permission for residential development at the site, it is not considered that the identified shortcomings in pedestrian connectivity would warrant the refusal of the current application on highway or sustainability grounds.

Parking

- 10.25. The submitted indicative site layout plan H10375 / 02 demonstrates a layout can be achieved which would provide adequate car parking and manoeuvring within the site. A detailed layout would be subject to further consideration at the reserved matters application stage.
- 10.26. Having regard to the above, and that Cambridgeshire County Council Highways have raised no objection to the proposal, the proposed access and parking arrangements are considered to comply with the requirements of Policy LP15 of the Fenland Local Plan 2014.

Flood Risk and Drainage

- 10.27. 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. The application site lies within Flood Zone 1, as defined by the latest Environment Agency Flood Maps for Planning, and is therefore located within an area of low flood risk. On this basis, the proposal is

acceptable in principle in flood risk terms and no objections are raised in this respect.

- 10.28. With regard to drainage, it is noted that the site is not served by a mains foul sewage connection. Policy LP15 advises that development proposals should avoid reliance on privately managed foul drainage systems where possible. Notwithstanding this, it is also noted that previous planning permissions at the site have not been refused on drainage grounds. The applicant has indicated that foul drainage would be served by individual sewage treatment plants, with surface water managed on site through soakaways. Subject to appropriate design and implementation, this approach is capable of being made acceptable.
- 10.29. Should planning permission be granted a condition would be required for the submission and approval of a detailed foul and surface water drainage strategy prior to the determination of the first reserved matters application. This would ensure that an appropriate and policy compliant drainage solution is secured in accordance with Policy LP15 of the Fenland Local Plan and to safeguard the future operation and environmental integrity of the development. The site is subject to a low, high and medium risk of surface water flooding. This is primarily located at the proposed access to the west and adjacent to the drain at the rear eastern boundary of the site. It is therefore important, particularly as the proposal is seeking single storey dwellings, that future potential surface water flood risk is appropriately mitigated against. However there is nothing to suggest that a development could not be delivered which would satisfactorily address surface water drainage.

Landscaping

- 10.30. Policy LP16 of the Fenland Local Plan 2014 requires all development to contribute to the delivery of high quality environments. In respect of landscaping, criteria (c) and (d) seek to ensure that development proposals retain and incorporate natural and historic features of the site, including trees and hedgerows, in order to preserve local landscape character and the established settlement pattern of the surrounding area.
- 10.31. Given the outline nature of the application, all landscaping matters are reserved for future consideration at the reserved matters stage. A potentially acceptable landscaping scheme could be achieved given the quantum of development and size of the site.

Ecology and Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG)

- 10.32. Policy LP19 requires development proposals to conserve, enhance, and promote the biodiversity and geological interest of the natural environment across Fenland.
- 10.33. 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.
- 10.34. Should permission be granted it would be subject to a BNG condition required to be discharged prior to the commencement of development. Due to the

constrained nature of the site, the achievement of the required minimum 10 percent net gain in biodiversity is unlikely to be fully deliverable on site and it is therefore anticipated that off site biodiversity gain provision will be necessary. Given the limited number of biodiversity units required and the relatively common nature of the habitats involved, there is considered to be a high level of confidence that suitable off site provision can be secured.

- 10.35. The submitted Ecological Impact Assessment by Glaven Ecology (ref 231-25-MHC, November 2025) confirms that the site lies within a Site of Special Scientific Interest Impact Risk Zone. However, the development does not fall within any categories requiring consultation with Natural England, the site is not ecologically connected to any designated sites and no impact pathways have been identified. Natural England has raised no objection. The Council's Ecologist has also raised no objection to the proposal, subject to conditions being imposed.
- 10.36. The site is assessed as being of low ecological value, comprising mainly bramble scrub, ruderal vegetation and small areas of grass which would be lost as part of the development. The site lies within a green risk zone for great crested newts and a Rapid Risk Assessment has confirmed that an offence is highly unlikely and no licence is required. Subject to precautionary construction measures, impacts on amphibians are predicted to be neutral.
- 10.37. No evidence of badgers was recorded within the accessible areas of the site, although further survey work is required in the eastern section of the land which was not accessible at the time of survey. No bat roosts were identified on site, although a potential roost feature was recorded in an adjacent off-site tree. Low levels of bat foraging and commuting may occur and, subject to sensitive lighting design, impacts are predicted to be neutral. Nesting opportunities for birds are limited and, subject to vegetation clearance being undertaken outside of the nesting season or following an ecological check, no significant effects are anticipated. Reptiles are considered unlikely to be present.
- 10.38. The submitted report also recommends a range of biodiversity enhancement measures, including species rich grassland, integrated bat boxes, swift bricks and hedgehog access through boundary treatments.
- 10.39. Subject to conditions securing further survey work, mitigation, enhancement and Biodiversity Net Gain, the development is considered acceptable in ecological terms and in accordance with Policy LP19 of the Fenland Local Plan and the Environment Act 2021.

Archaeology

- 10.40. Paragraph 207 of the NPPF states that where a site on which development is proposed includes, or has the potential to include, heritage assets with archaeological interest, local planning authorities should require developers to submit an appropriate desk-based assessment and, where necessary, a field evaluation. Policy LP18 (a – c) requires development proposals to assess the significance of the heritage asset to determine its archaeological interest, assess the impact of the works upon the asset and provide a justification for the works.
- 10.41. The site lies within an area of high archaeological potential on the north eastern edge of the historic settlement of March. The proposed development area is crossed by the Fen Causeway, an important Roman road, and is located close to the known remains of a Romano British settlement, including associated field

systems and watercourses. The County Archaeologist has advised, consistent with previous applications at the site, that a further programme of archaeological investigation and recording is required to establish the presence, extent and condition of any surviving archaeological remains and to determine the need for appropriate mitigation measures prior to development.

Contamination

- 10.42. Policy LP16 of the Fenland Local Plan 2014 seeks to ensure that all development contributes to the delivery and protection of high quality environments across the district. Of particular relevance to contaminated land considerations are criteria (l) and (m), which require development to identify, manage and mitigate against any existing or potential risks arising from pollution, contamination, emissions and ground conditions. The policy further requires that sites are demonstrably suitable for their proposed use, with layout and drainage taking account of any contamination and gas risks from previous uses, and that development does not give rise to significant risks to future occupiers, groundwater or surface waters.
- 10.43. The submitted Goldfinch Environmental Ltd Tier 1 Contaminated Land Risk Assessment (Report Ref: 1036/1) has been reviewed and is acknowledged and accepted. The assessment concludes that the site does not present an unacceptable level of risk and that a further Phase 2 intrusive investigation is not warranted.
- 10.44. Notwithstanding this, the report advises that, should any evidence of unexpected contamination be encountered during groundworks, the affected area must be temporarily isolated and further advice sought from a suitably qualified independent consultant. In such circumstances, a management and mitigation strategy would be required to be submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority prior to the recommencement of works, in accordance with the advice of the Council's Regulatory Services.
- 10.45. Subject to the imposition of an appropriate unexpected contamination condition, should the application be approved, the proposal is considered to be acceptable in contaminated land terms.

PLANNING BALANCE AND CONCLUSION

- 11.1. The site is located outside the defined settlement of March in an 'Elsewhere' location and benefits from limited pedestrian connectivity, which reduces its accessibility to local services and facilities and conflicts with the sustainability aims of Policies LP3 and LP15 of the Fenland Local Plan and paragraph 115 of the NPPF. Notwithstanding this, the site has previously benefited from an outline planning permission for residential development, which is a significant material consideration and carries substantial weight in the overall planning balance.
- 11.2. Policy LP5 sets out the housing targets for the District and the Council has undertaken a full assessment of the Five Year Housing Land Supply in the District and has concluded that the Council is able to demonstrate a supply of specific deliverable sites sufficient to provide for more than Five Years' worth of housing against the Council's identified requirements.
- 11.3. In terms of sustainability, the National Planning Policy Framework states that the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable

development. Achieving sustainable development requires the planning system to pursue three overarching objectives, namely economic, social and environmental, which are interdependent and must be pursued in mutually supportive ways so that opportunities can be taken to secure net gains across each of these objectives.

- 11.4. This approach is supported by Policy LP1 of the Fenland Local Plan and the March Neighbourhood Plan. In respect of the economic objective, it is acknowledged that residential development typically generates economic benefits, particularly during the construction phase. In this instance, the proposal would generate temporary employment during construction and would contribute to the local economy through increased spending in local shops, services and facilities once occupied. While these benefits are modest in scale due to the small number of dwellings proposed, they nevertheless represent a positive contribution to the economic role of sustainable development.
- 11.5. In respect of the social objective, the proposal would contribute a small number of new dwellings to the local housing supply, assisting in meeting housing needs within the district. The provision of single storey dwellings would also offer an appropriate form of accommodation when assessed against the large number of single storey dwellings in the vicinity of the site along Creek Fen to the south and Flaggrass Hill Road to the west.
- 11.6. With regard to the environmental objective, the proposal is considered acceptable in principle in terms of design potential, scale and layout, subject to detailed assessment at the reserved matters stage. Although the backland form of development is not characteristic of the prevailing frontage settlement pattern and therefore conflicts with Policy LP16 (d) in strict terms, the use of single storey dwellings and the limited visibility of the site within the public realm significantly reduces this harm. Landscaping can be secured by condition, and the development has the potential to integrate satisfactorily with its surroundings.
- 11.7. The site lies within Flood Zone 1 and is at low risk of flooding. Subject to conditions, appropriate foul and surface water drainage can be secured in accordance with Policy LP15. The contaminated land assessment confirms that the site is suitable for the proposed use, subject to an unexpected contamination condition.
- 11.8. From an ecological perspective, the site is of low ecological value and, subject to conditions, there would be no unacceptable impacts on designated sites or protected species. The Council's Ecologist has raised no objection and Biodiversity Net Gain, including off site provision where required, can be secured through the statutory condition and associated Biodiversity Gain Plan in accordance with the Environment Act 2021 and Policy LP19.
- 11.9. Overall, the proposal results in conflict with the settlement hierarchy and sustainability objectives of Policy LP3 and with pedestrian accessibility objectives under Policy LP15. However, these harms must be balanced against the material weight afforded to the previously approved residential permission, the limited harm to the appearance of the area, the ability to adequately mitigate technical matters through condition and the modest economic and housing benefits that would arise.
- 11.10. Subject to the imposition of appropriate conditions, the development is capable of being delivered without giving rise to unacceptable impacts in terms of highway

safety, residential amenity, flood risk, drainage, contamination, ecology or landscape. On balance, having regard to the policies of the development plan taken as a whole, the National Planning Policy Framework and all other material considerations, it is concluded that the benefits of the proposal outweigh the identified harms and that planning permission can be granted subject to conditions.

RECOMMENDATION

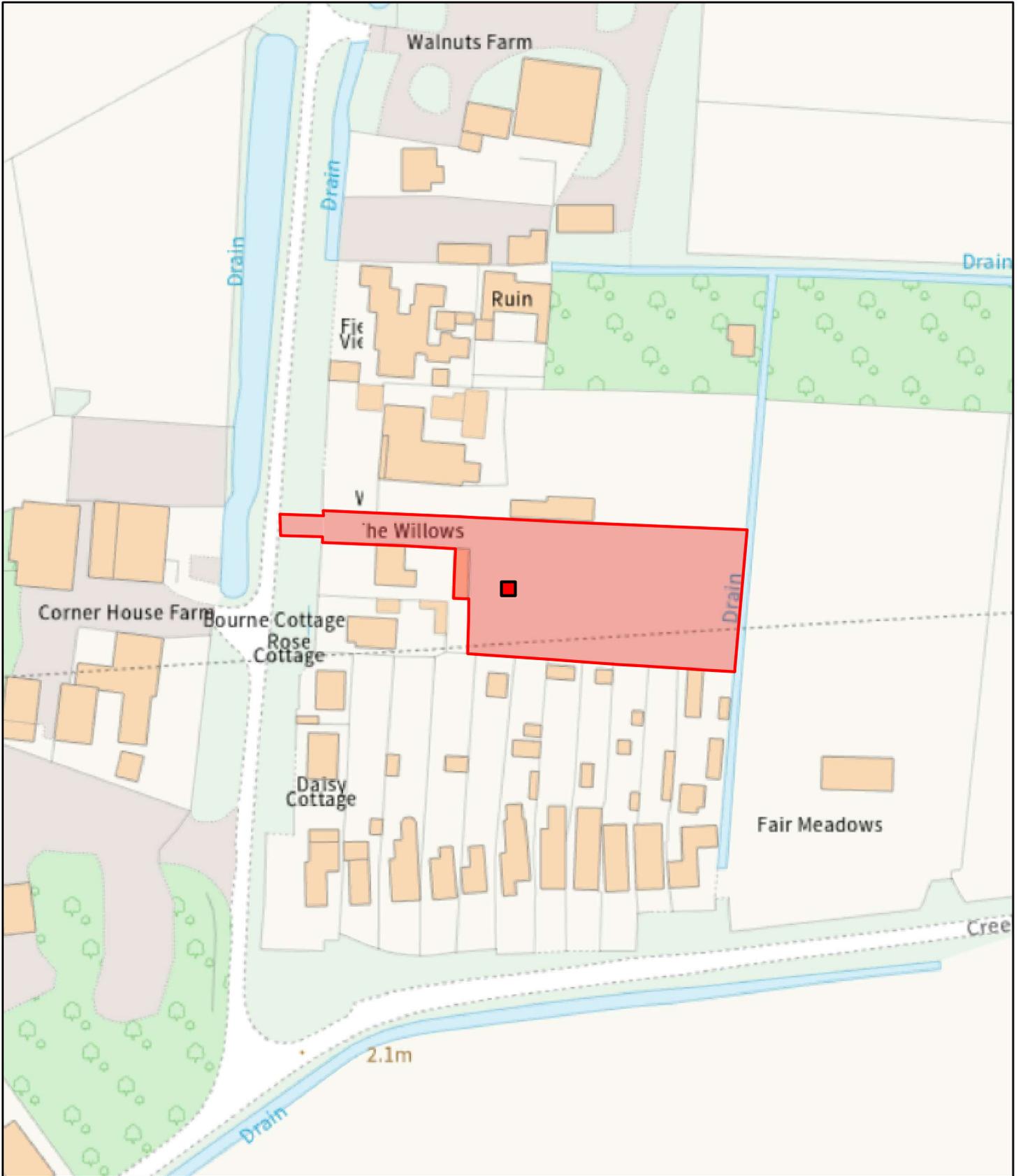
Grant; subject to the following conditions:

1	<p>Approval of the details of:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i. the layout of the site ii. the scale of the building(s); iii. the external appearance of the building(s); iv. the landscaping <p>(hereinafter called "the Reserved Matters") shall be obtained from the Local Planning Authority prior to the commencement of development.</p> <p>Reason - To enable the Local Planning Authority to control the details of the development hereby permitted.</p>
2	<p>Application for approval of the reserved matters shall be made to the Local Planning Authority before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.</p> <p>Reason: To comply with the requirements of Section 92 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as amended by the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004</p>
3	<p>The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of two years from the date of approval of the last of the reserved matters to be approved.</p> <p>Reason: To comply with the requirements of Section 92 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as amended by the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004. Authority to control the details of the development hereby permitted.</p>
4	<p>The development shall not exceed four dwellings, which shall be single storey only comprising of one floor of accommodation.</p> <p>Reason: To ensure that the proposed dwellings preserves the character of the area and does not adversely impact on neighbour amenities, in accordance with Policy LP16 of the Local Development Plan.</p>
5	<p>No development shall take place, including any works of demolition, until a Construction Method Statement has been submitted to, and approved in writing by, the local planning authority. The approved Statement shall be adhered to throughout the construction period. The Statement shall provide for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The parking of vehicles of site operatives and visitors • The proposed working hours on site for demolition and construction. • Loading and unloading of plant and materials • Storage of plant and materials used in constructing the development • Wheel washing facilities

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Measures to control the emission of dust and dirt during construction • A scheme for recycling/disposing of waste resulting from demolition and construction works <p>Reason: In order to ensure that the construction takes place in a suitable manner and to ensure that amenities of existing residents are protected as far as reasonable in accordance with Policies LP2 and LP16 of the Fenland Local Plan.</p>
6	<p>Prior to the commencement of any development, a scheme and timetable for the provision and implementation of foul and surface water drainage shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The use of Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS), or discharge to surface waters or sewers, shall be designed and implemented in accordance with the principles and standards set out in the National Standards for Sustainable Drainage Systems. The approved scheme shall be constructed and completed in accordance with the approved plans and specifications at such time(s) as may be specified in the scheme and shall thereafter be retained in perpetuity.</p> <p>Reason: To ensure a satisfactory method of foul and surface water drainage and to prevent the increased risk of flooding in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework and Policy LP14 of the Fenland Local Plan 2014.</p>
7	<p>No demolition/development shall commence until the applicant has secured the implementation of a programme of archaeological work in accordance with a Written Scheme of Investigation, that has been submitted by the applicant and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.</p> <p>The pre-commencement aspects of archaeological work should include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) Submission of a Written Scheme of Investigation that sets out the methods and timetable for the investigation of archaeological remains in the development area, presents an appropriate outreach element, describes post-fieldwork analysis stages, defines relevant technical and publication reports and indicates archive preparation methods for deposition in an approved archaeological archive storage facility; ii) Timescale for the completion of fieldwork and recording in accordance with the approved Written Scheme of Investigation. <p>Reason: To secure the provision of the investigation and recording of archaeological remains threatened by the development and the reporting and dissemination of the results in accordance with Policy LP18 of the Fenland Local Plan.</p> <p>To enable the inspection of the site by qualified persons for the investigation of archaeological remains in accordance with a written scheme of investigation.</p>
8	<p>The post-fieldwork sections of the archaeology programme shall be fully implemented in accordance with the timetable and provisions of the Written Scheme of Investigation approved under condition 8 above, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Completion of a Post-Excavation Assessment report and an Updated Project Design for the analytical work to be submitted for approval within six months of the completion of fieldwork, unless otherwise agreed in advance with the Local Planning Authority; b) Completion of the approved programme of analysis and

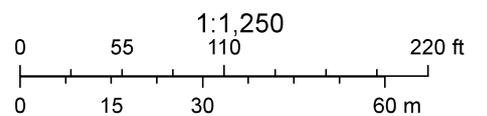
	<p>production of an archive report; submission of a publication synopsis and preparation of a publication report to be completed within two years of the completion of fieldwork, unless otherwise agreed in advance with the Local Planning Authority;</p> <p>c) Preparation of the archaeological archive for display (as appropriate) and deposition at the Cambridgeshire Archaeological Archive Facility or another appropriate store approved by the Local Planning Authority;</p> <p>Reason: To secure satisfactory mitigation measures and conserve the interests of the historic environment in compliance with Policy LP18 of the Fenland Local Plan, adopted May 2014.</p>
9	<p>The approved access and all hardstanding within the site shall be constructed with adequate drainage measures to prevent surface water run-off onto the adjacent public highway and retained in perpetuity.</p> <p>Reason: To prevent surface water discharging to the highway in accordance with policy LP15 of the Fenland Local Plan, adopted May 2014</p>
10	<p>Prior to the commencement of development, a badger survey shall be undertaken and submitted for approval in writing by the LPA. Any identified mitigation, including timing of delivery, shall be implemented in full accordance with the agreed details.</p> <p>Reason: To protect badgers in accordance with the Protection of Badgers Act 1992 and Policy LP19 of the Fenland Local Plan.</p>
11	<p>Prior to the first occupation of the development hereby permitted visibility splays of 2.4 metres by 43 metres, measured from the back edge of the carriageway, shall be provided at the junction of the access road with Flaggrass Hill Road and shall thereafter be maintained free from any obstruction exceeding 0.6m above the level of the adjacent highway carriageway.</p> <p>Reason - In the interest of highway safety in accordance with Policy LP15 of the Fenland Local Plan.</p>
12	<p>All ecological mitigation and enhancement measures set out in the submitted Ecological Impact Assessment carried out by Glaven Ecology (ref 231-25-MHC, November 2025) shall be implemented in full and retained thereafter.</p> <p>Reason: To protect and conserve protected species/habitat in line with policies LP16 and LP19 of the Fenland Local Plan 2014.</p>
13	<p>No vegetation clearance required to facilitate the proposals should be undertaken during the optimum time of year for bird nesting (March to August inclusive), unless nesting birds have been shown to be absent by a suitably qualified person.</p> <p>Reason: To protect nesting birds in accordance with the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 and Policy LP19.</p>
14	<p>Any contamination that is found during the course of construction of the approved development that was not previously identified shall be reported immediately to the Local Planning Authority. Development on the part of the site affected shall be suspended and a risk assessment carried out and submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.</p>

	<p>Where unacceptable risks are found remediation and verification schemes shall be submitted to the Local Planning Authority for approval in writing. These approved schemes shall be carried out before the development is resumed or continued. Following completion of measures identified in the approved remediation scheme, a verification report demonstrating the effectiveness of the remediation scheme carried out must be submitted to the Local Planning Authority for approval in writing.</p> <p>Reason: In the interests of public safety and in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework and Policy LP16 of the Fenland Local Plan 2014.</p>
15	<p>Development may not be begun unless:</p> <p>(a) a biodiversity gain plan has been submitted to the planning authority,</p> <p>and</p> <p>(b) the planning authority has approved the plan.</p> <p>Reason: To ensure compliance with Schedule 7A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (inserted by the Environment</p>
16	<p>The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans and documents</p>



11/11/2025, 4:06:03 PM

 Fenland District Boundary



Copyright on all drawings prepared by Morton & Hall Consulting Limited is their property. Drawings and designs may not be reproduced in part or in whole without their written permission.
 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

PLEASE REFER TO THE ARBORICULTURAL REPORT SUBMITTED WITH THE APPLICATION

NEW IMPROVED ACCESS TO SITE OF 5.5m x 10m LAID TO FALL AWAY FROM FLAGGRASS HILL ROAD ALL TO CAMBRIDGESHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL GUIDELINES



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

REVISIONS	DATE

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Fenland District Council Building Design Awards Winner

CLIENT: Mr D Upton

PROJECT: The Piggeries
 Flaggrass Hill Road
 March
 Cambridgeshire PE15 0BY

TITLE: Proposed Site Plan
 INDICATIVE LAYOUT

DRAWN: MH	DATE OF ISSUE:
CHECKED:	
DATE: September 2025	DRAWING NUMBER: H10375/02
SCALE: As Shown	



PROPOSED SITE PLAN (1:200)
 INDICATIVE LAYOUT

1:200
 0 5 10 15