
F/YR19/0809/F

Applicant: Mr N Bowers

**Agent : Mr Gareth Edwards
Swann Edwards Architecture Limited**

6 Bridge Lane, Wimblington, March, Cambridgeshire

Erect 1 dwelling (2-storey 5-bed with attached 4-bay garage and swimming pool to rear), 2.0m high (max height) wall with railings and gates to front and the temporary siting of 2 x static caravans involving the demolition of existing dwelling and garage

Officer recommendation: Refuse

Reason for Committee: Number of representations received contrary to Officers recommendation.

1 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 The application seeks permission for a replacement dwelling.
- 1.2 The proposal would enable the effective use of land for a residential property following the removal of an existing, relatively restrictive dwelling and would provide a high quality living environment for future occupiers which would not compromise the amenity of neighbouring occupiers or result in any adverse highway impacts.
- 1.3 However, the proposed dwelling, due to its siting, design, scale and massing would fail to respect the settlement pattern, scale of local built form and general character of the area.
- 1.4 As a result, the development would adversely impact on the character and appearance of the area contrary to policy LP12 Part C and LP16(d) of the Fenland Local Plan (2014), DM3 of the Delivering & Protecting High Quality Environments in Fenland Supplementary Planning Document (2014) and Chapter 12 of the National Planning Policy Framework.
- 1.5 The recommendation is to refuse the application.

2 SITE DESCRIPTION

- 2.1 The site comprises an established residential plot with a single storey dwelling and large rear garden located along Bridge Lane.
- 2.2 The site is straddled on either side by a mixture of residential properties which in the immediate area run predominantly along the southern side of Bridge Lane, with an area of agricultural land immediately opposite to the north.
- 2.3 The dwellings on Bridge Lane are characterised by relatively large scale individual designs. However they are within spacious plots and many feature mature

boundary planting, which combined with the open green surroundings and the single lane road, give the locality an informal rural character.

2.4 The site lies in Flood Zone 1 (low risk).

3 PROPOSAL

- 3.1 The application seeks planning permission for the demolition of the existing bungalow and the erection of a 2-storey dwelling with attached garage block and rear projecting element to incorporate a swimming pool. A 2m high boundary wall is also proposed along the boundaries with entrance gates and railings at the frontage. At the time of the Officer's site visit, the boundary walls were partially built.
- 3.2 The dwelling occupies a footprint of c.460m² with a height of 9.5m to the main dwelling, a height of 6.4m for the garage area and 5.6m for the rear-projecting swimming pool element. The dwelling is proposed to be finished in a light buff facing brick (Vandersanden Zena Facing Bricks) with slate roof tiles.
- 3.3 The dwelling incorporates a mixture of features including stone cills and lintels, sash windows and pillars at the entrance and at the rear.
- 3.4 The existing access is proposed to be utilised which then opens up into a spacious driveway leading to the garages and gated access at the sides of the dwelling to the rear garden. The rear garden is proposed to be laid to lawn with the existing rear boundary hedge proposed to be retained. An area of paddock and stables to the south east associated with the dwelling are proposed to remain with no works proposed to this element within this submission.
- 3.5 The applicant also seeks permission for the siting of 2 mobile homes to use as a residence whilst construction of the dwelling is carried out.
- 3.6 Full plans and associated documents for this application can be found at: <https://www.fenland.gov.uk/publicaccess/>

4 SITE PLANNING HISTORY

Reference	Description	Decision	Date
F/YR19/0617/F	Erect a 2-storey 5-bed dwelling with attached 4-bay garage and swimming pool to rear a 2.0m high (max height) wall and gates to front and the temporary siting of 2 x static caravans involving the demolition of existing dwelling and garage 6 Bridge Lane Wimblington March Cambridgeshire PE15 0RS	Withdrawn	05/09/2019
F/YR03/1160/F	Erection of a detached single garage and access to stable/paddocks 6 Bridge Lane Wimblington Cambs PE15 0RS	Granted	31/10/2003
F/96/0371/F	Erection of a single-storey rear extension to existing bungalow including alterations to the existing roof 6 Bridge Lane Wimblington Cambs PE15 0RS	Granted	27/09/1996
F/94/0368/F	Erection of a 4-bed bungalow with detached double garage 6 Bridge Lane Wimblington Cambs PE15 0RS	Granted	10/07/1994

5 CONSULTATIONS

Wimblington Parish Council

- 5.1 No objection but has concerns about the environmental impact of so many vehicles being allowed to stay on the property. Would also like a robust and workable plan in place for the removal of the 2 temporary caravans, which must be removed after the house build is completed, which should include the possible use of cranes to take them from the site.

FDC Environmental Protection

- 5.2 Raises no objection but requests that the unsuspected contaminated land condition is included in any approval in view of the demolition element of the proposal.

CCC Highways (LHA)

- 5.3 Raises no objection subject to conditions securing access layout and the location of gates no closer than 6m from the highway and inward opening.

Local Residents/Interested Parties

- 5.4 22 letters of support received from local residents raising the points;
- Plans are well thought-out with consideration for neighbours and the area
 - The build will be a great asset – compared to the existing
 - The site is very large and suited to a prestigious property of this size
 - Will enhance the area
 - The village needs quality development such as this
 - Homes today should be adequate for bigger families
 - Swimming pools are a fantastic idea
 - Good architectural design in appearance and layout
 - Policy compliant amenity space
 - Not overdeveloped for the land it is sited on
 - Not overbearing
 - The development for 3a to 9 Bridge Lane is for 7 substantial dwellings which is no different this application.
 - Will increase house values
 - No implications to view of Bridge Lane
 - Will help with flow of traffic rather than over-developing the site
 - In-keeping with 8a Bridge Lane (5 bedroom property)
 - Hopes the Council encourages executive-style homes to persuade businesses and developers to relocate to this area and enhance the local economy
 - Applicant has worked to reduce impact on adjacent property
 - Will not cause much noise or traffic
 - The plans are unique to the area

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

7.1 National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

Para 8: 3 strands of sustainability

Para 11: Presumption in favour of sustainable development

Para 127: Well-designed development

Para 130: Permission should be refused for development of poor design that fails to take opportunities for improving the character and quality of an area.

7.2 National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG)

National Design Guide

(Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, 2019):

- Context
- Identity

7.3 Fenland Local Plan 2014 (FLP);

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

LP5: Meeting Housing need

LP12: Rural development

LP15: Facilitating the creation of a More Sustainable Transport Network in Fenland

LP16: Delivering and Protecting High Quality Environments across the District

7.4 Supplementary Planning Documents/ Guidance:

- Delivering & Protecting High Quality Environments in Fenland SPD (2014)
- The Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Minerals and Waste Core Strategy (2011) which includes the RECAP CCC Waste Management Design Guide SPD (2012)

8 KEY ISSUES

- **Principle of Development**
- **Impact on the character of the area**
- **Residential amenity**
- **Highways**
- **Other matters**

9 BACKGROUND

9.1 This application follows the withdrawal of a previous application for development of the site for 1 dwelling (F/YR18/0617/F) which was withdrawn following concerns raised by officers primarily over the scale, massing and design of the development and including the loss of hedgerow along the rear boundary.

9.2 Following a meeting with the applicant's agent, the scheme has been amended slightly through shifting of the dwelling away from No.6a by a further 1.4m, the retention of the rear hedge and introduction of railings to the front boundary wall.

10 ASSESSMENT

10.1 The site is considered to lie outside the settlement of Wimblington due to its detachment from the continuous built frontage of this settlement – having regard to criteria under policy LP12 Part A which sets out the definitions for developed footprint (see also F/YR15/0281/F and F/YR15/0798/O). Notwithstanding this,

Policy LP12 Part C supports the principle of replacement dwellings in locations outside of the developed footprint subject to 6 criteria as follows;

- (a) The residential use of the original dwelling has not been abandoned; and
- (b) The original dwelling is not important to retain due to its character and/or contribution to the landscape; and
- (c) The original dwelling is not a temporary or mobile structure, such as a caravan; and
- (d) It is of a design appropriate to its rural setting; and
- (e) It is of a similar size and scale to the original dwelling; and
- (f) It is located on the footprint of the original dwelling unless an alternative position within the curtilage would enhance the setting of the building on the plot and have no adverse impact on the wider setting.

10.2 In respect of (a) whilst the dwelling appears to be currently uninhabitable, it is considered that it has not been abandoned. Nor is it considered that the existing permanent dwelling important to retain (b and c). In respect of criteria d to e; these are considered in detail below as they relate to the impact of the development on the character and appearance of the area.

Impact on the character of the area

10.3 Properties along this part of Bridge Lane are generally set within good sized gardens, proportionate to the size of the properties, mainly being family-sized dwellings. There is spacing between the dwellings that enables privacy and maintains the informal rural appearance of the area.

10.4 The proposed dwelling occupies a footprint of c.460m² compared to the c.60m² footprint of the dwelling proposed to be demolished. Whilst it is acknowledged that dwellings in the vicinity do vary in style and size, with the application site dwelling being notably smaller than those around it, average footprints of dwellings along Bridge Lane generally do not exceed 100m² to 200m² with dwelling widths between 10m and 13m in comparison to the 460m² footprint and c.30m overall width of the application dwelling. In this regard, the proposed dwelling would accommodate a footprint significantly bigger than the existing dwelling and substantially larger than those in the locality. Likewise, building heights in the immediate vicinity are notably lower than the application dwelling with the height of No.4 at c.7.5m, No.6a at c.5.5m and 8a at c.7.8m, compared to the 9.5m ridge height proposed. There is therefore clear conflict with criteria (e) of LP12 Part C.

10.5 It is noted that the application site is substantially larger than those adjacent. However, this has historically remained relatively undeveloped and a formal and informal boundary line of rear gardens is evident with the boundaries set back between 30 and 40m from the highway. Whilst properties within this part of the village vary in terms of design, age and plot size they are arranged in a distinct linear manner resulting in a prevailing character of a linear settlement with little in-depth development. This distinctive pattern of development contributes significantly to the character of the area.

10.6 The development is pushed rearward, away from the highway with the dwelling going well beyond the rear garden line of existing dwellings which is uncharacteristic to this part of Bridge Lane and would disrupt the general pattern of development in this location. Whilst it is acknowledged that scope to locate a new dwelling on the footprint of the existing dwelling may be slightly constrained due to the size of the existing dwelling and narrowness of the access; nonetheless the location of the dwelling, so far away from the existing footprint, introduces a

discordant in-depth feature into the street scene – emphasised with the garage wing extending behind No. 4. This results in conflict with criteria (f) of LP12 Part C.

- 10.7 This physical disruption of the settlement pattern is further compounded by the incongruous scale, massing and design of the dwelling. As noted, the dwelling is substantially larger than those adjacent and found along Bridge Lane and this, combined with the mass of built form would be noticeable from immediate views and as far as the A141 when approaching south where the current simple, linear arrangement of dwellings can be clearly seen along the lane. The development would be further highlighted by the use of light facing brick which would draw the eye to the development which would appear visually dominant and incongruous in the street scene contrary to criteria (d) of LP12 Part C.
- 10.8 Notwithstanding the clear conflicts with LP12 Part C the development is considered to conflict with the aims of LP16(d) and the National Design Guide in that it fails to make a positive contribution to local distinctiveness and character of the area and does not reinforce local identity due to the incongruous scale and massing, appearance and layout which does not reflect the informal rural character of the lane and its settlement pattern.
- 10.9 Whilst it is recognised that the development incorporates some high quality features, the proposal conflicts with the context of the site location and the overall character and identity of the area.

Residential amenity

- 10.10 No objections are raised by immediate neighbours as to any adverse amenity impacts arising from the development and indeed the immediate neighbour has offered their support for the development. Having regard to the layout of the development relative to neighbouring properties, it is considered that residential amenity would not be compromised, for example through overlooking, loss of light or negative outlook. As such, the scheme accords with the aims of LP16(e).
- 10.11 In addition, the development would afford the future occupiers adequate private amenity space and a pleasant environment in accordance with the aims of LP2 and LP16(h) of the FLP.

Highways

- 10.12 The LHA has raised no objection to the scheme subject to conditions securing access delivery and appropriate gate location. It is concluded that the development would achieve safe and effective access for future users and would not compromise highway safety in accordance with policy LP15 of the FLP.

Other matters

Parish Council comments

- 10.13 The comments from the Parish Council are noted. In respect of the removal of the caravans, it is Officers understanding that these are to be removed upon completion of the development and a condition could be imposed to ensure this is undertaken. The exact logistics of doing so would be a matter for the developer but there doesn't appear to be any constraint in achieving this.
- 10.14 In respect of environmental impacts of vehicles at the property, this would be a matter for the applicant to ensure that they do not cause contamination contrary to environmental law which fall outside of planning legislation. Furthermore, the storage of vehicles would need to be incidental to the enjoyment of the dwelling.

Resident comments

- 10.15 Whilst some of the resident comments have been addressed above, the following require attention;

The development for 3a to 9 Bridge Lane is for 7 substantial dwellings which is no different this application.

- 10.16 This development secured Outline approval with no matters committed. As such, at this time, layout, appearance and scale have not been considered. Notwithstanding this, the site context being a back-land brownfield site for a former commercial use is notably different in context to this application.

Will increase house values

- 10.17 With regards to matters related to the impact on property values, the courts have taken the view that planning is concerned with land use in the public interest, so that the protection of purely private interests such as the impact of a development on the value of a neighbouring property could not be a material consideration.

Will help with flow of traffic rather than over-developing the site

- 10.18 Having regard to the planning history of the site, there has not been any proposal for more than 1 dwelling on the site. As such any traffic impacts for such a proposal have not been explored.

In-keeping with 8a Bridge Lane (5 bedroom property)

- 10.19 8a Bridge Lane is substantially smaller than this proposal (c.120m² footprint including garage and a ridge height of 7.8m compared to 460m² footprint and 9.5m height as proposed) and of a different style, design and layout. It is considered that the dwellings are not comparable in this regard.

Hopes the Council encourages executive-style homes to persuade businesses and developers to relocate to this area and enhance the local economy

- 10.20 There is no planning definition of “executive-style” housing either nationally or locally and therefore it is not possible to assess the demand or delivery for such housing in the district. Notwithstanding this, as noted above the principle of a dwelling in this location is accepted subject to satisfying the relevant policies of the development plan.

11 CONCLUSIONS

- 11.1 The proposal would enable the effective use of land for a residential property following the removal of an existing, relatively restrictive dwelling and would provide a high quality living environment for future occupiers which would not compromise the amenity of neighbouring occupiers or result in any adverse highway impacts.

- 11.2 However, the proposed dwelling, which is set back away from the highway and incorporates a substantial frontage which wraps behind the adjacent dwelling fails to respect the distinctive frontage, linear build line of this settlement. Furthermore, the proposed dwelling is substantial in scale and massing which is at odds with the more modest scale and design of development in this rural area. The development is also proposed to be finished externally in a light-buff facing brick which is uncharacteristic to the area and which would further emphasise its incongruous scale, massing and in-depth positioning on the street scene.

- 11.3 As a result, the development would adversely impact on the settlement pattern of the area and would ultimately fail to make a positive contribution to the local

distinctiveness and character of the local built environment contrary to Policy LP12 Part C and LP16(d) of the Fenland Local Plan (2014), DM3 of the Delivering & Protecting High Quality Environments in Fenland Supplementary Planning Document (2014) and Chapter 12 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

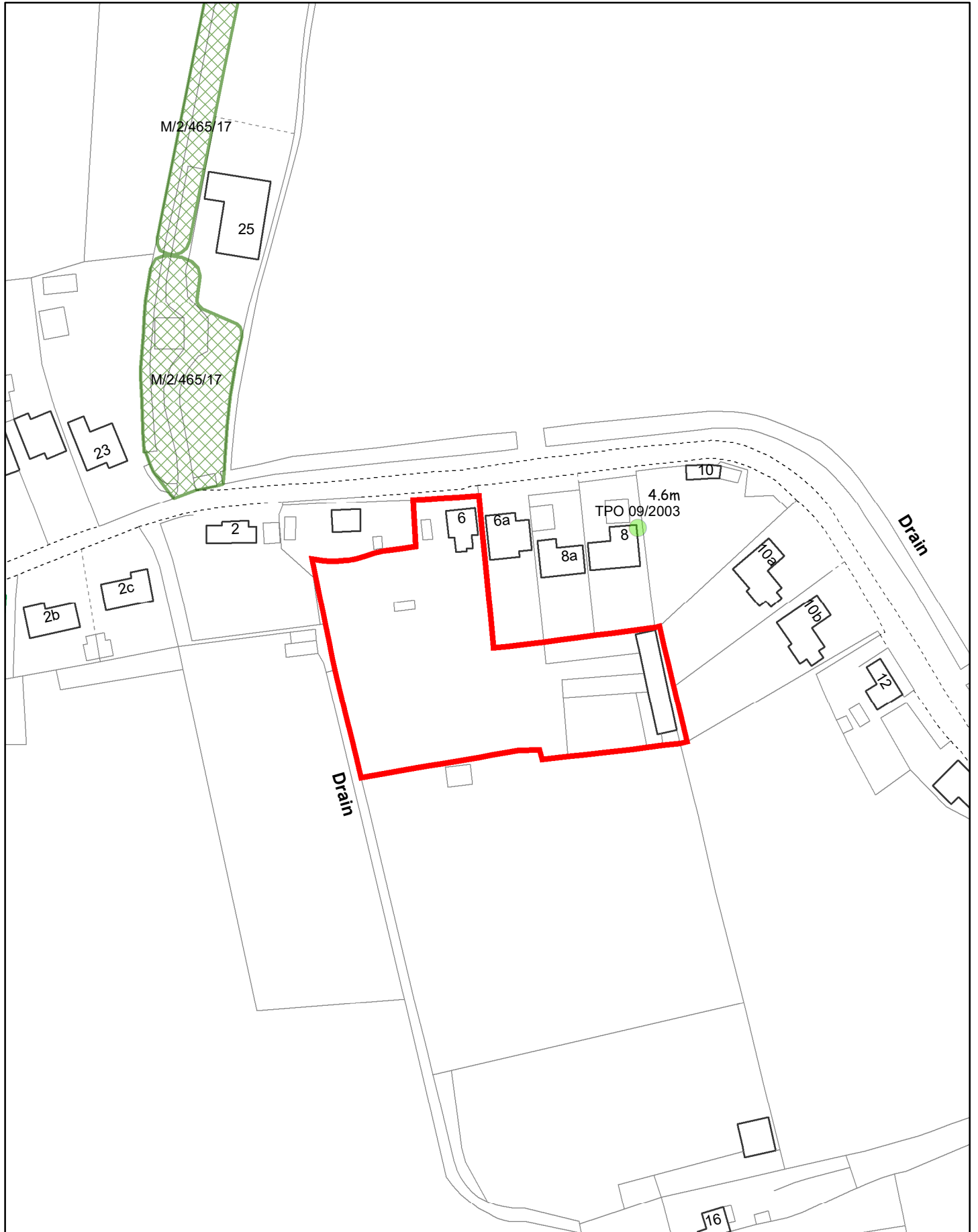
- 11.4 Whilst it is acknowledged that the applicant has made some amendments to the previous scheme following proactive discussion, these amendments have not been sufficient overcome the fundamental concerns over general scale and massing of the development. It is considered that the benefits of the scheme do not outweigh the substantial harm identified.

12 RECOMMENDATION

Refuse for the following reason;

1. The proposed dwelling by reason of its in-depth position and width which extends behind the adjacent dwelling to the west fails to respect the distinctive frontage linear pattern of development. Furthermore the dwelling's large scale and massing is at odds with the more modest scale and mass of development in this rural area. The development is also proposed to be finished externally in a light-buff facing brick which is uncharacteristic to the area and which would further emphasize the incongruous siting, scale and massing.

As a result, the development would adversely impact on the settlement pattern of the area and would ultimately fail to make a positive contribution to the local distinctiveness and character of the local built environment contrary to policy LP12 Part C and LP16(d) of the Fenland Local Plan (2014), DM3 of the Delivering & Protecting High Quality Environments in Fenland Supplementary Planning Document (2014) and Chapter 12 of the National Planning Policy Framework.



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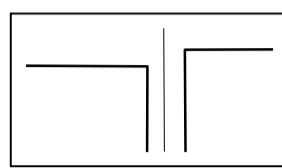
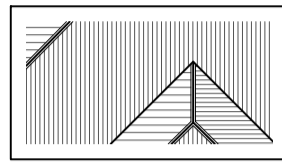
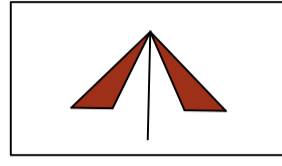
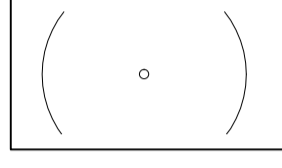
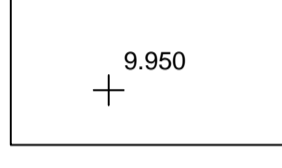
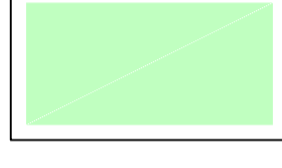


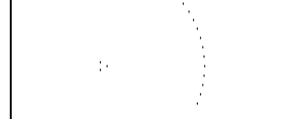
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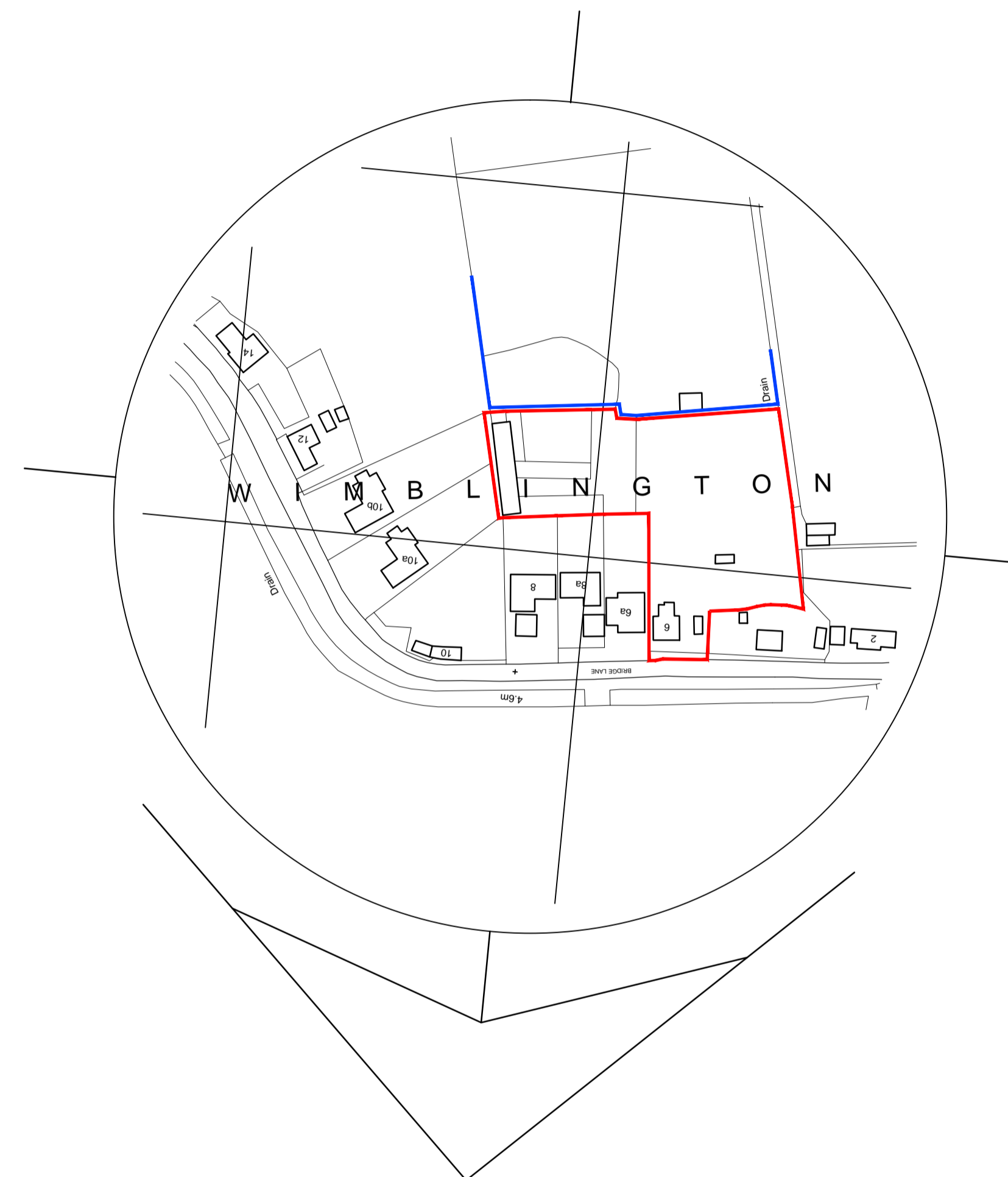
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 4. This drawing is to be read in conjunction with all relevant engineers and specialist sub-contractors drawings and specifications.
 5. Any discrepancies are to be brought to the designers attention.

SITE PLAN KEY

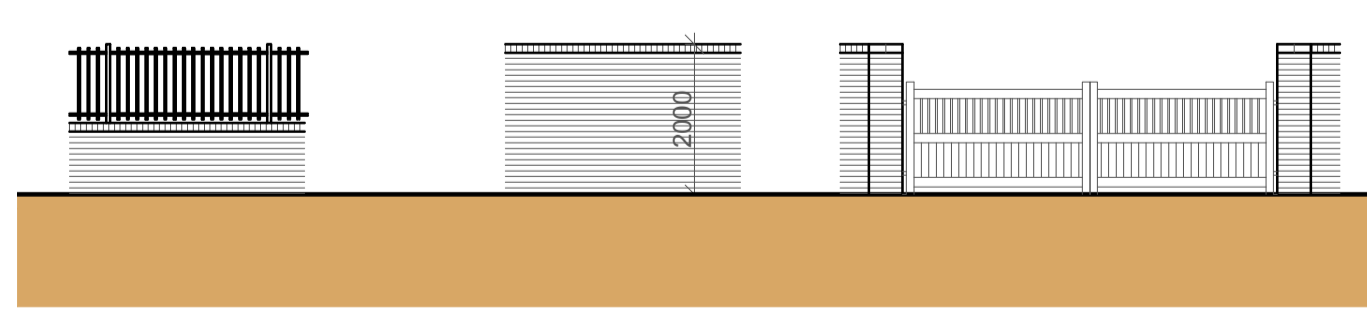
-  Buildings taken from OS map
-  Proposed building
-  Site access
-  Approximate position of existing vegetation and trees
-  Existing site levels
-  Proposed vegetation and trees
-  Proposed gravel
-  Proposed grass
-  Indicates existing features on site to be demolished



Site Plan
Scale: 1:250



Location Plan
Scale: 1:1250



Boundary Wall & Gate Elevation
Scale: 1:100

Revisions	
D	Sept 2019 Revised for new application

Status
FOR APPROVAL

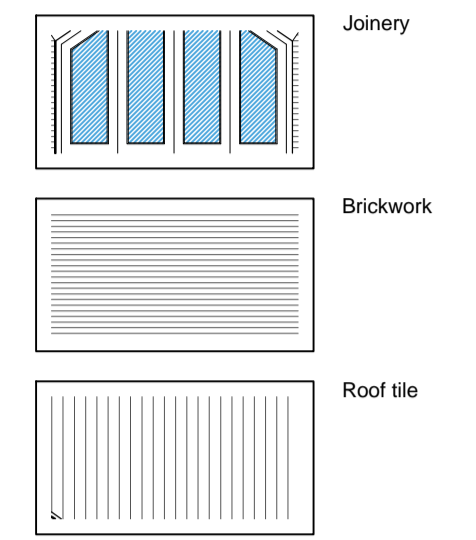
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ARCHITECTURE

Swann Edwards Architecture Limited, Swann Edwards Architecture, Black Barn, Fen Road, Guyhirn, Wisbech, Cambs, PE13 4AA.
t 01945 450634 e info@swannedwards.co.uk w www.swannedwards.co.uk

Job Title Proposed Development 6 Bridge Lane, Wimblington, March, Cambs For: Mr and Mrs Bowers	Date June 2019	Drawn by JRB Checked by GE
Drawing Title Planning Drawing Site Plan & Location Plan	Job No. SE-1231 Dwg No. PP1000	Sheet Size A1 Revision D

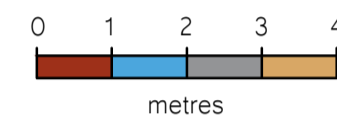
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ELEVATION KEY



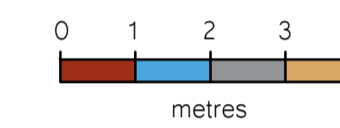
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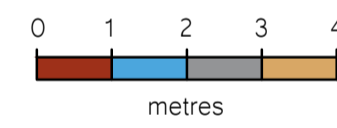
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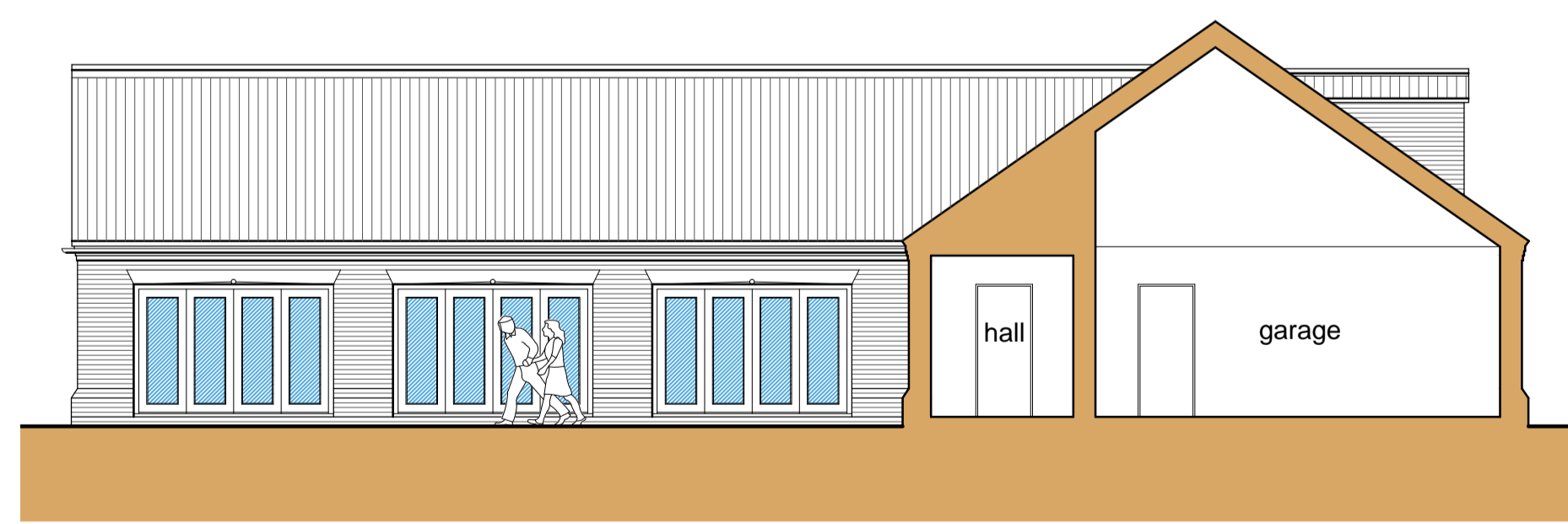
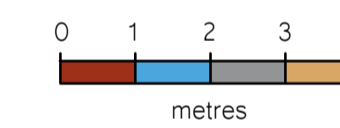
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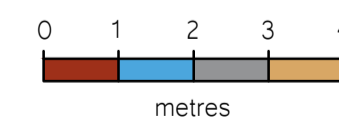
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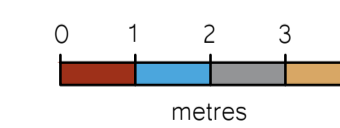
Section A-A

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Section B-B

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Status
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Proposed Development 6 Bridge Lane, Wimblington, March, Cambs For: Mr and Mrs Bowers	Job Title Date June 2019	Drawn by JRB Checked by GE
Drawing Title Planning Drawing Proposed Elevations	Job No. SE-1231 Dwg No. PP2100	Sheet Size A1 Revision