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**F/YR25/0036/PIP**

**Applicant: Mr Daniel Samuel**

**Agent :**

**Land South Of Poppyfields, Wimblington Road, Manea, Cambridgeshire**

**Permission in principle to erect up to 9 x self-build dwellings**

**Officer recommendation: Refuse**

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

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**Government Planning Guarantee**

**Statutory Target Date For Determination: 12 February 2025**

**EOT in Place:** No, this was requested but not agreed

**EOT Expiry:** N/A

**Application Fee:** £5030

**Risk Statement:**

**This application must be determined by 30<sup>th</sup> April 2025 otherwise the Council is required to refund the fee of £5030. The application is already out of time and will therefore negatively affect the performance figures.**

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**1 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

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| <p>1.1 This application seeks 'Permission in Principle' (PiP) for residential development of up to 9 dwellings, where only in principle issues are assessed, namely the location, use and amount of development. All matters of detail would be subject to a Technical Details application should this submission be successful and accordingly, matters raised by consultees may not be addressed at this time.</p> <p>1.2 This site is considered to be located beyond the established settlement of Manea and development of this site would introduce a formal, in-depth, estate type development into the open countryside, which does not respect the rural character, it would result in an unacceptable urbanisation and set a precedent for future development, further eroding the open character of this area.</p> <p>1.3 The site is not considered to be sustainably linked to even the most basic facilities, there is no footpath along Wimblington Road, a 60mph road with no street lighting and there are no bus stops in the vicinity of the site. Hence there is no scope for the use of modes of active travel or public transport to reach essential services, and future residents would have no option but to use private modes of transport.</p> <p>1.4 The site lies wholly within Flood Zone 3 and the application is not accompanied by a sequential test and as such insufficient assessment has been undertaken</p> |
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and inadequate information submitted to demonstrate that it is not possible for the development to be located on a site with a lower risk of flooding

- 1.5 The application site is approximately 2.3km from the Ouse Washes Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), Special Protection Area (SPA), Special Area of Conservation (SAC) and Ramsar site and may provide functional land that is important to the maintenance of populations of Whooper and Bewick's swans. The application is not supported by any ecological evidence and as such insufficient information has been submitted to inform the required Habitat Regulations Assessment.
- 1.6 The application site is indicated as being in an area of potential deep peat, and insufficient information has been submitted to verify the actual soil conditions, as such the application has failed to demonstrate that a development on this site would not impact deep peat with the potential for carbon release.
- 1.7 As such, the application is recommended for refusal.

## **2 SITE DESCRIPTION**

- 2.1 The site comprises approximately 0.99ha of agricultural (paddock) land located to the south of the dwelling 'Poppyfields' and to the northwest of the settlement of Manea.
- 2.2 The site is predominantly grassland, with some mounded soil areas, access into the site appears to be gravel, leading to a further area of hardstanding (neither of which appear to have the benefit of planning permission). The site is bounded by low post and rail fencing and has overhead cables and associated easement which bisects the site. It is located in Flood Zone 3, the highest risk of flooding and parts of the site are indicated to be high to medium risk of surface water flooding. There is a public footpath that runs along the ditch on the eastern side of the site.

## **3 PROPOSAL**

- 3.1 The 'Permission in Principle' (PiP) application is for residential development of up to 9 self-build dwellings. The current proposal is the first part of the permission in principle application, which only assesses the principle issues namely:
  - (1) location,
  - (2) use; and
  - (3) amount of development proposed,
- 3.2 This seeks to establish whether the site is suitable in principle. Should this application be successful, the applicant would have to submit a Technical Details application covering all other detailed material planning considerations. The approval of PiP alone does not constitute the grant of planning permission.
- 3.3 Full plans and associated documents for this application can be found at:

## 4 SITE PLANNING HISTORY

None of relevance to the site itself however the following relate to Poppyfields:

F/YR10/0510/F	Removal of condition 2 of planning permission F/97/0428/F relating to agricultural occupancy	Granted 318/2010
F/YR01/0060/F	Conversion of existing garage to office, utility room and garden store and erection of detached double garage	Granted 7/3/2001
F/97/0428/F	Erection of a 2-bed detached 2-storey dwelling with attached double garage	Granted 22/10/1997

## 5 CONSULTATIONS

### 5.1 Parish Council

*Object:*

*Poor access*

*On a dangerous bend*

*Rear land development*

*Not conducive to the street scene*

*In Flood zone*

*Sets a precedent*

*No 106 provision*

### 5.2 Cambridgeshire County Council Archaeology

*I am writing with regards to the archaeological implications of the above referenced application. The proposed development is in an area of archaeological potential to the north of the settlement of Manae, but following the 'raised' fen island that stretches away from the main settlement to the north west. These area of raised ground surrounded by deeper fen deposits are known foci for archaeological activity particularly in the prehistoric and Roman Periods. Our records support this, although most archaeological investigations previously undertaken have been further south within the main settlement, our records indicate the presence of a Bronze age Barrow (or burial mound) within the vicinity (Cambridgeshire Historic Environment Record ref.05969), as well as Bronze Age Finds (CHER 05970). Just to the north of the proposed site Mesolithic Flint scatters have been recorded (CHER 05971), and further to the northwest more Bronze Age Barrows have been record (CHER 07806, 05964).*

*We are content that no works are required prior to determination of an application and consequently we wish to raise no objections for this application to secure Planning In Principle, however we would request to be consulted on any future planning application for development within the redline area indicated, with the expectation that a condition on development could be secured at Technical Details stage.*

### 5.3 Cambridgeshire County Council Highways (24/1/25)

*On the basis of the information submitted, from the perspective of the Development Management Team, I consider the proposed development is acceptable.*

#### **Comments**

*This development is accessed off a private drive which has a suitable vehicle junction arrangement for this number of dwellings. The proposal shows a single track road leading to the development past this junction which includes a vehicle waiting area. There is no passing places along this track. However, I do not believe this to be of concern to the highways authority as drivers will be able to see on coming vehicles and wait for them to pass at either end.*

*Although, I would recommend that the CCC Rights of Way Team are consulted as Footpath Number. 15 appears to run along this track.*

#### **5.4 Cambridgeshire County Council Highways (12/2/25)**

The following comments were made to a local resident who raised concerns to the LHA regarding the access:

*The development site access with the highway was investigated before the response was submitted. It was found that the existing vehicle access is sufficient for the proposed development and there has been no police recorded accidents within the last 5 years in this location / near vicinity, the visibility from this access point is also acceptable. As such the highway authority has no grounds to object or recommend the refusal of this proposed development. Should the planning authority wish to object on highways grounds it is their prerogative as the legally responsible authority. However, the highway authority can only respond to any application with the data available to them at the time of submission.*

#### **5.5 Cambridgeshire County Council Definitive Map Team**

*Public footpath No. 3, Manea runs along the access to the development site. To view the location of the footpath please view our interactive map online which can be found at <http://my.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/myCambridgeshire.aspx>.*

- The application proposes to change the surface of the Manea Public Footpath 3 with a sustainable permeable surface. The applicant cannot change the surface of a public right of way without authorisation, our Change of Surface Authorisation Form can be found here: <https://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/asset-library/prow-change-of-surface-authorisation-request-v1.0.docx> All proposals that would involve a change to the surface of any part of a public right of way in Cambridgeshire are now required to follow an authorisation process. This Policy was approved on 7 March 2023 and sits within the Highway Operational Standards at Appendix T. Highway policies and capital maintenance programme - Cambridgeshire County Council*
- In reference to page 2 of the supporting statement, the public right of way is a footpath only, and is not suitable for cyclists.*
- There is no legally defined and recorded width for Public Footpath No. 3, Manea, which abuts the development. Where there is no legally defined width for a public right of way, we are not able to advise what the width would be. As the dimensions are not known, we cannot guarantee that the applicant would not be encroaching upon the highway. The applicant therefore would proceed with any development that might affect the highway at their own risk.*

*Whilst the Definitive Map Team have no objection to the proposals, the above information remains pertinent and should be considered by the applicant.*

## *Informatives*

*Should you be minded to grant planning permission we would be grateful that the following informatives are included:*

- Public footpath No. 3, Manea must remain open and unobstructed at all times. Building materials must not be stored on Public Rights of Way and contractors' vehicles must not be parked on it (it is an offence under s 137 of the Highways Act 1980 to obstruct a public Highway).*
- The Public footpath must not be used to access the development site unless the applicant is sure they have lawful authority to do so (it is an offence under S34 of the Road Traffic Act 1988 to drive on a Public [ROW] without lawful authority)*
- No alteration to the footpath's surface is permitted without our consent (it is an offence to damage the surface of a public footpath under s 1 of the Criminal Damage Act 1971).*
- Landowners are reminded that it is their responsibility to maintain boundaries, including trees, hedges and fences adjacent to Public Rights of way, and that any transfer of land should account for any such boundaries (s154 Highways Act 1980).*
- The granting of planning permission does not entitle a developer to obstruct a Public Right of Way (Circular 1/09 para 7.1).*
- It is the responsibility of the Applicant to ensure that any works which may result in a material loss of established vegetation and/or damage to existing ecosystems (including potentially both habitats and protected species) within the existing public right of way or adjoining land, comply with relevant legislation and that any supplementary permits or permissions are secured prior to undertaking their public rights of way works.*
- If temporary closures are required during construction work, this requires a Temporary Traffic Regulation Order (TTRO). Please apply to the Street Works Team, further information regarding this can be found on the County Council's website at <https://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/residents/travel-roads-and-parking/roads-and-pathways/highway-licences-and-permits/>.*

### **5.6 Environmental Health (FDC)**

*The Environmental Health Team note and accept the submitted information and have 'No Objections' to the proposal, as it is unlikely to have a detrimental effect on local air quality, adversely impact the local amenity due to excessive artificial lighting or be affected by ground contamination.*

*In the event that Permission in Principle (PIP) is granted and a further application for the site is submitted in the future, this service may recommend a condition on working time restrictions during the construction phase due to the close proximity to existing noise sensitive receptors.*

### **5.7 Environment Agency**

*Thank you for your consultation dated 20 January 2025. We have reviewed the documents as submitted and in principle we have no objection to this planning application.*

*The proposed development is located within our Hazard Mapping area. We expect a Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) to be submitted with the Technical Details consent that highlights the flood risk associated on site and demonstrates that the development is compatible and in line with local and national planning policies, including the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).*

## **5.8 Middle Level Commissioners IDB**

*Further to previous correspondence with your authority and in view of the continuing problems in the area the Board has requested that the Commissioners write to your authority to express concern and advise that it wishes to oppose this planning application until a suitable solution, that meets the Boards requirements, has been reached.*

*Items of concern include, but are not limited to:*

*A. The area has a history of poor drainage and localised flooding some of which is unsubstantiated or has not been formally reported. However, your Council will have noted the concerns received from the members of the public which specifically refer to this issue.*

*B. Treated foul effluent water discharges into the Boards system via Manea Town Lots WRC. However, it is noted that in recent months the Environment Agency have objected to developments intending to use the WRC stating that “.. the discharge is exceeding the limits set for its environmental permit to discharge treated flows to a surface waterbody which in this case is the drain under the jurisdiction of the Manea and Welney Internal Drainage Board which forms part of the Old Bedford and Middle Level catchment”.*

*As a result, the Board will not recommend the issuing of consents to the discharge of either surface or treated foul effluent into watercourses in its District until these matters are resolved to its requirements.*

*A more detailed response is currently being prepared and will endeavour to do this before the weekend.*

## **5.9 Natural England**

**SUMMARY OF NATURAL ENGLAND'S ADVICE**

**FURTHER INFORMATION REQUIRED TO DETERMINE IMPACTS ON DESIGNATED SITES**

*As submitted, the application could have potential significant effects on Ouse Washes Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), Special Protection Area (SPA), Special Area of Conservation (SAC) and Ramsar site. Further information is required in order to determine the significance of these impacts and the scope for mitigation.*

*The following information is required:*

- LPA's Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) screening decision*
- Ecologically sensitive design requirements*
- ALC soil survey, including peat presence and depth*

*Without this information, Natural England may need to object to the proposal.*

*Please re-consult Natural England once this information has been obtained.*

## **5.10 Local Residents/Interested Parties**

*27 objections have been received (19 of which are from Manea) in relation to the following:*

- Highway safety (dangerous bend, visibility, 60mph road, accidents, extra traffic, traffic assessment required)
- Flood Zone 3
- Surface water flooding
- Not in keeping with rural area/sporadic nature of development
- Footpath into the village not always accessible (over grown/flooded)
- Concerns regarding introduction of sensitive use on existing businesses
- Proposed road is a public footpath
- Creating an estate outside the settlement
- Set a precedent
- No footpath along Wimblington Road/not possible to walk to station
- Infrastructure capacity in village
- Impact on biodiversity
- Detailed flood risk assessment required
- Village needs small, affordable, first-time homes
- Impact of construction

30 supporting comments have been received (6 of which are from Manea, including the applicant's address), in relation to the following:

- Opportunity to relocate to Manea and purchase one of plots to build dream home
- Public footpath linking site to village
- Close to railway station/amenities
- Building plots for larger properties/executive homes which are in demand
- Self builds
- Off street parking
- Environmentally friendly
- Suitable access
- Provide local employment opportunities
- Support the village facilities

Comments where they relate to relevant planning considerations will be assessed in the sections below, however it should be noted that this is a Permission in Principle (PiP) application which seeks to establish only whether the site is suitable in principle, all other details and information submitted are purely indicative at this stage.

## **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) the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Minerals and Waste Local Plan (2021)

## **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 11 – Making effective use of land  
Chapter 12 – Achieving well-designed places  
Chapter 14 – Meeting the challenge of climate change, flooding and coastal change  
Chapter 15 – Conserving and enhancing the natural environment

### **National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG)**

Determining a Planning Application

### **National Design Guide 2021**

Context

Identity

Built Form

Movement

Nature

Homes and Buildings

### **Fenland Local Plan 2014**

LP1 – A Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development

LP2 – Facilitating Health and Wellbeing of Fenland Residents

LP3 – Spatial Strategy, the Settlement Hierarchy and the Countryside

LP4 – Housing

LP5 – Meeting Housing Need

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

LP17 – Community Safety

LP19 – The Natural Environment

### **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**

#### **Emerging Local Plan**

The Draft Fenland Local Plan (2022) was published for consultation between 25th August 2022 and 19 October 2022, all comments received will be reviewed and any changes arising from the consultation will be made to the draft Local Plan. Given the very early stage which the Plan is therefore at, it is considered, in accordance with Paragraph 49 of the NPPF, that the policies of this should carry extremely limited weight in decision making. Of relevance to this application are policies:

LP1: Settlement Hierarchy

LP2: Spatial Strategy for the Location of Residential Development

LP5: Health and Wellbeing

LP7: Design

LP8: Amenity Provision

LP11: Community Safety

LP12: Meeting Housing Needs

LP13: Custom and Self Build



- LP18: Development in the Countryside
- LP20: Accessibility and Transport
- LP21: Public Rights of Way
- LP24: Natural Environment
- LP25: Biodiversity Net Gain
- LP32: Flood and Water Management

## **8 KEY ISSUES**

- 8.1 This application is made pursuant to the Town and Country Planning (Permission in Principle) Order 2017 (as amended) (PiP regulations) that provides opportunity for an applicant to apply as to whether 'Permission in Principle' is acceptable for a site, having regard to specific legislative requirements and, in accordance with the NPPG (58-012-20180615) as to whether the location, land use and amount of development proposed is acceptable. The permission in principle (PiP) consent route is an alternative way of obtaining planning permission for housing-led development which separates the consideration of matters of principle for proposed development from the technical detail of the development. The approval of PiP alone does not constitute the grant of planning permission.
- 8.2 The PiP consent route has 2 stages: the first stage (or Permission in Principle stage) establishes whether a site is suitable in-principle and the second ('technical details consent') stage is when the detailed development proposals are assessed.
- 8.3 Evaluation of a PIP must be restricted to the issues highlighted above; even if technical issues are apparent from the outset they can form no part of the determination of Stage 1 of the process, Accordingly, matters raised by consultees may not be addressed at this time.

## **9 ASSESSMENT**

### **Location and Land Use**

- 9.1 Policy LP3 of the Fenland Local Plan defines Manea as a growth village. For these settlements, development and new service provision either within the existing urban area or as small village extensions will be appropriate, albeit of a considerably more limited scale than appropriate to market towns. Development not falling into one of the defined village hierarchies will fall into the "elsewhere" category and will be restricted to that which is demonstrably essential to the effective operation of local agriculture, horticulture, forestry, outdoor recreation, transport or utility services or to minerals and waste development.
- 9.2 Policy LP12, Part A states that "*new development will be supported where it contributes towards the sustainability of that settlement and does not harm the wide-open character of the countryside*" and the following criteria:
  - (a) *The site is in or adjacent to the existing developed footprint of the village;*  
*and*
  - (b) *It would not result in coalescence with any neighbouring village; and*
  - (c) *It would not have an adverse impact on the character and appearance of the surrounding countryside and farmland*
  - (d) *The proposal is of a scale and in a location that is in keeping with the core shape and form of the settlement, and will not adversely harm its character and appearance; and*

- (e) *It would not extend linear features of the settlement or result in ribbon development; and*
- (f) *The site retains and respects natural boundaries such as trees, hedgerows, embankments and drainage ditches; and*
- (g) *The site retains and respects ecological, heritage and biodiversity features; and*
- (h) *It would not result in the loss of important open space within the village; and*
- (i) *It would not result in the loss of high-grade agricultural land, or if so, comprehensive evidence is provided to justify the loss. This should include an assessment of all alternative reasonable opportunities in the locality to develop on lower grades of agricultural land; and*
- (j) *It would not put people or property in danger from identified risks; and*
- (k) *It can be served by sustainable infrastructure provision, such as surface water and wastewater drainage and highways.*

The developed footprint referred to in criteria (a) is further defined in a footnote as *“the continuous built form of the settlement and excludes:*

- (a) individual buildings and groups of dispersed or intermittent buildings, that are clearly detached from the continuous built-up area of the settlement*
- (b) gardens, paddocks, and other undeveloped land within the curtilage of buildings on the edge of the settlement where the land relates more to the surrounding countryside than to the built-up area of the settlement*
- (c) agricultural buildings and associated land on the edge of the settlement*
- (d) outdoor sports and recreation facilities and other formal open spaces on the edge of the settlement”*

- 9.3 This site is considered to be clearly located beyond the established settlement of Manea; with the form of land and buildings in the vicinity relating more to the surrounding countryside than the built-up area of development, there is no footpath or street lighting along Wimblington Road, with the nearest bound footpath being at the junction with Station Road, some 590m distant.
- 9.4 Development of this site would introduce what would inherently be a formal, in-depth, estate type development into the open countryside, which does not respect the rural character, it would result in an unacceptable urbanisation and set a precedent for future development, further eroding the open character of this area. As such, the proposal is considered contrary to Policy LP12 Part A (a), (c) and (d) which seek to ensure development is in or adjacent the existing developed footprint of the village, is in keeping with the core shape and form of the settlement and would not have an adverse impact on the character and appearance of the surrounding countryside. Furthermore, Policy LP16 (d) of the Fenland Local Plan, Policy DM3 of Delivering and Protecting High Quality Environments in Fenland SPD, paras 135 and 187 of the NPPF and chapters C1 and I1 of the NDG seek to ensure that developments make a positive contribution and are sympathetic to the local distinctiveness and character of the area, recognise the beauty and character of the countryside and do not adversely impact on the landscape character.
- 9.5 The site is not considered to be sustainably linked to even the most basic facilities, there is no footpath along Wimblington Road, a 60mph road with no street lighting and there are no bus stops in the vicinity of the site. As such there is no scope for the use of modes of active travel or public transport to reach essential services and future residents would have no option but to use private modes of transport. It is acknowledged that the applicant refers to the public footpath which runs alongside the site, however this is unmade, unlit and across fields which cannot be

said to provide a suitable sustainable link to services and facilities. As such the proposal is in conflict with the aims of Chapter 9 of the NPPF and Policies LP2, LP12 Part A (k) and LP15 of the Fenland Local Plan 2014. This further reinforces the unsustainable location of the site for unjustified new housing and provides an example for the rationale for the Council's settlement strategies under LP3 – in terms of placing people and property in the most sustainable location to safely access services and facilities and improve accessibility for everyone by all modes of travel.

- 9.6 It is acknowledged that the description of development relates to self-build dwellings. However, even if the Council has a shortfall in the delivery of self-build and custom build plots (which is not considered to be the case), the PPG advises that no conditions nor mechanism can be secured by way of a planning obligation on a Permission in Principle. Therefore, such self-build plots could not be secured as part of the application and hence no weight is afforded to this consideration.
- 9.7 The point of access to the site is the existing access serving Poppyfields off Wimblington Road, with a narrow (approximately 2m where it meets the existing access) access road extending approximately 140m to the main part of the site. The Local Highways Authority are content that the existing junction is suitable for the proposed development. Of some concern to Officers however is the narrowness and extent of the access and the suitability of this, in addition it is questionable whether a suitable access within the site could be achieved at Technical Details stage, not least that as the site is at 09.972ha currently any additional land would exceed the 1ha limit for this type of application. Furthermore, there is a public right of way along the eastern side of the site, the Definitive Map Team have advised that there is no legally defined and recorded width for this. The access to the site is in close proximity and may therefore encroach within this, which again could result in difficulty obtaining a suitable access to the site at Technical Details stage should this application be successful. Nevertheless, given that this would form a consideration at Technical Details stage rather than Permission in Principle, this is not put forward as a reason for refusal.
- 9.8 The site lies wholly within Flood Zone 3; Policy LP12 Part A (j) seeks to ensure that developments would not put people or property in danger from identified risks, such as flooding. Policy LP14 of the Fenland Local Plan and Chapter 14 of the NPPF seek to steer developments to the areas with the least probability of flooding and development will not be permitted if there are reasonably available sites appropriate for the proposed development in areas with a lower risk of flooding. The application is not accompanied by a sequential test and as such insufficient assessment has been undertaken and inadequate information submitted to demonstrate that it is not possible for the development to be located on a site with a lower risk of flooding and as such the development is contrary to the aforementioned policies.
- 9.9 The application site is approximately 2.3km from the Ouse Washes Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), Special Protection Area (SPA), Special Area of Conservation (SAC) and Ramsar site. The development triggers Natural England's 'Goose & Swan Functional Land' Impact Risk Zone (IRZ) for the Ouse Washes due to the potential for surrounding agricultural land to provide important winter roosting and foraging habitat for Ouse Washes qualifying bird species. Suitable arable / grassland habitat, particularly in such close proximity to the internationally designated sites, may provide functional land that is important to the maintenance of populations of Whooper and Bewick's swans. The application is not supported by any ecological evidence and as such insufficient information has

been submitted to inform the Habitat Regulations Assessment 'likely significant effect' screening and the proposal is considered contrary to Policies LP16 (b) and LP19 of the Fenland Local Plan 2014 and Paragraph 187 of the NPPF 2024.

- 9.10 Furthermore, Natural England's high level indicative mapping shows that the application site is located in an area of potential deep peat, and as such they advise that an Agricultural Land Classification (ALC) survey should be undertaken to verify the actual soil conditions and enable consideration of the sustainable use and management of peat soils, to ensure their protection and minimise production of carbon emissions through their loss and degradation. Natural England's advice is that new development should avoid peat soils to leave this important carbon sink intact and prevent release of CO<sub>2</sub> and/or methane into the atmosphere. Chapter 11 of the NPPF seeks to safeguard land for carbon storage and Chapter 14 of the NPPF and the aims of Policy LP14 of the Fenland Local Plan seek to avoid carbon emissions in order to mitigate against climate change. The application has not been accompanied by an ALC survey and as such has failed to demonstrate that a development on this site would not impact deep peat with the potential for carbon release, contrary to the aforementioned policies.
- 9.11 The site comprises of approximately 0.99ha of Grade 2 Agricultural land, classed as very good. Policy LP12 ((i) states that development should not result in the loss of high grade agricultural land or if so comprehensive evidence is provided to justify the loss. Para 187 of the NPPF 2024 recognises the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside, including the economic and other benefits of the best and most versatile (BMV) agricultural land (defined as Grades 1, 2 and 3a) and para 188 (footnote 65) advises that where significant development of agricultural land is demonstrated to be necessary, areas of poorer quality land should be preferred to those of a higher quality.
- 9.12 Having regard to the wider mapping, it is acknowledged that a significant majority of the Fenland District falls within the BMV land with only the urban areas of the main Market Towns, the Kings Delph and Morton's Leam areas and the north of March including the prison area falling within the lower grades. As such, it is recognised that there are very few areas of poorer quality agricultural land, and it would not be possible therefore for Fenland to meet its housing demands without developing areas of BMV land.
- 9.13 This does not however confer that all agricultural land should be developed, especially where it relates more to open countryside than to the settlement and Officers consider that this is the intention of LP12, Part A (c), supported by the preamble at paragraph 4.7.1 of the Fenland Local Plan. An assessment however should be made as to the relationship of the land to the open countryside, in comparison to the built envelope of the settlement. As stated in the section above, the application site is considered to relate more to the open countryside than the built form, though it is acknowledged that 0.99ha is not significant in the context of BMV land within Fenland.
- 9.14 Whilst the policies of the emerging local plan carry extremely limited weight in decision making the following are relevant to this application:

Policy LP1, Part A identifies Manea as a large village; Part B advises that land outside settlement boundaries is defined as countryside where development is restricted (as set out in LP18), this site is outside of the defined settlement and Part C would not be applicable as the proposal is not frontage infill development. LP49 defines residential site allocations in Manea and this site does not have such

an allocation. As such the proposal is also considered contrary to the aforementioned policies of the emerging local plan.

**Amount of development proposed**

9.15 The proposal is for up to 9 dwellings on a site of approximately 0.99ha, equating to approximately 9 dwellings per hectare, it could therefore be argued that this development does not make an effective use of land. Nevertheless, policies LP12 (c) and (d) and LP16 (d) require development to respond to the local character in this regard, and the introduction of 9 dwellings in this location would result in an unacceptable urbanisation and set a precedent for future development, further eroding the open character of this area, contrary to the aforementioned policies.

**9.16 Other matters raised during consultation:**

<p>Impact on biodiversity/BNG</p>	<p>The LPA duty under Section 40 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 as amended, has been considered.</p> <p>In other application types such as outline and full applications, an ecological survey and if necessary further species surveys would be needed up front to accompany the application. This application if successful, would not be granting planning permission.</p> <p>Ecological information should be submitted at the Technical Details stage (if this first stage were successful) and taken into account then, consulted upon and the decision, including potential refusal or conditions, should be based upon the findings of said ecological information.</p> <p>If this PiP were successful, it would not prevent proper consideration of ecological issues at the next stage and it would not alter duties of landowners/developers to comply with other legislation such as the Wildlife and Countryside Act in the meantime.</p> <p>The grant of permission in principle is not within the scope of biodiversity net gain (as it is not a grant of planning permission), but the subsequent technical details consent (as a grant of planning permission) would be subject to the biodiversity gain condition.</p>
<p>Working Time Restrictions</p>	<p>The Council's Environmental Health team have requested a condition regarding working time restrictions be appended to any future Technical Details application due to the proximity of existing noise sensitive receptors.</p>

Archaeology	The site lies in an area of archaeological interest and as such CCC Archaeology have requested to be consulted on any future applications on this site, with the expectation that a condition of development, if required, could be secured at Technical Details stage.
Surface Water Flooding and Site Specific Flood Risk Assessment	Part of the site has a medium to high risk of surface water flooding and lies within Flood Zone 3 in relation to flooding from rivers and the sea. As such, should this application be successful a Site Specific Flood Risk Assessment and Drainage Strategy would be required as part of any Technical Details application.
Manea-Town Lots water recycling centre (WRC)	Anglian Water advised on 28/2/25 that funding has now been confirmed for the Manea WRC and that on this basis they can withdraw any holding objections and recommend a condition in respect of this matter, which could be imposed at Technical Details stage should this application be successful.

## 10 CONCLUSIONS

- 10.1 This application seeks 'Permission in Principle' (PiP) for residential development of up to 9 dwellings, where only in principle issues are assessed, namely the location, use and amount of development. All matters of detail would be subject to a Technical Details application should this submission be successful and accordingly, matters raised by consultees may not be addressed at this time.
- 10.2 This site is considered to be located beyond the established settlement of Manea and development of this site would introduce a formal, in-depth, estate type development into the open countryside, which does not respect the rural character, it would result in an unacceptable urbanisation and set a precedent for future development, further eroding the open character of this area.
- 10.3 The site is not considered to be sustainably linked to even the most basic facilities, there is no footpath along Wimblington Road, a 60mph road with no street lighting and there are no bus stops in the vicinity of the site. Hence there is no scope for the use of modes of active travel or public transport to reach essential services, and future residents would have no option but to use private modes of transport.
- 10.4 The site lies wholly within Flood Zone 3 and the application is not accompanied by a sequential test and as such insufficient assessment has been undertaken and inadequate information submitted to demonstrate that it is not possible for the development to be located on a site with a lower risk of flooding
- 10.5 The application site is approximately 2.3km from the Ouse Washes Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), Special Protection Area (SPA), Special Area of

Conservation (SAC) and Ramsar site and may provide functional land that is important to the maintenance of populations of Whooper and Bewick's swans. The application is not supported by any ecological evidence and as such insufficient information has been submitted to inform the required Habitat Regulations Assessment.

- 10.6 The application site is indicated as being in an area of potential deep peat, and insufficient information has been submitted to verify the actual soil conditions, as such the application has failed to demonstrate that a development on this site would not impact deep peat with the potential for carbon release.

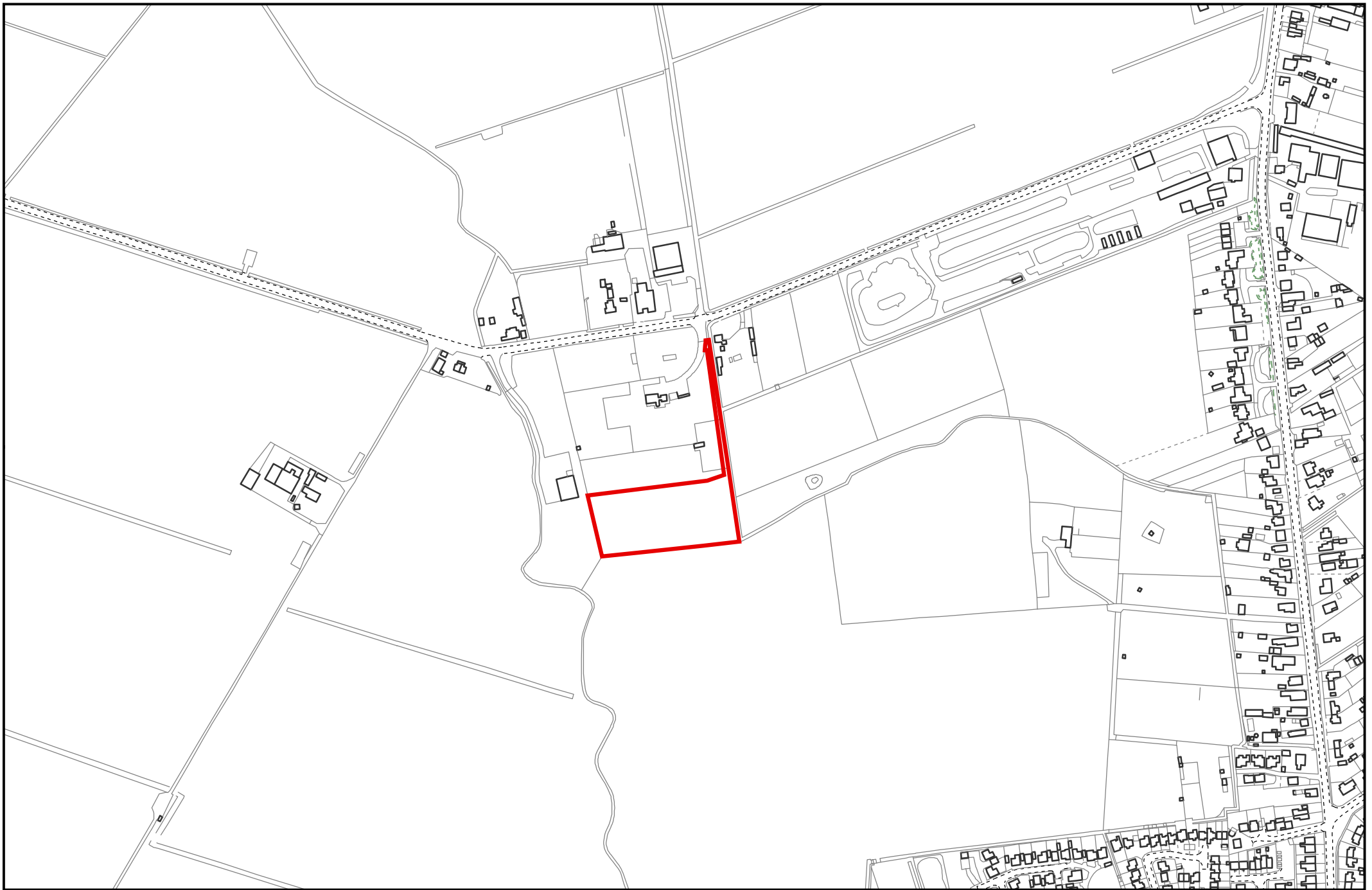
## 11 RECOMMENDATION

**Refuse;** for the following reasons:

1.	<p>This site is considered to be located beyond the established settlement of Manea and development of this site would inherently introduce a formal, in-depth, estate type development into the open countryside, which does not respect the rural character, it would result in an unacceptable urbanisation and set a precedent for future development, further eroding the open character of this area. As such, the proposal is considered contrary to Policy LP12 Part A (a), (c) and (d) which seek to ensure development is in or adjacent the existing developed footprint of the village, is in keeping with the core shape and form of the settlement and would not have an adverse impact on the character and appearance of the surrounding countryside.</p> <p>Furthermore, Policy LP16 (d) of the Fenland Local Plan, Policy DM3 of Delivering and Protecting High Quality Environments in Fenland SPD, paras 135 and 187 of the NPPF and chapters C1 and I1 of the NDG seek to ensure that developments make a positive contribution and are sympathetic to the local distinctiveness and character of the area, recognise the beauty and character of the countryside and do not adversely impact on the landscape character. As such, the proposal is also considered contrary to these policies.</p>
2.	<p>The site is not considered to be sustainably linked to even the most basic facilities, there is no footpath along Wimblington Road, a 60mph road with no street lighting and there are no bus stops in the vicinity of the site. Hence there is no scope for the use of modes of active travel or public transport to reach essential services, and future residents would have no option but to use private modes of transport.</p> <p>As such the proposal is in conflict with the aims of Chapter 9 of the NPPF and Policies LP2, LP12 Part A (k) and LP15 of the Fenland Local Plan 2014 which seek to ensure that proposals are afforded safe access to services and facilities and improved accessibility for everyone by all modes of travel.</p>
3.	<p>The site lies wholly within Flood Zone 3; Policy LP12 Part A (j) seeks to ensure that developments would not put people or property in danger from identified risks, such as flooding. Policy LP14 of the Fenland Local Plan and Chapter 14 of the NPPF seek to steer developments to the areas with the least probability of flooding and development will not be permitted if there are reasonably available sites appropriate for the proposed development in areas with a lower risk of flooding.</p> <p>The application is not accompanied by a sequential test and as such</p>

	<p>insufficient assessment has been undertaken and inadequate information submitted to demonstrate that it is not possible for the development to be located on a site with a lower risk of flooding and as such the development is contrary to the aforementioned policies.</p>
4.	<p>The application site is approximately 2.3km from the Ouse Washes Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), Special Protection Area (SPA), Special Area of Conservation (SAC) and Ramsar site. The development triggers Natural England's 'Goose &amp; Swan Functional Land' Impact Risk Zone (IRZ) for the Ouse Washes due to the potential for surrounding agricultural land to provide important winter roosting and foraging habitat for Ouse Washes qualifying bird species. Suitable arable / grassland habitat, particularly in such close proximity to the internationally designated sites, may provide functional land that is important to the maintenance of populations of Whooper and Bewick's swans.</p> <p>The application is not supported by any ecological evidence and as such insufficient information has been submitted to inform the Habitat Regulations Assessment 'likely significant effect' screening and the proposal is considered contrary to Policies LP16 (b) and LP19 of the Fenland Local Plan 2014 and Paragraph 187 of the NPPF 2024.</p>
5.	<p>Natural England's high level indicative mapping shows that the application site is located in an area of potential deep peat, and as such an Agricultural Land Classification (ALC) survey is required to verify the actual soil conditions and enable consideration of the sustainable use and management of peat soils, to ensure their protection and minimise production of carbon emissions through their loss and degradation.</p> <p>Chapter 11 of the NPPF seeks to safeguard land for carbon storage and Chapter 14 of the NPPF and the aims of Policy LP14 of the Fenland Local Plan seek to avoid carbon emissions in order to mitigate against climate change. The application has not been accompanied by an ALC survey and as such has failed to demonstrate that a development on this site would not impact deep peat with the potential for carbon release, contrary to the aforementioned policies.</p>





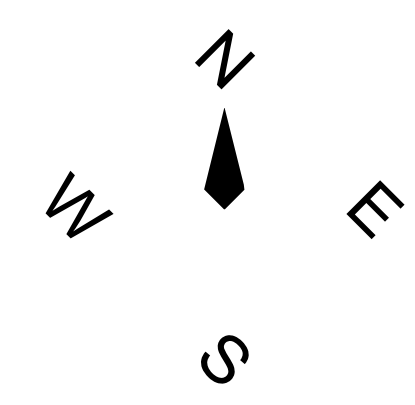
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**F/YR25/0036/PIP**

Scale = 1:5,000





Notes:

0.5 0 0.5 1 1.5 2 2.5  
SCALE 1: 50  
m

1 0 1 2 3 4 5  
SCALE 1: 100  
m

5 0 5 10 15 20 25  
SCALE 1: 500  
m

**1 Existing Site Plan**  
1 : 500

STATUS: For Approval

**CadTech Design**  
  
 Viner Lodge  
 Church Road  
 Eardisland  
 HR6 9BP  
 Tel: 01432 806409  
 Email: buildingregs@cadtechdesign.com

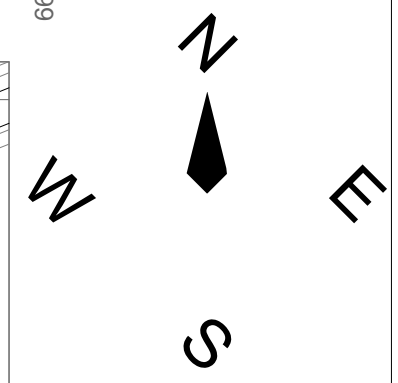
PROJECT:  
Proposed residential development

CLIENT  
Mr Daniel Samuel

SITE  
Land South of Poppyfields, Wimblington Road, Manea PE15 0JR, Cambs

TITLE:  
Existing Site Plan

SCALE AT A1: 1 : 500	DATE: Jan 2025	DRAWN: DC	CHECKED: AC
PROJECT NO: DS/1	DRAWING NO: PP/002A	REVISION:	



Notes:

Notes

10 0 10 20 30 40 50

SCALE 1: 1250 m

Land in same ownership

The Site

Rev A: Site application area confirmed

Application Site Area 9972m<sup>2</sup>

REV	DESCRIPTION	BY	DATE
STATUS:	For Approval		



Viner Lodge  
Church Road  
Eardisland  
HR6 9BP

Telephone: 01432 806409  
www.houseplansdirect.co.uk

CLIENT:  
Mr Daniel Samuel

SITE:  
Land South of Poppyfields, Wimblington Road, Manea PE15 0JR, Cambs

TITLE:  
Location Plan

SCALE: AT A3:	DATE:	DRAWN:	CHECKED:
1 : 1250	Jan 2025	DC	AC
PROJECT NO:	DRAWING NO:	REVISION:	
DS/1	PP/001A		

290160

**1** **Location Plan**  
1 : 1250