Urban Design Forum
AGENDA
DATE 16/11/2026
Please fill in DM officer name, ref, address of case
DM Admin – Please save to anite and route to applicable officer as 'COMMENT'

Officer/Case	Site Constraints – FZ, CA, LB, TPO's, Related Application?	Actions agreed	UD Officer
CDEW-26/01959/FUL Land Adjacent 43 Fen Lane Sawtry	None	**Context and Background** The application seeks to erect 3 dwellings with associated access, parking and landscaping and follows previous pre-application discussions (26/00469/PREAPP) for the erection of 7 dwellings. This covered the wider curtilage belonging to No. 43 Fen Lane and proposed 5 dwellings fronting Chapel End and 2 dwellings fronting Fen Lane. Previous comments on the 26/00469/PREAPP submission raised concerns regarding the number of units, the narrow deep plan form, and narrow separation creating a cramped and overly intensive pattern of development that fails to reflect the wide fronted, shallow plan properties characteristic of Chapel End. The resulting tight rhythm of semi-detached dwellings was inconsistent with the spatial qualities of the street. The Urban Design response recommended that to achieve a more contextually harmonious and visually coherent street frontage, development along Chapel End should be significantly reduced in intensity. A range of 2 possibly 3 detached, wider fronted, shallow plan dwellings with parking to the side would better reflect the prevailing character of the street and align with Local Plan and SPD expectations. This would allow for stronger frontage articulation, improved landscaping opportunities, reduced car dominance, and a more spacious, suburban form consistent with the established built form of Chapel End. Sawtry is an established village settlement within Huntingdonshire that benefits from a range local services and facilities. The village is well connected by the A1, providing strategic north- south connectivity. Nearby towns of Huntingdon and Peterborough offer further connectivity and access to a wider range of services, facilities and employment opportunities. The application relates to No. 43 Fen Lane, a detached two storey dwelling positioned on a notably large and well-established plot. The site occupies a corner position, with Fen Lane forming the southern boundary and Chapel End forming the eastern boundary. To the north and west, the site adjoins the rear gardens of properties on Manor Drive.	**JM**

		A significant constraint arises from the oil pipeline that is adjacent the site diagonally from southeast to northwest, with easements of 6 and 7m. Chapel End is defined by large, spaciously arranged detached properties with varied building lines and juxtapositions, with units set back behind landscaped frontages with detached garages and long rear gardens. Submission: • Planning and Design Statement • Location Plan 7472-010 • Existing Site Plan 7472-014 • Proposed Site plan 7472-015A • Proposed Block Plan 7472-016A • Proposed Floor Plans (Plot 1) 7472- 110A • Proposed Floor Plans (Plot 2) 7472- 120A • Proposed Floor Plans (Plot 3) 7472- 130A • Proposed Elevations (Plot 1) 7472- 210A • Proposed Elevations (Plot 2) 7472- 220A • Proposed Elevations (Plot 3) 7472- 230A • Proposed Garage (Plot 1) 7472- 111A • Proposed Street Scene 7472-250 • Vehicle Tacking 26093-TDC-00-ZZ-DR-C-8502_P01 • Plots 1-3 Chapel End Visibility Splays 26093-TDC-00-ZZ-DR-C-8501_P02 • Plots 1-3 Chapel End Site Entrance Review 26093-TDC-00-ZZ-DR-C-8500_P02 Urban Design Comments are as follows: **Site layout** The submitted application relates to the Chapel End half of the site and proposes the erection of 3 large detached dwellings (Plots 1 and 3 form 4-bed, whilst Plot 3 is 3-bed), with integral garages for Plots 1 and 2 and a separate detached garage single garage for Plot 1. The units are arranged to front Chapel End and have a stepped building line with the front elevation of Plot 1 aligned to respond to the rear elevation of adjacent No. 25 Manor Drive to the north. The units are setback behind retained trees and hedge planting with access two private drives. The site is 0.16ha and is surrounded by mature trees, native and non-native hedgerow to the north and eastern edges, which provide some enclosure to the development. The southern boundary consists of a matured trees that are being retained outside the red line boundary. Two trees within the red line boundary lie adjacent to the Chapel End frontage (NT1 and NT2 Category C Ash Trees) which are proposed to be retained. Comments on the proposed pruning of tree NT1 to reduce he crown spread by 1.5m and pruning of the hedgerow should be sought from Tree Colleagues.	

		Access 38m of the proposed hedgerow is proposed to be removed to accommodate the 2 separate access points. The northern access is 5m x 3.5m and being used to serve plots 1 and 2. The southern access is 3.6m long and serving plot 3 only. Previous proposals submitted under 26/00469/PREAPP included a single access located between the two existing Ash trees (the northern access on the submitted application). Given the limited number of units proposed, it is recommended that a single access is considered to allow further retention of the existing hedgerow within Chapel End and screen the parking for Plot 3. **Siting and Massing** The units comprise large, detached dwellings, with 2.2m separation between units. The 1.3m separation between the corner of Plot 3 and the southern site boundary separates the rear garden and is likely to limit useability and opportunities for landscaping adjacent to No. 43 Fen Lane. Plot 1 is located approximately 1.5m from the northern site boundary with No. 25 Manor Drive again limiting opportunities for soft landscaping. The narrow separation distances, together with the close proximity to the northern and southern site boundaries creates a cramped form of development that fails to reflect the spacious arrangement of existing units on the east side of Chapel End. This fails to meet the expectations of Local Plan Policy LP11, which requires new development to respond positively to local context and draw inspiration from the defining characteristics of the surrounding built and natural environment. The proposals are similarly contrary to LP12 (a–c) as they fail to contribute positively to local identity, integrate successfully with adjoining buildings, or deliver appropriately scaled, attractive street frontages. The units comprise a mixture of 1.5 and 2 storeys, with 7.4m 7.6m and 7.9m ridge heights. The sloping topography means the units step down in height towards the north, with Plot 1 reflecting a similar ridge height to No. 25 Manor Drive. The overall height of the units is considered acceptable. **Elevations and Appearance** The first floor accommodation within Plots 1 and 2 are located partly within the pitched roof space. The proposed dormer windows break the eaves line, which creates a cluttered appearance with an excess of rainwater downpipes on the front and rear elevations, which are likely to appear prominent in views from Manor Drive and Chapel End. It is recommended that Plots 1 and 2 form true 1.5 storey units with dormer windows positioned within the roof space, aligned to the internal face or supported off the purlins, to ensure the eaves line is continuous. A lower eaves height over Plot 1 would also improve the relationship with Manor Drive to the north. The tall eaves height over the integral garages of Plots 2 and 3 results in a large expanse of brickwork above garage door openings. Lower eaves heights are recommended for these elements to reinforce their subservient appearance.	

		The proposed units are traditional in appearance with reconstituted stone cills, glazing bar and arched windows headers to first floor windows. Chimneys should be introduced to reinforce the traditional appearance of the dwellings. The proposed Material Palate is set out within section 4 of the Planning and Design and Access statement. This includes Ibstock Ivanhoe Katrina Brick, dark grey Redland concrete plain roof tiles, 'clotted cream' coloured UPVC windows, reconstituted stone cills and white UPVC gutters. Chapel End includes a mixture of red, buff and rendered dwellings, whilst dwellings within Manor Drive are exclusively buff. Given the proposed units will be seen from both Chapel End and Manor Drive, a buff brick appearance is recommended. Red pan tiles are recommended to reflect existing dwellings within Chapel End. The submitted material images show white fascias and soffits, it is recommended that these are black together with black rainwater goods to reinforce the traditional appearance of the units and reflect adjacent dwellings. **Car Parking, cycle and refuse storage** The proposals include 2 parking spaces for Plots 1 and 2 and 1 space for Plot 3, together with a further parking space within the garages. Additional parking is also available within the large driveways in front of the units. The proposed garages measure 6m x 3.3m with 2.4m wide garage doors in accordance with the HDC Design Guide SPD and provide sufficient space to accommodate car parking and cycle storage. Plot 1's detached garage is located in front of the building line. The HDC Design Guide SPD 2017 (page 94) requires that *"Garages to be aligned with, or set back from the building frontage".* Whilst it is accepted that a number of existing dwellings within Chapel End feature garages forward of the dwellings, these comprise large plots, with extensive curtilage. There is concern the detached garage extends across the majority of the frontage of Plot 1 dominating the unit (noting that the garage is not illustrated on the submitted street scene). Furthermore, the submitted Arboricultural Method statement dwg 6048b indicates the hedge adjacent to Chapel End would be trimmed to 0.5m off the root line. This would fail to screen the proposed garage and parking from views along Chapel End. A narrower house type for Plot 1, with integral garage similar to Plot 2 is recommended to address above concerns. The planning and design statement notes that the cycle store will be provided within the garage which is acceptable. Bin stores are located near to the rear garden access. Refuse collection will take place adjacent to the driveway accesses.	

		Hard and soft landscaping The Planning and Design and Access statement indicates the access and driveways will be finished in dark charcoal block paving which is acceptable. Patios will be finished in Sandstone Harvest paving slabs. This reflects the hard landscaping of the local area. Timber fencing is proposed to define private garden boundaries, with planting to soften their appearance. Shrub planting is proposed within front gardens, softening the appearance of the units and separating the driveways between Plots 1-2 and Plot 3. No landscaping is proposed in front of Plot 3 and is required to soften views from the site entrance. Detailed hard and soft landscaping proposals including planting pallet and details of the manufacturer / product name of block paving should be confirmed by way of condition. **Recommendation:** Whilst the principle of detached dwellings is supported and forms a positive improvement following pre-application stages, there is concern the narrow separation distances, together with the close proximity to the northern and southern site boundaries creates a cramped form of development that fails to reflect the spacious arrangement of existing units on the east side of Chapel End. This does not meet the expectations of Local Plan Policy LP11, which requires new development to respond positively to local context and draw inspiration from the defining characteristics of the surrounding built and natural environment. The proposals are similarly contrary to LP12 (a–c) as they fail to contribute positively to local identity, integrate successfully with adjoining buildings, or deliver appropriately scaled, attractive street frontages. Amendments are required to increase the gaps between units, reconfigure the garage for Plot 1, and amend the arrangement of dormer windows on Plots 1 and 2. Suggested Conditions: • Hard and soft landscaping • Materials • Architectural Details – including the treatment of facias and soffits, dormer windows, window RAL colours, reveal depth and means of opening.	

For PENQS: The above comments represent informal officer views and are therefore without prejudice to the determination of any planning application should one be submitted. Furthermore the views expressed will not bind the decision of Members should a planning application be submitted, nor prejudice the formal decision making process of the council.