OFFICER REPORT

Case No: 25/00150/FUL **Full Planning Application**

Proposal: **Proposed Self Build erection of 1 x 3 bedroom dwelling including formation of new access off the A1198.**

Location: **Land Rear Of 27 Ravenshoe Godmanchester**

Applicant: **Mr Simarjit Sharma**

Grid Ref: **525352 270143**

DESCRIPTION OF SITE AND APPLICATION

This application seeks approval for the erection of a Self Build 3 bedroom dwelling including formation of new access off the A1198 on land to the rear of 27 Ravenshoe, Godmanchester.

This amended scheme follows a previously withdrawn planning application (23/01218/FUL), a previously refused proposal for the erection of two dwellings (22/02372/FUL) and approved application for 1 dwelling (23/02059/FUL).

The application site is within the built-up area of Godmanchester which is part of the Huntingdon Spatial Planning Area. The site is located outside of the Godmanchester Neighbourhood Plan settlement boundary.

The site is located within Flood Zone 1 (lowest probability of flooding), is not part of or within the setting of any designated heritage assets, and none of the on-site trees are protected by a Tree Preservation Order.

Officers have scrutinised the plans and have familiarised themselves with the site and surrounding area.

NATIONAL GUIDANCE

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF 2024) sets out the three objectives - economic, social and environmental - of the planning system to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. The NPPF 2024 at paragraph 10 provides as follows: 'So that sustainable development is pursued in a positive way, at the heart of the Framework is a presumption in favour of sustainable development (paragraph 11).'

The NPPF 2024 sets out the Government's planning policies for (amongst other things):

* delivering a sufficient supply of homes;
* building a strong, competitive economy;
* achieving well-designed, beautiful and safe places;
* conserving and enhancing the natural, built and historic environment.

Planning Practice Guidance and the National Design Guide 2021 are also relevant and material considerations.

For full details visit the government website: https://www.gov.uk

PLANNING POLICIES

Huntingdonshire's Local Plan to 2036 - adopted May 2019

LP1: Amount of Development
LP2: Strategy for Development
LP4: Contributing to Infrastructure Delivery
LP5: Flood Risk
LP6: Waste Water Management
LP7: Spatial Planning Areas
LP11: Design Context
LP12: Design Implementation
LP14: Amenity
LP15: Surface Water
LP16: Sustainable Travel
LP17: Parking Provision and Vehicle Movement
LP25: Housing Mix
LP30: Biodiversity and Geodiversity
LP31: Trees, Woodland, Hedges and Hedgerows

Local policies are viewable at https://www.huntingdonshire.gov.uk

Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD) and Guidance:

Huntingdonshire Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document 2017
Developer Contributions SPD 2011
Huntingdonshire Landscape and Townscape SPD (2022)
Huntingdonshire Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (2024)
Cambridgeshire Flood and Water SPD 2017
LDF Developer Contributions SPD (2011)
Annual Monitoring Review regarding housing land supply (2024)
Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Minerals and Waste Local Plan (2021)

The National Design Guide (2021)

* C1 - Understand and relate well to the site, its local and wider context
* I1 - Respond to existing local character and identity
* I2 - Well-designed, high quality and attractive
* B2 - Appropriate building types and forms
*M3 - Well-considered parking, servicing and utilities infrastructure for all users
* N3 - Support rich and varied biodiversity
* H1 - Healthy, comfortable and safe internal and external environment
* H2 - Well-related to external amenity and public spaces
* H3 - Attention to detail: storage, waste, servicing and utilities

Local policies are viewable at https://www.huntingdonshire.gov.uk

PLANNING HISTORY

23/02059/FUL - Erection of a two storey 3 bed dwelling - Granted.

23/01218/FUL - Proposed 2 No. two-storey, 3-bedroom dwellings - Withdrawn.

22/02372/FUL - Erection of 2, two storey dwellings - Refused.

22/01137/FUL - Erection of two two-storey dwellings - Withdrawn.

20/02240/PIP - Permission in principle for one new dwelling - Permission.

20/00505/REM - Details of appearance, landscaping, layout and scale for 46 no. dwellings on the Northern Parcel and Southern Parcel as defined in the approved documents to the outline planning permission - Granted.

18/00532/OUT - Outline planning application with all matters reserved apart from access for the erection of up to 46 residential dwellings, including affordable housing (Use Class C3) and in addition, for the erection of either a residential care home (Use Class C2) or up to 13 residential dwellings, including affordable housing (Use Class C3) (in the alternative) together with parking areas, landscaping, pumping stations, and other associated infrastructure - Granted.

CONSULTATIONS

Parish Council : approve subject to guidance from the council on a safe and suitable access.

Urban Design: The application is acceptable in design terms subject to conditions to agree materials, boundary treatments, opaque glazing and hard and soft landscaping.

Environmental Health: concerns over noise and ventilation.

Highways: This is a resubmission of application 23/02059/ful with further buildings added. The amended plans do not appear to affect the access, parking and turning arrangements already considered with respect of the previous application and the observations and recommendations made previously therefore remain applicable. Conditions recommended.

REPRESENTATIONS

The application has been advertised by
- Site notice
- On the council website
- Neighbour letters

No third party representations were received during the course of the application.

SUMMARY OF ISSUES

When determining planning applications, it is necessary to establish what weight should be given to each plan's policies in order to come to a decision. The following legislation, government policy and guidance outline how this should be done.

As set out within the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (Section 38(6)) and the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (Section 70(2)) in dealing with planning applications the Local Planning Authority shall have regard to have provisions of the development plan, so far as material to the application, and to any other material considerations. This is reiterated within paragraph 47 of the NPPF (2024). The development plan is defined in Section 38(3)(b) of the 2004 Act as "the development plan documents (taken as a whole) that have been adopted or approved in that area".

The statutory term 'material considerations' has been broadly construed to include any consideration relevant in the circumstances which bears on the use or development of the land: Cala Homes (South) Ltd v Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government & Anor [2011] EWHC 97 (Admin); [2011] 1 P. & C.R. 22, per Lindblom J. Whilst accepting that the NPPF

does not change the statutory status of the Development Plan, paragraph 2 confirms that it is a material consideration and significant weight is given to this in determining applications.

The main issues to consider are:

- The Principle of Development
- Design and visual amenity
- Residential amenity
- Highway safety
- Flood risk and surface water
- Biodiversity
- Trees
- Developer Contributions
- Accessible and adaptable Homes
- Water efficiency

*The Principle of the Development

The site is located within a residential area of Godmanchester, which the adopted Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2036 identifies as forming part of the Huntingdon Spatial Planning Area. Policy LP7 of the adopted Local Plan states that a residential development on a site which is additional to those allocated in the Local Plan will be supported where it is appropriately located within a built-up area of an identified Spatial Planning Area settlement.

Given the site is located within a built-up area, as defined by the adopted Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2036, the proposal is considered to be in accordance with Policy LP7 and therefore the principle of development is acceptable, subject to all other planning matters being addressed. Furthermore, the principle of a dwelling has been approved under application 23/02059/FUL, albeit a different scale and design.

It is also worth noting that in 2020, the Local Planning Authority granted permission in principle for the erection of one dwelling on land to the rear of No. 27 Ravenshoe, Godmanchester (Reference number 20/02240/PIP).

*Design, Visual Amenity and Impact Upon the Character of the Area

Policy LP11 of the Local Plan states that a proposal will be supported where it is demonstrated that it responds positively to its context. Policy LP12 states that new development will be expected to be well designed and that a proposal will be supported where it can be demonstrated that it contributes positively to the area's character and identity and successfully integrates with adjoining buildings and landscape. This is also reflected in the Huntingdonshire Design Guide SPD and Section 12 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

This proposal seeks approval for the erection of a detached, three-storey dwelling on land to the rear of No. 27 Ravenshoe, Godmanchester. The proposal would involve the subdivision of the existing properties private rear amenity space with the proposed dwelling set back from the public highway of the A1198. This forms a similar length and width to the previous approved application, with a narrow gable frontage and deep floor plan. The dwelling maintains the 8m setback from the site boundary with the A1198, with a tandem driveway and single garage positioned to the south / left hand side of the dwelling.

The proposed dwelling would be of a gable end design with a single-storey lean-to section on the rear of the property. The amendments from the previous approval include squaring of the kitchen/dining area to the rear of the dwelling together with amendments to the arrangement of windows.

Elevations include Grantchester Blend facing bricks, Sandtoft old English Pantile antique slate roof tiles, anthracite grey roof tiles and black UPVC roof tiles. The white render previously included for the front and rear gable elevations of the 23/02059/FUL application have been replaced with facing bricks in accordance with previous recommendations. However, as raised in previous comments the TBS Grantchester Blend forms a red-multi facing brick, whereas a gault/multi-buff facing brick is required to reflect the predominantly buff appearance of units immediately to the south (within Pippin Close) and opposite (within the Romans Edge development). Therefore, a materials condition is imposed to ensure that sympathetic materials are used.

With regard to the siting of the proposed dwelling, while there are no other examples of subdividing plots to create an additional dwelling from the properties along Ravenshoe, there are increased examples of dwellings fronting the public highway of the A1198 with new developments to the south, north and on the eastern side of the highway. Whilst this proposal would be for a single dwelling with existing residential gardens to be retained either side, its siting is not considered to result in detrimental impacts to the character and appearance of the streetscene of the A1198 or the surrounding area. This was approved for a dwelling in the same location on the previous permission. Furthermore, the scale of the proposed dwelling is considered to be acceptable as it would reflect that of properties in the immediate vicinity. The revised proposals maintain three bedrooms; however the ridge height has increased from 7.1m to 9.4m creating a 2.5 storey dwelling, with bedroom 3 together with a walk in wardrobe and ensuite bathroom now located within the pitched roof space. The taller ridge height is considered acceptable and the proposed dwelling would still sit below the ridge height of the adjacent 2 storey Plots 19-24 within the 20/00505/REM development to the south owning to the level changes across the site frontage as shown on the street scene contained on dwg H10160/01D. The 2.5 storey height is also consistent with the 2.5 storey gable fronted dwelling further south, on the opposite side of the A1198 within the Romans Edge development.

The overall design and appearance of the proposed dwelling is considered to be acceptable with a narrow gable design and a flat frontage addressing the A1198 which closely reflects the narrower gable depth of No. 16 Pippin Close adjacent. Cycle storage for three bikes is also proposed within a dedicated store located within the rear garden and details of the appearance and size of this cycle store should be confirmed by way of condition.

Overall, following the receipt of amended plans and subject to the imposition of conditions, the Local Planning Authority are satisfied that the proposal would be acceptable in terms of its design and visual impact. As such, the proposal is considered to be in accordance with Policies LP11 and LP12 of Huntingdonshire's Local Plan to 2036, the Huntingdonshire Design Guide SPD and Section 12 of the National Planning Policy Framework in this regard.

*Residential Amenity

Policy LP14 of the Local Plan to 2036 states a proposal will be supported where a high standard of amenity is provided for all users and occupiers of the proposed development and maintained for users and occupiers of neighbouring land and buildings.

The closest neighbouring properties that are most likely to be impacted upon as a result of the development are Nos. 25, 27 and 29 Ravenshoe, Godmanchester. No representations have been received.

The shared boundary to the neighbouring property comprises a 1.8m high close boarded fence. While it is recognised that the proposed dwelling would result in some overbearing and overshadowing impacts on the neighbouring property to the north, given the total length of the neighbouring properties private amenity space (approximately 57m) and the roof sloping away from the shared boundary, the impacts are not considered to be severe enough to warrant refusal of planning permission in this instance.

The proposals include first floor bathroom and ensuite windows on the north elevation - these should be opaque glazed and fitting with opening restrictors to prevent overlooking to the rear garden of No. 25 Ravenshoe to the north and improve piracy. The second floor rooflights are missing from the building section but would appear to allow high level overlooking to neighbouring rear gardens of Nos. 25 and 29 Ravenshoe. These rooflights should be fitted with obscured glazing. These measures are to ensure the proposal does not result in any overlooking impacts on the neighbouring property.

The proposed dwelling is not considered to result in any significantly detrimental overbearing or overshadowing impacts on No. 29 Ravenshoe with the roof sloping away from the neighbouring property. Furthermore, the proposed dwelling does not include any first-floor, south side elevation windows and therefore would not result in any detrimental overlooking impacts.

Beyond the garden area of No. 29 Ravenshoe are the rear, north facing elevations of Nos. 20 and 22 Pippin Close within the adjacent 20/00505/REM development site. Given the proposal is separated by the garden of No. 29 and there are no first-floor, south side elevation windows, no adverse impact on these properties is anticipated.

With regards to No. 27 Ravenshoe, the proposed dwelling is not considered to result in any detrimental overbearing, overshadowing or overlooking impacts on the neighbouring property. Furthermore, the subdivision of the existing plot of No. 27 is considered to be acceptable, ensuring adequate private amenity space for both the existing and proposed property.

Overall, taking the above factors into consideration, the proposal is considered to be acceptable with regard to its impact on residential amenity and therefore accords with Policy LP14 of Huntingdonshire's Local Plan to 2036, the Huntingdonshire Design Guide SPD and Section 12 of the National Planning Policy Framework in this regard.

*Highway Safety

Policy LP17 of the Local Plan seeks to ensure that new development incorporates appropriate space for vehicle movements, facilitates access for emergency vehicles and service vehicles and incorporates adequate parking for vehicles and cycles. Harm to highway safety should not arise from development.

The proposed dwelling would be accessed via a proposed access off the A1198, which is subject to a 30mph speed limit. The A1198 is a wide HGV haul route that has wide foot/cycle ways along both sides of the carriageway.

On the previous application, the Local Highway recognised that the proposed access off a wide HGV haul route is not ideal, it would serve one dwelling and therefore they have no planning policy base to recommend refusal. Furthermore, the proposed access is able to demonstrate acceptable pedestrian and vehicular visibility splays in both directions and has not changed in principle. Conditions would be imposed on any planning permission granted to ensure the proposed access arrangements (including visibility splays) are carried out in strict accordance with the submitted plans.

The proposed dwelling would include three bedrooms with the submitted site layout plan indicating the provision of two, tandem off-street car parking spaces along the south-west of the dwelling. The proposed quantum of off-street car parking is considered to be acceptable and while it is in a tandem layout, there is an area of hardsurfacing to the front of the property within the proposed curtilage to ensure that vehicles can enter the highway in a forward gear. Furthermore, the proposal includes a cycle store with capacity for three bikes and would therefore comply with Policy LP16 of the adopted Local Plan.

The proposals also include a single detached garage positioned to the rear of the tandem parking. This has an internal measurement of 7m x 3m and accords with the HDC Design Guide SPD requirements for single garages and is sufficient to accommodate both a parked car together with the necessary cycle parking for the dwelling.

Overall, subject to imposition of appropriate conditions on any planning permission granted, the proposal is considered acceptable in terms of its impact on highway safety and therefore accords with Policy LP17 of Huntingdonshire's Local Plan to 2036 and Section 9 of the National Planning Policy Framework in this regard.

*Flood Risk

The site is at the lowest risk of flooding according to the Huntingdonshire Strategic Flood Risk Assessment 2017 and Environment Agency Flood Map for Planning (Flood Zone 1) and the proposal is for minor development. This type of development is considered to be acceptable in Flood Zone 1 and accordingly the sequential and exceptions tests for flooding nor the submission of a flood risk assessment are considered necessary in this instance in accordance with the NPPF and NPPG.

It is proposed to dispose of surface water via a soakaway and foul sewage via connecting to the existing mains drainage system. Given the low flood risk and minor scale of development, officers are satisfied that full details of the surface and foul water drainage can be secured as part of building regulations and other relevant legislative requirements in this instance.

Therefore, subject to appropriate conditions the proposal is considered to be acceptable with regard to its impact on both flood risk and surface water and therefore accords with Policies LP5, LP6 and LP15 of Huntingdonshire's Local Plan to 2036 and Section 14 of the National Planning Policy Framework in this regard.

*Biodiversity

Paragraph 180 of the NPPF (2024) states planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment. Policy LP30 of the Local Plan to 2036 requires proposals to demonstrate that all potential adverse impacts on biodiversity and geodiversity have been investigated and ensure no net loss in biodiversity and provide a net gain where possible, through the planned retention, enhancement and creation of habitats and wildlife features, appropriate to the scale, type, and location of development.

As of the 2nd April 2024, mandatory biodiversity net gain (BNG) is applicable on small sites as per paragraph 13 of Schedule 7A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended)). The applicants must have had the primary input into the final design and layout of a house and would occupy the proposed dwelling themselves. Officers are satisfied the proposal is exempt from a mandatory net gain as the development is self-build. As it is on this basis only that 10% BNG is not to be secured, a condition shall be imposed on any consent to ensure the property is a self-build property.

The application has demonstrated the proposal would not result in adverse impacts on biodiversity and geodiversity and any impacts which may arise can be mitigated. The proposal is considered to accord with the objectives of Policy LP30 of Huntingdonshire's Local Plan and Section 15 of the National Planning Policy Framework 2024 in this regard.

This application has been accompanied by a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal which concludes that the site currently forms part of the existing residential garden of No. 27 Ravenshoe and offers low ecological value.

The submitted report offers biodiversity enhancement measures in the form of the installation of bird nesting boxes, bat boxes, hedgehog homes and a soft landscaping scheme.

Subject to the imposition of conditions to ensure the implementation of the biodiversity enhancement measures alongside a specific soft landscaping scheme, the Local Planning Authority are satisfied that the proposal would broadly be in accordance with Policies LP30 and LP31 of Huntingdonshire's Local Plan to 2036 and Section 15 of the National Planning Policy Framework in this regard.

*Trees

Policy LP31 of the adopted Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2036 states that a proposal will be required to demonstrate that the potential for adverse impacts on trees, woodland, hedges and hedgerows has been investigated. Furthermore, a proposal will only be supported where it seeks to conserve and enhance any existing tree, woodland, hedge or hedgerow of value that would be affected by the proposed development. Paragraph 131 of the National Planning Policy Framework states that trees make an important contribution to the character and quality of urban environments and decisions should ensure that existing trees are retained wherever possible.

The application has been accompanied by a Tree Survey. The proposal involves the removal of four cherry trees and seeks to plant four, replacement silver birch trees in the western corner of the site. Given the site does not benefit from being situated within a Conservation Area, there are no Tree Protection Orders and the trees proposed to be removed off limited amenity value, the Local Planning Authority have no objections to their removal and replacement.

Accordingly, the proposal is considered to be in accordance with Policy LP31 of the adopted Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2036 and Sections 12 and 15 of the National Planning Policy Framework in this regard.

*Development Obligations

Part H of the Developer Contributions SPD (2011) requires a payment towards refuse bins for new residential development. A Unilateral Undertaking Form in respect of wheeled bins has been received by the Local Planning Authority dated 6th February 2024. The proposed development is therefore considered to accord with Policy LP4 of Huntingdonshire's Local Plan to 2036 and the Developers Contributions SPD (2011).

*Accessible and Adaptable Dwellings

Policy LP25 of the Huntingdonshire's Local Plan to 2036 seeks to ensure that all housing developments in the district offers a genuine choice of Accessible and adaptable dwellings that meet the requirements of residents:

f. ensuring 100% of new dwellings, across all tenures provided, meet Building Regulation requirement M4 (2) 'accessible and adaptable dwellings' (or replacement standards).

To ensure that the development can meet these standards a condition would be imposed on any outline permission that may be granted in this regard in accordance with Policy LP25 of Huntingdonshire's Local Plan to 2036.

*Water Efficiency

Policy LP12 (j) of the Local Plan to 2036 states that new dwellings must comply with the optional Building Regulation requirement for water efficiency set out in Approved Document G of the Building Regulations. A condition will be attached to any consent to ensure compliance with the above, in accordance with Policy LP12 (j) of Huntingdonshire's Local Plan to 2036.

*Other issues

*Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)

If the necessary qualification requirements are met and the application process is completed within required timescales, an exemption from the Community Infrastructure Levy will be available to anybody who is building their own home or has commissioned a home from a contractor, house builder or sub-contractor. Individuals benefiting from the exemption must own the property and occupy it as their principal residence for a minimum of 3 years after the work is completed.

There is a set process which requires 4 steps to be undertaken within the required timescales. Failure to follow the set procedures within the required timescales will mean that the exemption will not be obtained, or will be rescinded if previously obtained, and a full levy liability will be incurred. Failure to submit a commencement notice before building works begin will result in a surcharge.

The exemption must be applied for and obtained, and a commencement notice must be received by the collecting authority, prior to the commencement of the development (start of works on site). In addition, following completion of the build, a form must be submitted to the collecting authority, along with the additional supporting evidence, within 6 months of the date of the compliance certificate (regulation 54C inserted by the 2014 Regulations).

*Conclusion

The proposed development is considered to be compliant with the relevant national and local policy as it is:

*Acceptable in principle

And it:

* Is of an appropriate scale and design;
* Would not be detrimental to highway safety or residential amenity in the locality;
* Would not result in an increased risk of flooding in the locality;
* Is acceptable with regards to the impact on biodiversity and trees;
* There are no other material planning considerations which lead to the conclusion that the proposal is unacceptable.

Taking national and local planning policies into account, and having regard for all relevant material considerations, it is recommended that planning permission be granted, subject to the imposition of appropriate conditions.

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CONTACT OFFICER:
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