HUNTINGDONSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

25/00282/HHFUL

OFFICER REPORT

Case No: **25/00282/HHFUL** **Householder (Full)**

Proposal: **Single storey residential annexe to rear garden for ancillary use to the main dwelling.**

Location: **36 Fen Lane Sawtry Huntingdon**

Applicant: **Mr Michael Skoyles**

Grid Ref: **517112 283550**

DESCRIPTION OF SITE AND APPLICATION

The application site is occupied by a two-storey semi-detached dwellinghouse, 36 Fen Lane, Sawtry. Residential dwellings are situated to the north, east and west. To the south of the application site is Sawtry Village Academy. No 36 Fen Lane benefits from a long but narrow residential amenity space to the rear.

The application site is located in Flood Zone 1 according to Environment Agency mapping and the Councils Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA, 2024) and therefore at lowest risk from river and sea flooding. According to the latest SFRA (2024) the site is not at risk from surface water flooding. No statutory ecological or historical designations are within or in proximity to the site.

The application seeks planning permission to erect a single storey residential annexe to the rear garden for ancillary use to the main dwelling. The annexe proposed would be designed with a shallow pitched roof, would be 6.6m in length, 6.3m in width and 3.1m to the ridge and would offer the occupants of the dwelling additional living and sleeping space. No kitchen facilities are proposed as part of the annexe.

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

NATIONAL GUIDANCE

The National Planning Policy Framework (12th December 2024) (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 10).'

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.

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

PLANNING POLICIES

Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2036 (Adopted 15/05/2019)
o LP11: Design Context

o LP12: Design Implementation
o LP14: Amenity
o LP30: Biodiversity and Geodiversity

Huntingdonshire Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document (2017):
* Place Making Principles - Part 3.7 Building Form and Part 3.8 Building Detailing

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

RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY
16/01154/FUL- Erection of two 2 bedroomed affordable rented dwellings-Permitted 07.09.2016

19/80285/COND- Conditional information for 16/01154/FUL: C7 (Drainage) and C11- Discharged 15.11.2019

20/00725/S73- Variation of Condition 2 (Plans) for 16/01154/FUL to include new hedging-Permitted 01.10.2020

CONSULTATIONS
Sawtry Town/Parish Council- No objection. Recommend approval. No effects on neighbouring properties.

Arboricultural Officer- No comment at the time of determination.

REPRESENTATIONS
None received at the time of determination.

SUMMARY OF ISSUES
The main issues to consider in the determination of this application are:
o Design and Visual Amenity
o Residential amenity
o Biodiversity and trees

*Design and Visual Amenity
Policies LP11 and LP12 state that developments should respond positively to their context, draw inspiration from the key characteristics of its surroundings and contribute positively to the area's character and identity.

No.36 Fen Lane is located in a residential area of the village of Sawtry. Development within the wider locality comprises of the village Academy, Leisure Centre and Youth Centre, pubs, shops and takeaways.

No.36 Fen Lane is a two storey semidetached dwellinghouse which benefits from a long but narrow rear residential amenity space. Various dwellings along Fen Road have residential outbuildings to the rear of the properties.

The application seeks planning permission to erect a single storey residential annexe to the rear garden for ancillary use to the main dwelling. The annexe proposed would be designed with a shallow pitched roof, 6.6m in length, 6.3m in width and would be 3.1m to the ridge.

Given the single storey nature of the proposed annexe and the size of the rear amenity space, the scale, mass and bulk of the proposed annexe would remain subservient to the host dwelling and is considered acceptable and would not have a detrimental impact on the character and appearance of the host dwelling or the surrounding area.

The proposal would offer the occupants of the dwelling additional living and sleeping space. Should the development be permitted, a condition would be imposed on the development to ensure that the building shall not be occupied at any time other than for purposes ancillary to the residential use of the dwelling house.

As detailed in the submitted application form the proposed annexe would be constructed using buff bricks, grey roof membrane, white UPVC windows, doors and rainwater goods. The materials used within the locality vairy. Given the proposed annexe would be sited to the rear of the dwelling it would not be visible from the public highway; the proposed material pallet is considered acceptable.

Given the above, Officers consider the proposed residential outbuilding to not have an unacceptable impact on the character and appearance of the area and therefore accords with Local Plan Policies LP11 and LP12.

*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 in terms of light, outlook, privacy and noise.

Due regard shall be paid to the residential amenity of the closest residential dwellings (No. 34 Fen Lane and No. 1 Homeview, Fen Lane) to the east and west. The proposed annexe would be 1m from the common boundary with No. 34 Fen Lane and 0.9m from the boundary with No. 1 Homeview, Fen Lane. Given the single storey nature of the proposal and set back arrangement at the end of the rear garden, the proposal is not considered to result in overshadowing or loss of light issues to the amenity space of adjacent neighbours. Furthermore, the site is bound with 1.8m close board fencing which would restrict any overlooking, alongside the single storey nature of the proposed outbuilding.

The proposed annexe would have a ground footprint of approximately 41.58 square meters and would be constructed at a hight of 3.1m to the ridge. It is noted that the permitted development 'fallback position' is a material consideration. The Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 Use Class E enables the development of buildings within the curtilage of a dwelling house without the need to apply for planning permission. Whilst Officers do not consider this application to be permitted development as the hight of the proposed annexe exceeds 2.5 meters, an outbuilding with a larger ground footprint in this location could be erected without the need to apply for planning permission. Additionally, the proposed annexe would raise above the shared boundaries with No. 34 Fen Rd and No. 1 Homeview, Fen Lane by 1.3 meters. However, the proposed annexe would only be slightly taller (0.6 metres) than a permitted development outbuilding and therefore would not be significant enough to refuse the application. As the permitted development fallback position is a material consideration, the proposed development is not thought to cause an overbearing impact to adjacent neighbours.

It is noted that the site is bound to the south with 1.8m timber frame fencing with mesh. A hawthorn hedge is proposed to be planted along the southern boundary in addition to the existing boundary treatment. This would offer a degree of screening between the proposed building and the school to the south. Furthermore, no windows are proposed on the southern elevation of the building.

Overall, the development is considered sympathetic to the amenity of neighbouring properties and acceptable in regard to overshadowing, overbearing impact, overlooking, loss of privacy, loss of light and therefore accords with Policy LP14 of the Local Plan.

*Biodiversity and Trees
A proposal will be required to demonstrate that all potential adverse impacts on biodiversity and geodiversity have been investigated as per Local Plan Policy LP 30. Local Plan Policy LP 31 states that proposals 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.

Officers visited the application site on the 27th February 2025 and found the site comprises of residential amenity grass with limited ecological value. It is noted that an ornamental pond is located to the south of the application site within the Academy grounds approximately 46.5 metres from the application site. The submission of a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) is usually required for development within 250 metres of a pond as per the Councils local validation list.

Notwithstanding this, there is a regularly trafficked car park comprising of a hard surface and associated with the school which intervenes the pond and application site. Additionally, there is no vegetation which connects the pond to the application site therefore, it is reasonable to assume that protected species such as the great crested newt would not be present within the application site.

As detailed in the submitted block plan, the proposed annexe would be sited within some (approximately 7.94m2) of the root protection area of tree T2 (Leyland Cypress Tree) located on adjacent land. As per British Standard BS5837:2012, where a slab for a minor structure (e.g. shed base) is to be formed within the Root Protection Area (RPA), it should bear on existing ground level and should not exceed an area greater than 20% of the existing unsurfaced ground. The RPA of T2 is 122.3m2 and the proposal would only cover 6.5% of the RPA therefore conforming to the British Standard

It is however recommended that a condition is imposed, should the development be permitted, which seeks the details of an Arboricultural Method Statement prior to commencement to ensure adjacent trees are protected during the construction works.

Subject to the imposition of an Arboricultural Method Statement condition, the proposal is considered to comply with Local Plan Policy LP31.

Conclusion
The proposed development is considered to be compliant with the relevant national and local policy as it:
* Is of an appropriate scale and design
* Would not have a significantly detrimental impact upon the amenity of neighbours;
* Would not have a significantly detrimental impact upon biodiversity, ecology or trees.

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:
Enquiries about this report to **Charlotte Dew**