

Development Management Committee – 20th July 2026

Application Number: 26/00797/FUL

Proposal: Proposed construction of two dwellings

Location: Land East Of The Hawthorns, Pidley Road, Somersham

Applicant: Mr R Ellingham

Agent: Mr Oliver Brookes

Case Officer: Charlotte Dew

Parish: Somersham

Reason for Referral: Parish Objection

Committee Date: 20th July 2026

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY OF PROPOSALS AND RECOMMENDATION

RECOMMENDATION: GRANT PERMISSION SUBJECT TO CONDITIONS WITH DELEGATED AUTHORITY TO THE HEAD OF PLANNING, INFRASTRUCTURE & PUBLIC PROTECTION TO APPROVE ANY AMENDMENTS TO CONDITIONS AS DEEMED NECESSARY.

Proposal

This application seeks full planning permission for the erection of two detached 1.5-storey, four-bedroom dwellings, each served by a detached garage, on-plot vehicle turning space, and individual accesses onto Pidley Road, Somersham.

The application site extends approximately 0.40 hectares and benefits from Permission in Principle (PIP) for the erection of up to two dwellings, granted in December 2025 under application reference 25/02004/PIP.

In addition to the main development site, a separate, smaller parcel of land accessed off the B1086, St Ives Road and presently used as a paddock is proposed to deliver biodiversity net gain (BNG) off-setting.

Consultations

The following consultees have raised an **objection** to the application:

- Somersham Parish Council

The following consultees have raised **no objections** to the application:

- Highways Officers and Environmental Health Officers.

There has been no letters of support and one letter of objection received.

Conclusion

The application has been assessed against the relevant policies in the NPPF, the adopted Local Plan and other relevant guidance as listed in detail at Section 8 of the report.

The key issues arising from the application details are:

- The principle of development
- Impact on Character of the Area
- Residential amenity
- Highway Safety and Parking Provision
- Flood Risk and Drainage
- Biodiversity
- Other Matters

The report looks into the key planning issues in detail, and Officers conclude that the proposal is acceptable subject to conditions.

Members are advised that the above is a summary of the proposals and key issues contained in the main report below which provides full details of all consultation responses, planning policies, the Officer's assessment and recommendations, and Members are advised that this summary should be read in conjunction with the detailed report.

MAIN REPORT

1 APPLICATION SITE AND LOCALITY

- 1.1 This application relates to a 0.40-hectare, broadly rectangular parcel of land situated to the west of Somersham, currently used as paddock land for horse grazing. The site is enclosed by mature hedgerows along its northern, eastern, and western boundaries, while the southern boundary remains open, providing views across the wider paddock land that will be retained. The site lies to the southside of Pidley Hill, with its current existing access taken from the rear of the site via the B1086, St Ives Road.
- 1.2 The application also includes an 0.05ha parcel of land on the southern end of the paddock and accessed off B1086 and southwest of the stable block. This piece of land is proposed to be used for the Biodiversity Net Gain offsetting.
- 1.3 According to the Council's 2024 Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) and the Environment Agency's Flood Map for Planning, the site is located within

Flood Zone 1 and therefore at lowest risk from Fluvial Flooding. The site is not susceptible to groundwater or surface water flooding. There are no statutory ecological designations within or in proximity to the application site. There is however a designated scheduled ancient monument known as "Obelisk at White Post" approximately 88m to the east of the application site.

- 1.4 The 0.40-hectare site obtained permission in principle for the construction of up to two dwellings in December 2025, under application ref 25/02004/PIP.

2 DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

- 2.1 This application seeks to erect two detached four-bedroom properties, each with their own detached garage, vehicle turning space, and own new vehicle access onto Pidley Road. The other smaller site accessed off an established junction onto the B1086 is proposed to be used for BNG offsetting.
- 2.2 Officers have scrutinised the plans and have familiarised themselves with the site and surrounding area.

3 RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

- 3.1 The following planning history is considered relevant to the current proposal:
 - 25/02004/PIP-Permission in principle for construction of up to two dwellings-Permitted 08.12.2025
 - 1400837FUL-Change of use from agricultural to equestrian to include the creation of a parking /turning hard core area with post and rail fencing-Permitted 14.10.2014
 - 0202264OUT-Erection of a dwelling -Refused 04.10.2002

4 RELEVANT PLANNING POLICY AND GUIDANCE

Statutory Duty

- 4.1 Planning law requires that applications for planning permission must be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
- 4.2 Huntingdonshire's Local Plan to 2036 (Adopted 15th May 2019)
 - LP1: Amount of Development
 - LP2: Strategy for Development
 - LP4: Contributing to Infrastructure Delivery
 - LP5: Flood Risk
 - LP6: Wastewater Management
 - LP8: Key Service Centres
 - LP11: Design Context
 - LP12: Design Implementation
 - LP14: Amenity
 - LP15: Surface Water
 - LP16: Sustainable Travel
 - LP17: Parking Provision and vehicle movement
 - LP22: Local Services and Community Facilities

LP30: Biodiversity and Geodiversity
LP31: Trees, Woodland, Hedges and Hedgerows

- 4.3 Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD) and Guidance:
- oHuntingdonshire's Design Guide SPD 2017 - Compatibility Statement (2021)
 - oDeveloper Contributions SPD (2011)
 - oDeveloper Contributions: Updates Costs 2019/2020
 - oHuntingdonshire Landscape and Townscape Assessment (2022)
 - oCambridgeshire Flood and Water SPD 2017
 - oStrategic Flood Risk Assessment 2024
 - oAnnual Monitoring Review regarding housing land supply 2024

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

- 4.4 There is no made neighbourhood plan in Somersham however, Somersham Parish Councils application for the designation of a neighbourhood plan area relating to the whole of the parish was approved on 25 September 2024.

RESPONSE TO CONSULTATION

- 4.5 Below is a summary of the consultation responses received at the time of writing this report. Responses are available to view in full on the Council's website.

Consultee Name	Position	Comment
Parish Council	No objection.	Further to the meeting held on 18th May 2026, Somersham Parish Council agreed to object to this application due to overdevelopment of the site.
Cambridgeshire County Council Highways	No objection.	It is noted that two new highway accesses are proposed onto the B1089, Pidley Hill. The applicant will need to obtain consent from the Lead Local Flood Authority for the ditch crossings and then apply for a Section 184 licence. A section 184 licence sits outside of the planning process. The Local Highways Authority (LHA) raises no objection.
Environmental Health Officer	No objection.	No further comments.

5 RESPONSE TO PUBLICITY

Below is a summary of the third party and neighbour responses received at the time of writing this report.

- 5.1 No letters of support have been received, however one letter of objection has been received raising the following concerns regarding the proposal:
- Flood risk and drainage- The site lies within a flood risk area and, given its current role as permeable grazing land, the proposed development, including built form, hardstanding, and watercourse crossings, raises concerns that

insufficient evidence has been provided to demonstrate it would not increase surface water runoff and exacerbate flooding elsewhere.

- **Harm to Rural Character and Countryside-** The proposal would urbanise this open countryside setting and create harmful encroachment into the countryside.
- **Biodiversity and Wildlife Impacts-** Development of the land would result in loss of grassland habitat, increased lighting, noise, traffic and domestic disturbance, which are likely to negatively affect wildlife and ecological corridors in the area.
- **Highway Safety Concerns-** The Highway Authority's requirements for visibility splays, ditch crossings and legal agreements indicate that the access is complex and may pose increased risks to motorists, cyclists, pedestrians and horse riders.

6 APPRAISAL

Principle of Development

Housing Land Supply

- 6.1 This report should be read with the knowledge that the NPPF paragraph 78 requires the Council to identify and update annually a supply of specific deliverable sites sufficient to provide a minimum of five years' worth of housing against our housing requirement. A substantially revised methodology for calculating local housing need and the reimposition of this as a mandatory approach for establishing housing requirements was introduced on 12th December 2024 in the revised NPPF and associated NPPG (the standard method).
- 6.2 As Huntingdonshire's Local Plan to 2036 is now over 5 years old it is necessary to demonstrate a five-year housing land supply (5YHLS) based on the housing requirement set using the standard method. NPPF paragraph 78 also requires provision of a buffer to ensure choice and competition in the market for land. As Huntingdonshire has successfully exceeded the requirements of the Housing Delivery Test a 5% buffer is required here. The 5-year housing land requirement including a 5% buffer is 5,907 homes. The current 5YHLS is 4,345 homes equivalent to 3.68 years' supply.
- 6.3 As a result of this, the presumption in favour of sustainable development is applied for decision-taking in accordance with paragraph 11 (d) and footnote 8 of the NPPF in relation to applications involving the provision of housing. This is generally referred to as 'the tilted balance'. While no 5YHLS can be demonstrated the Local Plan policies concerned with the supply and location of housing as set out in the Development Strategy chapter (policies LP2, LP7, LP8, LP9 and LP10) of Huntingdonshire's Local Plan to 2036 are considered to be out-of-date and can no longer be afforded full weight in the determination of planning applications.

Permission in Principle

- 6.4 As set out above, the 0.40-hectare site secured Permission in Principle (PIP) for the erection of up to two dwellings in December 2025 under application reference 25/02004/PIP.
- 6.5 The site lies within the countryside, where new residential development is typically resisted. However, the grant of PIP established that development of up to two dwellings on the site would be acceptable in principle, having regard to the amount, use and location of development. This conclusion was reached in the context the Council's current inability to demonstrate a five-year housing land supply, taking account of the site's proximity to the Key Service Centre of Somersham and so being considered relatively sustainable. Also taking into account the benefits of 2 additional houses and weighing this against the limited visual landscape/countryside harm. In this instance the visual/landscape impact/harm did not significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits when considering all the positives and negatives of the proposal.
- 6.6 It is acknowledged that third-party representations raise concerns regarding encroachment into the countryside. However as detailed above, as the Council cannot current demonstrate its 5-year housing land supply, the principle of erecting up to two dwellings cannot be resisted on the site and has already been considered and granted through the extant PIP consent. This permission in principle (PIP) for 2 dwellings on the site is therefore the fallback planning position of the site. Therefore, in the absence of any new material planning considerations since granting of the PIP permission in December 2025, which would affect the determination of 2 dwellings on site, matters relating to the suitability of the site in terms of location, land use and quantum of development are considered established and so are not revisited under this application.
- 6.7 Therefore, the principle of 2 residential dwellings on the site been established by the approved PIP, and the assessment of this proposal therefore lies in consideration of the detailed proposals of site layout, design, parking, landscaping etc.
- 6.8 The application also proposes to use an 0.05ha parcel of existing paddock land to facilitate Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) offsetting. The site currently forms part of an established rural holding in equestrian use, and the proposal would utilise land within this lawful use to deliver ecological enhancements.
- 6.9 The principle, of enhancing a piece of nearby paddock land to the site to provide the BNG enhancements required by this housing development is acceptable, in line with BNG legislation, and compatible with the paddock land and its surrounding context.
- 6.10 Accordingly, the principle of using the site for BNG offsetting is considered acceptable and in compliance with Policies LP10 (The Countryside), LP19 (Rural Economy) and LP30 (Biodiversity and Geodiversity) of the Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2036.

Impact on Character of the Area

- 6.11 Policies LP11 and LP12 of Huntingdonshire's Local Plan to 2036 states 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.
- 6.12 In addition to the above, it is also noted the site is located in the Countryside whereby Local Plan Policy LP10 part c sets out all development in the countryside must recognise the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside.
- 6.13 Pidley Hill is characterised by linear development along the road, comprising detached dwellings set within spacious plots and positioned back from the road frontage. The vernacular along this part of Pidley Hill is varied, comprising both single-storey and two-storey dwellings. Building forms range from traditional rectangular footprints to properties incorporating front projecting gables. Gable roof types are prevalent within the streetscene, while hipped roof forms appear less frequently.
- 6.14 The application site lies to the south of the public highway, between the residential property known as "The Hawthornes" and the customer car park of The Windmill public house. The proposed development would represent an infill between The Windmill site and the residential curtilage of "The Hawthornes."
- 6.15 This application seeks to erect two detached four-bedroom properties, each with their own detached garage, vehicle turning space, and individual accesses to be established onto Pidley Road, in a linear arrangement facing onto Pidley Road. The other smaller site accessed off an established junction onto the B1086 is proposed to be used for BNG offsetting only.
- 6.16 The Parish Council objection about the proposal overdeveloping the site has been considered.
- 6.17 Whilst the proposed dwellings are relatively large in size, they are set comfortably within their plots, with generous separation distances to their side, rear and front boundaries. In addition, there is a significant degree of separation between the plots, with approximately 21 metres between the garage of Plot 1 (the western plot) and Plot 2 (the eastern plot). This helps to ensure they would not appear visually cramped or oversized for their plots. This also allows for the provision of generously sized side and rear garden spaces for the properties, giving good levels of residential amenity for future residents. The properties proposed layout pattern and character therefore appears to be, and appropriate for this rural loose grain ribbon development character predominant on the opposite side of the road.
- 6.18 The properties proposed layout pattern and character, results in an acceptable density of development for the site, and one that is characteristic of the loose grain ribbon development on the opposite side of the road, and in some instances more generous than the separation distances and plots sizes of these. As such, the proposal would reflect the established layout character of housing in the surrounding area in terms of plot spacing and layout.

- 6.19 Taking these factors into account, Officers are satisfied that the proposal would represent an acceptable form of development on the site and would not constitute overdevelopment of it. The scheme is therefore considered acceptable in respect of density in this countryside location.
- 6.20 The proposed dwellings are designed as 1.5-storey properties with the proposed first floor accommodation in the roof space, featuring a traditional wide frontage and a shallow plan form. The design incorporates a catslide roof, which lowers the eaves at the rear elevation to approximately 2.4 metres, with an overall ridge height of approximately 7.2 metres. Both front and rear projecting gables are proposed, together with a single dormer window on the front elevation and two dormer windows on the rear elevation.
- 6.21 Officers consider the use of a catslide roof to be a positive design feature, as it reduces the overall visual impact of the development by lowering the apparent height and massing of the dwellings. This is particularly beneficial in relation to the open paddock to the south, where a reduced ridge height helps to minimise the impact on the wider countryside setting. The proposed scale and form of the dwellings are considered to be appropriate and in keeping with the varied character of surrounding properties. Furthermore, the siting of the dwellings, set back from the road frontage, helps to maintain the prevailing linear character of development along the southern side of Pidley Road, whilst reflecting the established pattern of development on the northern side.
- 6.22 In terms of materials, Pidley Road displays a mix of white uPVC windows and rainwater goods, red and buff brickwork, brown pantiles and grey slate roof tiles, with limited use of render. The proposal seeks to utilise a palette comprising buff brick, slate roof tiles, grey windows and doors, and a limited amount of timber cladding to the front projecting gables and dormers. Whilst grey fenestration is not widely prevalent within the immediate locality, it is supported by the Huntingdonshire Design Guide as an appropriate feature within contemporary development, and is considered acceptable in this context as it introduces a modest degree of variety to the streetscene (Huntingdonshire Design Guide, p.167).
- 6.23 Similarly, although timber cladding is not a dominant material within the surrounding area, its use is considered appropriate given the site's rural context. The inclusion of natural materials such as timber is viewed as being sympathetic to the countryside setting and contributes positively to the overall design approach.
- 6.24 Each dwelling would be served by a detached double garage measuring approximately 8 metres in width by 6.5 metres in depth. These structures are considered to be of an appropriate size to accommodate two vehicles, as well as the secure storage of four cycles (one per bedroom), in accordance with the requirements of Local Plan Policy LP17. The garages would have a ridge height of approximately 5.6 metres and are therefore appropriately scaled to remain subservient to the host dwellings.

- 6.25 Notwithstanding the submitted site plan, which indicates the presence of a hedgerow along the southern boundary to provide screening from the adjoining paddock, Officers consider it necessary to secure full details of landscaping. Accordingly, should Members be minded to grant planning permission, it is recommended that a condition be imposed requiring the submission and approval of a comprehensive hard and soft landscaping scheme.
- 6.26 In light of the above assessment, Officers are satisfied that the proposed dwellings respond positively to their context, drawing upon the key characteristics of the surrounding area. The development is considered to respect and reinforce the established character and identity of this countryside location, while introducing a high-quality design. Accordingly, the proposal is considered to accord with the requirements of Local Plan policies LP10 (part c), LP11 and LP12.

Residential amenity

- 6.27 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.

Neighbouring properties

- 6.28 The closest existing residential properties are located to the north, on the opposite side of Pidley Hill road and are known as, 'The Bungalow', 'Windy Ridge Farm' and 'Willow House'. Approximately 30m to the west of the site is the dwelling known as 'The Hawthorns'.
- 6.29 It is also noted that PIP has been granted on the land to the west, between the site and The Hawthorns (application ref: 26/00212/PIP). Whilst this permission establishes the principle of residential development, details relating to the design and appearance of those dwellings have not yet been submitted to or approved by the Local Planning Authority (LPA).
- 6.30 Notwithstanding this, the proposed dwellings would not include any first-floor side-facing windows within the western elevation, and therefore direct overlooking would not arise. In addition, Plot 1 (the eastern property) would achieve a side separation distance of approximately 12 metres from the shared boundary with the adjacent site benefitting from planning permission. This degree of separation is considered sufficient to minimise the potential for future overshadowing or overbearing impacts.
- 6.31 In respect of potential impacts on neighbouring residential amenity, including overlooking, overshadowing and overbearing effects on the occupants of The Bungalow, Windy Ridge Farm and Willow House, the proposed dwellings would be set back from the road frontage by approximately 20 metres. These neighbouring properties are, at a minimum, a further 40 metres away, with intervening landscaping. Given these separation distances and screening, any impacts arising from the proposed development would be limited to negligible.

- 6.32 Approximately 30 metres to the west lies the dwelling known as The Hawthorns. As noted above, no first-floor side-facing windows are proposed on the west elevation. Furthermore, given the degree of separation between the proposal and the eastern elevation of The Hawthorns, it is considered that there would be no material harm in terms of overlooking, overshadowing or overbearing impact to this adjacent neighbour. Overall, the proposal is considered to afford an acceptable level of residential amenity for surrounding occupiers.

Amenity for future occupiers

- 6.33 The proposed development has been designed to provide a high standard of residential amenity for future occupiers. Each dwelling benefits from an appropriate level of private external amenity space, relative to its size and type. The layout has been carefully arranged to ensure adequate separation distances between dwellings, preventing undue overlooking and safeguarding privacy.
- 6.34 The dwellings have been designed to meet the nationally described space standard for a 4-bedroom 5-person 2-storey dwelling. All proposed habitable rooms of the properties would be served with windows which offer acceptable levels of daylight and sunlight
- 6.35 Taking the above factors into consideration, Officers consider the proposed development to be acceptable in residential amenity terms and in accordance 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 and Parking Provision

- 6.36 Policy LP16 of Huntingdonshire's Local Plan to 2036 encourages sustainable transport modes and Policy LP17 supports proposals where they incorporate appropriate space for vehicle movements, safe access onto the highway and adequate parking for vehicles and cycles.
- 6.37 The proposal seeks to create two new accesses onto Pidley Hill, one to serve each new dwelling. Each proposed access would be 3.8m in width.
- 6.38 It is acknowledged that third parties have raised concerns regarding the proposals impact on highways safety. However, the Local Highways Authority (LHA) consulted on the application have raised no objection to the proposal in terms of highways safety and recommended the imposition of several conditions.
- 6.39 The LHA did however note that the applicant would need to obtain consent from the Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA) for the ditch crossings and then apply for a Section 184 licence (Footway/Verge Crossing). A Section 184 licence falls outside the planning process.

- 6.40 The key consideration in this instance is whether the proposed access arrangements would give rise to any highway safety concerns. In this regard, the LHA has confirmed that the proposed accesses would not be detrimental to highway safety.
- 6.41 Each dwelling would be served with an on-site turning area to allow vehicles to enter and leave the site in a forward gear.
- 6.42 As detailed above, the proposed garages would be of a sufficient size to accommodate the parking of two vehicles, as well as the secure storage of four cycles. The proposal therefore accords with Policy LP17 of the Local Plan, which requires the provision of one cycle space per bedroom.

Flood Risk and Drainage

- 6.43 Policy LP5 of the Local Plan sets out that a proposal will only be supported where all forms of flood risk have been addressed.
- 6.44 Whilst third party concerns in respect of drainage and flooding are acknowledged, information available to the LPA indicate the application site is entirely located within Flood Zone 1, as defined by the Environment Agency's Flood Map for Planning and the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA 2024), and is therefore at a low risk of fluvial flooding. As detailed above, the site is also not susceptible to groundwater or surface water flooding according to SFRA and EA data.
- 6.45 The submission of a flood risk assessment and the application of the sequential test are therefore considered unnecessary, as the site is at low risk from all sources of flooding.
- 6.46 The submitted application form indicates that surface water would be disposed of via a soakaway, although the proposed arrangement for foul water drainage has not been specified at this stage. Therefore, a condition is recommended requiring a foul water drainage scheme to be agreed with the Local Planning Authority.
- 6.47 The development would introduce an increased area of hardstanding, which has the potential to affect surface water runoff. However, it is considered that the scale of the proposed development is unlikely to result in a significant increase in surface water runoff so as to warrant refusal of the application, particularly given that the site is located within Flood Zone 1 and is not identified as being at risk from any form of flooding.
- 6.48 Due to the modest scale of the proposed development, the site's location within an area of low flood risk, and subject to the imposition of a condition requiring the submission and approval of a foul water drainage strategy, the proposal is considered to have acceptable flood risk and drainage impacts. Accordingly, the development is considered to accord with Policies LP5, LP6 and LP15 of the Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2036, the provisions of the NPPF and NPPG,

and the guidance contained within Section 4 of the Cambridgeshire Flood and Water SPD.

Biodiversity

- 6.49 Paragraph 187 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 dovetails this and 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.
- 6.50 The application is supported by a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) and a Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment dated 7th April 2026.
- 6.51 The PEA identifies that there are no trees, buildings or structures within the Site with potential to support roosting bats. However, it recommends the implementation of a sensitive lighting scheme to minimise any potential impacts on foraging or commuting bats. This shall be secured by condition should members be minded to permit the development.
- 6.52 With regard to other protected species, no evidence of hedgehogs or other notable mammal species was recorded on site. Nevertheless, the surrounding habitats are considered suitable to support hedgehogs, and as such the PEA recommends precautionary working measures, including the provision of permeable boundaries where fencing is proposed.
- 6.53 The proposal involves the partial removal of the northern hedgerow to facilitate access, and the PEA therefore recommends that vegetation clearance is undertaken outside of the bird nesting season.
- 6.54 In respect of Great Crested Newts, the PEA concludes that the habitats within the site are of low value and unlikely to support significant populations or function as core habitat for amphibians. Similarly, the site is considered to be of limited value to invertebrates due to the absence of key habitat features such as diverse vegetation structure, nectar-rich planting, deadwood, bare ground, or waterbodies.
- 6.55 It is acknowledged that third parties have raised concerns that development of the site would result in the loss of grassland habitat, alongside increased lighting, noise, traffic and general domestic disturbance, which could have adverse impacts on local wildlife and ecological corridors.
- 6.56 The submitted PEA concludes that no further ecological surveys are required. The site is identified as being of low ecological value, with good connectivity to the wider landscape; however, no protected species were recorded during the assessment. Whilst the site has some ecological value, this does not in itself preclude development. The PEA confirms the absence of protected species within the site and sets out a series of recommendations to mitigate impacts and enhance biodiversity.

- 6.57 Furthermore, as detailed below, the proposal includes measures to deliver BNG, with a minimum 10% uplift in accordance with current policy requirements.
- 6.58 Subject to the imposition of a condition securing compliance with the recommendations set out within the submitted PEA, together with a condition requiring the submission and approval of a bat-sensitive lighting strategy, Officers are satisfied that the application has appropriately assessed potential impacts on biodiversity and geodiversity.
- 6.59 In addition to the above requirements to assess the development impact on protected species, in accordance with Schedule 7A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, as inserted by the Environment Act 2021 and amended by the Levelling Up and Regeneration Act 2023, this development is subject to the mandatory requirement to deliver at least a 10% Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG).
- 6.60 The application is accompanied by a BNG Metric and supporting Biodiversity Net Gain Report. The report identifies the site's baseline habitats as predominantly modified grassland, with smaller elements comprising orchard (0.015 acres), sparsely vegetated land, and developed/sealed surfaces. Native hedgerows and a hedgerow ditch, totalling approximately 130 metres in length, are assessed as having a baseline value of 1.32 hedgerow units. Officers consider the submitted baseline to be reasonable and robust.
- 6.61 The submitted BNG assessment concludes that, post-development, the site would predominantly comprise built development, including sealed surfaces and residential gardens.
- 6.62 The report proposes the planting of approximately 0.0326 acres of rural trees within the separate land parcel on St Ives Road to facilitate biodiversity net gain. Overall, the proposals are anticipated to deliver a total of 1.12 habitat units' post-development, equating to a 14.71% increase in habitat units.
- 6.63 In respect of hedgerows, the scheme proposes the planting of 30 metres of species-rich native hedgerow, resulting in an increase to 1.46 hedgerow units, equivalent to a 10.51% net gain.
- 6.64 The overall biodiversity net gain targets would be exceeded for both habitat and hedgerow units. A planning condition is recommended to secure the submission and approval of a Biodiversity Gain Plan, setting out how the on-site net gain will be delivered, managed, and maintained for a minimum period of 30 years.

7 PLANNING BALANCE AND CONCLUSION

- 7.1 Planning law requires that applications for planning permission be determined in accordance with the development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
- 7.2 A revised NPPF was published in December 2024, introducing a substantially revised methodology for calculating local housing need and the reimposition of

this as a mandatory approach for establishing housing requirements. This has resulted in the Council being unable to demonstrate a 5 Year Housing Land Supply (5YHLS). While no 5YHLS can be demonstrated Local Plan policies concerned with the supply and location of housing, as set out in the Development Strategy chapter (policies LP2, LP7, LP8, LP9 and LP10) of Huntingdonshire's Local Plan to 2036, are considered to be out-of-date and can no longer be afforded full weight in the determination of planning applications.

7.3 As a result of this, the presumption in favour of sustainable development is applied for decision-taking in accordance with paragraph 11 (d) and footnote 8 of the NPPF in relation to applications involving the provision of housing. This is generally referred to as 'the tilted balance'.

7.4 NPPF para 11 states:

'Plans and decisions should apply a presumption in favour of sustainable development.'

For decision-taking this means:

d) where there are no relevant development plan policies, or the policies which are most important for determining the application are out-of-date, granting permission unless:

i. the application of policies in this Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance (7) provides a strong reason for refusing the development proposed; or*

ii. any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole, having particular regard to key policies for directing development to sustainable locations, making effective use of land, securing well-designed places and providing affordable homes, individually or in combination.

7 Foot note 7 states: The policies referred to are those in this Framework (rather than those in development plans) relating to: habitats sites (and those sites listed in paragraph 194) and/or designated as Sites of Special Scientific Interest; land designated as Green Belt, Local Green Space, a National Landscape, a National Park (or within the Broads Authority) or defined as Heritage Coast; irreplaceable habitats; designated heritage assets (and other heritage assets of archaeological interest referred to in footnote 75); and areas at risk of flooding or coastal change.'*

7.5 As outlined in the report, there are no strong reasons for refusal in relation to any habitats sites (and those sites listed in paragraph 194) and/or designated as Sites of Special Scientific Interest, Local Green Space, irreplaceable habitats; designated heritage assets (and other heritage assets of archaeological interest referred to in footnote 75) and areas at risk of flooding. Therefore, there is no reason to not move forward to test d (ii) as per above and thus the 'tilted balance' is engaged.

7.6 The principle of development for the erection of two dwellings on this site was considered acceptable in December 2025 under application ref 25/02004/PIP,

there are no new material planning considerations since this approval which would change this position. This position and fall-back approval is afforded significant weight in the determination of this planning application.

- 7.7 In terms of the benefits of the scheme, the proposed development would deliver two new homes, contributing to the district's housing supply at a time when the Council cannot demonstrate a five-year housing land supply. This is given moderate weight in the planning balance.
- 7.8 In terms of the economic dimension of sustainable development, the proposed development would contribute towards economic growth, including job creation – during the construction phase and in the longer term through the additional population assisting the local economy through spending on local services/facilities. Moderate weight is afforded to this.
- 7.9 In terms of the environmental and social dimensions of sustainable development, the proposal would achieve biodiversity net gain (subject to agreement of the baseline) and well as support to local services and facilities
- 7.10 As set out within this report, as the Council is in tilted balance, the proposal does not give rise to conflict with the provisions of the Local Plan, and any limited visual/countryside/ecology harm would be outweighed by the benefits and could be adverse impacts appropriately mitigated through the use of planning conditions or planning obligations (including Biodiversity Net Gain).
- 7.11 On balance, when assessed against the policies in the NPPF taken as a whole, the identified harms are not considered to significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits of the proposal. Therefore, in accordance with paragraph 11(d) of the NPPF, the presumption in favour of sustainable development applies, and the application is recommended for approval subject to conditions.

8 RECOMMENDATION/CONDITIONS AND REASONS

- 8.1 Grant permission subject to conditions as set out below with delegated authority to the Head of Planning, Infrastructure & Public Protection to approve any amendments to conditions as deemed necessary.

Conditions (full wording)

Time Limit

- 1. The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.
Reason: To comply with the provisions of Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as amended by Section 51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

Approved Plans

- 2. The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the approved plans listed in the table above.
Reason: For the avoidance of doubt and to facilitate any future application to

the Local Planning Authority under Section 73 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

Materials

3. Notwithstanding the submitted details, no development shall take place above slab level, other than demolition, until full details of the materials to be used in the construction of the development including but not limited to, bricks, render, cladding, roofing material, doors, windows, rainwater goods, flues and vents have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: To ensure the external appearance of the development does not detract from the character and appearance of the area in accordance with Policy LP12 of the Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2036.

New Access – Construction

4. Prior to the occupation of each dwelling and being brought into first use their associated vehicular access where it crosses the public highway shall have been laid out and constructed in accordance with the approved plans and to the Cambridgeshire County Council specification and shall thereafter be retained as such.

Reason: In the interests of highway safety in accordance with Policies LP12 and LP17 of the Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2036.

Ditch / Watercourse Crossing

5. Prior to the occupation of each dwelling and being brought into first use details, including the proposed timetable, of the proposed vehicular crossing of the ditch/watercourse along the frontage of the site have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall be implemented in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: In the interests of highway safety and an effective drainage system in accordance with Policies LP12, LP15 and LP17 of the Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2036.

Provision of Visibility Splays

6. Prior to the occupation of each dwelling, and being site being brought into first use the associated visibility splays shall be provided on each side of the vehicular access in full accordance with the details indicated on the submitted plan no. 25217-1000. The splays shall thereafter be maintained free from any obstruction exceeding 0.6m above the level of the adjacent highway carriageway.

Reason: In the interests of highway safety in accordance with Policies LP12 and LP17 of the Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2036.

Drainage

7. All access/driveways hereby approved shall be constructed so that they falls and levels are such that no private water from the site drains across or onto the public highway and uses a bound material for the first 5 metres to prevent debris spreading onto the public highway. Once constructed the driveway shall be retained as such.

Reason: In the interests of highway safety in accordance with Policies LP12 and LP17 of the Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2036.

Landscaping

8. No development above slab level for each dwelling shall take place until details of both hard and soft landscape works for that plot have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. These details shall include:
 - (a) indications of all existing trees and hedgerows on the land and details of any to be retained; planting plans (which show the relationship to all underground services); written specifications (including cultivation and other operations associated with plant and grass establishment); schedules of plants, noting species, plant sizes and proposed numbers/densities where appropriate;
 - (b) boundary treatments indicating the positions, design, materials and type of boundary treatments to be erected;
 - (c) a hard landscaping plan, indicating location, manufacturer, type, colour and size;

Reason: To ensure the development is satisfactorily assimilated into the area and enhances biodiversity in accordance with Policies LP11, LP12 and LP31 of the Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2036.

External Lighting

9. No external lighting shall be provided or installed for each dwelling other than in accordance with a scheme which has been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The scheme shall be carried as approved and shall be retained as such.

Reason: To minimise the effects of light pollution on the surrounding area and to protect biodiversity interests in accordance with Policies LP14 and LP30 of the Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2036.

Compliance with the Preliminary Ecological Appraisal

10. The development hereby approved shall be carried out in accordance with the mitigation and enhancement measures detailed in section 5 and 5.4 of the Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (by Denny Ecology) received by the Local Planning Authority on 30/04/2026.

Reason: To complement or enhance features of biodiversity value in accordance with Policy LP30 of the Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2036.

Biodiversity Net Gain

11. The development shall not commence (including site clearance, demolition, or ground works) until:
- a) A biodiversity net gain plan to achieve 10% biodiversity net gain (BNG) has been submitted to the planning authority; and
 - b) The planning authority has approved the plan.

Key requirements:

The biodiversity net gain plan should include but not be limited to the following:

- a) The completed metric calculation tool showing the calculations of the predevelopment and post intervention biodiversity values.
- b) Pre and post development habitat plans
- c) Legal agreement(s) where on site biodiversity net gain is proposed
- d) Biodiversity Gain Site Register reference numbers (if using off-site units).
- e) Proof of purchase (if buying off-site or statutory biodiversity credits at a last resort).

The biodiversity net gain plan must be completed using the DEFRA Biodiversity Gain Plan Template (or any subsequent update published on GOV.UK) and shall be implemented in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: To ensure the development delivers a biodiversity net gain and secures the protection and effective management of the remaining habitat on site in accordance with Schedule 7A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, the NPPF 2024 and Policy LP30 of the Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2036.

Water Efficiency

12. The dwelling(s) hereby permitted shall be constructed and fitted out to comply with the Building Regulations 2010 (as amended) optional requirement for water efficiency, as set out in Approved Document G (or replacement standards) prior to first occupation. Such provision shall be maintained for the lifetime of the development.

Reason: In accordance with Policy LP12 of the Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2036.

Informative: The person carrying out building work must inform the building control body that the optional requirement for Water Efficiency (As set out in Approved Document G) and M4(2) applies.

Accessible and Adaptable Buildings

13. The dwelling(s) hereby permitted, shall be constructed and fitted out to comply with the Building Regulations 2010 (as amended) optional requirement M4(2) 'accessible and adaptable' (or replacement standard), prior to occupation. Such provision shall be maintained for the lifetime of the development.

Reason: To ensure the units are accessible and adaptable in accordance with Policy LP25 of the Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2036.

Site Levels

14. No development, except for demolition or site clearance, shall take place until details showing the finished floor levels of the proposed dwelling(s) in relation to the existing and proposed ground levels of the site and surrounding land has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall be constructed in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: To ensure that before any development commences the impact on the amenity of the area can be fully assessed and protected in accordance with Policies LP12 and LP14 of the Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2036.

Foul Drainage Strategy

15. No development above ground level shall commence until a scheme for the provision and implementation of foul water drainage has been submitted to, and approved in writing by, the Local Planning Authority. The scheme shall subsequently be implemented in accordance with the approved details prior to first occupation of the dwellings hereby approved, or in accordance with an implementation programme agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To reduce the risk of pollution to the water environment and to ensure a satisfactory method of foul water drainage, in accordance with policies LP6 and LP37 of the Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2036.

From: [DevelopmentControl](#)
To: [DevelopmentControl](#)
Subject: Comments for Planning Application 26/00797/FUL
Date: 19 May 2026 10:34:36

Comments summary

Dear Sir/Madam,

Planning Application comments have been made. A summary of the comments is provided below.

Comments were submitted at 19/05/2026 10:34 AM from Mrs Irene Healiss.

Application Summary

Address:	Land East Of The Hawthorns Pidley Road Somersham
Proposal:	Proposed construction of two dwellings
Case Officer:	Charlotte Dew

[Click for further information](#)

Customer Details

Name:	
Email:	executiveofficer@somersham-pc.gov.uk
Address:	The Norwood Building Parkhall Road Somersham Huntingdon

Comments Details

Commenter Type:	Town or Parish Council
Stance:	Customer objects to the Planning Application
Reasons for comment:	
Comments:	Further to the meeting held on 18th May 2026, Somersham Parish Council agreed to object to this application due to overdevelopment of the site.

Kind regards





General Notes

Work to figure dimensions only. All dimensions are shown in 'mm' unless otherwise stated. The contractor, sub-contractors and suppliers must verify all dimensions on site prior to the commencement of any work. This drawing is the property of Cameron Bosque Brookes Architects Limited and copyright is reserved by them. This drawing is issued on the basis that it is not copied, used or disclosed by or to any unauthorised person without the prior written consent of Cameron Bosque Brookes Architects Limited. This drawing is to be read in conjunction with all relevant engineers and specialist sub-contractors drawings and specifications. Contractors should carry out their own independent site surveys to confirm dimensions. Any discrepancies are to be brought to the designers attention.

Rev	Date	Drawn by	Change description
P1	08/04/2026	JPR	Issued for Planning
P2	09/04/2026	JPR	Revised Issued for Planning

0m25m50m75m100m125m

0m10m20m30m40m50m

Status

Planning

N

Cameron Bosque Brookes Architects
St Ives | Cambridge | London
01480 301 554 | 0208 050 6206
info@cbb-architects.co.uk

Title

Location and Block Plan

Client Name

Mr & Mrs Ellingham

Project Address

Land East of Hawthorns, Somersham

Scale

1:1250, 1:500@A1

Date

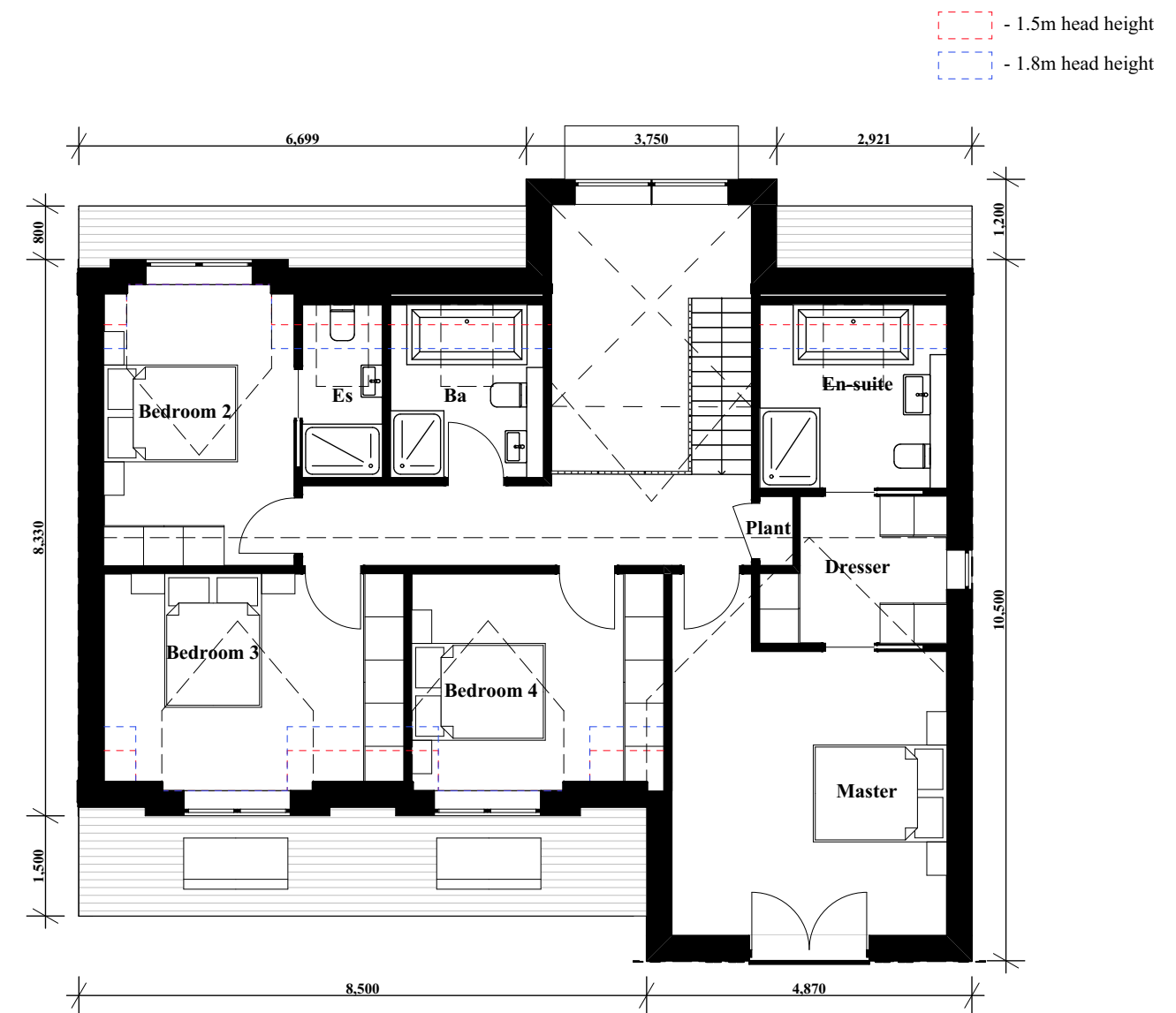
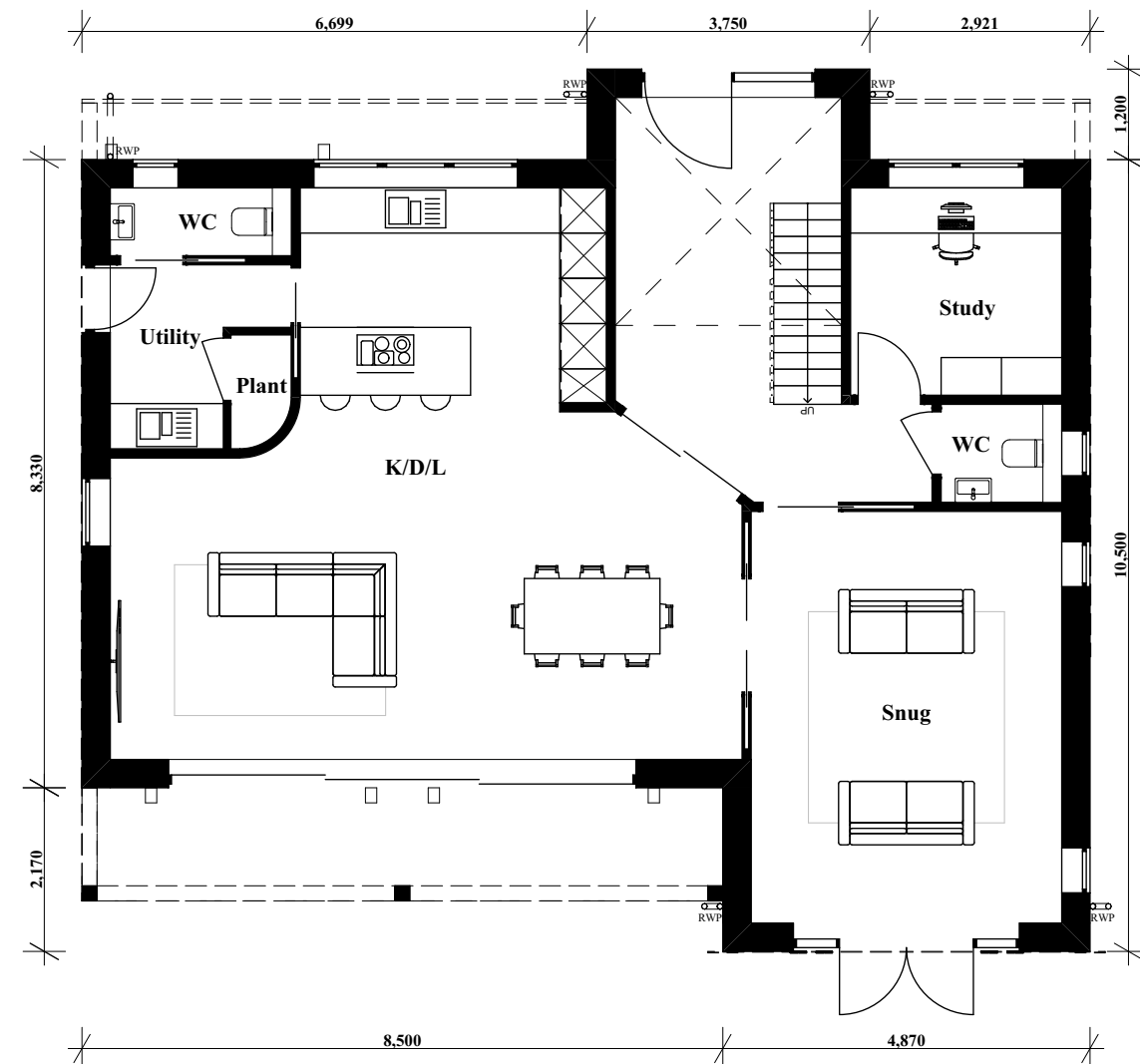
29/04/2026

Drawing Number

25217-0000

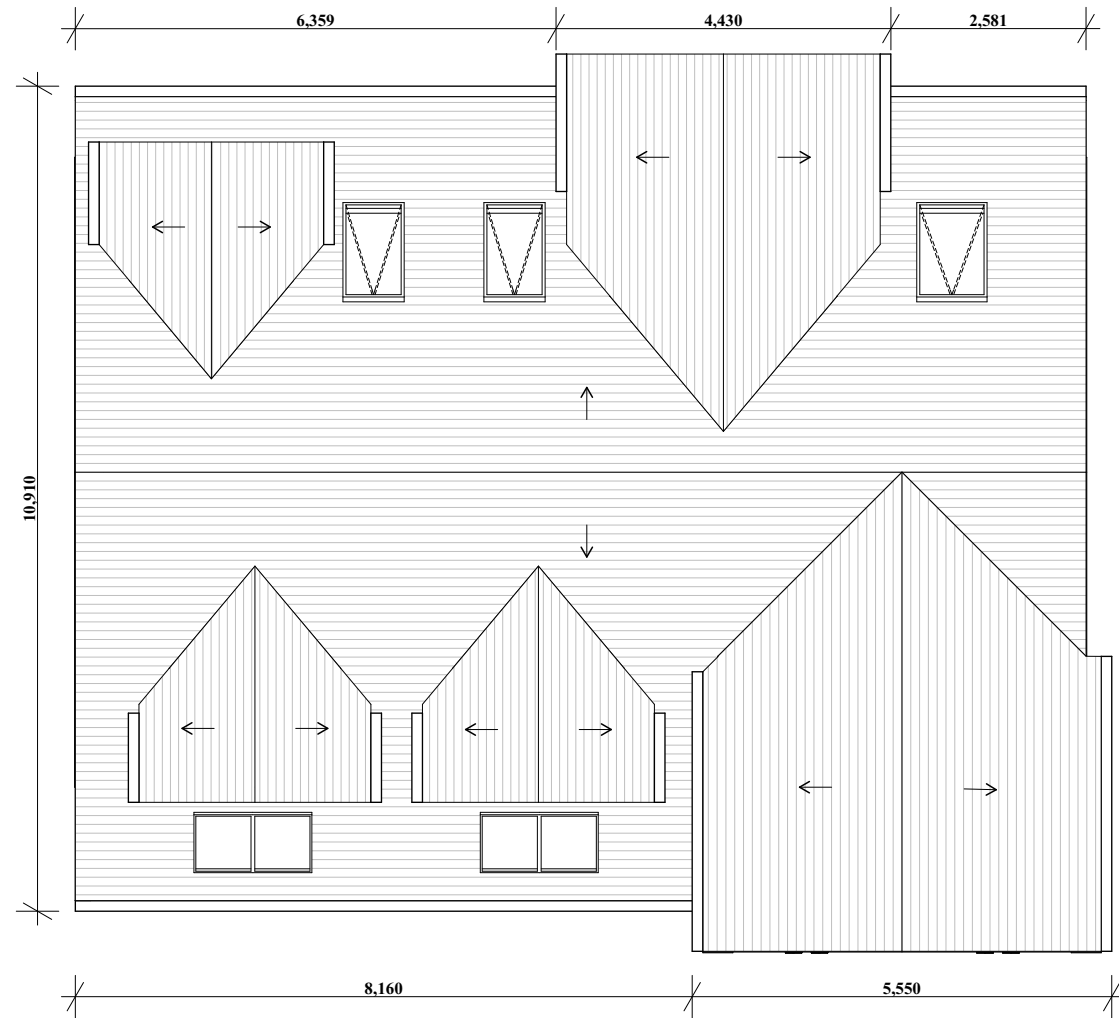
Revision

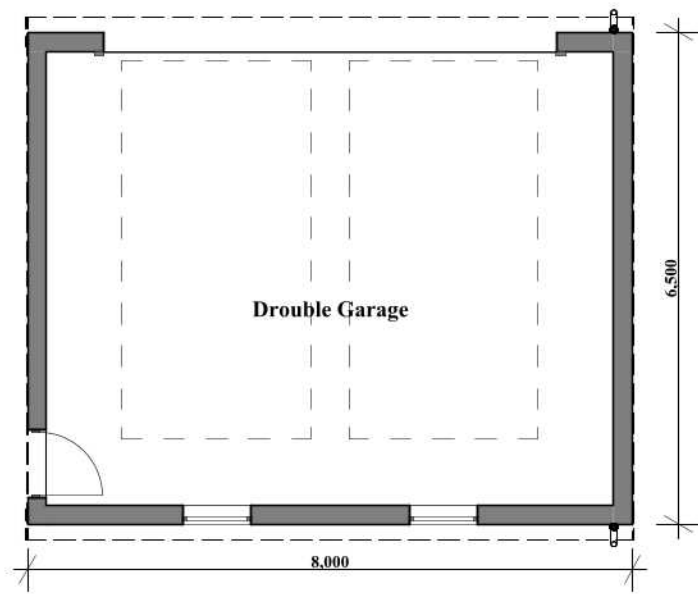
P2



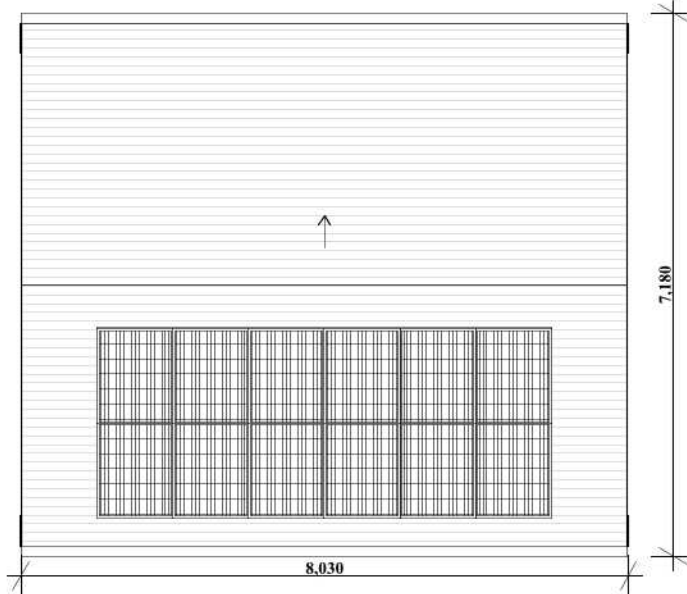
 Cameron Bosque Brookes Architects St Ives Cambridge London 01480 301 554 0208 050 6206 info@cbb-architects.co.uk 	<u>Status</u> Planning	<u>Title</u> Proposed Ground Floor and First Floor Plan	<u>Rev</u> <u>Date</u> <u>Drawn by</u> <u>Change description</u> P1 29/04/2026 JPR Issued for Comment Issued for Planning RL removed	0m 2m 4m 6m 8m 10m  0ft 20ft	N 	
	<u>Client Name</u> Mr & Mrs Ellingham	<u>Scale</u> 1:100@A3				<u>Date</u> 29/04/2026
	<u>Project Address</u> Land East of Hawthorns, Somersham	<u>Drawing Number</u> 25217-1100		<u>Revision</u> P1		<u>General Notes</u> Work to figure dimensions only. All dimensions are shown in 'mm' unless otherwise stated.The contractor, sub-contractors and suppliers must verify all dimensions on site prior to the commencement of any work This drawing is the property of Cameron Bosque Brookes Architects Limited and copyright is reserved by them. This drawing is issued on the basis that it is not copied, used or disclosed by or to any unauthorised person without the prior written consent of Cameron Bosque Brookes Architects Limited. This drawing is to be read in conjunction with all relevant engineers and specialist sub-contractors drawings and specifications. Contractors should carry out their own independent site surveys to confirm dimensions. Any discrepancies are to be brought to the designers attention.







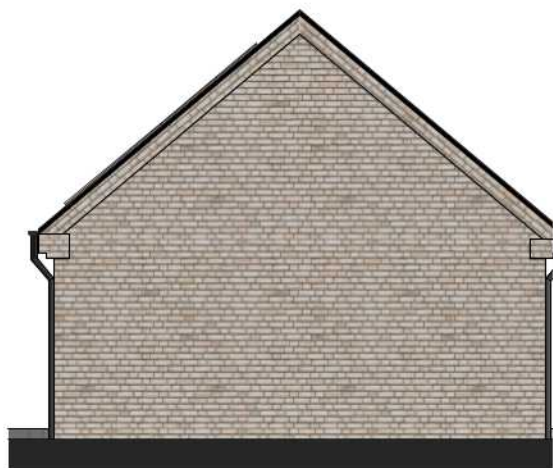
1:100 Garage Floor Plan



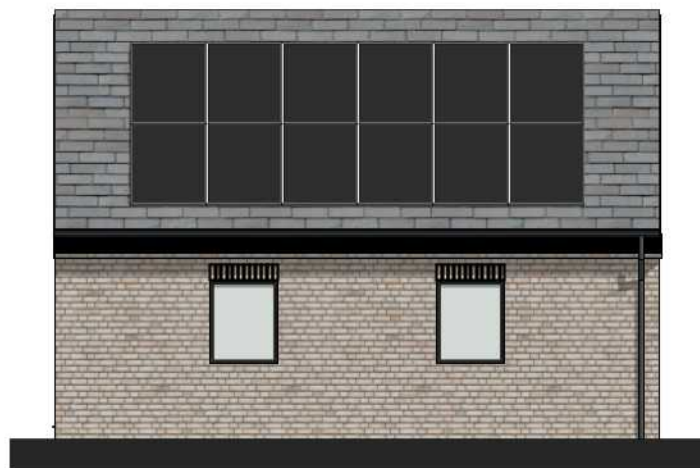
1:100 Garage Roof Plan



1:100 North Elevation



1:100 East Elevation



1:100 South Elevation



1:100 West Elevation