



Finding a viable plot

BEFORE WE BEGIN

- If you can't see the Slides correctly, you may need to change the 'View Options' at the top of your Zoom screen.
- If you have a question about using Zoom please ask now and I'll try to help!
- Please ask questions at any time using the Q&A button at the bottom of the screen. I will answer some of these as I go.
- We will also have dedicated Q&A time at the end of the morning & afternoon sessions.



AGENDA

- Kick off 7 p.m.
 - Finish around 9 p.m.
 - Q & A to finish
- How to start your plot search.
 - Land: What to look for.
 - Planning policy.
 - Ways to find a plot.
 - The plot buying process.
 - Appraising a plot.
 - Plot Valuation.
 - Summing up & Q&A.
 - Plot finding case studies.



How to find a building plot



Introduction

Can't find that elusive plot?

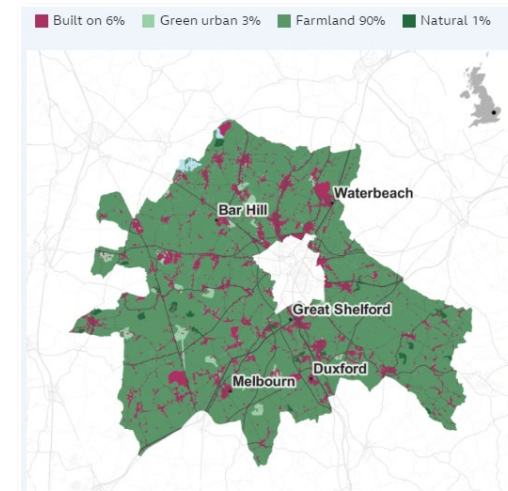
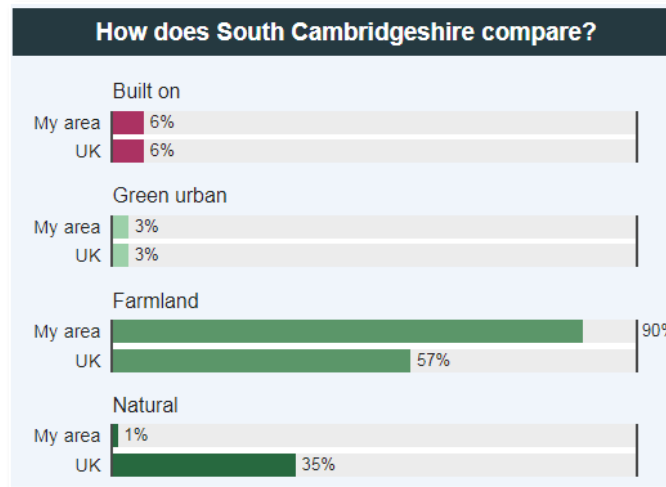
The market for plots is very competitive!

NaCSBA / Ipsos MORI findings:

- Around 100,000 people expect to buy a plot, get planning or build a new home during the coming year.
- But only about 12,000 people manage to build each year.

Plots are relatively scarce,

Over 90% of land in England & Wales can't be built on.



Introduction

Can't find that elusive plot!

Limited supply of developable land;

- Nimbyism.
- Planning complications.
- Potential land controlled by developers.
= Limited availability!

The perfect plot doesn't exist!

- Very rigid requirements
- Unrealistic expectations
- Not prepared to compromise.



Introduction

Can't find that elusive plot!



You could be the problem!

- You're possibly not being as obsessive as you need to be.
- You're probably looking in the same places as everyone else.
- Failure to move quickly – indecisive.

Work out your land finding strategy;

- Make sure your plan is deliverable
- Know what you're looking for
- Don't 'hunt with the pack'
- Learn how to 'beat' the market
- Know your competitors
- Focus your search



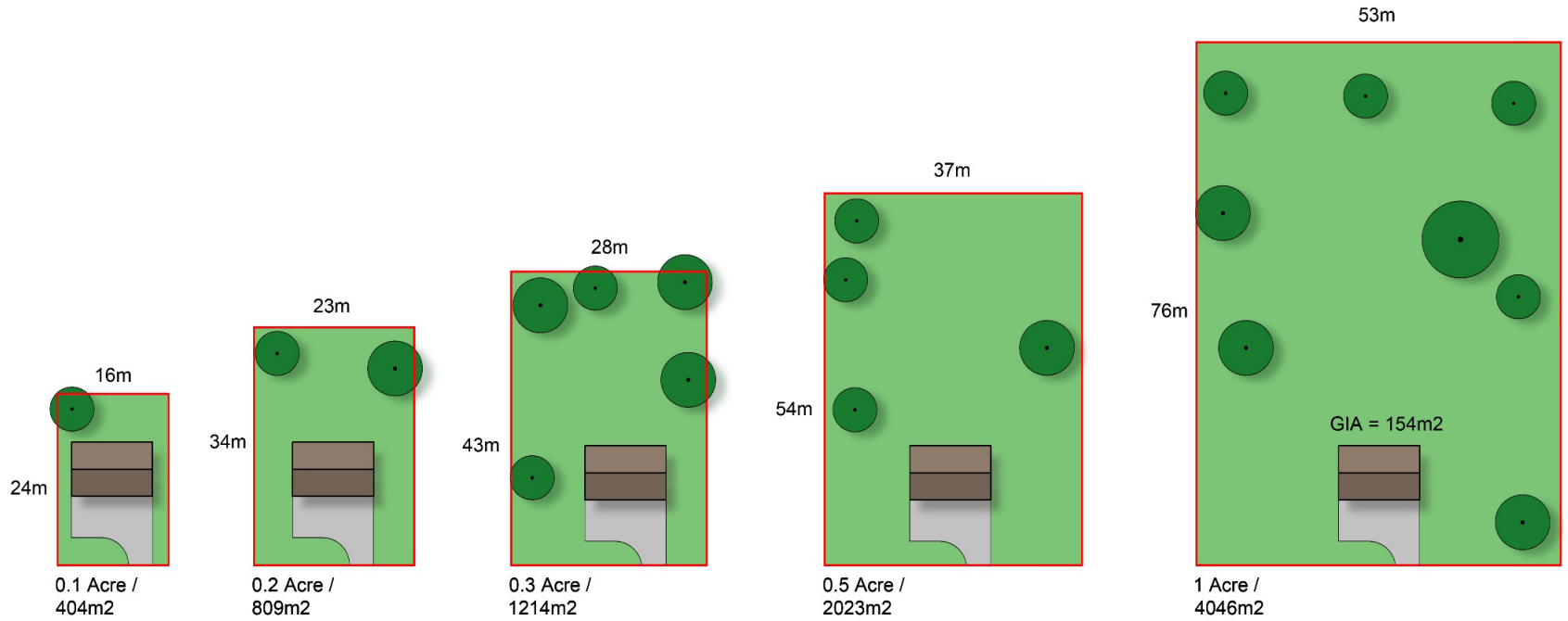
Land – what to look for



What to look for

How much land do I need?

How the same 154m² (1657ft²) house fits on different sized plots



What to look for

Knock down and rebuild

Open Field?



Scrub land?

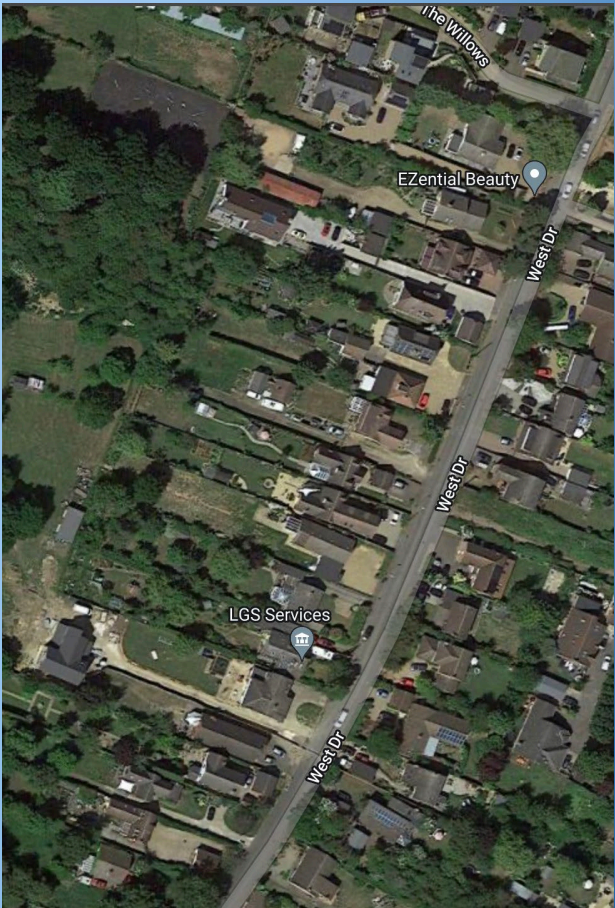


Brown Field?



What to look for

Garden Plots



Garden Plots

Be careful of "Back Land" or "Tandem" development



What to look for

Infill Plots

Infill Plots

Must consider street scenes, access, scale and mass and loss of amenity.



Source Potton



What to look for

Knock down and rebuild

Knock Down and Rebuild

The perfect plot may not actually look like a plot at all!

It may be a replacement dwelling!



YES



NO
It's a listed building!



MAYBE?



What to look for

Plots with challenges

See through the problems

- Understand how your home will be built and at what cost.
- Don't overpay for the plot.
- Don't be put off by the challenges – it won't be you building the house.



Source Potton



What to look for

Forgotten Land

Forgotten Land

- Be careful, there may be a reason why it hasn't been developed!
- Never assume it's not possible – investigate.



What to look for

Stalled developments



Protected Permissions



Think about why the developments look stalled? - builder gone bust or could the permission be protected in perpetuity?



What to look for?

Brownfield Land

Unwanted commercial property



Pubs



Haulage & storage yards



Petrol stations



What to look for?

Brownfield Land

Brownfield land includes the curtilage of the development land but excludes;

- Occupied by agricultural or forestry buildings
- Land in built-up areas such as private residential gardens, parks, recreation grounds and allotments;
- Land that was previously developed, but where the remains of the permanent structure have blended into the landscape in the process of time."



Brownfield Land

Consider other types of commercial buildings that could be converted under permitted development rights

- Must have been vacant for at least 3 months prior to application – may change and built before 20 March 2013
- 150m² floor space limit on commercial shops but consultation considering increase to 300m²
- Don't buy a launderette – PD rights may be withdrawn



What to look for?

Agricultural buildings

Class Q Permissions

- They come in all sorts of shapes and sizes.
- They might not even look like a house.
- May need demolishing and rebuilt to habitable standards.



What to look for?

Agricultural
buildings

Agricultural Buildings

Don't be seduced by a derelict greenhouse or allotments

– they are classed as agricultural land and therefore don't usually have development value.



What to look for?

**Fields and
paddocks**

Not really – homes for horses!



What to look for?

Still looking for a field?

Build a house of exceptional architectural merit
(Paragraph 84 Application)

- Architecturally 'outstanding'.
- Design & planning very dear.
- Risky and expensive to build
- Very few are built!



Source Grand Designs

Apply for an agricultural workers dwelling.

- Must satisfy stringent local planning conditions
- Very difficult to achieve:
Limited national guidance.
- Must demonstrate a need to live at place of work;



Source Potton



What to look for?

Planning applications and permissions

Approved



Failures – why?



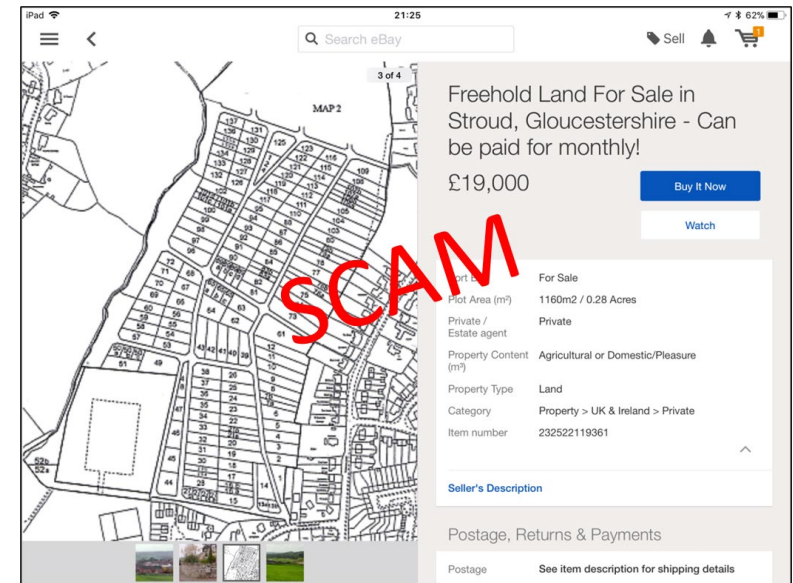
What to look for?

A word of caution!

Never buy land on 'hope value' - If it sounds too good to be true, it probably is and will probably never be a plot.

Look out for statements like;

- Development opportunity
- Development potential
- Subject to planning
- Best & final bids only
- Unconditional offers only
- Avoid land banking schemes



How to find a plot



How to find a plot

Planning Policy

Policy is key to successful plot hunting

- NPPF – National Planning Policy Framework
- NPPG – National Planning Policy Guidance
- Right to Build Legislation
- Local plans

Self build
is now
specifically
referenced

Your chosen Planning Professional will understand all this



How to find a plot

Consider the settlement boundary!



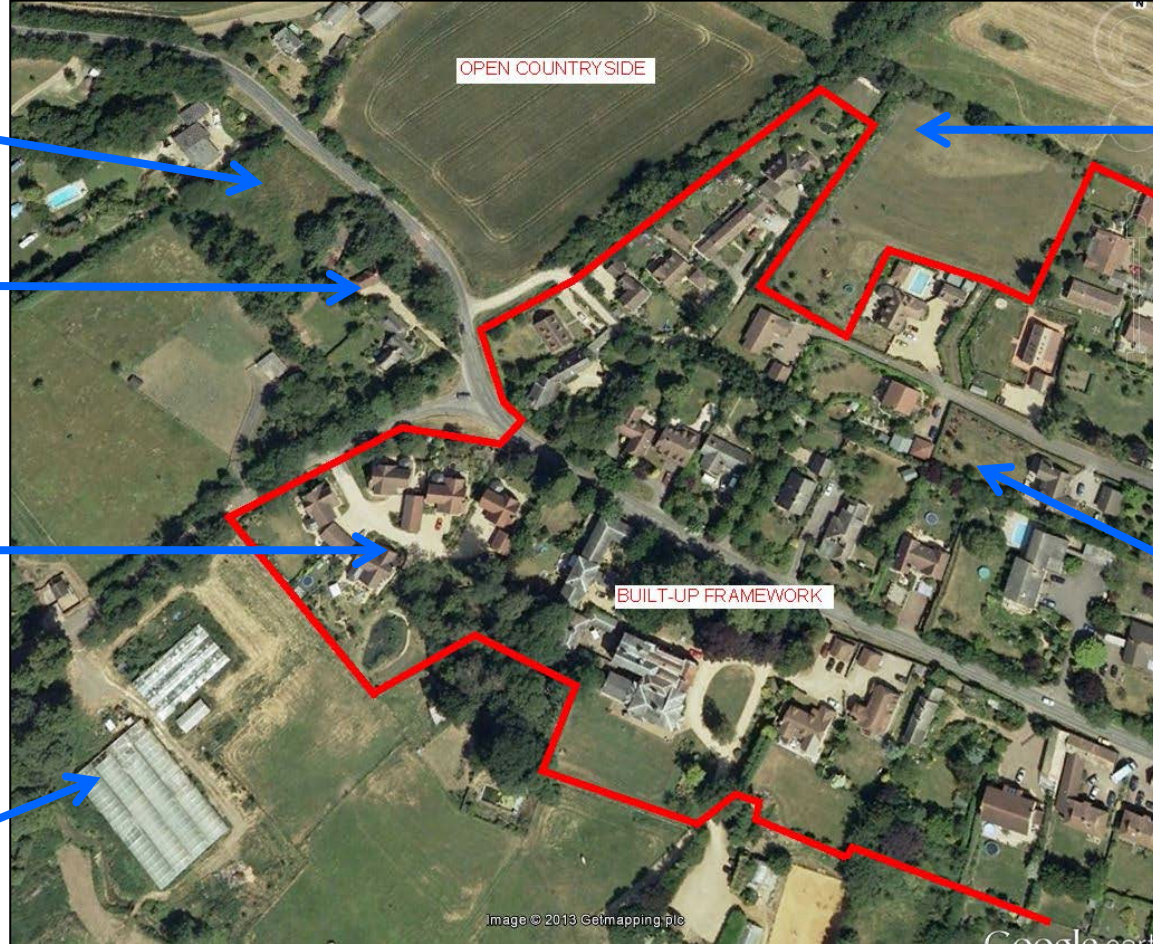
Identify the settlement boundary

Paddock

Replacement dwelling

New development

Disused industrial?



Possible Developer parcel

Garden plots with access

Image © 2013 Getmapping.plc

How to find a plot

Use specialist
search engines

Great for doing market research and understanding where plots are available and at what price.

It's a great starting place but the obvious place to start so everyone will be doing it!



- Vetted opportunities specifically suitable for self build
- Listings include planning references to aid research
- Lots of informative articles
- Includes a 'serviced plot' hub.



How to find a plot

Get out and look yourself!

Try to find land that has not been identified as a building plot already.

Tips to follow;

- Be thorough - limit your search to a few key areas.
- Walk around your chosen areas since, if you drive, you may miss the less-obvious sites.
- Buy a map that shows houses - record where potential plots are.



How to find a plot

Spread the word

Tell everyone your looking.

- Letters drops
- Talk to locals.
- Tell family and friends,
- Offer a finders fees

Don't forget to 'play up' your credentials

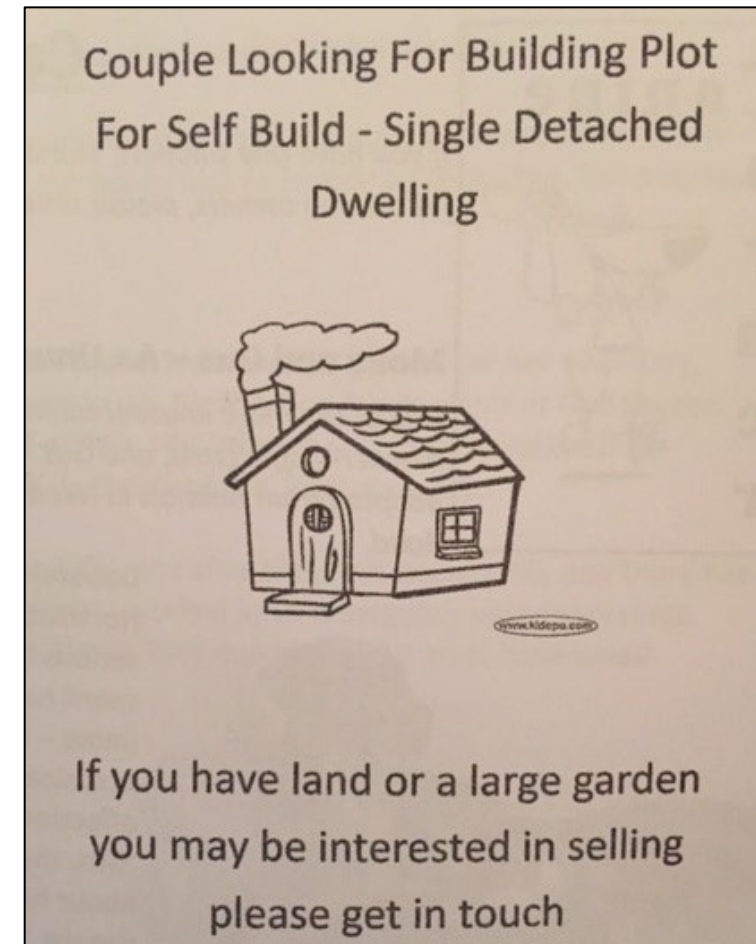


How to find a plot

Spread the word

Use adverts but keep it simple and not professional

- Local magazines & papers.
- Social media
- Post office windows.
- Community notice boards.



How to find a plot

Search the
brown field
register

Town and Country Planning (Brownfield Land Register) Regulations 2017

- Require local authorities to maintain registers of brownfield
 - 0.25ha. / 5 dwellings or more,
 - suitable in planning terms
 - available & achievable
- Part 1 is a comprehensive list of all brownfield sites.
- Part 2 will be brownfield granted permission in principle.



The image shows a tilted view of a large, multi-column table. The table has a green header row and several rows of data below it. The columns are densely packed with text, likely representing various attributes of brownfield sites such as location, size, and planning status. The table is oriented diagonally, sloping downwards from left to right.



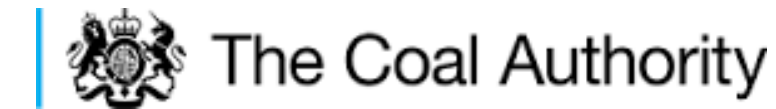
How to find a plot

Approach estate departments

There are all sorts of institutions, organisations and companies that own land and sell some off periodically. They include;

- Network Rail.
- Universities.
- Traditional landowners like the Duchy of Cornwall, Farmers.
- The coal authority.
- Water authority.
- Canal and River Trust.

Keep abreast of the local and regional news, you may discover one of them is offering parcels of land for sale.



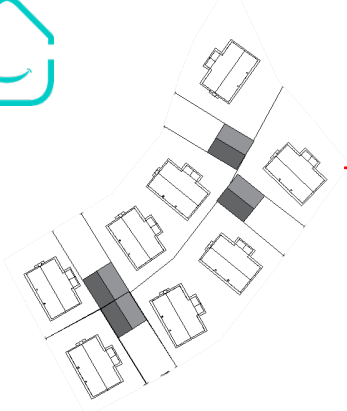
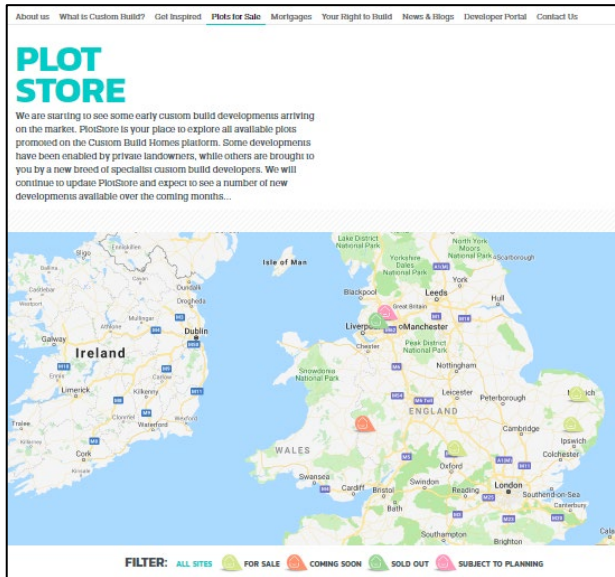
How to find a plot

Look for custom build sites



Consider custom build sites.

Developers may offer custom or self-build plots as part of their developments as part of the Right to Build legislation.



How to find a plot

Befriend Builders

Small builders may be prepared to sell you something from their 'land bank' in return for a build contract.

Professionals may be helping land owners to permission before selling



How to find a plot

Contact Self Build Companies

There are a few companies, such as Potton, who work with land owners to secure planning permission and offer the plots for sale.



How to find a plot

Go to Auctions

Land Auctions – used to;

- Establish the value of the plot - Secure the best price
- Sell land quickly.
- Sell sites with problems!

Remember;

- Fall of the hammer marks exchange of contracts.
- Sale completes usually within 28 days
- Line up your solicitor and professional team
- Be sure of the planning potential
- Have a maximum amount in mind
- Understand what you're buying!

Buyer beware!!!

- Deposits are non returnable
- Watch out for ransom strips.
- Watch out for sites with problems.
- ***Visit the site, study the auction and legal pack!***



How to find a plot

Pester Estate Agents

Identify those that deal in land. (Agents)

- Register your details on mailing lists.
- Be memorable.....

Golden Rules;

- Look attractive and flirt!
- Be aware of less-scrupulous agents;
- Look for replacement dwelling opportunities;

rightmove 

ZOOPLA



How to find a plot

You may already own it

Could your garden be a plot?

Think about;

- Impact on your neighbours.
- How it fits in the street scene.
- Will its position fit with planning policy.
- What it will do to the value of your existing home.
- Don't forget about the tax advantages!

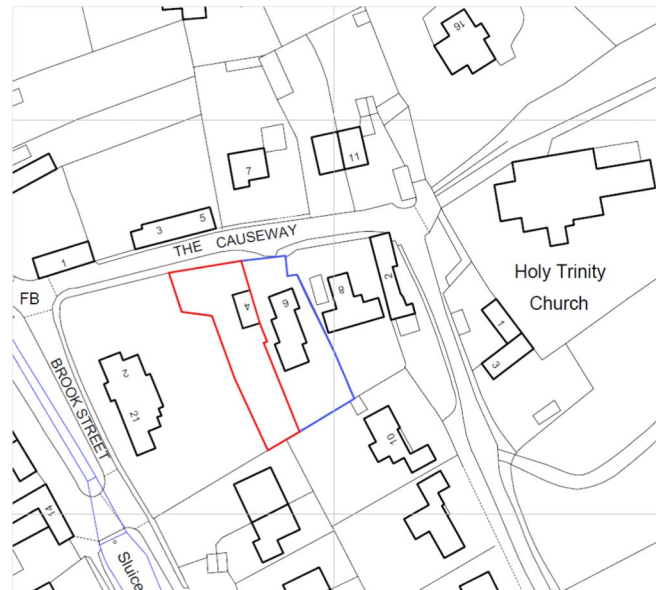


How to find a plot

Study maps and plans

Use Google Maps, Google Earth Pro & Street View.

- Easier than hedge hopping!
- Good to find back land and garden plots.
- Helpful to identify access.



How to find a plot

Make your own plot

Study mapping tools

The planning portal has excellent mapping and even show the planning history for the plots. Look to 'make your own plot'.



Make a plot from two gardens!

Look for large gardens and good access

Don't forget about the impact to neighbours!

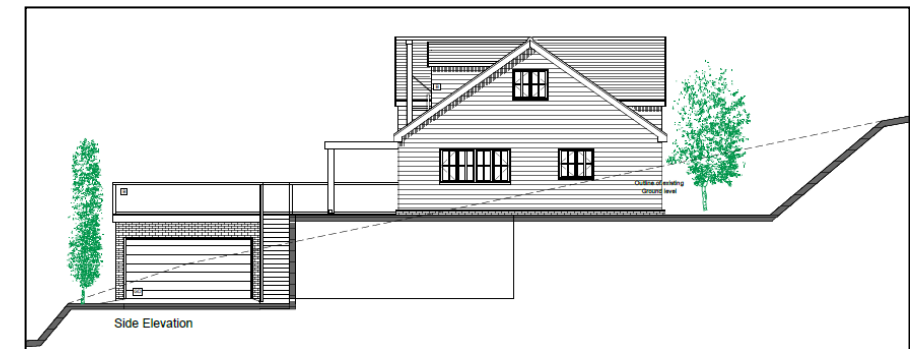
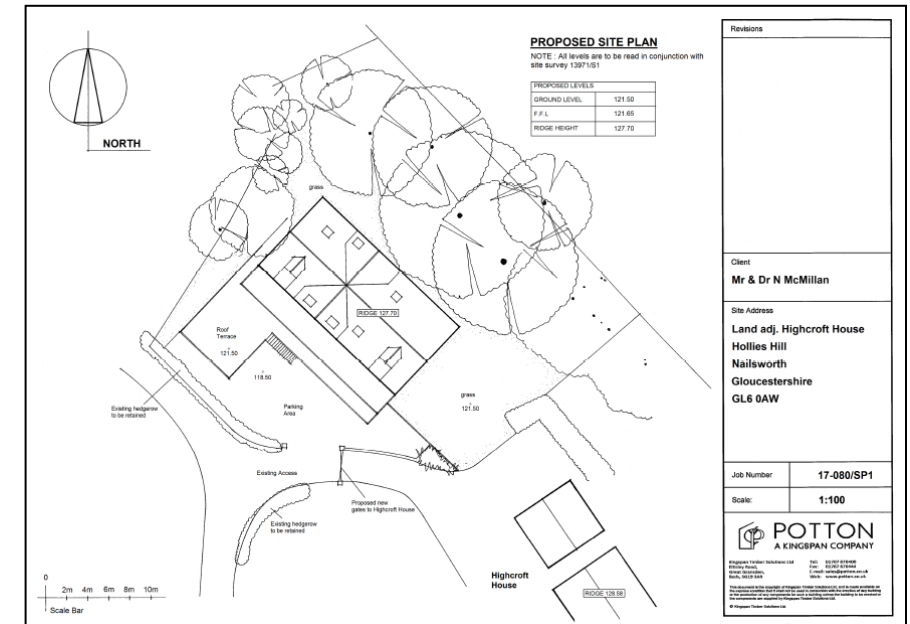
Remember to look inside the settlement boundary



How to find a plot

See through the problems

Find the solutions others cant see.



How to find a plot

Search the Planning Portal

Monitor planning activity.

Keep an eye on the planning portal listings – Some applications are for plots that will be sold!

- Monitor planning applications and permissions.
- Look for '**Approval Pending**' - the owner may be looking to sell.
- Look for **failed applications** – a bad application could be overcome.



A screenshot of the Huntingdonshire.gov.uk Planning Portal search results page. The page header includes the website name and navigation links like 'Home / Public Access'. Below the header is a search bar and navigation options. The main content area shows a list of planning applications with details such as application type, reference number, date received, and status. A 'Simple Search' filter is visible, and a 'Status' dropdown menu is set to 'All'. A tilted inset window shows a detailed view of a specific application, including its title, reference number, and status.



How to find a plot

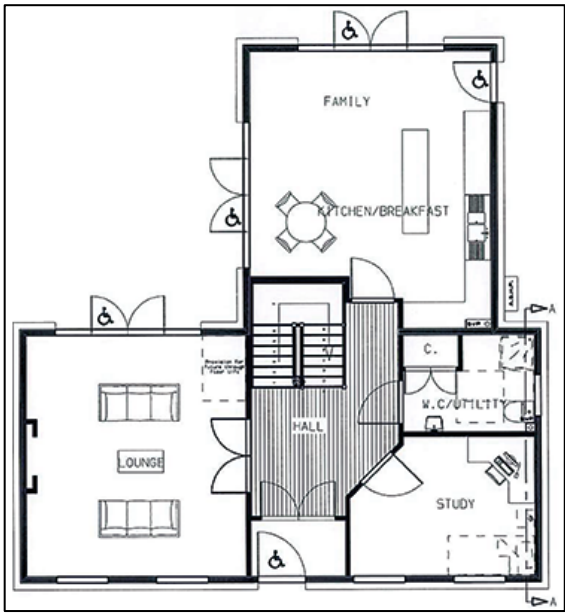
Search the
Planning Portal



Change the planning consent.

An existing consent might not look suitable, but could it be changed to meet your needs?

From this



to this



POTTON
A KINGSPAN COMPANY

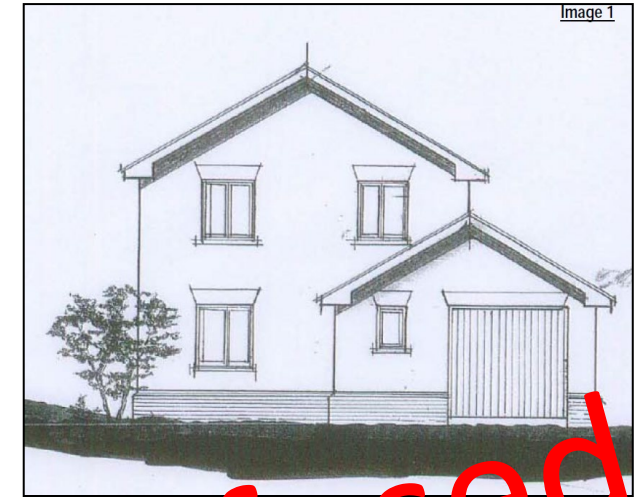
How to find a plot

Search the Planning Portal

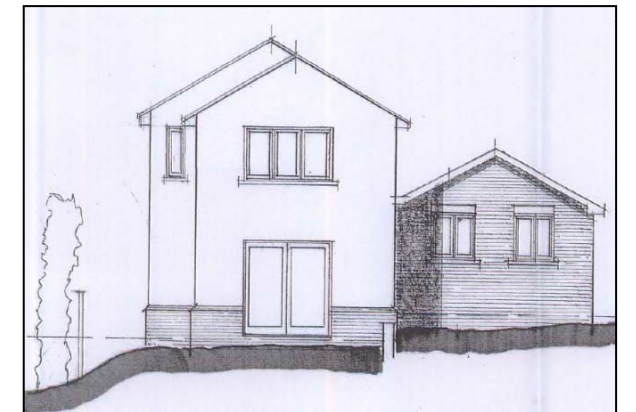


Planning Failures

- 1) Read the planning refusal
 - understand why it failed.
- 2) Ask a few questions .
 - How can the reasons for refusal be overcome?
 - What kind of proposal would be acceptable?
- 3) Seek professional help and guidance
 - Consider the visual impact of the proposal
 - Look at the architectural style and character of the area
 - Consider the street scene
 - Engage with the locals – take account of local politics
 - Work up a 'professional' alternative.



Refused



Making sure your plot is viable

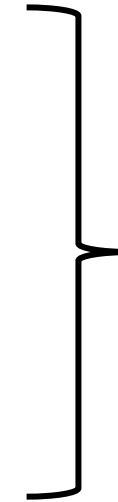


Buying the plot

Get the right team



Architect / Building Designer
Self-build Consultant
Planning Professional
Foundation Engineer
Drainage Designer
Structural Engineer
SAP Assessor (Thermal engineer)
Fire Engineer
Building Control / Warranty Provider
Project Manager
Land Surveyor
Groundworks Contractor
Floor Risk Engineer
Ecology experts
Arboriculturalist
Party Wall Surveyor
Solicitor
Mortgage provider

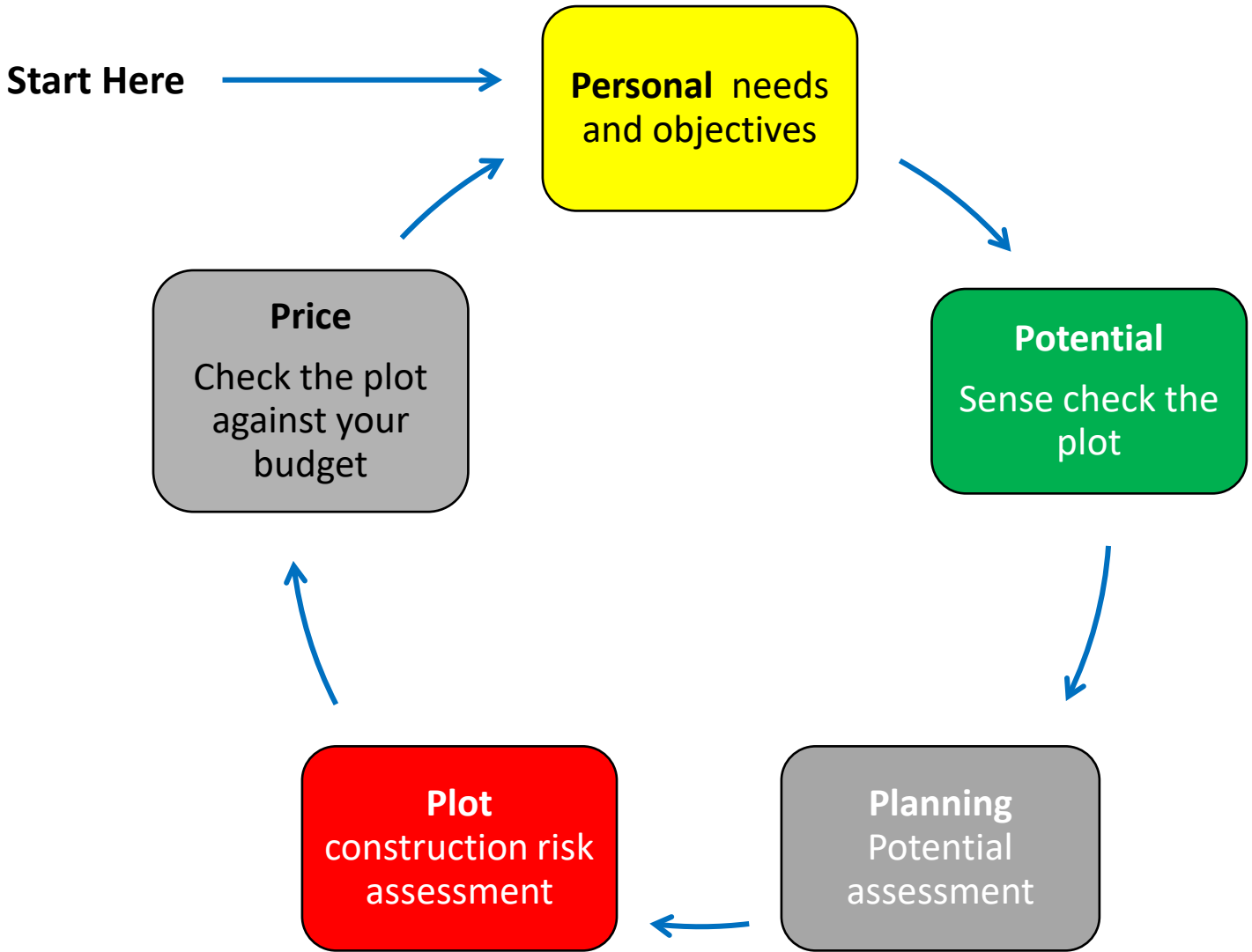


Package Provider



Appraising plots

The process



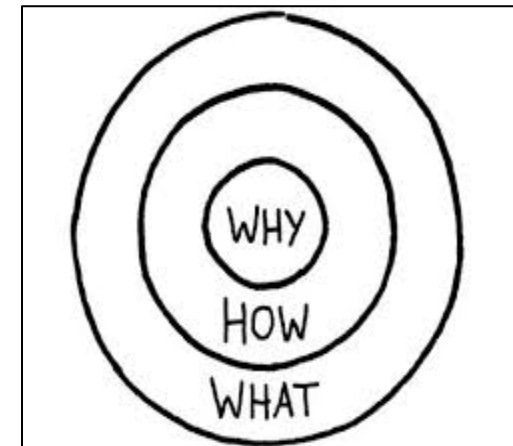
Appraising plots

Personal needs and objectives

- 1) Why do you want to build a home?
- 2) What are your design needs?
 - Size and scale
 - Features and specification
 - Architectural style
- 3) What professional support will you need.
 - Architect or Package
 - Planning professional
 - Engineers & surveyors
 - Legal advisors
- 4) How do you intend to manage the build.
 - Self manage
 - Project managed
 - Turnkey builder
- 5) Does your plan and budget stack up?
 - Can you afford it
 - Can you raise the money
 - Can the whole project be funded
 - What if things go wrong?

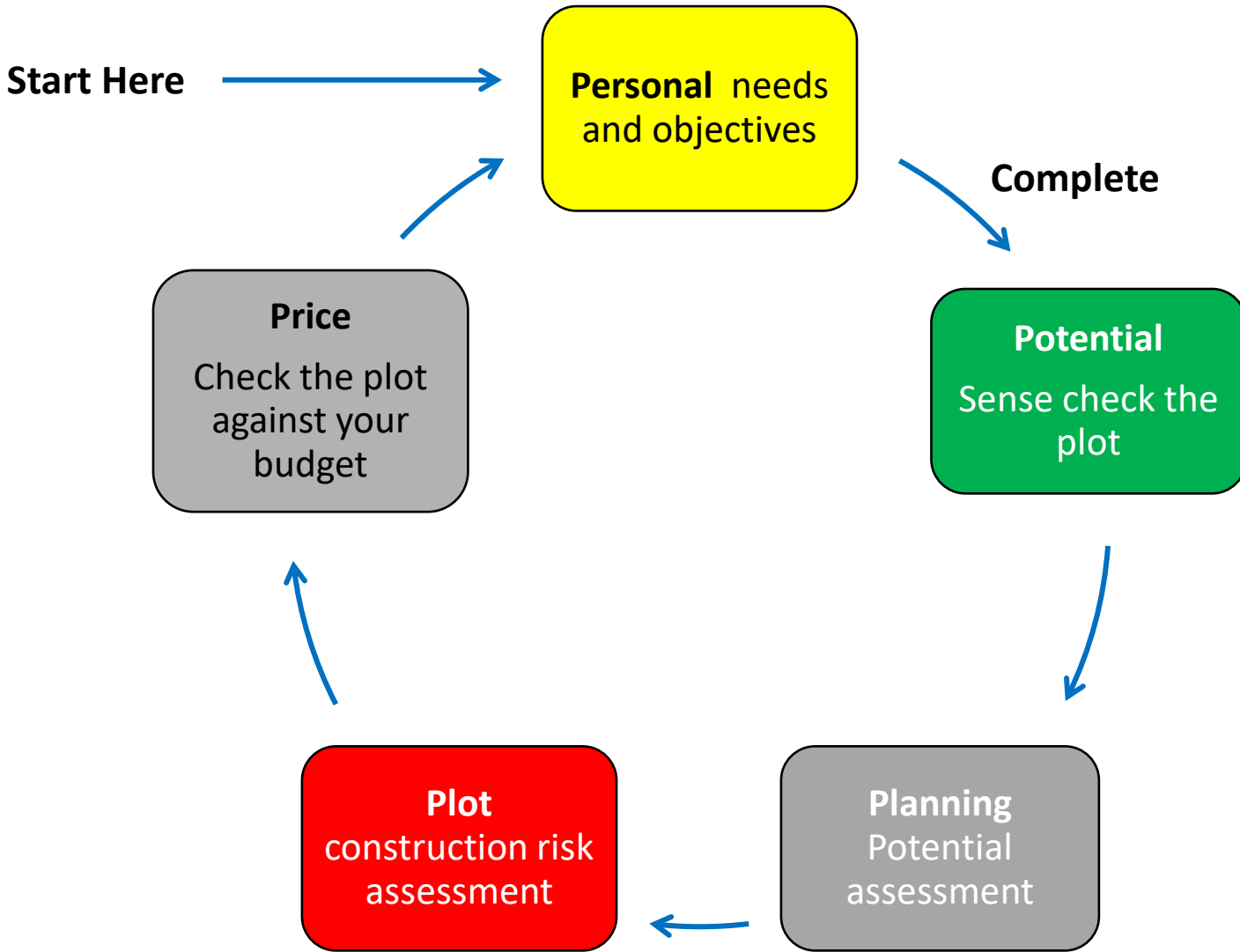
It all starts with you –
Not the plot!

Personal
needs and
objectives



Appraising plots

The process



Appraising plots

Sense check the potential

Ask yourself 8 key questions;

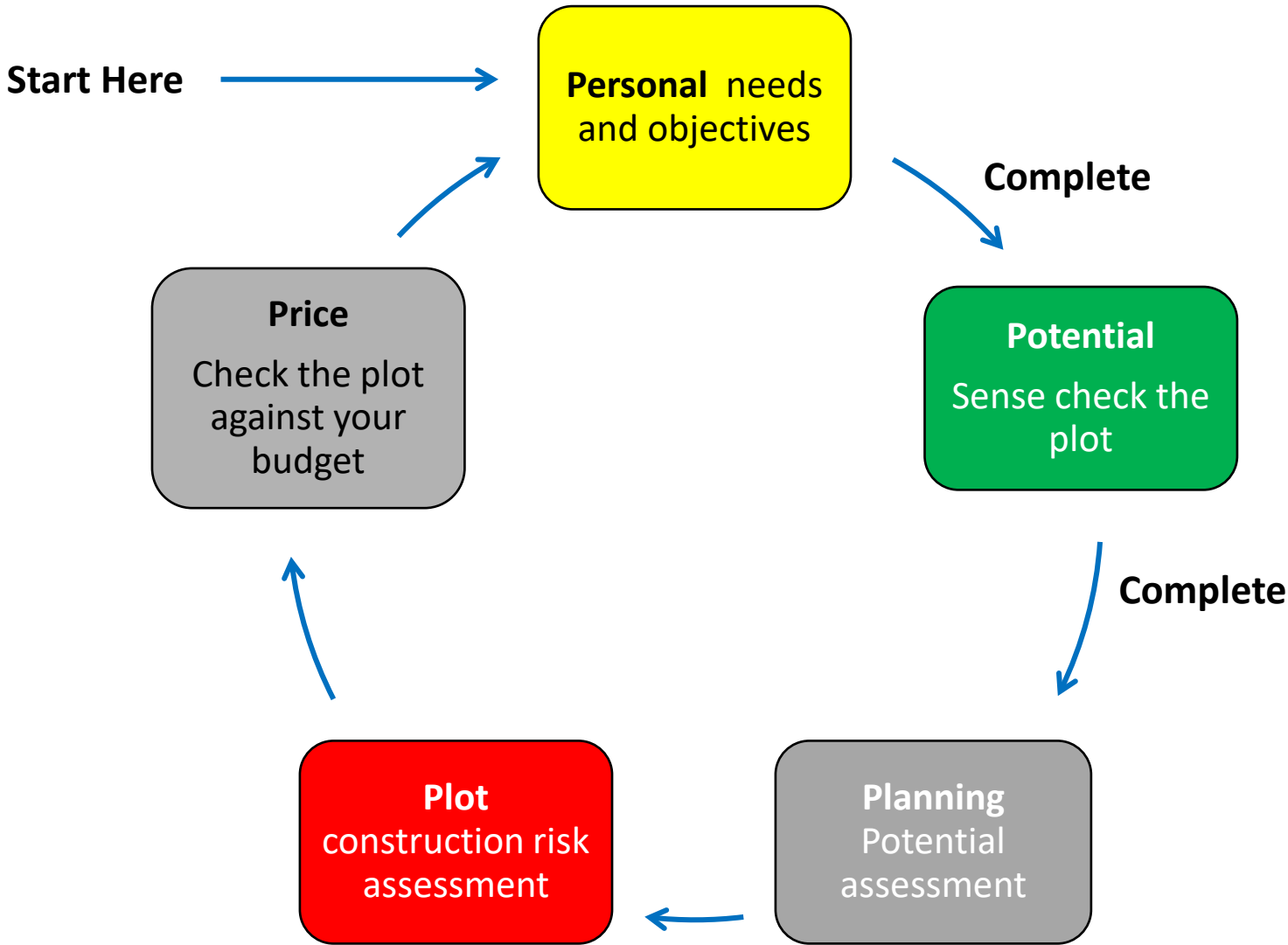
- 1) Will the plot meet my needs and objectives?
- 2) Will I get permission for what I want?
- 3) Can I deal with all the planning conditions?
- 4) Do I have legal and unobstructed access?
- 5) Can I service the plot?
- 6) Are there any construction problems to overcome?
- 7) Are there any legal matters to consider?
- 8) Do the numbers stack up?

Potential
Sense check the plot



Appraising plots

The process



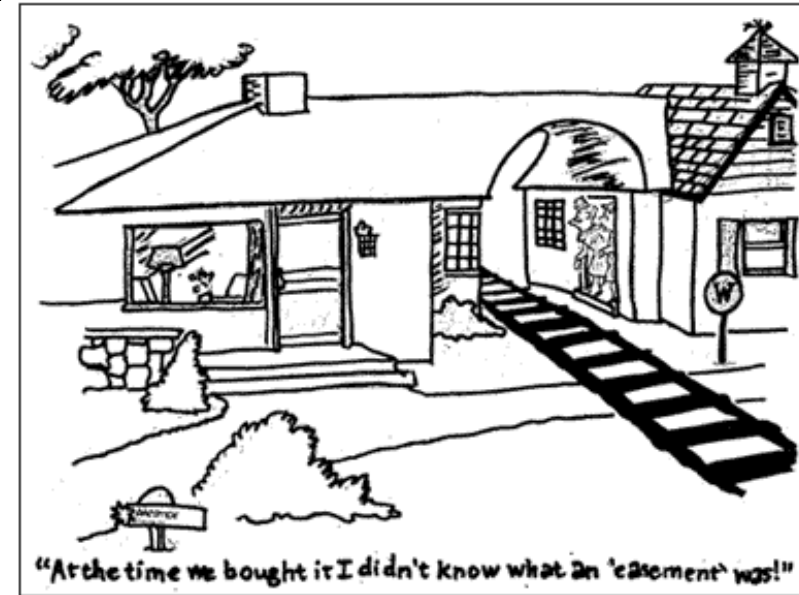
Appraising plots

Assess the Planning Potential

Check the legal issues early –
appoint a solicitor.

Title – download from land registry
Check as early as possible;

- Boundary ownership.
- Boundary position.
- Access to adoptable highway
- Rights of way to plot's benefit
- Rights of way for others.
- Ransom strips.
- Rights of light.
- Rights for services connections
- Restrictive covenants.
- Easements.
- Disputes.
- Part Wall agreements.



Appraising plots

Assess the Planning Potential

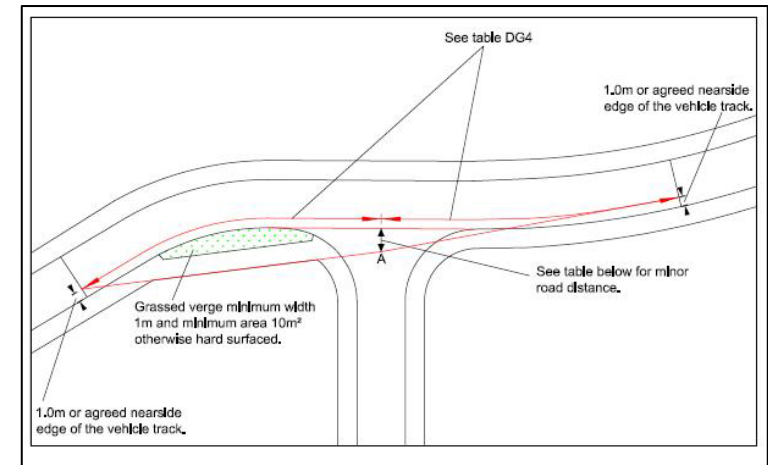
Access to the site.

The highways department will comment on the application.

- Safe access and egress.
- Visibility splays.
- Levels – disabled access.
- Parking requirements.

Also check the legal's.

- Legally ownership of the access directly to the adopted highway.
- Legal right of way to access the plot.
- Look for ransom strips



Appraising plots

Assess the Planning Potential



Existing Permissions

Read and understand the consent;

- Type of permission – full or outline.
- Time limits / expiry date.
- Conditions to resolve – Can they be satisfied?
- What obligations (taxes) does the consent require me to pay.
- Does the approved design work for you
 - Should I change the design?
 - Will changing the permission be possible?
 - Granted on appeal.
 - Any objections.
 - Can I afford it?
 - Can I build it?

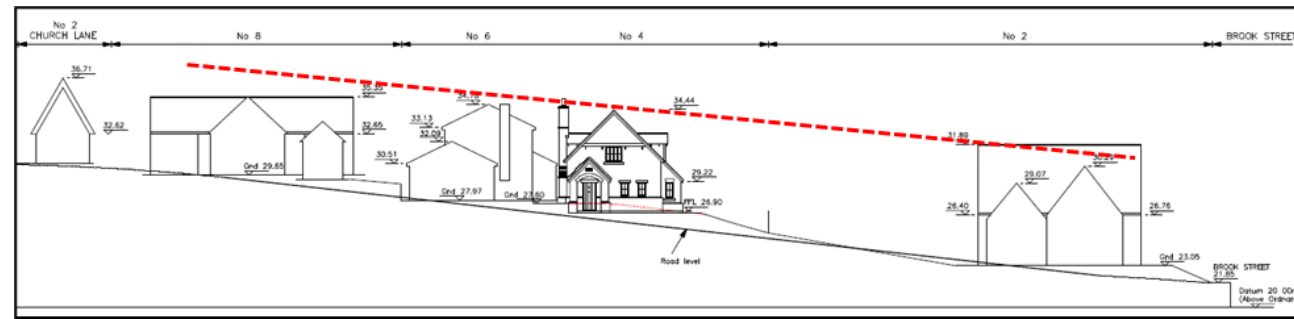
Planning Potential
assessment

Appraising plots

Assess the Planning Potential

New Permissions - Consider;

- Local planning policy guidance & NPPF.
- The designation of the location.
 - Within the settlement boundary?
 - Designation - conservation area / brownfield etc
 - Sustainability of the development
 - Flood risk.
- Understand plot constraints.
 - Architectural influences & external materials.
 - Street scenes & block plans.
 - Highways - access, safety and parking arrangements.
 - Layout, scale and mass of the proposal.
 - Impact on amenity - loss of privacy
 - Impact on listed buildings & ecology.
- Changes to fees – Free go now gone.



Appraising plots

Assess the Planning Potential

Pre-app advice.

It might be worthwhile discussing your plans with the planning department;

- A fee may be payable.
- Details of your proposals will be required – take photos, do a sketch, write it up.
- Use existing designs – provoke opinions.
- Be prepared to take the advice on board – you may have to compromise!
- Remember, the pre-app will offer guidance but it cannot be totally relied upon.

BEAUTIFULLY TAILORED
CAXTON SHOWHOUSE

DIMENSIONS	METRIC	IMPERIAL
Ground floor	nr depth width	nr depth width
Living/Dining	3.5 2.1 5.6	11 7 18 5
Dining	1.1 2.1 2.1	3 7 7 7
Breakfast/Kitchen	2.0 4.0 2.5	6 10 8 8
1st flr	7.5 5.7 2.8	25 19 9 10

First Floor	METRIC	IMPERIAL
Master Bedroom	3.1 4.4 5.8	10 14 19
Bedroom 1	2.6 2.9 4.8	8 9 16 10
Bedroom 2	2.5 2.7 3.5	8 9 11 10
Bedroom 3	2.5 2.7 3.5	8 9 11 10
Bedroom 4	2.0 2.3 2.8	6 8 9 9

GROUND FLOOR

FIRST FLOOR

CAXTON SHOWHOUSE

OVERALL HOUSE SIZE	FOOTPRINT DIMENSIONS	TYPICAL RISE HEIGHT
142sqm / 1,540sqft	depth 5.2m / 17ft width 3.2m / 10ft	7.5m



Appraising plots

Assess the Planning Potential

Flood risk – Can kill the best of plots

- The Environment Agency will object if the flood risk is not adequately addressed!
- A flood risk assessment may be needed - Check Environment Agency flood maps.
- Locations subject to flooding may also be subject to 'sequential testing' to make sure there aren't better locations to build.



Appraising plots

Assess the Planning Potential



Trees & Ecology - Protected Flora and Fauna

- bats, all species
- great crested newts
- badgers
- hazel or common dormice
- water voles
- otters
- wild birds
- reptiles
- protected plants
- white-clawed crayfish
- invertebrates
- freshwater fish
- natterjack toads
- ancient woodland and veteran trees

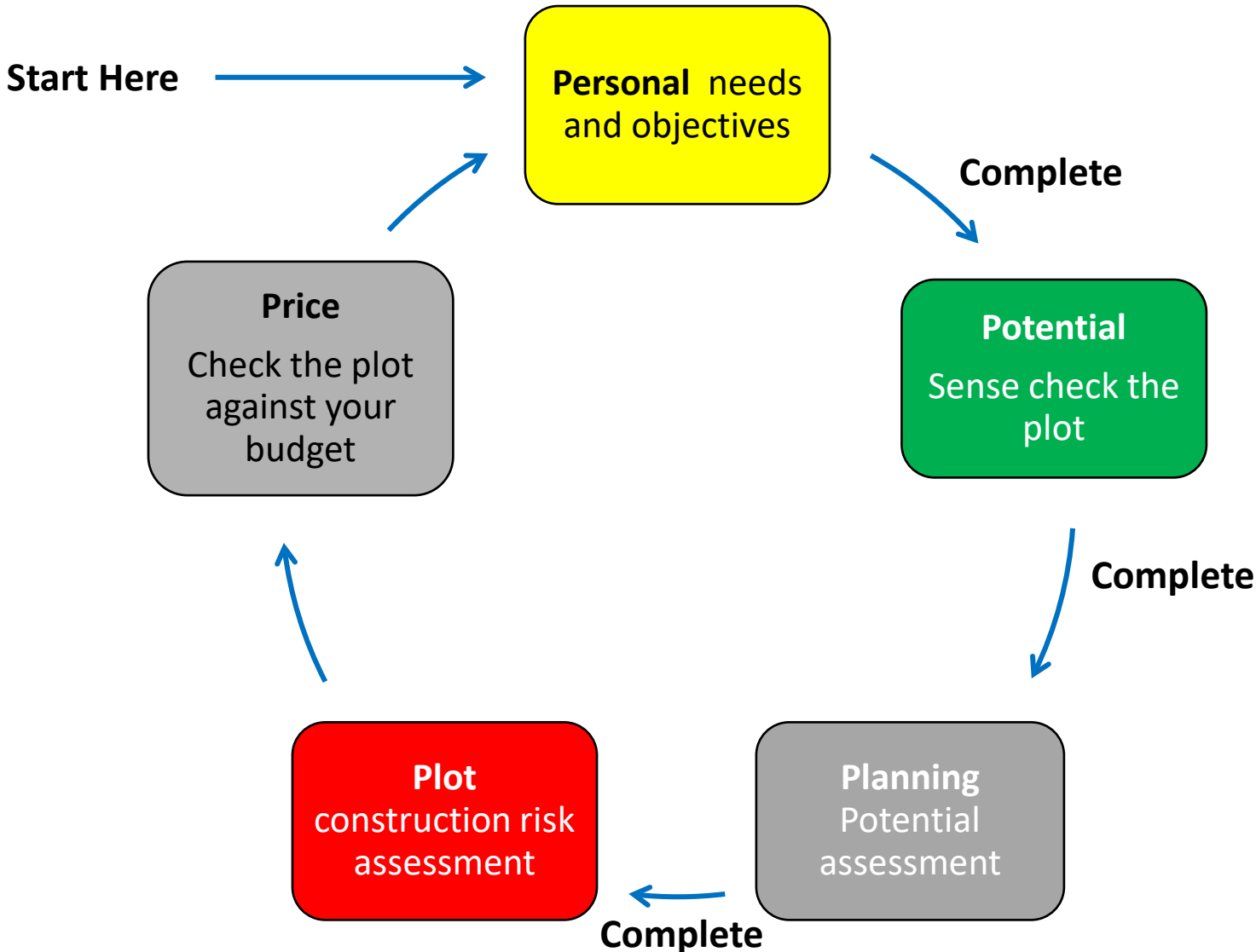
Expect to have to complete ecology surveys

<https://www.gov.uk/protected-species-and-sites-how-to-review-planning-proposals>



Appraising plots

The process



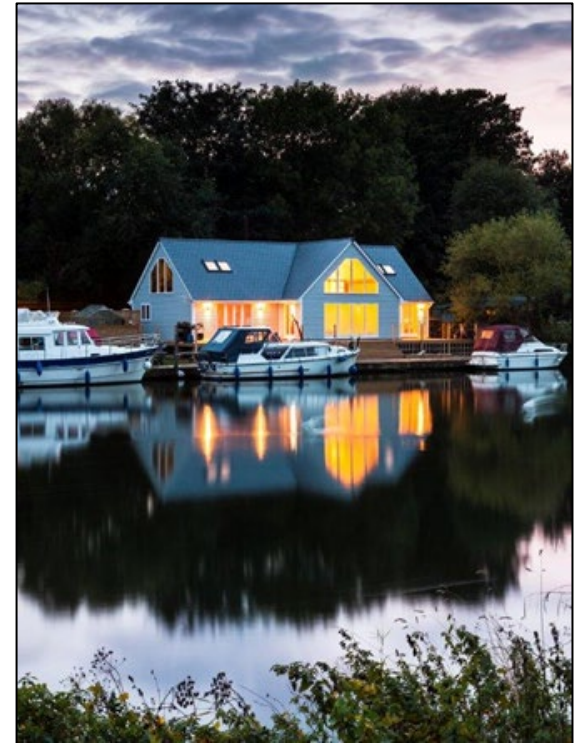
Appraising plots

Assessing construction risk

Plot construction risks & site abnormal's

- Site access and space to work.
- Demolitions & contamination.
- Services – existing and new connections.
- Drainage – connections and diversions.
- Topography, site levels & reduced level.
- Ground conditions & obstructions.
- Foundation types.
- Trees & ecology.
- Groundwater.
- Engineering works.
- Retaining structures.
- Highways works.

Plot Potential
construction risk
assessment



Source Potton



Appraising plots

Assessing construction risk

Access and space to work.

Check that there is sufficient access to the site for construction purposes.

- Suitable access for deliveries
- Room for scaffold & access
- Space for material storage
- Space for site welfare

Specialist plant or additional labour may be needed to build safely.

Think about the construction sequence and if extra time / money will be needed.



Appraising plots

Assessing construction risk

Demolition needs careful planning and control.

- Access to demolish does not have the same legal entitlement as access to maintain and repair!
- Beware of contamination such as asbestos.
- Services disconnections required.

Demolition sounds complicated but is not as expensive as you'd think.



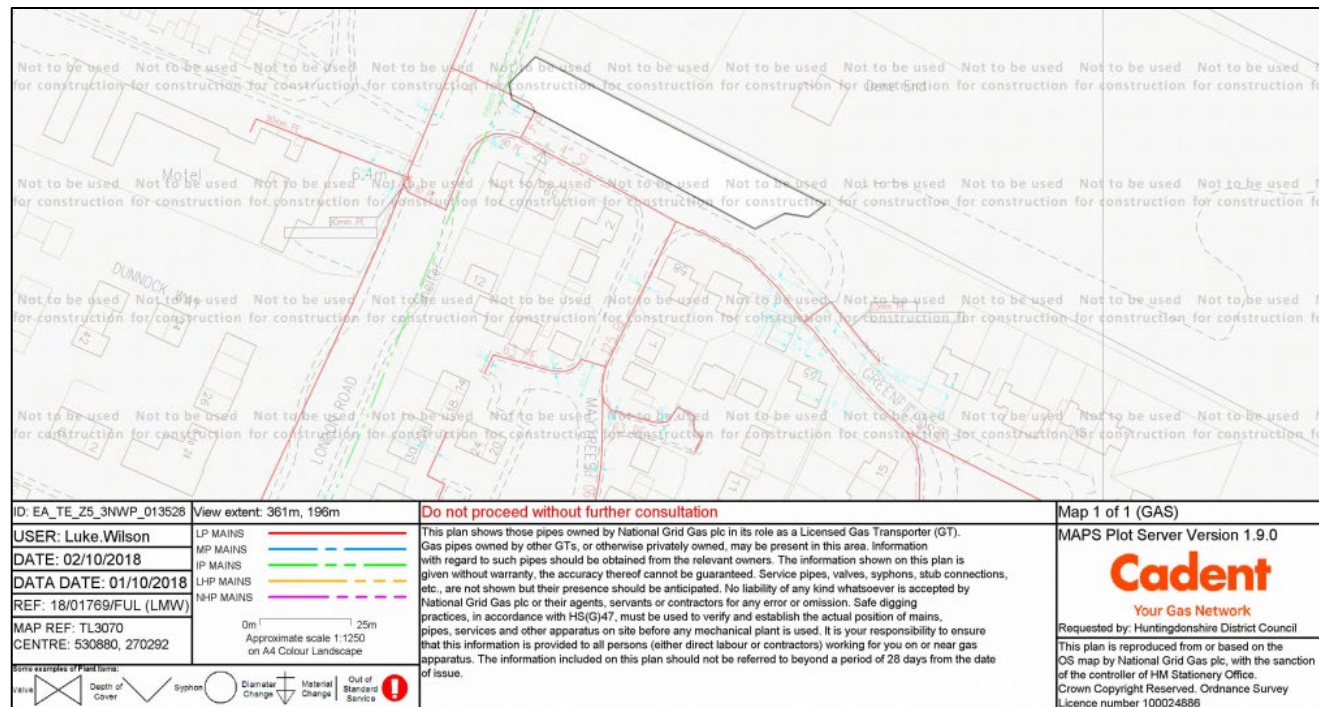
Appraising plots

Assessing construction risk

Services, connections, diversions.

Check that mains services are readily available.

Also consider diversions of services that may be affected by the build.

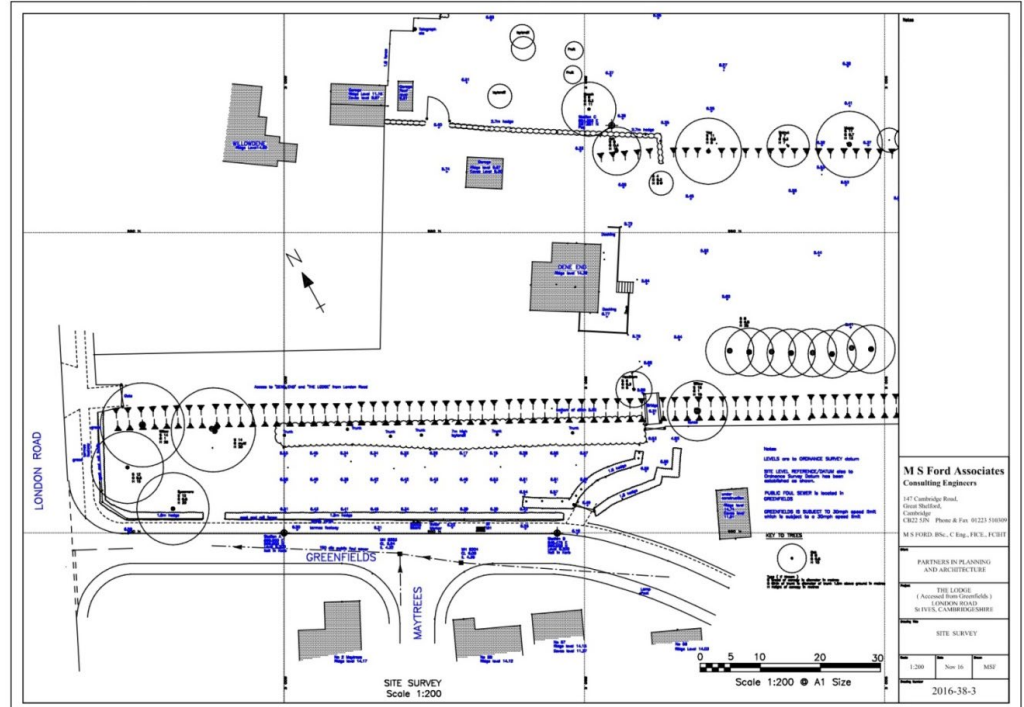


Appraising plots

Assessing construction risk

Topography - often overlooked but can be expensive to address.

- Assess site levels & gradients – topographical survey required
- Optimise the 'reduced level' – keep arising's on site
- Check key dimensions – is it the right size?

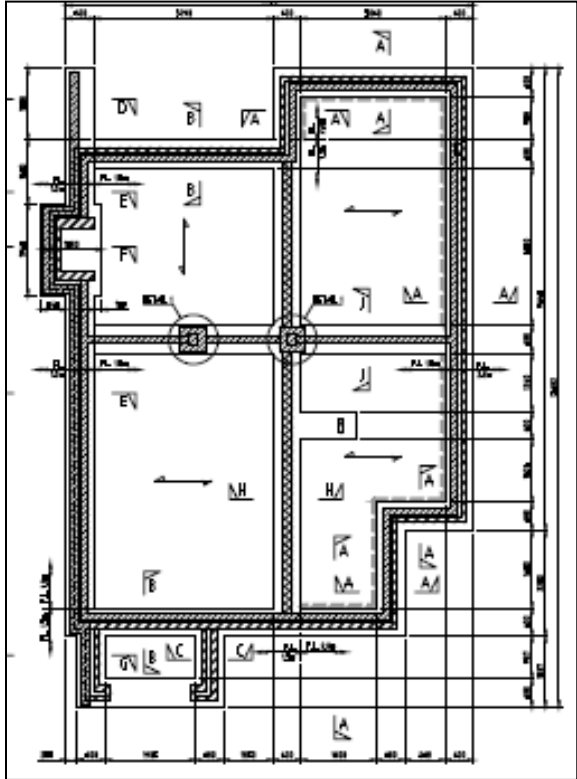


Appraising plots

Assessing construction risk

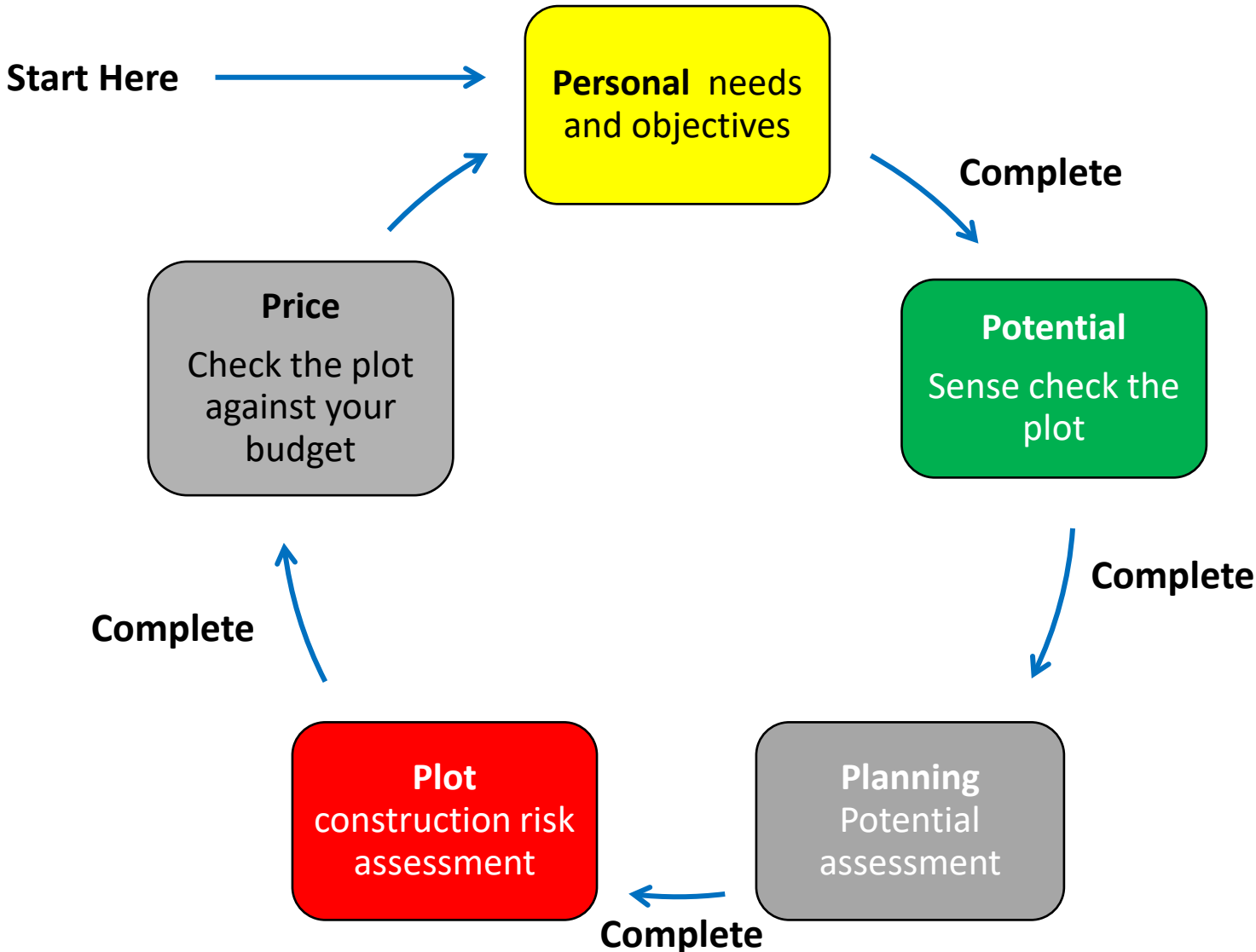
Ground Conditions – always complete a ground investigation

- The founding properties of the virgin ground.
- Depth of natural vegetation.
- Identify filled or disturbed soil.
- Locate depth of ground water.
- Identify any contamination & gases.
- Assess the chemical composition of the ground.
- Consider existing buildings / foundations / trees and their impact on the new



Appraising plots

The process



Appraising plots

Plot valuation

A plot is only worth what someone is prepared to pay but...
what you're prepared to pay should only be what its worth!

$$\begin{aligned} \text{Plot Value} &= \text{End Value} \\ &- \text{Design and planning fees} \\ &- \text{Cost to buy} \\ &- \text{Cost to build} \\ &- \text{Site abnormal costs} \\ &- \text{Desired equity} \end{aligned}$$

The trick to getting the valuation right is figuring out the variables;

- 1) What will the plot support
- 2) Establishing the end value of the finished home
- 3) Knowing the cost to build
- 4) Identifying unique site abnormal costs
- 5) Accounting for risk such as legal issues, access and servicing the site



Appraising plots

Plot valuation

Working out the end value – Develop some design ideas;

- What sort of property would the plot support?
- Pick a suitable existing design from a catalogue.
- Find out what sort of value would that carry?
- Value using Zoopla (for an idea) or an RICS surveyor.



BEAUTIFULLY TAILORED
CAXTON SHOWHOUSE

DIMENSIONS	METRE		FOOTING			
	m ²	depth	width	m ²	depth	width
Ground floor	24.5	7.9	6.6	272	26	27
Lozge/Study	14.3	3.5	3.1	154	13	30
Living	10.2	4.6	4.3	205	15	15
Dining/Kitchen	9.5	3.7	2.9	109	10	10
1st floor	19.1	4.4	3.8	206	14	10
Bedroom	9.9	2.5	4.9	107	8	16
Bedroom 2	8.0	3.2	2.7	85	10	9
Bedroom 3	9.0	2.5	3.8	95	8	9

BEAUTIFULLY TAILORED
CAXTON SHOWHOUSE

OVERALL HOUSE SIZE: 92.0m² (990sq ft)
FOOTPRINT DIMENSIONS: 24.5m (80ft) x 7.9m (26ft)
TYPICAL RIDGE HEIGHT: 7.9m

Ideas book...

BEAUTIFULLY TAILORED



Appraising plots

Plot valuation

Working out the design and build costs;

- Use price guides for your preferred package supplier.
- Use BuildIt's online cost calculators.
- Get quotations from builders
- Don't forget about wider 'project costs'

Remember different routes to build have different costs.

Build It POWERED BY HBXL
ESTIMATING SERVICE
 CONTROLLING YOUR SELF BUILD COSTS

Build It cost calculator examples

Category	Item	Quantity	Unit Price	Total Price
Site Preparation	Excavation	100	100	10000
	Foundation	200	500	100000
	Roofing	500	200	100000
	Interior Finishes	1000	100	100000
Total				300000



Build It
 Self-Build | Renovation | Extension

Self Build Cost Calculator

Estimate your project costs instantly with Build It's interactive self-build cost calculator. Find out how much it will cost to build your house, including total building costs and a price per square metre

[Build It Cost Calculator](#)

Appraising plots

Plot valuation

Paying the right price for a plot - Basic valuation example

What the finished home is worth	£ <u>750,000</u>
Less	
Cost to Build (Use Potton's Price Guide – say £250 /sq ft)	£(400,000)
Site Abnormal Costs	£(20,000)
Cost to Buy the Plot	£(15,000)
Professional Fees	£(6,000)
Desired Equity – Say 20%	£(<u>150,000</u>)
 Possible Plot Valuation	 <u>£159,000</u>

What is the maximum plot value?

Should you include rental costs and finance costs?

What about design and planning fees?

What about CIL contributions?

What's the consequence of building at say £400/sqft

Tip – If it's the plots fault then deduct the cost.



Appraising plots

Plot valuation

Plot Valuation Tool

Plot Valuation Tool

Key Data Input

		Change green only	
Value	Gross internal floor area of proposed house (GIA)	153	m2
	Current value of completed homes in the local area (per m2)	£3,920	/m2
	New Build Premium	0.00%	
	Annual rate of house value inflation	0.00%	
Build Costs	Construction cost per m2 (Excluding PM Fees)	£2,460	m2
	Annual construction inflation	0.00%	
	Months to build	12	Mths
	Site Abnormals (site entrance works & landscaping etc)	£26,000	
Fees	Stamp Duty on plot purchase (Use HMRC Calculator)	£0	
	https://www.gov.uk/stamp-duty-land-tax	£0	
	Legal fees (Excluding any party wall agreements as not known)	£0	
	Site Insurances	inc	
	Architectural Fees	1.00%	
	Planning fees	1.00%	
	Planning reports and surveys	£0	
	Ground Investigation & land survey	£4,000	
	Structural Engineering	£0	
	10 Year Structural Warranty	inc	
	Project Management Fees (excluding VAT) (coaching only)	£14,400	
Community Infrastructure Levy (Claim exception as self build)	£0		
Equity	Expected Profit or Equity earned by custom builder	0%	

Comments	
-----------------	--

Residual Plot Valuation Calculation

		Less	
Completed Value	Gross internal floor area of proposed house (GIA)	153	m2
	Current value of completed homes in local area (per m2)	£3,920	/m2
	Current value of completed home		£599,760
		plus	
	New build premium	0%	£0
	House price inflation for completion in 12 months	0%	£0
	Completed house value at completion in 12 months		£599,760

		Less	
Cost to Build	Gross internal floor area of proposed house (GIA)	153	m2
	Construction Cost (£/m2 GIA)	£2,460	
	Basic cost to build the home	Plus	£376,402
	Construction inflation for period of build	0.00%	£0
	Site Abnormals		£26,000
	Total cost to build		£402,402

		Less	
Fees	Community Infrastructure Levy (£/m2) / S106 fees	£0	£0
	Stamp duty		£0
	Legal fees		£0
	Site insurances		inc
	Design & Planning (TBC)		£7,528
	Foundation design & structural engineering		£4,000
	10 Year Structural Warranty		inc
	Project Management Fees		£14,400
	Total fees		£25,928

		Less	
Equity	Expected Profit earned on gross development value	0%	£0

Residual Plot Valuation £171,431



Buying the plot

The plot buying process

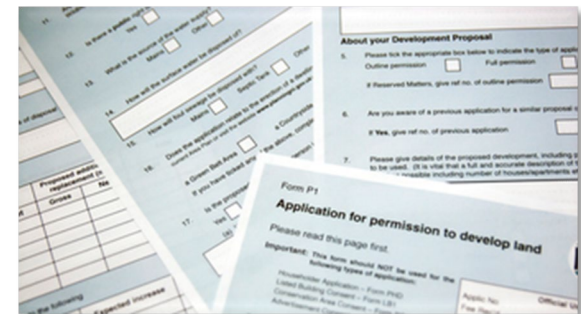
Put an '**Option Agreement**' in place before buying the plot

An 'option' is a legal agreement made between a landowner and a potential purchaser to sell at an agreed price but subject to certain conditions;

- Securing planning permission.
- Suitable site investigation.
- Provision of suitable access.
- Confirmation of statutory services connections.

Options should be;

- Legally binding.
- Arranged by lawyers.
- Of sufficient duration.



Buying the plot

The plot buying process

Planning required:

- 1) Establish your budget / finance
- 2) Appraise the site (viability assessment)
- 3) Establish principle of development
- 4) Develop design concepts
- 5) Hold pre-application (If necessary)
- 6) Establish value of the plot
- 7) Negotiate & secure option to purchase
- 8) Appoint your professional team
- 9) Develop the design
- 10) Prepare application
- 11) Submit and register
- 12) Planning approval process (8 weeks ++)
- 13) Decision by L.A. Planning
- 14) If refused – appeal (within 6 months)
- 15) Decision by planning inspectorate
- 16) Approved! Complete **purchase the plot**



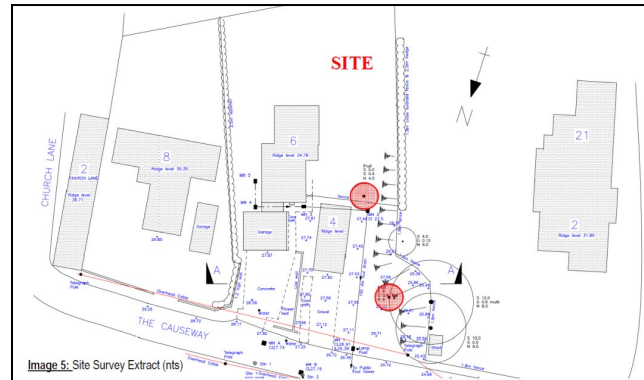
Plot finding case studies



Case study 1

A planning failure

- A sensitive conservation area.
- Plenty of nimby's!
- Lots of local objection.
- History of planning refusals



Case study 1

A planning failure

Reason for refusal – cause harm to the visual amenity of the area and would neither preserve or enhance the character and appearance of the conservation area.

recommendation by the
refusing the application
by letter confirming the

Comment: This application has a
comment on it

Applicant & Agent Details | Decision & Publicity | Plans & Docs (12) | Applications

Decision Details

Decision: Refused
Decision Date: 13-Apr-2012

Publicity Details

Publicity Start Date: 31-Jan-2012
Publicity End Date: 21-Feb-2012

Conditions/Reasons For Refusal

Type	Short Desc
Informative	Recreational Infrastructure
Reason	Harm to Conservation Area

WPHAPPDETAIL - Google Chrome

Not secure | plan.scams.gov.uk/swiftlg/apas/run/WPHAPPDETAIL.DisplayUrl?th...

PLANNING APPLICATIONS - DETAILS

- › Planning
 - › Contact planning
 - › Development planning
 - › District planning policy
 - › Local land charges
 - › Section 106 Agreements
- › Bin collection & recycling
- › Business
- › Community and living
- › Council and democracy
- › Council tax, benefits and finance
- › Housing
- › Job vacancies
- › Learning and education
- › Leisure and culture

The proposed development (as shown on drawings 9650-3, 9650-7 Rev B and 9650-8 Rev A) would, by virtue of its siting, scale and design, cause harm to the visual amenity of the area and would neither preserve nor enhance the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. The proposal is therefore contrary to polices DP/2, DP/3 and CH/5 of the South Cambridgeshire Local Development Framework Development Control Policies DPD 2007.



Case study 1

A planning failure

Two previous planning applications



Failed

Case study 1

A planning failure

Stop | Look | Listen

1) Read the planning refusal – understand why it failed.

“Cause harm to the visual amenity of the area and would neither preserve or enhance the character and appearance of the conservation area”.

2) Ask a few questions .

- How can this be overcome?
- What kind of proposal would;
 - not harm visual amenity?
 - enhance the character and appearance of the area?

3) Seek professional help and guidance .

- Look at the architectural style and character of the area
- Consider the street scene
- Think about the impact of a new building
- Engage with the locals – take account of local politics
- Work up a ‘professional’ alternative.



Evolving the right application

Case study 1

A planning failure



Design Evolution

Image 38:

Design input sought from John Harris

ation



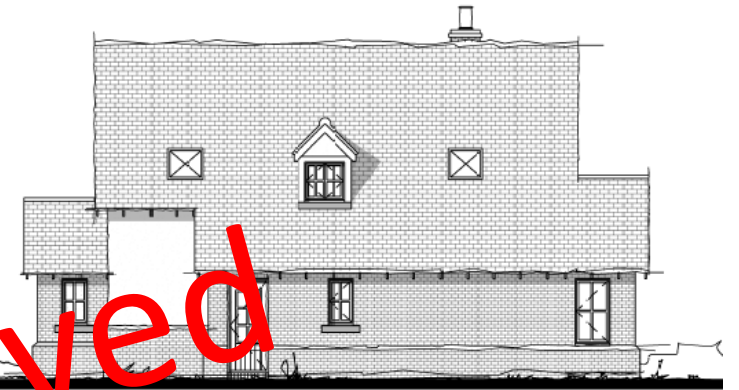
Case study 1

A planning failure

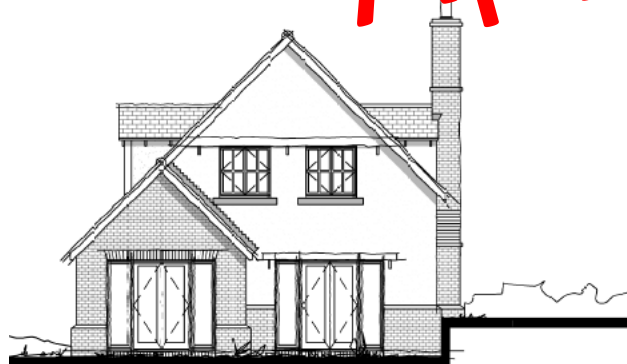
Potton's Application



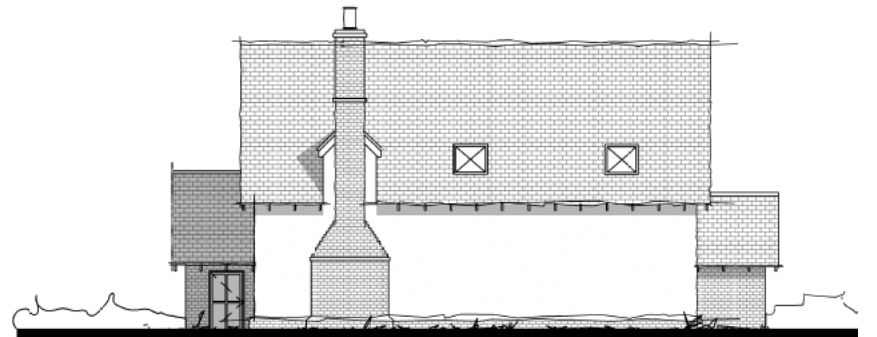
Front Elevation (North)
Scale 1:100



Side Elevation (West)
Scale 1:100



Rear Elevation (South)
Scale 1:100



Side Elevation (East)
Scale 1:100

Approved



Case study 1

A planning failure

The built home



More Photo's or book a stay

<https://www.sykescottages.co.uk/cottage/Cambridgeshire-Avenue-Fm/Fern-Cottage-1095328.html>



Case study 1

A planning failure



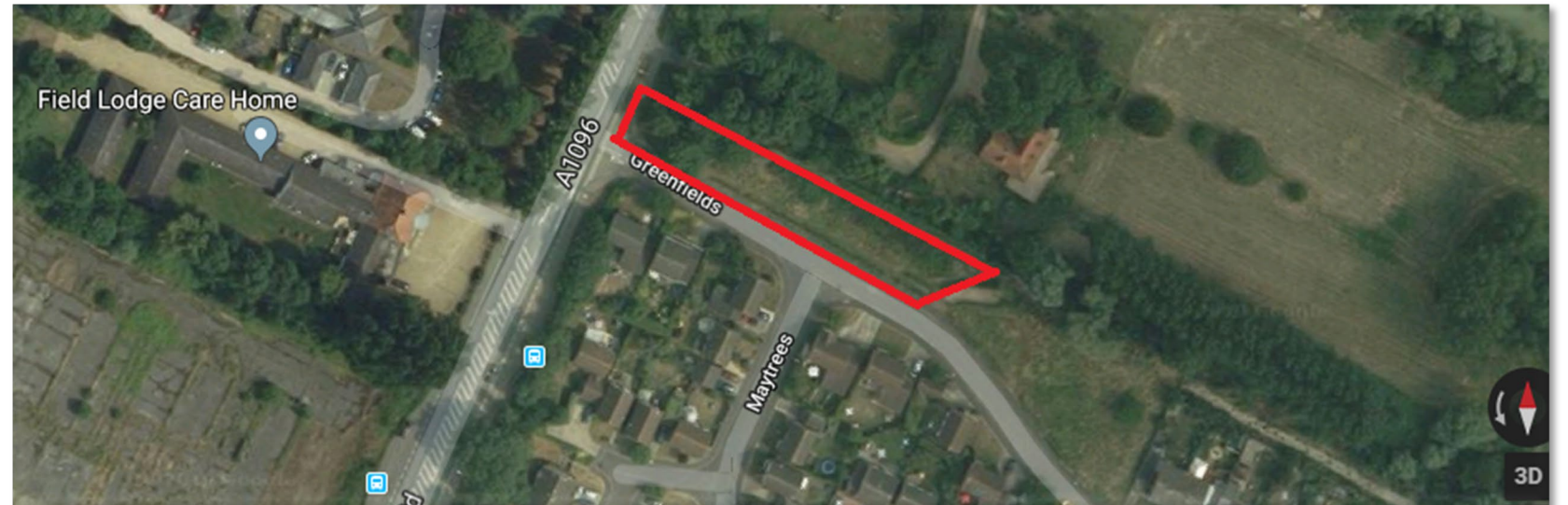
Lessons;

- 1) Never assume a refusal means the plot isn't developable – read the refusal notice and ask how the issues can be overcome.
- 2) Bad applications done on the cheap secure lots of refusals – seek professional advice.
- 3) Landowners who failed to win a consent often have reduced ambitions – they may accept lower offers, subject to planning of course.
- 4) Always take account of local politics. Get to know the locals, include them in your plans – it's harder to object if they like you and have had an opportunity to contribute to what gets built.
- 5) Remember, local objections carry limited weight. Provided you address planning policy, there is no reason why an acceptable proposal shouldn't be approved.

Case study 2

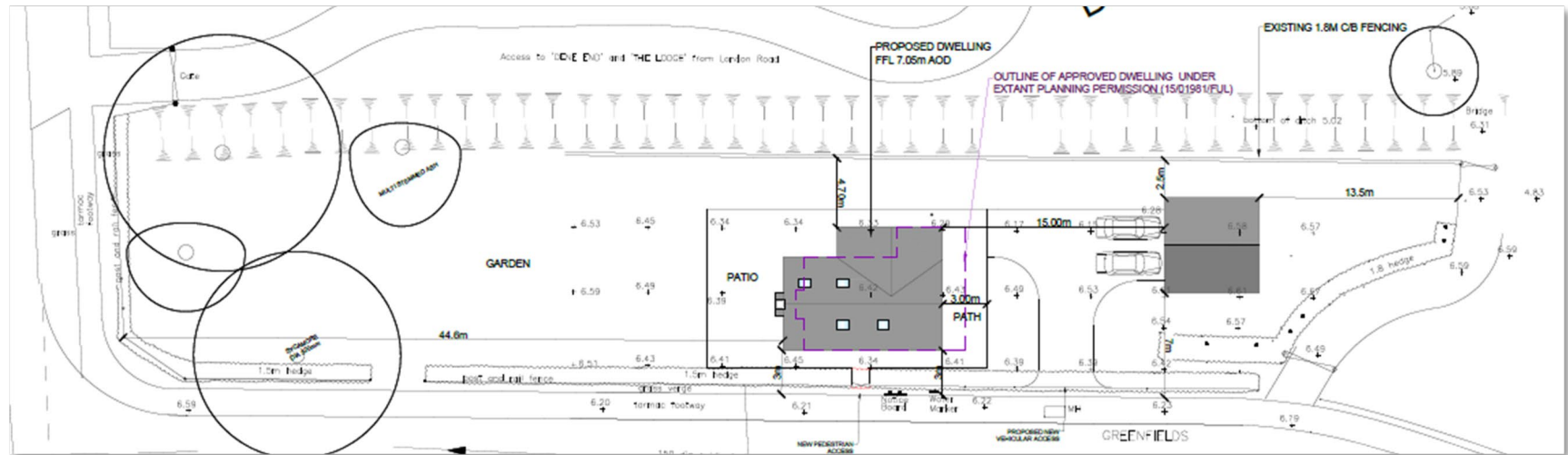
Problem land

- Large narrow plot positioned on a main road.
- Unsightly, conifer hedging – too narrow to develop.
- Monster hedge ruined the plot!
- Looks like amenity land but was fenced off - Why?



Case study 2

Problem land



Case study 2

Problem land

Case Study 2 - Lessons

- 1) Always look beyond what you see?
 - Why hasn't it been developed
 - Can problems be overcome
 - What risk is involved
 - Is there a bespoke architectural design that unlocks the opportunity?

- 2) Seek professional advice to understand the alternatives
 - Planner | Designers | Builder

- 3) Always keep an eye on the cost of development and the end value bearing in mind the plot restrictions – make sure its viable



Let's wrap things up



Q&A



NEED HELP?

ELSWORTH
PROJECTS



Get in touch....

Email: markstevenson@elsworthprojects.co.uk

Mobile : 07862 257384

Plot Support Services;

- Development appraisals
- Land valuations
- Site investigations

Project Management Services:

- Build budgets
- Project coaching
- Problem solving





THANK YOU
FOR JOINING US

Visit <https://www.self-build.co.uk/plan-it/finding-land/> for great plot finding information

GET TRAINED:
[buildit.co.uk/training](https://www.buildit.co.uk/training)