



# Finding a viable plot

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# 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.



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# 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.



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# How to find a building plot



# Introduction

Can't find that elusive plot?

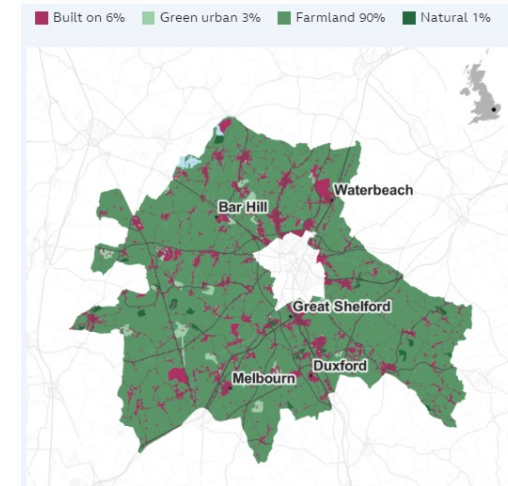
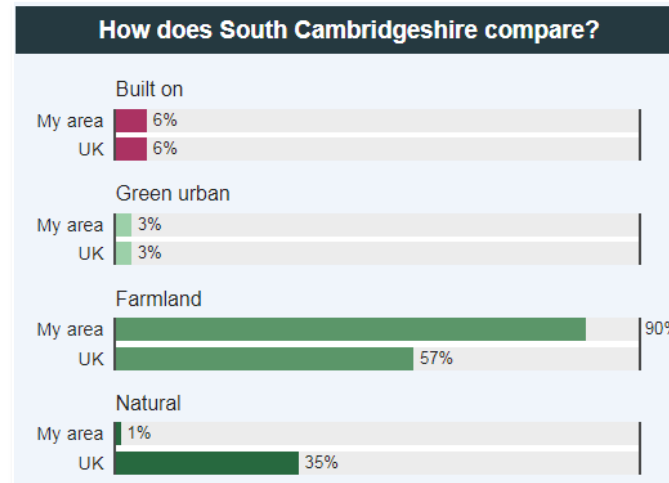
## The market for plots is very competitive!

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

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*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

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*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



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# Land – what to look for

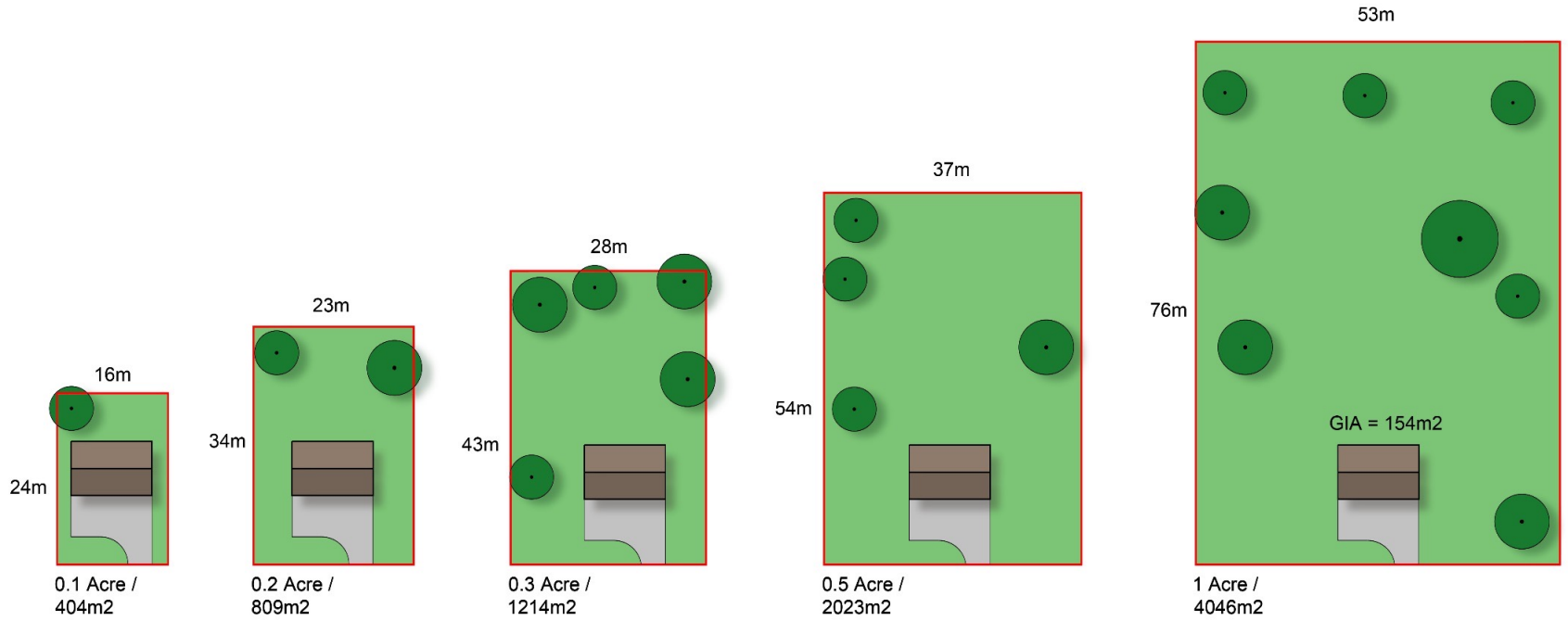




# What to look for

*How much land do I need?*

How the same 154m<sup>2</sup> (1657ft<sup>2</sup>) house fits on different sized plots



# What to look for

## Knock down and rebuild

**Open Field?**



**Scrub land?**



**Brown Field?**



# What to look for

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# Garden Plots



## Garden Plots

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



# What to look for

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## 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

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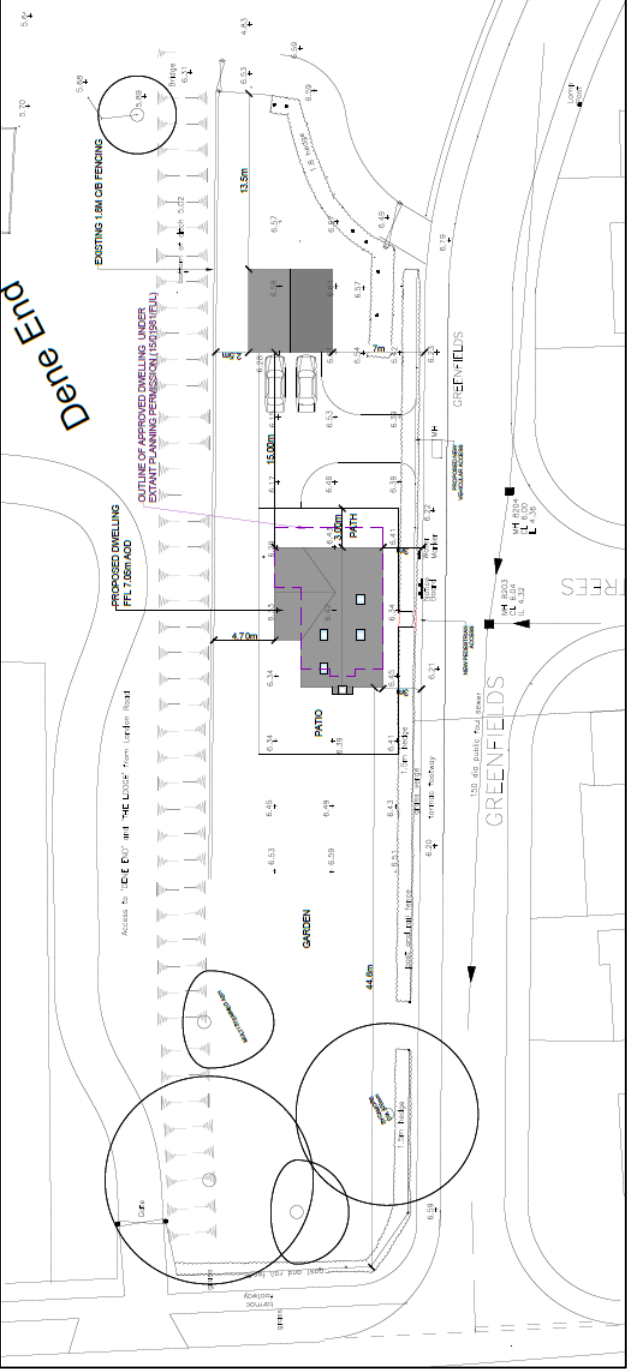
## Forgotten Land

### 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 Forgotten Land





# What to look for

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## 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?*

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# 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."



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## 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
- 150m<sup>2</sup> floor space limit on commercial shops but consultation considering increase to 300m<sup>2</sup>
- 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?*

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Fields and  
paddocks

Not really – homes for horses!



*What to look for?*

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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!

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 Grand Designs



Source Potton





# What to look for?

Planning applications and permissions

Approved



Failures – why?



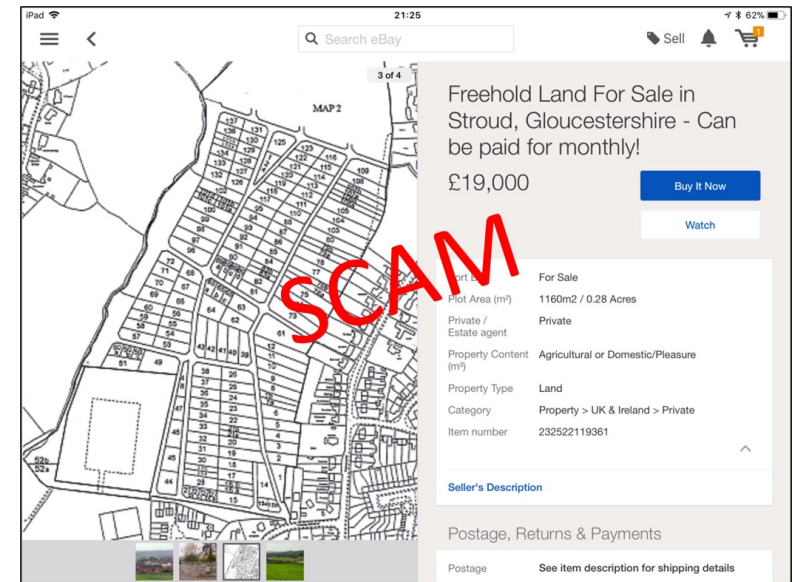
# What to look for?

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



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# 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*



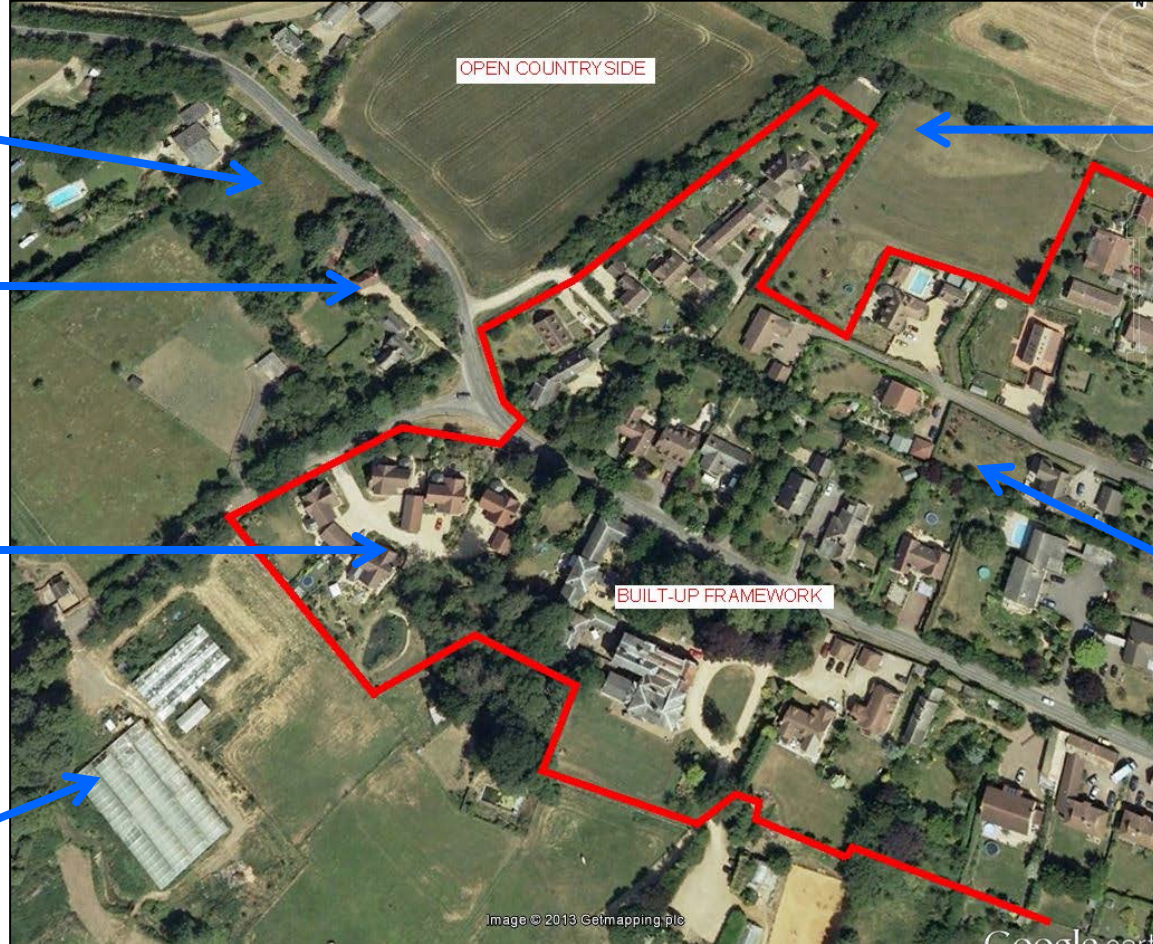
# How to find a plot

*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

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*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

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*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

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## *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



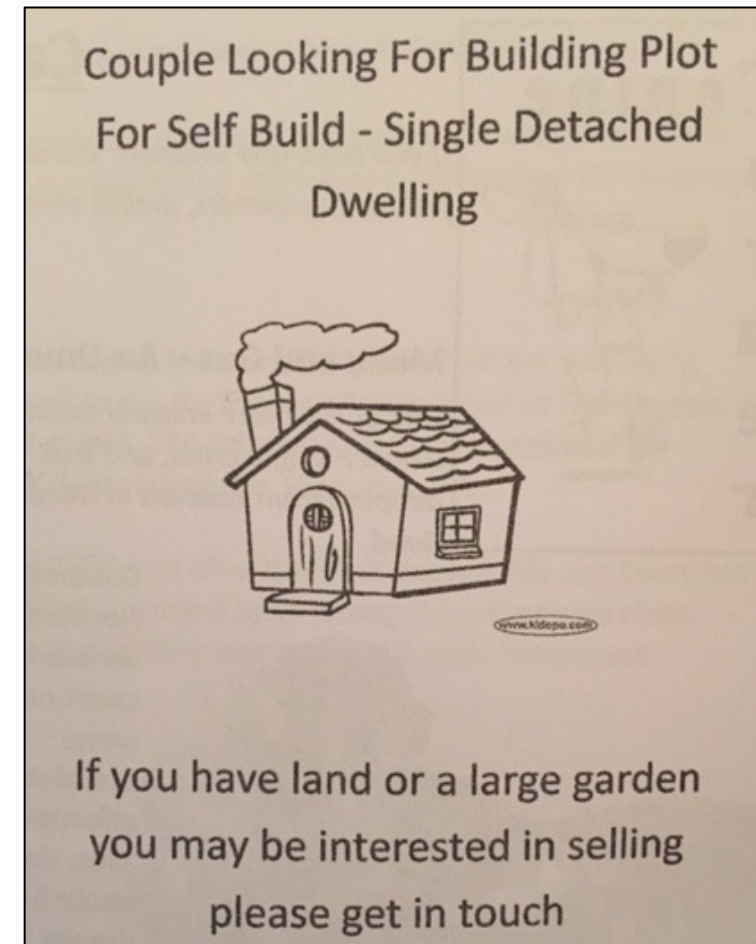


# How to find a plot

*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.



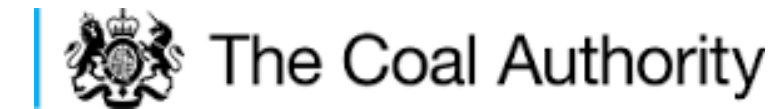
## How to find a plot

### *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.



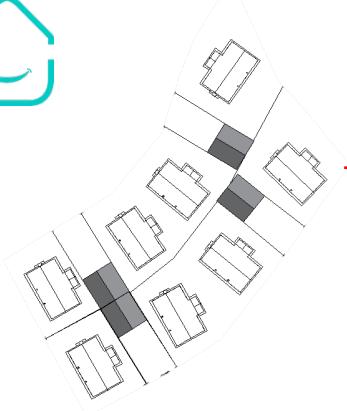
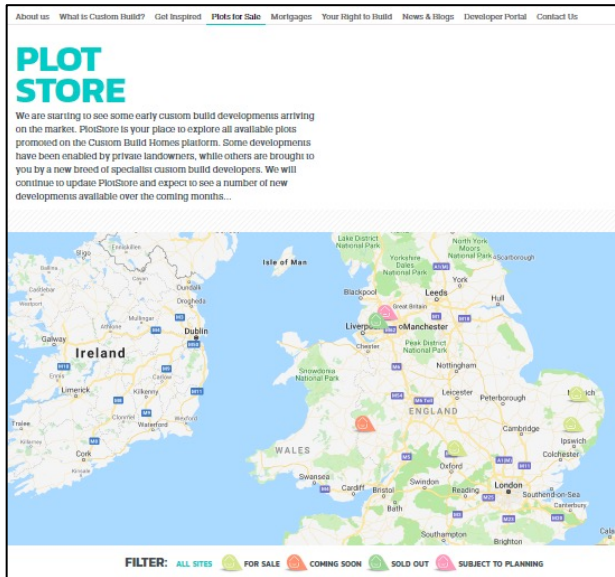
# How to find a plot

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

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### *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

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*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!

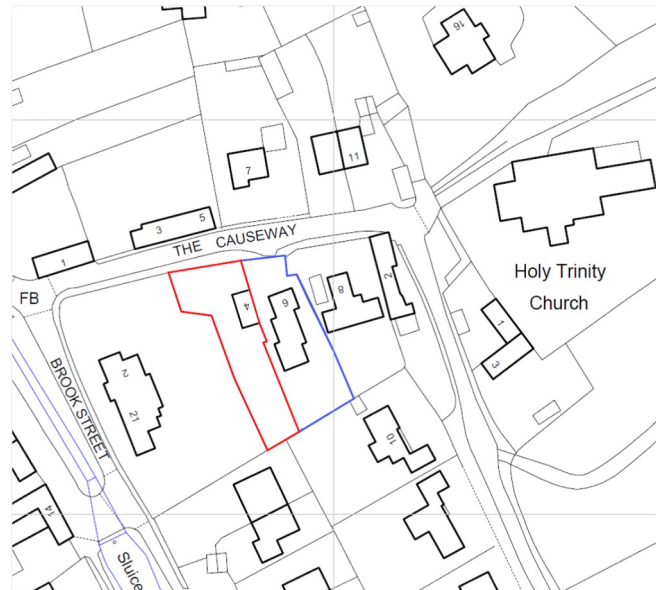


# How to find a plot

*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!*

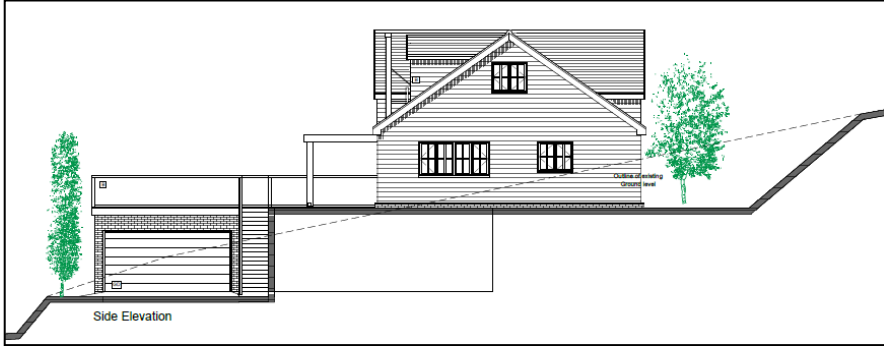
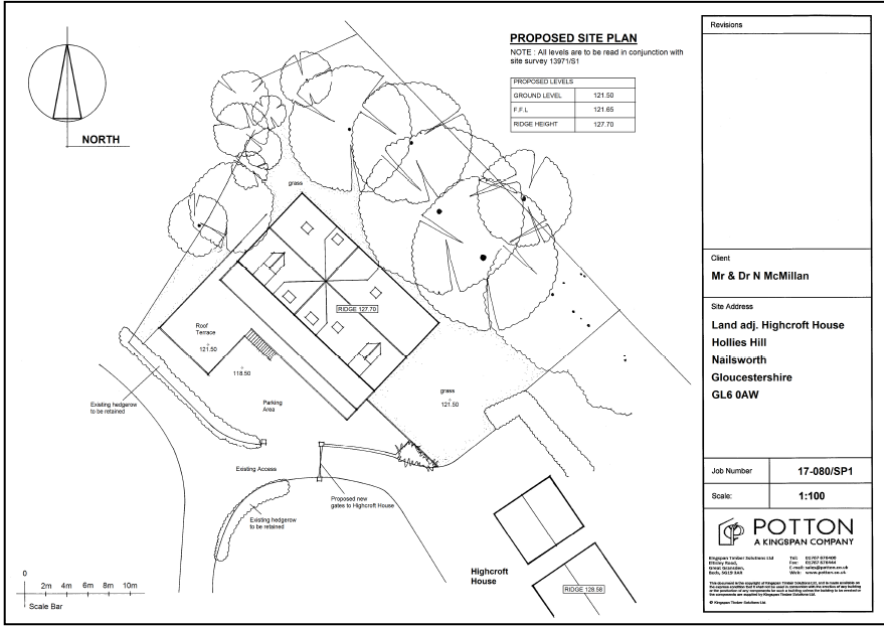
Remember to look inside the settlement boundary



# 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, location, and status. A 'Simple Search' tab is selected, and the search results are sorted by 'Date Received' in descending order. The results list includes entries like 'Condition information for 15/01530/FUL - C3, C5, 6, C9' and 'Erection of detached dwelling'.



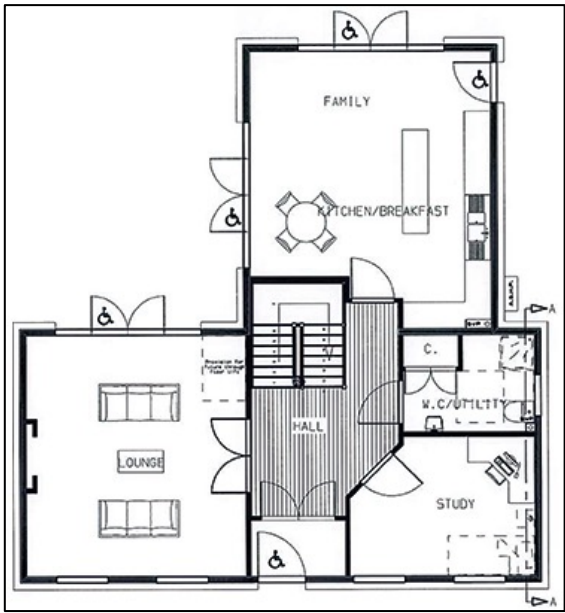
# How to find a plot

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*



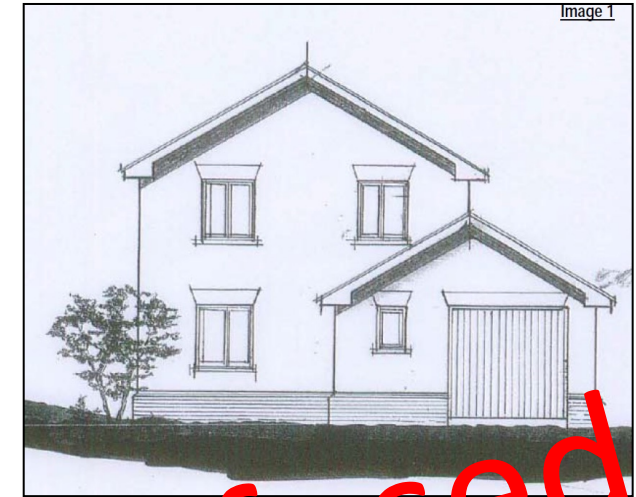
# How to find a plot

*Search the  
Planning Portal*

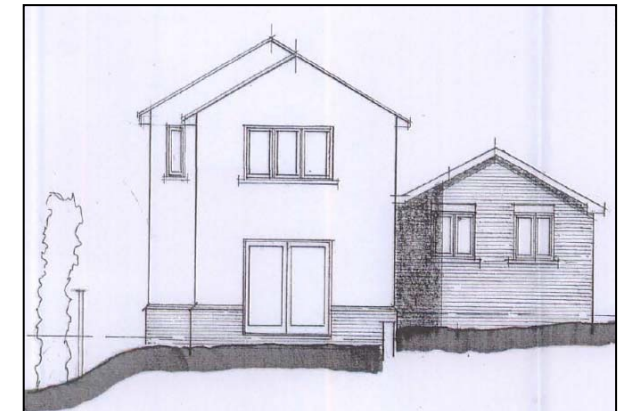


## Planning Failures

- 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**



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Making sure your plot is viable



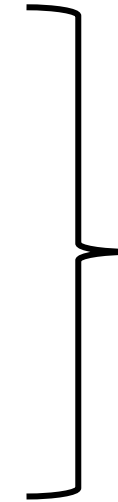


# Buying the plot

*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

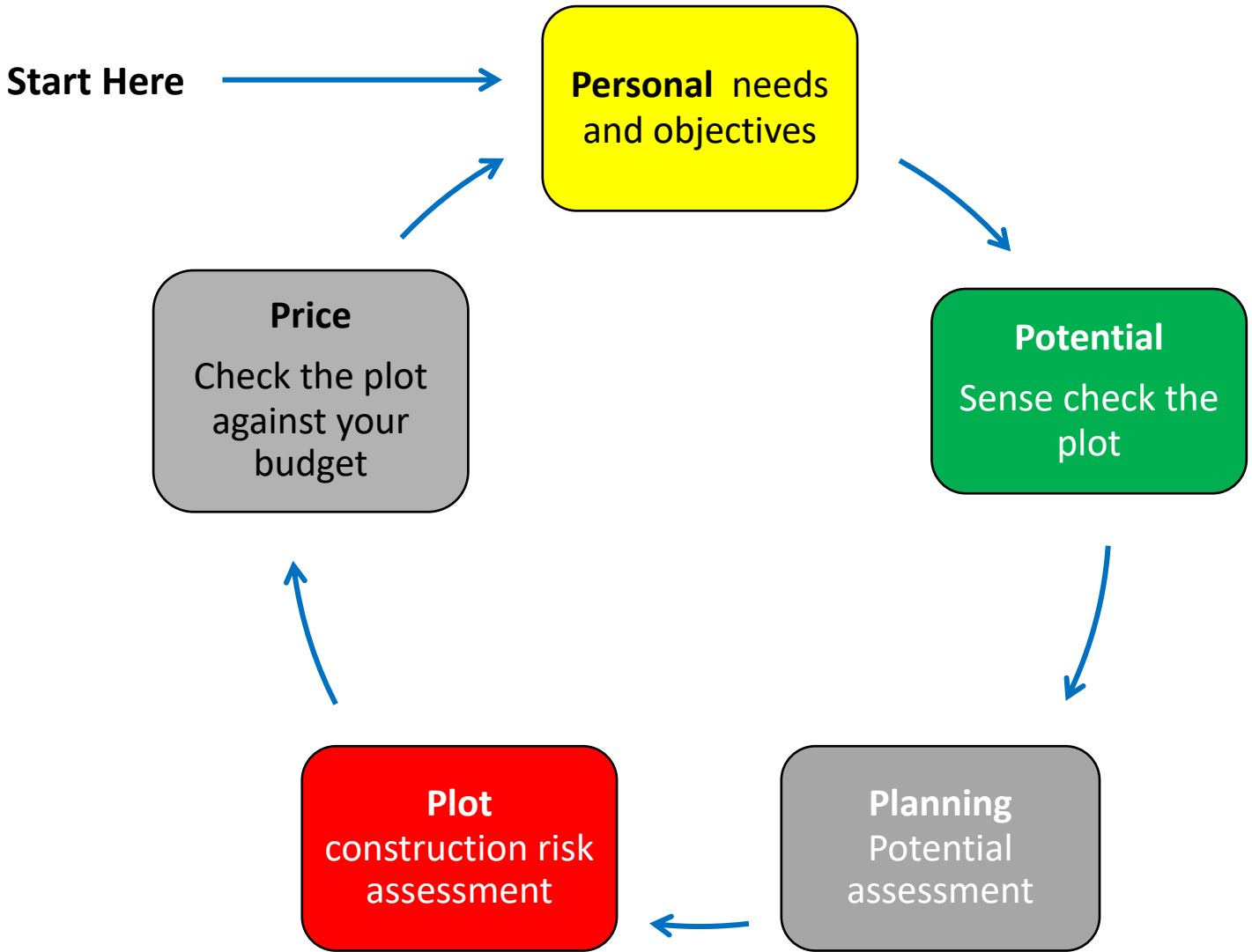


Package Provider



# Appraising plots

## The process



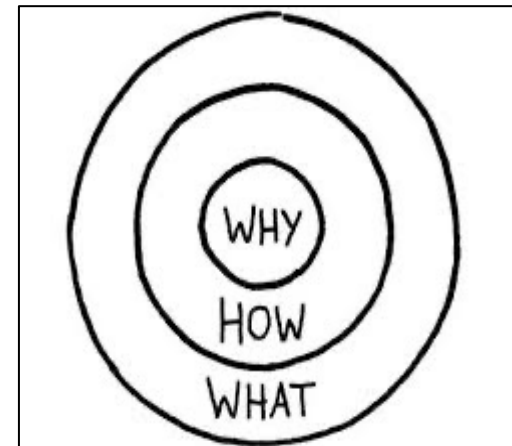
# Appraising plots

## *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?

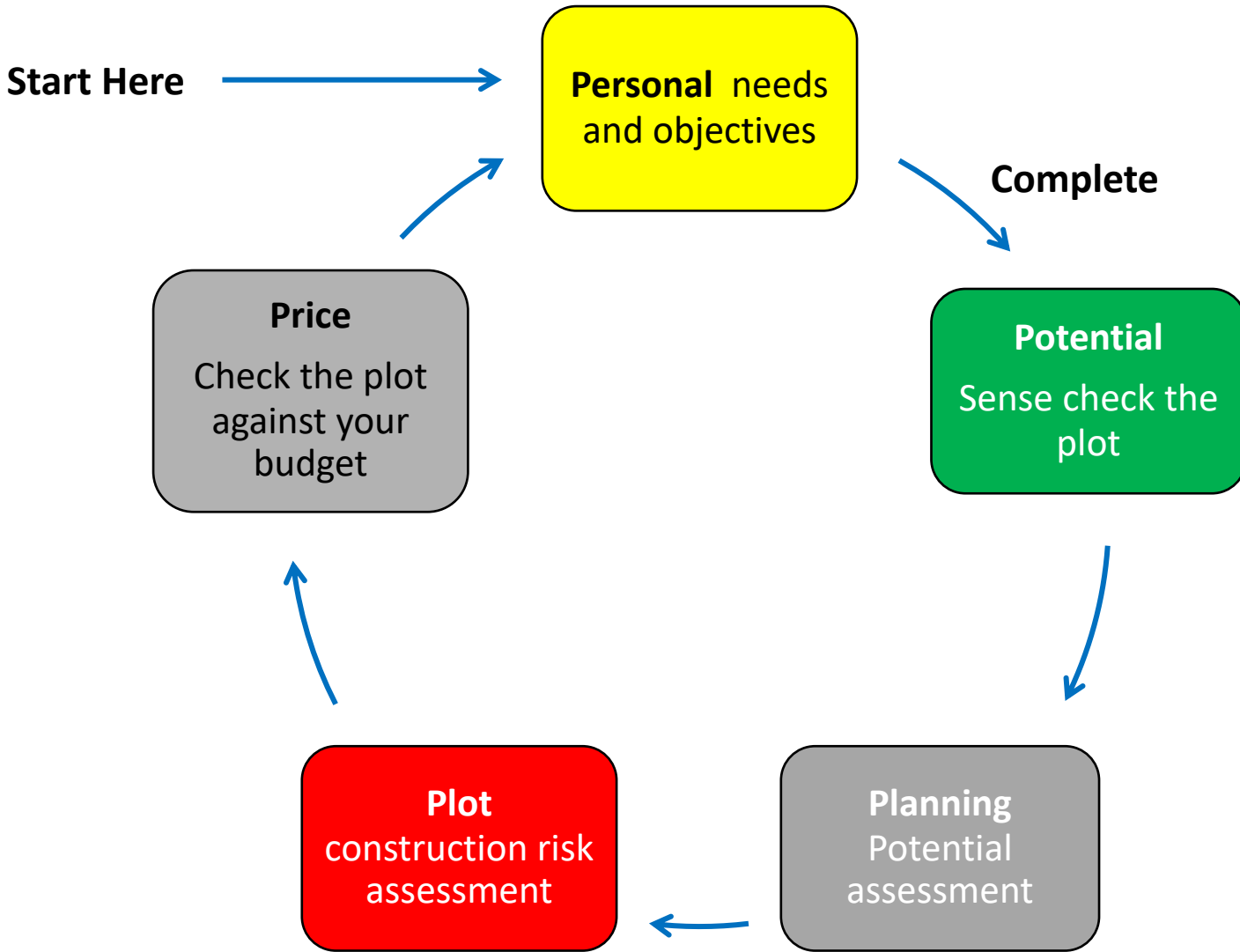
It all starts with you –  
**Not the plot!**

**Personal**  
needs and  
objectives



# Appraising plots

## The process



# Appraising plots

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## *Sense check the potential*

Ask yourself 8 key questions;

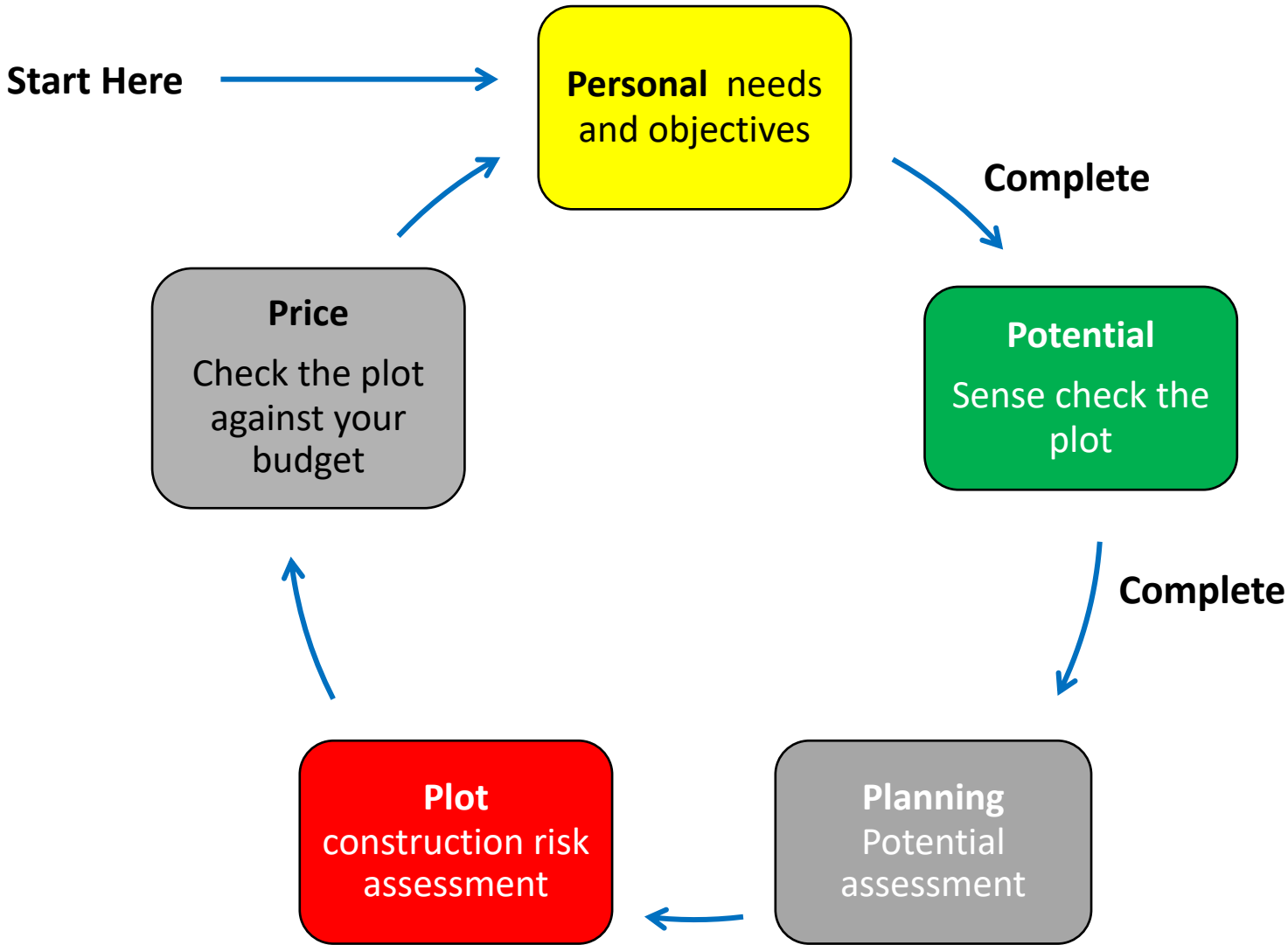
- 1) Will the plot meet my needs and objectives?
- 2) Will I get permission for what I want?
- 3) Can I deal with all the planning conditions?
- 4) Do I have legal and unobstructed access?
- 5) Can I service the plot?
- 6) Are there any construction problems to overcome?
- 7) Are there any legal matters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

**Potential**  
Sense check the plot



# Appraising plots

## The process



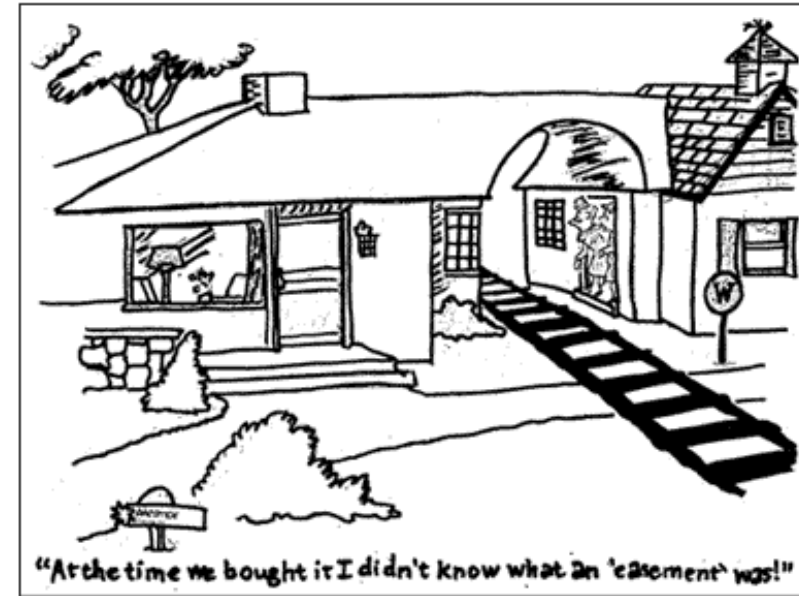
# Appraising plots

## *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

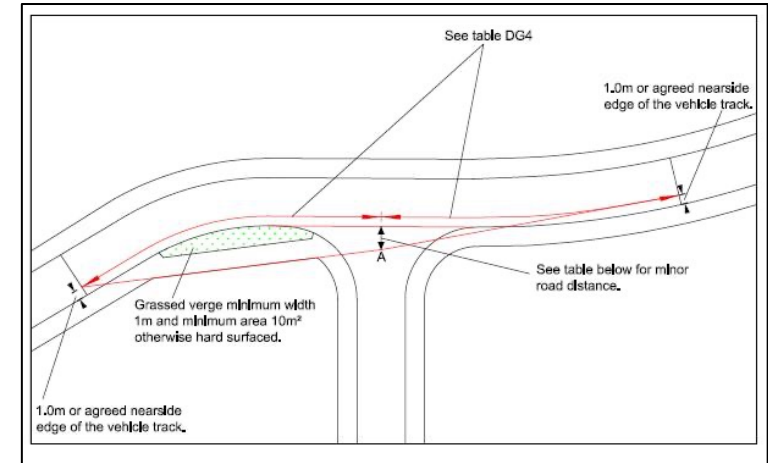
### Access to the site.

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

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## *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?

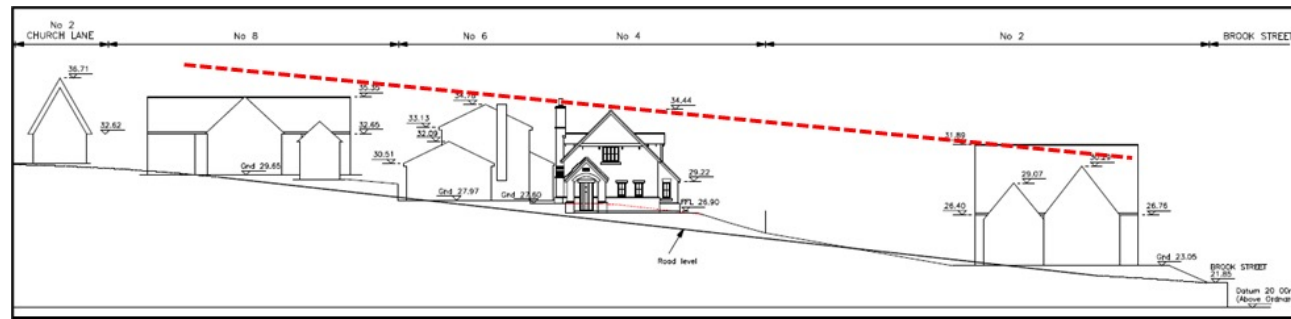
Planning Potential  
assessment

# 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 replied upon.

BEAUTIFULLY TAILORED  
CAXTON SHOWHOUSE

DIMENSIONS	METRIC	IMPERIAL
Ground floor	nr depth width	nr depth width
Living/Dining	3.5 2.5 5.6	11 8 18
Dining	1.1 2.5 2.1	3 8 7
Breakfast kitchen	1.9 4.0 2.5	6 3 8 8
1st fl	7.5 5.7 2.8	24 19 9

First floor	METRIC	IMPERIAL
Master Bedroom	3.1 4.4 5.8	10 14 19
Bedroom 1	3.0 2.9 4.9	9 9 16
Bedroom 2	3.0 2.7 3.5	9 9 11
Bedroom 3	3.0 2.3 2.8	9 7 9

GROUND FLOOR PLAN      FIRST FLOOR PLAN

OVERALL HOUSE SIZE: 142sqm / 1,490sqft  
FOOTPRINT DIMENSIONS: depth 5,200mm / 17ft 10in, width 12,500mm / 41ft 0in  
TYPICAL RISE HEIGHT: 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

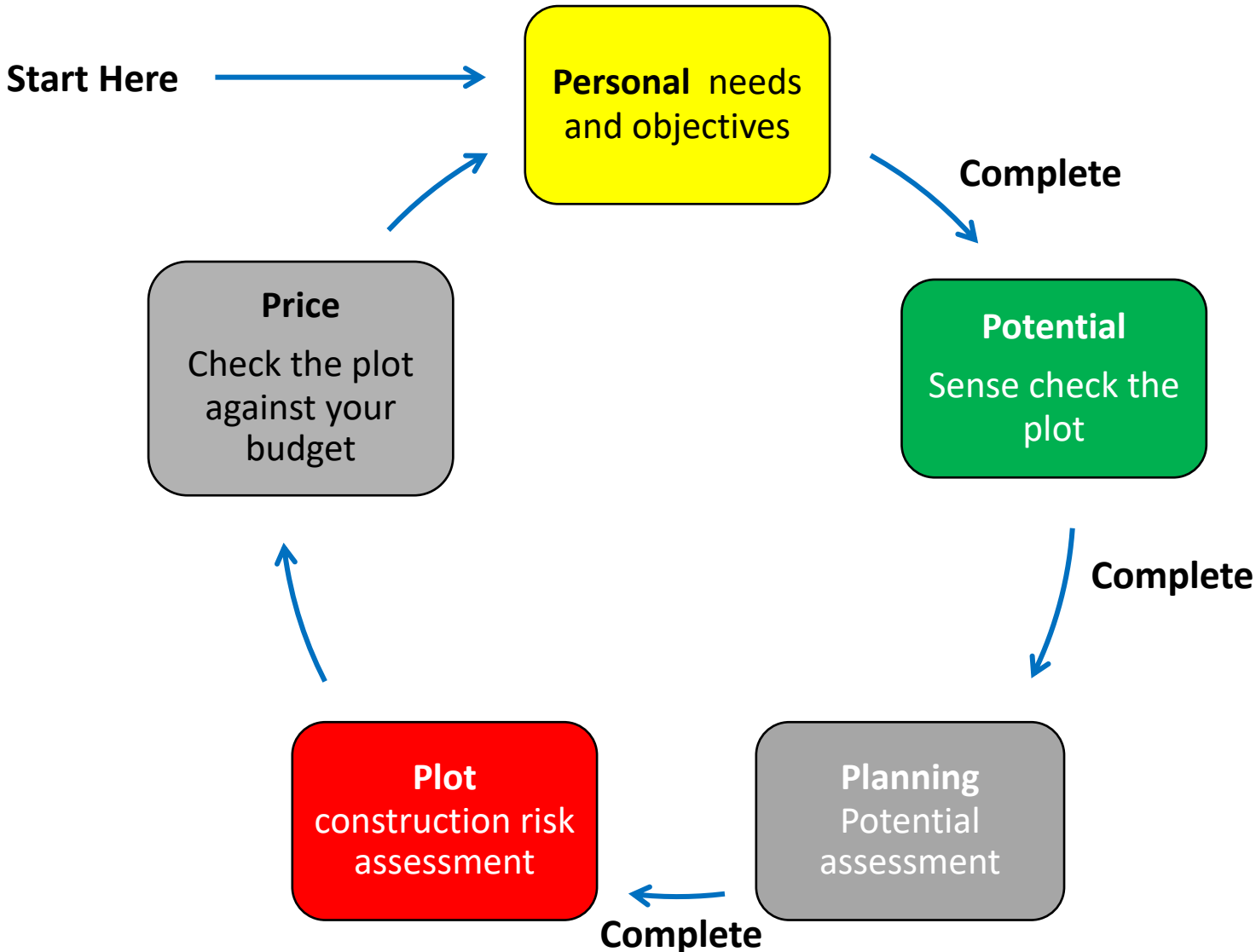
## Expect to have to complete ecology surveys

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



# Appraising plots

## The process



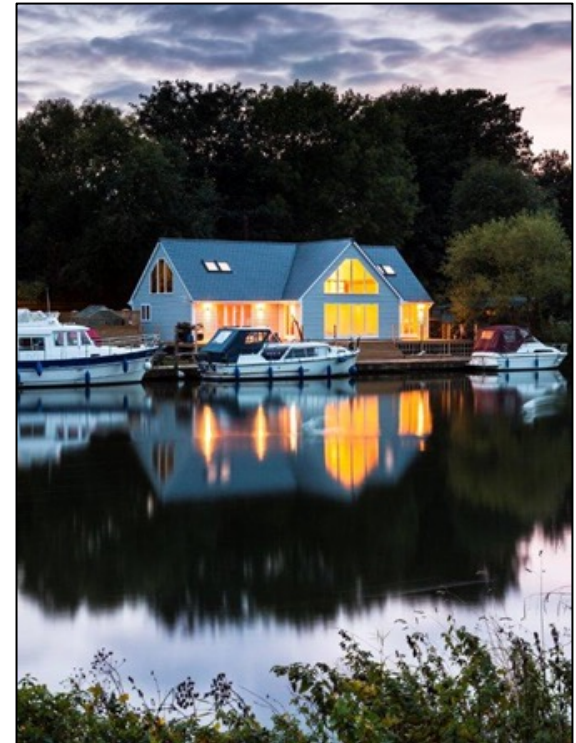
# Appraising plots

## 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.



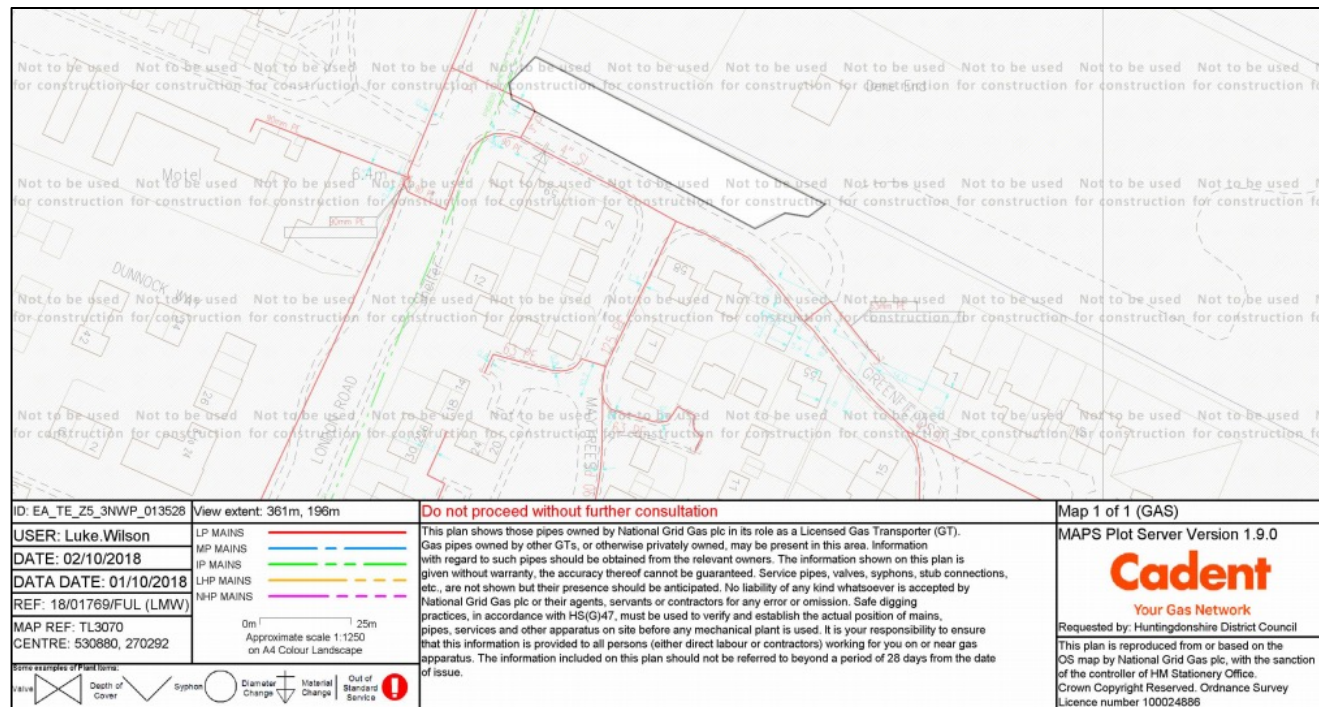
# Appraising plots

## 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.

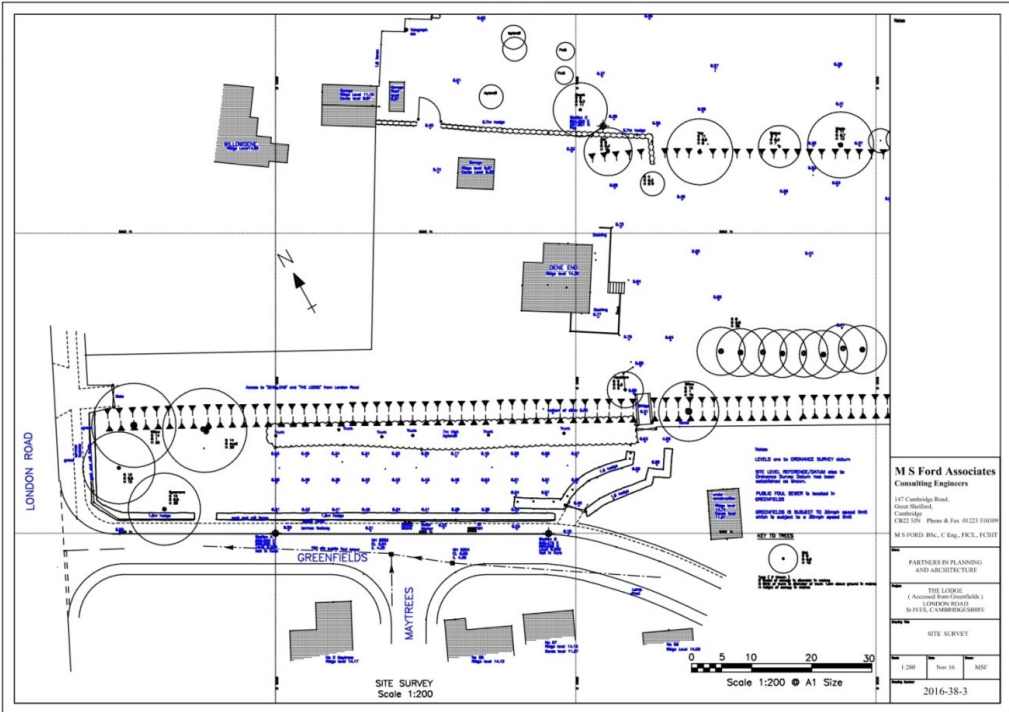


# Appraising plots

## 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?

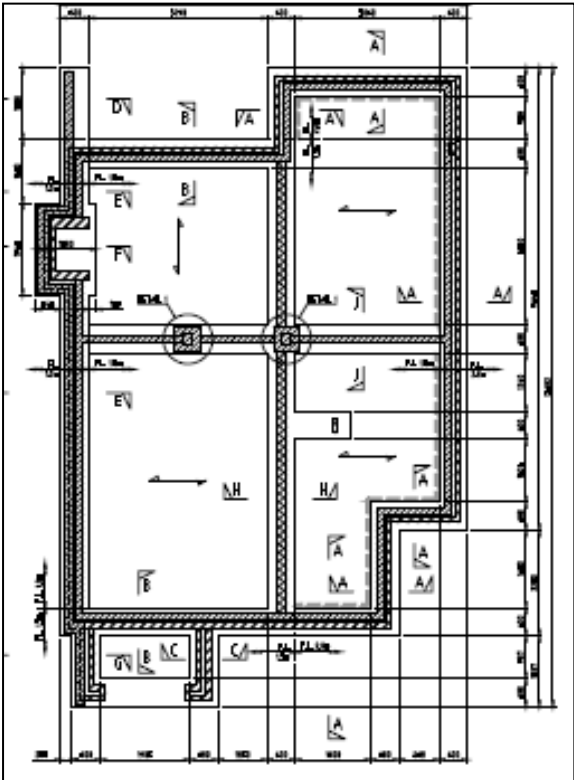


# Appraising plots

## Assessing construction risk

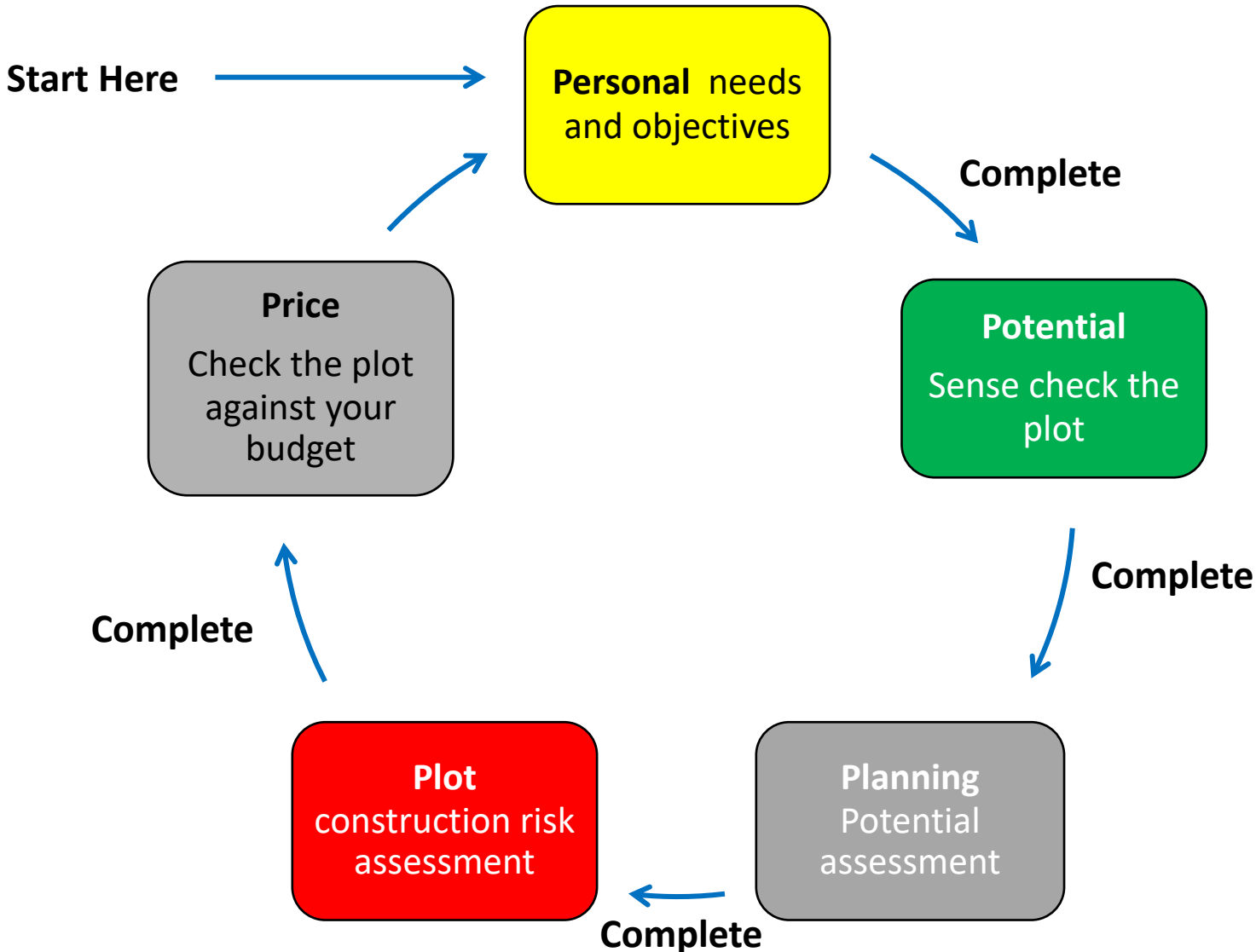
### Ground Conditions – always complete a ground investigation

- 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!

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

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	METRIC		IMPERIAL			
	m <sup>2</sup>	depth	width	m <sup>2</sup>	depth	width
Ground floor	24.5	7.9	8.6	272	26	27
Loose/Study	14.3	3.5	4.1	154	11	10
Garage	18.0	4.6	4.3	205	15	15
1st	9.5	3.7	2.9	103	10	10

**First floor**

Master Bedroom	19.1	4.4	3.8	206	14	10
Bedroom 2	9.9	2.5	4.9	107	8	16
Bedroom 3	8.0	3.2	2.7	93	10	9
Bedroom 4	9.0	2.5	3.8	95	8	9

BEAUTIFULLY TAILORED

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




**Leads build cost examples**

Package	Package A	Package B	Package C	Package D	Package E	Package F	Package G
Plot	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
Design	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
Build	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
Project Costs	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
<b>Total</b>	<b>300</b>	<b>300</b>	<b>300</b>	<b>300</b>	<b>300</b>	<b>300</b>	<b>300</b>



**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

Value	Change green only	
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%	
<b>Build Costs</b>		
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	
<b>Fees</b>		
Stamp Duty on plot purchase (Use HMRC Calculator)	£0	
<a href="https://www.gov.uk/stamp-duty-land-tax">https://www.gov.uk/stamp-duty-land-tax</a>	£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	
<b>Equity</b>		
Expected Profit or Equity earned by custom builder	0%	

<b>Comments</b>	
-----------------	--

##### Residual Plot Valuation Calculation

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
		<b>plus</b>	
New build premium	0%		£0
House price inflation for completion in 12 months	0%		£0
Completed house value at completion in 12 months			<b>£599,760</b>

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		<b>Plus</b>	£376,402
Construction inflation for period of build	0.00%		£0
Site Abnormals			£26,000
Total cost to build			<b>£402,402</b>

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			<b>£25,928</b>

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**



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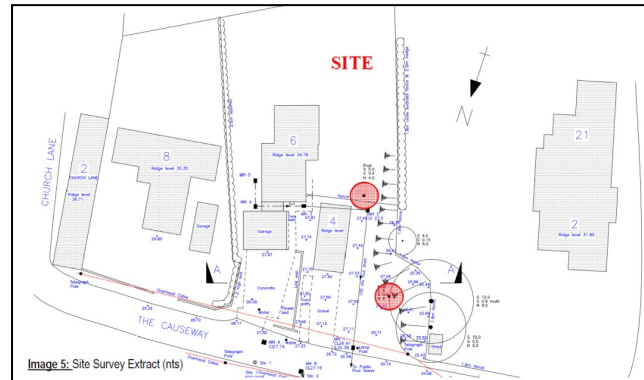
# Plot finding case studies



# 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





# 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 28:



Design input sought from John Harris

ation



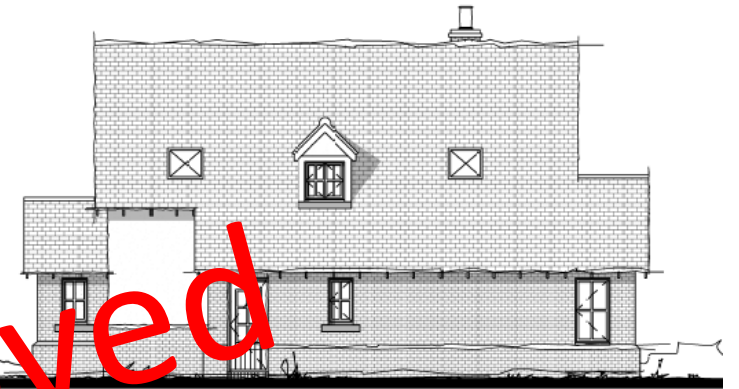
# Case study 1

## A planning failure

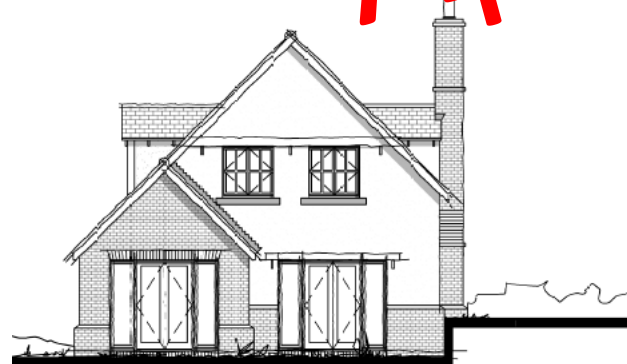
### Potton's Application



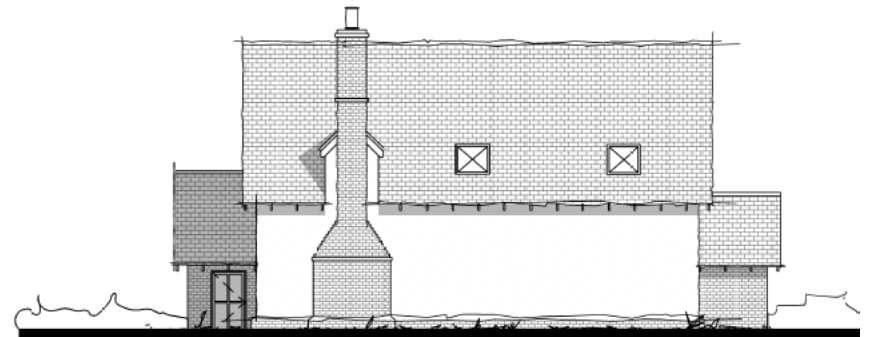
Front Elevation (North)  
Scale 1:100



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

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## 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

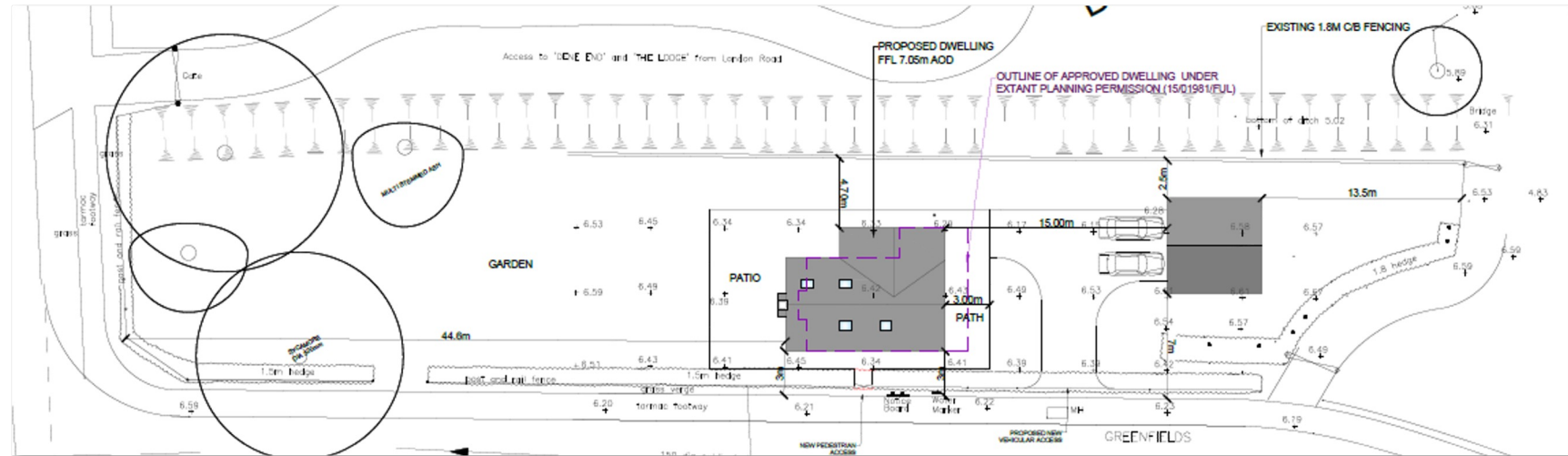
### Problem land

- 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 it's viable



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Let's wrap things up



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# Q&A



NEED HELP?

## Get in touch....

Email: [markstevenson@elsworthprojects.co.uk](mailto: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



**ELSWORTH  
PROJECTS**





**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)