

PLANNING RESPONSE

For the Cotswolds AONB

COUNCIL / DEPT / AGENCY:
West Oxfordshire

APPLICATION NUMBER:
17/00642/OUT



15-Aug-17

DESCRIPTION:

Outline planning application for up to 85 dwellings (Use Class C3), up to 60 extra care units (Use Class C2), creation of new vehicular access off of Witney Street and revised vehicular access off Barns Lane, and provision of public open space with associated infrastructure and earthworks

RESPONSE:

The Cotswolds Conservation Board wishes to object to this proposal for the reasons detailed below.

In its response (dated 23rd December 2016) to the West Oxfordshire Local Plan consultation on

proposed changes to draft local plan, the Board objected to the inclusion of this site for development. Our response stated that,

"The Board objects to the inclusion of this site for development. The site lies wholly within the AONB and as such development is contrary to Paragraphs 115 and 116 of the NPPF. The Board's

view is that alternative sites outside the AONB should be sought in order to meet housing need.

Recently West Oxfordshire District Council refused a larger development outside the AONB, south

of the A40 (site 146 SHLAA Stage 2 Map 5 Burford). This suggests that other sites are available in

Burford for development. In light of this the Board believes that the inclusion of the site East of Burford does not conform to the 3rd bullet point of Paragraph 116 of the NPPF "...the cost of, and

scope for, developing elsewhere outside the designated area.." and should be removed from the plan".

On 17th January 2017, after the Board responded to the local plan consultation, planning permission was granted on appeal (Appeal Ref APP/D3125/W/15/3139687) for a residential development and care home on land west of Shilton Road, Burford. The Board did not object to

this proposal as the site is outside of and reasonably well screened from the AONB.

The current proposal lies wholly within the nationally designated AONB landscape. With the creation of a new vehicular access off Witney Street the application seeks even further incursion

Conserving, enhancing, understanding and enjoying the Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty

Cotswolds Conservation Board Fosse Way Northleach Gloucestershire GL54 3JH

Tel: 01451 862000 Fax: 01451 862001 Email: info@cotswoldsaonb.org.uk Website: www.cotswoldsaonb.org.uk

into the AONB than that proposed in the draft plan. The NNPF makes specific reference to development in AONBs. Paragraph 115 affords 'great weight' to conserving landscape and scenic beauty in AONBs and Paragraph 116 advises that major developments in AONBs should only be permitted in 'exceptional circumstances'. With permission granted on Shilton Road for a similar development the Board does not believe that this application passes the 'exceptional circumstances' test. In addition, Paragraph 14 footnote 9 notes that the NNPF's presumption in favour of sustainable development does not automatically apply in AONBs. Burford falls within the Broad Floodplain Character Type as described in the Cotswolds AONB Landscape Strategy and Guidelines (2016)<http://www.cotswoldsaonb.org.uk/planningmanagement-advice/landscapestrategy/>. This describes a landscape sensitivity of, "Wide views from the upper valley slopes and over the long stretches of the valley are possible, thus increasing the sensitivity of the valleys to large scale built development that might interrupt views or impact on their rural character." Furthermore "The gently sloping valley sides have limited development capacity as they form an agricultural backdrop to views from the valley floor". With respect to new development the Guidelines advise that developments e.g. extensions to settlements which will intrude negatively into the landscape and cannot be successfully mitigated should be avoided. As a result of the above the Board maintains its objection to development of this part of the AONB.

CCB OFFICER:
Alison Rood

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