

**4th July 2017**

**16/09259/FUL Dorothy House Foundation Ltd WINSLEY BA15 2LE.**

**Application for planning permission for the reconfiguration of the existing car park and extension to provide additional parking and associated works.**

The Cotswolds Conservation Board (the Board) wishes to **object** to the above application.

The site lies within the Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). Section 85 of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act (CROW) 2000 places a statutory duty on public bodies to *'have regard to the purpose of conserving and enhancing the natural beauty of the area of outstanding natural beauty'*. The National Planning Policy Framework is also relevant, particularly paragraph 14 and its accompanying footnote 9 which refers to AONBs as one area where restrictions to the presumption in favour of sustainable development are applicable.

The Cotswolds AONB Management Plan is a statutory document which sets out the Board's policies for the management of the AONB. In consideration of this application the Board makes particular reference to policies LP1, LP2 and DTP1. LTP1 refers to the conservation and enhancement of the key characteristics and special qualities of the Cotswolds landscape whilst LP2 refers to the need to take into account guidance and advice published by the Board. DTP1 lists criteria for determining the acceptability of proposed development in the AONB including compatibility with the character of the location and the need to have regard to impact on tranquillity including dark skies.

In June 2016 the Board published its Landscape Strategy and Guidelines which identified 19 different landscape character types in the Cotswolds AONB and can be used to inform decisions regarding the suitability of proposed development or change within the Cotswold landscape. Two landscape character types are applicable for the application – 11. Dip-slope Lowland and 4. Enclosed Limestone Valley. Relevant potential landscape implications of the proposal within the Dip-slope Lowland include intrusion of expanded settlement fringes into the landscape, degradation of views to, from and across the Dip-slope lowland character type and the introduction and accumulation of lit areas and the erosion of characteristic dark skies. Implications for the Enclosed Limestone Valley include encroachment of built development into the valleys, the spread of lit elements up the valley slopes and degradation of views from the valley sides and rim from neighbouring areas.

The Board acknowledges that the applicant has acknowledged and attempted to address many of the landscape and visual impacts of the proposal. As a result the scheme is significantly improved from the original plans with the overall impact of the lighting reduced. However, the Board considers that negative impact on views into the site from the valley sides and, in particular public footpaths, remains. The granting of permission would cause a deterioration in the overall character of the surrounding landscape as described in the Landscape Strategy and Guidelines. The Board also understands that the applicant owns additional land in the vicinity which would, in the Board's opinion, be less intrusive in the landscape, whilst still providing the additional facilities required.

Should the Council be minded to grant the application the Board recommends strict enforcement of lighting conditions and hours of usage in order to minimise detrimental impacts.