

20th May 2019

Victoria Stone
Case Officer
Planning Department
Tewkesbury Borough Council



By email to developmentapplications@teewkesbury.gov.uk

FAO Ms Victoria Stone (Case Officer)

Dear Ms Stone

19/00333/FUL. Erection of 5 dwellings with associated access. Part Parcel 2363, Butts Lane, Woodmancote.

Thank you for consulting the Cotswolds Conservation Board ('the Board') on the above planning application. Thank you, also, for providing the Board with extra time to respond to this consultation. The Board wishes to **object** to this planning application.

The proposed development is located in the Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). The statutory purpose of AONB designation (and the Board's primary statutory purpose) is to conserve and enhance the natural beauty of the AONB. The proposed development would have an adverse effect on this purpose, as outlined below. Planning permission should therefore be refused.

The Board has previously objected to a similar planning application in this location (Ref: 18/00133/FUL). Although some of the details of the proposed development have changed, the reasons for objecting to the development remain broadly the same. Equally, the local planning authority's reasons for 'refusal of permission for development', in relation to 18/00133/FUL, also remain valid.

The boundary of the AONB at Butts Lane, Woodmancote, provides a clear delineation between the built environment of Woodmancote, to the west, and the rural landscape of the Cotswold escarpment, within the AONB, to the east. The application site (which occupies land inside the AONB boundary) and its immediate landscape setting typifies the Cotswold escarpment landscape, forming part of the transitional topography at the foot of the scarp and framing views of the escarpment. It represents open countryside, with just some scattered buildings in the surrounding landscape, and provides clear views towards the escarpment from the edge of Woodmancote. The proposed development would, therefore, represent and incongruous and (sub) urbanising intrusion into this rural landscape and open countryside.

The Cotswold escarpment is one of the 'special qualities' of the Cotswolds AONB. In other words, it is one of the features of the Cotswolds that makes the area so outstanding that it is in the nation's interest to safeguard it. The escarpment is classed as Landscape Character Type (LCT) 2 in the Cotswolds AONB Landscape Character Assessment. The Cotswolds AONB Landscape Strategy and Guidelines specifies that new development in LCT2 involving the '*development, expansion and infilling of settlements ... onto or towards the lower slopes of the Escarpment*' should, inter alia:

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

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- Avoid development that will intrude negatively into the landscape and cannot be successfully mitigated, for example, extensions to settlements onto the escarpment.

The proposed development is clearly contrary to these guidelines and, as such, does not comply with Policy CE10 (Development and Transport – Principles) of the Cotswolds AONB Management Plan 2018-2023, which states:

- *Proposals relating to development ... in the Cotswolds AONB ... should ... be compatible with guidance produced by the Cotswolds Conservation Board, including the Cotswolds AONB Landscape Strategy Guidelines [and the] Cotswolds AONB Landscape Character Assessment.*

The proposed development is, therefore, not consistent with the policies of the Cotswolds AONB Management Plan.

Policy SD7 (The Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB)) of the Gloucester, Cheltenham and Tewkesbury Joint Core Strategy specifies that:

- *All development proposals in ... the Cotswolds AONB will be required to conserve and, where appropriate, enhance its landscape, scenic beauty, wildlife, cultural heritage and other special qualities. Proposals will be required to be consistent with the policies set out in the Cotswolds AONB Management Plan.*

Given that the proposed development is not consistent with the Cotswolds AONB Management Plan, it is also not compliant with the policies of the Joint Core Strategy.

The proposed development is also not compliant with paragraph 172 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), which states that:

- Great weight should be given to conserving and enhancing landscape and scenic beauty in National Parks, the Broads and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, which have the highest status of protection in relation to these issues.

It is for the reasons given above that the Board objects to the proposed development. Should you require any further clarification on any of the points raised above please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading 'John Mills', with a stylized flourish underneath.

John Mills MRTPI
Planning and Landscape Officer