



Emma Pickernell
Planning: Place and Growth
Cheltenham Borough Council
PO Box 12, Municipal Offices
Promenade
Cheltenham
GL50 1PP

By email only to: Emma.Pickernell@cheltenham.gov.uk

17 October 2022

Dear Emma,

APPLICATION NO: 21/02750/FUL

DESCRIPTION: Residential development of 30 no. dwellings (Class C3); vehicular, pedestrian and cycle access from Church Road; pedestrian and cycle access from Farm Lane; highways improvement works; public open space, landscaping, orchard planting and children's play space; surface water attenuation and other associated works

LOCATION: Land Adjoining Leckhampton Farm, Court Farm Lane, Leckhampton

Thank you for consulting the Cotswolds Conservation Board ('the Board') on the additional information submitted by the applicant for this proposed development, which would be located in the setting of the Cotswolds National Landscape.¹

Our previous consultation response, dated 19 January 2022 and which is appended to this response for convenience, requested further information on a number of matters. The applicant's additional information includes a Landscape and Visual Impact Addendum (The Richards Partnership, August 2022) which responds to both the comments of the Board and of Stuart Ryder, the Council's Landscape Consultant who also raised a number of issues in his response of 28 April 2022.

Having reviewed the additional information submitted by the applicant, the Board's remains concerned regarding the potential impact of the proposal on the setting of the Cotswolds National Landscape and the assessment of this potential impact in this application. For the reasons outlined in Annex 1 the Board wishes to maintain its **objection** to this application. However, we are conscious of Stuart Ryder's recent response to the new information dated 5 October 2022 whereby he did not object to the application and of the continuing pressure upon the Council to deliver housing within a constrained Borough to maintain a five-year housing land supply in line with national policy and as such are cognisant that the Council's decision has to be made in light of a wider planning balance.

Cotswolds Conservation Board

The Old Prison, Fosse Way, Northleach
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The Cotswolds National Landscape is a designated
Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB),
managed and looked after by the Cotswolds
Conservation Board.

cotswoldsaonb.org.uk

Chairman:
Brendan McCarthy

Vice Chair:
Rebecca Charley

Please don't hesitate to contact me if you wish to discuss this response further.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'S. Joyce', with a small dot at the end.

Simon Joyce

Planning Officer

simon.joyce@cotswoldsaonb.org.uk | 07808 391227

ANNEX 1 COTSWOLDS NATIONAL LANDSCAPE CONSULTATION RESPONSE IN RELATION TO PLANNING APPLICATION 21/02750/FUL

Landscape and Visual Impact

We welcome the applicant's Landscape and Visual Addendum dated August 2022 and their response to the matters raised in our previous consultation response. However, we do not consider that it responds directly to all of the issues raised (for example, our comments on the conclusions drawn and the apparent conflict with figures 1c (landscape effects) and 1f (visual effects)) and we remain of the opinion that the conclusions of the LVIA underestimates the significance of the overall landscape and visual effect.

The new photomontages provided show that the proposed development will be visible from the AONB, particularly from elevated viewpoints, even in the summer and at year 15 and would comprise a new element within these views, albeit we recognise that the change would be no greater than 'low' magnitude. However, given the 'high/very high' sensitivity of receptors from viewpoints such as Viewpoint 17 (Devil's Chimney/Leckhampton Hill, a popular viewing location on the Cotswold Way National Trail for visitors and walkers), we continue to consider that the development would result in a 'moderate' (i.e. 'significant') adverse effect.

We note the comments provided by Stuart Ryder, the Council's Landscape Consultant dated 5 October 2022. In his response, Stuart neither recommends approval or refusal and suggests the wording for planning conditions relating to landscape and arboricultural matters should the Council be minded to grant planning permission. However, we also note that while Stuart's response covers seven matters it does not explicitly cover the points discussed above relating to views from the Cotswolds National Landscape and the assessment of this within the applicant's LVIA. As such we do not consider that this response conflicts with Stuart Ryder's advice.

Indeed, we note his assessment in the 'summary remarks' section that *"There will still be a loss of a parcel of open landscape with this development and the setting of the AONB still remains an area of concern as further house building will reduce the landscape character of its immediate setting. However, the change in landscape character at the Site must be judged within its immediate context of other housing, most notably Brizen Park. There will be a Minor, Adverse landscape change to the wider character of the none AONB area, but the greater change has already taken place to this fringe of the town with the new school and Brizen Park now influencing the character of this part of Leckhampton. With regards to the AONB there will be a small scale reduction in the landscape quality of its setting until the front mitigation landscape works establish and effectively screen off the proposals from being judged in proximity to the AONB. Again the presence of Brizen Park acts as a nearby precedent but it does have a larger depth of screen planting separating it from the edge of the AONB... there will be a sense of development at the Site where currently there is none."* (our emphasis).

Bearing in mind the above, we wish to maintain our previous objection as we do not consider that the proposal would conserve and enhance the National Landscape and would therefore be contrary to paragraph 176 of the NPPF and Policy SD7 of the Joint Core Strategy. For the reasons outlined in our previous response in the 'background' section of Annex 1, when considering proposals for development within the setting of the National Landscape where it adversely impacts its landscape

character and quality in views from within it, 'great weight' should be given to the conservation and enhancement of landscape and scenic beauty of the National Landscape.

Tranquillity

We also note that the applicant has not responded to our request for an assessment of the cumulative highways impacts in relation to the tranquillity of the AONB.

NOTES:

- 1) Cotswolds National Landscape is the new name for the Cotswolds Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). The new name takes forward one of the proposals of the Government-commissioned 'Landscapes Review' to rename AONBs as 'National Landscapes'. This change reflects the national importance of AONBs and the fact that they are safeguarded, in the national interest, for nature, people, business and culture.
- 2) Section 85 of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000.
www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2000/37/section/85
- 3) The documents referred to in our response can be located on the Cotswolds National Landscape website under the following sections
 - a. Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) Management Plan 2018-2023
www.cotswoldsaonb.org.uk/management-plan
 - b. Cotswolds AONB Landscape Character Assessment
www.cotswoldsaonb.org.uk/lca
 - c. Cotswolds AONB Landscape Strategy and Guidelines
www.cotswoldsaonb.org.uk/lsg
 - d. Cotswolds AONB Local Distinctiveness and Landscape Change
www.cotswoldsaonb.org.uk/ldlc
 - e. Cotswolds Conservation Board Position Statements
www.cotswoldsaonb.org.uk/ps1
www.cotswoldsaonb.org.uk/ps2