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Planning: Place and Growth
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By email only to: lucy.white@cheltenham.gov.uk

12 January 2023

Dear Lucy,

APPLICATION NO: 22/02206/SCOPE

DESCRIPTION: Request for EIA scoping opinion at West Cheltenham

LOCATION: Land to south of Old Gloucester Road, Cheltenham

Thank you for consulting the Cotswolds National Landscape Board¹ on this proposed development, which would be located within the setting of the Cotswolds National Landscape².

The Board has reviewed the information submitted in the scoping report from the applicant and considers that this development could potentially have an impact upon the Cotswolds National Landscape. The development boundary lies 5.3km from the AONB boundary, however given the scale of the development proposed and the long-ranging views westwards from the Cotswold escarpment, this proposal is likely to be a significant addition to views to and from the AONB.

In considering any application for planning permission for this development, great weight should be given to potential impacts on views from the Cotswolds National Landscape, as expanded on in the Development in the Setting of the Cotswolds AONB Position Statement. Policy CE1 of the Cotswolds AONB Management Plan states that development proposals should ensure that views – including those into and out of the AONB – are visual amenity are conserved and enhanced.

The Board therefore supports the conclusion of the applicant's scoping report that Landscape and Visual matters are to be scoped into the Environmental Statement (ES). We recommend that this should include an assessment of any impact on visual receptors located within the elevated landscape of the Cotswold escarpment, particularly those users of the Cotswold Way National Trail. As such, the ES submitted in support of any forthcoming application should have regard to the potential impacts of the proposed development on the National Landscape, including relevant 'special qualities' of the National Landscape³. These include:

- views from and to the Cotswold escarpment and high wolds, particularly with regards to views from the public rights of way network, including the Cotswold Way National Trail (especially from Leckhampton Hill and Cleeve Common), and access land or common land as well as views of the escarpment from the Cheltenham Circular Walk in the vicinity of the proposed development;
- the dark skies of the National Landscape, including potential increases in light pollution;

Cotswolds Conservation Board

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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

- the relative tranquillity of the National Landscape, including: o potential increases in noise and other visual and aural disturbance; o the % increase in traffic movements on roads in and adjacent to the National Landscape;
- the internationally important flower-rich grasslands and ancient broadleaved woodlands of the National Landscape, in particular, the Cotswolds Beechwoods Special Area of Conservation (SAC); and
- the heritage assets of the National Landscape, and their settings, including relevant listed buildings.

Further guidance on relevant considerations is provided in the following Board publications⁴:

- Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) Management Plan 2018-2023 ([link](#)) and in particular Policy CE1 (Landscape);
- Cotswolds AONB Landscape Character Assessment ([link](#)), particularly, in this instance, with regards to the 'key features / characteristics' of Landscape Character Type (LCT) 2 (Escarpment);
- Cotswolds AONB Landscape Strategy and Guidelines ([link](#)), particularly, in this instance, with regards to LCT 2 (Escarpment) ([link](#)), including Section 2.1;
- Cotswolds Conservation Board Position Statements ([link](#)), particularly, in this instance, the Position Statement on 'Development in the setting of the Cotswolds AONB' ([link](#)).

If you have any queries regarding the information provided in this response, please do not hesitate to get in touch.

Yours sincerely,



Simon Joyce
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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) The name used for the organisation associated with the AONB designation is the Cotswolds National Landscape Board. At times this is abbreviated to National Landscape Board or The Board. The legal name of the organisation remains the Cotswolds Conservation Board but this name is no longer used in most circumstances.
- 3) The 'special qualities' of the Cotswolds National Landscape are listed in Chapter 2 of the Cotswolds AONB Management Plan 2018-2023. The special qualities of the National Landscape are:
 - the aspects of the area's natural beauty which make the area particularly distinctive and valuable, especially at a national scale;
 - the key attributes on which the priorities for the area's conservation, enhancement and management should be based.
- 4) 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