

14/01245/OUT Outline application for residential development (up to 550 dwellings), potential site for primary school, ancillary facilities, open space and landscaping. (Including means of vehicular access from Aston Fields Lane). Land Off Aston Fields Lane Ashchurch Tewkesbury Gloucestershire.

The Cotswolds Conservation Board wish to raise the following comments:

Although the site is outside the AONB boundary there are still views into and out of the site from the AONB and we consider this site to be within the setting of the AONB. The views to and from Bredon Hill to the north of the site are particularly exposed and vulnerable to negative impacts from the development of this site.

Again although the Board has not raised an in principle objection to the proposed Ashchurch allocation as part of the Joint Core Strategy, the expectation was that the JCS process would have at least ensured that all matters in relation to the site including AONB setting issues, would have been properly considered. Accordingly if the site was allocated we would have expected a master plan approach which would have included a strategic approach to landscaping of the whole allocation. This process would have allowed the Board to ensure the issues raised in our Setting and Transport Position Statements (see attached) were properly considered and mitigated against before any planning applications were forthcoming.

As it stands an application has now been submitted before this process has been completed. Our concerns relate to the very weak landscaping belt as proposed along the northern boundary of the development; the potential impact from allowing development up to 12m in height; lack of measures to reduce the impact from street lighting and new levels of light pollution; the impact from new levels of traffic generation and controlling “rat running” back into the AONB; the cumulative impact from this and the rest of the allocation coming forward.

The Board therefore are unable to conclude based on the application as submitted, that this development has taken into consideration the Cotswolds AONB Management Plan 2013-2018 and the related attached Position Statements and therefore the scheme as submitted will result in a negative impact on the setting of the AONB. The Council must therefore decide whether they wish to refuse the scheme as it stands or seek improvements to address the concerns we have raised.

With thanks

Andrew Lord
Planning & Landscape Officer
Cotswolds Conservation Board

