

RE: 15/00228/FUL Full Planning Application for an Exceptional New Dwelling ('Headlands') Land At Headlands Mill Lane Prestbury.

The Cotswolds Conservation Board has been asked by local residents to respond to the above planning application. The Board's comments are as follows:

The Cotswolds Conservation Board wish to **object** to this planning application. The site is outside and away from any settlement within the open countryside of the nationally protected Cotswolds AONB. There is a legal duty under Section 85 of the CRoW Act 2000 for the Local Authority to ensure the conservation and enhancement of the AONB which has the highest status of landscape and scenic beauty protection and is afforded "great weight" under Paragraph 115 of the NPPF. It is noted that the proposal is seeking justification under Paragraph 55 of the NPPF. However, the starting point for Para.55 is "To promote sustainable development in rural areas, housing should be located where it will enhance or maintain the vitality of rural communities." Accordingly Local Planning Authorities are advised to specifically avoid new isolated homes in the countryside unless there are exceptional circumstances. The AONB Board see no exceptional circumstances in this case that meet with the tests of Para.55 of the NPPF and that would overcome and take preference above the protections afforded to the AONB and to protection of the countryside generally from random housing development. The development would take place in an agricultural ridge and furrow field and through the introduction of built form, access, lighting and all the trappings of a typical dwelling would result in a clear change in character from a rural pastoral scene to a developed site. Both the CRoW Act and Para.55 seeks an element of landscape enhancement, however building a new house and associated access in a field in the countryside, no matter how well concealed, will result in negative impact and particularly in relation to an AONB. The future occupiers of the site would also likely to be car reliant as the site is away from any settlement and so this development also fails the tests of "sustainable development" at Paras. 6 and 7 of the NPPF and would lead to a precedent for other such developments across the open countryside of this nationally protected landscape.