

Planning Application S.14/1191/FUL

Mixed residential development comprising the erection of 24 dwellings (including 7 affordable units), associated parking, hard and soft landscaping and associated works; change of use and renovation works to the traditional stone barn to become ancillary to Nupend Farmhouse; and, renovation works to the Farmhouse.

Nupend Farm Boscombe Lane, Horsley, Stroud, Gloucestershire, GL6 0PZ

Comments of the Cotswolds Conservation Board

1. The Cotswolds Conservation Board ('the Board') was established by Parliament in 2004.

The Board has two statutory purposes¹:

- a) to conserve and enhance the natural beauty of the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB); and
- b) To increase the understanding and enjoyment of the special qualities of the AONB.

In fulfilling these roles, the Board has a duty to seek to foster the economic and social well-being of people living in the AONB.

2. The Board would wish the Council to consider whether the development represents major development in the local context of a settlement the size of Horsley. There are 323 dwellings in the whole parish which includes smaller settlements and isolated dwellings. If the proposal does represent major development then it will need to be assessed against the tests in paragraph 116 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).
3. Whether or not the development is considered to be "major" the proposal needs to be considered in the light of paragraph 115 of the NPPF. The site is currently clearly agricultural in character. As such it is not out of character with the rural nature of the settlement of Horsley. The landscape appraisal submitted by the applicant acknowledges that in views from the wider landscape the farm buildings are not incongruous or intrusive. The only close public viewpoint from which the scale and condition of the buildings is apparent is from the footpath to the west of the site. The buildings are largely screened by trees from the main road. There is no reason to suppose that a residential development of the scale proposed will be any more appropriate in the landscape than the farm. In fact the introduction of urbanising features such as car parking areas, domestic paraphernalia, street lighting and footways, including the latter on the main village road along the site frontage can be seen as harming the rural character of this part of the settlement.
4. The Board acknowledges that the proposal clearly provides improvements to the heritage assets on the site in the form of restoration and enhancements to the setting of the listed buildings.

¹ Section 87, Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000.

5. Whilst the Board has not had sight of a local housing need survey, the provision of affordable housing with priority being given to people with a local connection is clearly an advantage of the scheme.
6. The Board considers that this is a finely balanced case. If not considered to be major development, and if the design can be amended to avoid the introduction of urbanising features on the main road into the village, then the Board would find the scheme to be acceptable.