

S/OUT/18/0703 from the North Wessex Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

Rachel Davies who wrote this report has requested that you do not copy and paste large sections of the report. Please use it to guide you when writing your own comments to SBC.

- Development has consistently been opposed on this site.
- The primary purpose of the AONB designation is to conserve and enhance the natural beauty of the area, as confirmed by Section 82 of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 (CRoW Act). Section 85 of that Act confirms that there is a duty on all relevant authorities to have regard to this purpose in exercising or performing any functions in relation to, or so as to affect land in AONB's.
- The North Wessex Downs is particularly sensitive to developments that are visually prominent, of an urban, suburban or industrial nature or are noisy. The scale of development would overly urbanise this approach to the village dominating the wider open countryside to the detriment of the natural beauty of the AONB and its special qualities.
- The whole of the site is currently open countryside under arable farming, in keeping with the surrounding countryside and contributes to the character of the AONB and Chisledon village. There are important outward views towards the Ridgeway and Skyline which forms part of the special qualities of the AONB, which would be lost if any part of the site were to be developed. Development would not conserve or enhance the natural beauty of the AONB.
- Under the revisions proposed to the NPPF 30 dwellings would be classed as Major development and therefore must be considered against para 115 and 116 of the NPPF.
- The NPPF supports a different approach to housing provision in the AONB compared to land outside the AONB, based on the need to conserve and enhance its natural beauty. The NPPF recognises that "great weight" be given to AONB considerations and recognises it as an area with the highest status of protection.
- The NPPF is clear that **the presumption in favour of sustainable development does not apply in AONBs** or National Parks. Paragraph 14 of the NPPF expects planning permission to be granted (unless material considerations indicate otherwise) where the Plan is out-of-date unless one or other of two cases arise. The first of these (adverse impacts that would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits) is quoted in the report, but this test never applies in AONBs. In fact, because the site is in an AONB the second case applies: "specific policies in this Framework indicate development should be restricted". Footnote 9 makes it clear that "land designated as ... an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty" is included in this category. The presumption in favour of development therefore does not apply at any point.
- The proposed development forces the village to encroach into the landscape buffer which is inappropriate as the properties, in particular the roofscape would be more visually prominent when viewed from the public right of way to the west and north of the site in addition to the Ridgeway and Liddington Castle.

- Current application does not overcome the Planning Inspectorates reasons for dismissing a smaller scheme proposed in 2011.
- There are other sporadic developments south of new road however they are not prominent in the landscape and form part of the main body of the village. This does not justify further degradation of the landscape.
- Development would suburbanise open countryside and New Road with the addition of a new junction, footpath and new buildings.
- The site is slightly elevated and rises to the south east which would see properties elevated above those to the north of New Road which would further highlight their prominence in the local streetscene and wider open countryside which would be detrimental to the natural and scenic beauty of the AONB
- Screening the site with trees along the boundaries suggests harm as the developers are trying to hide the dwellings from view.
- The addition of trees adjacent to the footpath in the neighbouring field would also suburbanise the open arable site as formal planting of this type is not natural and would alter the experiences of users of the footpath by restricting views over towards the Ridgeway.
- Landscape mitigation should not be relied upon as the trees will take 5-10 years at least to have an effect and are not protected, therefore could be felled at any time which would open the site. The retention of trees cannot be conditioned within an application as it would fail to pass the condition tests.
- 4 viewpoints included in the landscape and visual impact assessment (LVIA) is very poor there should be more view points, closer and further afield including the Ridgeway south of the Site, footpath towards Burderop Park, Charbury Hill to the north east and the Roman Road between Wanborough and Hinton Parva.