

Stow-on-the-Wold and the Swells
Neighbourhood Development Plan
Volume 2

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STOW & THE SWELLS NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN – SEPTEMBER 2023 BROADWELL PARISH COUNCIL’S RESPONSE TO REGULATION 16 CONSULTATION

INTRODUCTION

Broadwell Parish Council (BPC) submitted a detailed response to the Stow & The Swells Neighbourhood Plan (SSNP) in March 2023 (copy appended herewith).

STC, in its Consultation Statement, acknowledges the receipt of BPC’s response but fails to address most of the concerns it contains. For this reason, the response is appended herewith and these concerns repeated.

Independently, some residents of Broadwell have commissioned a report (Chadwick Town Planning submitted to CDC 21.12.23). This report has been read and fully endorsed by BPC.

Whilst BPC is broadly supportive of the aims and objectives of the SSNP, it is particularly concerned at the location and size of the development subject to SSNP7. Not only is this site outside the Development Boundary for Stow, but also, its size would be out of proportion with the town, it will have a devastating impact on local infrastructure (particularly road and drainage), it will be damaging to the historic character of both Stow and Broadwell and risks harming rather than supporting local businesses and economy.

In its Consultation Statement, STC makes various references to a ‘template response’ from various residents of Broadwell. In this regard, BPC wants to stress that it is unaware of this approach but confirms that there is widespread concern in the village as to the negative impact of the SSNP and SSNP7 in particular. Furthermore, if residents have co-ordinated their responses using a template, in no way does this invalidate or dilute their value as STC implies.

Regarding the proposal for a 170 or 240 unit development at the North-East site (SSNP7), it is of particular note that subsequent to the issue of the SSNP, CDC has approved a development on Oddington Road for 37 affordable housing units. This meets the Stow affordability requirements in a much shorter timescale on a single site (CDC planning ref 23/01513/FUL). This fundamentally undermines the justification presented by STC for the SSNP7 development and SSNP7 should be removed from the SSNP.

The National Planning Policy Framework states that “the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development, including... supporting infrastructure in a sustainable manner”. The pressure on local social and economic infrastructure will already be tested by the 250 house development on the Southern edge of Moreton-in-Marsh (Spitfire Homes). This will increase traffic on the A429 Fosseway, increase demand on local drainage and sewage infrastructure (already under strain), increase flooding risk to communities in the Evenlode valley and increase demand on local health, social welfare and education infrastructure. No compelling evidence has been provided by STC to show how any development of a similar scale (such as the proposed 170-240 homes site subject to SSNP7) would not overwhelm local infrastructure.

In the event that the SSNP proceeds to referendum, we strongly argue that all affected communities should be involved, including residents of all adjacent parishes (and not just those residing in the Swells).

Further to reiterating the points in BPC's March submission, we make the following specific comments with reference to National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and follow the order of STC's Basic Conditions Statement.

BASIC CONDITION CONFORMITY

The Basic Condition Statement submitted by STC is misleading or unsubstantiated in various respects (same numbering as STC's Basic Condition Statement):

1. Introduction

- 1.5 A Neighbourhood Plan must meet "Basic Conditions" listed in the 1990 Town & Country Planning Act. In this case various parts of the SSNP fail to meet the Basic Conditions:
- 1.5a) The SSNP conflicts with various provisions of the NPPF as we will demonstrate in Section 4 below.
 - 1.5d) Not all of the SSNP policies contribute to the achievement of sustainable development (also see Section 4 below).
 - 1.5e) Contrary to STC's assertions, in specific circumstances, the SSNP deviates from the strategic policies contained in CDC's development plan for the area as we will demonstrate in Section 5 below.

2. Background

- 2.1 STC states that in producing the SSNP, "it recognised that its neighbours, Lower and Upper Swell, were close by and invited Swells parish to form a multi-parish Neighbourhood Area, which it accepted". STC provides no evidence of the inclusion or support of Swells Parish Council and BPC believes that there is considerable disquiet over the plan in this parish.

Furthermore, if STC was genuinely interested in involving its neighbouring parishes, particularly given the scale of the proposals and the profound effect they will have, in perpetuity, on everyone who lives within many miles of Stow, why did it not meaningfully seek to involve other adjacent parishes that are no further away than the Swells including Broadwell, Mangersbury and Oddington? It should be noted that the impact of the SSNP on Broadwell and the countryside to the north and east will be considerably greater than on the Swells due to the village's proximity to the SSNP7 site and the fact that (unlike the Swells) it shares the same drainage catchment area at the SSNP7 site.

STC acknowledges that "the plan area is wholly located within the Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) and it was important to both Councils (Stow and Swells) to present a vision which protects the special qualities of the AONB and encourages development that meets the needs identified by the community". On this basis, the SSNP precludes development in the Swells but, in stark contradiction to this policy, it promotes the development of a much more prominent and sensitive site in SSNP7.

2.3 Where STC has consulted its local community, the consultations have not been comprehensive or representative. The SSNP covers the town and a large area to its West but not adjacent areas immediately to the North, East and South of the town. This creates a distorted view of the needs of the locality and therefore has not created an holistic plan covering the town and its surrounding area that would have reflected the views of BPC or other affected local parish councils. The only engagement with BPC was a short presentation of the draft SSNP to two of BPC's councillors at a small meeting on 24 January 2023. At this meeting, BPC's views and comments were not sought nor given. STC should be required to provide evidence of its proper engagement with neighbouring communities.

3. Condition (A): Regard to National Planning Policy

3.1 Parts of the Neighbourhood Plan disregard various national policies set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) – see Section 4 below.

3.2 STC considers the Neighbourhood Plan contains “only non-strategic policy proposals or proposals that refine strategic policy without [in its opinion] undermining their purpose”. On what basis and with what justification does STC seek to unilaterally amend any strategic policy within CDC's Local Plan (further discussed in Section 5 below)?

3.4 STC has commented on those NPPF policies it considers to be most relevant in Table A. Our specific comments in relation to the points in this table are listed below:

SSNP1 – Overriding the Development Boundary: The SSNP redefines the Development Boundary for Stow-on-the-Wold as set out in the Local Plan. No evidence is provided to support why the boundary should be extended save to justify setting-aside CDC's Local Plan in order to develop the North-East Site (SSNP7). This is currently agricultural land in a prominent hill-top location in a sensitive position within the ANOB.

SSNP2 - Development in The Swells and the Countryside: Due to the sensitive nature of the surrounding countryside, which is wholly located in the Cotswold AONB, STC states that “no development here would enhance rather than harm the AONB which no level of architectural quality could redeem”. Yet, bearing in mind that the Swells are low-lying valley bottom villages, STC offers no evidence or justification why the same concerns should be set aside for the prominent hill-top site subject to SSNP7.

BPC argues that the SSNP should have included all adjacent parishes on the same grounds as the Swells. BPC also argues that adjacent parishes, including Broadwell, should be included in the referendum if the SSNP was to progress to the next stage. Given the impact on the wider community this should be a minimum requirement.

SSNP3 – Housing Mix: This recognises the need for affordable homes. However, the SSNP was issued prior to the approval of the Oddington Road development that has subsequently been approved by CDC (ref: [Cotswold town plans for 37 affordable homes approved despite 'dangerous road' fears - Gloucestershire Live](#)). This site meets Stow's stated affordable housing need on a single site. This development is considerably further progressed than SSNP7 and obviates much of the justification presented by the STC in support of developing the SSNP7 site.

SSNP4 – Principal Residence: It is alleged that the policy is in accordance with NPPF Section 31 requiring it to be consistent with relevant and up-to-date evidence and does not fall foul of Section 78 referring to the local plan for a five-year supply of deliverable housing sites. We show why neither is the case in Section 4 below.

SSNP7 – Land North-East of Stow: STC concedes that development of this site will make the most significant housing contribution in the town for 30+ years (in fact the largest single development ever undertaken in the town). This alludes to the disproportionate scale of the development, aiming to provide nearly double Stow's affordable housing target in a single scheme and disregarding the potential contribution of other, more advanced schemes in the town (including the more advanced application subject to application CDC planning ref 23/01513/FUL).

At the national average for 2.4 inhabitants per dwelling, the population of the SSNP7 site can be expected to be over 400 (assuming 170 dwellings) rising to around 600 if the full site (including a further 70 homes in the area within Broadwell Parish) is developed. This would represent an increase to the population of the town of up to 30% in a single scheme. STC offers no justification for any scheme outside the Development Boundary, let alone one of the proposed scale.

STC argues that a larger scale development should be permitted provided that it is well located and supported by the necessary infrastructure and facilities, yet it offers no compelling evidence to explain why a hill-top location with no existing electrical, water, drainage or sewage infrastructure, poor road links (access off a narrow country lane) and very limited public transport meets these conditions.

STC suggests that this site would be a boost to the size of the town's population and therefore bolster the local economy providing a larger local workforce that a) does not need to commute long distances from more affordable locations outside the Cotswolds, b) that will spend some of its money in the town's businesses, and c) that will use local schools and other services. No evidence has been provided to support these claims, indeed, it is likely that evidence exists to the contrary. Local employment in retirement or nursing homes, leisure businesses, accommodation, shops and cafes is mostly transient and often part-time and employees do not move home to fulfil such roles. Indeed, commuting will increase as new residents move to the development but work elsewhere.

No evidence is provided to show support of the town's businesses, many of which have not been consulted and have expressed concerns that proposed new market square parking restrictions may harm rather than support business, particularly if the commercial centre of Stow shifts away from the Town Square to any extent. What evidence does STC offer to show that town businesses have been meaningfully consulted and their concerns addressed?

We do not believe that the need for the community/business hub is sufficient to justify major development in the AONB, particularly given the existing amount of underused community space. There is no evidence that retail or office space would be viable in this location. Indeed, there is a risk that it would generate additional vehicle trips to access the facility.

There is also a strong argument that the proposed car park is too far and relatively inaccessible from the centre of Stow.

Stow currently only has a primary school which is already at full capacity, secondary schools require transport out-of-town by road and GP services are also at full capacity. It also appears that Stow Surgery were even aware, about the nature, scale or impact of the Plan, let alone consulted.

Economic benefit is also claimed for improvements to the Market Square boosting businesses and driving greater footfall. No evidence is provided to support the contention that reducing car parking spaces in the square will increase footfall, logic suggesting the reverse (replacement parking on the site at SSNP7 is 15 minutes' walk from the centre). It is also claimed without evidence that the new community hub will make "a step change in the provision business facilities in the town" despite the very modest scale of the unit. In reality, this is likely to attract workers from outside the town thereby increasing traffic movements.

STC states that the transport effects have been assessed in principle only. Considering the size of this development and the existing traffic issues in and around Stow, a detailed and impartial study should be commissioned. STC claims that the traffic the site will generate will not be significant in the context of the town and A429 Fosse Way but the only traffic report available was prepared by Bloor, the proposed developer of the site which has assisted Stow in the development of the SSNP, and this does not claim insignificant traffic generation. BPC's own analysis suggests the site could generate up to 400 vehicle movements in the morning and evening peak hours (see Section 4 of BPC's attached March consultation response). Most new residents will work outside the town and there is no evidence that the scheme "should" reduce the need for other trips in and out of the town to access work and services. Despite STC's assertion that the site is well connected to the town centre, access by car from the site would initially be northwards, away from town, and via a narrow country lane leading to a congested junction with the A429. Long delays from here into town are common, especially in the summer and at peak times. Pedestrian access via Well Lane would be a steep 15 minute walk.

4. Condition (D): Contributing to Achieving Sustainable Development

The NPPF states at para 8c) "environmental objective – to protect and enhance our natural, built and historic environment; including making effective use of land, improving biodiversity, using natural resources prudently, minimising waste and pollution, and mitigating and adapting to climate change, including moving to a low carbon economy". There is very little evidence provided by STC to show that the SSNP meets any of these objectives convincingly and SSNP7 in particular will risk harming each of them.

The SSNP7 site is adjacent to and, at over 10 hectares, out of proportion with Stow's conservation area. The site also abuts the historic Wells Lane and its wells of late mediaeval origin. No evidence has been provided to show why these local heritage assets will not be harmed by such a large development.

No evidence has been provided to show why the conversion of agricultural land at SSNP7 "will improve biodiversity" (in fact it can only be harmful) and why a 170-240 home development will not increase the frequent sewage discharges into the River Evenlode rather than "minimise waste and pollution" (discussed in more detail below).

No evidence of increased public transport provision has been offered and no explanation of why up to 400 extra peak hour car movements will minimise pollution, mitigate climate impact or help move to a low carbon economy.

At para 11, that all plans should promote a sustainable pattern of development that seeks to meet the development needs of their area; align growth and infrastructure; improve the environment; mitigate climate change and adapt to its effects. The framework also states that protecting areas or assets of particular importance provides a strong reason for restricting the overall scale of development. In the case of SSNP7, the planned growth is excessive and is incompatible with the fabric of existing social and economic infrastructure with no evidence provided as to how this will be improved to meet increased demand. The absence of good transport links will lead to increases in car traffic volumes and associated pollution, noise and disturbance.

At para 13, the NPPF states that neighbourhood plans should support the delivery of strategic policies contained in local plans yet the SSNP requires these to be overridden or amended and the Development Boundaries redrawn.

At para 16, the NPPF states that plans should be shaped by early, proportionate and effective engagement between plan makers and communities, local organisations, businesses, infrastructure providers and operators and statutory consultees. This work is incomplete as STC cannot evidence that all local communities such as Broadwell have been engaged, businesses effectively consulted (shopkeepers in Stow and the doctor's surgery are unaware of the SSNP) and confirmation that infrastructure and transport providers can increase capacity to meet the growth in demand in a timely and cost-effective manner.

At para 23, the NPPF states that broad locations for development should be designated, land allocations identified and strategic policies provided for bringing sufficient land forward. CDC has done this in its Local Plan yet the SSNP seeks to override or amend this.

Para 29 of the NPPF allows neighbourhood planning to give communities the power to develop a shared vision for their area. In failing to consult and consider neighbouring communities, the SSNP is incomplete and too tightly focussed on the town itself at the expense of the wider area it serves.

At para 31 of the NPPF, it states that all policies should be underpinned by relevant and up-to-date evidence and take into account relevant market signals. In this regard, the SSNP was submitted prior to the approval of the Oddington Road development comprising 37 affordable units and therefore fails to recognise latest evidence and market signals.

At para 70, the NPPF states that neighbourhood planning groups should also give particular consideration to the opportunities for allocating small and medium-sized sites defined as no larger than 1 hectare. STC fails to provide adequate consideration for smaller sites in its preoccupation with the site at SSNP7 which is considerably larger at more than 10 hectares.

Para 78 refers to a five-year supply of deliverable housing sites in a 5 year plan. The SSNP is not compliant but surplus to this requirement as CDC already has a Local Plan that meets this requirement.

Para 82 refers to plans being responsive to local circumstances and support housing developments that reflect local needs. Whilst it can be argued that much of the SSNP does

this, SSNP7 is grossly out of proportion to the rest of the plan and therefore dominates it. It greatly exceeds local needs, particularly given local affordable housing need has already been addressed and approved (Oddington Road development) and it disregards local circumstances such as the overburdened capacity of local infrastructure and the lack of engagement with local businesses.

Para 83 promotes sustainable development in rural areas with housing located where it will enhance or maintain the vitality of rural communities. For reasons already discussed, the capacity of local infrastructure is currently unsustainable with no demonstrable plans to upgrade (or in the event of road capacity, no scope to do so without radical new road construction which is unlikely in the AONB). Increased traffic, flooding and pollution risk is likely to harm rather than enhance the vitality of local communities. Broadwell already experiences surface water flooding and sewage escaping into the built environment (a flood alleviation scheme is in progress and takes no account of the additional risk presented by this scheme directly above the village)

Para 89 states plans and sites in rural areas should meet local business and community needs in rural areas, but it is important to ensure that development is sensitive to its surroundings, does not have an unacceptable impact on local roads and exploits any opportunities to make a location more sustainable (for example by improving the scope for access on foot, by cycling or by public transport). For reasons already discussed, there is scant evidence of meaningful consultation with local businesses, no consultation has been held with adjacent communities (except, arguably, for the Swells), the hilltop location of SSNP7 will be insensitive to the AONB, this site would have an unacceptable impact on local roads, the increase demand on local infrastructure would be unsustainable and no evidence offered to improve access on foot, by cycling or by public transport.

Para 100 refers to faster delivery of public service infrastructure (education, health etc). Stow has no secondary schools and its new GP surgery and North Cotswold Hospital have been designed on existing population demand. The SSNP submits no detail as to how public service infrastructure will be expanded and brought forward.

Para 108 refers to transport issues being considered at the earliest stages of plan-making. There is no evidence that this has been done. As described in the attached BPC Regulation 14 response, currently there is scant provision of local bus services and no rail connections at Stow. Consequently, levels of car ownership and use will be high and the SSNP7 development is likely to increase these levels locally, not reduce them. The potential impact of the SSNP7 development on the road network will be severe with no upgrades or mitigation measures planned. Whilst the SSNP refers to opportunities to walk from SSNP7 site into town, this is a 15 minute walk. No other improvements to walking, cycling and public transport use are identified. The environmental impacts of increased traffic have been down-played and no detailed independent assessment undertaken by STC (the only plan submitted is that for the developer and is unrealistic for reasons discussed the BPC Regulation 14 response).

Para 157 supports the transition to a low carbon future in a changing climate, taking full account of flood risk yet the SSNP only considers flood risk within the development boundary. Due to its hill-top location, the main impact of any development within Stow will be downstream in the Evenlode and Dickler valleys yet no evidence has been provided as to how these rivers and surrounding low-lying communities will be affected. The NPPF also states that plans should contribute to radical reductions in greenhouse gas emissions (SSNP7 will not), minimise vulnerability and improve resilience (SSNP7 will not), encourage the reuse of existing

resources, including the conversion of existing buildings (SSNP7 will not) and support renewable and low carbon energy and associated infrastructure (SSNP7 will not).

Para 165 discourages inappropriate development in areas at risk of flooding by directing development away from areas at highest risk (whether existing or future). Where development is necessary in such areas, the development should be made safe for its lifetime without increasing flood risk elsewhere. The SSNP7 development cannot satisfy these criteria either in terms of current risk to surrounding areas and communities or in terms of mitigating future risk (see discussion under NPPF 175 below).

At para 168, the NPPF encourages new development to be steered towards areas with the lowest risk of flooding from any source and developments should not be allocated or permitted if there are reasonably available alternative sites in areas with a lower risk of flooding. The CDC Local Plan has considered this but been disregarded by the SSNP.

At para 174, the NPPF states that planning policies should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by protecting and enhancing valued landscapes. There can be little doubt that SSNP7 will negatively impact the AONB and views from various angles to the East and South would be harmed.

At para 175, the NPPF states that major developments should incorporate sustainable drainage systems. Broadwell, located at the foot of the hill, suffers from flooding and flood protection measures are to be constructed in 2024 to mitigate flood risk. However, these are designed on current surface run-off and no evidence has been provided as to how the SSNP7 site would impact this (discussed in greater detail in section 7 of the Regulation 14 consultation document in the Appendix). The SSNP7 policy only considers these issues at or adjacent to the site itself.

The Flood Risk and Drainage Report evidenced with the SSNP was prepared by BWB for the developer, Bloor Homes. It concentrates on the flood risk to the site (this is a hilltop location so unsurprisingly the flood risk is considered low). This report is flawed as it refers to the nearest river being the River Dickler but the site is actually located on the River Evenlode side of the watershed. The report admits that no soakaway tests have been undertaken despite the ground condition being heavy clay soil and proposes outfall to the nearby watercourse or public sewer network if infiltration is inadequate (as seems likely). The SSNP makes no reference to the fact the existing flood risk in local watercourses and that local sewer network is frequently overwhelmed (see below). The report also admits that no Sustainable Drainage Strategy has been prepared and no evidence offered as to the impact of the proposed development on the capacity of the existing surface drainage.

The report also states that foul drainage is likely to be pumped to public sewers located to the south and admits that Thames Water has not been consulted as to system capacities or the infrastructure improvements that will be required (Thames Water's investment programme is already 5 years in delay). This is despite the capacity of the Thames Water sewage pumping station on Oddington Road, Broadwell, being already inadequate for current peak demand causing it to frequently discharge raw sewage into the Evenlode water course. So far this year (2023), the Broadwell treatment plant has discharged surplus untreated sewage into the River Evenlode watercourse for 528 hours (ref: [ECP December Newsletter \(earthwatch.org.uk\)](https://www.earthwatch.org.uk/newsletter/december-2023/)).

Para 176 specifies that "Great weight should be given to conserving and enhancing the landscape and scenic beauty in Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty which have the highest status of protection in relation to these issues" and that "The scale and extent of development

within all these designated areas should be limited.” SSNP7 contradicts the NPPF requirement for the scale and extent of development with the AONB to be limited.

Para 177 specifies that “When considering applications for development within AONBs, permission should be refused for major development other than in exceptional circumstances, and where it can be demonstrated that the development is in the public interest. Consideration of such applications should include (amongst other things) an assessment of the cost of and scope for, developing outside the designated area, or meeting the need for it in some other way.” Stow’s affordable housing need has now been met within Stow and there are, in addition, more sites available within Stow and other affordable housing developments in Moreton for which people living in Stow qualify.

5. Condition (E): General Conformity with the Strategic Policies of the Development Plan

In particular, the CDC Local Plan’s strategy is to focus the majority of development in the most sustainable settlements (Clause 6.2.3 refers). As this response demonstrates, the SSNP is inconsistent with the sustainability objective, particularly in relation to SSNP7.

The strategy of the Local Plan is also to protect smaller settlements and the open countryside. Although Stow is considered a Principal Settlement, the Population Census of 2021 shows Stow’s population is just 1,900 inhabitants and, therefore, it is also a smaller settlement. In particular, specific evidence rather than unsubstantiated conjecture should be provided to show that SSNP7 does protect rather than harms Stow, its character, history and economy. Furthermore, SSNP7 threatens to inflict real harm to nearby smaller settlement such as Broadwell, Evenlode, Donnington and Oddington.

CDC’s strategy in its Local Plan (Clause 6.2.5 refers) also includes minimising a direct impact on landscape assets and a large development at a hilltop location such as that in SSNP7 will be visible from many points in the Evenlode valley including as far away as Churchill. There can be little doubt that a development at this location will have a severe impact on the AONB.

CDC’s Local Plan (Clause 7.15.5 refers) supports the development of sports and leisure facilities, new libraries, workshops and B1 uses. Although these feature in the SSNP, they would not be in proportion to the scale of SSNP7 development.

CONCLUSION

BPC, if properly consulted, would potentially support elements of the SSNP, but this would never justify the extraordinary and far-reaching impact on the AONB of SSNP7. The SSNP is dominated by SSNP7, a site that has been promoted by a large private developer. The extent of the involvement of this developer and its financial interest in the SSNP7 site has not been disclosed by STC.

Importantly, since the SSNP has been issued for Regulation 16 consultation before approval of the 37 affordable homes on the land north of Oddington Road, Stow-on-the-Wold (planning application 23/01513). This development alone will meet the need that STC has identified to provide 37 affordable homes between now and 2031. This is a relevant development that at least requires the SSNP to be revised.

Furthermore, BPC believes that the sustainability criteria for SSNP7 has not been met and cannot be adequately demonstrated (in fact the contrary). STC seeks to amend or overturn sections of CDC's Local Plan without offering a compelling case for attempting to do so.

In addition, this plan overrides the first main concern of the residents who did respond to the consultation; The first "main issue and concern raised as a result of consultations" was "Concern that the unique townscape and environment of the town, parish and AONB should be conserved and enhanced and not spoilt by inappropriate development."

Finally, as we have demonstrated above, the SSNP has failed to satisfy many key policies in the NPPF. Protecting the Cotswolds AONB provides a strong reason for restricting the overall scale, type or distribution of development in the NDP area and the adverse impacts of the SSNP7 site significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits.

Consequently, BPC is registering its objection to the SSNP and, in particular SSNP7, as part of the Regulation 16 Consultation. Furthermore, if the SSNP proceeds to referendum, then the immediately surrounding parishes should also be included (for the same reasons that the Swells were included within the SSNP).

~

Broadwell Parish Council: 13 December 2023

APPENDIX

RESPONSE BY

BROADWELL PARISH COUNCIL

TO

REGULATION 14 CONSULTATION BY STOW TOWN COUNCIL

TO

ITS PROPOSED NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN.

STOW TOWN COUNCIL NEIGHBOURHOOD DEVELOPMENT PLAN: RESPONSE BY BROADWELL PARISH COUNCIL TO REGULATION 14 CONSULTATION

1. Introduction

Broadwell Parish Council (BPC) arranged an extraordinary general meeting to specifically address the Stow Town Council (STC) Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP). This attracted a very large attendance. Having considered all comments made, this is BPC's formal response to the STC's Regulation 14 consultation process.

There was some sympathy with STC's objective of building affordable housing within Stow but there were grave concerns about the site location, scale and impact of the proposed housing development at the site North-East of Stow (ref: Policy STOW7, and Site S61 in CDC's Stow Site Assessments in its 2021 Strategic Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment ("SHELAA") document). This site is referred to as the "North-East Site" throughout this document.

The North-East Site is at a prominent hilltop location in an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. It also encroaches on a Conservation Area, is partly outside Stow's permitted development boundary and impinges on land within Broadwell Parish. It risks overwhelming the capacity of local road, water, drainage and social infrastructure. It would not be compliant with Policies EN1, EN4 and EN5 of the CDC's Local Plan.

Our specific concerns are described fully below.

2. Consultations

Contrary to the statement made by STC in its NDP, BPC has NOT been consulted meaningfully by STC in the compilation of this plan. BPC was invited to a small meeting on 24 January 2023 at which STC outlined the main contents of its draft NDP and described the approval process and timeline. BPC's views were not invited, nor given and the NDP has been prepared without any contribution from BPC.

Furthermore, the NDP describes the process through which STC has produced its plan. The NDP states that in 2020, a questionnaire was sent to every address in Stow and 325 responses were received representing 31% of all households. Drop-in sessions were also held at which 170 forms were submitted, representing just 8% of the population. No details of the questions have been given and no statistical or objective analysis of the responses disclosed (ref: NDP 4.12).

Further correspondence was sent to inhabitants of Stow in May 2022 and drop-in sessions held. STC states that this generated 214 responses, representing just 10% of the population. Again, no details of the questions asked or statistical or objective analysis of the responses received have been disclosed (ref: NDP 4.14).

What is more, discussions with various traders within the town has revealed that many were unaware of the plans, have not been consulted and are duly concerned at the potential impact of the NDP on their businesses.

For these reasons, we do not believe that the consultation process to date has been genuine, meaningful or representative,

However, the main outcome of these consultations stated by STC is concern about impact to the AONB, the provision of affordable housing for the people of Stow, support for the town's economy and provision of additional parking close to the town centre (a full list is at NDP 4.14). Whilst these are supportable aims, for the reasons described below, we do not believe that they will be met by the new development proposed at the North-East Site.

3. Housing

STC has identified the need to provide 37 affordable houses between now and 2031. STC refers to building 170 new homes on the North-East Site but the NDP clearly states that the developer's plans are based on developing the full site, including land lying within Broadwell Parish, to provide 240 homes (5.26 of the NDP refers). Both figures include 70 affordable homes but STC would have no control over who occupied the remaining 70% of the development, whether this be the elderly, commuters or vacation landlords. Therefore, this development would not assure that STC's demographic objectives would be met and is vastly out of proportion to need.

At its meeting with representatives of BPC on 24 January 2023, STC also disclosed that it knows of various vacant plots, unoccupied flats and over 100 empty properties within Stow which potentially could be utilised to help meet housing demand.

Despite the need for more affordable housing in the area, and notwithstanding STC's argument for increased provision for people working in Stow, the simple reality is that most of the affordable housing will be allocated to people currently living and working outside the immediate area. Therefore, rather than specifically serving Stow's needs, this will contribute to the wider need in the area for which CDC has already identified and approved development locations including near-by in Moreton-in-Marsh.

The scale of the proposed development is out of proportion with previous housing development in the vicinity. If STC's affordable housing objective is to be met, a mix of various smaller sites would be more sympathetic to the local historic character of the town, less intrusive within the AONB, less impact to surrounding greenbelt agricultural land and more manageable with respect to impact on local infrastructure. It is noted that STC has already identified 11 of such sites on its NDP consultation webpage, many of which involve fewer planning obstacles than those associated with the North-East Site.

CDC has appraised various sites for development in its SHELAA document. These include the site adjacent to the new GP surgery site which is deemed potentially suitable for development (ref S55B in CDC's SHELAA document). CDC also identifies that redevelopment of the Maugersbury Road Car Park for housing would be suitable if an alternative location can be found for car and coach parking (ref S64 in CDC's SHELAA document). Both of these sites are included in STC's own site assessments.

In Appendix F of the NDP, STC itself considered a site on Oddington Road (ref S14/S22B in CDC's SHELAA document) before discounting it on spurious grounds which includes poor access (despite it having direct access onto the A436, being located no further from the town centre than the North-East Site and being closer to facilities such as the school and GP surgery). This site, being made available by Stow Community Land Trust for a community led project, would meet many of STC's NDP aims more quickly and with fewer obstacles than developing the North-East Site. Whilst this site had a previous planning application refused, this was before CDC had prepared its Local Plan and the main objection was impact to the AONB, a factor that CDC felt could be addressed with a more sympathetic plan. We are aware that Bayhill Property is developing an affordable housing scheme that would meet STC's affordable housing aims by itself and would have a much reduced impact on the AONB than the proposed North-East Site.

The above clearly illustrates that a mix of smaller developments could meet the objectives described in STC's NDP more sympathetically to the environment, the character of the town and the capacity of local infrastructure than the proposed development at the North-East Site.

4. Public Transport

Stow is poorly served by public transport. There is no railway station in the town, the nearest stations being is at Moreton-in March and Kingham, both approximately 5 miles distant.

There are only 2 regular bus routes that serve the town on a daily basis. One runs at 90 minute intervals between Moreton-in-Marsh and Cheltenham which stops in the town (801). The other, a local bus (802), links the surrounding villages and Stow with Kingham Railway Station, running seven times a day, principally during peak morning and evening rush-hours with just three services during the middle of the day. The last bus services are in the early evening.

Therefore, residents at any new development, many of which will not work in Stow, are likely to be very reliant on car transport.

5. Traffic

Stow is a recognised traffic hotspot and a major crossroad location. Nine roads converge on the town comprising:

1,2). The A429 (Fosseway) from the North-East via Moreton-in-Marsh and the South-West via Cirencester. This is major trunk road from Junction 15 of the M40 at Warwick to junction 17 of the M4 Motorway at Chippenham. As such, it is the main artery through the Cotswolds. It is not only the main entry route for much traffic coming to the Cotswolds but is also, inappropriately, a major route for through traffic.

3,4). The A424 linking the A44 from the North-West via Evesham with the A40 at Burford to the South-East. It is the main route from the West Midlands at Junction 6 of the M5 at Worcester into the North Cotswolds and another busy and popular tourist route into and through the area.

5,6). The A436 from the East linking the A44 at Chipping Norton with the A417 trunk road at the Air Balloon Roundabout and onwards to Cheltenham and Gloucester. This is another major route into and through the area carrying traffic from Oxford and the M40 from the South-East/London in one direction and from Cheltenham, Gloucester and the M5 to the West in the other.

7). B4077 from Tewkesbury and local villages to the North-West of Stow.

8). B4068 from local villages to the West of Stow.

9). Broadwell Lane, a narrow country lane linking Broadwell, Evenlode and Adlestrop to Stow and Tesco (the main supermarket in the area) and increasingly, a route for traffic seeking to avoid delays on the main A roads in and around Stow.

Consequently, the town experiences considerable congestion, particularly at peak times and holiday periods. Traffic is often stationary, particularly from the north with queues backing down the A429 from the town to the Donnington turn 1½ miles to the North.

WYG's (traffic consultants) A429/A433 Corridor Study dated 2018, commissioned by GCC, highlights Stow as one of the 5 collision hotspots on the A429 (para 2.14). It also projects that the route will reach 110% of its capacity by 2031, the acceptable maximum capacity being 90% (para 3.2.10). These volumes will be exacerbated by the approval or completion of subsequent further developments such as the 250 dwellings at Dunstall Farm and the expansion of Fosseway Garden Centre. The report also states that congestion on the A429 has already caused 'rat runs' through Broadwell and Oddington.

STC's "Sustainable Transport Report – April 2022", (carried-out by the developer, Bloor Homes) states that the Broadwell Lane-A429 junction would need to be upgraded and signal-controlled and that Broadwell Lane itself would need to be widened with the addition of a pavement for pedestrians. This is hardly consistent with the rural character of this location.

The average number of cars per household in the South-West is 1.45. This will include car-count in urban areas so the car-count per household on the North-East Site, where the majority of dwellings will be family houses, can be expected to be well above 1.5. Assuming the development proceeds on the basis of the full site of 240 dwellings, the likely car-count will be approximately 400. In addition to this, STC proposes to incorporate a 150 space car park on the site increasing the total number of cars using the site to around 550 cars.

STC's own traffic report (referred to above) predicts 180 vehicle movements per hour, 4 per minute at peak times. We believe this is an under-estimate as it assumes that little traffic will be created by the Community Hub (unrealistically, users are expected to walk to the hub from the town or the development itself). Moreover, despite the evidence referred to above of Broadwell already being used as a 'rat run', this report assumes that there will be no 'trip assignments' through Broadwell caused by the development. Therefore, there are serious flaws to this report.

If half of the 550 cars on-site exit or enter the site in the morning and evening rush-hours, this will create an extra 275 car movements per hour, significantly higher than the 180 movements predicted by STC. Currently at peak times, the wait from the top of Broadwell Lane at its junction with the A429 to the A424 junction alone is typically 5-10 minutes (and can be much greater at times of severe congestion). Therefore, even on STC's own predictions, this development can be expected to add up to 40 cars to the queues on the A429. Despite the fact that the Broadwell junction will

need to be controlled, traffic will back-up into the development itself. Moreover, a controlled junction will result in greater delays to traffic on the A429, even longer queues down Stow Hill towards the Donnington Turn and therefore causing more traffic to divert through Broadwell (already a problem at peak times).

Furthermore, contrary to STC's traffic report, development traffic not destined for the town itself, will turn right to Broadwell to avoid queues and delays and from there turn North to join the A429 or South to Oddington to head for Chipping Norton, Bicester, Oxford and the M40 South.

For these reasons, Broadwell will increasingly become a 'rat-run'. The village lanes are only wide enough for one car in places, there are two blind bends and the roads are shared with horse riders, cyclists (the village is on National Cycle Route NCR48) and walkers (the village is on the Monarch's Way long distance footpath). There are no pavements or segregated paths. Not only will this adversely impact the rural nature and character of the village but residents are overwhelmingly concerned at the disproportionate increase in through traffic, and its consequences for noise and road safety.

The volume of additional traffic created by the development will also increase congestion within the Stow itself. Traffic held up on the A429 will try to divert through the town centre and Well Lane and Back Lane could also become 'rat runs'. This, combined with the proposed reduction in parking spaces in the town square, will negatively impact trade in the town with local trade diverting to alternative commercial centres at Moreton-in-Marsh, Bourton on the Water and Chipping Norton. It will also further foster the trend towards internet shopping and Stow will increasingly fail to serve effectively its local market.

The alternative to the proposed site entrance on Broadwell Lane is access to the A429 through the existing Tesco access road. This option (not currently proposed by STC) would have the benefit of feeding site traffic onto the A429 at an existing, traffic light controlled junction. It would have the advantage of deterring site traffic from diverting down Broadwell Lane to some extent as there would be less time advantage from doing so. However, this will not diminish total traffic movements and these traffic lights will need to be rephased for the increased traffic volume on the access road. It will not reduce the predicted delays on the A429 and therefore will have the same implications as described above to traffic volumes and their impact on Broadwell.

Additionally, the NDP reveals that such a large development will take up to 5 years to construct resulting in significant construction traffic and demand for additional parking capacity for construction staff over a protracted period in the meantime.

6. Car parking

Residents in Broadwell and other surrounding villages are very concerned that STC plans to reduce the number of parking spaces in the Town Square. Many residents drive to Stow to do quick errands or pick-up provisions (e.g., the post office, pharmacy and to shop at small independent retailers). They may be deterred from doing so not only by the increased congestion but also by the fewer parking spaces planned by STC which will reduce the likelihood of finding a spare space in-town. An alternative car park 10 minutes' walk from the town centre will not constitute a practical alternative for quick visits and surrounding villagers are likely to divert to more convenient alternatives in Moreton-in-Marsh, Bourton on the Water and Chipping Norton.

There is a real danger that the businesses of independent retailers in Stow will suffer as a consequence. This risk is borne-out by the under-utilisation of the Maugersbury Road Car Park which is closer to the town centre than the new car park at North-East Site. The local community would be better served if current parking restrictions were more rigorously enforced, and people parking for longer periods were encouraged to use the existing long-term car parks rather than blocking parking spaces in the square.

Moreover, the NDP provides contradictory information on the location of the proposed new car park. At Policy Stow7 (D), STC states that the car park will be as close as possible to Broadwell Lane but the development plan at Appendix F shows the car park is at the opposite end of the site, nearest the town and adjacent to the proposed Community Hub. If the car park is to be located at the Broadwell Lane end of the site, this will be over 0.6 miles from the town centre and a 15 minute walk. If the car park is at the South end of the site adjacent to the Community Centre, then access to the town would be down a steep bank and along Well Lane, a walk of 10 minutes. However, the latter location would result in parking traffic having to drive through the whole length of a residential development comprising mainly family homes, hardly desirable. Furthermore, with pedestrian access to the town being via Well Lane, drivers will soon realise that on-street parking in Well Lane is closer to the town centre and more convenient adding to traffic and parking problems within the lane itself. This problem would be largely averted if the site entrance was to be an extension of the Tesco access road rather than from Broadwell Lane.

7. Sewage and Drainage

The sewage pumping station on Oddington Road (Broadwell) has insufficient capacity for current sewage demand. Currently, Thames Water frequently discharges raw sewage into the Evenlode water course and during periods of heavy rain, drains in the village frequently surcharge, emitting raw sewage into Chapel

Street and gardens. The scale of the proposed new housing development is likely to greatly exacerbate this problem.

Furthermore, without the use of large capacity soakaways on the development site, surface run-off would greatly increase the risk of flooding in Broadwell. The village experienced a serious flood in 2007 affecting several properties and there have been more recent episodes of the streams breaking their banks and hill run-off flooding village roads. The flood risk in the village is recognised by CDC which has allocated funding for the construction of flood mitigation measures at the bottom of Broadwell Hill directly below the North-East Site. Current plans are being progressed to build swales and field bunds to help prevent flooding but these measures are designed for current levels of surface water run-off and will be inadequate if this increases as a result of the new development.

8. Social Infrastructure

Attracting more families to the town may be beneficial to the local economy and a worthy objective. However, there is no evidence that the proposed development at North-East Site will improve the sense of community in the town as STC intends and little consideration has been given to the increased pressure this development will create on local social infrastructure.

For example, GP Services and District Nursing are already at full capacity and there is no current provision for increasing their capacities. Other than a restricted hours Minor Injuries Unit at North Cotswolds Hospital in Moreton-in-Marsh, there are no local Accident and Emergency Hospitals. The nearest Emergency Departments are at Cheltenham (20 miles), Gloucester (30 miles) and Oxford (30 miles).

There is a primary school in Stow but no secondary school in the town. Secondary school pupils will have to travel outside the immediate area to the Cotswold Academy in Bourton-on-the-Water or further afield to schools at Chipping Norton, Chipping Camden, Burford or the independent school at Kingham. The Cotswold Academy is at full capacity and would require significant investment to expand to meet the increased demand and it is known that schools in the area generally have difficulty in recruiting and retaining qualified teaching staff.

9. Community Hub

The principle of a Community Hub and Business Centre to support the local economy is supported. However, there are concerns about how this building would be managed, who would use it and the likelihood of it generating additional traffic. There are already two under-used community centres in Stow.

10. AONB

The proposed development site is in a prominent, elevated position on the ridgeline. It will impact the rural views from a large area of the Evenlode valley, Chastleton Hill and the villages of Churchill, Adlestrop and Evenlode. It is not consistent with protecting a conservation area within an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

11. Dark Skies

The size of the development carries with it the risk of significant light pollution which, because of its elevated position, would impact a large area surrounding Stow.

12. Conclusion

In general, we are supportive of the objectives of the NDP and are as keen as STC to see Stow thrive and flourish. However, we do not believe these will be achieved by the development at the North-East Site. Its size is out of proportion with the town, it will have a devastating impact on local infrastructure (particularly road and drainage), will be damaging to the historic character of both Stow and Broadwell and risks harming rather than supporting local businesses and the town's economy.

We believe that there are better ways to meet STC's aims through the development of various small sites that are proportionate to the size of the town, more sympathetic to its location within the AONB and with lesser impact on local infrastructure.

Consequently, BPC is registering its objection to the development at the site North-East of Stow (ref: Policy STOW7 / Site S61 in CDC's SHELAA) in the strongest terms.

~

Cotswold District Council
Representation to the Stow-on-the-Wold and the Swells
Neighbourhood Plan Regulation 16 consultation



COTSWOLD
DISTRICT COUNCIL

Please find below comments from **Cotswold District Council** (CDC) on the Stow-on-the-Wold and the Swells Neighbourhood Plan 2020-2031 (the Plan).

CDC acknowledges the work that has been put in by the authors of this Plan, and commends its structure and clarity.

The following comments, observations and suggested amendments have been written to try to identify either points which in officers' opinion may not meet the Basic Conditions against which the NDP will be assessed, or where the wording used may be open to interpretation during the development management process. While we have commented on the majority of policies, we hope these suggestions will enhance the policies and the plan.

Unfortunately, we have also raised some more fundamental concerns. We have raised a number of concerns on Policy SSNP7, which is clearly a central pillar of the Plan. While the comments below go into some detail, it is worth highlighting our principal concerns: that the Plan seeks to allocate a parcel of land which is but a part of a larger site - thus is not presented as developable in its own right; and, that the development will need to demonstrate exceptional circumstances, yet reasonable alternatives such as a combination of smaller sites or developing outside the Cotswolds National Landscape (formerly known as the Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty) have not been fully considered.

On 22nd November 2023, the Government rebranded all Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONBs) as 'National Landscapes' to boost understanding of their national significance. References to the Cotswolds AONB should therefore be updated to the Cotswolds National Landscape.

Para 3.8 To provide confirmation to the note that the Neighbourhood Plan should be examined against the adopted Local Plan, please note the Local Plan Partial Update will now be submitted for examination in public in 2025.

Para 3.10 The Gloucestershire Local Transport Plan is an important consideration in the preparation of development plans and neighbourhood plans and especially so given the plan's intention to allocate major development.

Para 3.11 Please note that the Cotswolds AONB Management Plan 2018-2023 has been superseded.

<https://www.cotswoldsaonb.org.uk/planning/cotswolds-aonb-management-plan/>

Para 4.16 The suggestion that no factors of technical substance came to light regarding the site allocation at Regulation 14 is inaccurate, given the interest in this issue from numerous parties, such as the Cotswolds National Landscape Board and the technical issues raised by CDC. Some of CDC's previously raised concerns are raised again in this representation, for consideration by the examiner.

p22, and p44, Policy SSNP1 The Stow on the Wold Development Boundary

The proposed Development Boundary is the extant boundary, plus the site allocation at SSNP7. Our comments on the proposed site follow below, in this representation. Should the site allocation be accepted, it follows that the development boundary should be amended. Conversely, should the site allocation be determined not to meet Basic Conditions, a development boundary policy less the site allocation would duplicate the adopted Local Plan policy.

Policy DS2 of the adopted Local Plan supports the principle of development inside Development Boundaries. CDC is concerned that the whole of the proposed site allocation being within the Development Boundary may lead to further development on land which is proposed to be retained for landscaping, greenspace, etc. It is recommended that, should the site be allocated for development, that the Development Boundary be scaled back to only include the part of the site containing housing, car parking and other buildings.

We note that the base map is a little dated and does not reflect the existing built environment of Stow - notably at the north end of the town, where there is a 'white triangle' between Character Area D and the proposed site allocation - this area, adjacent to the proposed site allocation, is built out and accommodates the Edwardstow Court Care home and Hawkesbury Place housing for over 70s.

p22 Policy SSNP2 Development in the Swells and the Countryside

The Local Plan's development strategy actively avoids listing non-principal settlements, as such matters are considered on a case-by-case basis. The description of Swell at Clause A identifies Lower Swell as a village 'suited to small-scale residential development' - which is not consistent with the strategic policies of the local plan (DS1 and DS3). Essentially this clause suggests that Lower Swell is de facto a suitable location for small-scale development, whereas the Local Plan approach, outside of principal settlements, requires a judgement at the time of a planning determination.

The second line of C seeks to disapply part of NPPF (2023) paragraph 80(e). NDPs have to have regard to the NPPF, but can differ, so this may be acceptable, but CDC is not convinced that the assertion in the following paragraph is sufficient justification, given the robustness of the paragraph 80 criteria, and the size and varied landscape of Swell Parish.

p21 Policy SSNP3 Housing Mix

Achieving a housing mix to meet local needs is an aspiration we share for all development in the district. However, we wonder whether this policy represents an appropriate strategy to deliver that for the following reasons.

1. The very specific percentage requirements will not always be mathematically achievable: a point now recognised in the policy. In order to achieve whole unit numbers, there will be a process of rounding, leading to negotiation, which this policy does not specifically enable, but which is in reality the existing approach.
2. The housing mix in tenure and size on any development will need to reflect the viability of the development, in terms of the site, infrastructure requirements and the state of the housing market at the time. These variables are not immutable during the plan period, so whatever may be appropriate now may not be the best fit in future years. A particular issue here would be the changing dynamic of need in Stow, particularly if a large development such as that proposed in policy SSNP7 is built out.

3. Local Plan Policy H1 already says that, "*Developers should have regard to local evidence, for example, the latest SHMA and parish needs surveys, and show how the proposed mix of market housing provision will help to address identified local needs in terms of the size, type and tenure of housing.*" Stow's housing needs survey can already be used to help determine the mix of houses in any planning application assessed against Policy H1.
4. The current NDP policy is not flexible to changing circumstances and the latest evidence.

Local evidence, such as the Housing Assessment carried out by AECOM, and indeed any successor documents, can already be used as a starting point for determining the housing mix. We would be supportive of the NDP reiterating the position that such evidence should direct the housing mix, and which presents the current summary information in the reasoned justification.

p22 Policy SSNP4 Principal Residence

Second Home ownership, and other non-principal housing uses is an issue within the neighbourhood area and the wider Cotswolds, which may affect housing availability and affordability for local people. Land use planning tools can be used to try to address this, but appear to be a rather blunt tool in practice. A policy such as this is limited to new dwellings, when the main appetite for second homes will be for existing 'character' dwellings. There will still be the stock of (character) homes available for people to buy as second homes in Stow and the Swells. Therefore, will this policy be effective in preventing second home / holiday home ownership in the Neighbourhood Area? If not, is it an appropriate and proportionate response to the issue?

There are also several national policy interventions underway that could go some way to resolving the issue in Stow without the proposed NDP policy. In January 2022 the [government introduced legislation](#) that will prevent owners of second homes from abusing a tax loophole by claiming their often-empty properties are holiday lets, thereby avoiding paying normal tax rates.

The Levelling-Up and Regeneration Act also introduces further restrictions:

- Councils will gain powers to impose higher rates of council tax on empty and second homes (double the standard council tax rate on any home left empty for longer than a year, rather than two years as is currently the case) and this is something that CDC is already pursuing.
- It requires the Secretary of State to introduce regulations to cover the registration of short-term rental properties
- The government also proposes to introduce a new "tourist accommodation registration scheme" in England, through the [Tourism Recovery Plan](#).

The government also recently announced that second-home owners may face an 'Airbnb ban', which would aim to protect tenants living in tourist hotspots. Furthermore, it proposes to introduce a new planning use class for short-term lets, which could result in a change of use permission being required for conversion from conventional housing.

CDC is also seeking to address the issue by enabling the provision of short-term holiday let accommodation in suitable locations to redirect the demand for this accommodation away from unsuitable locations and /or stressed locations.

The proposed policy approach has been supported in neighbourhood plans elsewhere in the country, subject to sufficient supporting evidence. However, the evidence justifying this policy in Stow and the Swells is sparse. There should be far greater consideration of this matter (and its effects) in the SEA, given the role the Sustainability Appraisal played in the St Ives policy being upheld in the face of legal challenge.

(<https://stivesnplan.files.wordpress.com/2013/08/sustainability-appraisal-submission-version.pdf>, pp41-42, pp60-63).

The evidence quoted is taken from AECOM's Housing Needs Assessment, which we believe is the 2011 Census data on 'Household Spaces with no usual residents'. While often cited in this context, this is not necessarily limited to non-principal dwelling uses. CDC's Council Tax data, appended to this response at Annex A, may be useful, albeit it would be fair to acknowledge that not every second homeowner will declare their property as such in their Council Tax return. Notably, it does not show a significant increase in Second Home ownership over recent years. While currently there is no formal threshold for when this approach might be acceptable, a similar level of second home ownership has not been deemed sufficiently high to justify the imposition of this type of restriction in another Neighbourhood Plan (Bridport), a judgement reached by the same examiner as St Ives.

Stow is a Principal Settlement, and thus our strategy sees it having a role to play in meeting the district's housing needs, which, as defined by the NPPF, does include non-principal residency housing uses.

That said, CDC recognises that Stow is heavily constrained, to the extent that we have not allocated a site in the town within the current Local Plan - thus in the context of the district having sufficient housing land supply, development in Stow, such as that proposed in SSNP7, may only be considered to meet exceptional circumstances if it delivers growth on top of district needs, in order to meet housing need arising from Stow. The principal residency policy could be considered to underpin this rationale, being a tool to enhance the benefit to the town. This could also present a basis to judge the policy to be in general conformity with the Local Plan.

We note that there are known difficulties with determining 'principal residency' and with enforcement action thereafter - this policy is likely to be most effective at the point of property sale. Moreover, there will be loopholes - e.g. someone can register the first home in their own name and the second home in the name of (e.g.) their partner. As a further observation, should the site proposed for allocation in SSNP7 proceed as described, with the developer also seeking to deliver housing outside the boundary within Broadwell parish, this restriction would not apply to the houses that are functionally part of Stow, but are not within the parish/neighbourhood plan boundary. We imagine this might influence how different sizes and tenures would be distributed around the site.

p22 Policy SSNP5 Specialist Accommodation for Older People in Stow

The policy uses the term 'local connection'. The RJ appears to define this through the phrase 'households relocating from within the Town or Parish or from a Parish that immediately adjoins the Neighbourhood Area'. We observe that such a definition would be more limited than the definition of 'local connection' used by the district council, and which would be too restrictive if such affordable dwellings are managed through Gloucestershire Homeseeker Plus, the Council's housing allocations approach.

While CDC recognises local concern on this issue, exacerbated by a perception of oversupply, we're concerned about trying to create a cap on a particular form of development for the entirety of the plan period - we cannot see the particular case for a cap of exactly 40, and would expect any quantum of development to be responsive to changing circumstances.

p23 Policy SSNP6: Health and Wellbeing

We endorse the ambitions of this policy - it provides a clear message about healthy place-shaping to complement the design guidance.

p24 Policy SSNP7: Land North East of Stow

CDC recognises the importance of affordable housing in maintaining the vibrancy of Stow, the wider NDP area and, indeed, the whole of Cotswold District. Accordingly, Stow is defined as a Principal Settlement. Policy DS2 of the adopted Local Plan supports the principle of new housing development within the Stow Development Boundary and Policy H3 enables affordable housing as Rural Exception Sites outside the Stow Development Boundary. However, the constraints in and around the town, most notably its hilltop location and the national policy requirement for the scale and extent of development in the National Landscape to be limited, have dictated a Local Plan strategy that directs strategic growth towards other settlements, particularly those that are not wholly located within the Cotswolds National Landscape. The NDP process presents a further opportunity, in addition to the Local Plan update, to address housing and other issues in the neighbourhood area. However, we are concerned that various challenges can be levelled at the current proposal.

- A. Since the Regulation 14 consultation, in May 2023 an application for 37 affordable houses was submitted and subsequently approved on 13 December 2023, at one of the sites considered and dismissed in the NDP process. We accept that the neighbourhood plan cannot continually adjust its strategy and evidence, and has to seek to move forward in the context of the evidence it has gathered. However, this site, Land North Of Oddington Road Stow-on-the-Wold (23/01513/FUL), is expected to deliver a quantum of development that addresses the evidenced needs presented by the NDP's Housing Needs Assessment, prepared by AECOM. The issue of housing need may need to be considered within this NDP examination as part of the justification for SSNP7. It would also have to be considered if a planning application is made on the SSNP7 site as there would still need to be exceptional circumstances at the point of determination to justify development - now in a context where the housing need is expected to be met by an approved scheme. We note that the objective of the SSNP is to counter demographic change, and thus does couch an argument that housing delivery may need to exceed enumerated 'need' to effect real change, but we question whether that aspiration could amount to an exceptional circumstance for the development proposal.
- B. NPPF (2023) paragraph 11 specifies that "*Plans... should apply a presumption in favour of sustainable development.*" Part b of paragraph 11 is for strategic policies. However, it lays down the principles that are required of development plan policies, which are highly relevant to SSNP7 in terms of the circumstances when housing needs should and should not be delivered in full. "*Policies should, as a minimum, provide for objectively assessed needs for housing and other uses **unless: i) the application of policies in this Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a strong reason for restricting the overall scale, type or distribution of***

development in the plan area⁷; or ii) any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole.” (CDC added). Footnote 7 confirms that Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (now rebranded as National Landscapes) are a protected area of asset of particular importance, the same as a National Parks, Sites of Special Scientific Interest, irreplaceable habitats; designated heritage assets and areas at risk of flooding.

- C. NPPF (2023) paragraph 176 specifies that “Great weight should be given to conserving and enhancing landscape and scenic beauty in Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty which have the highest status of protection in relation to these issues” and that “The scale and extent of development within all these designated areas should be limited.”

CDC is concerned that, in accordance with NPPF paragraph 11:

- 1) protecting the Cotswolds National Landscape provides a strong reason for restricting the overall scale, type or distribution of development in the NDP area.
- 2) the adverse impacts of the SSNP7 site significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits.

CDC is also concerned that the balancing exercise has not been undertaken, which should give great weight to conserving and enhancing the landscape and scenic beauty of the Cotswolds National Landscape. In addition, CDC is concerned that the SSNP7 contradicts the NPPF requirement for the scale and extent of development within the Cotswolds National Landscape to be limited.”

- D. The SEA does not need to explore every possible option, but it does need to explore reasonable alternatives. In addition to NPPF (2023) para 176, para 177 specifies that “*When considering applications for development within AONBs, permission should be refused for major development other than in exceptional circumstances, and where it can be demonstrated that the development is in the public interest.... Consideration of such applications should include [amongst other things] an assessment of the **cost of, and scope for, developing outside the designated area, or meeting the need for it in some other way**” (CDC emphasis).*

CDC is not convinced by the current rationale in the SEA. While we are pleased to see some amendments following our Regulation 14 representation, we do not believe that sufficient consideration has been given to assessing the scope for developing outside the designated area or meeting the need(s) in some other way. In particular, consideration should be given to whether Stow’s affordable housing need can be / is already being accommodated outside the Cotswolds National Landscape. For example, nearby Moreton-in-Marsh already has a 250 dwelling planning permission under construction at Dunstall Farm, a 67 dwelling planning permission under construction at Evenlode Road and other affordable housing developments. In addition, there is further potentially deliverable land elsewhere in Moreton. People living in Stow qualify as having a ‘local connection’ and can apply for affordable housing in Moreton. Furthermore, there are regular public transport connections between Moreton and Stow with a reasonable journey time and cost.

Whilst this option does not deliver a community centre or a car park in Stow, it may be able to deliver Stow’s affordable housing need without developing a highly sensitive major development site in the Cotswolds National Landscape.

Consideration should also be given a hybrid option whereby some of the affordable housing need could be delivered on a site (or sites) within the neighbourhood area that do not involve major development in the Cotswolds National Landscape combined with the remaining affordable housing need being met outside the Cotswolds National Landscape. The [Remainder of land at Tall Trees site at Oddington Road](#) may be one such location where the hybrid approach could be applied. This would have the advantage of delivering some affordable housing in Stow, albeit not the entire affordable housing need, with the remainder of the need being accommodated outside the Cotswolds National Landscape. This may provide another avenue for “meeting the need in some other way” without developing a highly sensitive major development site in the Cotswolds National Landscape.

- E. Is there sufficient evidence of housing need - that has to be delivered in Stow, to evidence the exceptional circumstances and public interest tests for major development? The adopted Cotswold District Local Plan has been developed to meet the district’s housing needs, including those of the Neighbourhood Area - is the need explored and enumerated in the AECOM housing report simply the Stow portion of this need, which the adopted Local Plan strategy is already addressing through allocations elsewhere in the district (in particular, recent development/permissions in Moreton-in-Marsh)? The Need Assessment is not supported by primary evidence, such as household surveys, but instead relies on modelling, using similar datasets to the calculation of the district’s housing need.
- F. We are not aware of a limit on the scale of development that a NDP can allocate. However, the SSNP7 development proposal is very large scale. The 170 dwellings would be 17 times the NPPF (2023) annex definition of major development in terms of the number of units and the 10ha site is around 20 times the same major development definition in terms of site area. We are unaware of a NDP allocating anywhere near the proposed scale of development within a National Landscape or a National Park. Another useful proxy is the adopted Local Plan which has avoided allocating sites of this scale within the Cotswolds National Landscape - largely for the reasons set out point (D).
- G. We previously commented on the version of the site assessments currently published on the town council website, which identified parts of the site assessments that required updating. The currently published site assessments are therefore not wholly accurate - notably the assessment published for site 7 fails to mention the proximity of a nearby listed structure (Stow Well) and Scheduled Ancient Monument. However, CDC acknowledges these constraints are considered in the SEA.
- H. Assuming the argument for housing need can be upheld, the proposed development has a greater land take than a ‘housing only’ approach, through the inclusion of a community/business hub and a public car park. Is the argument for these aspects of the proposed development sufficiently robust so as not to undermine the proposal as a whole? Is the need for the community/business hub sufficient to justify major development in the Cotswolds National Landscape and does it outweigh the proposed level of harm? Is the need for the public car park sufficient to justify major development in the Cotswolds National Landscape and does it outweigh the proposed level of harm? It is important to consider these aspects of the development separately to understand whether the level of harm can be mitigated by a smaller-scale development.
- I. The specification for the community hub (appendix C) envisages 6 x 25 sq m offices/retail units available for rent for periods of under one year. Both retail and office facilities are defined by the NPPF (2023) as Main Town Centre Uses. Supporting evidence would therefore be needed to demonstrate how this policy accords with Local Plan Policy EC8 and EC9, taking consideration of the proposed locations, which we

assume to be out of centre given that the location would be near the car park to the north of the site (note the NPPF (2023) annex definitions of edge of centre and out of centre). Would retail / office uses be viable in this location, which would be on the edge of the town? Would there be sufficient footfall to sustain retail in particular?

- J. The location of this community/business facility, on the periphery of the town, with adjacent parking, risks generating short car journeys within Stow. Residents would likely opt for a private vehicle trip to access the facility and tourists would be incentivised to drive and park rather than incorporating a visit to this facility within a visit to the town centre.
- K. Access from the car park and community centre to the rest of the town. Given the local aspiration for a parking facility is driven by a desire to decant parking from the historic centre, is the access from this site to the town short enough, and attractive enough to achieve that objective? The site is circa 750 metres from the centre (using the library as the destination, contrasting with just under 450m for both the Shoppers' Car Park by Tesco and the Maugersbury Road Car Park, and unless access is achieved through Tesco, or routed down to Well Lane (increasing distance and inclines), requires a walk alongside the Fosseway for most of the route. Could the allocation make a play on creating an attractive feature walk into the town centre? A wildlife walk, boards explaining the history of the town, the landscape, etc, or something like that? Anything to make the route more attractive would encourage people to walk.
- L. The development proposal which has been consulted upon as this plan has progressed is not limited to land within the neighbourhood area. While the NDP states that the viability of the policy is not subject to the whole site being developed, we are concerned about whether only a portion of a larger site can be considered a deliverable allocation, if it is not expected to come forward as a scheme in its right. The land area available for development within the plan area is contingent upon a defensible landscape barrier at the edge of the site, outside of the NDP boundary - i.e. a development only within the neighbourhood area would need to accommodate landscaping, which is not factored into the quantum of development the plan seeks to enable. On this point, a variety of technical documents prepared on behalf of the scheme promoter have been published - on initial review, none of these explore the acceptability of a sub-scheme only within the neighbourhood area.
- M. In a similar vein, the shape of the allocation itself is an unusual 'L' shape, projecting into the countryside at the south eastern edge, and creating an unusual urban form that is determined by the administrative boundary rather than being 'landscape led'. The shape of the allocation would cause additional landscape harm and is rather at odds with the approach sought by the Cotswolds National Landscape Board, the Local Plan, and articulated in the SEA.
- N. As already discussed, the adopted Local Plan strategy seeks to limit the scale and extent of development within the Cotswolds National Landscape and places great weight on conserving and enhancing its landscape and scenic beauty. If there is an exceptional circumstance for a major development in the Cotswolds National Landscape, and the development is in the public interest, the council would support such an approach. However, even if the principle of allowing major development in the National Landscape can be justified, it does not automatically follow that a site allocation be made or that planning permission should be granted. To reiterate, the proposed development site is highly constrained. Furthermore, it would seem the full extent of the available land is needed (including the land within Broadwell parish) for it to have a chance of demonstrating the exceptional circumstances and public interest tests. If this is the case, assuming the site allocation could be justified, would it not be better to allocate the entirety of the site through an expanded neighbourhood plan area? This solution would have the benefit of making best use of available land and

avoiding the landscape harm of the irregularly shaped site. As presented it is unlikely this site would secure the benefit of site allocation in the Local Plan because the justification is currently too weak to pass the tests of soundness - a higher threshold than the Basic Conditions test required of Neighbourhood Plans.

- O. The policy, the reasoned justification and the building specification at pp 56-57 set out in some detail the scale of the car parking and the community building. However, the text does not specify the ownership model for either. While policy should rightly be focused on the land use, the ownership model is material to a view on whether the community benefit of these facilities outweighs the harm. Will the Town Council own these assets, and accrue a financial return to manage them as set out in the policy, and to the benefit of the town, or will it be expected to pay rent on the space specified in the policy? Does the cost of these assets need to be recouped from the development and offset against other deliverables, or will the developer retain ownership?
- P. The policy specifies “for a low or zero carbon residential-led, mixed use development...”. If the plan includes “low or”, our concern is that it will not deliver zero carbon. We suggest having one or the other.
- Q. The policy includes a 20% BNG requirement. If the site allocation is carried through within the final NDP, it would be helpful for the NDP to specify where the BNG would be delivered - e.g. anywhere within the Neighbourhood Area, within the development site or elsewhere? To what extent does this affect development viability and the deliverability of the plan and policy?
- R. Within part A of the policy, we would prefer wording such as “comprising 60% (approx. 100) open market homes and 40% (approx. 70) affordable homes”. Otherwise, there is ambiguity over the specific percentage that will be required. The use of bullet points in this clause is unhelpful, as it makes it difficult to cite a policy criterion in reports. Numbering is advised instead.
- S. In part E, please replace ‘Cotswold Design Code’ with ‘the design policies of the Local Plan’. This will ensure the policy is flexible to any future changes to the Local Plan.
- T. Paragraph 5.26 specifies distances to the town centre and the superstore. Given the size of the site, there will be homes located much further away than these distances. To overcome this issue, we suggest instead providing a range including the closest point and the furthest point from the town centre and the superstore.
- U. Paragraph 5.27 states that, *“In this regard, the allocation proposal is considered to comprise a ‘major development’ in the AONB, the justification for which must show that its public benefits outweigh the harm to the AONB (as per NPPF §177 and set out in Appendix E)”*. To accurately reflect the NPPF (2023), the paragraph should read *“the justification for which must show that there must be exceptional circumstances for development and it can be demonstrated that the development is in the public interest”*.
- V. Paragraph 5.31 - *“new research has been commissioned but it is not considered that it will conclude anything other than capacity being an even greater problem.”* We suggest deleting this as it predetermines the evidence.

p27 Policy STOW8: Stow Town Centre & Market Square

CDC welcomes the intent of this policy.

Policy STOW10: Local Green Spaces

As a general point, CDC supports the identification of Local Green Spaces in Neighbourhood Plans. The sites proposed here, based on their description and distribution around the Plan area, appear to have been proposed based on their individual attributes in line with the guidance in the NPPF.

In terms of the final clause, for consistency with the Local Plan and clarity, we would suggest 'Development will only be permitted within a Local Green Space where there are very special circumstances, which outweigh the harm to the Local Green Space'. Logically, if development is permitted, it is not inappropriate, with the opposite also holding true, so the current phrasing perhaps underplays the strength of this policy in preserving important community assets,

p29 Policy STOW11: Stow and the Swells Design Code

The Design Code reads well, and reflects the different character areas of the Plan area. CDC are concerned that it is perhaps too prescriptive, particularly in so strongly advocating for very specific traditional forms, in the context of a recognised need to improve the environmental performance of local housing stock. The layout should assist with putting the Code into use. More specific comments are added as Annex B to this representation, below.

p30 Policy STOW12: Non-designated heritage assets

While the Local Plan already affords protection to non-designated local heritage assets, identifying these through neighbourhood plans provides useful granularity and certainty, and allows NDPs to celebrate local heritage, which we truly welcome.

p30 Policy STOW13: Zero Carbon Buildings

While we embrace the thinking behind this policy, we do not believe that it is reasonable that it applies to 'all development' (clause A) given the range of circumstances and scale of development that might require development consent.

Clause B will be very difficult to implement - how will any faults be rectified if the building is built? Moreover, this places an additional resourcing burden on the Local Authority, which is not resourced or funded to deliver these additional commitments.

Clause C appears to give some significant leeway on design to meet this criterion. As scripted it would apply in, and possibly be in conflict with, the Conservation area designations in the NDP area.

p33 Policy STOW14: Walking & Cycling in the Town and Parish

We endorse the ambitions reflected in this policy.

p33 Policy STOW15: Vehicle Parking

Transport emissions are a major component of our carbon footprint in Cotswold District and Gloucestershire, and something that both CDC and Gloucestershire County Council are committed to reducing. We therefore welcome the consideration given to electric car charging points - in locations such as Lower Swell, better parking facilities, enabling ULEVs to enable a shift away from private car ownership may be part of the solution.

p34 Policy STOW16: Digital Infrastructure

We welcome the redraft of this policy since Regulation 14. The intention is clear, and there is a recognition that harm to heritage assets needs to be subject to a planning judgement. We are concerned, however, that the NPPF already has commentary on the importance of digital infrastructure, and similarly, the consideration that must be given to heritage assets - we're not convinced that this approach has regard to the NPPF.

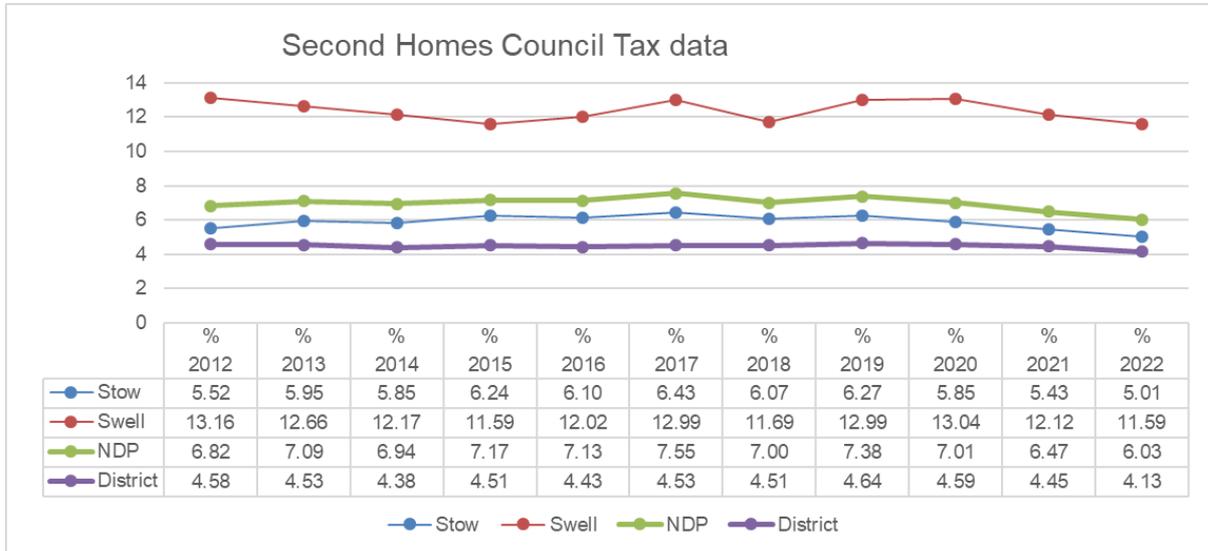
p35 Implementation

No specific comment, other to endorse the inclusion of this section.

Contact:

Joseph Walker, Community Partnerships Officer
Cotswold District Council
Trinity Road
Cirencester
Gloucestershire
GL7 1PX

Annex A: Second Homes Council Tax Data



A Second Home for tax purposes is a dwelling which is substantially furnished (enough to live in) but not considered to be the liable party's main residence. For example, properties that are owned by someone which are left unfurnished and not lived in, wouldn't be reflected in these numbers. This data has been gathered from Tax Base records, which is reported each year to allow the following year's Council Tax charges. This is information collated from the system, which holds Council Tax records so is an official count.

Annex B: Comments on the design code

We advise that the Cotswold Design Code will be updated and expanded as part of the emerging partial update of the adopted local plan (in line with the Council's 'green to the core' ambition, and the government's recent design code and guide guidance).

A number of the comments below will also apply to alter clauses that repeat the same type of wording but for other character areas.

The Stow Design Code is fairly architectural in focus and the references to Green Infrastructure (GI) are limited. There is no commentary on how the GI sections of the Cotswold Design Code should be considered in a Stow context. It also does not provide any guidance on how new sustainable technologies might best be installed in a way that retains the character of Stow, which is evidently a challenging operation particularly in the historic core of the town.

Para 2.1 (and various coding clauses)

We support the approach to divide the settlements into character areas, but the code also needs to be clear whether the design code also applies to developments in the more rural areas outside the character areas.

We have some concern that the preference for non-contemporary architecture in some character areas may be challenging when delivering net zero buildings.

EVENLODE PARISH COUNCIL

Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 (as amended)

REPRESENTATIONS & RESPONSE TO REGULATION 16 CONSULTATION RE:STOW TOWN COUNCIL & SWELLS NEIGHBOURHOOD DEVELOPMENT

Evenlode PC has now had sight of the report commissioned by Broadwell PC from Chadwick Town Planning dated 21/12/2023.

- In addition to its enclosed representations about STNP7, Evenlode PC shares the concerns of Broadwell PC regarding about the location, scale and impact of this large, proposed allocation for approximately 170 homes (but indicated in the Plan as including a further 70 homes on land in Broadwell Parish in the future); a community hub, and a 150-space public car park due, in summary, to its significant and very harmful and damaging impact upon the Cotswolds National Landscape, heritage assets, traffic congestion, air pollution and the very qualities of the town itself.
- Evenlode PC endorses all the professional opinions spelt out in the Chadwick Town Planning report, and considers that the knock-on effects of those concerns would spread outwards by one mile to cover the village of Evenlode.
- Evenlode is, by a quirk of history, just outside the AONB. However its character and proximity to the AONB means that all those matters specified in the Chadwick report would also have a significant impact on Evenlode.

Jan Lesser, Evenlode Parish Council Clerk 23/12/2023

STOW ON THE WOLD AND SWELLS NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

SUBMISSIONS FROM EVENLODE PARISH COUNCIL

In addition to endorsing those submissions of Broadwell PC regarding SSNP7, Evenlode Parish Council specifically endorses paragraphs 4 and 5 of the Broadwell PC submission re: Regulation 16.

Further, Evenlode Parish Council also submits:-

An important feature of the Cotswolds, which draws so many visitors and why so many people love living here is that once you are off the Fosse Way you are immediately captured by the beauty and character of Cotswold villages and the rural qualities of the area. Drop down Broadwell Hill and you are immediately immersed in the quiet village character of Broadwell and, one mile away, Evenlode.

Increases in traffic generated by a large housing estate such as that envisaged at the top of Broadwell Hill, and you immediately destroy that special quality and uniqueness. Access to the Fosse will create even worse traffic build up than already exists and will send drivers looking for speedier ways to access the main road - namely by rat running through villages.

Given that the number of houses proposed far exceeds the needs of Stow and Swell, and given that other more modest development plots in the vicinity of Stow with existing road infrastructure are available, the proposals are disproportionate to the level of actual need.

There are - both within and without the AONB – already significant flooding and drainage and pollution problems. The proposed level of housing at the top of Broadwell will, as is evident from reports and the lack of consultation with the relevant water authority, increase and exacerbate those problems.

So far as the process which led to the SSNP7 proposals, Evenlode PC endorses Broadwell PC's concerns about the absence of evidence supporting the SSNP's contentions, namely the lack of evidence of stakeholder consultation and involvement, and lack of evidence from Thames Water about its ability to cope with the demands of such a development.

Evenlode PC takes the view that the SSNP7 is defective, in that SSTC failed to consider all those matters which it ought properly consider. Its assertions and contentions are without supporting evidence. The result is that it has come to conclusions and decisions which no reasonable Town Council could have come to.

Evenlode PC endorses Broadwell PC 's request that should the matter of SSNP7 go to referendum, then Stow Town Council should be required to include surrounding villages (Broadwell; Evenlode; Oddington, and Donnington) in that referendum.

JAN LESSER EVENLODE PC CLERK 23/12/2023

Gloucestershire County Council

Dear Sir/Madam

Thank you for consulting Gloucestershire County Council (GCC) on the above consultation. I have the following officer comments to make. It is noted that a significant allocation is proposed in policy SSNP7 for a 10 ha site to the north east of Stow for a mixed use development, including 170 houses. GCC reserves the right to formally comment on this allocation if/as it progresses through the local plan process. This is likely to raise a number of issues around transport and highways on the A429 and officers will need to consider these in greater detail when further information is available.

Archaeology Planning advice:

In regards to my previous comments there remains the issue in regards to **Policy SSNP7: Land North East of Stow** - The Historic Environment Record shows that this lies on the possible alternative site of Stow Battlefield (southeastern end). Whilst this issue is now mentioned in 5.27 the issue has not been resolved and there remains the risk that this policy cannot be delivered.

Minerals & Waste:

M&W officers have reviewed the consultation information and at this time do not consider it likely that materially significant mineral and waste impacts will emerge as a result of implementing the consultation's proposals. M&W officers have based this response on potential impacts relating to: - Gloucestershire's mineral resources; the supply of minerals from and / or into Gloucestershire; and the ability of the county's network of waste management facilities to operate at its full permitted potential. M&W officers have reviewed the consultation information and have no further comments to make.

Library service:

No comments to make from a library service point of view. The plan states that new community facilities would be supported if they met the rest of the plan proposals so I'm comfortable we don't need to make any further comment.

Education:

No further comments from the education team

If you have any queries on the above please do not hesitate to contact me.

Rob Niblett, Gloucestershire County Council

Historic England | South West

1st Floor Fermentation North | Finzels Reach | Hawkins Lane | Bristol | BS1 6WQ



Historic England

Dear Joseph

Thank you for your Regulation 16 consultation on the submitted version of the Stow-on-the-Wold and Swells Neighbourhood Plan.

From our records we can find no details of having received a Regulation 14 consultation on the Plan from the community.

We note from the submitted Consultation Statement that the Regulation 14 consultation period took place between 6th February and 20th March this year. However, reference to English Heritage and not ourselves is cited, as is the fact that no response was received. This may explain the seeming absence of information on our records.

The fact of any omission and that the Plan is at an advanced stage in its preparation means that we are limited in what we can reasonably comment on. But we note that the Plan intends to allocate 10ha of development on Land North East of Stow in policy SSNP7. The proposal for a community hub, associated parking and 170 homes may well have the potential to generate impact on heritage assets. At the same time we note that the Plan has been subject to a full SEA and that through earlier SEA Screening and Scoping consultations we were able to confirm the intended use of our guidance on relevant matters associated with site allocations and related matters affecting the historic environment (see attached).

We do not know the extent to which your authority has been involved in the preparation of the Plan, and particularly in the assessment by its conservation team of the heritage evidence base in support of policy SSNP7. Our role is not anyway to substitute or duplicate that specialist advice available at the local level, and in the circumstances therefore we must defer to the conservation expertise of your authority on the suitability of this policy from a heritage perspective.

For this reason also we have no comments to make on other aspects of the Plan.

Kind regards

David

David Stuart | Historic Places Adviser

Joseph Walker

From: Stuart, David
Sent: 25 September 2020 12:21
To: Joanne Corbett
Cc: Joseph Walker
Subject: Request for SEA/HRA Screening Opinion on a NDP
Attachments: Stow-on-the-Wold and the Swells Neighbourhood Plan: Consultation on the SEA Scoping Report

Dear Joanne

Thank you for your SEA Screening Opinion consultation for the emerging Stow-on-the-Wold and Swell Neighbourhood Plan.

We are happy to concur with the view that a full SEA is required.

Apart from this consultation our only involvement in the preparation of the Plan so far has been a consultation in 2017 on the associated SEA Scoping. I attach that response again here for information.

Kind regards

David

David Stuart | Historic Places Adviser South West
Direct Line: 01275 335222 | Mobile: 07958 335222

Historic England | 29 Queen Square | Bristol | BS1 4ND
<https://historicengland.org.uk/southwest>

From: Joanne Corbett
Sent: 21 August 2020 13:38
To: Stuart, David;
Cc: Joseph Walker
Subject: RE: Request for SEA/HRA Screening Opinion on a NDP

THIS IS AN EXTERNAL EMAIL: do not click any links or open any attachments unless you trust the sender and were expecting the content to be sent to you

Dear Sir/madam

Please find attached a screening report on whether the **draft Stow-on-the-Wold and Swell Neighbourhood Plan** might have significant environmental effects and therefore require a full SEA/SA or HRA.

As you are aware we are required to consult with the environmental assessment bodies, and as such we are seeking your advice and opinion on this matter. It is likely we will include your response with the statement of reasons, as to why (if this is the case) a SEA or HRA was not required, which is submitted to the Inspector.

A response is due within 5 weeks, by 5pm on 25th September 2020.

I would be grateful if you could acknowledge receipt of this email.

Joseph Walker

From: Stuart, David
Sent: 28 January 2021 10:28
To: chris.McNulty@
Cc: Joseph Walker; Joanne Corbett
Subject: Stow on the Wold and the Swells Neighbourhood Plan - SEA scoping report
Attachments: Stow & Swell NP, SEA Screening, 25.9.20..msg

Dear Chris

Thank you for your consultation on the draft SEA Scoping Report for the emerging Stow on the Wold and Swells Neighbourhood Plan.

We were consulted on a previous SEA Scoping Report by AECOM in 2017, and we have also been more recently consulted on an SEA Screening Opinion by Cotswold District Council in the autumn of last year in response to which we were able to endorse the need for a full SEA. I attach those responses here for information.

We are not clear on what may have transpired since the original SEA Scoping exercise over 3 years ago but on looking at the Plan's website it would seem that the draft of the Plan available remains that produced in 2017. This would seem to suggest that the issues we identified to AECOM in 2017 remain extant.

We therefore have only a couple of additional comments to make at this time.

We are pleased to note the reference in the Scoping Report to our guidance on Conservation Areas, SEAs, Setting, and Neighbourhood Plans. To this list we would advise the inclusion and use of our guidance on Site Allocations which is as applicable to Neighbourhood Plans as it is to Local Plans. Its application will be particularly relevant given the community's aspiration to allocate site(s) for the development of affordable housing (<https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/historic-environment-and-site-allocations-in-local-plans/>).

In that respect we also note from the Plan's website that various site assessments have already been undertaken. In looking at these it is not clear whether and how they may have utilised our guidance on Site Allocations and Setting in particular. We would therefore caution that any outcomes from this work may need to be reviewed within this context and highlight the importance of this before they can be used as appropriate evidence to inform the content of the Plan and the SEA exercise and demonstrate conformity with overarching policy for the protection and enhancement of the historic environment.

Kind regards

David

David Stuart | Historic Places Adviser

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Direct Line: | Mobile:
<https://historicengland.org.uk/southwest>

Maugersbury Parish Council

Maugersbury Parish Council has carefully considered the Neighbourhood Plan for Stow-on-the-Wold and the Swells (NP) and have the following comments to make.

MPC is supportive of the overall primary objective to rebalance the demographic of Stow and the Swells between the older and younger age groups.

We have considered the policies set out in the document in regards how effective we feel they will be in achieving the primary objective.

The key focus of the document is **Policy SSNP7**, which proposes the allocation of the site behind Tesco for major development.

Whilst we fully understand that not all the site falls in the area covered by this plan, the fact that the developer has stated their intention to submit a planning application for the entire site (should the site be allocated in the NP) then we feel it should be discussed and considered more openly as the full development of up to 240 houses. This is how the planning application will be considered and the additional houses built, although technically in Broadwell Parish, will be added to the mass of Stow-on-the-Wold town, not Broadwell village.

Given the population of Stow is just under 2000 a development of 240 houses represents a massive increase of the population size of at least 25% as a conservative estimate and a 24% increase in the number of properties, not 17% as the plan considers.

Building houses is only a part of the solution to rebalancing the demographic and creating a more sustainable community. As the NP points out higher value employment opportunities are also required in order to attract younger people of working age.

We question the claim that the new housing result in 'enabling the ever-aging demographic to be arrested'. We are concerned that any potential rebalancing benefit brought about from the affordable housing element of this proposed scheme will be wiped out by the larger market housing element that may predominantly go to retirees.

We also have questions in regards the affordable housing element of this proposed scheme. Is it proposed that the homes will be managed by Bromford homes on behalf of CDC?. In which case will there be any provision specifically for local people? Our understanding is that housing allocated via Bromford will be allocated on a district wide basis and therefore not deliver the affordable homes for local people the NP set out to achieve.

MPC supports the proposal for office space for start-ups and hot desking space but what then happens after the initial 1-year tenancy? If businesses are successful, they may then need permanent office space or small industrial units. Allocating space for this possibility would make for a much more sustainable community in the longer term.

Policy SSNP7 (in conjunction with Appendix C) also sets out the specification for the proposed Community Hub. As previously stated, we are supportive of the proposal to include shared co-working office space and small office/retail units for new businesses. However, we are less persuaded by the need for a new central hall and commercial gym.

Any new community space has to be run, maintained and utilised, costing money and requiring volunteers. We already have a large number of community spaces in Stow that are underutilised: School hall, the hub, St. Edwards Hall, the church, Baptist church rooms, Stow Social Club, Youth Club and the community room at Tesco off the top of our heads. We feel it would be much better to invest money into these existing spaces so that they can provide what the community needs and support those community organisations who provide them.

In regards a gym, any commercial gym is going to take business away from the leisure centre in Bourton-on-the-water in which the district council has just invested. There are also a number of other commercial gyms already available in the area. Again, we feel it would be best not to be overly prescriptive in regards the precise use of this space.

A major development such as that proposed undermines the protections afforded for the area in the Local Plan and we are not convinced that the public benefit outweighs the environmental harm, given we do not see a need for a new community space.

Does a car park really warrant the building of 240 homes? Stow definitely does have a parking problem but there are many studies that suggest simply building more car parking is not the solution. Building more car parks and roads has been shown to simply generate more cars. What Stow needs is an ambitious and broad thinking sustainable transport strategy to get visitors to visit without their cars.

Policy SSNP4 proposes that any new market housing will only be supported where there is a restriction to ensure occupancy as Principal Residence. Whilst MPC understands the driver behind this policy our understanding is that the success and enforceability of policies such as these is yet to be proven. In St.Ives there is evidence that a similar policy has impacted the wider housing market. The NP recognises there have been some impacts in larger towns that have tried this but does not see this being an issue in a small market town such as Stow. However, there is no detail given as to why they have discounted these risks. By imposing restrictions on any new houses this will presumably lead to those seeking second homes and holiday lets to focus on the existing stock within the area. In our opinion (whilst we recognise it is not in the control of the Neighbourhood

Plan) it would be much better to lobby government for the planning change they are currently considering to require a planning change of use to use a house as a holiday let/second home.

It is still not clear if the market housing proposed in Policy SSNP7 will be subject to this restriction.

Policy SSNP9 proposes support for future development of pavilions both on the Queen Elizabeth II field and King Georges field. Again, we restate that we would rather see funds contributed from any development used to improve current community spaces so that they are fully utilised before any new spaces are created. There is obviously already a pavilion on the cricket field and this space has been used to a greater extent over recent years for large scale, well attended community events e.g fireworks night and so this would seem more of a priority to refurbish this space than build a new community hall on the new development site.

Policy SSNP13. MPC welcomes the focus on zero carbon development and would like to see this go further. There is no mention of a desire to improve the carbon footprint of existing housing stock, in ways that maintains the architectural heritage of the Stow and the Swells.

Could there not be some type of community heating scheme for any new development on the site proposed in SSNP7?

Policy SSNP15 tackles the issue of vehicle parking. Part A states that residential developments must meet standards for off-street parking set out in the Design Code.

There is no mention in this policy in regards business proposals meeting parking requirements. This would seem to be an omission. Where new businesses are being proposed via a change of use of buildings parking provision should be a careful consideration as to whether the change of use is appropriate. We have just seen this in Stow with the change of use of Fosseyway Farm. There was woefully inadequate parking on site for the proposed holiday accommodation, restaurant, gym and spa. However, the scheme was still given permission (we recognise this was given by CDC not the town council). Surely in these circumstances the proposed scheme should have been deemed inappropriate for the site, rather than now further exacerbating the problem. If turned down you may find that some of these sites might then be used for uses that meet the needs of the town better i.e. accommodation.

Having looked at the Design Code we can only find fleeting mentions of the provision of parking relating to only a couple of the Character Areas. This seems to be inadequate in our opinion. There should be a presumption against the loss of any existing off-street parking provision and a policy that all new housing provides off-street parking.

We would like to see this policy set out an ambition to better utilise the existing parking facilities within the area. There are a few larger parking areas that are not used for significant periods e.g. Stow doctors surgery, Brethren meeting hall, Catholic church, social club, school. Perhaps there are possibilities to provide financial benefit to these organisations to make these spaces available at times they are not using them. Many spaces in the square are taken up by those working in the businesses in the square. These could potentially be issued permits to use the alternatives e.g doctors surgery on Saturday and Sunday, thus freeing up space for visitors in the square.

There are many studies that indicate that the more parking you make available the more people drive. Whilst being a rural town presents challenges the focus should be on a more sustainable transport strategy for visitors to Stow.

We also would like to see this policy have strategy for increasing EV charging provision in the area.

Conclusion

In order to for Stow-on-the-Wold and the Swells to remain vibrant and sustainable communities the neighbourhood needs to be able to adapt to current and future challenges and requirements. We therefore believe this document should be strategic whilst avoiding being over prescriptive.

This needs to be done without losing sight of why local people want to remain in Stow and the Swells, and why so many want to visit and move to the area. It is a fine balance between development that will enhance and add to the attraction of the area and over development that will actually drive tourism away and make the area a less desirable place to live and work.

We note that the scheme for 37 affordable dwellings has been recommended to permit, (subject to the S106 agreement being agreed) at the site near King Georges Field. This brings into further question whether such a large development in Stow is necessary. Given this provision of affordable housing we now question whether the perceived benefit of a Community Hub and car park does outweigh the severe harm that such a big development in the AONB would bring and whether such a development would actually achieve the aim to rebalance the demographic of Stow.



Network Rail
1st Floor
Bristol Temple Point
Bristol
BS1 6NL

Date: 15 November 2023

TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1990 (as amended)

PROPOSAL: Stow-on-the-wold NDP

Dear Sir/Madam,

Thank you for consulting us on the Stow-on-the-wold NDP. This email forms for the basis of our response.

Network Rail is a statutory undertaker responsible for maintaining and operating the country's railway infrastructure and associated estate. Network Rail owns, operates, maintains and develops the main rail network. This includes the railway tracks, stations, signalling systems, bridges, tunnels, level crossings and viaducts. The preparation of development plan policy is important in relation to the protection and enhancement of Network Rail's infrastructure.

Policy SSNP14: Walking & Cycling in the Town and Parish

Paragraph 5.60 under policy SSNP14 refers to the creation of new routes to encourage walking and cycling with support of strategic multimodal connects to Kingham Railway Station.

Should these connections be pursued the LPA is discouraged from promoting active travel over level crossings. The closest level crossing to Kingham Station is Bledington Footpath Crossing (OWW 85m 04cns).

Level Crossings

Any development of land which would result in a material increase or significant change in the character of traffic using rail crossings should be refused unless, in consultation with Network Rail, it can either be demonstrated that they safety will not be compromised, or where safety is compromised serious mitigation measures would be incorporated to prevent any increased safety risk as a requirement of any permission.

Network Rail has a strong policy to guide and improve its management of level crossings, which aims to; reduce risk at level crossings, reduce the number and types of level crossings, ensure level crossings are fit for purpose, ensure Network Rail works with users / stakeholders and supports enforcement initiatives. Without significant consultation with Network Rail and if proved as required, approved mitigation measures, Network Rail would be extremely concerned if any future development impacts on the safety and operation of any of the level crossings listed above. The safety of the operational railway and of those crossing it is of the highest importance to Network Rail.

Level crossings can be impacted in a variety of ways by planning proposals:

- By a proposal being directly next to a level crossing
- By the cumulative effect of development added over time
- By the type of crossing involved
- By the construction of large developments (commercial and residential) where road access to and from site includes a level crossing
- By developments that might impede pedestrians ability to hear approaching trains
- By proposals that may interfere with pedestrian and vehicle users' ability to see level crossing warning signs
- By any developments for schools, colleges or nurseries where minors in numbers may be using a level crossing
- By any development or enhancement of the public rights of way

It is Network Rail's and indeed the Office of Rail Regulation's (ORR) policy to reduce risk at level crossings not to increase risk as could be the case with an increase in usage at the level crossing in question. The Office of Rail Regulators, in their policy, hold Network Rail accountable under the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999, and that risk control should, where practicable, be achieved through the elimination of level crossings in favour of bridges or diversions.

The Council have a statutory responsibility under planning legislation to consult the statutory rail undertaker where a proposal for development is likely to result in a material increase in the rail volume or a material change in the character of traffic using a level crossing over a railway:-

- (Schedule 4 (j) of the Town & Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) Order, 2015) requires that “...*development which is likely to result in a material increase in the volume or a material change in the character of traffic using a level crossing over a railway*” (public footpath, public or private road) the Planning Authority’s Highway Engineer must submit details to both the Secretary of State for Transport and Network Rail for separate approval.

We trust these comments will be useful in the preparation of the forthcoming plan documents.

Yours Sincerely,

Grace Lewis

Town Planning Technician Wales and Western

Network Rail

Temple Point, Redcliffe Way, Bristol, BS1 6NL

COMMENTS ON THE STOW ON THE WOLD AND THE SWELLS
NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

The final version of the Neighbourhood Plan (NP) has been slightly modified to correct typographical and factual errors and to respond to the objections received during previous consultations. As will be explained below these changes and explanations DO NOT alter the fact that Policy SSNP7 will cause substantial harm to Stow on the Wold and the AONB which cannot be outweighed by the justifications set out in the document.

Swell Parish Council (SPC) generally supports the major elements of the NP but has considerable reservations about the size and nature of the development set out in Policy SSNP7.

SPC's concerns are :-

1. The size and location of the proposed development contains 100 market houses that Stow does not need and are not allocated in the CDC Local Plan
2. The developer is unlikely to comply with the provisions of Policies SSNP 3 and 4.
3. CDC has already discounted this site (S61) in their Strategic Housing Land Assessment as being unsuitable for allocation in the Local Plan. SPC disputes that the draft NP proposals, as shown in the 'masterplan' would overcome the unique qualities of this site. It is a site that has one of the highest strategic landscape qualities in the AONB and would be a major development, with the associated large urban appearance (viewed from far and wide), traffic congestion and light pollution. It would have devastating consequences on these qualities and the hilltop setting of Stow.

SPC endorses the need for additional truly affordable housing for purchase or rent to support the future economic development of Stow and the surrounding area. It is noted that such an affordable housing scheme submitted by Bayhill on the Oddington Road has just received planning consent. This is an 'Exception' site and only includes 37 affordable houses (without the unnecessary market housing) which satisfies the AECOM Housing Needs Survey.

Policy SSNP7 states that the land is in the control of a single developer which is Bloor Homes. What is unacceptable is that negotiations were held in private for 'commercial confidentiality' with some Council members barred from attending.

Bloor appears to have had a leading role in writing up the NP amendments (See attached copy of email dated 13th April from Neil Homer regarding agreed changes).

SPC has concerns that STC delegated this to a commercial developer who has vested interests in preparing the wording. An example is the deletion of clauses C & D concerning the carparking and community hub that were requested by SPC and previously agreed by STC. This was added to ensure that the carparking and hub could not be abandoned once the houses were built and occupied. Alternative wording has been added but this is weaker and allows the developer to circumvent the original requirement put forward by SPC.

‘.....the following sentence has been deleted: “It shall be constructed and made available for operation prior to the first occupation of the housing scheme’

The NP states that this was the preferred site in 'community' surveys carried out in 2022 but only a small number responded as a percentage of Stow’s population and Stow Town Council itself acknowledged that this was a “low response rate” & “cannot regard the result as strong guidance” For such a large, damaging and controversial development this is poor evidence of support by the Stow community.

Before the start of the public consultation of 6 February-20 March 2023 SPC advised STC that they did not approve of Policy SSNP7 and therefore could not endorse the draft NP in its current form. SPC requested that this should be clearly stated in the document as the title gives the impression that The Swells had endorsed the document. This was not done. There is mention of The Swells objections in the accompanying Consultation Statement but then this discounts the objections because they are not from residents of Stow. It also states that....

‘The position of Swells Parish Council is unfortunate as a partner in the SSNP project.’

Does this mean unfortunate that the NP includes The Swells or that it is unfortunate for STC and the developers that SPC have raised significant and perceptive objections.

During the process, SPC wrote to STC on 5th February 2023 expressing their concern about the lack of consultation and are still concerned that SPC views have not been taken into account in the final version.

SPC does not support the final draft of the NP and this was formalised in the EGM held on 15th June 2023. Minutes attached.

The NP acknowledges that the proposals would constitute a major development but then attempts to justify the unjustifiable by stating.....

‘The TC does not dispute that the proposal is ‘major development’ and that such a change will be harmful and permanent as a matter of principle. Nor does it dispute the fact that the land exhibits the special qualities of the AONB (as set out in the CAONB Management Plan), lying on an east facing slope of the town within its wider setting that is visible in part in long views from the east.....

For the proposal to form an allocation policy of the NP it must meet the 'basic conditions' in both having regard to national policy and being in general conformity with strategic development plan policy (notably Policy EN5 'AONB' of the adopted Cotswold District Local Plan 2011-2031). It is therefore necessary to demonstrate that all three of the tests of NPPF §177 (to which Policy EN5 defers) are met,.

Test A: The Need for the Development. The scheme would secure both market and affordable housing for which there is a need in Stow to shift its demographic profile, economic base and self-sustainability. It would boost the supply of local housing in way that has not happened in 40 years and contribute to District-wide housing supply. Crucially it will deliver almost 100 affordable homes.....'

This statement is incorrect as only 37 affordable and social homes are required in Stow over the Neighbourhood Plan period (2021-2031) as set out in the AECOM Housing Needs Survey (March 2022) which is one of the NP base documents. No further market housing is required. Such 37 affordable houses recently received planning consent as an Exception site on the Oddington Road and so the justification for the 100 market houses is no longer valid.

Test B: The Absence of Alternatives. The whole of the NP area lies within the AONB. The benefit of the NP plan-led approach is that it allows for communities to envision their future, gather local evidence and come to a planning judgement on reasonable alternatives. Since the 1970s, any housing (other than for older people), economic (other than for tourism) and social (again, other than for older people) needs of Stow have been met by other towns in the northern part of the District, or in neighbouring Districts. For the vision to be realised, of necessity these needs must be met in Stow and therefore in the AONB.'

There are alternatives to the proposed community hub. Such as the large empty Magistrates Court in the Police Station that has been unused for decades, the Cricket Pavilion, the Youth Centre, Church & Baptist Rooms, School Hall, St Edwards Hall or a new building on King Georges Field?

Test C: Moderating Detrimental Effects. The concept masterplanning work has shown that the site is large enough to accommodate a landscape strategy that can successfully moderate the majority of the harmful environmental effects. The arrangement of uses and design strategy will enable new landscape to permeate the scheme and to bolster the existing tree belts and hedgerows around its eastern, southern and northern boundaries. The scheme has additional environmental benefits in the form of green infrastructure and biodiversity enhancements. It would also deliver recreational benefits through new footpath links and the creation of publicly accessible areas on land that is currently private.'

CDC have already discounted this site for development and SPC dispute that the NP proposals would overcome the unique qualities of this site. It is a site that has one of the highest strategic landscape qualities in the AONB. A major development, with the associated large urban appearance (viewed from far and wide), traffic congestion

and light pollution, would have devastating consequences on these qualities and the hilltop setting of Stow.

Regarding the 'biodiversity' claims, this is a classic example of 'Greenwashing'. For the best biodiversity outcome and lowest carbon footprint the site should be left as open agricultural land preferably with wildflower margins.

The CDC SHLAA Assessment for this site reads as follows.....

'The site is on the same side of Stow as the refused planning permission for up to 146 dwellings on the Land east of Griffin Close site, which subsequently had an appeal dismissed. With S61, however, not only would the development also be considered to be 'major development within the AONB' but the scale of development would be considerably larger and more harmful to the AONB than the Land east of Griffin Close site. The site is on higher ground than the Griffin Close site and is more visible within the surrounding landscape. Stow is a hilltop town and development in this location would not be in keeping with the settlement pattern. The scale of development on a slope would erode the character of the town, as well the rural setting in which the town sits. It would adversely affect the intrinsic value of the AONB and the proposal is assessed to have "High" landscape impact. The development of S61 would also harm the rural setting of a Scheduled Monument, it would harm the setting of the Conservation Area, and it would harm the settings of a Grade I listed building and a Grade II listed building. Other considerations, such as the loss of productive agricultural land, whether the access via Broadwell Road is suitable for the scale of development and potential archaeological issues would also need to be explored further but may also be further constraints to the development of this site. Recommendation S61 is unsuitable for allocation in the Local Plan'

In Appendix E further attempts are made to justify the proposals including the AONB 'checklist'. SPC believes that the proposals DO NOT justify or outweigh the development implications.

Policy SSNP7 contradicts the CDC adopted Local Plan in many respects.

Typical examples are :-

1.5 *'.....Neighbourhood Plans must meet some 'basic conditions'. In essence the conditions are:.....'.Is the Plan consistent with local planning policy?'*

The NP proposals do not.

3.5. *'The Neighbourhood Plan must be in general conformity with the strategic policies of the [CDC] development plan.'*

The NP proposals are in conflict with Policies S13, EN1, EN4, EN5 and EN10-12 in the CDC adopted Local Plan.

3.6. *'Policy S13 [in the CDC Local Plan] is specific to the town and encourages improvements to community and tourism facilities but contains no development proposals'*

This speaks for itself

5.2 *'The key objectives of the Neighbourhood Plan are.....to ensure that the unique townscape and environment of the town and the surrounding parish is conserved and enhanced.'*

The proposals clearly do not.

Other Policies in the NP relate to Policy SSNP7.

Policy SSNP3: Housing Mix [in the NP] states a 40% requirement for 'affordable' housing and a specific rental/ownership percentage and dwelling type for new developments of 6 or more dwellings. These requirements are unlikely to be enforceable or protected from Appeals from experience of previous similar developments.

Policy SSNP4: Principle Residence proposes restrictions to ensure occupancy only as a principle dwelling to avoid them becoming holiday lets or second homes. This is notoriously difficult to implement and the NP acknowledges this by saying that *'this presents enforcement challenges to the District Council....'*

Part D of the Policy refers to the car park scheme and later states that the carpark is 10 minutes away from the town centre. However, many visitors are already reluctant to park in the Tesco or Mangersbury road carpark allocated for visitors.

Part H of the Policy states that *'the transport strategy shall seek to discourage traffic generated by the housing, public carpark and community hub schemes from using the Broadwell Lane other than to access the site from the A429 Fosse Way....'* This will not be enforceable. Most of the traffic generated will come from the A429 junction and this will probably need yet another set of traffic lights to cope with the potential 600 plus vehicles per day generated from both directions. In any event, it is not possible that practical restrictions could be imposed to prevent traffic using the Broadwell Lane from the development except by making it a one-way street which residents of Broadwell village would not find acceptable. This would become a 'rat run' for vehicles trying to avoid the congested A429 junction, guided by their satnavs.

Given the recent consent for 37 affordable houses in Stow there will be no public benefit from such a development of market housing. Nothing will compensate for the long term damage to the character and setting of Stow and the surrounding countryside with more traffic congestion and pressures on the already overloaded sewage, electric and water infrastructure. Most benefits will accrue to the

developers, property speculators and the wealthy who can afford to buy the expensive upmarket houses.

A final issue is that the site falls partly within the Broadwell Parish. The 'masterplan' shows the full development of 240 houses including the area in the Parish of Broadwell. It is understood that many residents of Broadwell are not supportive of the development as they will be equally affected by the degraded landscape, light pollution and traffic congestion.

The Swells will also be affected by the increased traffic congestion and degrading of the AONB which was established for the national benefit and well-being of residents and visitors to the Cotswolds.

18th December 2023
Swell Parish Council

Clerk - Jill Wightman
1 Spa Cottages
Lower Swell Road
Lower Swell
GL54 1LD

Chairman – Jane de St Croix
2 Horseshoe Cottages
Lower Swell
GL54 1LG

Minutes of an Extraordinary Meeting of Swell Parish Council

Held in the Village Hall on Thursday 15th June 2023 at 3.30pm

Councillors present: Cllrs, Tom Blythe (Chairman for this meeting), Helena Nash and Jenny Brown,

In attendance: 1 member of the public attended as the meeting ended.

The meeting commenced at 3.30pm and in the absence of Cllr Jane de St Croix as current Chair, Vice-Chair Tom Blythe agreed to chair the meeting.

230615/1 **Chairmans Opening Remarks:** Cllr Blythe confirmed that as three councillors were present, the meeting was quorate and therefore lawful.

230615/2 **Declarations of Interest:** None.

230615/3 **Apologies:** Notices of absence were received in advance from Cllrs Jane de St Croix, Dan Baring, Andy Lucas and Robert Kinder.

230615/4 **To consider and, if thought fit, endorse the final proposal approving Stow and Swell Neighbourhood Plan which had been circulated to all councillors in advance of the meeting and made available on request to members of the public.**

Councillors approved the following resolution: *That the Swell Parish Council approves the final version of the 'Stow and Swells Neighbourhood Plan dated May 2023' except for Policy STOW 7 as it does not think that this Policy is the best way forward for Stow or our locality.*

230615/5 **Date of Next Meeting:** Thursday 13th July 2023 at 6.30pm in the Village Hall.

Meeting ended: 3.36pm

Subject: Stow NP: approval process and Bloors meeting outcome

Both,

Yes, we will highlight any changes of substance to Section 5 (i.e. the policies and supporting text) and to the appendices. Changes made elsewhere – primarily Section 1 – will simply be to convert the draft NP into its final version.

We will work to a deadline of 18 May for all the submission NP document to be sent to Claire to circulate for the TC meeting on 25 May. I will leave you both to agree when the PC considers it after that – I think the TC needs to approve it first as it is the Qualifying Body. The other submission documents should also be ready by that deadline but don't technically need to be approved.

As for the outcome of the Bloors meeting on STOW7, I noted the following:

1. Add a reference to the battlefield matter as part of the heritage assessment requirements, leaving its resolution to the planning application stage
2. Add a clause on the sewage matter – Bloors to suggest its wording
3. Allow for more flexibility on phasing of the car park and hub, noting that with a full scheme build out only being about 3 years we do not need to be as precise on trigger points as would otherwise be necessary for a larger, longer scheme
4. Bloors to provide a new concept layout plan to include in the NP, its boundary confined to the land in the NP area only, with its best guess on the optimum location of the car park in that layout
5. Bloors to provide wording (for the supporting text) on the preferred delivery model for handing over the hub and car park
6. Bloors to update its technical documents as necessary, especially to note the battlefield matter in its heritage assessment
7. Me to see if it's possible to use what we already have in the NP to complete an AONB major development checklist to add to the appendix (as suggested by CCB)

Please let me know if I've missed anything.

Claire – please ensure that Bloors know what they have to do (above) and to get everything to us by 15 May latest.

Best regards,

Neil

ONeill Homer

The Office
Merriscourt
Sarsden



RIDGE

**REPRESENTATIONS TO THE
STOW-ON-THE-WOLD AND THE
SWELLS NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN
REGULATION 16 DRAFT
PREPARED FOR BLOOR HOMES
WESTERN**

January 2024

REPRESENTATIONS TO THE STOW-ON-THE-WOLD AND THE SWELLS NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN REGULATION 16 SUBMISSION VERSION JANUARY 2024

Prepared for

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APPENDIX 1: VISION DOCUMENT

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1. These representations have been prepared by Ridge and Partners LLP on behalf of Bloor Homes Western. A detailed representation was submitted under Regulation 14¹ and should be considered alongside this submission.
- 1.2. Bloor Homes have interests in Land North East of Stow (Policy SSNP7), and as such the representations focus on this policy. Where relevant, further consideration is also given to other policies in the emerging Neighbourhood Plan. Bloor Homes congratulates the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group on the work carried out to date to produce the Submission Draft of the Neighbourhood Plan.
- 1.3. Bloor Homes is an experienced national housebuilder and places quality at the heart of everything it does. Bloor Homes Western has successfully delivered a number of developments throughout the Cotswolds including at Cirencester, Fairford, Bourton-on-the-Water, Moreton-in-Marsh and Chipping Norton. Bloor Homes has strong experience of delivering successful community developments, including community hubs, as part of wider allocations.
- 1.4. The allocation of Land North East of Stow addresses a number of important key issues for the town including:
- The need to reverse the increasingly ageing population and attract young people and families to the town;²
 - The lack of development of new affordable housing within the town since the mid-twentieth century;
 - The need for a new community hub;
 - The need for a new parking area, as part of a wider desire to make the historic town square and its immediate surroundings more pedestrian friendly.
- 1.5. The Neighbourhood Plan is based upon an ambitious vision for the town, which cannot be delivered without the allocation of this Site for housing. The Neighbourhood Plan represents a once in a generation opportunity to realise this vision and reverse the ageing demographic of the town. Bloor Homes agrees with Appendix E of the Draft Plan which records the exceptional circumstances which exist for the development of this Site within the AONB.

¹ Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012

² Paragraph [2.4] records: *"Between 2011 and 2019 the proportion of Stow residents aged 18 and under dropped by 30%, the proportion of working age dropped by 6% and the proportion aged 65+ increased by 44%".*

- 1.6. The Neighbourhood Plan has been the subject of extensive consultation over almost 10 years, which culminated in a public consultation on potential development sites in June 2022. From the two sites put forward, over 60% of respondents sought to progress land to the North East of Stow. Since this time, Bloor Homes have worked with the Steering Group with the result that the proposed allocation will deliver in line with the overall vision for the Neighbourhood Plan.
- 1.7. Bloor Homes submitted a Vision Document to the Town Council in June 2022 (**Appendix 1**). This document demonstrates the quality of the proposed development, the wider contribution that it will make to the town and the overall sustainability of the Site. The core elements of the Vision Document (residential development, community hub and parking area) are now reflected in Policy SSNP7.
- 1.8. The Vision Document refers to a larger development of up to 240 dwellings. However, part of the site is outside of the Neighbourhood Plan Area. Under Section 61F(1) a neighbourhood plan qualifying body is only able to allocate land within its own boundary. Thus the allocation is confined only to land within the neighbourhood plan area, as shown in the Illustrative Masterplan.
- 1.9. Bloor Homes make clear that the community hub and car park can be delivered in their entirety as part of the of the proposed allocation for 170 dwellings. Any additional development beyond the allocation and thus beyond the Parish' boundary would be addressed by way of a future planning application.
- 1.10. Overall, Bloor Homes agree with the Parish Council that the allocation and the wider Neighbourhood Plan are fully compliant with the basic conditions under paragraph 8 of Schedule 4B of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, subject to certain policy text which requires modification as set out below (see the detailed sections referring to Policies SSNP3 (Housing Mix), SSNP7 (Land North East of Stow) and SSNP13 (Zero Carbon Buildings)).
- 1.11. Following this Regulation 16 Consultation, it is understood that all representations will be sent to an independent examiner, along with the plan and supporting evidence.
- 1.12. It is requested that Ridge and Partners LLP are kept informed by the District Council throughout the examination of the Neighbourhood Plan. Bloor Homes and Ridge would be happy to provide any additional evidence or explanation should this be of assistance.
- 1.13. Please note that since the Draft Neighbourhood Plan was released for consultation, a new NPPF has been published, and all references within this response relate to the NPPF published on 19 December 2023.

2. POLICY SSNP3: HOUSING MIX

Do you support, oppose or wish to comment on this paragraph?

- 2.1. Bloor Homes wish to comment on both paragraph A and B of this Policy. Bloor supports the objectives of the Policy to promote affordable housing, but considers that the relationship between SSNP3 and SSNP7 should be clarified.

Please give details of your reasons

- 2.2. Paragraph A states that: *"proposals for residential development schemes of 6 or more dwellings are required to deliver as part of the scheme at least 30% of the affordable dwellings (rounded as necessary) as First Homes to be made available at a minimum 50% discount. The mix of other affordable home tenures should have regard to the evidence in an up to date housing need assessment and should also be delivered within the scheme.."* [underlining added]
- 2.3. Supporting Paragraph 5.12 then sets out that *"The report notes that the town has an above average number of affordable homes in its current stock but that this still falls far short of meeting needs in a place like Stow. The community wishes to use the opportunity presented by this plan to redress the balance of its stock and this policy will apply to the allocation in Policy SSNP7 and to all other qualifying proposals over the plan period unless a future review and assessment of need indicates otherwise."* [underlining added]
- 2.4. However, Policy SSNP7 then specifies that *"shall comprise a mix of dwelling types as required by Policy SSNP3 and an affordable housing mix of 70% social rent, 25% First Homes and 5% affordable rent"*. There is therefore a potential internal difference between the two policies and their supporting text, with SSNP7 being more specific than SSNP3 and omitting reference to the need to have regard to the relevant most up-to-date evidence as to need.
- 2.5. It is recommended that policy SSNP3 remains the lead policy for the proposed affordable housing mix as it provides for additional flexibility. This could be achieved by modification of SSNP7 as set out below.
- 2.6. With respect to Paragraph B, Bloor Homes confirms the proposed allocation will accord with the mix set out within this policy, which places an emphasis on family homes to encourage and enable young people and families to live in Stow. The aim of this as set out within supporting paragraph 5.13 is to turn around the increasingly ageing population profile.

What improvements or modifications would you suggest?

- 2.7. The necessary modification to Policy SSNP7 is set out below in Section 4.

3. POLICY SSNP6: HEALTH AND WELLBEING

Do you support, oppose or wish to comment on this paragraph?

- 3.1. This policy is supported. A forthcoming planning application for development on Land to the North East of Stow would comply with and support each of the paragraphs in SSNP6.

Please give details of your reasons

- 3.2. The proposed allocation on Land to the North East of Stow (policy SSNP7) presents a real opportunity to contribute to these ambitions within the draft Neighbourhood Plan in the following ways (NB we have added square bracketed numbers to distinguish the various bullet-points):

Proposals for housing development of any type should demonstrate how they will support the community's physical and mental health and social networks. Proposals will be supported that:

- [1] *encourage active lifestyles and healthy choices.*

- 3.3. The development of Land to the North East of Stow will encourage active lifestyles and healthy choices by providing key links to the town centre which will encourage walking and cycling. In addition, the proposal will provide a comprehensive green infrastructure network and public open space including areas of equipped play in line with the adopted standards.

- [2] *provide access to open spaces and links to footpaths and cycling routes and provide for cycle storage.*

- 3.4. The development will be very well-connected to the centre of Stow. The illustrative masterplan shows the connections proposed to the town centre and neighbouring supermarket. Equally there will be pedestrian and cycle connections to the new community hub from the wider town. All new homes will be provided with cycle storage in line with the policy requirements.

- [3] *deliver on site green infrastructure that meets Building with Nature standards and the principles set out in Natural England's Green Infrastructure Framework as relevant to the nature, scale and location of the proposal.*

- 3.5. Development of Land to the North East of Stow will be landscape-led. All the key site features such as the established woodland along the western boundary, boundary trees and hedgerows would be retained as an integral part of the landscape setting for new residential development.

- 3.6. These retained features will be reinforced and inter-connected by a comprehensive framework of open space, woodland planting and green corridors ensuring delivery of a multi-functional 'Green Infrastructure' setting.

- [4] *are designed to improve air quality, reduce noise pollution, reduce car use and calm traffic.*
- 3.7. As has been set out above, a comprehensive network of footpaths and cycling routes will be provided through the development to ensure that the proposals connect to the wider town and prioritises sustainable transport methods. Furthermore, all homes will be provided with air-source heat pumps, PV panels, and EV charging points to improve air quality and reduce the overall carbon footprint.
- [5] *contribute towards the provision of new community infrastructure defined in Section 6 of this Plan*
- 3.8. Section 6 of the Neighbourhood Plan describes the implementation of the plan and sets out the Local Infrastructure Improvements, including the Community Hub. This is shown on the indicative masterplan. Bloor Homes are committed to providing this as part of their future planning application on land to the North East of Stow.
- [6] *for major housing development schemes as defined by NPPF paragraph 177, include publicly shared outside green, play and allotment space and sympathetic landscaping including appropriate native trees which screen the development from distant views.*
- 3.9. Protecting the landscape setting of Stow-on-the-Wold is a key consideration with residential development set back from sensitive landscape features such as Monarch's Way, the valley to the south and Fosseway House and tree cover to the west. Broad swathes of open space and native woodland planting along the southern and eastern boundaries would blend with existing tree cover, create an attractive settlement edge and screen and filter views from the wider landscape to the east and screening of new housing.
- 3.10. As has been detailed above, the proposal will provide for open space, play equipment and allotments in line with policy requirements.
- [7] *incorporate 'Healthy Home' features, as described in the UK Green Building Council's Health and Wellbeing in Homes (July 2016) document and reflect the varied design of buildings in historic Stow.*
- 3.11. The proposals will incorporate Healthy Homes features and will look to minimise the overall carbon footprint. This includes through the consideration of building materials and construction methods to the way buildings are powered and heated once complete. This will include air-source heat pumps, PV panels, EV charging points to all properties and a Fabric First approach to construction.
- [8] *do not differentiate between different types of housing tenure in respect of their design*
- 3.12. All homes within the development would be tenure blind with respect to their design.

What improvements or modifications would you suggest?

- 3.13. Overall Bloor Homes are supportive of all sub-paragraphs/criteria in this policy and consider that the Land to the North East of Stow would meet these ambitions within the Draft Neighbourhood Plan.

4. POLICY SSNP7: LAND NORTH EAST OF STOW

Do you support, oppose or wish to comment on this paragraph?

- 4.1. This policy is strongly supported, subject to a number of focussed modifications to Paragraphs C (community hub), D (affordable housing) and H (biodiversity net gain) which are set out below.
- 4.2. These modifications are necessary to ensure that the Neighbourhood Plan meets the basic conditions set out in set out in paragraph 8 of Schedule 4B to the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended). notably having regard to national policy (basic condition (a)), contributes to the achievement of sustainable development (basic condition (d)) and is general conformity with the Development Plan (basic condition (e)) In each case, the basic conditions somewhat overlap, e.g. the need for clarity in the policy text or the need for greater flexibility, in order to ensure the achievement of the policy and Plan's objectives.

Please give details of your reasons

- 4.3. Land North East of Stow is a highly sustainable location for growth, being located directly adjacent to the town and its existing services. The Site is in single ownership/control and free from any major constraints. The benefits of delivery in this location are listed in Appendix E and the Vision Document and therefore do not require exhaustive recitation here. In short, Bloor Homes fully agree with the Neighbourhood Plan authors' description of the pressing need for the development of this Site to deliver the Neighbourhood Plan's ambitions.
- 4.4. The Draft Neighbourhood Plan is also accompanied by an extensive evidence base, including the Environmental Report Update as part of the Strategic Environmental Assessment of the Plan. This identifies the likely significant effects of the development of the allocation. Collectively the evidence base further demonstrates why this is a suitable location for development.
- 4.5. Any future planning application on the site will be accompanied by a full suite of technical documents, which will address the matters raised in the Strategic Environmental Assessment for example in relation to landscape and heritage.
- 4.6. The allocation also benefits from strong community support, as recorded in the Consultation Statement and Appendix E. The proposed allocation for Land North East of Stow was presented to the community through a number of public consultations and at a public exhibition The Site was consistently chosen by residents of the local community as the preferred location for growth.
- 4.7. The allocation is therefore fully in line with the NPPF paragraph 29 and also the PPG guidance which states, "*Neighbourhood planning provides a powerful set of tools for local people to plan for the types of development to meet their community's needs and where the ambition of the*

neighbourhood is aligned with the strategic needs and priorities of the wider local area.” (reference ID: 41-001-20190509).

- 4.8. In summary, the allocation will help ensure the vision for the Neighbourhood Plan of making the town a more self-sustaining community can become a reality. It presents an opportunity to not only provide additional housing for the town, but also much needed community facilities and parking.
- 4.9. Finally, we note that as part of the Draft Neighbourhood Plan, the Steering Committee have sought to respond to the matters raised by consultees at the Regulation 14 stage. This is detailed in full within the Consultation Report on policy SSNP7 but includes provisions such as the requirement for a delivery plan within Paragraph I to demonstrate the community facilities will come forward, and this will be secured by a legal agreement. Furthermore, the consultation undertaken to date, has not identified any additional opportunities to provide all the facilities offered by this allocation. In summary, the Steering Committee’s response is supported. Bloor Homes would request the opportunity to respond to any additional points made through Regulation 16 consultation, by way of further evidence to the Examiner, if any new points are raised by other consultees.
- 4.10. Taking each of the criteria within policy SSNP7, the following comments can be made:

Paragraph A: The Proposed Allocation

A. *The Neighbourhood Plan allocates 10 Ha of land to the north east of the town, as shown on the Policies Map, for a low or zero carbon mixed use development scheme comprising:*

- *A community hub building for a mix of local community facility uses (falling within either Classes E(d) or F2(b) only) and managed workspace uses (falling within Class E(g)(i) only);*
- *A public car park scheme of 10approx. 150 spaces; and*
- *An enabling housing scheme of approx. 170 homes comprising approx. 100 open market homes (of which at least 5 plots should be provided as serviced plots for self-build or custom build homes) and approx. 70 affordable homes.*

- 4.11. Stow-on-the-Wold is identified within policy DS1 of the Cotswold Local Plan as being a principal settlement. These are settlements which have been identified by the council as being the most sustainable settlements to deliver growth (page 24, paragraph 6.1.9), however the Local Plan does not allocate any additional sites for housing within Stow.
- 4.12. Within the supporting text for the Neighbourhood Plan at 2.8, it is recognised that *“Failure to provide an appropriate mix of housing has led to more economically active people, particularly the young, being forced to look elsewhere for somewhere to live. There is little unemployment in the North Cotswolds and local employers have difficulty in recruiting. This poses a significant risk to Stow’s sustainability and raises its carbon footprint as many of those who work in Stow commute from the wider area”*. The allocation of this site provides an opportunity to address not only the identified need for affordable housing but also a need for housing more widely within the town.

- 4.13. As has been detailed within Appendix E of the draft Neighbourhood Plan, under the three tests set out in paragraph 183 of the NPPF, *“The scheme would secure both market and affordable housing for which there is a need in Stow to shift its demographic profile, economic base and self-sustainability. It would boost the supply of local housing in way that has not happened in 40 years and contribute to District-wide housing supply”* (paragraph 183(a)).
- 4.14. Furthermore, it is also recognised that *“Since the 1970s, any housing (other than for older people), economic (other than for tourism) and social (again, other than for older people) needs of Stow have been met by other towns in the northern part of the District, or in neighbouring Districts. For the vision to be realised, of necessity these needs must be met in Stow and therefore in the AONB”* (paragraph 183(b)). As such, Land to the North East of Stow is the ideal and indeed the only practical option to deliver housing to meet these needs at scale and to provide the extensive community benefits.

Paragraph B: The Community Hub

- B. *The community hub scheme shall comprise either a single, multi-purpose building or ground floor accommodation as part of the housing scheme and shall be of a detailed specification to be agreed with the Town Council. The building form and design should be distinct from the main housing scheme but should accord with the relevant requirements of the Cotswold and Stow Design Codes. It shall be located adjoining the public car park to be able to share some of its spaces. The building form, its noise attenuation measures and its hours of operation should be designed in a way that will protect the amenities of nearby residential properties but that will also enable the facility to be accessible and functional to meet a wider range of community needs during the daytime and evenings and on weekdays and weekends.*
- 4.15. The proposal for a new community hub is supported. It is recognised that this is a long-held ambition of the community and is also set out within policy S13 of the Local Plan (page 80). As part of the allocation, Bloor Homes are committed to delivering this much longed-for facility. It is however recommended that the supporting text at 5.30 and accompanying Appendix C is updated to state that the overall size and specification of the community hub is *“to be agreed between the applicant and the Town Council in due course as part of the planning application for the whole site”*. This modification is necessary to ensure clarity and flexibility in the ultimate design, in line with basic conditions (a), (b) and (e).

Paragraph C: The Public Car Park

- C. *The public car park scheme shall be located within the site in a way that minimises the walking distance to the town centre and that fits well with the layout of the adjoining housing and community hub schemes. It shall comprise a single car park laid out and landscaped in such a way as to minimise its urban appearance in the wider landscape. It shall be lighted using discreet columns that combine motion-sensitive lighting and CCTV to achieve a safe space that does not emit unnecessary light pollution. It shall comprise a permeable surface only. It shall be designed in such a way that every space can accommodate an electric charging point, with a minimum of 10% of the spaces having installed points at the outset.*

- 4.16. One of the key ambitions of both the Neighbourhood Plan and within policy S13 of the Local Plan is to move car parking provision from the Market Square to an alternative location to reduce congestion. Policy SSNP8 (G) sets out that *“Proposals that lead to a reduction in the overall space in the Market Square dedicated to vehicle parking will be supported, provided that space is repurposed for public realm improvements only and that the number of spaces lost will not undermine the commercial viability of the Market Square.”* The indicative masterplan put forward by Bloor Homes within the Neighbourhood Plan identifies an area on the plan which would provide around 150 parking spaces. The proposals provide a viable, alternative place for people to park (rather than the town centre) with onward off-road pedestrian links to the town centre.
- 4.17. This would be located close to the Fosse Way (A419) and would provide those coming from the north with a place to park without needing to drive into the centre of the town. Equally the car park would be located close to the community centre providing a dual use. Clear and well-signposted pedestrian connections would be provided, giving visitors a direct link to the town centre.

Paragraph D: Affordable Housing

D. The enabling housing scheme shall comprise a mix of dwelling types as required by Policy SSNP3 and an affordable housing mix of 70% social rent, 25% First Homes and 5% affordable rent, and shall be located in a way that relates well to the public car park and community hub schemes to aid their natural surveillance.

- 4.18. Whilst the proposed affordable housing mix is noted, this should be updated so that it is in line with paragraph A of policy SSNP3 which after setting out the requirement for first homes states *“The mix of other affordable home tenures should have regard to the evidence in an up-to-date housing need assessment and should also be delivered within the scheme. Proposals that seek to maximise opportunities for new open market and affordable homes to be made available to persons with either a local connection to the Neighbourhood Area and its immediate surroundings or persons that are defined as key workers will be especially supported.”*[underlining added]
- 4.19. This will ensure that the mix is informed by the most recent evidence available at the time a planning application is submitted and to be agreed with the Housing Officer, as well as ensuring consistency with policy SSNP3. This will ensure clarity and flexibility in line with basic conditions (a), (b) and (e).

Paragraph E: Design

E. The design strategy shall comprise a layout, plots, building forms and designs and a landscape design that are informed by a clear understanding of the relevant guidance published by the Cotswolds AONB and with the relevant requirements of the Cotswold and Stow Design Codes. Its character and appearance should be inspired by the Parks Estate Character Area provisions in the Design Code. It shall provide for a layout and landscaping scheme that successfully mitigate the effects of the development on the AONB countryside to the east and shall acknowledge the views across the site south eastwards from Broadwell Lane.

- 4.20. To date, all work on the site has been landscape let to ensure that the proposals will be well integrated within the landscape. The requirement for the proposals to be informed by the relevant requirements of the Cotswold and Stow Design Codes are noted.

Paragraph F: Active Travel

F. The active travel strategy shall comprise a layout that creates new pedestrian routes to connect with Well Lane; with the superstore development to its immediate west; and with the pavement on the eastern side of the A429 Fosse Way at its junction with Broadwell Lane. These routes shall be well signposted to the town centre from within the housing scheme and from the public car park scheme.

- 4.21. The importance of integrating and connecting the proposed allocation to the wider town are key to the success of the allocation. The application will ensure that pedestrian and cycle connections are fully integrated into the development providing residents and visitors with a clear route to the town centre, the neighbouring supermarket and community facilities.

Paragraph G: Transport Strategy

G. The transport strategy shall seek to discourage traffic generated by the housing, public car park and community hub schemes from travelling east on Broadwell Lane towards Broadwell village. It shall also implement any improvement works shown to be necessary to the A429 Fosse Way/Broadwell Lane junction prior to the occupation of the first dwelling.

- 4.22. The illustrative proposals show that a vehicular access would be created along the northern boundary of the site. The comments within Paragraph G would be addressed within the accompanying Transport Assessment which would accompany the planning application for the development of the Site.

Paragraph H: Green Infrastructure and Biodiversity Net Gain

H. The green infrastructure strategy shall make provision for onsite biodiversity net gain of at least 20% (as measured by the most up to date BNG Metric) as part of its proposals to integrate with the wider network of green infrastructure. It shall avoid any loss of the existing mature tree and hedgerows within the site boundaries and shall seek to reinstate historic hedgerows as part of the landscape scheme. The landscape scheme shall also seek to replace existing non-native tree species on the site boundaries with native species.

- 4.23. In terms of green infrastructure, the policy requires a Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) of at least 20%. It is recommended that this text is modified to be in line with the legislative requirement which from January/February 2024 will require a BNG of at least 10% as introduced by Schedule 7A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (inserted by the Environment Act 2021). The policy should be set in line with the legislative requirement, rather than be required to exceed it.
- 4.24. In line with the recommendations of the Preliminary Review of the Landscape Character and Visual Amenity, a comprehensive Green Infrastructure Strategy will accompany a future planning application on the site. Trying to provide at least 20% BNG may result in unnecessary compromises

with affordable housing and other wider benefits proposed on the site. In its current form, paragraph H is not considered to meet the basic conditions as is set out in paragraph 8 of Schedule 4B to the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) in so far as it does not accord with national policy for the purposes of basic condition (a), could prevent the achievement of sustainable development across the Site contrary to basic condition (d) and would otherwise not be in general accordance with the strategic policies in the development plan for the purposes of basic condition (e).

- 4.25. Bloor Homes request right to make further submission following the publication of the final version of the BNG Regulations following the November draft presented to Parliament, and any further policy or guidance provided by DLUHC or DEFRA.

Paragraph I: Proposed Planning Application Requirements

- I. Proposals should be made in the form of a comprehensive planning application and must include:*
- 1. an illustrative masterplan that defines the land uses and sets out the key development principles for access, layout and design;*
 - 2. a delivery plan setting out how the community hub and public car park schemes and supporting infrastructure will be secured and delivered, with the requirement that a planning obligation is agreed to require both schemes are delivered and available for operation before the final occupation of the housing scheme (excluding the self-build element) at the latest;*
 - 3. design features that improve energy efficiency and reduce carbon dioxide emissions; and*
 - 4. a proposal for how the scheme will manage any future identification of any part of the land as having heritage value as a battlefield site.*

- 4.26. The above requirements are acknowledged. The proposed community hub and public car park will be secured by way of a Section 106 Agreement. Furthermore, careful consideration will be given to designated heritage assets as part of a forthcoming application .

- 4.27. As to the fourth criterion, although the Sustainability Appraisal makes reference to the Battlefield Trust, the Battle of Stow 'designated area' matter identified by the Trust has been considered by Bloor and is addressed within the Archaeological Desk Based Assessment; undertaken as part of the background work for the site. The Desk Based Archaeological Assessment was updated by Orion Heritage and submitted to the Neighbourhood Plan Group via email on 24th May 2023.

- 4.28. Overall, the proposed planning application requirements as set out in paragraph I together with the recommendations set out at 10.7 of the Strategic Environmental Assessment have already been addressed or will be addressed as part of a future planning application on the site.

Exceptional Circumstances

4.29. A planning application for development of this scale within the AONB would be subject to NPPF paragraph 183 which sets out that, planning permission should be refused for major development, other than in exceptional circumstances and subject to three criteria (a), (b) and (c) and where it demonstrated to be in the public interest. Appendix E of the Neighbourhood Plan is supported and has had full regard to the criteria within the NPPF. The forthcoming application for permission would address all of these matters further in the planning and other technical and environmental evidence. For present purposes, it is sufficient to indicate that all three criteria are very clearly met in this location.

Paragraph 183: When considering applications for development within National Parks, the Broads and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, permission should be refused for major development other than in exceptional circumstances, and where it can be demonstrated that the development is in the public interest. Consideration of such applications should include an assessment of:

a. the need for the development, including in terms of any national considerations, and the impact of permitting it, or refusing it, upon the local economy;

4.30. The site will provide both market and affordable housing for Stow. As has been detailed within the Neighbourhood Plan, this development presents a once in a generation opportunity to provide a residential-led development within the town. The only development within the town in recent years has been for care facilities. This has had the effect of changing the demographics of the town (as detailed at 2.4) with a drop in the working age population by 6% and an increase in those over 65 by 44%. The Housing Needs Assessment (HNA) sets out that “*The NA will need to attract more young couples and families to ensures more of a balanced age structure*” (page 10 of HNA). Equally it is understood that around 16% of the housing stock within Stow comprises holiday accommodation and/ or second homes (2.7 of the Neighbourhood Plan). This further limits the housing available for local people.

4.31. The Housing Needs Assessment which accompanies the Neighbourhood Plan suggests that over the Neighbourhood Plan period, 37 affordable homes need to be provided in Stow, albeit this must be seen as a minimum figure. It is understood that an ‘exceptions site’ planning application off Oddington Road, Stow on the Wold has a resolution to grant subject to a Section 106 agreement for affordable dwellings to meet this need (ref: 23/01513/FUL). However, whilst this may meet some of the need, it will not help to address the increasingly ageing demographic population within the town. Rapid delivery of much needed new affordable homes is therefore necessary. Furthermore, the Oddington Road proposal will not deliver the wider benefits proposed as part of this allocation such as the community hub and additional parking.

4.32. Paragraph 161 within the Housing Needs Assessment sets out that “*Our life-stage modelling suggests that a split of 17% 2 bed, 33% 3 bed, 34% 4 bed and 16% 5 bed homes would be suitable to help best meet needs of the plan period. This will provide more homes suitable for families with children, which are a key demographic to ensure that the population of the NA does not age as rapidly as it has in recent years*”.

- 4.33. The allocation of a site for both market and affordable housing will help to redress the demographic balance and the proposed restriction on second homes owners will ensure that the dwellings are occupied as their primary residence, thereby providing employers with an additional pool of people to recruit from and to increase day-to-day spending within the town, thereby providing socio-economic benefits.
- 4.34. Stow is identified as a principal settlement within the Local Plan, and these are settlements that have been identified as the most sustainable within the District and suitable for development.
- 4.35. Over the plan period to date, the following homes have been provided:

Settlement	Total Housing Delivery 2011-2031	Comments
Stow-on-the-Wold	294	Entirely within the AONB. From this, a total of 150 residential units for older people have been granted. Given the majority of other development has been small-scale, only two affordable homes have been delivered over this time.
Tetbury	964	Entirely within the AONB
Moreton-in-Marsh	1,308	The western half of the town is in the AONB
Bourton-on-the-Water	460	Entirely within the AONB

Figures taken from the Housing Land Supply Report 2023.

- 4.36. It can therefore be seen that there have been significantly fewer dwellings permitted in Stow over the plan period than other comparable settlements. The allocation of this site will help to address this imbalance.

b. the cost of, and scope for, developing outside the designated area, or meeting the need for it in some other way; and

- 4.37. The PPG states that “Neighbourhood planning gives communities direct power to develop a shared vision for their neighbourhood and shape the development and growth of their local area. They are able to choose where they want new homes, shops and offices to be built, have their say on what those new buildings should look like and what infrastructure should be provided, and grant planning permission for the new buildings they want to see go ahead”. (ref ID: 41-001-20190509).

- 4.38. In this case, the entire Neighbourhood Plan area is within the AONB. There is therefore no possibility of delivering any residential development at scale without granting permission within the AONB, as is set out in Appendix E (test B). The proposed allocation has been identified by the Town Council to meet the specific needs of the town, notably the need for additional housing to reverse the changing demographics of the town with the aim of attracting young couples and families to the area. The proposed site allocation also has broad community support as identified at several rounds of formal and informal consultation; including where alternative sites have been put forward. In addition, the proposals seek to provide a new car park to free up the market square and a new community centre.

4.39. These proposals are all specific to meet the needs of Stow and therefore could not be located elsewhere.

c. any detrimental effect on the environment, the landscape and recreational opportunities, and the extent to which that could be moderated.

4.40. The forthcoming application and supporting documents will identify and address any potential environmental adverse effects, as well as landscape and recreational enhancement opportunities. In this respect, Bloor's preliminary work has confirmed that any identified landscape harm can be moderated through mitigation measures. It is not considered that there will be any other adverse effects, including in respect of heritage and this will be confirmed through the application material. The indicative masterplan within the draft Neighbourhood Plan clearly demonstrates that significant space is provided for green infrastructure. Furthermore, any forthcoming application also presents an opportunity for biodiversity enhancements and recreational benefits with the creation of additional public open space and new footpath links.

Conclusions on Exceptional Circumstances

4.41. Overall, the proposed allocation will meet the identified needs for Stow. Importantly, this allocation presents an opportunity to provide additional open market and affordable housing of a range of type and tenure which will help retain younger members of the community and attract new families to the area, reversing current demographic trends as well as providing additional car parking for visitors to the town and a new community centre. As such, the exceptional circumstances are considered to be met. The development of the Site is demonstrably in the public interest.

What improvements or modifications would you suggest?

4.42. Overall, this policy is strongly supported, subject to the focussed modifications requested. The proposed allocation presents a once in a generation opportunity to provide new housing within Stow to increase the mix of housing within the town, together with a new car park and community centre.

4.43. Focused modifications are required to Paragraph B in respect of the community hub and Paragraph D in respect of affordable housing is amended to provide clarity and additional flexibility and to ensure that the Policy meets the Basic Conditions.

4.44. Furthermore, it is recommended that the BNG requirement as set out in paragraph H is updated so that it is in line with national legislation and policy and therefore meets the Basic Conditions.

5. POLICY SSNP13: ZERO CARBON BUILDINGS

Do you support, oppose or wish to comment on this paragraph?

5.1. Bloor Homes consider that this policy should be modified as follows.

Please give details of your reasons

5.2. Bloor Homes supports the transition from low to zero carbon (LZC) sources. The Neighbourhood Plan's ambitions and intentions in this respect of this are acknowledged but are likely to be overtaken by national policy and legislative change. The policy approach should be to first ensure Building Regulations Compliance, to avoid duplication of policy and regulations.

5.3. The Government has recently released a consultation "The Future Homes and Buildings Standards: 2023 Consultation", which runs until 6th March 2024. As part of this consultation, it is intended that the updated regulations "*will set the performance requirements at a level which ensures new homes and non-domestic buildings have high fabric standards, use low-carbon heating and are 'zero-carbon ready' (meaning no further work will be needed for them to have zero carbon emissions once the electricity grid has fully decarbonised). Importantly we present options to reduce running costs, while maintaining thermal comfort, balanced against build costs.*" It is anticipated that based on the current consultation that this updated Building Standards Legislation would come into force in 2025, during the early lifetime of the Neighbourhood Plan.

What improvements or modifications would you suggest?

5.4. The policy should be modified so that it is in line with national guidance to avoid duplication with other regulations, particularly if Building Regulations are likely to be updated as soon as 2025.

6. CONCLUSIONS

- 6.1. In conclusion, Bloor Homes commends the Steering Group on the work carried out to date on producing the draft Neighbourhood Plan.
- 6.2. The proposed allocation at policy SSNP7 provides a once in a generation opportunity to provide new market and affordable housing to the town; increasing the type and mix of housing within the local area. This draft allocation also seeks to address and support wider ambitions for the town, including provision of a new multi-use community centre and additional car parking for visitors which in turn will allow for public realm improvements in the market square.
- 6.3. Bloor Homes look forward to working with the Neighbourhood Plan Group, Stow on the Wold Town Council, The Swells Parish Council, Cotswold District Council and Gloucestershire County Council, to deliver this exciting development.

APPENDIX 1

Vision Document

THE VISION FOR
*Land East of Fosse Way,
Stow-on-the-Wold*



JUNE 2022





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1.0 INTRODUCTION

- Introduction and Purpose
- Site Location and Context
- Planning Policy



2.0 SITE CONSIDERATIONS

- Suitability for Development
- Constraints and Opportunities
- Transport
- Built Heritage
- Archaeology
- Landscape and Views
- Ecology
- Trees
- Flood Risk and Drainage



3.0 DESIGN PRINCIPLES AND EMERGING MASTERPLAN

- The Vision
- Access, Movement and Connectivity
- Green Infrastructure
- Community Facilities
- Place Making
- Design Concept
- The Illustrative Masterplan
- Why Support Land East of Fosse Way?



(above) Bloor Homes: Bourton-on-the-Water, Cotswolds

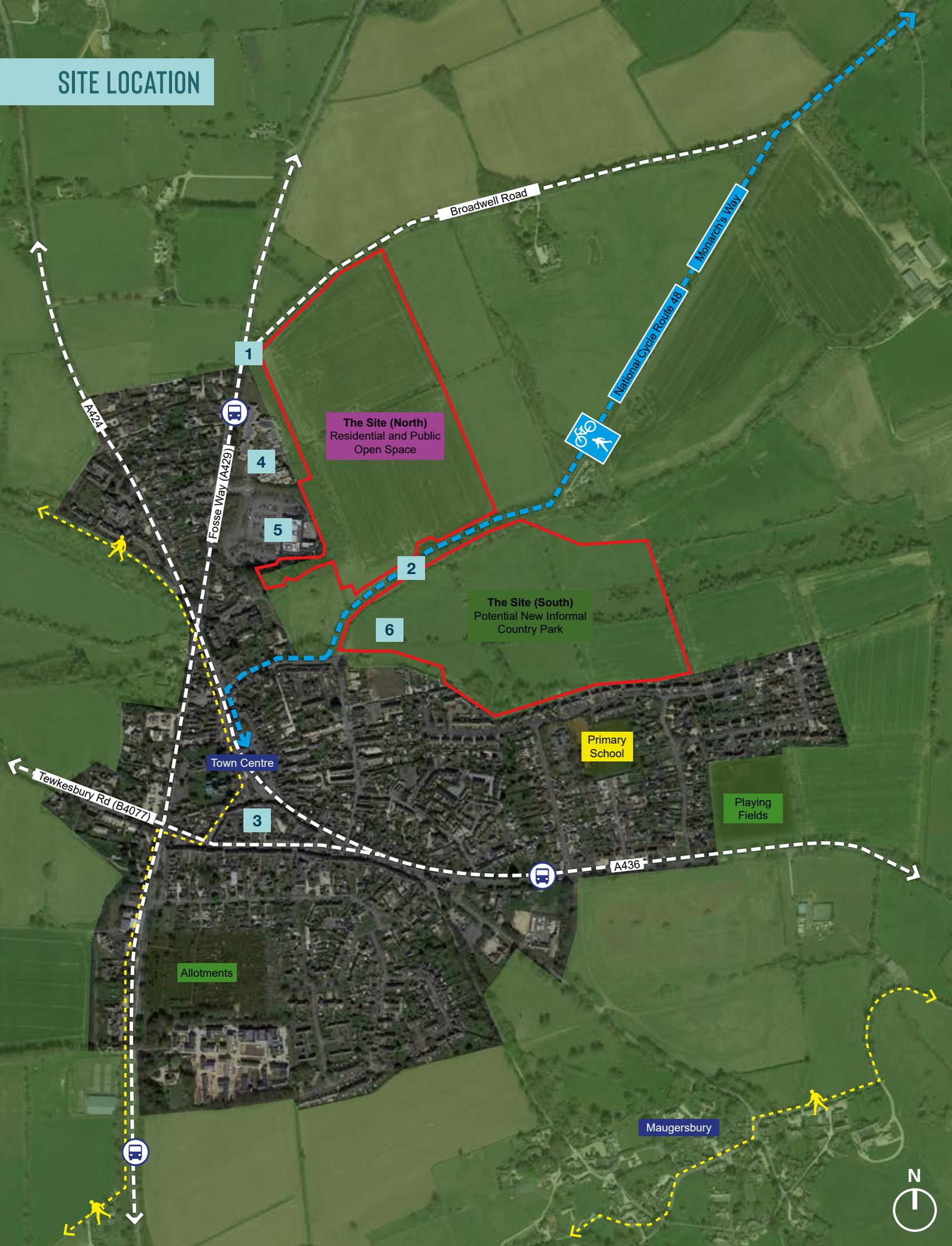


INTRODUCTION

- Introduction and Purpose
- Site Location and Context
- Planning Policy

1.0

SITE LOCATION





(1) Trees along northern site boundary (2) Monarch's Way Long Distance Route (3) Stow-on-the Wold Town Centre (4) Edwardstow Court (5) Tesco (6) Potential location for new Country Park

INTRODUCTION & PURPOSE

This Vision Document has been prepared by Bloor Homes to demonstrate to Stow-on-the-Wold Town Council, Cotswold District Council, other stakeholders and landowners the suitability and potential capacity of Land East of Fosse Way for residential development and associated uses.

It outlines the guiding principles for a high-quality development that could accommodate circa 240 new homes, a Community Hub, car parking and a new country park.

The Document has been prepared on behalf of Bloor Homes who have a controlling interest in the land. Bloor Homes are experienced housebuilders, skilled at bringing forward high-quality housing schemes throughout the Cotswolds and across the country.

SITE LOCATION AND CONTEXT

The site is located on the north eastern edge of Stow-on-the-Wold and comprises two parcels of land: the northern parcel, which is proposed for residential development and associated areas of open space; and the southern parcel, which has been identified as a potential location for a new informal country park.

The northern parcel is situated adjacent to Tesco supermarket, Hawkesbury Place and Edwardstow Court Care Home, which are located beyond a belt of trees along the western boundary. Broadwell Road extends along the northern boundary whilst the eastern boundary adjoins the agricultural landscape surrounding the town. Wells Lane, which forms part of Monarch's Way long distance trail is located along the southern boundary.

The southern parcel lies to south of Monarch's Way and forms a minor valley, which separates the northern parcel of land from the existing settlement edge at Camp Gardens on the opposite side of the valley. The town centre is located to the south of the site.

PLANNING POLICY

The current adopted Cotswold Local Plan covers the period up to 2031.

Policy DS1 sets out the development strategy with a requirement to deliver at least 8,400 dwellings over the plan period within the principal settlements including Stow-on-the-Wold.

Policy S13 relates to Stow-on-the-Wold and the supporting text for this policy acknowledges the importance of tourism to the town. A key priority is to enhance economic activity further, but the plan recognises that there are problems with car parking and congestion within the centre of town.

It further sets out that

“Options should be explored for improving the physical environment of the town centre, including moving car parking provision from the Market Square to a suitable location within easy reach of the town centre. A suitable site could also be identified for additional off-street car parking provision to alleviate the impact of tourism and maintain the contribution that visitors make to the town’s economy”.

In addition, the text states: “The District Council would support the provision of a new community facility, incorporating sports and leisure provision, new library facilities and health services.”

Within the current Local Plan, there are no housing allocations proposed for the town and there has only been limited development within the town over recent years. This is at odds with other similar towns within the district such as Tetbury and Bourton-on-the-Water which are within the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) and Moreton in Marsh (of which the western half falls within the AONB) which have seen significant development in recent years.

Policy EN5 relates to the Cotswold Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

Policy H2 sets out that for all developments over 11 dwellings, 40% affordable housing should be provided.

Policy EN1 regards the built, natural and historic environment. It sets out that, “New development will, where appropriate, promote the protection, conservation and enhancement of the historic and natural environment”.

Policy EN10 notes the importance of the consideration of designated heritage assets.

Policy INF3 emphasises the need for development to

support and provide sustainable travel options.

Policy INF7 orientates around green infrastructure.

Policy INF8 relates to water infrastructure and drainage.

EMERGING NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

A Neighbourhood Plan is currently being prepared for Stow-on-the-Wold and the Swells to cover the time period up to 2031. The vision for the community includes:

“The whole community will have benefitted from new genuinely affordable, energy efficient homes with robust connectivity, and other carbon-neutral developments providing educational and leisure provision, new employment space and greatly improved parking provision. It will thus sustain an energetic and productive community of all ages.”

The most recent draft Neighbourhood Plan (revision 12) acknowledges at 3.25 that the “failure to provide an appropriate mix of housing, particularly affordable housing, has led to more economically-active people, particularly the young, being forced to look elsewhere for somewhere to live”. Equally the Housing Needs Survey updated in 2016 identified that there were 27 households in need of affordable housing. Given the low response rate, this is likely to be significantly higher (as the District Council’s current waiting list for people with a Stow local connection would suggest). Within Stow, the main types of housing which have been given permissions is for extra care developments.

It is worth noting that as part of an initial consultation carried out by the Steering Group to ask local residents their views on which sites they considered to be most preferable for development two land parcels (Sites 6 & 7) both within the subject site were ranked No 1 and 2.

SHELAA

The site has been submitted and assessed as part of the Council’s SHELAA Assessment and is identified as S61. The Council concluded that the site would be unsuitable for development raising concerns over matters such as the location within the AONB and that it would comprise major development, the settlement pattern and the potential impact on designated heritage assets. Bloor Homes have undertaken extensive technical work in respect of these matters and this Vision Document will demonstrate that the site is suitable for development and how the council’s concerns can be overcome.

LOCAL PLAN REVIEW

The Council are currently undertaking a partial review of the Local Plan. An Regulation 18 'Issues and Options' consultation was undertaken in February/March 2022. Whilst this is at an early stage, it is clearly setting out the Council's intended direction of travel in terms of planning policy.

One of the key matters relates to the climate change emergency which has been declared. Of this, there are a number of options which include not only targeting zero carbon housing but also looking at locating development within the most sustainable settlements, where there is better access to jobs, services, facilities and public transport.

This approach means that Stow must be considered as a suitable location for new development. As is demonstrated within this vision document, the site has easy access to all core services and the town provides a range of employment opportunities.

Equally another key topic relates to Green Infrastructure, with the document acknowledging that the Covid-19 pandemic has put greater pressure on Green Infrastructure, and it specifically asked for potential sites for country parks.

Whilst the review is at an early stage, it is clear that the climate emergency, which has been declared will be at the forefront of decision making. In this respect, new development should be located within the most sustainable settlements to minimise the need to travel.

MAJOR DEVELOPMENT WITHIN AONB

As has been set out within the SHELAA assessment, development on this site would comprise major development in the AONB. Policy EN5 requires development to accord with the requirements of national policy which is paragraph 177 of the NPPF.

This states "When considering applications for development within National Parks, the Broads and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, permission should be refused for major development other than in exceptional circumstances, and where it can be demonstrated that the development is in the public interest."

In this case, the proposal is for a mixed-use development including for around 240 residential dwellings of which 40% (96 dwellings) would be affordable. It is

acknowledged and accepted that there is a need to provide additional housing across the country and within Cotswold District itself. Within Stow itself, the draft Neighbourhood Plan acknowledges that there is a need for at least 27 affordable dwellings within the town and that with the development that has taken to place to date there is an increasingly ageing population within the town and younger people and families are being forced to move away as there is no appropriate housing. This proposal will provide a mix of dwellings to meet the needs of the local population together with much needed affordable housing.

Secondly and as identified within both the draft Neighbourhood Plan and Local Plan, parking is a problem within the town. The proposal looks to provide a 150-space car park for visitors to the town. The location of this car park is considered a benefit because it will intercept traffic coming from the north on the A429 (Roman Road) and will help reduce traffic on Sheep Street. The proposed car park will be located to the south of the site, meaning visitors to the town would have a short walk to the centre of town.

Also included within the masterplan is a potential flexible use community hub of around 1,000sqm. This is noted as being an ambition within the Local Plan and the need for a community facility has been identified within an early draft Neighbourhood Plan. As the plan is indicative at the current time, in determining the ultimate scale, layout and design of any such facility Bloor Homes would seek further details of the demand for a new community hub in Stow; the type of potential users and frequency of use; and the accountable body(ies) who could manage the facility, all of which would impact on its viability. In this respect, Bloor would look to discuss this particular element of the proposals with the Town Council and District Council in order to ensure that the space provided met the needs of the present and future local community.

The final part of the masterplan proposes a Country Park. This is a tremendous opportunity to provide a significant area of informal green space for the local community to use for recreation; extending accessible countryside into the heart of Stow-on-the-Wold. The emerging Local Plan acknowledges the importance of green space to communities, especially after the Covid-19 pandemic.

As such, when considered as a whole this development would meet the exceptional circumstances for development within the AONB.



(above) Bloor Homes: Chipping Norton, Cotswolds

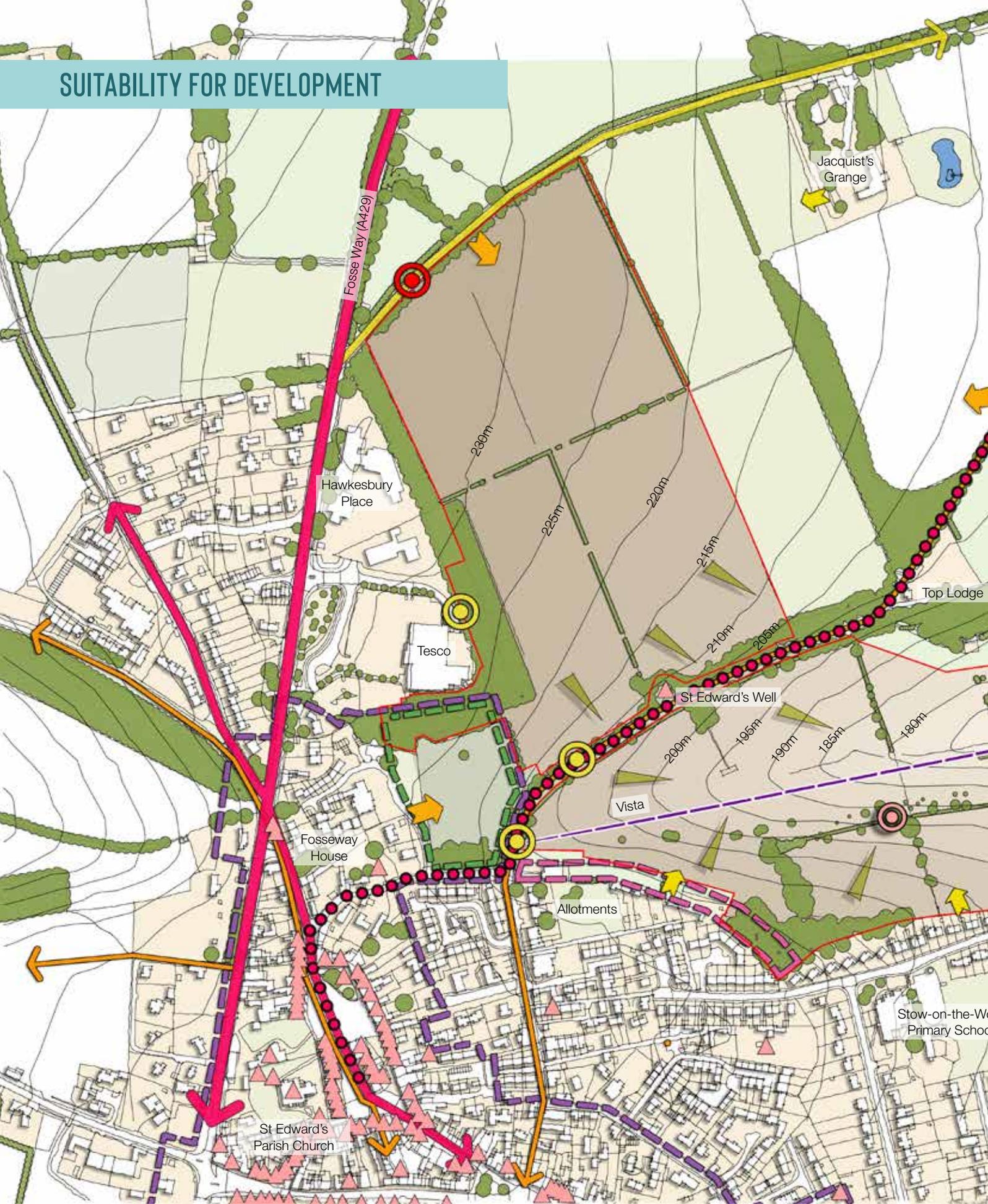


SITE CONSIDERATIONS

- Suitability for Development
- Constraints and Opportunities
- Transport
- Landscape
- Views
- Built Heritage
- Archaeology
- Ecology
- Trees
- Flood Risk & Drainage

2.0

SUITABILITY FOR DEVELOPMENT





Detailed environmental assessment work has been undertaken to inform the vision and proposals. The key opportunities and constraints, which have been taken into account by the design team, are shown on the plan above

CONSTRAINTS & OPPORTUNITIES

-  Land East of Fosse Way
-  Existing settlement
-  Existing pond
-  Public Right of Way
-  National Cycle Route
-  Primary Road
-  Secondary Route
-  Proposed Vehicular Access
-  Potential pedestrian/cycle connection
-  Conservation Area
-  Listed Building
-  Scheduled Monument
-  Open space within Conservation Area
-  Consider views (highways/footpaths)
-  Consider views (residential)
-  Vista
-  Veteran tree

TRANSPORT

EXISTING CONSTRAINTS AND OPPORTUNITIES

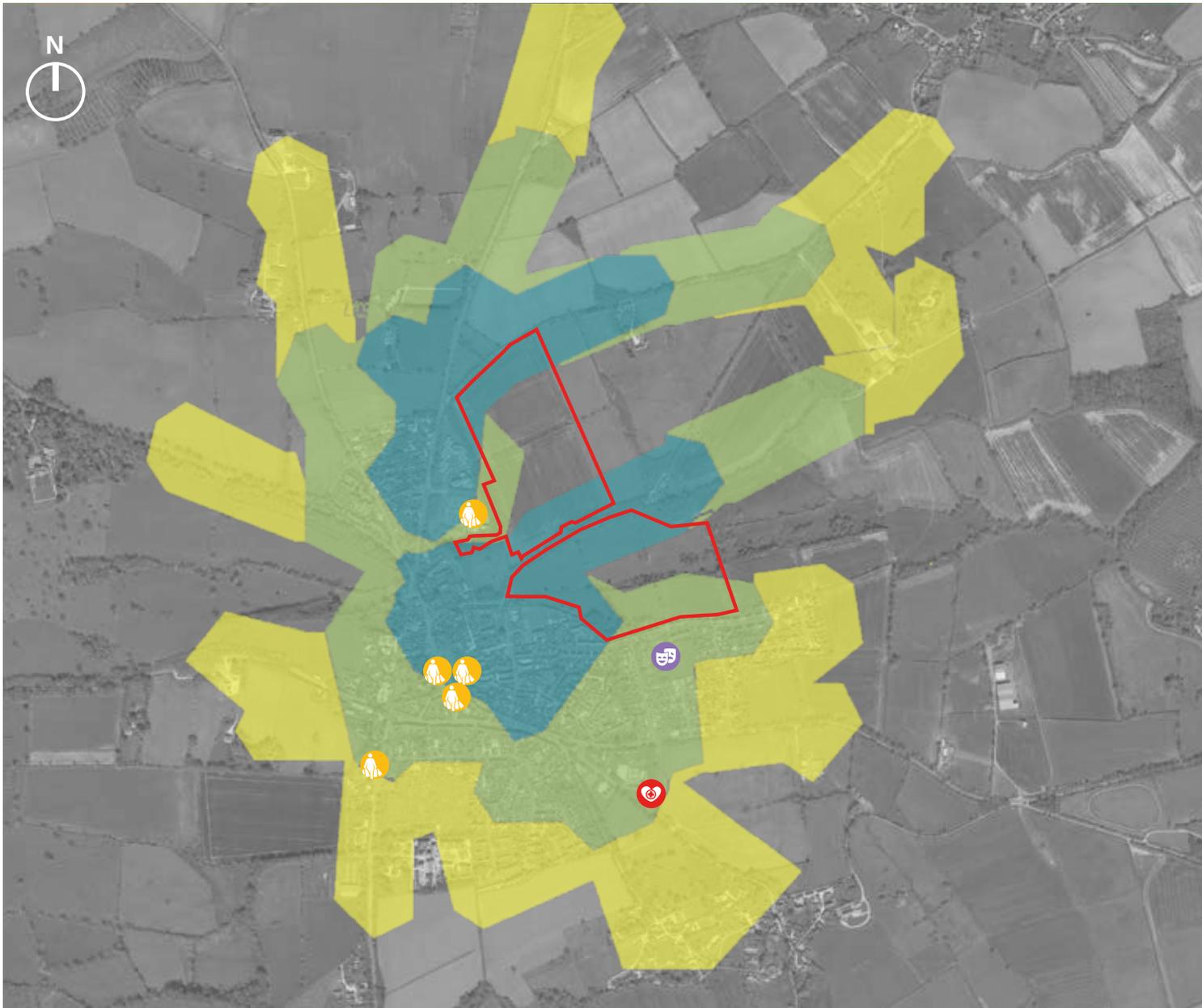
Initial feasibility work has been undertaken by Phil Jones Associates (PJA) in relation to the proposal site. This work has looked at accessibility and distance to local facilities and the proposed highways works required to facilitate the development together with highways capacity.

There are a number of local facilities within walking/ cycling distance of the site providing a wide range of services for everyday needs. As can be seen on page 15, all key local amenities are within a desirable or acceptable walking distance from the site, and they are accessible via existing footways and crossing points on the local highway network. The accessibility of the site to local facilities will be further enhanced by the development proposals.

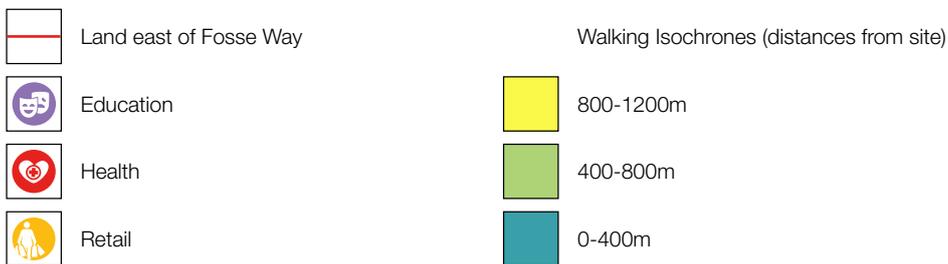
The current local bus network is based on Cheltenham to Moreton-in-Marsh routes and a series of infrequent market day buses to Stow-on-the-Wold and surrounding settlements. A number of routes operate at school times linking Stow-on-the-Wold to Cirencester. The proposed development is within 400m of existing bus stops.

The site benefits from being in close proximity to a range of existing pedestrian and cycle facilities including National Cycle Route 48. These routes locally provide access to local facilities in Stow-on-the-Wold town centre, and public transport infrastructure.





LOCAL SERVICES AND FACILITIES



ACCESS STRATEGY

VEHICULAR ACCESS

Vehicular access is proposed to be solely provided from a priority junction, along the northern boundary of the site as shown on page 17. The proposed access and visibility splays can be provided entirely within the site boundary and extent of adopted highway boundary. As part of the proposals, it is proposed to widen Broadwell Road to 5.5m to accommodate two-way traffic generated by the development.

WALKING AND CYCLING

Links into existing pedestrian and cycle facilities will facilitate sustainable travel and connectivity into surrounding areas:

- *Provision of 2m footway on southern side of Broadwell Road, linking into existing footway provision on A429 Fosse Way.*
- *Provision of pedestrian / cycle connection in the south-west corner of the site onto Monarch's Way, to provide a gateway feature into the country park and connection onto National Cycle Route 48;*
- *Provision of pedestrian connection into the retail park located to the west of the proposed development, to enhance connectivity to local facilities and bus stop provision within the retail park for residents and provide access for residents to the west of the site to the Country Park. This will bring the site to within desirable walking distance of retail facilities; and*
- *A pedestrian route into the Country Park from Monarch's Way, to the north of its junction with Parson's Corner*

PUBLIC TRANSPORT

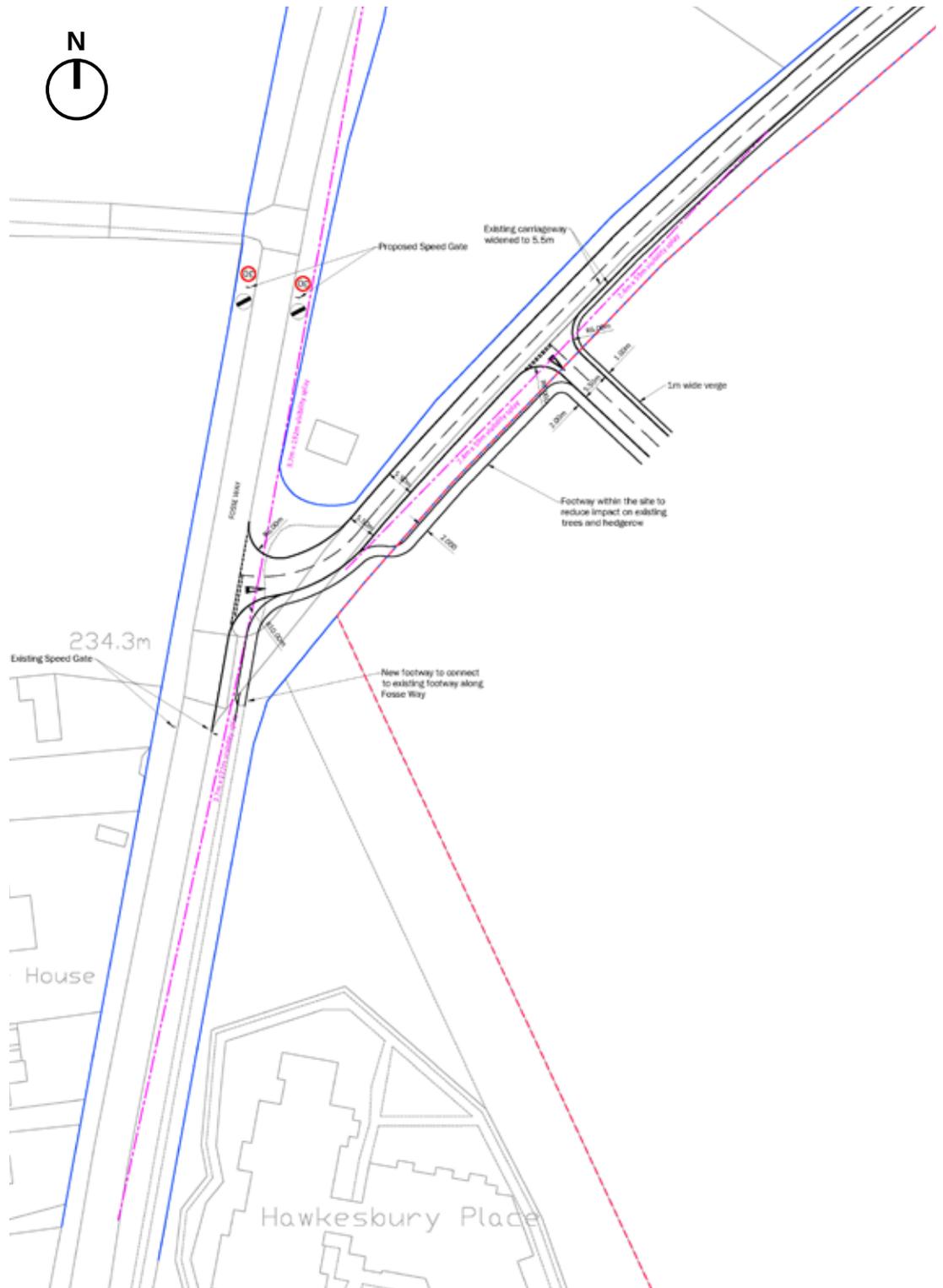
Public Transport The site is relatively well served by existing bus services and it is proposed to provide additional pedestrian connections from the community centre to the neighbouring supermarket, which would ensure that this facility could be conveniently accessed via public transport. There is also the opportunity to discuss the re-routing of bus services with local companies.

OFF-SITE IMPROVEMENTS

In order to facilitate the proposed development, it is proposed to make a series of amendments to this junction to facilitate access to the proposed developments, as follows:

- *Realign the junction between Fosse Way / Broadwell Road to accommodate the swept path of larger vehicles and improve visibility to the north and south of the junction;*
- *Provision of a 2m footway around the south-eastern corner of the junction to link into the existing pedestrian infrastructure on Fosse Way and proposals at the site access; and*
- *Reduction of the speed limit through the junction, by re-locating the existing National Speed Limit to the north of the junction.*

All of these improvements can be accommodated within the adopted highways boundary. These junction enhancements will ensure that the main road facilitating access to the proposed site is appropriate for all vehicles accessing the site and that safety considerations are at the forefront of design solutions. Modelling of the proposed junction improvements demonstrated that it would operate within acceptable thresholds of capacity in all scenarios. This can be delivered within adopted highway boundary.



SITE-ACCESS POINT: PRIORITY JUNCTION

LANDSCAPE

A Preliminary Landscape and Visual Appraisal has been carried out by FPCR Environment and Design, which explores landscape character and visual amenity and considers its capacity to accommodate development.

LANDSCAPE CHARACTER

The Site and Stow-on-the-Wold are located within the Cotswold Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB).

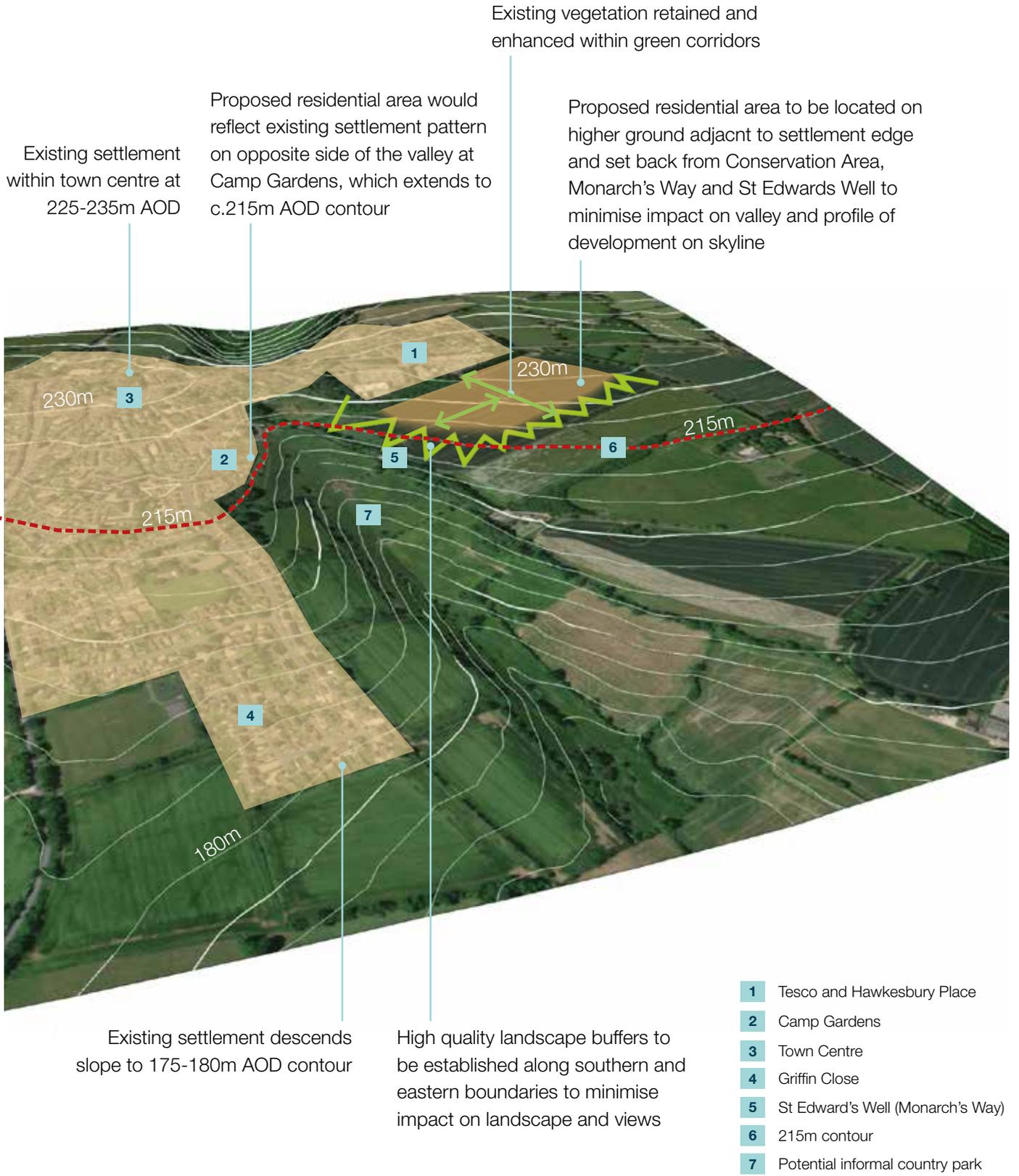
The site is primarily located within the 'Farmed Slopes' Landscape Type (LT) and 'Moreton Farmed Slopes' Landscape Character Area (LCA) as identified by the Cotswolds AONB Landscape Character Assessment. The key characteristics for this Landscape Type include the following:

- *Transitional landscape between the High Wold and the Pastoral Lowland Vale;*
- *Smooth gentle landform with gentler landform on lower slopes, and sense of exposure on some upper slopes;*
- *Small, often geometric, broadleaf and coniferous woodlands and tree belts along watercourses draining the slopes;*
- *Large deciduous and mixed woodlands bordering parkland, integrated by strong hedgerow network;*
- *Numerous historic parkland landscapes;*
- *Productive arable and pasture farmland with a strong pattern of hedgerows;*
- *Small stone built villages and hamlets on slopes above the Pastoral Lowland Vale.*

STOW-ON-THE-WOLD SITE ASSESSMENT (SHELAA 2021)

An assessment of potential housing sites has been undertaken for the district by Cotswold District Council. The majority of the site itself is located within Site S61 (Land East of Roman Road) (figure 4.), which is assessed as being of 'High' landscape sensitivity. This assessment has been addressed by the Preliminary Landscape and Visual Appraisal and design proposals as summarised below and illustrated opposite:

- The residential area would be set back from sensitive landscape and heritage features identified by the SHELAA including St Edward's Well, the Conservation Area and Monarch's Way;
- Built development would be largely restricted to areas of higher ground (circa 215m-235m AOD), which are well-related to the existing settlement edge (230-235m AOD) and reflect the pattern and extents of development on the opposite side of the valley which descends to 215m AOD at Camp Gardens (adjacent to the Stow Camp Scheduled Monument) and 180m AOD at Griffin Close to the south-east;
- Whilst the SHELAA assessment is based upon a development of up to 350 units, the emerging masterplan proposes a development of circa 240 units. This allows for generous set-backs and substantial landscape buffers and areas of structural planting along the southern and eastern edges of the residential area in order to screen and filter views and minimise the profile of new housing on the skyline;
- As noted by the SHELAA, development of the site also provides opportunities for linking existing belts of woodland, enhancement of existing hedgerows, creation of wildlife corridors and enhancement of biodiversity.
- There is potential for reduced scale development along the edges of the residential area to further minimise the impacts of new housing on the landscape setting and AONB.



TERRAIN MODEL OF SITE AND STOW-ON-THE-WOLD

VIEWS

Through the preliminary baseline analysis and fieldwork, it is assessed that the site is generally screened to views from the north and west by existing vegetation and that visual receptors are primarily located to the south and east of the site. Whilst expansive views in these directions are possible from within the site, visibility of the site from residential area, roads and the public rights of way network to the east and south-east varies due to the localised screening effects of intervening vegetation and topography.

There is the potential for longer distance views from visual receptors located on areas of higher ground within the AONB to the east. However, the site would form a relatively small element within views at these distances and be seen in the context of existing settlement within the AONB.

The creation of a green infrastructure framework of new habitats would expand upon the existing landscape features of the site, with new green infrastructure, in the form of woodland, hedges, trees and green space, assimilating development into the landscape, and minimising impacts and adverse effects on landscape character and visual amenity. Subject to a sensitively designed masterplan and green infrastructure strategy, it is considered that the site and its landscape context is tolerant of change and has the capacity to absorb well-designed and well-planned development.



1 View west from Monarch's Way



2 View west from Broadwell Road



3 View south-east from Fosse Way

Jacquist's Grange



Views of existing development at Stow-on-the-Wold

Views towards site screened and filtered by intervening vegetation



Vegetation along western site boundary screens views

Existing built development adjacent to western site boundary



BUILT HERITAGE AND ARCHAEOLOGY

BUILT HERITAGE

An initial assessment of built heritage assets has been undertaken. There are a number of designated heritage assets within the vicinity of the site, and the Conservation Area adjoins the southwest corner of the site. Whilst there are no listed buildings within the site, those close to the site include:

- St Edward's (Stow) Well, which adjoins the site to the south and is Grade II listed
- Summer House (Fosseway House) which is Grade II listed and located 115metres to the south west
- K6 Telephone Kiosk and Drinking Fountain and Horse Trough which is Grade II listed and located 125 metres to the south west

Due to the intervening development, natural screening and distance from the site, the heritage assets share no inter-visibility with it. Within the wider area, the tower to the Grade I Listed St Edward's Parish Church is partially evident in views from the southern part of the site and this part of the site is considered to contribute to the setting of the church. However intervening development and existing natural screening lessens the visual prominence of the church from this vantage point.

The southwestern corner of the site is located within the Stow-on-the-Wold and Mangersbury Conservation Area. The projecting south-western parcel within the site is located within the designation and comprises a tree covered area.

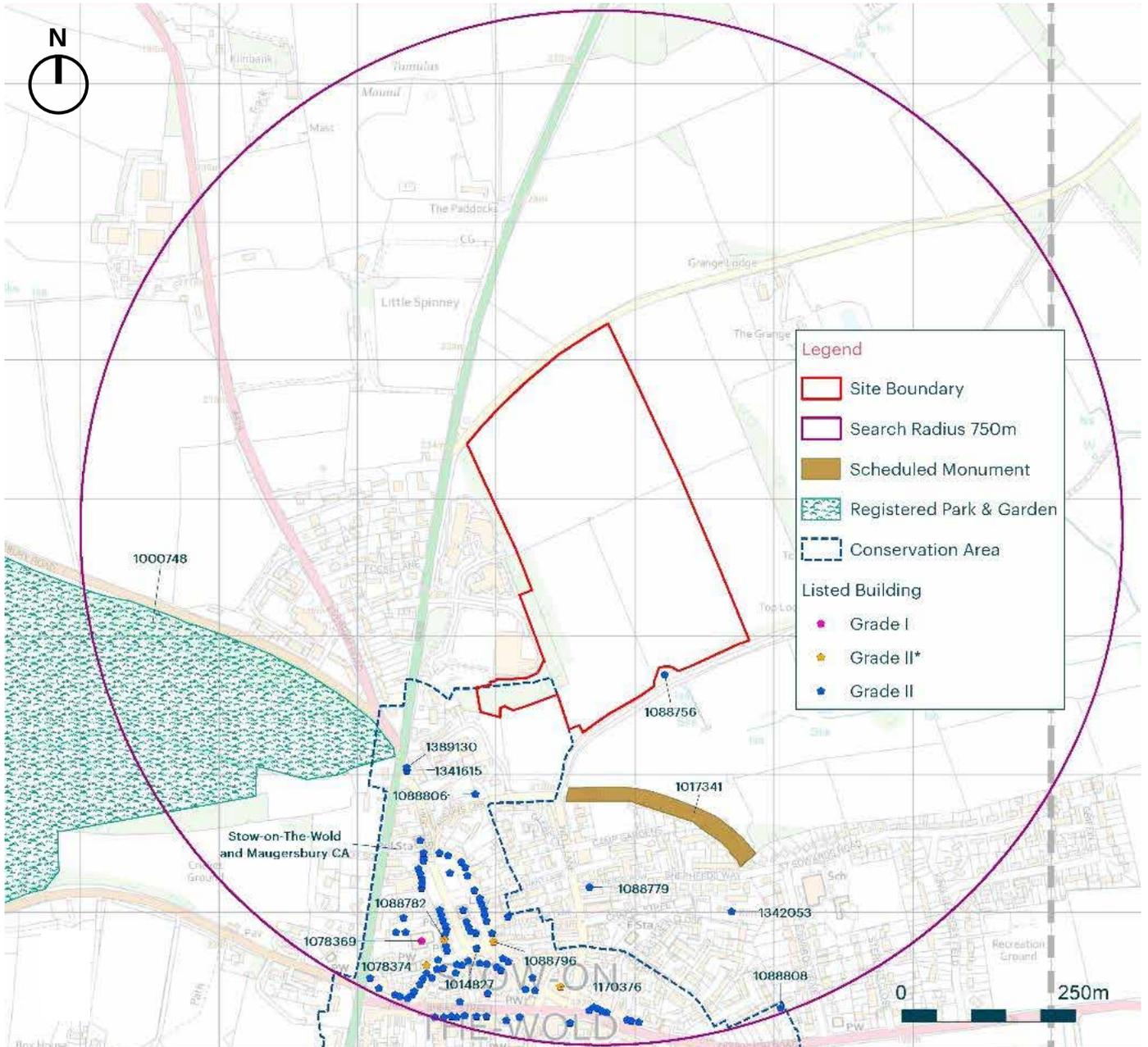
ARCHAEOLOGY

A desk based archaeological appraisal has been undertaken of the site which has indicated that the site has a moderate potential to contain finds and features from the Prehistoric and Roman periods and a low potential for all other periods.

A programme of archaeological evaluation is proposed to support a future planning application to fully assess the archaeological potential across the study site. This will be a staged approach: the first stage will be a programme of archaeological geophysical survey; the second stage will comprise archaeological trial trenching, the scope and timing of which will be discussed with the Local Planning Authority following the results of the geophysical survey.



(1) St Edward's Parish Church (2) Summer House (Fosseway House) (3) St Edward's (Stow) Well



HERITAGE DESIGNATIONS

ECOLOGY AND TREES

ECOLOGY

A preliminary ecological appraisal has been carried out on the site. This confirms there are no statutory or non-statutory ecological designations identified within the vicinity of the site and as such would not pose a constraint to any future development.

The site is dominated by habitats of limited ecological value or botanical interest, with arable dominating the northern parcel and improved grassland the southern parcel.

As part of the proposed development, there is a real opportunity to improve biodiversity within the site. The initial ecological appraisal carried out recommends that woodland, scrub and neutral grassland are retained where possible.

TREES

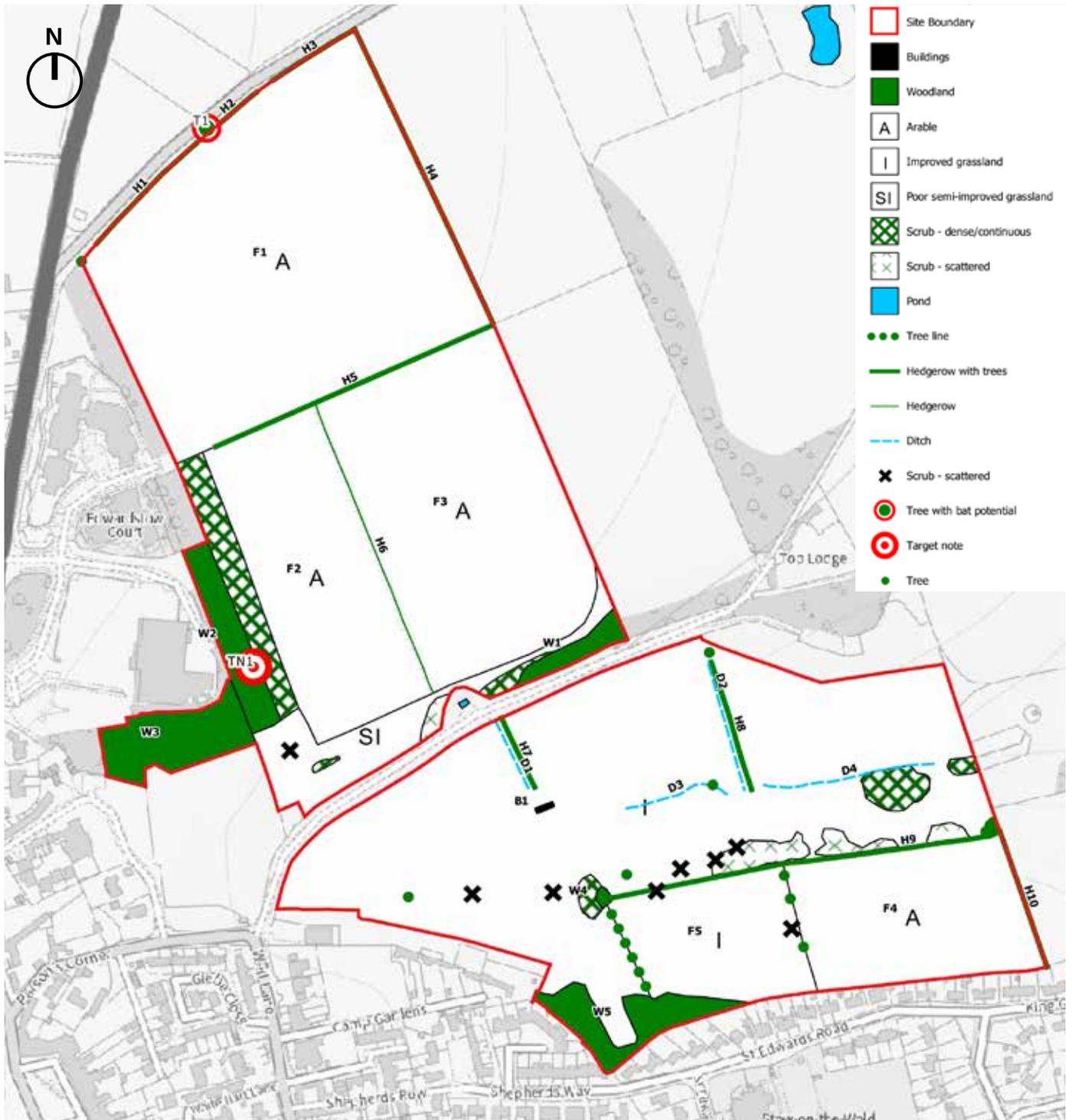
A preliminary arboricultural appraisal has been carried out on the site. The appraisal concludes that due to the nature of the tree stock being primarily located along the perimeter of the site, any removals could largely be limited to providing access both onto, and within, the parcels. Two veteran trees are located within the site and would be retained within areas of open space.

The boundary groups, although of low to moderate arboricultural quality, provided screening value and importantly should be incorporated into the development to continue to provide this function, however any losses for access onto and within the site should not constrain development providing there is appropriate mitigation to offset any loss of canopy cover and impacts to biodiversity.

An area-wide Tree Protection Order (TPO 14/00005) covers trees along the western boundary and statutory constraints apply to the trees located within the Conservation Area, which are covered by the site boundary.



(1) Existing vegetation along northern boundary (2) Trees along western boundary (3) Land to south of Monarch's Way to be retained and enhanced as new country park



PHASE 1 HABITAT SURVEY

FLOOD RISK AND DRAINAGE

FLOOD RISK

The site is located in Flood Zone 1, which according to the Environment Agency flood map for planning is at the lowest risk of flooding.

DRAINAGE

A preliminary desk-based assessment has identified that the site is largely underlain by limestone and as such it is envisaged that surface water run off will be disposed of through soakaway/ infiltration into the ground.

Wherever possible, SuDS features will be above ground to provide amenity and biodiversity benefits (such as infiltration trenches and basins). The storm water storage provided will be appropriately sized to account for the projected impacts of climate change.

It is expected that foul drainage from the development will most likely need to be pumped via an on-site foul water pumping station which will outfall to public sewers located to the south within Well Lane. There will be early and ongoing consultation with Thames Water to confirm the most appropriate point of discharge for foul drainage and to allow time for any necessary infrastructure improvements to be implemented.





-  Potential locations for sustainable drainage features
-  Indicative slope direction



(above) Potential location for new informal Country Park for Stow-on-the-Wold



DESIGN PRINCIPLES AND THE EMERGING MASTERPLAN

- The Vision
- Access, Movement and Connectivity
- Green Infrastructure
- Community Facilities
- Place Making
- Design Concept and Objectives
- Illustrative Masterplan
- Why Support East of Fosse Way?

3.0

The overall Vision for East of Fosse Way is to create a distinctive and high-quality place alongside a new informal country park, which respects and enhances the character and assets of Stow-on-the-Wold whilst ensuring connectivity and inclusivity with the existing community.



EAST OF FOSSE WAY - A SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY

East of Fosse Way presents an exciting opportunity to create a sustainable development of high environmental quality. A locally distinctive neighbourhood of approximately 240 new homes complete with a community hub, a new car park and informal country park could be delivered and set within a strong landscape framework to provide residents with an attractive, green environment in which to live.

The following principles underpin the East of Fosse Way development:

- Improved social opportunities via provision of new affordable housing (tenure blindness) and a mix of new market housing including a proportion of smaller more affordable market homes.
- Improving connectivity for new and existing residents of Stow-on-the-Wold who will be connected to the new community and its open spaces by sustainable means of travel making best use of existing connections within and around the town.
- A landscape-led approach to ensure urban form is well-integrated into the surrounding countryside with structural landscape planting creating a soft positive settlement edge for Stow-on-the-Wold. Land dedicated to green infrastructure and a new informal country park would meet current requirements for Biodiversity Net Gain.
- Provision of new community facilities at the heart of the development which would include a new community hub and additional parking for Tesco and the town centre.
- Creation of a distinctive and attractive new residential area which is set back and buffered from existing landscape and heritage assets such as the Conservation Area, St Edward's Well and Monarch's Way.

Social Opportunity – delivering affordable housing and a mix of market homes including smaller, more affordable market homes

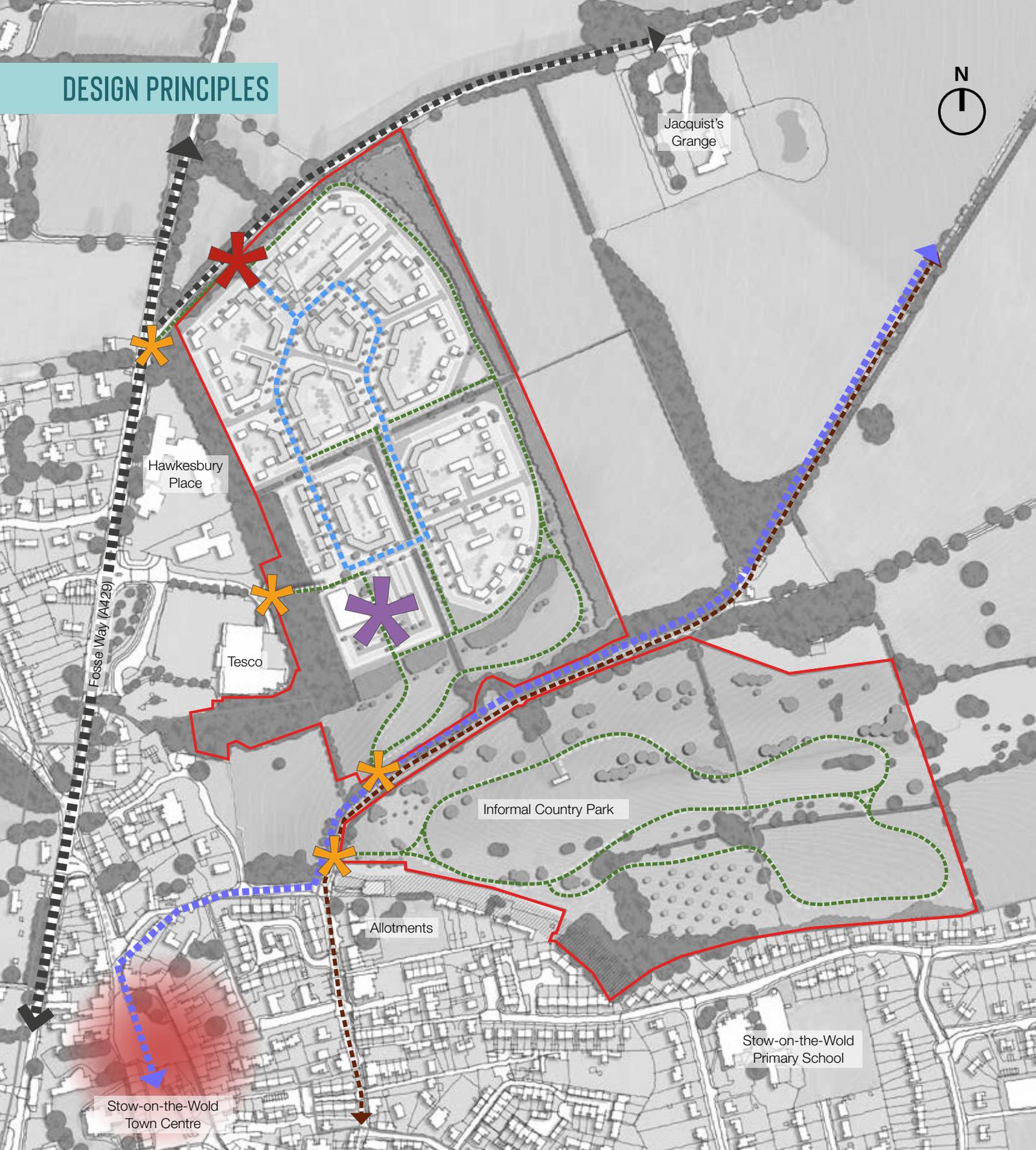
Improving Connectivity – to have a high regard for the health and wellbeing of existing and future residents allowing them easy access towards areas of public open space, Tesco and the town centre

Landscape-Led Masterplan – set within a robust framework of retained and new landscape features. A substantial new informal country park would be created at the eastern edge of Stow-on-the-Wold

New Community Facilities – provision of a potential new community hub, additional town centre car parking and new walking and cycling routes

Place Making – Creating an attractive new residential development which is led by and well integrated with the existing settlement pattern and character

DESIGN PRINCIPLES



- | | | | | | |
|--|---------------------------------------|---|-------------------------------------|---|---------------------------------------|
|  | Land East of Fosse Way |  | Existing Road |  | Indicative main vehicular route |
|  | Public Right of Way |  | Proposed Vehicular Access |  | Potential pedestrian/cycle connection |
|  | National Cycle Route 48 |  | Potential community hub/car parking | | |
|  | Indicative new pedestrian/cycle route | | | | |

ACCESS, MOVEMENT & CONNECTIVITY

ACCESS AND MOVEMENT

Vehicular access is proposed to be solely provided from a priority junction, along the northern boundary of the site as shown on page 17.

A main vehicular route around the site would provide access to secondary roads and private drives. The landscape treatment along the main route would comprise a strong tree-lined street that could also incorporate sustainable drainage features such as swales as required.

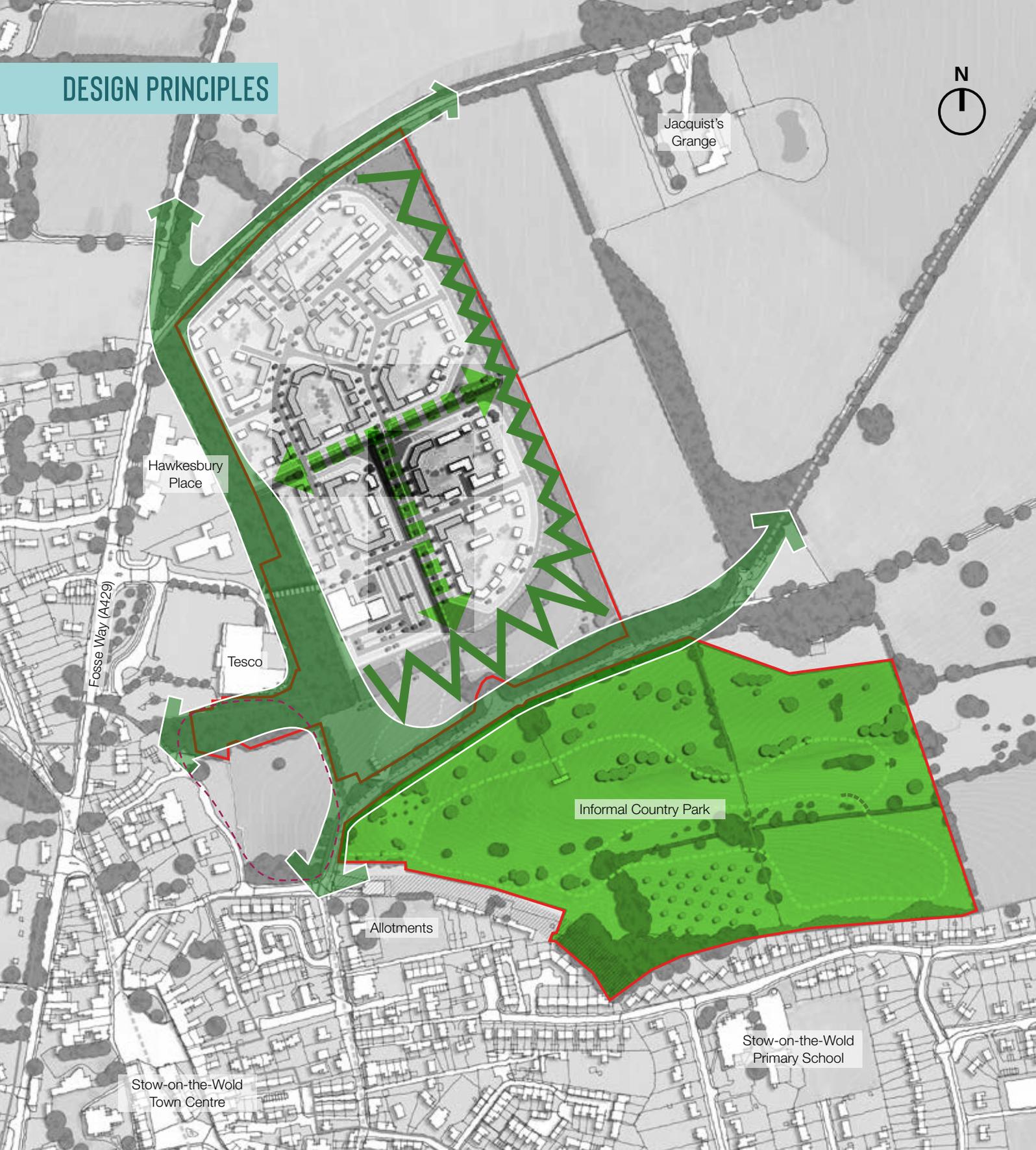
CONNECTIVITY

The new development would be designed to provide strong pedestrian and cycle links through the residential area and areas of public open space. New pedestrian connections would include:

- *Provision of 2m footway on southern side of Broadwell Road, linking into existing footway provision on A429 Fosse Way.*
- *Provision of pedestrian / cycle connection in the south-west corner of the site onto Monarch's Way, to provide a gateway feature into the country park and connection onto National Cycle Route 48;*
- *Provision of pedestrian connection into the retail park located to the west of the proposed development, to enhance connectivity to local facilities and bus stop provision within the retail park for residents and provide access for residents to the west of the site to the Country Park. This will bring the site to within desirable walking distance of retail facilities; and*
- *A pedestrian route into the Country Park from Monarch's Way, to the north of its junction with Parson's Corner*



DESIGN PRINCIPLES



- Land East of Fosse Way

High quality landscape buffers to include open space, structural planting and access
- New Informal Country Park

Open land and woodland within Conservation Area retained
- Existing retained woodland enhanced and linked with new planting
- ←

Green corridors to incorporate retained hedgerows, new planting and access

GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE

A LANDSCAPE-LED DEVELOPMENT

All the key site features such as the established woodland along the western boundary, boundary trees and hedgerows would be retained as an integral part of the landscape setting for new residential development. These retained features will be reinforced and interconnected by a comprehensive framework of open space and new parkland, woodland planting and green corridors ensuring delivery of a multi-functional 'Green Infrastructure' setting

Protecting the landscape setting of Stow-on-the-Wold is a key consideration with residential development set back from sensitive landscape features such as Monarch's Way, the valley to the south and Fosseway House and tree cover to the west. Broad swathes of open space and native woodland planting along the southern and eastern boundaries would blend with existing tree cover, create an attractive settlement edge and screen and filter views from the wider landscape to the east. and screening of new housing.

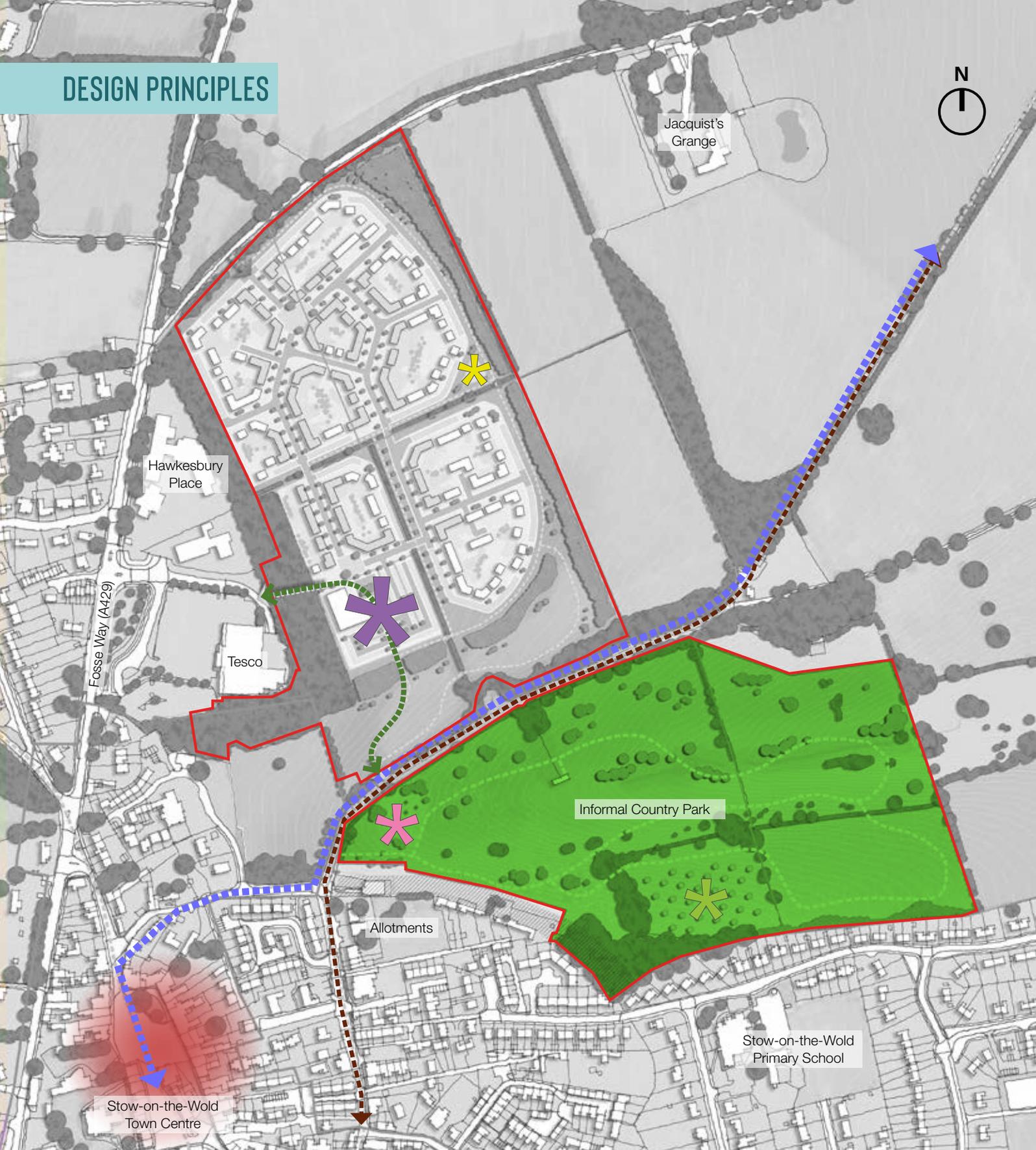
NEW INFORMAL COUNTRY PARK AND BIODIVERSITY

A distinctive new informal country park would be created at the eastern edge of the town. The country park would incorporate a mosaic of retained existing and new habitats including wetland, grassland, woodland and scrub as well as land retained in agricultural use.

Existing ecological habitats such as the woodland, scrub and neutral grassland will be retained wherever possible within the Green Infrastructure (GI) at East of Fosse Way. In order to ensure achieve a biodiversity net gain, open spaces will incorporate native species and scrub planting together with wildflower grassland where possible. In addition, the proposed country park provides an opportunity for further habitat enhancements such as native hedgerow planting.



DESIGN PRINCIPLES



- Land East of Fosse Way
- Potential new informal country park
- Potential location for new community hub and car park
- Potential location for informal community orchard
- Potential location for picnic area/viewpoint
- Potential location for equipped play
- Indicative pedestrian connections from car park to Tesco and Town Centre via Monarch's Way



COMMUNITY FACILITIES

COMMUNITY HUB

A new Community Hub would act as a nucleus for social interaction at East of Fosse Way. The Hub would be easily accessed off the main vehicular route as well as proposed footpath and cycling routes through the residential area and public open space.

PARKING

A new circa 150 space Car Park which would predominantly provide additional car parking to visitors to Stow-on-the-Wold, to alleviate existing pressures in the town centre. Access would be via the main access to the development. The car park will also provide some parking for the Country Park and community centre, but it is anticipated that the majority of the users would reside within walking/cycling distance of these facilities and therefore vehicle trip generation would be low

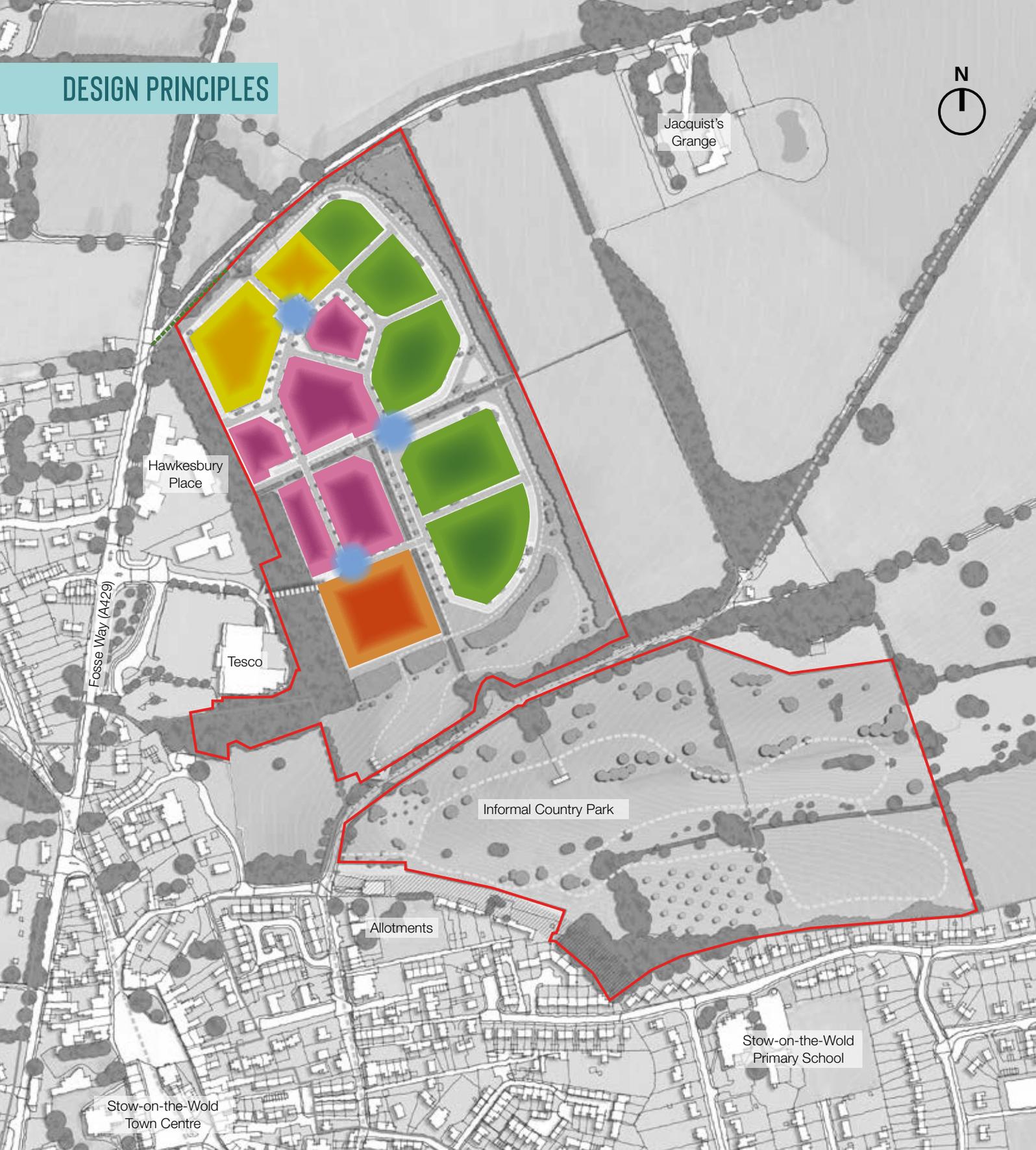
A NEW INFORMAL COUNTRY PARK

A distinctive new informal country park will provide a large swathe of public accessible countryside at the eastern edge of Stow-on-the-Wold within easy reach of the Town Centre and existing residential areas. The new country park will incorporate a circular network of signed routes and trails, which will provide opportunities for walking, running, picnics and informal enjoyment of the countryside surrounding the town.

EQUIPPED PLAY

Equipped children's play will be provided within the site and designed to suit the settlement edge location. Adhering to principles of social, creative and accessible play, the play area will cater for children of all ages and encourage interaction with the surrounding landscape.

DESIGN PRINCIPLES



- Land East of Fosse Way
- Potential gateway character area
- Potential main street character area
- Potential feature space / node
- Potential rural edge character area
- Potential community hub / car parking



PLACE MAKING

CHARACTER

A range of character types are found within Stow-on-the-Wold ranging from the historic centre to more modern residential development at the edges of the town. These character types will influence the scale and density of new buildings.

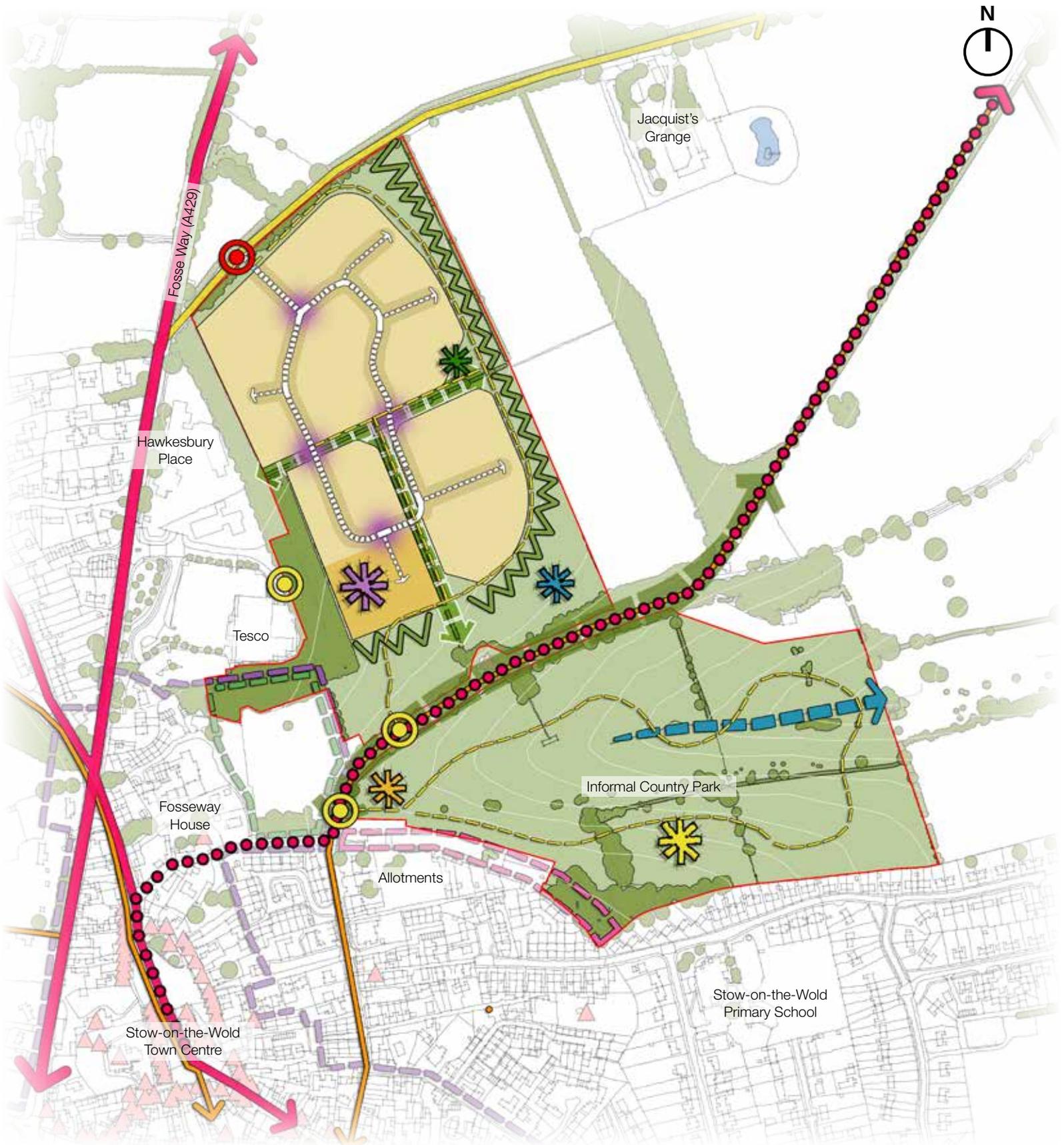
Architectural themes will reflect the best examples of locally distinctive Cotswolds building materials and techniques. Architectural character of the Community Hub will focus on contemporary design grounded in locally distinctive materials and detailing in order to create a distinctive focal point for the new neighbourhood.

Streets and lanes together with front and rear gardens will be designed to reflect the positive characteristics of existing development within Stow-on-the-Wold. Nodes will be created within the residential area such as at vehicular junctions and footpath intersections with open space. These nodes can be framed by variations in architectural character and/or distinctive landscape treatment or use i.e specimen trees or children's play.

SCALE AND DENSITY

Whilst it is envisioned that the vast majority of new buildings would be two storeys in height to reflect existing local character, there is also potential to explore provision of 1.5 storey buildings along the southern edge of the residential area to further minimise the impact of development on the landscape setting and heritage features.

The rural edge of the development will be characterised by lower density arrangements of residential dwellings and structural planting, which will create a green positive settlement edge.



- | | | | | | |
|--|---|---|--|---|---|
|  | Land East of Fosse Way |  | Potential location for SuDS |  | Potential location for new Community Hub and car park |
|  | Potential High-Medium Residential along primary vehicular route |  | Existing vegetation retained within green corridors |  | Potential location for equipped play |
|  | Proposed Vehicular Access |  | Landscape buffer to comprise broad swathe of POS, planting and footpaths |  | Potential location for picnic area/viewpoint |
|  | Potential pedestrian/cycle connection |  | Indicative pedestrian/cycle route |  | Potential location for new informal community orchard |



DESIGN CONCEPT & OBJECTIVES

As part of the design process, a number of design objectives have been set to deliver a development that will meet future needs and has a high regard for the environment and well-being of future residents.

KEY DESIGN OBJECTIVES

- To provide a variety of new homes including open market and affordable homes, ranging in both size and density to suit specific locations within the site and respond positively to the settlement edge and landscape setting;
- To ensure the development improves connectivity in the area giving opportunity for sustainable means of movement around the development and connecting to the wider area.
- To minimise the carbon footprint of East of Fosse Way through consideration of building materials and construction methods to the way buildings are powered and heated once complete. This will include air-source heat pumps, PV panels, EV charging points to all properties and a Fabric First approach to construction.
- To have a high regard for the health and well-being of future residents allowing them easy access to quality green open space and a pleasant environment to live.
- To meet current requirements for Biodiversity Net Gain considering the existing habitats and how these could be retained or improved and added to in order to provide quality habitat.

ILLUSTRATIVE MASTERPLAN



- | | | |
|---|---|--|
|  Site boundary (24.33ha) |  Proposed point of access |  Scheduled Monument |
|  Stow-on-the-Wold Parish Boundary |  Indicative pedestrian connections |  Public Open Space |
|  Proposed Residential (6.76ha)
Circa 240 dwellings at 35dph |  Existing woodland/trees/hedgerows |  Indicative woodland/tree/hedgerow planting |
|  Flexible community hub
(circa 1000sqm) |  Existing PRoW |  Potential location for equipped play |
|  New car park (circa 150 spaces) |  Conservation Area |  Indicative pedestrian/cycle routes |



The Illustrative Masterplan shows one way in which circa 240 new homes, a community hub, car parking and new country park could be delivered. Bloor Homes are keen to work with the Town Council and Local Planning Authority to refine the proposals and support the emerging vision for Stow-on-the-Wold

IMPROVING CONNECTIVITY



The new residential area, areas of open space, community facilities and country park would be well connected to existing walking and cycling routes.

NEW HOUSING & COMMUNITY FACILITIES



New housing would provide a mix of house types and tenures alongside a potential new community hub and additional car parking for Tesco and the town centre.

LANDSCAPE BUFFERS AND CORRIDORS



The southern part of site will remain open to protect views and the landscape setting of the town and heritage assets. Existing trees and hedgerows would be retained and supplemented and linked by new structural planting.

NEW INFORMAL COUNTRY PARK



A new informal country park would open up and enhance a large area of countryside at the eastern edge of the Stow-on-the-Wold close to the town centre.

WHY SUPPORT EAST OF FOSSE WAY?

Returning to the Neighbourhood Plan vision, this states:

“The whole community will have benefitted from new genuinely affordable, energy efficient homes with robust connectivity, and other carbon-neutral developments providing educational and leisure provision, new employment space and greatly improved parking provision. It will thus sustain an energetic and productive community of all ages.”

This Vision Document has set out Bloor Homes proposals land east of Fosse Way, and in summary the proposals look to provide the following:

- **Around 240 new dwellings (including 40% affordable housing). This will provide a mix of dwellings sizes together with affordable housing, the need for which is identified within the draft Neighbourhood Plan.**
- **A potential community hub which is identified within both the draft Neighbourhood Plan and current Local Plan.**
- **150-space car park for visitors to the town and users of the proposed community hub. This will help ease congestion within the town centre, whilst still encouraging tourism and visitors to the town as set out within the Neighbourhood Plan vision.**
- **An informal Country Park close to the centre of the town and easily accessible for all residents. This potential parkland represents a tremendous opportunity to provide a significant area of open space for the whole community to utilise and enjoy.**
- **Comprehensive landscaping along the southern and eastern boundaries of the site and green infrastructure throughout the site to minimise the impact of the proposal on the AONB.**
- **Pedestrian connections and footpaths to the town centre and neighbouring supermarket and bus stop to encourage residents to use sustainable modes of transport and minimise use of the private car.**

When taken as a whole, the proposals are considered to meet the vision set out within the emerging Neighbourhood Plan.

In addition to this, this document demonstrates how the concerns raised within the SHELAA Assessment can be overcome:

- ***It is agreed that the site would comprise major development with the AONB, but as has been demonstrated earlier in this document exceptional circumstances exist which would overcome this.***
- ***As is set out within the landscaping assessment, the proposals would be viewed within the context of the existing settlement in the AONB. It is considered that the site and its landscape context is tolerant of change and has the capacity to absorb well-designed and well-planned development without resulting in any unacceptable long-term landscape and visual harm.***
- ***In respect of Heritage and Archaeology, the masterplan has been developed to ensure that the proposals would not have an adverse impact on heritage assets or their setting with the southern portion of the site retained as open space and additional landscaping proposed.***

As a result, the proposals would represent sustainable development within one of the District's principal settlements. The proposal provides an opportunity to not only meet the affordable housing needs of the town but also to deliver real community benefits in the form of a community hub and country park. As such it is requested that this site is looked upon favourably

THE VISION FOR

*Land East of Fosse Way,
Stow-on-the-Wold*

BLOOR HOMES[®]

Stow-on-the-Wold and the Swells Neighbourhood Development Plan: pre-examination consultation

Regulation 16 Consultation

Neighbourhood Planning Regulations 2012

Stow-on-the-Wold Town Council has prepared a Neighbourhood Development Plan, published below. The Plan sets out a vision for the future of the parishes of Stow-on-the-Wold and Swell and planning policies which will be used to determine planning applications locally.

The [Neighbourhood Plan and supporting documents](#) are available to view on our website.

All comments must be received by 12 noon on 5th January 2024. There are a number of ways to make your comments:

Complete an electronic response: <https://forms.office.com/e/zZjMHspjFh>

Complete this form and email it to: neighbourhood.planning@cotswold.gov.uk

Print the form and post it to: Neighbourhood Planning, Cotswold District Council, Trinity Road, Cirencester, GL7 1PX.

We will accept other comments in writing (including electronic, such as e-mail, provided that a name and address is supplied. We cannot accept anonymous comments.

All representations will be publicly available, and identifiable by name and (where applicable) organisation. Please note that your comments, name and address and, if applicable, organisation will be publicly available but your signature, email address and telephone number will be removed. Other personal information provided will be processed by Cotswold District Council in line with Data Protection legislation. To find out how we use your personal data, please view our [privacy notice](#). Representations may include a request to be notified of the local planning authority's decision to make the plan under Regulation 19.

How to use this form

Please complete Part A in full, in order for your representation to be taken into account at the Neighbourhood Plan examination.

Please complete Part B, identifying which paragraph your comment relates to. Repeat this for subsequent comments relating to other sections of the plan.

Part A

Full name: John Mills

Address: Cotswolds National Landscape Board, Cotswold Business Centre, 2 A P Ellis Way,
Upper Rissington, Gloucestershire

Postcode: GL54 2QB

Telephone: 07878 861003

Email: john.mills@cotswolds-nl.org.uk

Organisation and position (if applicable):

- Organisation: Cotswolds National Landscape Board
- Position: Planning Lead

Date: 05/05/2024

Do you wish to be notified of the Local Planning Authority's Decision to 'make' (adopt) the Plan, under Regulation 19 of the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012?

Please delete as applicable: YES

Part B

Which part of the document does your representation relate to?

Paragraph number:

Policy reference: SSNP7 – Land North East of Stow / Appendix E – Major Development in the AONB Statement

Do you support, oppose, or wish to comment on this paragraph? (Please tick)

Support Support with modifications Oppose Have comment

Please give details of your reasons for support or opposition or make comments:

The Cotswolds National Landscape Board ('the Board') opposes Policy SSNP7 and the proposed allocation at Land North East of Stow.

The main reasons for opposing the Policy SSNP7 and the proposed allocation are as follows:

- Adverse impacts on the natural beauty of the Cotswolds National Landscape (CNL)¹, including its landscape and scenic beauty and its cultural heritage.
- The supporting information has failed to demonstrate that exceptional circumstances apply to justify the proposed allocation, which constitutes 'major development' in the context of paragraph 183 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

The Board raised similar concerns in a previous consultation response in March 2023. We kindly request that the previous consultation response is also taken into consideration.

With regards to the Board's previous consultation response, the Stow-on-the-Wold & The Swells Neighbourhood Plan Consultation Statement indicates that the Board focused on '*technical, process issues*'.² This infers that the concerns that the Board has raised previously are just a technicality (i.e., a small detail). The Board strongly refutes this assertion. The Board's concerns are fundamental to whether the Land North East of Stow should be allocated.

The Consultation Statement also states that '*both bodies [i.e., the Board and Cotswold District Council] acknowledge the case that has been made and neither has objected to it, although they accept that they would not strike the planning balance in the same way as the Town Council*'. Again, we strongly refute this assertion.

Whilst the Board has recognised, in principle, the need for new housing in Stow-on-the-Wold, particularly affordable housing, we have not acknowledged – and we do not acknowledge - that the case has been made for the scale and extent of housing and other development that has been proposed for this allocation.

¹ Cotswolds National Landscape is how the Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) is now referred to, although AONB remains for formal designation.

² Stow-on-the-Wold & The Swells Neighbourhood Plan Consultation Statement, page 16 (digital page 20).

We acknowledge that we didn't explicitly object to the proposed allocation in our previous consultation response. However, we did state that we didn't consider that exceptional circumstances had been demonstrated to justify this major development. In the absence of these exceptional circumstances, national planning policy makes it clear that such development should not be permitted.³

Adverse impacts – landscape and visual

The Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) for the Stow-on-the Wold & The Swells Neighbourhood Plan identifies that *'development at the site is likely to affect views into/ from Stow and potentially views across the wider AONB landscape too'*. It states that *'overall, the large-scale greenfield development proposed will ultimately impact upon the existing landscape'*. However, it also states that *'the provisions of the SSNP seek to minimise this impact, particularly through a landscape-led approach to development underpinned by defined design codes specific to the local area and informed by the AONB Management Plan. As a result, residual minor long-term negative effects are concluded as most likely in relation to landscape'*.⁴

We disagree with the conclusions of the SEA in this regard. In particular, as outlined in our previous consultation response, we are concerned with the way in which the south eastern section of the allocation protrudes, incongruously, beyond the eastern limit of development for the northern part of the allocation. Development on this south-eastern part of the site would, in effect, cascade down the hillside. As such, it is likely that the development would remain highly visible even when landscape mitigation measures (such as tree and hedge planting) have been implemented. This incongruous protrusion is certainly not what the Board would consider to be a 'landscape-led' approach.

Given that the boundary of the proposed allocation remains unchanged, it does not appear that our previous recommendations, in this regard, have been adequately addressed

It seems that the *'residual minor long-term negative effects'*, identified in the SEA, relate to the magnitude of change that would result from the proposed allocation. However, it is worth noting that in Environmental Impact Assessments (EIA), the significance of any effects, is based on a combination of magnitude of change and the sensitivity of the landscape or visual receptor. Given that the site reflects the special qualities of the CNL and that it is not significantly influenced by existing development, the sensitivity is likely to be 'high' or 'very high'. So, even with a 'low' magnitude of change, the significance of the adverse landscape / visual effects is still likely to be 'moderate', which can be considered to be significant. With a 'moderate' magnitude of change, the significance of the adverse landscape / visual effects would be 'major'.

Adverse impacts – cultural heritage / historic environment

The natural beauty of the CNL relates not only to landscape and scenic beauty but also to other factors such as natural heritage and cultural heritage. In this context, cultural heritage includes historic environment.

³ National Planning Policy Framework, paragraph 183.

⁴ The Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) for the Stow-on-the Wold & The Swells Neighbourhood Plan

The supporting information for the Neighbourhood Plan indicates that there is some uncertainty regarding the precise location of Stow Battlefield. To help address this issue, the SEA recommends 'directing development to the northern extent of the site where heritage sensitivities are reduced'.

Given that the proposed boundary for the allocation remains unchanged, it does not appear that this recommendation has been adequately addressed.

Major development – exceptional circumstances / public interest

In the Board's previous consultation response, we highlighted the issue of major development and the need to demonstrate that: (i) exceptional circumstances apply and; (ii) the allocation would be in the public interest. In that response we also expressed our concerns that this issue had not been rigorously addressed. We concluded that we didn't consider that exceptional circumstances hadn't been demonstrated.

The issue of major development is addressed in Appendix E of the draft Neighbourhood Plan. However, this only provides one paragraph in relation to each of the three major development 'tests' that are specified in paragraph 183 of the NPPF.

As such we still consider that this issue has not been adequately addressed, specifically in the context of paragraph 183 of the NPPF, including in relation to:

- The need for the development (i.e., taking into account considerations such as affordable housing need surveys for Stow-on-the-Wold, Cotswold District Council's five-year housing land supply data, etc).
- Alternative options, including alternative options for housing provision within Stow-on-the-Wold and The Swells.
- Detrimental effects.

On this basis, we consider it still hasn't been demonstrated that exceptional circumstances apply to justify the allocation.

The Consultation Statement states that '*inevitably, it remains a political judgement for the Town Council to decide if it wishes to retain this proposal in the SSNP*'. Whilst this may be the case, the decision as to whether the allocation should be permitted should be a policy-based judgement.

Given that the proposed allocation constitutes major development, in the context of what is now paragraph 183 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), Cotswold District Council should not simply weigh all material considerations in a balance, but should refuse an application unless they are satisfied that (i) there are exceptional circumstances, and (ii) it is demonstrated that, despite giving great weight to conserving the landscape and scenic beauty in the AONB, the development is in the public interest.

Please refer to our previous consultation response for further detail on this issue.

What improvements or modifications would you suggest?

As outlined in our previous consultation response, we recommend that the boundary of the allocation should be changed by removing the south-eastern third of the allocation as shown below.

Figure 1. Extract from a previously proposed masterplan⁵, with the blue line showing the Board's suggested alternative limit of development and the red line showing the parish / Neighbourhood Plan boundary



⁵ This masterplan shows development extending into Broadwell parish. However, Neighbourhood Plan allocations have to be located entirely within the Neighbourhood Plan area and cannot extend into neighbouring parishes. Nor should the allocation be dependent / reliant on potential future development in the neighbouring parish.



Neighbourhood Plan Comments
The Town Clerk
Stow on the Wold Town Council
Stow Youth Centre
Fosseway
Stow on the Wold
Gloucestershire GL54 1DW

By email only to: stowplan@stowonthewold-tc.gov.uk

20 March 2023

Dear Claire

STOW ON THE WOLD & THE SWELLS NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN 2023-2031 – PRE-SUBMISSION VERSION

Thank you for consulting the Cotswolds National Landscape Board on the Stow on the Wold & The Swells Neighbourhood Plan 2021-2031 Pre-Submission draft.

The Board is very supportive of many aspects of the draft Neighbourhood Plan. Our main concern relates to **Policy STOW7** – the proposed allocation of 170 dwellings at Land North East of Stow. Whilst we recognise the importance of maintaining vibrant and thriving communities, we question the scale and extent of development that is being proposed on this site. In particular, we are concerned about potential development in the south-eastern section of the site, which would be particularly intrusive and incongruous. At present, we do not consider that exceptional circumstances apply to justify this major development.

A more appropriate option may be to deliver a smaller quantum of housing on the western half of the site. However, we acknowledge that this may compromise the delivery of the proposed car park and community hub and may affect the relative merits of this allocation compared to alternative options.

Other key recommendations are as follows:

- **Policy STOW3 (Housing Mix):** The policy should require on-site provision of 50% affordable housing for housing developments of five units or fewer (ideally, for developments of two or more units).
- **Policy STOW6 (Health and Well Being):** The policy should require compliance with Natural England's Green Infrastructure Framework.
- **Policy STOW9 (Playing Field Facilities):** The policy should have regard to relevant guidance and standard relating to dark skies and artificial light.
- **Policy STOW11 (Stow and the Swells Design Guide):** The policy and / or supporting text should explicitly refer to relevant Board guidance.
- **Policy STOW13 (Zero Carbon Buildings):** The policy should seek to deliver zero carbon housing in a way that is compatible with the purpose of conserving and enhancing the natural beauty of the Cotswolds National Landscape.
- **Policy STOW16 (Digital Infrastructure):** The policy should require digital infrastructure to be sensitively located and designed.

Further comments are provided in Appendix 1 below.

Cotswolds Conservation Board

The Old Prison, Fosse Way, Northleach
Gloucestershire GL54 3JH
01451 862000
info@cotswoldsaonb.org.uk

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

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "John Mills". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long, sweeping underline that extends to the right.

John Mills MRTPI CMLI

Planning & Landscape Lead

john.mills@cotswoldsaonb.org.uk | 07878 861003

APPENDIX 1. DETAILED COMMENTS ON THE STOW ON THE WOLD AND THE SWELLS NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN 2023-2031 – PRE-SUBMISSION DRAFT CONSULTATION

3. PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT – COTSWOLDS NATIONAL LANDSCAPE MANAGEMENT PLAN

The Cotswolds National Board is pleased to see that the draft Neighbourhood Plan explicitly refers to the Cotswolds AONB Management Plan. However, it should be noted that the Board adopted a new Management Plan in March 2023, which is called the Cotswolds National Landscape Management Plan 2023-2025.¹ The final version of the Neighbourhood Plan should refer to this most recent iteration of the Management Plan rather than to the 2018-2023 version.

POLICY STOW3: HOUSING MIX

Percentage of affordable housing including for housing developments of five units or fewer

Policy STOW3 states that:

- *Within the Stow on the Wold Development Boundary proposals for residential development schemes of 6 or more dwellings will be required to deliver at least 40% of the dwellings as affordable homes.*

However, paragraph 64 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) allows for on-site affordable housing provision for housing developments of five units or fewer in designated rural areas, which includes Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONBs)). The Government-commissioned Landscapes Review encourages local planning authorities to make use of this provision.²

Best practice in development plans that overlap with protected landscapes also require 50% affordable housing.

This provision is implemented in several development plans that overlap with protected landscapes, including AONBs. For example:

- Policy AS04 (Housing Provision) of the Arnsdale and Silverdale AONB Development Plan Document requires on-site provision of at least 50% affordable housing in developments of two or more dwellings.³
- Policy SP27 of the New Forest National Park Local Plan requires on site provision of 50% affordable housing in developments of three or more dwellings.⁴
- Strategic Policy SD28 (Affordable Homes) of the South Downs Local Plan requires on-site provision of affordable housing in developments of four or more dwellings.⁵

¹ Cotswolds National Landscape Board (2023) *Cotswolds National Landscape Management Plan 2023-2025* ([link](#)).

² Defra (2019) *Landscape Review Final Report* ([link](#)). Proposal 18, page 110: ‘local planning authorities in AONBs should also make use of the provision that allows them to demand on-site affordable housing contributions on all sites, including developments of five homes or fewer’.

³ South Lakeland District Council and Lancaster City Council (2019) *Arnsdale and Silverdale Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) Development Plan Document (DPD) – Adopted Version, 28 March 2019*. ([Link](#)).

⁴ New Forest National Park Authority (2019) *New Forest National Park Local Plan 2016-2036* ([link](#)).

⁵ South Downs National Park Authority (2019) *South Downs Local Plan 2014-2033* ([link](#)).

These development plans are included as best-practice case studies in the Board’s Housing Position Statement.⁶

This best practice is reflected in Policy CE12 of the Cotswolds National Landscape Management Plan 2023-2025 (Development Priorities and Evidence of Need) which advocates on-site provision of 50% affordable housing for housing developments of five units or fewer.⁷

We acknowledge that 50% affordable housing provision is higher than the 40% figure that is specified in Policy H2 (Affordable Housing) of the Cotswold District Local Plan.⁸ However, we consider that this is reasonable, given that:

- the Neighbourhood Plan identifies that there has been a significant under-provision of affordable housing in Stow on the Wold over several decades; and
- one of the key objectives of the draft Neighbourhood Plan is to ensure that the community has an adequate supply of affordable housing to meet its needs.

Percentage of affordable housing that is affordable in perpetuity

Policy STOW3 specifies the mix of affordable housing that should be provided for proposals within the Stow on the Wold development boundary, as follows:

- 45% social rented
- 41% affordable home ownership (comprising 30% First Homes made available at a minimum 50% discount and 11% of other products)
- 14% affordable rent

The supporting text indicates that this mix is *‘in line with the evolution of national policy since 2018’*, particularly with regards to First Homes.

However, as we understand it, national policy only requires 25% of affordable housing, secured through developer contributions, to be First Homes.⁹ As such, Policy STOW3 could potentially reduce the First Homes requirement to 25% instead of the proposed 30%.

As stated in Policy CE12 (Development Priorities and Evidence of Need) of the Cotswolds National Landscape Management Plan 2023-2025, *‘housing delivery in the Cotswolds National Landscape (CNL) should be focussed on meeting affordable housing requirements, particularly housing that is affordable in perpetuity such as social rented housing’*.¹⁰

6

Cotswolds National Landscape Board (2021) *Housing Position Statement* ([link 1](#) – main document; [link 2](#) – appendices). The case studies are provided in Appendix 2. The recommendations relating to 50% affordable housing provision on sites of five units or fewer are provided in Section 5.7 of the main document

⁷ Cotswolds National Landscape Board (2023) *Cotswolds National Landscape Management Plan 2023-2025* ([link](#)). Policy CE12 (Development Priorities and Evidence of Need). Section 5.7 of the Board’s Housing Position Statement ([link 1](#) – main document; [link 2](#) – appendices) provide additional context on this issue.

⁸ Cotswold District Council (2018) *Cotswold District Local Plan 2011-2031* ([link](#)). Policy H2 (Affordable Housing).

⁹ UK Parliament (2021). *Hansard: Affordable Housing. Volume 696: debated on Monday 21 May 2021.* ([Link](#)). *‘A minimum of 25% of all affordable housing units secured through developer contributions should be First Homes. This is a national threshold which should be applied for England.’*

¹⁰ Cotswolds National Landscape Board (2023) *Cotswolds National Landscape Management Plan 2023-2025* ([link](#)). Section 5.5 of the Board’s Housing Position Statement ([link 1 – main document; link 2 – appendices](#)) provide additional context on this issue.

The South Downs Local Plan and New Forest National Park Local Plan, referred to above, both advocate a minimum 75% affordable rented tenure (at least for developments of 11 or more dwellings). We acknowledge that the First Homes requirements, which have come into force since these two Local Plans were adopted, mean that 75% affordable rented tenure may no longer be achievable. However, it should still be possible to deliver a higher percentage of affordable rented tenure, particularly with regards to social rented housing. Ideally, more than 50% of affordable housing provision should be for social rented housing. This would go some way to compensating for the loss of social rented housing in Stow on the Wold resulting from Right to Buy.

Recommendation

The Cotswolds National Landscape Board recommends that Policy STOW3 should require:

- on-site provision of 50% affordable housing for housing developments of five units or fewer (ideally, for developments of two or more units).
- at least 51% of affordable housing provision to be social rented housing.

POLICY STOW4: PRINCIPAL RESIDENCE

The Cotswolds National Landscape Board supports Policy STOW4, which seeks to restrict second homes. This is because we recognise that the growth of second homes has begun to have a serious adverse effect on access to market and affordable homes and its consequences for local services.

The Board addresses the issue of second homes in its Housing Position Statement.¹¹

POLICY STOW5: SPECIALIST ACCOMMODATION FOR OLDER PEOPLE IN STOW

The Cotswolds National Landscape Board supports Policy STOW5, which seems to limit the amount of specialist accommodation for older people in Stow on the Wold.

This is because we recognise that Stow on the Wold has already, recently accommodated two substantial developments of this type, which have been the only developments in the town of any scale since the 1980s. Further developments of this type would exacerbate the town's already unsustainable, aging population profile.

We agree with the draft Neighbourhood Plan that the main focus for future housing provision in Stow on the Wold should be for people of working age, including families.

POLICY STOW6: HEALTH AND WELL BEING

An important consideration in relation to supporting physical and mental health is the provision of green infrastructure.

This would be consistent with the NPPF, which makes several references to green infrastructure, including:

- Paragraph 20: *Strategic policies should ... make sufficient provision for ... d) conservation and enhancement of the natural, built and historic environment, including landscapes and green infrastructure.*

¹¹ Cotswolds National Landscape Board (2021) *Housing Position Statement* ([link 1](#) – main document; [link 2](#) – appendices). Section 5.11.

- Paragraph 92: *Planning policies and decisions should aim to achieve healthy, inclusive and safe places which ... c) enable and support healthy lifestyles ... for example, through the provision of safe and accessible green infrastructure.*
- Paragraph 154: *New development should be planned for in ways that ... a) avoid increased vulnerability to the range of impacts arising from climate change ... including through the planning of green infrastructure.*

It would also be consistent with the Cotswold District Local Plan, with Policy EN1 (Built, Natural and Historic Environment) stating:

- *New development will, where appropriate, promote the protection, conservation and enhancement of the historic and natural environment by ... b. contributing to the provision and enhancement of multi-functional green infrastructure.*¹²

Further information on the topic of green infrastructure is provided in Natural England's Green Infrastructure Framework.¹³

Recommendation:

The Cotswolds National Landscape Board recommends that Policy STOW6 should require development proposals to:

- comply with Natural England's Green Infrastructure Framework;
- contribute to the wider Neighbourhood Plan area becoming compliant with Natural England's Green Infrastructure Framework.

POLICY STOW7: LAND NORTH EAST OF STOW

The Cotswolds National Landscape Board does not support Policy STOW7. Whilst we recognise the need for new housing and other facilities in Stow on the Wold, we do not consider that the proposals for Land North East of Stow, as currently set out in Policy STOW7, comply with national and local planning policy.

Context

In principle, the Cotswolds National Landscape Board supports the following aspiration of the Neighbourhood Plan, as set out in the Vision:

- The community now has a better supply of market and affordable housing of a variety of types to meet its needs, which has led to a higher proportion of young people living in the town.

As set out in the Board's Housing Position Statement¹⁴, we recognise that the Cotswolds National Landscape is a living and working landscape, in which the social and economic well-being of local communities is an important consideration. Maintaining vibrant and thriving local communities is essential to the long-term future of the National Landscape.

¹² Cotswold District Council (2018) *Cotswold District Local Plan 2011-2031* ([link](#)). Policy EN1 (Built, Natural and Historic Environment).

¹³ <https://designatedsites.naturalengland.org.uk/GreenInfrastructure/Home.aspx>

¹⁴ Cotswolds National Landscape Board (2021) *Housing Position Statement* ([link 1](#) – main document; [link 2](#) – appendices). Section 1.0.

However, these aspirations should be delivered in a way that is compatible with – and, ideally, positively contributes to – the statutory purpose of conserving and enhancing the natural beauty of the Cotswolds National Landscape.

The draft Neighbourhood Plan acknowledges that the proposed allocation at Land North East of Stow would constitute major development, in the context of paragraph 177 of the NPPF. We agree with this conclusion based on the scale and extent of the proposed development and on the sensitive ‘setting’ of the development.

Paragraph 177 of the NPPF states that *‘permission should be refused for major development [in Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty] other than in exceptional circumstances and where it can be demonstrated that the development is in the public interest’*. As outlined below, we do not consider that the current proposals pass this stringent threshold.

Scale and extent of development / Detrimental effects

Policy STOW7 proposes approximately 170 homes on a site covering 4.5 hectares. The site is an unusual ‘L’ shape, as shown in the Pre-submission Policies Map on page 37 of the draft Neighbourhood Plan. This is because of the location of the boundary between Stow on the Wold parish and Broadwell parish.

Figure 1: Extract from the Pre-submission Policies Map showing the site boundary for Land North East of Stow (in green) and the parish boundary (in red)



The settlement of Stow on the Wold is located primarily on the high wold plateau¹⁵, particularly the historic core of the town. The north-westerly section of Land North East of Stow is also located on the high wold plateau. However, the southern part of the site is located on the ‘Farmed Slopes’ landscape character type¹⁶.

The encroachment of built development onto the Farmed Slopes and / or into the landscape, is identified as a ‘force for change’ in the Cotswolds AONB Landscape Strategy & Guidelines. The Landscape Strategy & Guidelines specifies the following guideline to address this issue:

¹⁵ Landscape Character Type 7 (High Wold) in the Cotswolds AONB Landscape Character Assessment and Cotswolds AONB Landscape Strategy & Guidelines.

¹⁶ Landscape Character Type 15 (Farmed Slopes) in the Cotswolds AONB Landscape Character Assessment and the Cotswolds AONB Landscape Strategy & Guidelines.

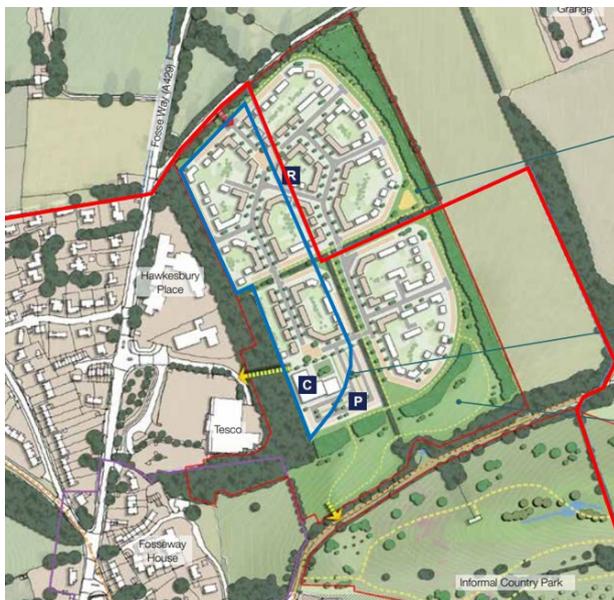
- Avoid development that will intrude negatively into the landscape and cannot be successfully mitigated, for example, extensions to settlements:
 - onto the Farmed Slopes;¹⁷
 - on visible hillsides.¹⁸

The south-eastern section of the site (i.e., the land to the east of the middle field boundary in the figure above), in particular, descends a considerable distance down the Farmed Slopes from the high wold plateau. As such, development on this part of the site would be particularly intrusive. The developed nature of this part of the site would contrast sharply with the undeveloped nature of the more elevated land immediately to the north, which lies within Broadwell parish. This would make development on this part of the site particularly incongruous. Limiting the southern extent of development to a specific contour line would not mitigate these adverse effects to a significant degree, as this part of the site would still appear as an incongruous ‘wedge’ of development, protruding in an easterly or south-easterly direction from the rest of the site.

We consider that developing the south-eastern section of the site would result in significant adverse effects on landscape and scenic beauty. This would weigh heavily against there being exceptional circumstances to justify development.

A more appropriate limit of development would potentially be that shown by the blue line in the figure below.

Figure 2. Extract from a previously proposed masterplan¹⁹, with the blue line showing the Board’s suggested alternative limit of development and the red line showing the parish / Neighbourhood Plan boundary



¹⁷ <https://www.cotswoldsaonb.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/07/lct-15-farmed-slopes-june-2016.pdf> - Section 15.1.

¹⁸ <https://www.cotswoldsaonb.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/07/lct-7-high-wold-2016.pdf> - Section 7.1.

¹⁹ This masterplan shows development extending into Broadwell parish. However, Neighbourhood Plan allocations have to be located entirely within the Neighbourhood Plan area and cannot extend into neighbouring parishes. Nor should the allocation be dependent / reliant on potential future development in the neighbouring parish.

We acknowledge that this would limit the scale and type of development that could be accommodated on the site. For example, it would reduce the amount of housing that could be delivered and could compromise the delivery of the proposed car park and / or community hub. However, in the highly sensitive landscape of the Cotswolds National Landscape, we consider this to be a more realistic proposition.

If the blue line in Figure 2 is used as the limit of development, any landscape mitigation (including tree planting along the eastern edge of development) should be delivered within this boundary.

Proportionality

The Cotswolds AONB Landscape Strategy & Guidelines states that new development should be proportionate to the existing settlement. The Board considers that for a development to be proportionate, it should not exceed the size of the development by more than 5%²⁰ (or should not increase the number of dwellings in the settlement by more than 5%).

The proposed 170 dwellings would increase the number of dwellings in Stow on the Wold by 15%, compared to the 2011 census baseline.²¹ This is three-times larger than the 5% threshold outlined above and so should be considered disproportionate (even taking into account the development that has taken place in Stow on the Wold since 2011).

Based on the 2011 baseline, a development of 58 dwellings, or fewer, would be within the 5% threshold. Restricting the allocation to the blue line boundary, shown in Figure 2, above would be more in line with this threshold.

Need

As outlined above the Board is supportive of the aspiration, as set out in the Vision, to provide an adequate supply of affordable housing to meet the community's needs. However, we are not convinced that the proposed quantum of housing is justified or that there is an exceptional need for this quantum of housing.

An important starting point, in this regard, is the fact that the Cotswold District Local Plan has accommodated the District's housing requirement for the Plan period (which is 8,400 dwellings) without having to accommodate additional housing in Stow on the Wold. There is also no shortfall in housing delivery in Cotswold District. Indeed, in 2022, Cotswold District Council had a Housing Delivery score of 120%. In addition, the District Council can demonstrate a supply of 7.5 years' worth of deliverable housing sites and it is anticipated that housing delivery during the Plan period is likely to exceed the Local Plan housing requirement figure.²²

The Neighbourhood Plan evidence base includes a Housing Needs Assessment (HNA). The HNA identifies that when Local Housing Need Assessment data is pro-rated, the housing need figure for Stow on the Wold and the Swells over the Neighbourhood Plan period (2021-2031) is 37 homes. However, given that the Local Plan has accommodated the District's housing requirements elsewhere, it is questionable whether the pro-rated HNA figure is actually valid.

²⁰ Cotswolds National Landscape Board (2021) *Landscape-led Development Position Statement* ([link 1](#) – main document; [link 2](#) – appendices). Appendix 5 – Major Development Checklist (Footnote 36).

²¹ https://www.nomisweb.co.uk/reports/localarea?compare=E04004273#section_7_0. This identifies that the 2011 baseline was 1,156 dwellings.

²² Cotswold District Council (2022) *Housing Land Supply Report July 2022* ([link](#)).

An important consideration should be a Housing Needs Survey (HNS) specific to Stow on the Wold Parish. However, the most recent HNS for Stow was published in 2010. As such it is important that a new HNS should be undertaken before the Neighbourhood Plan is finalised. Data from an up-to-date HNS would help to ‘ground truth’ the housing need by providing a robust baseline.

It may be appropriate to include Homeseeker Plus data within the evidence base. However, we consider that Homeseeker Plus data should not be used explicitly as a measure of affordable housing need unless the data has been verified and there is a clear local connection to – and preference for – the settlement in question.²³

Other data that would be useful would include a survey of people who commute to Stow on the Wold for work, to find out how many of these commuters would consider living in Stow if there was sufficient (affordable) housing.

Alternative options

As indicated above, the Cotswold District Local Plan has accommodated the District’s housing requirements elsewhere. For example, a significant amount of housing has been provided in Moreton-in-Marsh, which is connected to Stow on the Wold by a regular bus service. In effect, some of Stow on the Wold’s housing need has been accommodated in places such as Moreton-in-Marsh. This reduces the justification for the quantum of housing proposed at Land North East of Stow.

As outlined above, we recommend that the Land North East of Stow allocation should be limited to the blue line boundary shown in Figure 2 above. If this is the case, then further consideration would need to be given to the relevant merits of this allocation compared to alternative options.

Other issues

Parking

Policy STOW7 proposes that the development should include a public car park scheme of approximately 150 spaces, with the car park being located as close to the Broadwell Lane junction as possible.

The Board acknowledges that locating the car park as close to the Broadwell Lane junction as possible will help to avoid excessive vehicle movements through the new housing estate. However, locating the car park at the northern end of the site also means that it would be located at the furthest point from the town centre. For example, the walk from the car park to the town centre via Broadwell Lane and the Fosse Way (A429) would be approximately 700m. The walk on the pavement alongside the Fosse Way would not be particularly pleasant. The alternative option of walking from the car park to the town centre via the new housing estate would involve a notable change in gradient, which would not be ideal.

Locating the car park at the southern end of the site (but still accessed via Broadwell Road) would not be appropriate as this would significantly increase the number of vehicle movements through the new housing estate, which would be a safety risk.

For these reasons, we are not convinced that the allocation provides a suitable location for a public car parking scheme of the proposed scale.

²³ Cotswolds National Landscape Board (2021) *Housing Position Statement* ([link 1](#) – main document; [link 2](#) – appendices. See paragraphs 1.2 and 1.3. See Section 5.10.

Housing Mix

The Board supports the proposed affordable housing mix (i.e., 70% social rent, 25% First Homes and 5% affordable rent) for the reasons outlined in relation to Policy STOW3. However, we recommend that 50% of the housing should be 'affordable' (rather than the currently proposed 41%), in line with Policy CE12 of the Cotswolds National Landscape Management Plan 2023-2025²⁴ – please see our comments on Policy STOW3 for further details.

Biodiversity Net Gain

The Board supports the provision for onsite biodiversity net gain (BNG) of at least 20%. This matches the BNG provision that is recommended in Policy CE7 (Biodiversity and Nature Recovery) in the Cotswolds National Landscape Management Plan 2023-2025.²⁵

Recommendations:

- Consideration should be given to limiting the extent of development at Land North East of Stow to the blue line boundary shown in Figure 2, above.
- If the 'blue line' is used as the development boundary:
 - the whole premise of this allocation, including the quantum of housing, the proposed car park and the community hub will need to be reviewed – this would need to include an assessment of whether the car park and / or community hub would still be viable;
 - the relative merits of this allocation - and the consideration of alternative options - would need to be reviewed;
 - consideration should be given to whether it would be more appropriate to put this site forward as a rural exception site.
- The evidence of housing need should include an up-to-date Housing Needs Survey.

POLICY STOW8: STOW TOWN CENTRE AND MARKET SQUARE

The Cotswolds National Landscape Board supports Policy STOW8. The policy appears to provide an appropriate balance between sustaining the retail-led mix of commercial uses and conserving and enhancing the historic character of the town centre, whilst recognising the important contribution of other uses, including residential development.

POLICY STOW9: PLAYING FIELD FACILITIES

The Cotswolds National Landscape Board supports Policy STOW9. We recognise the important of these community facilities and the desire, as expressed in the draft Neighbourhood Plan, to improve them.

Pavilion buildings often have large areas of glazing and / or external lighting. Consideration should be given to the impact of such development on the dark skies of the Cotswolds National Landscape, which are one of the area's 'special qualities.' The issue of dark skies, including the impact of light pollution, is addressed in Policy CE5 (Dark Skies) of the Cotswolds National Landscape Management

²⁴ Cotswolds National Landscape Board (2023) *Cotswolds National Landscape Management Plan 2023-2025* ([link](#)). Policy CE12 (Development Priorities and Evidence of Need). Section 5.7 of the Board's Housing Position Statement ([link 1](#) – main document; [link 2](#) – appendices) provide additional context on this issue.

²⁵ Cotswolds National Landscape Board (2023) *Cotswolds National Landscape Management Plan 2023-2025* ([link](#)). Policy CE5 (Biodiversity and Nature Recovery).

Plan 2023-2025.²⁶ Further guidance on this topic is provided in the Board’s Dark Skies and Artificial Light Position Statement²⁷, which states that:

- *To achieve a consistent approach to managing dark skies across the Cotswolds AONB it is desirable that recognised standards should be applied.*

These recognised standards include the guidance note on ‘The Reduction of Obtrusive Light’ published by the Institution of Lighting Professionals (ILP), which is included in Appendix B of the Position Statement. Within an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), such as the Cotswolds National Landscape, the criteria / thresholds for Environmental Zone 1 should be applied, as specified in the ILP guidance.

Other relevant, best practice guidance for protected landscapes, relating to dark skies and artificial light includes the Dark Skies Technical Advice Note published by the South Downs National Park Authority²⁸, including the appendix on ‘Glazing - Internal Light Spill’²⁹. In particular the appendix states:

- glazing should not exceed 25% of the floor area; and
- large single continuous areas of glazing should be avoided (e.g., >50% glazing on a single elevation).

Recommendation:

The Cotswolds National Landscape Board recommends that the pavilion facilities (and other development within the Neighbourhood Plan area) should comply with recognised standards including:

- the guidance note on ‘The Reduction of Obtrusive Light’, published by the Institution of Lighting Professionals; and
- the Dark Skies Technical Advice Note (and appendix) published by the South Downs National Park Authority.

This should be stated explicitly in the supporting text for Policy STOW9 (and other relevant policies).

POLICY STOW10: LOCAL GREEN SPACES

In principle, the Cotswolds National Landscape Board supports Policy STOW10 provided that it can be demonstrated that it complies with the requirements of paragraph 102 of the NPPF.

POLICY STOW11: STOW AND THE SWELLS DESIGN GUIDE

In principle, the Cotswolds National Landscape Board supports Policy STOW11, subject to the recommendation that we make in relation to this policy.

²⁶ Cotswolds National Landscape Board (2023) *Cotswolds National Landscape Management Plan 2023-2025* ([link](#)). Policy CE5 (Dark Skies).

²⁷ Cotswolds National Landscape Board (2019) *Dark Skies and Artificial Light Position Statement* ([link 1](#) – main document; [link 2](#) – Appendix A; [link 3](#) – Appendix B; [link 4](#) – Appendix C).

²⁸ South Downs National Park Authority (2021) *Dark Skies Technical Advice Note* ([link](#)).

²⁹ South Downs National Park Authority (2021) *Dark Skies Technical Advice Note. Appendix: Glazing - Internal Light Spill* ([link](#)).

We consider that the Design Guide will help to conserve and enhance relevant ‘special qualities’ of the Cotswolds National Landscape³⁰, particularly those that relate to the built environment. These include:

- the unifying character of the limestone geology – its visible presence in the landscape and use as a building material;
- variations in the colour of the stone from one part of the National Landscape to another which add a vital element of local distinctiveness;
- distinctive settlements, developed in the Cotswold vernacular with high architectural quality and integrity.

We also consider that the design guide is broadly compatible with Policy CE3 (Local Distinctiveness) of the Cotswolds National Landscape Management Plan 2023-2025 and with the guidance set out in the following Board publications:

- Cotswolds AONB Landscape Strategy & Guidelines³¹, particularly with regards to landscape character types 7 (High Wold)³² and 15 Farmed Slopes³³.
- Cotswolds AONB Local Distinctiveness and Landscape Change.³⁴

However, the existing built environment in some parts of Stow on the Wold, outside of the Conservation Area, does not reflect this best practice. It is important that the Design Guide helps to address this issue by requiring high quality design, which appropriately reflects the local distinctiveness of the built environment in this part of the Cotswolds National Landscape, in all part of the Neighbourhood Plan area.

Recommendation:

The Cotswolds National Landscape Board recommends that the Design Guide should make explicit reference to the following documents:

- Cotswolds National Landscape Management Plan 2023-2025;
- Cotswolds AONB Landscape Strategy and Guidelines;
- Cotswolds AONB Local Distinctiveness and Landscape Change.

POLICY STOW12: BUILDINGS OF LOCAL IMPORTANCE

The Cotswolds National Landscape Board supports Policy STOW12.

The Buildings of Local Importance, as listed in Appendix A of the draft Neighbourhood Plan, are an important component of the local distinctiveness and historic character of Stow on the Wold and the Swells. By extension, they also contribute to the natural beauty of the Cotswolds National Landscape. As such, it is important to take account of the effects of development proposals on these buildings.

³⁰ The ‘special qualities’ of the Cotswolds National Landscape are listed in Chapter 4 of the Cotswolds National Landscape Management Plan 2023-2025 ([link](#)). They are the key attributes on which the priorities for the conservation, enhancement and management of the Cotswolds National Landscape should be based.

³¹ <https://www.cotswoldsaonb.org.uk/our-landscape/landscape-strategy-guidelines/>

³² <https://www.cotswoldsaonb.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/07/lct-7-high-wold-2016.pdf>

³³ <https://www.cotswoldsaonb.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/07/lct-15-farmed-slopes-june-2016.pdf>

³⁴ <https://www.cotswoldsaonb.org.uk/our-landscape/local-distinctiveness-landscape-change/>

POLICY STOW13: ZERO CARBON BUILDINGS

In principle, the Cotswolds National Landscape Board supports Policy STOW 13.

The principle of delivering ‘zero carbon buildings’ is an important component of mitigating the impacts of climate change. In this regard, Policy CC1 (Climate Change - Mitigation) of the Cotswolds National Landscape Management Plan 2023-2025 supports measures to reduce energy demand in existing and new buildings and infrastructure.³⁵

However, it is important to ensure that these measures are delivered in a way that is compatible with the statutory purpose of conserving and enhancing the natural beauty of the Cotswolds National Landscape, including its special qualities and local distinctiveness.

Recommendation:

Policy STOW13 and / or its supporting text should explicitly recognise the importance of delivering ‘zero carbon buildings’ in a way that is compatible with the statutory purpose of conserving and enhancing the natural beauty of the Cotswolds National Landscape.

POLICY STOW14: WALKING & CYCLING IN THE TOWN AND PARISH

The Cotswolds National Landscape Board supports Policy STOW13.

The policy will contribute to the provision of quiet, outdoor recreation, which is a key component of the Board’s second statutory purpose (to increase the understanding and enjoyment of the special qualities of the Cotswolds National Landscape).

Policy STOW13 is also compatible with (and would help to conserve and enhance) the following ‘special quality’ of the Cotswolds National Landscape:

- An accessible landscape for quiet recreation ... with numerous walking and riding routes.

It is also compatible with Policy UE2 (Access and Recreation) of the Cotswolds National Landscape Management Plan 2023-2025.³⁶

POLICY STOW15: VEHICLE PARKING

The Cotswolds National Landscape Board supports Policy STOW15.

This policy will help to ensure that new development does not exacerbate the already serious parking problems.

POLICY STOW16: DIGITAL INFRASTRUCTURE

In principle, the Cotswolds National Landscape Board supports Policy STOW16.

We recognise the need to improve digital infrastructure in the area. However, this infrastructure should be sensitively located and designed to (i) avoid and (ii) minimise potential adverse effects.

³⁵ Cotswolds National Landscape Board (2023) *Cotswolds National Landscape Management Plan 2023-2025* ([link](#)). Policy CC1 (Climate Change - Mitigation).

³⁶ Cotswolds National Landscape Board (2023) *Cotswolds National Landscape Management Plan 2023-2025* ([link](#)). Policy UE2 (Access and Recreation).

Recommendation:

The Cotswolds National Landscape Board recommends that Policy STOW16 should explicitly require new digital infrastructure to be sensitively located and designed in order to (i) avoid and (ii) minimise potential adverse effects on the natural beauty of the Cotswolds National Landscape, including its landscape and scenic beauty.



Regulation 16 consultation on the submitted Stow on the Wold & The Swells Neighbourhood Plan 2023 - 2031 ('SSNP')

Representations

Boyer

Report Control

Project:	Land at Newlands of Stow, Evesham Road
Client:	Newlands of Stow Care Village
Reference:	20.1046
File Origin:	https://lrgcouk.sharepoint.com/:w/s/BoyerSP/ESebuM0HrKBLuonbabVr4gB69OEpgj44GhZ1eoQs62ugw?e=jr6RWH
Primary Author	Daniel Gresswell-Nunn & Joe Hickling
Checked By:	Alyson Jones

<i>Issue</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Status</i>	<i>Checked By</i>
01	03/01/2024	Draft	Alyson Jones
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4. Comments on Proposed Policies	14
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APPENDIX

Appendix One – Site Location Plan

Appendix Two – Consultation Version of the Masterplan (November 2023)

Appendix Three – Draft Landscape and Visual Appraisal (November 2023) (To be finalised at application submission stage (including drawing references))

Appendix Four – Planning Need Assessment

Appendix Five – SHELAA 2021 Extract

1. INTRODUCTION

Background and Scope of these Representations

- 1.1 Boyer has prepared these representations on behalf of Newlands of Stow ('NoS'), in response to the Regulation 16 consultation on the submitted Stow on the Wold & The Swells Neighbourhood Plan 2023 - 2031 ('SSNP').
- 1.2 Newlands of Stow, located in Stow-on-the-Wold is an IRC which provides a range of accommodation including: a CQC rated Outstanding (in caring) care home which offers respite care, palliative care as well as long-term care; 15 one and two bed assisted living apartments; 2 independent living apartments and a number of independent living cottages.
- 1.3 There are also communal facilities including a restaurant and drawing room, coffee shop and lounge, treatment rooms, and library. There are also maintained courtyards and gardens.
- 1.4 NoS has additional land in the curtilage of the IRC, occupied by a vacant property known as Rose Cottage and a large field, which is accessed via an existing access off Evesham Road.
- 1.5 These representations relate to a small proportion of that additional land, referred to as the 'Site', which lies immediately adjacent to the Tewkesbury Road to the south and the existing Newlands of Stow IRC and extends to 1.53ha.
- 1.6 NoS are promoting the Site for development to facilitate an extension to the existing IRC, comprising an additional 24 retirement living cottages with associated health and wellbeing facilities, including a rehabilitation suite for use by the wider community in conjunction with the NHS and local GP practice by way of referrals. NoS are seeking the allocation of the Site for retirement accommodation in the SSNP. A site location plan is provided at **Appendix 1: Site Location Plan.**
- 1.7 NoS have sought to promote the site for older persons housing through the Cotswold District Local Plan Partial Update Review, however the District Council are not proposing to allocate sites for older persons accommodation in the emerging Plan. As such, CDC advised such a proposal would have to be considered through a planning application (as confirmed in the recommendation section of the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment ('SHELAA') (2021) and subsequent correspondence). Following pre-application discussions, a planning application has also been prepared which is set to be submitted in January 2024, following a period of public engagement. The relevant SHELAA extract is provided at **Appendix 5: SHELAA Extract.** Further details are set out in Section 3 of this statement.
- 1.8 In preparing for a planning application, Newlands of Stow prepared a masterplan of the proposed scheme which was shared with the community and Town Council through public engagement, which is provided at **Appendix 2: Consultation Version of the Masterplan (November 2023).** Further technical work has been undertaken to support the preparation of the illustrative masterplan, including a Landscape and Visual Appraisal of the site.

- 1.9 Newlands of Stow welcomes the preparation of the Stow & Swells Neighbourhood Plan and believes that the Plan could have a positive effect on planning within the Neighbourhood Area. Newlands of Stow also appreciates the opportunity to outline its observations on the proposed plan and the evidence-base reports which support its preparation.
- 1.10 Notwithstanding the above, as expressed at the Regulation 15 stage, it is considered that, in its present form, the draft SSNP does not meet the 'basic conditions' as identified in Paragraph 8 of Schedule 4B of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990. We set out why this is the case in the following sections of this representation and set out how such issues could be remedied to ensure the plan is compliant with the basic conditions.
- 1.11 It should be noted that we have specifically sought to comment in respect of draft policies that are directly or indirectly pertinent to the promotion of Land at Newlands of Stow ('the site') for development. However, we have also provided constructive suggestions in relation to other proposed policies, where we believe these will enhance the NP and facilitate its implementation as an effective development management tool.
- 1.12 Accordingly, the following sections of this representation are set out as follows:
- Section 2: Legal and Policy Context
 - Section 3: Land at Newlands of Stow Care Village
 - Section 4: Response to the Draft Neighbourhood Plan
 - Section 5: Summary and Conclusions
- 1.13 We trust that our comments are of assistance to the Inspector. Should any of our comments require clarification, or further detail be of assistance, we would welcome the opportunity to provide supplementary information as appropriate.

2. LEGAL AND POLICY CONTEXT

Basic Conditions

- 2.1 Once the Neighbourhood Plan is submitted for independent examination, under Regulation 17 of the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 (as amended), it must be demonstrated that it conforms to the 'basic conditions' as identified in Paragraph 8 of Schedule 4B of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (TCPA 1990). The Plan must also be legally compliant in every other respect.
- 2.2 Following submission (R17), it is the role of an Independent Examiner to consider whether the draft Neighbourhood Plan meets the basic conditions. In order to meet the basic conditions, the making of the Neighbourhood Plan must (in summary):
- Be appropriate to do so, having regard to national policies and advice contained in guidance issued by the Secretary of State;
 - Contribute to the achievement of sustainable development;
 - Be in general conformity with the strategic policies of the development plan; and
 - Not breach, and must be otherwise compatible with, European Union (EU) and European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR) obligations.
- 2.3 In considering the submitted Neighbourhood Plan, the Independent Examiner will also be required to establish that the Plan:
- Has been prepared and submitted for examination by a qualifying body;
 - Has been prepared for an area that has been properly designated;
 - Does not include development that is excluded development;
 - Relates to only one Neighbourhood Area; and
 - Contains only policies that relate to the development and use of land.
- 2.4 We note that the Stow-on-the-Wold Town Council resolved to decline a Request from CDC to submit the Neighbourhood Plan for a Health Check Review prior to the Regulation 16 Stage, as indicated in the Minutes of the Council Meeting held on the 11th October 2023. We note that the Council's planning consultant had indicated that the health check is not a statutory requirement and it could take an additional six weeks. Members therefore resolved that a) Members were confident that the NP was strong enough to stand up to examination and b) Members did not wish for any further delay.
- 2.5 Further guidance on each of the basic conditions is provided under the respective sub-headings below.

Regard to National Policy

- 2.6 A Neighbourhood Plan must have regard to the National Planning Policy Framework (December 2023) ('NPPF') and associated guidance. In this respect, NPPF Paragraph 13 states that:

'The application of the presumption [in favour of sustainable development] has implications for the way communities engage in neighbourhood planning. Neighbourhood plans should support the delivery of strategic policies contained in local plans or spatial development strategies; and, should shape and direct development that is outside of these strategic policies'.

- 2.7 NPPF Paragraph 29 further reiterates the need for Neighbourhood Plans to be aligned with the strategic needs and priorities of the wider local area. It states that: *'...Neighbourhood plans should not promote less development than set out in the strategic policies for the area, or undermine those strategic policies'*. This is supported by NPPF footnote 16 which states: *'Neighbourhood plans must be in general conformity with the strategic policies contained in any development plan that covers their area'*.
- 2.8 Pursuant to this, the Planning Practice Guidance ("PPG") further clarifies that 'regard to national policy' means that a *'Neighbourhood Plan or Order must not constrain the delivery of important national policy objectives'*¹ (emphasis added).
- 2.9 In addition, Neighbourhood Plans are also required to provide sufficient clarity to enable their policies to fulfil their intended development management role. Moreover, such policies must relate specifically to the unique circumstances of the neighbourhood area. This means that Neighbourhood Plan policies should not duplicate general Local Plan policies. This is set out in PPG, wherein:

*'A policy in a neighbourhood plan should be clear and unambiguous. It should be drafted with sufficient clarity that a decision maker can apply it consistently and with confidence when determining planning applications. It should be concise, precise and supported by appropriate evidence. It should be distinct to reflect and respond to the unique characteristics and planning context of the specific neighbourhood area for which it has been prepared'*².

- 2.10 The PPG further specifies that there has to be robust evidence to support particular policies, as may be proposed in a Neighbourhood Plan. It is not permissible to rely on conjecture or assertions. Nor is it sufficient (for example) to rely on a survey of local opinion, in order to suggest that a particular policy is justified because of the aspirations or concerns of the local community. In this regard the PPG states that:

*'While there are prescribed documents that must be submitted with a neighbourhood plan or Order there is no 'tick box' list of evidence required for neighbourhood planning. Proportionate, robust evidence should support the choices made and the approach taken. The evidence should be drawn upon to explain succinctly the intention and rationale of the policies in the draft neighbourhood plan or the proposals in an Order...'*³.

¹ Planning Practice Guidance. Paragraph: 069 Reference ID: 41-069-20140306.

² Planning Practice Guidance. Paragraph: 041; Reference ID: 41-041-20140306.

³ Planning Practice Guidance. Paragraph: 040; Reference ID: 41-040-20160211.

Contribution to the Achievement of Sustainable Development

- 2.11 The NPPF is clear that all plan-making should contribute to and help to achieve sustainable development. Sustainable development is defined at NPPF paragraph 8. It encompasses three overarching objectives - environmental, economic and social:

*'a) an **economic objective** – to help build a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right types is available in the right places and at the right time to support growth, innovation and improved productivity; and by identifying and coordinating the provision of infrastructure;*

*b) a **social objective** – to support strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by ensuring that a sufficient number and range of homes can be provided to meet the needs of present and future generations; and by fostering a well-designed and safe built environment, with accessible services and open spaces that reflect current and future needs and support communities' health, social and cultural well-being; and*

*c) an **environmental objective** – to contribute to protecting and enhancing our natural, built and historic environment; including making effective use of land, helping to improve biodiversity, using natural resources prudently, minimising waste and pollution, and mitigating and adapting to climate change, including moving to a low carbon economy'.*

- 2.12 Furthermore, at paragraph 11, the NPPF confirms that all 'Plans and decisions should apply a presumption in favour of sustainable development'. The NPPF clarifies that:

'For plan-making this means that:

a) all plans should promote a sustainable pattern of development that seeks to [inter alia]: meet the development needs of their area...

b) strategic policies should, as a minimum, provide for objectively assessed needs for housing and other uses...' unless:

- i. the application of policies in this Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a strong reason for restricting the overall scale, type or distribution of development in the plan area [such as the presence of the AONB]; or*
- ii. any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole.'* (emphasis added)

- 2.13 In the context of establishing *need*, the NPPF is clear at paragraph 63 that: *'...the size, type and tenure of housing needed for different groups in the community should be assessed and reflected in planning policies. These groups should include (but are not limited to) those who require affordable housing; families with children; older people (including those who require retirement housing, housing-with-care and care homes)...' (emphasis added).*

- 2.14 Accordingly, Neighbourhood Plans should contribute to improvements to the three dimensions of sustainable development. If there are likely potential adverse effects as a result of the Plan, there should be measures in place that will reduce or offset these effects. This requirement is outlined in the PPG, which adds that:

'This basic condition [contributing to sustainable development] is consistent with the planning principle that all plan-making and decision-making should help to achieve sustainable development. A qualifying body should demonstrate how its plan or Order will contribute to improvements in environmental, economic and social conditions or that consideration has been given to how any potential adverse effects arising from the proposals may be prevented, reduced or offset (referred to as mitigation measures).

In order to demonstrate that a draft neighbourhood plan or Order contributes to sustainable development, sufficient and proportionate evidence should be presented on how the draft neighbourhood plan or Order guides development to sustainable solutions' (emphasis added)⁴.

Conformity with the Strategic Policies in the Development Plan of the Local Area

- 2.15 The NPPF is clear, at paragraph 13, that Neighbourhood Plans should support the strategic development needs set out in Local Plans, including policies for housing and economic development. At footnote 16 and paragraph 29, the NPPF also states that Neighbourhood Plans should be in general conformity with the strategic policies of the Development Plan and that Neighbourhood Plans should plan positively to support them.
- 2.16 The Development Plan for the Neighbourhood Plan Area currently comprises the Cotswold District Local Plan (2011 – 2031) ('the adopted plan'), which was adopted in 2018. In addition, Cotswold District Council is also preparing a 'partial update' to the adopted plan, which reviews elements of the spatial strategy being implemented to guide development up to 2031. A Regulation 18 'Issues and Options' consultation on the 'partial update' to the adopted plan took place between 4 February and 20 March 2022.
- 2.17 Further to the initial consultation exercise, a second Regulation 18 'Housing Need' consultation took place from 16 February to 16 March 2023. The second Regulation 18 consultation focuses on the Council's Non-Strategic Site Allocations Site Selection Methodology and Guidance for Major Development in the Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty ('AONB').
- 2.18 Stow on the Wold is identified within the adopted local plan as a 'Principal Settlements' of Cotswold District, performing the role of a service centre for the surrounding rural area. The spatial strategy seeks to direct the significant majority of the district's overall development needs to 2031 to the Principal Settlements.

⁴ Planning Practice Guidance. Paragraph 072. Reference ID: 41-072-20190509.

- 2.19 Furthermore, Policy DS1: Development Strategy in the adopted plan commits the District to meeting the Objectively Assessed Housing Need ('OAHN'), as at the point of adoption, of 8,400 homes up to 2031. Notably, the 'partial update' to the adopted plan is not seeking to amend either of these strategic policies.
- 2.20 PPG is clear that a draft Neighbourhood Plan is not tested against the policies in an emerging Local Plan. It is therefore possible for the NP to proceed to referendum and be 'made' prior to the new Local Plan being adopted. However, the PPG clarifies that:

'...the reasoning and evidence informing the local plan process is likely to be relevant to the consideration of the basic conditions against which a neighbourhood plan is tested. For example, up-to-date housing need evidence is relevant to the question of whether a housing supply policy in a neighbourhood plan or Order contributes to the achievement of sustainable development' (emphasis added)⁵.

- 2.21 In considering the primary policy objective of achieving of sustainable development, it is also entirely possible (as indicated at PPG Paragraph 103; Reference ID 41-103-20190509) for a Neighbourhood Plan to propose housing growth at a level exceeding the requirement identified by the LPA. This may well be a suitable approach, where the allocation of additional housing can create further social, economic or environmental benefits.

Compatibility with EU and Human Rights Regulations

- 2.22 Neighbourhood Plans must not breach and must be compatible with EU and human rights obligations, including the Strategic Environmental Assessment ('SEA') Directive. The SEA is a procedure (set out in the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004) which requires the formal environmental assessment of certain plans and programmes that are likely to have significant effects on the environment.

⁵ Planning Practice Guidance. Paragraph: 009. Reference ID: 41-009-20190509.

3. LAND AT NEWLANDS OF STOW INTEGRATED RETIREMENT COMMUNITY (IRC)

- 3.1 As indicated above, part of the Land at Newlands of Stow ('the Site') is being proposed for a sustainable, high-quality, landscape-led Extension to an existing integrated retirement community (IRC) which comprises of a care home, assisted living and independent living accommodation, to provide 24 additional retirement living cottages with associated health and wellbeing facilities including a rehabilitation unit for use by the community via GP/NHS referral.
- 3.2 The provision of the health and wellbeing facilities are critical to the continued and future success of Newlands of Stow and are being provided in direct response to both existing and future resident requirements and to align with the wider sector, where such facilities are now commonly being delivered. Given the nature and fabric of the existing buildings at Newlands, it is not possible to provide these facilities within the existing IRC.
- 3.3 Retirement cottages are in significant demand, primarily from local people and their families and Newlands of Stow have a waiting list of potential owner occupiers, looking to downsize into modern, fit for purpose accommodation suitable for older people. This will be evidenced in the planning application submission, which will be made in January 2024 following a period of public engagement.
- 3.4 The proposals are for Use Class C3 residential retirement development and will not require residents to take a care package, as such they are significantly different from the Use Class C2 Extra Care predominately apartment developments, which have been recently built out on two other sites in Stow-on-the-Wold.
- 3.5 It is considered that the Site should be allocated within the SSNP.

Site Context and Characteristics

- 3.6 The part of the NoS site proposed for built form is currently occupied by a vacant property known as Rose Cottage situated to the south of the site, and the southern part of a large mown grass field. The Site extends to approximately 1.53ha. The land is bound by mature trees along its western and southern boundaries and adjoins the existing Newlands of Stow IRC, to the east. To the north and west of the site lie fields of permanent pasture in agricultural use, primarily as sheep grazing. There is an existing vehicular, cycle and pedestrian site access, Newlands Court, which provides direct access into the proposed site from the Evesham Road. The full extent of the site beyond the area proposed to accommodate built form and including the area of open land, extends to 2.9ha. The Site Location Plan can be found in **Appendix 1**.

- 3.7 The Development Boundary of Stow-on-the-Wold includes the existing built area of Newlands of Stow, but does not include the Site, nor Rose Cottage, which lies on the southern site boundary. However, Rose Cottage and its curtilage already extend the settled character of Stow to the west along the Tewkesbury Road. While development is contained within the southern part of the site and does not extend up to the A242 Evesham Road, it is noted that the Stow-on-the-Wold Development Boundary extends further north along the eastern side of the A424 Evesham Road, than the existing Newlands of Stow does on the west side, so the extension of the settlement boundary beyond the confines of built development on both sides of the radial routes is not uncharacteristic and would in any event be very limited.
- 3.8 In terms of sustainability, as a market town, Stow is also served by a number of shops including a supermarket, pubs, café's, restaurants, garages and many other shops. These facilities are located a 5 minute walk from the site. It is just over 400m to the superstore from the site entrance via Fosse Lane (noting restrictions on vehicular access). Other local services and facilities include a post office, churches, Primary School, library, pharmacy, police station and a town hall. All services and facilities are accessible via wide footpaths and safe locations to cross the road. The doctors surgery is located within approximately 1,000 metres. A bus stop is located 0.4 miles from the site with footpath access. The bus stop is served by a number of services, the most frequent of which is the 801 which links Stow to Cheltenham, Andoverford, Northleach, Bourton, Donnington and Moreton with services running nearly every hour from 6:40 to 20:00 Mondays to Friday and with a frequent Saturday service. The 801 bus stops at Cheltenham general hospital.
- 3.9 The Site, as well as the whole of the town of Stow on the Wold, is located within the nationally designated landscape of the Cotswolds National Landscape (or Cotswold Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB)), the nearest boundary of which lies 2.4km to the north-west of the site. The site does not lie within a Special Landscape Area.
- 3.10 There are no ecology designations within or adjacent to the site. The grassed area of the Site does not have high biodiversity value. There is an opportunity to increase green infrastructure connectivity in the area.
- 3.11 There are a number of trees subject to Tree Preservation Orders (TPO's), including a group TPO. The retention of tree's and the ability to reinforce the existing green corridors through additional tree planting as well as introducing other new appropriate tree planting, whilst respecting the wider open nature of the AONB in this location could be achieved. The designation of TPO's is not considered a constraint to development in this location and indeed provides an opportunity.
- 3.12 There are no statutory heritage designations within or adjacent to the site. The north-eastern extent of the Stow Conservation Area lies within 220m of the site. The Grade II* registered park and garden of Abbotswood is separated from the site by the B4077 Tewkesbury Road, a high stone boundary wall and a 40m wide belt of mature trees, therefore, there is no intervisibility between the site and this heritage asset. The Registered Battlefield of the Battle of Stow 1646 lies over 1.2km to the north of the site.

3.13 The site is not within any flood zones and the flood risk from both fluvial and surface water sources is deemed 'very low risk'.

3.14 In terms of employment, the proposals would provide a range of employment opportunities for the local community, not only in relation to nursing and carer positions, but also cooks, cleaners, gardeners, drivers etc.

The Proposed Development

3.15 As noted in Section 2, in line with CDC's advice in the SHELAA, a full (detailed) planning application has been prepared for the site which is due to be submitted in January 2024. The application follows pre-application advice from CDC and extensive community engagement (including meetings with the Town Council and members of the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group). The scheme has been carefully considered to respond to the limited on-site constraints and address on points raised by CDC and the local community.

3.16 The proposed development includes the following:

- Demolition of Rose Cottage;
- Extension of existing IRC to develop 24 retirement living cottages;
- 2 Ancillary Guest/rehabilitation Suites;
- Health and wellbeing facilities including:
 - Therapy Room;
 - Consulting Room;
 - Rehabilitation Gym;
 - Hydrotherapy Pool;
 - Health Bar and Café;
 - Multi purpose space (which could accommodate resident gatherings);
- Site-wide landscaping strategy with integrated green and blue infrastructure;
- Retention of mature trees and hedges with reinforced boundary planting where appropriate;
- Biodiversity enhancements to achieve a 10% Biodiversity Net Gain;
- Supporting highways and sustainable drainage infrastructure; and
- Off-site highways improvements including upgrade works to a footway.

- 3.17 The proposals have been designed to form a logical and sensitive extension to the existing IRC. The principle of development is summarised in Section 4, but in essence, it is to provide 24 demonstrably needed retirement living cottages with associated health and wellbeing facilities. These facilities are proposed to serve the existing and future residents of the existing and extended IRC, to meet residents' expectations in relation to health care needs for social, physical and mental health purposes. By expanding the existing facilities at Newlands of Stow, the long-term viability of a successful local business will be futureproofed through the provision of new and updated services which will also assist in addressing modern CQC expectations. The development will promote inclusivity and accessibility to those who need specialist care. Additionally, the rehabilitation facilities including the hydrotherapy pool, exercise facilities and therapy room will be available to members of the public when referred by their local GP practice or NHS service and will therefore also serve wider existing care needs in line with draft Policy SSNP6. Furthermore, such facilities will help take pressure off NHS demands.
- 3.18 It is also significantly beneficial that the proposed retirement cottages will provide future occupiers the opportunity to downsize, which would address the prevalent issue in the local community where older individuals often reside in under-occupied houses, a benefit recognised in the Gloucestershire Local Housing Needs Assessment (2020). The transition positively frees up larger family homes for younger residents to stay within their local area as well as other young families to move into the local area, an objective of the SSNP. Whilst the provision of family homes are necessary to get younger people on the housing ladder, retirement living is required to liberate conventional market housing at the other end of the housing spectrum. This lack of available family homes and resultantly younger people is a key issue locally in Stow-on-the-Wold which has been highlighted through engagement with the local community and is reflected in the draft Neighbourhood Plan. The accompanying Planning Needs Assessment (**Appendix 4**) further details this matter.
- 3.19 Furthermore, as set out above, being an extension to the IRC, the site is sustainably located in terms of accessing key local facilities as a pedestrian. Policy DS1 of the Local Plan identifies Stow-on-the-Wold as a principal settlement with the supporting text noting that Stow-on-the-Wold is considered a service centre. Paragraph 6.1.9 of the Local Plan explains that *"The Principal Settlements listed in Policy DS1 have been identified as the most sustainable locations to deliver future growth, with Cirencester being the District's main centre by a very considerable margin. These settlements were selected on the basis of their social and economic sustainability, including accessibility to services and facilities. The availability of suitable land capable of delivering sustainable development during the Plan period also helped determine which settlements to include in the Development Strategy"*.

3.20 It is also notable that despite the site being located within the AONB, a Landscape and Visual Assessment has been undertaken to support the planning application which assesses the proposed developments impacts, which is provided at **Appendix 3: Draft Landscape and Visual Appraisal**. The assessment concludes that the potential landscape and visual effects of the proposed development would be largely localised by virtue of the limited public viewpoints into the site and there would unlikely be significant impacts on the wider landscape character of the AONB or the visual amenity of people in the long term. The pre-application response reflects this conclusion stating:

“Having regard to the size of the proposed development, its residential nature and its location adjacent to a Principal Settlement, it is considered that the proposed development would not constitute major development for the purposes of paragraph 177 ...(now revised to para 183)... of the NPPF.”

3.21 Furthermore, the LVA demonstrates that “*any detrimental effect on the environment, the landscape and recreational opportunities*” would be minimal, and also explains “*the extent to which that could be moderated*” such that it would be compliant with criterion c of Paragraph 183 of the Framework. The proposals therefore do not require exceptional circumstances when considered for determination.

3.22 A suite of further technical documents have also been prepared to support the planning application which ensure that the proposals form a sustainable, high quality development. Such documents include a Planning Need Assessment, Transport Statement, Flood Risk Assessment and Drainage Strategy, Arboricultural Report, Landscape Strategy, Heritage Statement, Archaeological Desk Based Assessment, Ecological Impact Assessment, Energy Statement, Lighting Report and BNG Strategy.

3.23 The consultation version of the masterplan (November 2023) is included in **Appendix 2**.

3.24 Newlands of Stow therefore consider that the site is therefore suitable for development in relation to the provisions set out in NPPF and would therefore be suitable for allocation in the SSNP, as a site which has no barriers to delivery within the plan period up to 2031 to meet an identified and evidenced housing need for retirement accommodation.

4. COMMENTS ON THE PROPOSED SSNP POLICIES

- 4.1 In this section, Newlands of Stow's observations and recommendations are set out in relation to the specific policies proposed within the emerging Stow & Swells Neighbourhood Plan. As previously noted, we welcome the preparation of the neighbourhood plan and it is considered that, once amended in accordance with the below suggestions, the Plan could have a positive effect on planning within the Neighbourhood Area.
- 4.2 However, it is considered that there are several flaws and omissions within the Neighbourhood Plan as currently proposed, which individually and together ensure that the emerging plan does not meet the 'basic conditions' as required by the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 (as amended).
- 4.3 Commentary is provided within this section to identify the various issues with the proposed plan and our recommendations as to how such issues could be remedied to ensure that the complies with the basic conditions. In the discussion, our comments relate wherever possible to situations in which the proposed plan conflicts directly with:
- national planning policy and the advice provided by the Secretary of State;
 - achieving sustainable development; and/or
 - delivering the strategic policies of the development plan.

Policy SSNP1: The Stow-on-the-Wold Development Boundary

- 4.4 Policy SSNP1 proposes to define the settlement boundary for Stow on the Wold ('Stow'), this being the principal settlement within the Neighbourhood Area. Newlands of Stow agree with this approach in principle, as the clarification of such boundaries provides greater certainty for residents and developers alike.
- 4.5 The proposed Stow Settlement Boundary reflects an amended iteration of the settlement boundary as designated within the adopted Local Plan. Although the general extent of the settlement boundary is established through the strategic policies of the adopted plan, neighbourhood plans are often well-placed to make detailed amendments to the settlement boundary to accommodate changing circumstances over time, and/or to improve the robustness of the settlement boundaries.
- 4.6 In this regard, we note that the existing settlement boundary to the north-west of Stow is proposed to run through the centre of the existing land interest of Newlands of Stow. In our view, it would be prudent to amend the boundary of the settlement to follow the extent of the whole area of land shown within the Site Location Plan at **Appendix 1**. This reflects the same area of land assessed by Cotswold District Council under site references S65 and S66 in the Strategic Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment (2021) ('SHELAA').

- 4.7 In our view, this reflects a more robust and well-defined boundary for the settlement boundary to follow. Extending the boundary to reflect the outer edge of this land parcel would, in effect, extend the settlement boundary along Evesham Road, before following the existing hedgerows and fencing lining the field, before joining with Tewkesbury Road to the south, west of Rose Cottage.
- 4.8 Notwithstanding the above, should a more refined Development Boundary be considered more appropriate such an amendment could be limited to the proposed development area as shown in red on the Site Location Plan.
- 4.9 In any event, it is considered that the extent of the curtilage of Rose Cottage should be included within the settlement boundary, whether the previous suggested amendments are taken forward or not. The property is clearly functionally linked to the remainder of the settlement and should be included within the settlement boundary. It is on a plot of similar nature and scale to properties on the Evesham Road, included within the Development Boundary. Further to which, in assessing this element of the Site, CDC's SHLAA considered (under Site Reference S66) that the site is *potentially developable*, to provide additional homes to meet the District's local housing needs.
- 4.10 We make no comment as to the appropriateness of extending the Development Boundary to include the development proposed under Policy SSNP7.

Policy SSNP2: Development in the Swells and the Countryside

- 4.11 Proposed Policy SSNP2: Development in the Swells and the Countryside seeks to establish the principle of development within the defined areas of Upper and Lower Swell, alongside the remainder of the 'Countryside' beyond these settlements.
- 4.12 Newlands of Stow considers that the proposed policy requires further work to ensure that it is '*clear and unambiguous*' as required within national guidance⁶. We recommend that the wording of the policy is amended in accordance with the suggestions below, and that the area proposed to be designated is clearly shown on the policies map.
- 4.13 Criterion 'C' of the policy would benefit from clarification in regard to the extent of the 'Countryside' to which it relates. There are two areas which require attention. Firstly, the policy currently refers to a 'Rural Area', which is not subsequently returned to within the Neighbourhood Plan and is not defined on the Proposals Map nor any of the Inset Maps. To redress this issue, we recommend that the reference to 'Rural Area' is amended to 'Countryside' to improve consistency with the remainder of the plan or is otherwise defined.
- 4.14 Furthermore, we assume that the extent of this area is intended to relate to the general extent of land outside of the defined settlement boundaries within the Neighbourhood Area. However, this is not currently defined and introduces ambiguity into the proposed policy, which conflicts with the requirements of national policy, and as a result the 'basic conditions'.

⁶ Planning Practice Guidance. Paragraph: 041; Reference ID: 41-041-20140306.

- 4.15 An additional concern relates to the proposed wording of the policy, which states that '*In the Rural Area beyond the settlements of Lower Swell and Upper Swell...*' (our emphasis added) various forms of development would be supported. In our view, the structure of this policy wording lends to potential confusion, as the word 'beyond' implies a sense of perspective, i.e., a relation to another object, which is not defined within the policy.
- 4.16 As read, the "Rural Area' may relate, for example, to the open countryside that is to the west of Lower and Upper Swell, or to the east, depending upon perspective. However, we assume that this is not the intention, and the wording should be amended to refer to, for example, land 'outside' the settlements of Upper and Lower Swell to provide clarity.
- 4.17 To assist in providing clarity, the extent of the area should be clearly shown on the Proposals Map and other inset maps as appropriate. If the 'Rural Area' is simply amended to refer to 'Countryside' as per the above, this could avoid the need for overlapping policy designations.
- 4.18 However, notwithstanding all the above, there would still be confusion as to whether SSNP2 just relates to the rural areas/countryside around the settlements of The Swells given that the policy wording only relates to those settlements. It is not clear as to whether the Policy would apply to the countryside around Stow-on-the-Wold, including at NoS, given that the wording in Policy Criterion A, B or C specifically refer to Lower and Upper Swell only and do not refer to Stow-on-the-Wold. This also creates a direct conflict with the wording in paragraph 5.6, which suggests that sites outside the Development Boundary of Stow on the Wold will be dealt with in SSNP2.

Policy SSNP3: Housing Mix

- 4.19 Policy SSNP3 seeks to establish requirements for the mix of homes to be delivered in schemes of 6 or more homes within the Stow on the Wold development boundary. The policy then seeks under Criterion A, 30% of the affordable dwellings to be First Homes to be made available at a minimum 50% discount. While under Criterion B a specific mix of dwellings is identified.
- 4.20 We have concerns that the introduction of a policy which identifies a mix of housing sizes and tenures based on a specific housing needs assessment (which does not form part of this consultation) is likely to become out of date and should instead be in accordance with the wording in Local Plan Policy H1 which provides flexibility to respond to changing needs over the plan period.
- 4.21 We have a number of other concerns relating to the clarity of the policy and the absence of any '*proportionate, robust evidence*' to assess the viability of delivering the requirements set out within the policy, as required in national planning policy and indeed as reflected in Local Plan Policy H1.

Viability of the Requirements

- 4.22 We are concerned that the proposed policy does not comply with the basic conditions insofar as it conflicts with national policy and the achievement of sustainable development.

- 4.23 PPG requires that '*A minimum of 25% of all affordable housing units secured through developer contributions should be First Homes*'⁷. Furthermore, PPG sets out that First Homes '*...must be discounted by a minimum of 30% against the market value*'⁸.
- 4.24 PPG is clear that: '*...the First Homes Written Ministerial Statement does give local authorities and neighbourhood planning groups the discretion to require a higher minimum discount of either 40% or 50% if they can demonstrate a need for this*'⁹ (emphasis added).
- 4.25 PPG requires that '*proportionate, robust evidence should support the choices made and the approach taken.*' However, there appears to be no evidence provided to support the requirements set out within the proposed policy in relation to the viability of delivering the proposed amount and mix of affordable housing tenures. The proposed policy is clearly, therefore, not consistent with national guidance given the absence of this evidence.
- 4.26 Cotswold District Council undertook a Whole Plan and Community Infrastructure Levy Viability Assessment in 2016, which concluded that the Council should adopt a two-tiered affordable housing requirement (with a 30% requirement on brownfield and a 40% requirement on remaining areas) to ensure that residential development '*...is not put at serious risk by the cumulative impact of the Council's policies*'¹⁰.
- 4.27 Given the cumulative impact of the policies set out within the Cotswold District Local Plan (2011 – 2031), the Council's own evidence-base identifies that there is limited scope for further requirements beyond those currently adopted. Following the Council's assessment of viability in 2016, the combined effect of the Covid-19 Pandemic, and other external factors have substantially increased building and construction costs generally.
- 4.28 Research recently published by the UK Trade & Business Commission demonstrates that, between 2015 and 2022, the cost of construction materials has risen by +60% and the cost of labour has increased by +30% in the UK¹¹. Given these substantial increases in costs, it is likely that the Council's viability assessment is now seriously out of date and its assumptions are likely to reflect a generous position with regard to the equivalent viability of development compared with today.

⁷ Planning Practice Guidance – First Homes. Paragraph: 012; Reference ID: 70-012-20210524.

⁸ Planning Practice Guidance – First Homes. Paragraph: 001 Reference ID: 70-001-20210524.

⁹ Planning Practice Guidance – First Homes. Paragraph: 004 Reference ID: 70-004-20210524.

¹⁰ Cotswold District Council (2016) Whole Plan and CIL Viability Assessment. Available online at: <https://www.cotswold.gov.uk/media/rsmfwrso/7101-whole-plan-and-community-infrastructure-levy-cil-viability-assessment-apr-2016.pdf>.

¹¹ The Guardian (2023) Available online at: <https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2023/jan/24/brexit-uk-construction-costs-eu>.

- 4.29 Given these circumstances, the neighbourhood plan has the responsibility for demonstrating that these additional requirements are reasonable and viable to implement, on the basis of '*proportionate, robust evidence*'. Where the plan seeks the provision of additional affordable housing beyond the requirements of the Cotswold District Council (i.e., the greater discount for First Homes and the increased proportion of Social Rented housing) this needs to be demonstrated to be *viable* on the basis of robust evidence, which is currently absent.
- 4.30 Without such evidence, the proposed neighbourhood plan cannot be considered to comply with the basic conditions. To redress the issue, we recommend that the criteria is either amended to reflect the Council's existing requirements, or that appropriate evidence is provided to justify the additional requirements.
- 4.31 In addition to the above, Paragraph 5.10 of the SSNP states that Policy H2 requires a minimum of 40% of homes to be affordable. However, this is factually incorrect as suggested above. Policy H2 states:
- "3. The affordable housing requirement on all sites requiring a contribution, subject to viability is:*
- i. Up to 30% of new dwellings gross on brownfield sites; and*
- ii. Up to 40% of new dwellings gross on all other sites."*
- 4.32 The wording at Paragraph 5.10 should be amended accordingly and should also incorporate the reference to viability.
- 4.33 Furthermore, it is notable that the supporting text to the draft policy, at paragraphs 5.12 – 5.13 include reference to the benefits associated with encouraging and enabling younger people and families to live in Stow, to redress the aging population profile of the settlement. However, no account has been taken of the benefits associated with releasing family housing through the provision of specialist accommodation for older people, wherein their 'downsizing' would result in an associated release of existing family-sized housing in the settlement to support younger people and families. This is an accepted principle in recent Appeal decisions, wherein the benefits of releasing other existing dwelling stock is afforded positive weight.
- 4.34 The proposed development at Newlands of Stow of retirement living cottages, will provide much-needed specialist accommodation for older people, which would result in other existing properties in the settlement being made available, including for younger people and families as the existing residents downsize. It will also help take pressure off NHS demand for such facilities. Such a benefit could be secured through the use of the 'Local Connection Test' criteria for any affordable housing element as set out in Policy SSNP5.

Policy SSNP5: Specialist Accommodation for Older People in Stow

- 4.35 Policy SSNP5 seeks to restrict the delivery of age-restricted homes in Stow over the plan period, by confining the delivery of specialist accommodation for older people to schemes of a 'small scale' and to schemes that provide 100% affordable housing.
- 4.36 The approach set out in Policy SSNP5, with regard to the delivery of specialist accommodation for older people, clearly conflicts with the 'basic conditions' in several areas. Our concerns relate to the clear conflict with the proposed policy and the achievement of sustainable development, conflict with national guidance relating to meeting the housing needs of this community group, and the lack of evidence provided to demonstrate the approach is viable.

Conflicts with National Guidance, the Development Plan, and the Achievement of Sustainable Development

- 4.37 Section 2 of these representations sets out in detail the legal and policy context relating to neighbourhood planning in England. The Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations (2012) (as amended) require that a neighbourhood plan must meet certain basic conditions, which [*inter alia*] require that the plan must contribute to the achievement of sustainable development, have regard to national guidance, and be in general conformity with the development plan of the area.
- 4.38 Proposed Policy SSNP5 seriously conflicts with each of these basic requirements, as discussed below, and must be amended to reflect a more *positively prepared* approach that seeks to meet the clear and substantial identified needs for this form of housing development over the lifetime of the plan period.
- 4.39 With regard to national guidance, the NPPF is clear that:

'The application of the presumption [in favour of sustainable development] has implications for the way communities engage in neighbourhood planning. Neighbourhood plans should:

- *Support the delivery of strategic policies contained in local plans or spatial development strategies; and,*
- *Shape and direct development that is outside of these strategic policies'¹² (emphasis added).*

- 4.40 The NPPF further reiterates, at paragraph 29, that neighbourhood plans need to be aligned with the strategic needs and priorities of the wider local area. It confirms that: '*...Neighbourhood plans should not promote less development than set out in the strategic policies for the area, or undermine those strategic policies*' (emphasis added). This is supported by NPPF footnote 16 which states: '*Neighbourhood plans must be in general conformity with the strategic policies contained in any development plan that covers their area*'.

¹² NPPF (2023) Paragraph 13.

- 4.41 Pursuant to this, PPG further clarifies that 'regard to national policy' means that a '*Neighbourhood Plan or Order must not constrain the delivery of important national policy objectives*'¹³ (emphasis added).
- 4.42 Given the above requirements for a neighbourhood plan, the inclusion of a policy which explicitly is '*...intended to slow down the supply of age-restricted homes in Stow*'¹⁴ (emphasis added) must clearly be in direct conflict with the achievement of sustainable development, national policy, and the development plan, in relation to the need to provide for identified housing needs where such needs are demonstrated. The following discussion clearly establishes that such a need is present at the national, district, and Neighbourhood Area (and even settlement) scale.

Identified Need for Specialist Accommodation for Older People

- 4.43 The NPPF (2021) is clear that (emphasis added):

... 'the size, type and tenure of housing needed for different groups in the community should be assessed and reflected in planning policies (including, but not limited to, those who require affordable housing, families with children, older people, students, people with disabilities, service families, travellers, people who rent their homes and people wishing to commission or build their own homes.

- 4.44 Furthermore, in December 2023, the Government published an updated version of the NPPF (2023, which amended this paragraph to include the specific identification of the need for planning policies to assess the needs of older persons '*including for retirement housing, housing-with-care and care homes*' and reflect this within planning policies (emphasis added).
- 4.45 The introduction of further clarification to the requirement to reflect the housing needs of older persons in planning policies demonstrates that tackling the emerging crisis in the under-provision of this type of accommodation represents a national priority. For Policy SSNP5 to explicitly and purposefully inhibit the delivery of this form of accommodation would clearly make the plan fail to meet the basic conditions.
- 4.46 Furthermore, at the sub-regional scale, the Gloucestershire Local Housing Needs Assessment (2020) ('LHNA'), which forms an essential part of the evidence-base supporting the Cotswold District Local Plan (2011 – 2031), to which the Neighbourhood Plan must have regard, identifies that there is a clear and '*substantial*' need for housing to accommodate the needs of older persons up to 2041.
- 4.47 Paragraphs 4.2 – 4.3 of the LHNA raise fundamental issues for Cotswold District Local Plan, to which the Neighbourhood Plan is required by the basic conditions to be in general conformity with. The LHNA confirms, at paragraph 23, that the projected population increase within Gloucestershire of persons aged 75+ alone is set to see an additional 52,232 individuals entering the bracket. This is almost equivalent to the baseline population of 68,131 persons.

¹³ Planning Practice Guidance. Paragraph: 069 Reference ID: 41-069-20140306

¹⁴ Stow & Swells Neighbourhood Plan (2023) Regulation 16 Iteration. Paragraph 5.18.

- 4.48 Of the projected population increase in Gloucestershire as a whole, the projected change in Cotswold District is 13,838 additional persons up to 2041. Figure 68 of the LHNA confirms that of those additional 13,838 persons, 11,957 are projected to be people aged 65+. This comprises 86% of the entire population increase for Cotswold District, in a group in which many individuals hold specific housing requirements.
- 4.49 Given the total projected population increase within this community group within Cotswold District, the LHNA models the demand for 'Older Persons Housing', at Figure 74, to comprise additional sheltered accommodation housing of 1,699 owned and 440 rented homes; and for those requiring 'extra care' housing types, an additional need for 149 owned and 44 rented homes up to 2041. There is, therefore, a clear and substantial need to accommodate the specific housing needs of older persons within Cotswold District.
- 4.50 Policy DS1 of the Cotswold District Local Plan (2011 – 2031) commits to meeting these identified housing needs up to 2031, with development being directed toward the Principal Settlements in the District. Stow comprises one of the principal settlements. Meeting the District's pressing housing needs is therefore linked to the sustainable growth of Stow to accommodate, where appropriate, both general residential housing needs and, in addition, the housing needs of older persons, which is both evidenced and substantial.
- 4.51 The basic conditions require a neighbourhood plan to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development, have regard to national policy, and be in general conformity with the development plan for the area. Policy SSNP5 clearly fails on all three of these measures. As proposed, the policy explicitly seeks to inhibit the delivery of specialist accommodation for older persons, which directly conflicts with the provisions of national, regional, and local commitments, and would undermine the delivery of Policy DS1 of the Cotswold District Local Plan (2011 – 2031).
- 4.52 Furthermore, Newlands of Stow have instructed specialist consultants Carterwood to undertake an assessment of need for specialist accommodation for older persons in Cotswold District. The Planning Needs Assessment (September 2023) is provided at **Appendix 4**.
- 4.53 Carterwood's assessment of net need for market retirement living concludes that there is a shortfall of -691 homes within the 10-mile market catchment area, and a shortfall of -966 homes within the administrative area of Cotswold District as at 2026. This reflects the earliest year that Newlands of Stow could reasonably deliver its proposed development of +25 retirement cottages should the site gain permission subject to a planning application being submitted.
- 4.54 It is notable that the shortfall in the local authority area was -867 in 2023. These assessments of shortfall *generously* assume that prevalence rates and existing provision remain unchanged and all currently planned supply (both granted and pending a decision) are developed.

- 4.55 Furthermore, the proposed policy clearly conflicts with the SSNP evidence-base produced to support the production of the neighbourhood plan itself. The Housing Need Assessment (2022) ('HNA') produced by AECOM (to support the SSNP but not included with the consultation documentation) projects that there will be a substantial increase in the population of the Neighbourhood Area in the 55 - 75+ age range.
- 4.56 Consequently, the HNA projects that there is a need for an additional 51 – 70 units of specialist accommodation for older persons within the Neighbourhood Area up to 2031. Of these, the HNA projects a need for 18 – 20 affordable dwellings, which ranges from approximately 28% to 35% of the total need. The HNA's recommendation is further broken down to between 14 – 28 '*housing with care*' units and 36 – 42 units of '*retirement housing*'.
- 4.57 Given the above, it is clear that there is an evidenced need for specialist accommodation for older persons within the Neighbourhood Area through the plan period, market or otherwise. This need is identified at the national, regional, local, and even Neighbourhood Area scale.
- 4.58 Cotswold District Council has decided not to specifically allocate sites for specialist accommodation for older people, instead relying upon development proposals progressing on the basis of the tests set out in Policy H4 of the Cotswold District Local Plan (2018) in order to meet these identified needs. The District's spatial strategy for the delivery of these specialist forms of accommodation consequently places reliance upon speculative development applications being made at suitable locations (i.e., the Principal Settlements of the District, of which Stow is one).
- 4.59 Within the SHELAA (2021), the Council specifically notes in its recommendations with regard to the site that: '*S65 could potentially come forward as an extension to the care home if a planning application was made – the site does not need to be allocated in the Local Plan for this to occur...*'. The relevant SHELAA (2021) extract is provided at **Appendix 5**.
- 4.60 The proposed Policy SSNP5, as currently formulated, would directly conflict with and be antagonistic to the delivery of this spatial strategy, which is set out in Policy H4 of the Cotswold District Local Plan (2018) and, as such, clearly conflicts with the basic conditions. Furthermore, the Council has confirmed separately that it is not proposing to change this spatial approach in its Partial Update of the Local Plan.

- 4.61 The proposed development at Newlands of Stow meets all of the tests set out under Policy H4 of the Local Plan (2018):
- i) It clearly meets a proven need for the type of accommodation proposed, which is evidenced in the Planning Need Assessment at **Appendix 4**, thus satisfying Criteria a.
 - ii) It proposes additional healthcare facilities as part of a wider IRC with existing facilities, comprising key priorities in the Gloucestershire Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy (2019-2030) and Gloucestershire ICS Primary Care Strategy (2019–2024), which will specifically serve the residents of Stow as set out previously, thus satisfying Criteria b.
 - iii) It is in a sustainable location, accessible to public transport and other services, adjacent to a 'Principal Settlement' as defined in the District's settlement hierarchy, thus satisfying Criteria c.
 - iv) Subject to viability, it will address with the requirements set out under Criteria d.
- 4.62 As currently formulated, Policy SSNP5 would undermine the ability for the proposed development at the existing Newlands of Stow community to progress to secure planning permission. Given that the District's spatial strategy is reliant upon such sites to come forward in order to meet identified needs, the Neighbourhood Plan is evidently in direct conflict with the Development Plan and cannot be considered to meet the basic conditions on this basis.
- 4.63 Policy SSNP5 is therefore in clear and direct conflict with the achievement of sustainable development to meet these identified needs, and as a result is also in direct conflict with national planning policy and the development plan for Cotswold District.
- 4.64 Given this clear conflict, Policy SSNP5 needs to be revised to reflect a more positive approach to development, which seeks to proactively meet the identified need for this type of housing within the Neighbourhood Area over the plan period.
- 4.65 To redress this issue, we **strongly encourage** the allocation of Land at Newlands of Stow to accommodate an extension of the existing IRC community by an additional 24 retirement living cottages with associated health and wellbeing facilities. Such an allocation would ensure that the identified needs of the settlement of Stow are met in a positive way and the allocation is capable of meeting almost all of Stow's needs for this type of development on its own.
- 4.66 Furthermore, we **strongly encourage** the revision of Policy SSNP5 to reflect a more positively prepared approach, by removing the undefined requirement for any development to be '*small scale*'. This requirement both introduces ambiguity into the policy and acts to inhibit the achievement of sustainable development.

Requirement to be 'Small Scale'

- 4.67 Draft Policy SSNP5 currently provides that development proposals for specialist accommodation for older people will not be permitted unless [*inter alia*] 'they are of a small scale...', as set out in the first bullet of the policy. What constitutes a 'small scale' development remains undefined within the policy, which introduces ambiguity to the plan.
- 4.68 To improve the clarity of the draft policy, we recommend that the requirement for development proposals to be '*small scale*' is removed, or otherwise appropriately defined. Given that the second bullet of the policy limits the maximum site-specific capacity of a proposal to 40 dwellings, it would follow that the reference to '*small scale*' proposals relates to this quantum and should be removed to avoid any ambiguity.

Requirement to be 100% Affordable

- 4.69 Further to the above, Policy SSNP5 is problematic insofar as it also seeks to require that 100% of any specialist accommodation for older persons delivered in the settlement comprises affordable housing. The aspect of the proposed policy conflicts with the basic conditions for several reasons, which relate to; the restriction of the ability to meet the identified need for market housing in this sector, and the absence of evidence relating to the viability of the requirement.
- 4.70 As set out previously, there is a significant evidenced need for specialist accommodation for older persons within both Cotswold District as a whole and the Neighbourhood Area in particular. This need is evidenced in the neighbourhood plan's own evidence-base and identifies a need for both market and affordable accommodation types.
- 4.71 The HNA sets out that an evidenced need for between 51 – 70 units of specialist accommodation for older persons within the Neighbourhood Area up to 2031, of which 33 – 50 should comprise market provision. Furthermore, as previously set out, the Planning Needs Assessment undertaken by Carterwood identifies that this need is significantly greater at the District scale, and the 10-mile Market Catchment Area.
- 4.72 Given the evidenced identified need for this form of accommodation, the restriction of specialist accommodation for older persons to 100% affordable clearly conflicts with the delivery of such housing need and therefore the achievement of sustainable development.
- 4.73 To redress this issue, we recommend that the policy is amended to reflect a requirement for approximately 30 – 40% of specialist accommodation for older persons to comprise affordable housing products (or require an equivalent commuted-sum for off-site affordable housing provision) to align with Local Plan Policy H2. Such a requirement would more appropriately reflect the evidence-base supporting the neighbourhood plan and would contribute to the achievement of sustainable development.

- 4.74 Furthermore, there is no provision for development proposals to come forward without providing 100% affordable housing, where there are evidenced viability issues with delivering this form of accommodation. There is no recognition in the SSNP or the evidence base of either the different finance model for funding retirement accommodation, nor the costs of providing communal facilities. Such factors are regularly identified and recognised in Local Plan Policies and associated evidence related to specialist accommodation. Policy SSNP5 must include the caveat that any requirement for affordable housing is 'subject to viability', in order to be consistent with both national planning policy and the adopted development plan of the District. Without this provision, the plan cannot be considered to meet the basic conditions.
- 4.75 If these issues are not resolved, the 'making' of it would clearly be in conflict with the basic conditions and the draft plan should not proceed to a referendum of the local population. As currently proposed, Policy SSNP5 is clearly in conflict with the basic conditions, insofar as the policy explicitly seeks to inhibit the achievement of sustainable development, does not clearly state that the affordable housing requirement is subject to viability; it therefore has little regard to national planning policy, and is not in general conformity with the development plan.
- 4.76 Other Relevant Issues Related to SSNP5 Paragraph 5.18 notes that the policy intends to slow down the supply of age-restricted housing in Stow for the plan period and suggests that Stow has an over-supply. Paragraph 5.19 that: "*The Town has seen two major such developments in the last decade.*"
- 4.77 While it is clear from the evidence that there is still a significant need for older persons housing there is no attempt to assess in finer detail the demand requirements. Based on the Housing Need Assessment and the Planning Need Assessment (contained in Appendix 4), there is demand for all types of older persons housing, however the two schemes that have been delivered in Stow-on-the-Wold have both been for Use Class C2 Extra Care (where a care package has to be taken) and are both predominately flatted/apartment developments.
- 4.78 The Planning Need Assessment is clear that there is a significant demand for retirement accommodation, which falls under Use Class C3 and does NOT require any care package to be taken. Rather such schemes encourage residents to remain in their own homes rather than move into accommodation with care, which aligns with the approach of Gloucestershire County Council. There is no such accommodation currently provided in Stow-on-the-Wold. Therefore, existing residents wishing to downsize into retirement accommodation cannot do so unless they have a care need.
- 4.79 As indicated above, the two schemes in Stow are predominantly flatted/apartment developments with only 7 cottages delivered, which have all been occupied, evidencing further demand for this style of accommodation. Given that a significant proportion of existing residents of the relevant demographic live in large family homes and are relatively affluent, as acknowledged in the SSNP, it is unsurprising that there is a greater demand for cottages rather than smaller apartments, when looking to downsize. This is born out in the waiting list for the existing Newlands of Stow cottages as confirmed by Knight Frank (details will be submitted with the application).

- 4.80 There is a demand for all types of accommodation. However, there is no consideration or differentiation made between them, or acknowledgement about the need for engagement held in relation to the NoS proposals that there is no clear understanding of the different types of specialist accommodation for older people, particularly relating to Extra Care and Retirement accommodation.
- 4.81 Policy SSNP5 first bullet refers to a local connection test. Provided greater clarity were provided as to what the local connection test actually comprises (we note it refers to CDC's definition at Paragraph 5.22, however it is not clear where the definition can be found), this proposition can be supported were the remainder of the policy be amended to allow for the extension of Newlands of Stow to deliver market retirement accommodation. This would have the clear benefit of freeing up local family homes to the market as residents downsize. Policy SSNP4 could be amended to ensure that the 'released' homes were also subject to a 'principal residence' clause, with appropriate caveats to ensure that should there be no up take that the properties can be marketed to a wider area.
- 4.82 It is noted that the Consultation Statement (September 2023) indicates on page 14 at the end of the third paragraph under the heading Policy SSNP5 Specialist Accommodation for Older People in Stow, with specific reference to the NoS proposals, that "*it is noted that the scheme being promoted may in any event be consistent with the policy.*"
- 4.83 It is not clear in what regard the promoted scheme, the details of which were provided to the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group and in response to the Regulation 14, the scheme can be considered as being consistent with the policy. The proposals are not for an affordable housing scheme and comprise 24 homes. The proposals would however be consistent with Policy H4 of the adopted Local Plan.

Policy SSNP6: Health and Well Being

- 4.84 Policy SSNP6 seeks to encourage proposals for housing development of any types to demonstrate how they will support the community's physical and mental health and social networks. Newlands of Stow welcome and support this policy objective and consider that the existing Newlands of Stow already fulfils a number of these criteria and through its proposals would further enhance the provisions available to the residents of Stow-on-the-Wold. The existing Newlands of Stow IRC makes a good example of improving efficiency for the NHS by GP's being able to assist residents all in one location. This benefit would be further through the proposed extension to the IRC, particularly with the health and wellbeing facilities being located on site.
- 4.85 However, it is unclear as to whether all proposals have to fulfil all the bullet points which would seem impracticable, onerous and unviable. The Policy should be reworded to provide clarity and avoid ambiguity in line with the basic condition requirements.

Policy SSNP11: Stow and the Swells Design Code

- 4.86 In principle, Newlands of Stow welcomes a Design Code for the settlement, and broadly supports the content of the associated Design Code. However, it is imperative that the policy and associated code are not overly prescriptive in their application.
- 4.87 In its current form, the policy could be applied too prescriptively given the provision that proposals must 'accord' with the design code. Rigid application of this policy could result in ineffective implementation of the policy and result in unnecessary delays in the planning process.
- 4.88 To redress this issue, our recommendation is that the word 'accord' should be replaced with 'align'. This would introduce a greater level of flexibility to its application where this appropriate and reasonable, whilst ensuring that proposals must demonstrate that the Design Code has informed the proposed development.

- 4.89 The revised text would read as follows:

'Development proposals must align with the Cotswold and Stow and the Swells Design Code'

- 4.90 We also note that there is an emphasis on traditional architectural forms, which may not always be appropriate and there should be guidance within the Design Code to reflect this.
- 4.91 Furthermore, an additional concern with respect to the Design Code relates specifically to the application of Code No. D9D, which seeks to set a restrictive policy that is not evidenced or justified. Code No. D9D states:

'New dwellings should not be built within the gardens of historic houses and cottages and proposals within or to extend must include in their landscape schemes provision for significant, mature trees and hedges at all rear plot boundaries'.

- 4.92 The SSNP fails to define what constitutes 'historic houses and cottages'. In the absence of a definition, or a specific list of identified buildings that meet this definition, the policy introduces ambiguity and is unclear as to its applicability. Consequently, this element of the Design Code, and the policy to which it relates, cannot be considered to be 'clear and unambiguous' as required by national guidance.
- 4.93 Furthermore, proportionate but robust evidence must be provided to justify the protection afforded to the gardens of such 'historic houses and cottages' in terms of the need to protect these from a heritage perspective.
- 4.94 With respect of the second element of the draft policy, Newlands of Stow are concerned that the requirement that relevant proposals 'must include in their landscape schemes provision for significant, mature trees and hedges at all rear plot boundaries' is too prescriptive, which, as set out previously, is likely to lead to unnecessary delays and inefficiencies in the planning process.

4.95 Newlands of Stow consider this requirement to be overly prescriptive and potentially restrict alternative, indeed potentially more appropriate, forms of mitigation to be implemented based upon the individual circumstances of specific development proposals. Consequently, our recommendation is that this criteria is removed from the policy. Alternatively, the provision may beneficially be replaced by an appropriately worded requirement for sufficient mitigation to be implemented to address harms as appropriate.

Policy SSNP13: Zero Carbon Buildings

4.96 Newlands of Stow welcomes the aspirations of the SSNP with respect to Zero Carbon buildings and being Zero Carbon ready.

4.97 However, in order to meet the basic conditions, the policy requirements must have regard to national planning policies and guidance, and be in general conformity with the strategic policies contained in the Cotswold District development plan. Newlands of Stow considers that the currently drafted policy fails to meet these criteria, for the reasons set out below.

4.98 Furthermore, the NPPF is clear, at paragraph 16, that all plans should '*...be prepared positively, in a way that is aspirational but deliverable...*' (emphasis added). With respect to the introduction of Zero Carbon requirements, the Qualifying Body should demonstrate, with proportional but robust evidence, that the policy requirements are deliverable with respect to viability.

4.99 Policy SSNP13 is split into five parts, which are dealt with below.

Criteria (a)

4.100 Policy SSNP13 (Zero Carbon Buildings) (a) relates to energy readiness. 'Zero Carbon Ready' remains undefined within the SSNP, introducing ambiguity within the policy for the decision-maker.

4.101 Given the lack of a formal definition, it is therefore unclear what standards and/or requirements the policy is seeking to achieve with respect to energy efficiency improvements and/or carbon emission reduction beyond existing national and local requirements. It is therefore unclear for the decision-maker and applicants what is being sought.

4.102 Given the introduction of the interim Future Homes Standard in national policy and guidance, Policy SSNP13 should be either removed entirely to avoid duplication, or otherwise amended to reflect current best practice. It is notable that the requirements of Part L of Building Regulations will ensure new homes built from 15 June 2022 (subject to transitional arrangements) produce 31% less carbon emissions compared to the 2013 standards.

4.103 Where other draft Neighbourhood Plans have sought to impose 'Zero Carbon ready' policies, Inspectors have reworded such policies to note that development proposals which would be 'zero carbon ready', would be 'supported'. An example of this is Policy TW9 of the Twyford Neighbourhood Plan in Wokingham Borough Council.

Criteria (b) and (c)

- 4.104 SSNP13 Criteria (b) and (c) appear to be intended to work together and relate to the use of the Passivhaus Planning Packing (PHPP). However, it is not clear how the requirements relate to development plan policy or national planning policy.
- 4.105 The requirement for a Post Occupancy Evaluation Report for new or refurbished buildings to be submitted to the Local Planning Authority within a specified period does not accord with guidance set out in PPG 'Use of Planning Conditions'.
- 4.106 Furthermore, it is not clear how such a condition could be enforced by CDC. It is also not clear how the specified period will be determined, what 'reasonable' corrective action could comprise, and how it will be determined whether the property can viably or even practicably be altered in response to the report, particularly if the property has passed to a new homeowner by this stage, which given it is a post occupation requirement, it will have done.
- 4.107 The implementation of this policy requirement could cause new homeowners significant issues and there may also be issues for purchasers with mortgagees not accepting such requirements, when properties with such restrictions on are purchased.
- 4.108 In relation to SSNP13 (c) it is not clear what is meant by 'where feasible' and under what circumstances buildings can and cannot be certified to a Passivhaus or equivalent standard. Further to which, such standards are regularly being updated and if incorporated into policy could change significantly beyond what was intended or indeed is achievable. Therefore, the specific requirements should be set out rather than the use of the requirement to be certified to a Passivhaus or equivalent standard.

Criteria (d)

- 4.109 In relation to SSNP13 (d) the requirement for a Whole-Life-Cycle Carbon Emission Assessment does not accord with development plan policy and as such has not been subject to scrutiny at Local Plan Examination. There is no detail provided in the SSNP as to what is required to meet this policy requirement nor how it is to be assessed on submission with an application by CDC, due to the lack of CDC policy context.

Criteria (e)

- 4.110 SSNP13 (e) provides a requirement to submit an Energy Statement, which is now common practice. However, the requirements should accord with national and local plan policy.

Other considerations

- 4.111 There is also a lack of consistency between the energy requirements and SSNP13 (a-d) for example the second and third bullet relates to Future Homes Standard and Building Regulations, to which we refer above, but this is not reflected in the SSNP13 (a) wording which is rather more ambiguous. The wording and requirement should be consistent.
- 4.112 Bullet four should refer to net zero carbon and relevant definitions should be provided.

4.113 In relation to paragraph 5.58 there is no evidence provided in relation to viability to justify the assertion regarding land values and should be deleted.

4.114 In addition, there is also some inconsistency between SSNP13 and SSNP7 Land North East of Stow, which at bullet a) refers to a 'low or zero carbon residential-led development and at i3) requires proposals to include features that improve energy efficiency and reduces carbon dioxide emissions. It is considered that this wording from SSNP7 should be reflected in SSNP13.

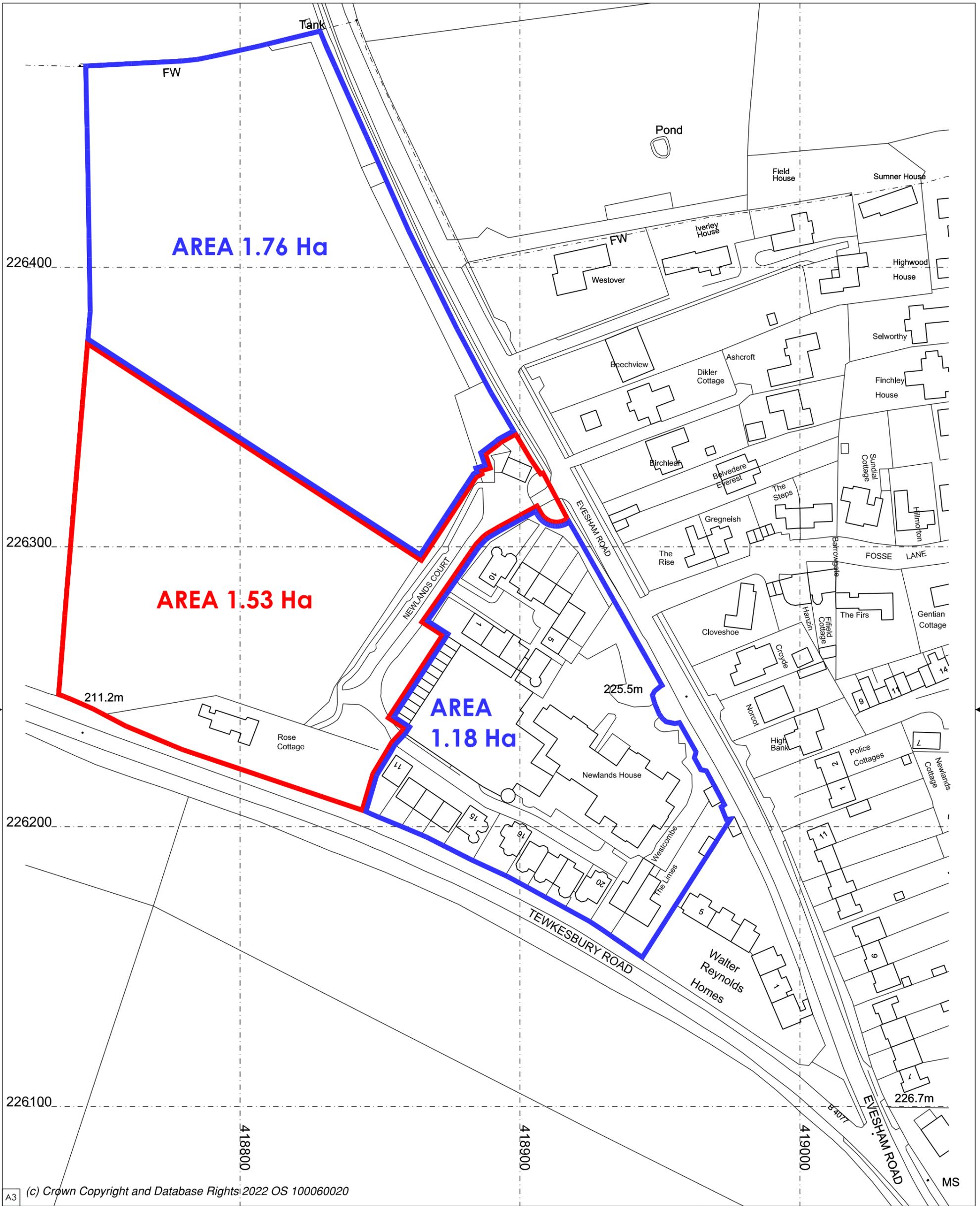
**Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) for the Stow on the Wold & The Swells
Neighbourhood Plan (June 2023)**

4.115 It is considered that the SEA does not give proper consideration to the non-site specific policies and in particular in relation to Policy SSNP5 related to Specialist Accommodation for Older People in Stow. Given that the Evidence Base clearly demonstrates that there is a significant proportion of older people in Stow, as well as in the wider Cotswolds and indeed nationally, their needs should have been given greater consideration through the SEA process, particularly given the significant demand for older persons accommodation that has been identified. There is no consideration of the alternative proposition to that set out in the policy. There is no assessment as to whether the existing older residents needs should be addressed nor any assessment as to the benefits to the wider housing market and how this could positively impact on the demographics of Stow by allowing younger people to enter the market, through the release of family housing from those downsizing into appropriate retirement accommodation.

5. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

- 5.1 Newlands of Stow welcomes the preparation of a Neighbourhood Plan for the Stow & the Swells Neighbourhood Area. We recognise that neighbourhood planning can allow local communities, of which we are a part, to play a meaningful and positive role in influencing development in the area.
- 5.2 As we have set out in these representations, there are many aspects of the draft neighbourhood plan that are of merit. However, we consider that there are several significant flaws and omissions within the draft plan that need to be redressed as part of its examination before the draft plan may progress to a referendum.
- 5.3 Newlands of Stow recommends that the draft plan is modified, such that a more positive approach to the development of specialist accommodation for older persons is provided within the document. In particular, we recommend that land adjacent to Tewkesbury Road at Newlands of Stow is allocated within the plan for an extension of the existing care community to provide 24 retirement living cottages with an associated health and wellbeing facilities. This would assist in meeting the identified need for this form of housing within the Neighbourhood Area over the plan period and assist the draft neighbourhood plan in meeting the basic conditions required for the plan to proceed to referendum and adoption.
- 5.4 We have also provided comments on a number of the other proposed policies. In this regard, Newlands of Stow are concerned that some of the draft policies appear to not be supported by sufficient evidence to confirm their effectiveness / feasibility to implement. These policies should be revisited, to ensure the draft neighbourhood plan meets the basic conditions test.
- 5.5 These representations (in conjunction with the appended Landscape and Visual Assessment) have confirmed that sites S65 (Land at Newlands of Stow) and S66 (Rose Cottage) are free from any significant constraints that would inhibit their development for housing with retirement living accommodation, a new rehabilitation facility open to the public and directly linked to the NHS and local GP surgery, on site 10% Biodiversity Net Gain, and public open space. The provision of specialist accommodation to meet the identified specific local need will also free up the local housing market for younger people currently unable to find appropriate accommodation, while enabling older persons to stay within their community but within a home specifically designed to meet their needs, thus also improving efficiency for NHS services. It is anticipated that the new homes would be subject to a local connection test, subject to take up, to help ensure that this can occur.
- 5.6 It is therefore recommended that the site is allocated, as part of a revised strategy, to meet the identified needs for this type of accommodation in the Neighbourhood Area. Notwithstanding, there are several further matters that must be addressed within the draft policies as set out within these representations in detail, in order for the plan to be capable of meeting the basic conditions.
- 5.7 Newlands of Stow would welcome the opportunity to clarify or supplement any of the matters raised in these representations with the independent Inspector examining the plan.

**APPENDIX ONE – SITE LOCATION PLAN (SEE
ACCOMPANYING DOCUMENT)**



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NEWLANDS OF STOW
 EVESHAM ROAD
 STOW-ON-THE-WOLD
 GLOUCESTERSHIRE
 GL54 1EY

SITE AREAS

SCALE @ A3 1: 1250	DATE 06.11.2023	AUTHOR JT	CHECK DP	DRAWING NO. PP1431/ SK37	REVISION -
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PRELIMINARY ISSUE

SCALE BAR = 10mm INTERVALS AT TRUE SCALE

PROPOSED APPLICATION BOUNDARY

LAND UNDER THE SAME OWNERSHIP

IMPORTANT NOTE FOR USE OF THIS DRAWING: THIS DRAWING HAS BEEN PRODUCED SPECIFICALLY FOR USE ON THIS PROJECT. POPE PRIESTLEY ARCHITECTS CANNOT BE HELD RESPONSIBLE FOR RE-USE OF THIS INFORMATION BY OTHERS FOR ANY PURPOSE OTHER THAN FOR WHICH IT IS SPECIFICALLY INTENDED. THIS DRAWING REFLECTS STANDARDS AGREED FOR THIS PROJECT AND CURRENT AT THE TIME OF PRODUCTION AND WILL NOT BE UPDATED IN ACCORDANCE WITH CHANGING LEGISLATION AND/ OR OTHER REQUIREMENTS.

APPENDIX TWO – CONSULTATION VERSION OF THE MASTERPLAN (NOVEMBER 2023)



**APPENDIX THREE – DRAFT LANDSCAPE AND
VISUAL APPRAISAL (NOVEMBER 2023) (TO BE
FINALISED AT APPLICATION SUBMISSION
STAGE (INCLUDING DRAWING REFERENCES))
(SEE ACCOMPANYING DOCUMENT)**



NEWLANDS OF STOW INTEGRATED RETIREMENT COMMUNITY, STOW-ON-THE-WOLD

Landscape and Visual Appraisal – Full Application

by

Hankinson Duckett Associates

for

Newlands of Stow Ltd

HDA ref: 1066.1/CM

Issue: 01

Date: November 2023

hankinson duckett associates

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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Instructions

1.1.1 Hankinson Duckett Associates (HDA) was appointed in March 2022 by Newlands of Stow Ltd to undertake a Landscape and Visual Appraisal (LVA) to support a submission for pre-application guidance from Cotswold District Council for the extension of an integrated retirement community on land to the west of the existing Newlands Retirement Community, off Evesham Road, Stow-on-the-Wold, GL54 1EY (here after referred to as 'the site' - *Plan HDA 1*). The pre-app (Reference 22/04480/PAYPRE) was for "*the addition of 25 dwellings, communal facilities including care facilities along with a centrally located community facility providing for hydro care facilities, gym, rehabilitation and occupational therapy (which would be open to the wider community) to create a comprehensive extension to Newlands of Stow*" on 1.03ha of land.

1.1.2 Following receipt of a response to the pre-app (from Martin Perks, Principal Planning Officer, dated 17 February 2023), HDA was commissioned to revise the LVA originally prepared for the pre-app, to update it to support the following development:

Full application for the demolition of Rose Lodge and an extension of the Newlands of Stow Integrated Retirement Community to develop 24 Retirement Cottages (Use Class C3), communal health and wellbeing facilities with associated car parking, landscaping, engineering, and other associated works, on land adjacent to Tewkesbury Road (on 1.53ha of land).

1.1.3 This updated LVA identifies the potential effects of the development on existing landscape features, the visual amenity and character of the local area.

1.2 Methodology

1.2.1 National landscape guidance uses landscape character as a basis for policy. Natural England has established the current methodology for the character-based approach to landscape assessment (*Ref 1*). This provides a foundation, with adaptation, for use in project-specific landscape assessment. It describes the application of landscape character assessment at different scales: the national/regional scale, local authority scale and local scale. The third edition of the 'Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment' (*Ref 2*) sets out landscape assessment methodology, which provides the basis for use in project-specific landscape assessment.

1.2.2 The approach to this Landscape and Visual Appraisal is based upon the latest guidance, and upon HDA's extensive practical experience of assessment work. HDA's Methodology for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment is set out within **Appendix A** of this report. The site survey was originally undertaken in March 2022 (to take advantage of winter views) and included an assessment of the wider area. Additional site visits have been undertaken in the interim, including attendance at consultation events. This LVA builds upon the LVA for the pre-app, dated November 2022 (Version 5). HDA has also provided

representations to the consultation on “Guidance for Major Development in the Cotswolds AONB” in March 2023.

2 SITE CONTEXT

2.1 Site Location

2.1.1 The site is located in the county of Gloucestershire, in the northern part of Cotswold District, on the north-western edge of the market town of Stow-on-the-Wold. The town occupies a hill-top position, and lies at the junction of several major roads, including the A429 Fosse Way, which was the Roman road between Cirencester and Warwick (though ultimately between Exeter and Lincoln).

2.1.2 The site lies on the north-western edge of the town and principally comprises the southern part of a field of mown grass. Along the site’s southern boundary, which adjoins the B4077 Tewkesbury Road, lies the unoccupied dwelling of Rose Lodge (referred to as Rose Cottage on some maps/documentation) and its associated garden, with mature trees lining the main road. To the east of the site lies the existing Newlands Integrated Retirement Community (1.18ha), which was completed in the 1990s. This existing development is accessed from the north, off the A424 Evesham Road, and it is proposed that this existing secondary access will also serve the proposed development site. The western site boundary is defined by mature trees in front of a stone boundary wall, whereas the northern site boundary is currently undefined, with the remainder of the field (1.76ha) extending northwards towards the A424 Evesham Road. On the south side of the B4077 Tewkesbury Road lies the high, stone wall to the country estate of Abbotswood, and abutting the boundary wall is a broad belt of mature trees. To the west of the site is open countryside.

2.2 Policy Context

2.2.1 The landscape and visual appraisal has regard to the requirements of the development planning process. The planning framework assists in the identification of the issues related to landscape, particularly in relation to landscape designation and policy objectives.

National Policy

2.2.2 The National Planning Policy Framework (*Ref 3*) sets out the government’s planning policy. Relevant paragraphs from the Framework are identified below:

- Chapter 2 – Achieving sustainable development: Paragraph 11 – Presumption in favour of sustainable development;
- Chapter 8 – Promoting healthy and safe communities: Paragraph 92 – Achieving healthy, inclusive and safe places;
- Chapter 12 – Achieving well-designed places: Paragraph 130 – Design of developments; and
- Chapter 15 – Conserving and enhancing the natural environment: Paragraph 174a) - Protecting and enhancing valued landscapes; Paragraph 174b) – Recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside; Paragraph 176 – Conserving and

enhancing landscape and scenic beauty in designated areas; and Paragraph 177 – Major development in designated areas.

- 2.2.3 The National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG) (*Ref 4*) supports and informs the Framework and sets out further specific planning guidance. Paragraph 041 from the ‘Natural Environment’ section (Reference ID: 8-041-20190721) is of relevance to this LVA, as it states:

All development in National Parks, the Broads and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty will need to be located and designed in a way that reflects their status as landscapes of the highest quality.

- 2.2.4 In addition, the National Design Guide (*Ref 5*) illustrates how well-designed places that are beautiful, enduring and successful, can be achieved in practice. It forms part of the Government’s suite of planning practice guidance notes and should be read alongside the separate planning practice guidance on design process and tools.

Regional Policy

- 2.2.5 Gloucestershire County Council’s primary plan-making responsibilities lie with the preparation of the Minerals Local Plan for Gloucestershire 2018-2032 (adopted March 2020) and the Gloucestershire Waste Core Strategy (adopted November 2012). However, the County Council is involved in developing infrastructure planning policies and will be a consultee on the application in its capacity as the Local Highway Authority, the Lead Local Flood Authority, the County archaeologist and the County ecologist.

Local Policy

- 2.2.6 The site lies within the administrative area of Cotswold District Council (CDC). The Cotswold District Local Plan 2011-2031 was adopted in August 2018 (CDLP, *Ref 6*) and in June 2020 it was agreed to undertake a partial update of the Local Plan. An ‘Issues and Options’ consultation (Regulation 18 – *Ref 7*) was held between 4th February and 20th March 2022. No proposed allocations were identified as part of the Regulation 18 consultation.

- 2.2.7 Below is a list of adopted policies relevant to the landscape and visual aspects of this project (the full wording of which can be found in **Appendix B**):

Policy EN1 – Built, Natural and Historic Environment;

Policy EN2 – Design of the Built and Natural Environment;

Policy EN4 – The Wider Natural and Historic Landscape;

Policy EN5 – Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB);

Policy EN7 - Trees, Hedgerows and Woodlands; and

Policy INF7 – Green Infrastructure.

2.2.8 The site, together with the remainder of the mown field to the north, and including Rose Lodge on the Tewkesbury Road frontage, was assessed within the 'Stow-on-the-Wold Site Assessments' for the Strategic Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment (Ref 8) as Site Refs S65 and S66. An extract from the assessment can be found at **Appendix C**.

2.2.9 As the site falls within the Cotswolds National Landscape (replacing the term Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) in June 2020), policies and planning principles within the Cotswolds National Landscape Management Plan 2023-2025 (Ref 9) have also been referred to in this LVA, though it should be noted that the Management Plan does not form part of the Development Plan. Policy CE1 and Policy CE3 are of relevance to the landscape and visual aspects of this application; the wording of these policies can be found at **Appendix D**.

Neighbourhood Plan Policy

2.2.10 Stow-on-the-Wold Town Council has prepared a Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP) for the parishes of Stow-on-the-Wold and Swell. A consultation into the Regulation 16 draft (Ref 10) is underway, and due to close on Friday 5 January 2024. Following the consultation, all representations received will be sent to an independent examiner to consider whether the submitted plan meets the legal requirements needed in order to proceed to referendum. The NDP is therefore some way off being 'made', and thus carries limited weight at this time.

2.2.11 The key policy within the NDP with regard to this application is Policy SSNP5: Specialist Accommodation for Older People in Stow (which is assessed in the Planning Statement). However, the key policy within the NDP of relevance to the landscape and visual aspects of this application is Policy SSNP11: Stow and the Swells Design Code, which states that "*Development proposals must accord with the Stow and the Swells Design Code*". The Design Code (Ref 11) is a separate document to the NDP and should be read in conjunction with the Cotswold Design Guide (Appendix D of the adopted Local Plan) (Ref 6). The site lies adjacent to Character Area D of the NDP Design Code, and reference has been made to that section (pages 50-60 of Ref 11) in the design evolution of the proposed development (refer to paragraph 6.2.5 of this LVA).

2.3 Designations and Development Considerations (Plan HDA 1)

2.3.1 Landscape: The site is located within the nationally designated landscape of the Cotswolds AONB, the nearest boundary of which lies 2.4km to the north-west of the site. The site does not lie within a Special Landscape Area (Policy EN6). There are several trees subject to Tree Preservation Order (TPO) No 315 (dated 29 August 2000) within or on the boundary

of the site. The plan for this TPO and the associated Schedule 1 are included at **Appendix E**.

2.3.2 Ecology: There are no ecology designations within or adjacent to the site. Woodlands over 1.9km to the south-west of the site (Slaughter Woods) are listed on Natural England's Inventory of Ancient Woodlands. Woodland on the opposite side of the road to the southern site boundary (within the grounds of Abbotswood) is shown on the government's 'Magic' website (Multi Agency Geographic Information for the Countryside) as 'Priority Habitat Inventory – Deciduous Woodland'. The woodland belt continues westwards along the Tewkesbury Road, and contributes to the leafy character of this road. The following description from the 'Stow-on-the-Wold Site Assessments' for Sites S65 and S66 (Ref 8 – and refer to **Appendix C**) refers to the hedgerows on the site, however, the western site boundary comprises a line of mature trees, rather than a hedgerow (Photo 1):

The hedgerows running alongside the sites appear on the 1884 Ordnance Survey and are therefore likely to be pre-enclosure hedges and would be considered to be important under the Hedgerows Regulations 1997. The trees and hedgerows would need to be retained and a scheme for their management and protection during development works would be required within any development proposal.

2.3.3 Heritage: There are no statutory heritage designations within or adjacent to the site. The north-eastern extent of the Stow Conservation Area lies within 220m of the site. As stated in the 'Stow-on-the-Wold Site Assessments' for Sites S65 and S66 (Ref 8), the Conservation Area "is screened by existing development and there would be no impact on the Conservation Area if the site were developed". The 'Site Assessments' report goes on to state the following:

A Scheduled Monument is located 180m to the east of the site (Romano-British villa 350m south-east of Abbotswood). The proximity of the site to the Scheduled Monument may present some issues (e.g., increased potential for archaeology). There is also a Historic Park/Garden opposite the southern boundary.

2.3.4 The Grade II* registered park and garden of Abbotswood is separated from the site by the B4077 Tewkesbury Road, a high stone boundary wall and a 40m wide belt of mature trees, therefore, there is no intervisibility between the site and this heritage asset. The Registered Battlefield of the Battle of Stow 1646 lies over 1.2km to the north of the site.

2.3.5 Public Rights of Way: No PRoWs pass through or adjacent to the site, though the B4077 Tewkesbury Road, to the south of the site, forms part of the promoted route of the Gloucestershire Way long distance trail.

2.3.6 Settlement Pattern: The Development Boundary of Stow-on-the-Wold includes the existing Newlands Retirement Community, but does not include Rose Lodge which lies on the southern site boundary. This cottage and its domestic curtilage are evidently a residential land use (though the property is currently unoccupied), and its presence extends the settled

character of Stow to the west along the Tewkesbury Road. The Development Boundary extends further north along the eastern side of the A424 Evesham Road, than the existing Newlands Retirement Community does on the west side, so the extension of the settlement boundary beyond the confines of built development on both sides of radial routes is not uncharacteristic. The Recommendations section of the Summary of the ‘Stow-on-the-Wold Site Assessments’ report (*Ref 8, page 31* – and refer to **Appendix C**), states “S65 (which refers to the larger northern part of the site, as the site containing Rose Lodge is S66) *could potentially come forward as an extension to the care home if a planning application was made – the site does not need to be allocated in the Local Plan for this to occur*”. This Recommendation suggests that extension of the settlement pattern westwards along Tewkesbury Road would be acceptable.

3 LANDSCAPE BASELINE

3.1 Landscape Context

3.1.1 Landform and Drainage: Stow-on-the-Wold sits on a hill (formed of Chipping Norton Limestone Formation; from <http://mapapps.bgs.ac.uk/geologyofbritain/home.html>), reaching a maximum of 230m Above Ordnance Datum (AOD) by the market square (though at the junction between the A429 Fosse Way, A436 Sheep Street and B4068 Lower Swell Road, there is a spot height of 233m AOD). The site sits on the north-western flanks of the hill, with a spot level on the B4077 Tewkesbury Road, to the south of the site, at 211.2m AOD. A spot height on the A424 Evesham Road, at the entrance to Newlands House, is at 225.5m AOD, therefore levels across the site lie within this range. The site drains to its south-west corner, and overlooks the valley of the River Dikler to the west (within which lie the villages of Lower and Upper Swell).

3.1.2 Local Land Use and Vegetation: As stated in Section 2.1 above, the site lies to the north of the B4077 Tewkesbury Road, which is fronted onto by the existing residential property of Rose Lodge, set in a large garden. To the south of the B4077 lies the estate of Abbotswood, set behind broad belts of trees. To the east lies the existing Newlands Retirement Community, and to the north and west lie fields of permanent pasture. The site, and the continuation of this field to the north, are maintained as cut grass (and have not been grazed for over 30 years), whereas the fields to the west are in agricultural use, primarily as sheep grazing. Greenfield Farm, 375m to the north of the site, comprises a large cluster of agricultural buildings characteristic of this landscape.

3.2 Landscape Character (Plan HDA 2)

3.2.1 The site lies centrally within the northern part of National Character Area (NCA) 107 ‘Cotswolds’ (*Ref 12*), and the landscape character of the site comprises several key characteristics listed for NCA 107. The NCAs cover large geographical extents, thus the degree to which the NCA descriptions are appropriate to a localised assessment can be

limited given they cover such large areas. Relevant extracts from NCA 107 can be found in **Appendix F**.

3.2.2 The current 'Gloucestershire Landscape Character Assessment' (GLCA, *Ref 13*), which is a county-level assessment, does not provide descriptions for the Landscape Character Types (LCTs) covered by the Cotswolds AONB LCA (AONB LCA, *Ref 14*). The AONB LCA uses almost the same boundaries between LCTs as the Gloucestershire study. For the purposes of this assessment, the AONB LCA is the key document to describe the landscape character of the site and its surrounding area. The site lies on the southern edge of LCT 7: 'High Wold', and specifically in LCA 7C: 'Cotswold High Wold Plateau', with the area to the south of the Tewkesbury Road in LCA 15A 'Vale of Bourton Farmed Slopes'. Extracts from the AONB LCA for LCAs 7C and 15A are included at **Appendix G**.

3.2.3 There is no landscape character assessment for Cotswold District, however, as part of the landscape evidence base for the Local Plan, a 'Study of land surrounding Key Settlements in Cotswold District: Update' (*Ref 15*) was produced. The Study assessed the landscape sensitivity of specific sites proposed for housing and economic development around settlements across the district. The Study did not include an assessment of the site. Extracts from the Study, and from a later update (*Ref 16*), for Stow-on-the-Wold are included at **Appendix H**.

3.2.4 The Regulation 16 Stow-on-the-Wold and Swells Neighbourhood Development Plan (*Ref 10*), does not contain a landscape character assessment for the NDP area, however, as stated above, reference has been made to Character Area D of the NDP Design Code (*Ref 11, pages 50-60*) in the design evolution of the proposed development.

3.3 Site Character and Features

3.3.1 The site is predominantly a mown grass field extending to approximately 1.53ha, bound by mature trees along its western and southern boundaries (refer to Photos 1 and 2), and includes the vacant residential property of Rose Lodge along its southern edge, set within its domestic curtilage. The site displays some characteristic features of the published character assessments, however, given the proximity of the adjacent Tewkesbury Road B4077 and suburban housing, including the existing retirement community, it has more urban characteristics than rural ones. The adjacent retirement community is a good example of a sensitive and characteristic development, which creates a sympathetic and good quality townscape.

3.3.2 The site slopes to the west, towards the valley of the River Dikler, however boundary vegetation restricts long distance views of the site, particularly when approached from Upper Swell, from the west along Tewkesbury Road. Rose Lodge already presents a

residential character to the adjacent Tewkesbury Road; redevelopment of this frontage would not be seen as any further encroachment of built settlement into the countryside than is currently the case. The site is regularly managed as part of the grounds of the adjacent retirement community, which maintains a good condition to the site, but its value is no more than ordinary countryside. Although the elevated nature of the site and the adjacent settlement increase their potential to be visible in some long-distance views, these are curtailed by boundary vegetation and a lack of publicly accessible viewpoints to the north and west from which to view the site.

3.4 Perceptual and Experiential Qualities

3.4.1 The site lies in a settlement edge location with grazing land to its west and north, but the prevailing character is of the adjacent settlement, with the existing retirement community to the east, Rose Lodge fronting the B4077 to the south and low density housing to the east of the A424. Vegetation along the western and southern boundaries of the site and along the north-eastern boundary of the adjoining field to its north, where it fronts onto the A424, help to screen the site from adjacent land uses. However, there is an awareness from within the site of the B4077 and the A424 and the noise generated by passing traffic. The site's mown grass appearance lends it a greater affinity to the adjacent retirement community than the agricultural fields to its west and north, but nonetheless, the site has mature trees to its perimeter that can be attributed as being scenic, which is perpetuated by the lack of visual detractors, such as overhead powerlines. In summary, the site relates more strongly to the existing settled edge of the town than with the wider rural landscape.

3.5 Landscape Sensitivity

3.5.1 The key landscape receptors that are likely to be affected by the proposed development of the site include:

- The proposed development site: Part of a mown grass field, and the residential property of Rose Lodge, adjoined to its east by an existing retirement community, and along its southern and western boundaries by mature trees;
- The surrounding landscape of LCA 7C: Cotswolds High Wold Plateau which encompasses the agricultural land to the west and north of the site but also the settlement of Stow-on-the-Wold to the east, which has a very different character, being suburban. For the purposes of this assessment, LCA 7C has been split into two areas, to differentiate between potential effects of the development on the differing countryside and urban characters of this LCA; and
- The surrounding landscape of LCA 15A: Vale of Bourton Farmed Slopes (including the estate of Abbotswold to the south).

3.5.2 The landscape sensitivity of a receptor comprises a combination of landscape value and susceptibility to change (see **Appendix A** for further details). Landscape value can be derived from designations placed upon a landscape or where Local Plans refer to specific landscape qualities of an area. Where designations or such local plan references are

absent, judgements can be made on quality criteria and experiential associations which may include:

- **Landscape quality (condition):** *'A measure of the physical state of the landscape'*. This includes land use, the intactness of the landscape and the quality and condition of the features within the landscape and the influence of incongruous features or elements;
- **Scenic quality:** The effect that a landscape is likely to have on the senses. For example, visual enclosure/openness or the pattern and scale of the landscape, whether there is a distinctive sense of place, striking landform or visual interest in the landscape;
- **Rarity:** *'the presence of rare elements or features in the landscape or the presence of a rare Landscape Character Type'*;
- **Representativeness:** whether the landscape or features within it are exemplary for the local area or whether the landscape being considered covers a high proportion of a particular character area;
- **Conservation interests:** recognition of importance through designation, or local consensus. Includes features of wildlife, archaeological, historic and cultural interest;
- **Recreation value:** *'evidence that the landscape is valued for recreational activity where experience of the landscape is important'*;
- **Perceptual aspects:** including tranquillity and appropriateness of substitution of the characteristics affected;
- **Associations:** *'with particular people, such as artists or writers, or events in history that contribute to perceptions of the natural beauty of the area'*.

3.5.3 The susceptibility to the proposed development would also vary between receptors. In landscape terms, susceptibility is "the ability of the landscape receptor to accommodate the proposed development without undue consequences for the maintenance of the baseline situation" (GLVIA, Page 88, Ref 2). Landscape receptors within the wider landscape would be less susceptible to the changes brought about by the type of development proposed than those receptors immediately adjacent to the site, such as the rural landscape to the west and north of the site. However, where the immediate landscape is suburban in nature (to the east), these areas would have a lower susceptibility to change.

3.5.4 The site and surrounding area are in the designated landscape of the Cotswolds AONB, within which the value of landscape receptors tends to be Very High or High in terms of tranquillity, landscape condition and scenic quality. The site possesses features that are characteristics of the AONB, though it is a typical, medium-scale, rectilinear field, bounded by trees and hedgerows, with a domestic curtilage along its southern edge. The site comprises 1.53ha of a mown grass field and a garden of limited biodiversity value and with the majority of its internal features being grass. Boundary features comprise medium to high value trees, except for the northern boundary, which is currently undefined, and these features in combination, do not afford the site high scenic qualities. The landscape value of the site has thus been assessed as High to High-Medium, whereas the surrounding countryside (in LCAs 7C and 15A), with its higher incidence of tree cover and less

influenced by the settlement, has been assessed as having High to Very High value. The settlement to the east and south-east of the site consists of medium density, built urban forms, where the predominant use of local stone (and stone substitutes) provides a harmonious appearance and an overall good scenic quality. The value of the adjacent settlement has therefore been assessed as having High/Medium value.

- 3.5.5 The site has been assessed as having Medium susceptibility to change, as change of the type proposed is similar to adjacent buildings within the baseline situation, though it is recognised that the proposed development cannot be accommodated without permanent loss or wholesale alteration of the field/garden. However, the features on the site's perimeter, that have higher landscape quality (the mature trees), can, on the whole, be retained and there would be the potential to augment these features and improve their longevity. As the proposed development would be in keeping with the type of development already present to the east (the existing retirement community) and with the residential land use already on the site along its southern edge (Rose Lodge), the susceptibility to change of the site has been assessed as Medium susceptibility. Landscape receptors within the wider landscape and adjacent settlement would be less susceptible to the changes brought about by the type of development proposed than the landscape of the site itself.
- 3.5.6 Based upon these judgements of value and susceptibility to change, the site has been assessed as having High/Medium to Medium sensitivity to the type of development proposed. In summary, the site lies within a designated landscape, though urban influences detract from the overall scenic quality. Within the site, the mown grass maintains its openness as experienced from the adjacent retirement community, but the site is well contained with mature boundary trees, which would be retained, and which provide a sense of detachment from the wider landscape. This sensitivity ranking for the site is reflective of the evaluation provided in the 'Stow-on-the-Wold Site Assessments' report (*Ref 8* – and refer to **Appendix C**) for Sites S65 and S66, which was High and Medium respectively.
- 3.5.7 The surrounding countryside within LCAs 7C and 15A has been judged as having a High/Medium and High sensitivity to the proposed development respectively, whereas the adjacent settlement area is assessed as Medium sensitivity. The site is adjacent to a suburban area to its east, and there is a higher degree of intervisibility with the existing retirement community than there is with the surrounding countryside, therefore it is considered that the site has a greater affinity with the settlement rather than making a significant contribution to the landscape setting of the settlement.
- 3.5.8 The following table sets out the sensitivity of the identified landscape receptors considered within this report through a combination of landscape value and susceptibility to change.

Landscape Receptors	Value	Susceptibility	Sensitivity
Proposed development site	High to High/Medium	Medium	High/Medium to Medium
Surrounding landscape of LCA 7C: Cotswolds High Wold Plateau	High	Medium	High/Medium
Surrounding townscape of LCA 7C: The settlement of Stow-on-the-Wold as a distinctive part of the Cotswolds High Wold Plateau	High/Medium	Low	Medium
Surrounding landscape of LCA 15A: Vale of Bourton Farmed Slopes	Very High	Medium	High

4 VISUAL BASELINE

4.1 Methodology

4.1.1 The visual baseline serves to establish the type of Visual Receptor that may be affected by the proposed development, the extent and character of existing views, the contribution that the site makes to each view/local visual amenity and the susceptibility to change in views. This in part correlates with the degree to which the site is visible from a Visual Receptor.

4.1.2 A visual appraisal of the site was undertaken from public roads and footpaths. Views were assessed based on 1) existing visibility 2) views after development. Views of the proposed development were estimated by visualising the scale and form of the proposed buildings, roads, car parking and associated green infrastructure. Views from properties could not be assessed from the houses themselves; in most cases, the likely extent of the view could be adequately estimated from adjacent roads or paths. Views from some properties were identified using a reverse view, i.e., an assessment of the extent to which a property was visible in views from within the site (or its perimeter) looking outwards.

4.1.3 The visual appraisal is based on a grading of degrees of visibility. There is, in any visual appraisal, a continuity of degrees of visibility from not visible to fully open in the view. To indicate the degree of visibility of the site from selected locations, that continuum has been divided into four categories, as follows:

- **None:** No view (no part of the site or proposed development is discernible);
- **Glimpse:** Only a minor area of the site or proposed development is discernible and/or the view is transient or at such a distance that it is difficult to perceive in the wider view, or sequence of views;
- **Partial:** The site or proposed development forms a relatively small proportion of a wider view. There are open views of part of the site or proposed development such that it is easily visible as part of the wider view;
- **Open:** There are open views of the site or proposed development such that it forms a substantial part (is a dominant element) of the overall view and affects its overall character and visual amenity; or the site or proposed development is the dominant feature of the view, to which other elements become subordinate and where the site/proposed development significantly affects or changes the character of the view.

4.1.4 The visual appraisal was carried out in April 2022 (though additional site visits have been undertaken in the interim). Views of the site are likely to decrease in summer months when vegetation is in leaf. As part of the assessment methodology, HDA have taken into account the latest guidance from the Landscape Institute with regard to the assessment of private views.

4.2 Public Views and Key Viewpoints (Plan HDA 3)

4.2.1 By virtue of its elevated nature, the site and the adjacent settlement have the potential to be visible in long distance views to the north and west. However, locally, the site is remarkably well contained, by mature trees along its western and southern boundaries. The site slopes down to the west, towards the valley of the River Dikler, but views between the site and The Swells are limited by dense belts of trees along the southern side of the B4077 Tewkesbury Road and associated with the well-treed estate of Abbotswood. Publicly accessible viewpoints to the north of the site are very limited, restricted to a short section of the A424 immediately north of the site and from more distant sections of the minor road to the north and south of Upper Swell.

4.2.2 Views from the north: Users of the A424 Evesham Road are the only public visual receptors in this direction, but all that is seen of the site from this approach to the town are the mature trees set behind the low stone boundary wall of the field to the north of the site (Photo 3). Properties on the east side of the A424 are the first buildings to be encountered on entering the town, though the existing retirement community then becomes visible on the west side of the road, with its broad access opening up views into the site through the double gates (Photos 4 and 5).

4.2.3 Views from the east: There are no publicly accessible viewpoints to the east of the site, as it is entirely screened from the rest of the settlement by the existing retirement community.

4.2.4 Views from the south: To the south of the site, the site's visual envelope is contained by a broad belt of trees behind the high stone walls of the Abbotswood estate, which fronts onto the B4077 Tewkesbury Road. This road provides the only public views of the site from this direction, and it coincides with the promoted route of the Gloucestershire Way. On approaching the site from Upper Swell, Rose Lodge and the existing retirement community are initially barely visible (Photo 6), and it is only as the viewer gets closer to the site that these existing buildings become more apparent (Photo 7). Rose Lodge only fully comes into view once receptors using the B4077 are opposite its former access onto this road (Photo 8). Similarly, the extent of the existing retirement community becomes more visible when the viewer is immediately opposite it (Photo 9). Travelling in the opposite direction,

to the west along the B4077, built development already dominates the scene along this road (Photo 10).

4.2.5 Views from the west: Views of the site from this direction are restricted to short sections of the minor road on the western side of the valley of the River Dikler, to the north and south of Upper Swell, as follows:

- South of Upper Swell: To the south of the entrance to Homefield House, the vegetation adjacent to the road is a low hedge, over which views of the site, about 1.3km away, are possible (Photo 11);
- North of Upper Swell, south of Old Mill Cottage: A narrow view corridor exists to the north of the localised knoll of Doctor's Walk (Photo 12);
- North of Upper Swell, west of Duncombe House: On higher ground, above the Dikler valley, the elevation of the road allows views towards the site, but at over 2km distance, these are not considered to be significant (Photo 13); and
- North of Upper Swell, adjacent to New Park Quarry: From the crest of the ridge (at 203m AOD), views of the site are barely perceptible (Photo 14).

Visual Sensitivity

4.2.6 The visual sensitivity of a particular viewpoint location is assessed as a combination of viewer susceptibility and the value attached to the view. The type of activity that a person (the visual receptor) is engaged in affects susceptibility, as does the experience (e.g., scenic quality, rarity, perceptual aspects, landmarks) of the viewer at a particular location and the extent to which the viewer can accept change of a particular type and scale without unacceptable adverse effects on the character and extent of the view.

4.2.7 Public rights of way: The most sensitive visual receptors to changes within a view are people whose activities are likely to be focussed on the landscape. These include pedestrians on footways alongside, and cyclists upon, the B4077 Tewkesbury Road (part of the Gloucestershire Way) and A424 Evesham Road, as well as non-motorised users of sections of the minor road to the north and south of Upper Swell. The sensitivity of receptors on the B4077 Tewkesbury Road has been assessed as Medium. Although the section of this road closest to the site is promoted as a recreational path, users' views and walking experience are marred by traffic along the road. From this road, close proximity views of the southern edge of the site are possible, but are partially screened by roadside trees.

4.2.8 The sensitivity of users of the A424 Evesham Road has been judged to be Medium/Low. This road is not promoted as a recreational route (room available for pedestrians is extremely limited), and views towards the site are more distant and enclosed by vegetation. The sensitivity of non-motorised users on the minor road to the north and south of Upper Swell has been assessed as Low. Views of the site are only glimpses between intervening

vegetation from a distance of between 1.3km and 2.1km. There are no pedestrian footways alongside these sections of this country lane.

4.2.9 **Roads:** Motorists are unlikely to be focussing on views of the countryside and are more likely to be travelling at speed, thus their views of the site would be transient in nature. Roads near to the site are visually enclosed by boundary features. The sensitivity of the views experienced by motorists using adjacent sections of the B4077 Tewkesbury Road and A424 Evesham Road have been judged to be Low for those motorists on the B4077 and Very Low for motorists on the A424. The sensitivity of views of the motorised users of the minor road to the north and south of Upper Swell has also been judged to be Very Low.

4.2.10 The following table sets out the sensitivity of public visual receptor groups considered within this assessment:

Visual Receptor/Viewpoint Location	Value	Susceptibility	Sensitivity
B4077 Tewkesbury Road – Pedestrians/Cyclists	Medium	Medium	Medium
B4077 Tewkesbury Road - Motorists	Medium	Low	Low
A424 Evesham Road – Pedestrians/ Cyclists	Medium	Low	Medium/Low
A424 Evesham Road - Motorists	Low	Very Low	Very Low
Minor road to the north and south of Upper Swell - Pedestrians/Cyclists	Medium	Low	Low
Minor road to the north and south of Upper Swell – Motorists	Low	Very Low	Very Low

4.2.11 Viewpoint locations with no views of the site (at any time of the year), where the visibility of the site would not conceivably change as a result of the proposed development, have not been taken forward for assessment within this report.

4.3 Private Views

4.3.1 Private views are generally limited to adjacent dwellings in the existing retirement community and those on the A424 Evesham Road, specifically ‘Westover’, ‘Beechview’, ‘Dikler Cottage’ and ‘Birchleaf’ (Photo 15). From these latter properties, the site is almost entirely screened by intervening garden boundary vegetation and mature trees along the western side of the road, with views restricted to those from upper storey windows. Open views into the site are possible from the northern part of the existing retirement community, but the properties adjacent to the garden of Rose Lodge are partially screened by intervening trees (protected by TPO). However, a gap in these trees allows more open views into the Rose Lodge part of the site (Photo 2). From more distant properties to the north and west of the site, the distances involved are so great that the site forms an

insignificant part of the view, seen in the context of the existing retirement community and the rest of the town as a backdrop.

4.3.2 Paragraph 6.17 of GLVIA (Ref 2) states that:

'In some cases it may also be appropriate to consider private viewpoints, mainly from residential properties.'

4.3.3 In March 2019, The Landscape Institute published technical guidance on Residential Visual Amenity Assessment (RVAA). Residential visual amenity is defined within the document as:

'The overall quality, experience and nature of views and outlook available to occupants of residential properties, including views from gardens and domestic curtilage. It represents the visual component of Residential Amenity.'

4.3.4 Paragraphs 1.5 and 1.6 of the RVAA document state that:

'1.5 Changes in views and visual amenity are considered in the planning process. In respect of private views and visual amenity, it is widely known that, no one has 'a right to a view.' This includes situations where a residential property's outlook / visual amenity is judged to be 'significantly' affected by a proposed development, a matter which has been confirmed in a number of appeal / public inquiry decisions.

1.6 It is not uncommon for significant adverse effects on views and visual amenity to be experienced by people at their place of residence as a result of introducing a new development into the landscape. In itself this does not necessarily cause particular planning concern. However, there are situations where the effect on the outlook/ visual amenity of a residential property is so great that it is not generally considered to be in the public interest to permit such conditions to occur where they did not exist before.'

4.3.5 Local residents with open views of the site from the primary living space of their property are accepted as being highly susceptible to changes within their views. Local residents with no views of the site from their primary living space, who live in a dwelling where the views are focussed in a different direction to the site, or whose views of the site are partially screened by existing houses or vegetation, would have a lower susceptibility to changes within the site. Although some adjacent properties on the A424 have partial views from upper storey windows into the site, retaining the northern part of the field as undeveloped will maintain the openness in front of the site in views from these properties. Ground floor views from these properties are screened by intervening boundary vegetation.

5 THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

5.1 Description of the Proposals

5.1.1 This section briefly describes the proposed development, as a basis for the assessment. The proposals relate to 1.53ha of land seeking full permission for an integrated retirement community on the southern part of a field to the east of an existing retirement community, providing 24 independent living/assisted living units (Use Class C3), together with health and wellbeing facilities in a communal pavilion, all set in landscaped gardens, including

enhancement of the existing perimeter tree belts. The proposed development would require the demolition of Rose Lodge and the removal of its garden planting. The masterplan (refer to **Appendix I**), proposes 24no 2-bed cottages, ranging in size between 1,300 and 1,700 square feet.

5.1.2 Building heights (including that of the communal pavilion) would be limited to 2-storeys, with some units proposed as 1.5 storey, to have a close match in height and massing to those buildings within the existing retirement community. The proposed density would be about 24 dwellings per hectare (dph) thus slightly lower than the density of the adjacent development. By restricting the proposals to the southern end of the wider landholding, this would avoid the more elevated part of the field and minimise the development's visual exposure to nearby residential properties (on the east side the A424 Evesham Road).

5.1.3 A temporary site access is proposed off Tewkesbury Road for the duration of the construction period (estimated to be about two years). The construction site access would require the removal of about 9m length of boundary dry stone wall (1m either side of the 7m wide access road) and a Sycamore tree from the highway verge, but at the completion of the works, the dry stone wall would be replaced and continued across the former access to Rose Lodge.

5.2 Response to Site Constraints and Opportunities

5.2.1 From an initial assessment of the baseline survey, a number of opportunities and constraints have been identified, these include:

- Constraints: The need for the proposed development not to be perceived as extending residential land uses further west out of the settlement of Stow-on-the-Wold than is currently the case (no further than the current curtilage to Rose Lodge);
- Opportunities: Replace a currently unoccupied dwelling of Rose Lodge, and the adjacent underused field, with a development that would be of as high a quality as the neighbouring retirement community. This would improve the street scene onto the B4077 Tewkesbury Road, in addition to creating opportunities for augmenting the mature trees on the boundaries with species-rich, native underplanting and new tree planting to increase the age diversity of the perimeter vegetation; and
- Key issues: Replacement of an open mown grass field with residential development, which would be of a high quality and would be at a density in keeping with adjacent development to the east of the site .

5.3 Green Infrastructure Strategy (Refer to Masterplan at **Appendix I** and Plan HDA 4)

5.3.1 The Green Infrastructure Strategy (GIS) for the site is based on HDA's assessment of the landscape character of the surrounding area, high value landscape features within the site, the predicted visual effects of the proposals, and the potential to maximise the site in terms of residential and open space land uses. Where possible the GIS has sought to provide multiple benefits through the design of the proposed open space. This has included an uplift in the biodiversity value of the site, with the objective of achieving 10% Biodiversity

Net Gain across the site (including planting in the remainder of the field to the north of the site). A Preliminary External Lighting Strategy has been prepared for the site (refer to **Appendix J**), and this will be utilised in the design of the detailed planting proposals which have not been prepared at this stage. If permission were granted, detailed planting proposals could be the subject of a condition.

5.3.2 The broad objectives of the scheme design and landscape proposals are:

- Locate the built development away from western and southern site boundaries to maximise space for the retention of existing trees, which would help contain the development from external views;
- As well as retaining existing mature, site boundary trees, where possible, these would be augmented on the western and southern boundaries with additional tree and scrub planting. This would assist with the softening of the proposed built development into the future and would provide enhanced opportunities for the movement of wildlife;
- New planting would use a predominantly native palette of locally occurring species, particularly on the northern boundary, which would be a new hedge with trees set behind a new metal rail, parkland-style fence. The strengthened boundary planting would improve the site's interface with the adjacent countryside and help meet emerging policies for Biodiversity Net Gain;
- Repairs to the existing stone boundary walls, to improve their appearance, particularly from the Tewkesbury Road;
- Provision of areas of open space (private and communal spaces), particularly in the development's centre to create a 'village green' enclosed by an informal, loose arrangement of buildings with views to the north, out towards the adjoining field; and
- Shared use of the existing access to the retirement community to minimise additional hard surfacing.

5.3.3 It is also proposed that improvements would be undertaken within the wider blue line boundary of the site, such as repairs to existing stone boundary walls and additional tree planting around the boundaries of the wider field. Such measures would provide enhancements to the wider AONB landscape.

6 PREDICTED EFFECTS OF THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

6.1 Introduction

6.1.1 The potential effects of the proposed development are assessed below, at Year 0, when the potential effects are at their greatest and at Year 10, following the establishment of the mitigation strategy. In order to assess the potential effects of the proposals, certain assumptions have been made about the height of the proposed buildings, the size of trees specified and the growth rates of any proposed vegetation. These assumptions are:

- The dwellings/communal building would be a maximum of two storeys high, with an assumed maximum height of 9m to the ridge of the rooftop from surrounding ground levels.
- Existing trees and vegetation have an assumed growth rate of 0.35m per year, however, it is assumed that the mature trees on the site's perimeter would not put on additional height.

- New planting is assumed to have no growth in the first year after planting, and 0.35m per year thereafter. Actual growth rates will depend on environmental conditions and tree species. It is likely that the proposed trees would have grown higher than have been assumed for this assessment.
- The majority of trees planted within the proposed development would be planted as select standards, with a height of 3-3.5m or as feathered trees (1.5 – 1.75m high). The feathered trees would be native trees within hedgerows/tree belts, which establish better when planted at a young stage (e.g. Beech and Oak). After 10 years of growth, we have assumed that a select standard tree would have reached a minimum height of 6-6.5m, and that the feathered trees would have reached approximately 4.5-5m high.
- Hedgerow and native shrub planting would be introduced as bareroot whips, approximately 0.4 - 0.8m high (depending on species). Hedgerow heights after 10 years of growth have been assumed to be 2.5-3m.

6.1.2 The magnitude of change is a judgement on the size or scale of effect and is combined with the landscape or visual sensitivity to give a judgement on the significance of effects resulting from the proposed development.

6.2 Predicted Landscape Effects

6.2.1 The most noticeable landscape effects would arise within the site during demolition of the existing property of Rose Lodge, and during the construction of the proposed units (including groundworks and use of cranes). A temporary site access would be constructed off Tewkesbury Road, requiring the removal of about 9m length of boundary dry stone wall, and a Sycamore tree from the highway verge (easternmost tree in Group 9 on the Tree Survey). The remaining existing high-quality landscape features on the perimeter of the site would be retained and protected throughout the course of the construction works on the site, thus ensuring their long-term viability.

6.2.2 The masterplan (**Appendix I**) demonstrates that new units could be placed on the site without undue encroachment upon retained mature trees on the perimeter of the site, however, in addition to the Sycamore in G9, several individual garden trees (T5, T7-T11, T13 and T14) and mixed species groups (G1, G3-G8, and G10-G12) would need to be removed to the west and east of the demolished Rose Lodge to accommodate the new cottages.

6.2.3 At completion of the construction phase, the site would have changed from a featureless mown grass field and a garden, to a high quality, residential development that would be in keeping with the adjacent retirement community. The landscape strategy also proposes that retained trees would be augmented where appropriate and set within areas of open space (about half of the site area is proposed as gardens or communal open space), however, at this early stage of completion, the proposed planting would be immature and of limited effect.

- 6.2.4 The removal of the mown grass and single property currently on the site would evidently bring about a marked change in the landscape character of the site, from a countryside use with one house, to a larger residential development. Whilst it is recognised that initially this change would be noticeable, the new housing would only replace the existing grass and domestic curtilage of Rose Lodge, as it would be possible to keep all the existing vegetation around the perimeter of the site (no losses of mature trees are proposed from the western site boundary). The proposed development would be in keeping with the character and appearance of the adjacent high quality retirement community to the east of the site. It is considered that the site is a good location for new housing, as it is a relatively level site, contiguous with the existing retirement community to its east, thus able to share communal facilities with that development as well as being close to existing facilities offered in the town.
- 6.2.5 The density of the proposed units on the site would be 24 dph. This would be lower than the density of dwellings in the adjacent development but would enable the provision of generous landscaped areas, including additional tree planting (which should, as a rule of thumb, not be planted within 5m of any built development). Proposed planting would help to integrate the development into its transitional position between town and country. In line with the emerging guidance in the Neighbourhood's Plan Design Code (*Ref 11, page 60*), the development proposals would "*protect existing green infrastructure*" and would "*make provision for generous front and rear plot planting for boundary treatment*", with a predominant use of "*hedges forming the front, side and rear boundaries to the plot*".
- 6.2.6 The magnitude of change has thus been assessed as High at construction, when the changes would be most pronounced. However, it is mainly the mown grass and garden of the former Rose Lodge within the site that would be changed. Most of the landscape features of higher quality on the perimeter of the site would be retained and augmented, though in the early years of the development, new planting would be of limited benefit in terms of its contribution to landscape character. The significance of effect would be Substantial/Moderate Adverse, though the construction works would be limited to a short, temporary period. This high level of effect is recognised as a consequence of developing a greenfield site.
- 6.2.7 Ten years into operation, permanent built form would have become established, changing a mown grass field/garden to a housing development of architectural merit, with building styles reflective of the local vernacular. The existing perimeter trees, having been retained and protected, would be brought into active management (which can be controlled by condition), and the proposed landscape scheme would have established, to maintain the

existing visual containment of the site and its interface with rural land uses to the north, south and west.

6.2.8 Within the site, the suburban character of a new housing development, set within areas of gardens and communal open space, enhanced with maturing tree and shrub planting, would emerge, potentially with an overall increase in characteristic features (with the potential to have beneficial effects). The magnitude of change at Year 10 would reduce to Medium/Low, thus the Substantial/Moderate Adverse levels of significance of effect as assessed at construction, would reduce to Moderate Adverse.

6.2.9 Whilst it is assessed that a High magnitude of change would occur on the site at construction, when the mown grass field would be replaced with a residential development, the effects on the wider landscape character (LCA 7C, including the adjacent townscape, and LCA15A to the south) are assessed as a Low magnitude of change. There would be no physical loss of landscape features beyond the confines of the site, and given the site is not easily perceived from the wider landscape, changes in character would be well contained, with the proposals being characteristic of the adjacent existing retirement community. The significance of effect of the proposed development on the wider landscape setting has thus been assessed as Minor Adverse at the time of construction and Negligible at the Year 10.

6.2.10 The following table summarises the predicted effects of the proposed development on the identified landscape receptors as set out above within this assessment.

Landscape Receptor	Sensitivity	Construction		10 Years Post Completion	
		Magnitude of Change	Effects	Magnitude of Change	Effects
Proposed development site	High/Medium to Medium	High	Substantial/Moderate Adverse	Medium/Low	Moderate Adverse
Surrounding landscape of LCA 7C: Cotswolds High Wold Plateau	High/Medium	Low	Minor Adverse	Very Low	Negligible
Surrounding townscape of LCA 7C: The settlement of Stow-on-the-Wold as a distinctive part of the Cotswolds High Wold Plateau	Medium	Low	Minor Adverse	Very Low	Negligible

Landscape Receptor	Sensitivity	Construction		10 Years Post Completion	
		Magnitude of Change	Effects	Magnitude of Change	Effects
Surrounding landscape of LCA 15A: Vale of Bourton Farmed Slopes	High/Medium	Low	Minor Adverse	Very Low	Negligible

6.3 Predicted Visual Effects

6.3.1 As stated previously (paragraph 4.2.1), the site is visually well contained due to surrounding tree cover and by virtue of the close proximity of the existing retirement community to the east. Only a limited number of visual receptors that have existing views of the site would experience adverse effects on their visual amenity as a result of the proposed development.

6.3.2 Publicly accessible roads and rights of way with existing views into the site are limited, not only in number, but also in the lengths of these routes from which views into the site are possible. Publicly accessible roads with partial views are restricted to the B4077 Tewkesbury Road, along the southern boundary of the site, and the A424 Evesham Road, to the north of the site, with other roads only affording glimpsed views of the site, such as the identified short sections of the minor road to the north and south of Upper Swell. Potential views from Upper Swell are limited by the high incidence of trees around the village.

6.3.3 Although reverse views taken from the site (Photo 16 is taken from a gap in the boundary vegetation) show that an extensive panorama is possible over the wider landscape to the north and west of the site, these views contain very few visual receptors, such as roads, public rights of way or residential properties. Those receptors that are visible to the west are generally over 1.5km from the site and from these locations, views would be of the site in the context of the existing retirement community and the backdrop of the settlement. It is therefore considered that the introduction of new houses on the site would not result in significant levels of visual effect from the wider countryside.

6.3.4 The B4077 Tewkesbury Road is contiguous with the southern site boundary for a length of 118m, and most of this frontage is lined with trees. It is proposed to retain the existing trees on the western site boundary and remove one from the southern boundary, including some trees within the former garden of Rose Lodge. Any perceived gaps would be infilled with new trees and understorey planting, thus reducing, over time, views into this southern part of the site. It is anticipated that the degree of visibility of the new units from the B4077 will be less than that experienced of the existing retirement community, as the new units can be set further north from the road frontage (no closer to the B4077 than Rose Lodge is

currently located). The new units therefore would only be seen in glimpses from the B4077, through the vegetation lining the northern side of the road and the western site boundary. The new units along this southern site boundary would replace an existing dwelling, thus the characteristics of the view would not be greatly altered with the proposals.

6.3.5 The magnitude of change at construction (thus at the worst-case scenario) for non-motorised users of Tewkesbury Road has been assessed as Medium, as the vegetation which provides a good screen at present would be maintained and the view of the proposals would be in keeping with existing views of the recently built care home and existing cottage (being replaced). A Medium magnitude of change would result in Moderate Adverse significance of effect (based upon Medium sensitivity), though the construction period would be temporary and short-term. The degrees of change in views experienced from Tewkesbury Road would vary with the obliqueness of the angle of the viewer, as the roadside vegetation has better screening qualities when viewed in combination from the side. By Year 10, the new planting along the site boundaries would have become established, to effectively filter views of the new units, particularly in summer. The magnitude of change at Year 10 for non-motorised users of Tewkesbury Road has been assessed as Low, thus reducing the significance of effects to Minor Adverse.

6.3.6 The following table summarises the predicted effects of the proposed development on public visual receptors as set out above within this assessment.

Visual Receptor	Sensitivity	Construction		10 Years Post Completion	
		Magnitude of Change	Effects	Magnitude of Change	Effects
B4077 Tewkesbury Road – Pedestrians/ Cyclists	Medium	Medium	Moderate Adverse	Low	Minor Adverse
B4077 Tewkesbury Road - Motorists	Low	Medium	Minor Adverse	Very Low	Negligible
A424 Evesham Road - Pedestrians	Medium/Low	Medium	Moderate/ Minor Adverse	Very Low	Negligible
A424 Evesham Road - Motorists	Very Low	Low	Negligible	Very Low	Negligible
Minor road to the north and south of Upper Swell - Pedestrians/ Cyclists	Low	Low	Negligible	Very Low	Negligible

Visual Receptor	Sensitivity	Construction		10 Years Post Completion	
		Magnitude of Change	Effects	Magnitude of Change	Effects
Minor road to the north and south of Upper Swell – Motorists	Very Low	Low	Negligible	Very Low	Negligible

Private Views

- 6.3.7 Of the previously identified private visual receptors, it is likely that views from those receptors closest to the site and with current partial views of the site will be those subject to the greatest changes. Residents along the A424 Evesham Road have partial views into the site from first floor windows, though most of their existing views are restricted by garden vegetation and trees along the west side of the A424. Changes in their views would occur with the introduction of new housing units, though set a reasonable distance away (over 100m), behind a new northern site boundary comprising a park-rail type fence, hedging and trees, with part of the grass mown field retained in front and the new units still seen against a backdrop of trees. Landscape planting within the proposed development would add more trees (promoting greater age diversity) into views from these properties.

7 CONCLUSIONS

7.1 Review of Relevant Policy

- 7.1.1 This section addresses the planning policy context relevant to the site and whether the proposals are contrary to those policies. Of particular relevance to the landscape aspects of policy pertaining to these proposals is the importance placed upon new development being in keeping with the existing landscape character of the area and the effects on the amenity of visual receptors.

- 7.1.2 This appraisal demonstrates that the proposals would conform to the Framework, by ensuring they “*are sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting*” (Paragraph 130 of the Framework – Ref 3). The site lies within an area designated for its landscape quality (though the AONB also includes the townscape of Stow-on-the-Wold), so whilst it lies within the countryside, it has, by virtue of its screening perimeter trees to south and west, more affinity with the existing adjacent retirement community to its east than with the wider landscape. The Framework requires that protection of areas should be commensurate with the status and quality of the landscape.

- 7.1.3 In the ‘Stow-on-the-Wold Site Assessments’ for Sites S65 and S66 (Ref 8 – and refer to **Appendix C**) it states that (2nd bullet on Page 30) “*the development would be considered*

to be 'major development within the AONB'. This comment is superseded by the Pre-app response (dated 17 February 2023) which states (top of page 15) the following:

"Having regard to the size of the proposed development, its residential nature and its location adjacent to a Principal Settlement, it is considered that the proposed development would not constitute major development for the purposes of Paragraph 177 of the NPPF".

7.1.4 Although the proposed development would not constitute major development in terms of Paragraph 177, this LVA is able to demonstrate that that "*any detrimental effect on the environment, the landscape and recreational opportunities*" would be minimal, and also explains "*the extent to which that could be moderated*" such that it would be compliant with item c of Paragraph 177 of the Framework.

7.1.5 In terms of compliance with local policy, the proposals would be consistent with Policies EN1, EN2 and EN7 of the Local Plan (Ref 6) as the development would perpetuate the same high-quality design that can be seen in the adjacent retirement village and would maintain a soft green edge along its interfaces with adjacent countryside to its north, west and south. The proposed density of development demonstrates a thorough understanding of the site's relationship with the surrounding area.

7.2 Conclusions

7.2.1 The potential landscape and visual effects associated with the proposed development of 24 independent living/assisted living units on land to the west of the existing Newlands Retirement Community would primarily be localised, though permanent, and given the limited public viewpoints into the site, there is little potential that the proposals would significantly impact either the wider landscape character of the AONB or the visual amenity of people in the long term.

7.2.2 The masterplan (**Appendix I**) allows for the retention of existing site perimeter features of value, such as mature trees along the southern and western boundaries, but also proposes new tree and understorey planting to these and the new northern boundary, so that in the future, the development will remain visually self-contained. Proposed areas of garden and communal open space are focussed on the site's perimeter and in a central 'village green' to provide an informal, loose arrangement of buildings. These areas can be detailed to provide biodiversity enhancements to the site. The proposed landscape scheme would be of high quality, both in design and delivery, and would assist in mitigating the predicted adverse effects associated with the development, such that the residual effects have been assessed as Moderate Adverse for the landscape character of the site, but Negligible for all except one visual receptors (the exception being non-motorised users of Tewkesbury Road adjacent to the site).

1. Natural England (October 2014), '*An Approach to Landscape Character Assessment*'
2. The Landscape Institute with the Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment, (2013), "*Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment*" (third edition)
3. Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (September 2023), '*National Planning Policy Framework*'
4. Department for Communities and Local Government (launched March 2014 and subsequent updates) '*National Planning Practice Guidance*'
5. Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (October 2019) '*National Design Guide*'
6. Cotswold District Council (adopted August 2018) '*Cotswold District Council Local Plan 2011-2031*'
7. Cotswold District Council (January 2022) '*Cotswold District Council Local Plan 2011-2031 Partial Update - Regulation 18 'Issues and Options' Consultation 4th February 2022 to 20th March 2022*'
8. Cotswold District Council (January 2021) '*Stow-on-the-Wold Site Assessments – Strategic Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment*'
9. Cotswolds Conservation Board (February 2023) '*Cotswolds National Landscape Management Plan 2023-2025*'
10. Stow-on-the-Wold Town Council and Swell Parish Council (September 2023) '*Stow and The Swells Neighbourhood Plan 2023-2031*' Regulation 16 Consultation Draft
11. Stow-on-the-Wold Town Council and Swell Parish Council (September 2023) '*Stow on the Wold and The Swells Design Code*'
12. Natural England (20 March 2013) '*National Character Area 107 – Cotswolds*' (NE420)
13. LDA Design for Gloucestershire County Council (January 2006) '*Gloucestershire Landscape Character Assessment – The Severn Vale, Upper Thames Valley, Vale of Moreton, Vale of Evesham Fringe*'
14. Cotswolds AONB Partnership (2004) '*Cotswolds Landscape Character Assessment*'
15. White Consultants for Cotswold District Council (October 2014) '*Study of land surrounding Key Settlements in Cotswold District: Update*'
16. White Consultants for Cotswold District Council (November 2015) '*Study of land surrounding Key Settlements in Cotswold District: Update – Additional Sites 2015: Final Report*'

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APPENDIX A
HDA LVIA METHODOLOGY

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HDA LVIA METHODOLOGY

1.1 Guidance

1.1.1 The proposed development is not subject to the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) (England) Regulations (2017¹), which implement EC Directive 2011/92/EU.

1.1.2 The methodology used in preparing this Landscape and Visual Appraisal has been developed by HDA from guidance given in the following documents:

- The Landscape Institute with the Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment, (2013), “*Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment*” (third edition) (GLVIA);
- Natural England (October 2014), “*An Approach to Landscape Character Assessment*”; and
- Countryside Agency (now Natural England) and Scottish Natural Heritage (by Carys Swanwick and Land Use Consultants), (April 2002), “*Landscape Character Assessment – Guidance for England and Scotland*”.

1.1.3 The assessment of likely impacts is considered in two separate, but inter-linked, parts defined within GLVIA (page 21, para 2.21) as follows:

***Assessment of landscape effects:** assessing effects on landscape as a resource in its own right;*

***Assessment of visual effects:** assessing effects on specific views and on the general visual amenity experienced by people.’*

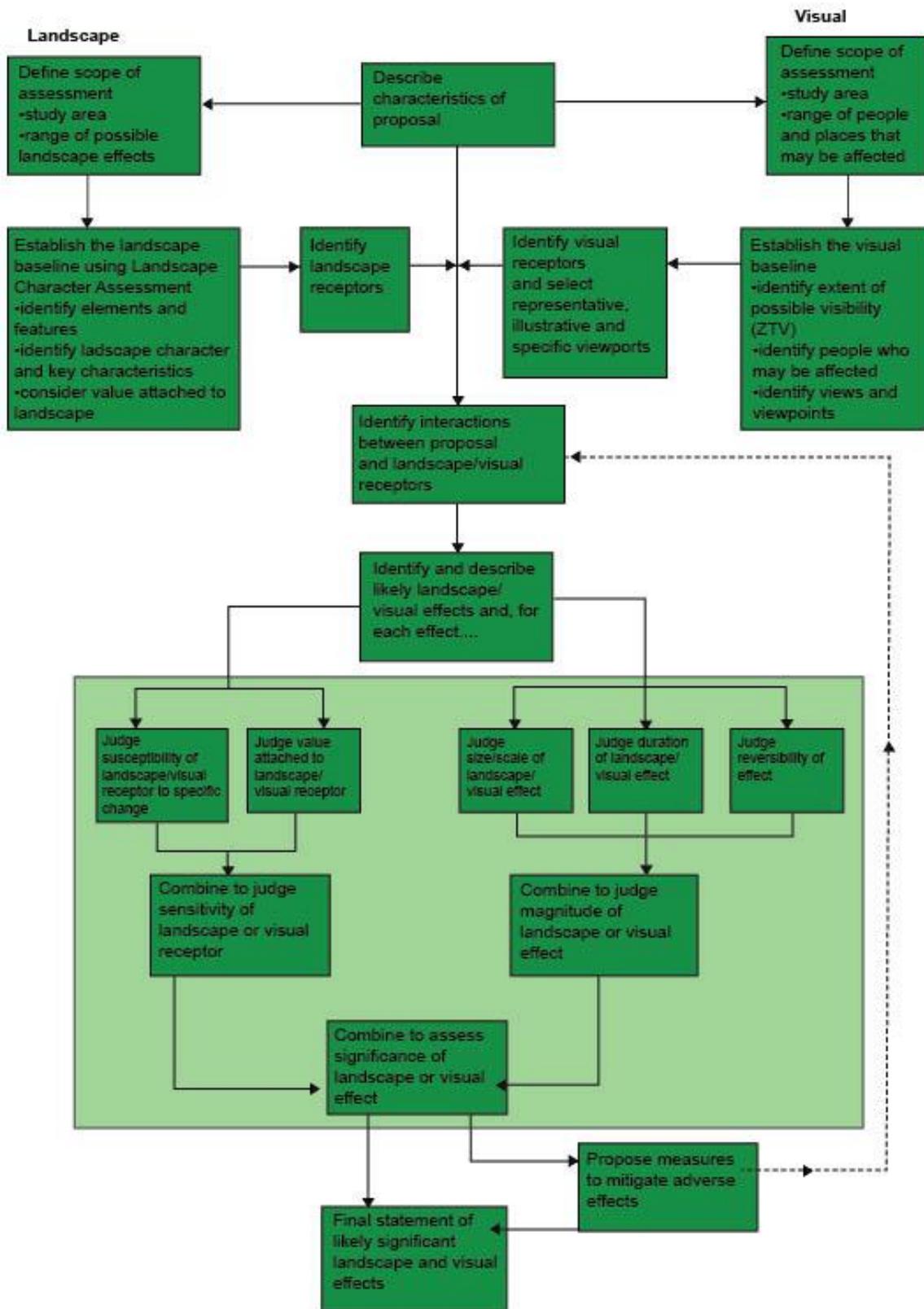
1.2 Process

1.2.1 The iterative process undertaken through the course of a Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment is illustrated in Figure 1.

1.2.2 The level of detail included within a report will be proportionate to the anticipated extent of potential impacts caused by the proposed development and is also likely to vary between a full LVIA chapter and a more concise Landscape and Visual Appraisal (LVA). Within an EIA compliant LVIA, the assessment section of the report (shown as a pale green box in Figure 1), would provide details of the relative judgement on sensitivity, magnitude of change and would provide an assessment on the significance of effects of the development on various features, character areas and views. A Landscape and Visual Appraisal (LVA) of a small development is likely to cover the key effects but not include any detailed references to judgements on significance.

¹ Statutory Instrument No 571, published by the Department of Housing, Communities and Local Government

Figure 1: Steps in assessing landscape and visual effects.



Referenced from figures 5.1 and 6.1 in GLVIA (Ref.2)

1.3 Desk Study

1.3.1 A desk-study is undertaken to establish the physical components of the local landscape and to identify the boundaries of the study area. The following data sources were consulted:

- Ordnance Survey (OS) maps – (a range from 1:12,500 to 1:2,000) to identify local features relating to topography, field pattern/shape/size, drainage pattern, woodland cover, existing settlement pattern, rights of way network, transport corridors and any important extant historic features.
- Vertical aerial photography – used to supplement the OS information.

1.3.2 This data informs the field survey by providing a basis for mapping landscape features and to indicate the likely visibility of the proposed development.

1.3.3 Topographical analysis is used to identify the extent of potential visibility of the site and the proposed development. The zone of theoretical visibility is identified through mapping, together with potential visual receptors (VRs), for verification by field survey. The VRs include locations with public access within the visual envelope; public rights of way, public open space, key vantage points, roads, etc. together with residential properties and workplaces.

1.3.4 Natural England's National Character Area Profiles, together with local landscape character assessment, provide the landscape character context.

1.3.5 The current landscape planning context for the site is provided by the development plan documents for Cotswold District Council.

1.4 Field Survey

1.4.1 A field survey of the site was carried out in April 2022. This involved walking the site and travelling extensively through the local area, the extent of the study area being identified in the desk-study, to verify any variations in landscape character and the locations of visual receptors. The field survey also served to understand the immediate setting of the proposed development, including the local topography, existing land uses and vegetation structure, position and condition of trees, hedgerows and stream courses.

1.4.2 The site visit was undertaken from publicly accessible viewpoints around the site such as roads and public rights of way. Intervisibility analysis (projective mapping) was used to verify the zone of theoretical visibility and to evaluate the extent and nature of views from nearby properties (properties were not visited as part of the study). A working photographic record of the visit was also made.

1.5 Establishing the Baseline

1.5.1 In order to form a comprehensive assessment of the effects of a proposed development, the existing situation, or baseline condition, must be established. The proposed changes resulting from the proposed development can then be identified and described. As described in section 1.1.3, the assessment considers the landscape and visual effects of the proposals.

1.5.2 GLVIA describes the landscape and visual baseline as follows:

- *‘For the landscape baseline the aim is to provide an understanding of the landscape in the area that may be affected – its constituent elements, its character and the way this varies spatially, its geographic extent, its history, its condition, the way the landscape is experienced, and the value attached to it.*
- *For the visual baseline the aim is to establish the area in which the development may be visible, the different groups of people who may experience the views of the development, the places where they will be affected and the nature of the views and visual amenity at those points.’ (Page 32, para 3.15 – Ref 2)*

1.6 Landscape Baseline

1.6.1 For the purposes of assessment, the landscape resource is considered in two ways:

1. Local landscape character variation across the site and Study Area is described and evaluated; and
2. Existing landscape features in and immediately adjacent to the site are identified, quantified and their condition assessed.

1.6.2 The objective of the landscape baseline is first to schedule, describe, and where possible, quantify the landscape resource that potentially could be affected by the proposed development. A judgement is then made as to the Landscape Value of the Study Area.

Landscape Sensitivity

1.6.3 Landscape sensitivity is defined as:

‘a term applied to specific receptors, combining judgements of the susceptibility of the receptor to the specific type of change or development proposed and the value related to that receptor’ (GLVIA, page 158)

1.6.4 The susceptibility of the landscape to change is *‘the ability of the landscape receptor to accommodate the proposed development without undue consequences for the maintenance of the baseline situation and/or the achievement of landscape planning policies and strategies’ (GLVIA, page 89, paragraph 5.40)*

1.6.5 The way that landscape responds to or is affected by proposed development is determined in part by the nature of that development. The sensitivity of the landscape will vary depending on the type, form, appearance, extent or scale, duration (temporary or permanent) and phasing of proposed development. Landscape effects are also dependent

upon the ‘degree to which the proposals fit with existing character’ (GLVIA, page 88, para 5.37), or indeed the potential to design-out potential adverse effects. Outline information about the proposed development, such as type and scale, helps inform preliminary judgement about the relative susceptibility of the landscape. However, the final judgement on susceptibility may change from the preliminary assessment as the scheme’s detail design evolves in parallel with EIA (an iterative process). Natural England’s advice note on ‘Assessing Landscape and Visual Sensitivity’ (2019), provides further advice on identifying susceptibility.

1.6.6 Landscape value consists of:

- *‘The value of the Landscape Character Types or Areas that may be affected, based on review of any designations at both national and local levels, and, where there are no designations, judgements based on criteria that can be used to establish landscape value.*
- *The value of individual contributors to landscape character, especially the key characteristics, which may include individual elements of the landscape, particular landscape features, notable aesthetic, perceptual or experiential qualities and combinations of these contributors.’* (GLVIA page 89, paragraph 5.44 – Ref 2)

1.6.7 Paragraph 174 a) of the National Planning Policy Framework² gives weight to ‘*protecting and enhancing valued landscapes*’, however no definition of ‘valued landscape’ is given. The Landscape Institute’s Technical Guidance Note (TGN) 02/21 defines a ‘valued landscape’ as “*an area identified as having sufficient landscape qualities to elevate it above other more everyday landscapes*” (paragraph A4.2.11), where it is noted that “*“everyday” landscapes may nevertheless have value to people*” (Footnote 44). The TGN states:

“Where a landscape has a statutory status, it will not be necessary to undertake an assessment based on Box 5.1 of GLVIA3 or the factors identified in Table 1 of this TGN. It may also be unnecessary where a local designation is supported by a strong evidence base. However, where there is little published evidence to support existing local landscape designations, an assessment based upon these factors would be helpful to support planning decision making” (paragraph A4.2.11).

1.6.8 The following is a summary of the definitions in Table 1 from the TGN which sets out the range of factors that can be considered when identifying landscape value:

- **Natural heritage:** Landscape with clear evidence of ecological, geological, geomorphological, or physiographic interest which contribute positively to the landscape;
- **Cultural heritage:** Landscape with clear evidence of archaeological, historical or cultural interest which contribute positively to the landscape;
- **Landscape condition:** Landscape which is in a good physical state both with regard to individual elements and overall landscape structure;
- **Associations:** Landscape which is connected with notable people, events and the arts;

² Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (July 2021), ‘*National Planning Policy Framework*’

- **Distinctiveness:** Landscape that has a strong sense of identity;
- **Recreational:** Landscape offering recreational opportunities where experience of landscape is important;
- **Perceptual (Scenic):** Landscape that appeals to the senses, primarily the visual sense;
- **Perceptual (Wildness and tranquillity):** Landscape with a strong perceptual value notably wildness, tranquillity and/or dark skies; and
- **Functional:** Landscape which performs a clearly identifiable and valuable function, particularly in the healthy functioning of the landscape.

Landscape Character

1.6.9 Landscape character areas (areas/types) were identified on plans and published descriptions and trends summarised. Where published documents create a hierarchy of landscape areas, this is stated and the scale most appropriate to the assessment is explained. The landscape characteristics within the site are compared to the character of the wider area.

1.6.10 The assessment focuses on the landscape within which the site/proposed development is located. The character of a neighbouring character unit may be strongly influenced by the adjacent area, within which the site is located. This relationship may be dependent on the scale of assessment (size of landscape units), as well as landscape characteristics that affect intervisibility, e.g., topography, vegetation cover.

Landscape Features

1.6.11 Key landscape features that define site character are identified on plans, together with the tables, which provide information relating to their type, condition, value, and quantification (area/length/number). The potential for impact on each landscape feature is assessed using a combination of their relationship to the site/ proposed development (e.g., within, on or adjacent to site boundary and for those outside the site, the distance from the boundary) and sensitivity.

1.6.12 The landscape value of site landscape features is evaluated using factors in the following checklist:

- Type of landscape feature (e.g., natural or man-made);
- Size/extent (e.g., covers a large or small area; individual or part of a group);
- Condition or quality of landscape feature (intact);
- Maturity (is feature well established or recent);
- Contribution feature makes to landscape character (e.g., distinct and recognisable pattern or limited influence);
- Rarity (rare or widespread in local and/or regional/national context);
- Recognised importance (e.g., designation either nationally or locally);

- Ease with which the feature may be substituted or recreated.

1.6.13 The susceptibility of landscape features is closely allied to the ease with which a feature may be substituted or recreated.

1.6.14 The assessment of landscape features is an integral part of the initial design process and often influences the location of development. The landscape value of features is a contributory factor for the assessment of landscape character, as the assessment of the quality and condition of a landscape is intrinsically linked to its component features.

1.7 **Criteria for Evaluation of Sensitivity of Landscape Resource**

1.7.1 The evaluation of overall landscape sensitivity to change is considered to be a product of susceptibility to change and the value of the receptor. The evaluation is an expression of comparative sensitivity based on a five-point scale: Very High, High, Medium, Low and Very Low as follows:

Very High:

- An exemplary part of a nationally recognised landscape, e.g., National Parks and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty. World Heritage Sites of international importance (if landscape reason for designation);
- Strong landscape structure, characteristic patterns and balanced combination of landform and land-cover;
- Appropriate management with distinctive features worthy of conservation;
- Sense of place (usually tranquil);
- No (or occasional) detracting features;
- Landscape not substitutable.

High:

- Part of a nationally or locally recognised landscape of particularly distinctive character.
- Recognisable landscape structure, characteristic patterns and combinations of landform and land-cover are still evident;
- Appropriate management, but potential scope for improvement;
- Some features worthy of conservation;
- Sense of place;
- No or occasional detracting features;
- Very limited substitutability and susceptible to relatively small changes.

Medium:

- Locally recognised, a landscape of moderately valued characteristics;
- Distinguishable landscape structure, with some characteristic patterns of landform and land-cover;
- Scope to improve management (e.g., of hedgerows);
- Occasional detracting features;
- Landscape resource reasonably tolerant to change.

Low:

- Ordinary undesignated countryside;
- Weak landscape structure, without characteristic patterns of landform or land-cover;
- Limited management which is beginning to show signs of degradation;
- Abundance of detracting features;
- A relatively unimportant landscape, the nature of which is potentially tolerant to substantial change.

Very Low:

- Degraded to damaged/polluted or derelict landscape structure;
- Single land use dominates;
- Lack of or poor management/maintenance/intervention which has resulted in degradation;
- Presence of disturbed or derelict land requiring treatment;
- Extensive or dominant detracting features.

1.8 Visual Baseline Methodology

1.8.1 The visual baseline serves to “*identify the people within an area who will be affected by changes in views and visual amenity – usually referred to as ‘Visual Receptors’*” (VR) (GLVIA, page 106, para 6.13). The baseline should combine information on “*the nature, composition and characteristics of existing views*” (GLVIA, page 111, para 6.24), “*the potential extent to which the site of the proposed development is visible from surrounding areas, the chosen viewpoints, the types of visual receptor affected*” (GLVIA, page 112, para 6.25), and “*their susceptibility to change in views and the value attached to particular views*” (GLVIA, page 113, paragraph 6.31).

1.8.2 The susceptibility of visual receptors (VRs) to changes in views and visual amenity is affected by the type of activity that person or VR is engaged in (to determine the expectations of the viewer), in combination with the extent of the view of the site they experience, which relates to the degree to which the site is visible by a VR from a viewpoint as described in the baseline assessment (adapted from GLVIA, page 113, paragraph 6.32).

1.8.3 All viewpoints (from chosen representative, specific and illustrative viewpoint locations), were visited as part of the field survey and “*the nature, composition and characteristics*” of their existing views noted. Where appropriate, the existence of temporary structures or features in the landscape that vary with the seasons and that may therefore affect visibility, such as deciduous vegetation, were noted in order to evaluate the worst-case situation in the assessment. The initial appraisal is based on a grading of degrees of visibility, from not visible to fully open in close views. To indicate the degree of visibility of the site from any location, that continuum has been divided into four categories:

- **None:** No view (no part of the site or proposed development is discernible);
- **Glimpse:** Only a minor area of the site or proposed development is discernible and/or the view is transient or at such a distance that it is difficult to perceive in the wider view, or sequence of views;
- **Partial:** The site or proposed development forms a relatively small proportion of a wider view. There are open views of part of the site or proposed development such that it is easily visible as part of the wider view;
- **Open:** There are open views of the site or proposed development such that it forms a substantial part (is a dominant element) of the overall view and affects its overall character and visual amenity; or the site or proposed development is the dominant feature of the view, to which other elements become subordinate and where the site/proposed development significantly affects or changes the character of the view.

1.8.4 The value attached to views should also be considered i.e., whether the visual receptor/s being assessed are within a designated landscape, the site forms the setting to a heritage asset or there are particular tourism activities associated with the viewpoint location. The combined susceptibility to change in views/visual amenity and the value attached to particular views within the zone of visual influence of the site/proposed development, is evaluated using a combination of the information in the following checklist:

- *‘The type and relative number of people (visual receptors) likely to be affected, making clear the activities they are likely to be involved in;*
- *The location, nature and characteristics of the chosen representative, specific and illustrative viewpoints, with details of the visual receptors likely to be affected by each;*
- *The nature, composition and characteristics of the existing views experienced at these viewpoints, including the direction of view;*
- *The visual characteristics of the existing views, for example the nature and extent of the skyline, aspects of visual scale and proportion, especially with respect to any particular horizontal or vertical emphasis and any key foci;*
- *Elements, such as landform, buildings or vegetation, which may interrupt, filter or otherwise influence the views.’*

(GLVIA, page 111, paragraph 6.24)

1.9 Criteria for Evaluation of Visual Sensitivity

1.9.1 The evaluation of sensitivity, in relation to visual receptors is considered to be a product of susceptibility to change and the value attributed to the view by the visual receptor. It is

represented as an expression of comparative sensitivity, based on a five-point scale: Very High, High, Medium, Low and Very Low as follows:

Very High:

- An open view, where the site forms a dominant part of the view, seen from a viewpoint that has a high value (nationally significant), by visual receptors that would be highly susceptible to a change in the view (e.g., walkers/cyclists on rural public rights of way), whose attention or interest is likely to be focused on the landscape. For example, a walker on a national trail within an AONB, where the site forms the foreground to the view and is a characteristic part of a scenic and rural landscape.

High:

- A distant open or partial view of the site from a viewpoint that has a high value (nationally significant), seen by visual receptors that would be highly susceptible to a change in the view, whose attention or interest is likely to be focused on the landscape; for example, a walker on a national trail within an AONB, where the site forms a distant part of a wider view and is seen in the context of a foreground which is characteristic and forms part of a scenic and rural landscape;
- An open view of the site from a viewpoint that **either** has a medium scenic value (i.e., is locally appreciated), seen by visual receptors that would be highly susceptible to a change in the view **or** that the viewpoint has a high value (nationally significant) but the visual receptors experiencing the view have a medium susceptibility to change (e.g., a scenic road route, where the view is transient but is still a focus).

Medium:

- An open view of the site from a viewpoint that **either** has a low scenic value (i.e., has a number of visual detractors / a degraded landscape character), seen by visual receptors that would have a medium susceptibility to a change in the view **or** that the viewpoint has a medium scenic value (i.e., is locally appreciated) and the visual receptors experiencing the view have a low susceptibility to change (i.e. a major road or an office, where the view is not the focus of people's attention);
- A partial view of the site from a viewpoint with medium value, seen by visual receptors with a medium susceptibility to change;
- A glimpse of the site from a viewpoint that has a high scenic value (nationally significant), seen by a high number of visual receptors and / or visual receptors that would be highly susceptible to a change in the view and whose attention or interest is likely to be focused on the landscape.

Low:

- A partial view of the site from a viewpoint that has **either:**
 - a low scenic value, seen by visual receptors that would have a medium susceptibility to a change in the view;
 - a medium scenic value and the visual receptors experiencing the view have a low susceptibility to change; **or**
 - that the viewpoint has a low scenic value and the visual receptors experiencing the view have a low susceptibility to change;
- A glimpse of the site from a viewpoint with medium value, seen by visual receptors with a medium susceptibility to change;
- No view of the site, but that the viewpoint has a high scenic value and would be seen by a high number of visual receptors and/or visual receptors that would be highly

susceptible to a change in the view, whose attention or interest is likely to be focused on the landscape.

Very Low:

- A glimpse of the site from a viewpoint that has **either:**
 - a low scenic value, seen by visual receptors that would have a medium susceptibility to a change in the view;
 - a medium scenic value and the visual receptors experiencing the view have a low susceptibility to change; **or**
 - that the viewpoint has a low scenic value and the visual receptors experiencing the view have a low susceptibility to change;
- No view from a viewpoint with medium value (or lower), seen by visual receptors with a medium susceptibility to change (or lower).

1.12 Summary of Landscape/Visual Baseline

1.12.1 The baseline survey identifies the landscape resource (landscape features and character) and visual receptors (VRs) likely to be affected by the proposed development, and then evaluates the susceptibility, value and combined sensitivity of each to the likely effects of the proposed development.

2 Mitigation

2.1 Mitigation is defined in the Guidelines as:

‘Measures proposed to prevent/avoid, reduce and where possible remedy (or compensate for) any significant adverse landscape and visual effects...’ (GLVIA, page 57, paragraph 4.21).

2.2 Mitigation proposals are designed to respond to the constraints of the site and mitigate the landscape and visual impacts that arise from the proposed development. The mitigation measures considered fall into two categories: primary and secondary mitigation.

- Primary mitigation – the iterative process of master-planning;
- Secondary mitigation – additions or changes to the landscape proposals in order to address predicted residual effects remaining after primary mitigation measures are in place and assuming that standard construction and management practices, to avoid and reduce environmental effects, have been adhered to.

3 Assessment of Landscape Effects

3.1 The landscape impact assessment addresses both direct and indirect impacts of the proposed development. Firstly, the direct effects of the development on the site itself are categorised, through an assessment of the magnitude of change. The magnitude of change is a judgement on the size/scale of effect, including the consistency of the proposed development with the baseline assessment, the extent of the area influenced and the duration and reversibility of the proposed effects. The focus is on the loss or change to

identified landscape features within or adjacent to the site, together with the creation of new landscape elements.

3.2 Landscape character: The effects on local landscape character that would result from the proposed development are assessed. The effect on site landscape character directly correlates with the impact on landscape features (extent and duration). The effect on landscape character in the environs of the site is dependent on a range of factors (sensitivity) and overlaps with the visual assessment because the extent to which the proposed development would be visible from the surrounding countryside may influence neighbouring character areas. Effects on landscape character will also be directly influenced by the type of development proposed and whether it is consistent with existing land-use patterns.

3.3 Changes to landscape features and character may be adverse, beneficial or neutral. The erosion of a feature/character equates to an adverse impact, whilst strengthening of features/characteristics is regarded as beneficial. The substitution of a landscape feature/character area with another that is different but locally appropriate may be assessed as a negligible significance of effect. Refer also to GLVIA, page 88, paragraph 5.37.

3.4 For the purposes of this assessment, 'magnitude of change' on each landscape feature and landscape character area is classified using the categories listed below (Whilst potential effects may be adverse or beneficial, for simplicity, the following definitions use examples of adverse impact, bearing in mind that significant effects on landscape features, in the context of LVIA, usually equate with total or partial loss. Where effects are deemed to be beneficial this will be clearly stated in the assessment text):

High:

- Notable change in landscape characteristics over an extensive area;
- The proposals are the dominant feature and there is substantial damage (or major improvement) to key characteristics, features and elements that contribute to landscape, and/or the effects are long term and irreversible;
- Effect on a landscape feature of designated importance that cannot be replaced; total loss of features that would be difficult to replace;
- Loss of, or substantial effect on, existing landscape character and its replacement with characteristics that are atypical of the character area;
- The proposed development is inconsistent with existing land-use patterns.

Medium:

- Moderate changes in localised area;
- The proposals form a visible and immediately apparent new feature that results in partial damage to (or addition of) key characteristics, elements and features that

contribute to landscape, and/or the effects are medium to long term and largely irreversible;

- Total loss of feature that may be recreated over time; loss of small proportion of a feature that would be difficult to replace (e.g., mature woodland or historic species rich hedgerow);
- A considerable change to landscape character (proposed landscape character appropriate to character area but different from adjoining areas).

Low:

- Small change in any components;
- Some measurable change where the proposal constitutes a minor feature in the landscape and results in loss (or addition) of one (or maybe more) key characteristics, and/or the effects are short to medium term or could be irreversible;
- Total loss over sizeable area of a feature that can be recreated relatively easily (e.g., arable farmland); partial loss of feature that may be recreated over time, (e.g., young plantation/hedgerow); very minor loss of feature that would be difficult to recreate (e.g., woodland);
- A noticeable change to landscape character (proposed landscape character similar to existing landscape character of the area).

Very Low:

- Virtually imperceptible change of a temporary nature;
- The proposals result in very minor loss (or benefit) to the characteristics, features and elements that contribute to character, and/or effects are likely to be short term or could be reversible;
- Partial loss of feature that can be recreated relatively easily or which would regain its characteristics over time; minor or temporary effect on feature that can accommodate limited removal without noticeable change (e.g., gappy hedgerow);
- A barely perceptible change to landscape character.

3.5 The degree of significance of the landscape effect of the development is a product of sensitivity and magnitude of change.

4 Assessment of Visual Effects

4.1 The degree of significance of visual effects are assessed at two levels:

- i. The significance of the effect on each individual Visual Receptor;
- ii. The overall significance of the visual effects in the context of the zone of visual influence and the range of Visual Receptors as a whole.

4.2 Following on from the visual baseline, the degree of visibility of the proposed development from each Visual Receptor is assessed based on the same four categories: No view; Glimpse; Partial view, Open view. The view as it would be both during construction and operation of the proposed development is described. A direct comparison of the descriptions of the view following development (or during construction) with that of the existing situation, together with degree of visibility, indicates the extent of the change to the

view. The relationship between visual intrusion and extent of change to the view is dependent upon the character of the development in the context of the view and whether they are consistent or contrasting.

4.3 The scale or magnitude of visual change has been made with reference to the following:

- *'The scale of the change in the view with respect to the loss or addition of features in the view and changes in its composition, including the proportion of the view occupied by the proposed development;*
- *The degree of contrast or integration of any new features or changes in the landscape with the existing or remaining landscape elements and characteristics in terms of form, scale and mass, line, height, colour and texture; and*
- *The nature of the view of the proposed development, in terms of the relative amount of time over which it will be experienced and whether views will be full, partial or glimpses.'*

(GLVIA, page 115, paragraph 6.39)

4.4 The geographical extent of a visual effect will vary with different viewpoints and is likely to reflect:

- *'The angle of view in relation to the main activity of the receptor;*
- *The distance of the viewpoint from the proposed development; and*
- *The extent of the area over which changes would be visible.'*

(GLVIA, page 115, paragraph 6.40)

4.5 The magnitude of change can be classified as follows:

High:

- Total loss of, or major alteration to, key elements of the baseline view, and/or introduction of elements considered to be uncharacteristic of the baseline view. The development would occupy most of the view (open or panoramic view) resulting in significant change in the existing view.
- The proposals would cause a significant deterioration/improvement in the view. (If adverse, the proposals would be a dominant and incongruous feature in the view).

Medium:

- Partial loss of, or alteration to, (one or more) key elements of the baseline view, and/or introduction of elements that may be prominent but may not necessarily be considered to be substantially uncharacteristic to the baseline view.
- The development may affect a partial view of most of it, or viewers would have a clear view of only a small part of the development. Also refers to distant views in which the site forms a significant proportion of the wider view resulting in a noticeable change in the existing view;
- The proposals would cause a noticeable deterioration/improvement in the view. (If adverse, the proposals would form a visible and recognisable incongruous new element readily noticed by a casual observer. If beneficial, the proposals would form a recognisable improvement that could be noticed by a casual observer.)

Low:

- Minor loss of, or alteration to, one or more key elements of the baseline view, and/or introduction of elements that may not be uncharacteristic of the baseline view. Poor or difficult view of the development resulting in a perceptible change in the existing views; and
- The proposals would cause a minor deterioration/improvement in the view. If adverse, the proposals would be a small, incongruous element in the view that could be missed by a casual observer. If beneficial, the proposals would form a small improvement to the view that could be missed by a casual observer.

Very Low:

- Very minor loss of, or alteration to, one or more key elements of the baseline view, and/or introduction of elements that are not characteristic of the baseline view.
- Poor or difficult view of the development resulting in barely perceptible change of a temporary nature. Approximating to the 'no change' situation, where the proposals overall would not form a noticeable deterioration or improvement in the view.

5 Landscape and Visual Significance

5.1 The methodology is first to identify the sensitivity of the landscape features, local landscape character or the viewer and then the scale of change. From these the significance of the effects arising from the proposed development are assessed. At its simplest; sensitivity x scale of change = significance of effects but modified by professional judgement. The significance matrix provided below makes the judgements made by the professional assessors transparent so they can be understood easily by any reader of the assessment. The distribution of judgements is not intended to create a symmetrical matrix but reflects a pragmatic approach to determining levels of significance based upon its refinement over many years.

5.2 Significance matrix for landscape and visual effects

		<i>Sensitivity of receptor</i>				
		Very High	High	Medium	Low	Very Low
Magnitude of change	High	Major	Substantial	Substantial or Moderate	Moderate	Minor
	Medium	Substantial	Substantial or Moderate	Moderate	Minor	Negligible
	Low	Moderate	Minor	Minor	Negligible	Negligible
	Very Low	Minor	Negligible	Negligible	Negligible	Negligible

Major significance of effect: An effect of international/national importance and is important to the decision-making process;

Substantial significance of effect: An effect of regional/district significance and could be a key decision-making issue; prominent changes to a sensitive view or substantial change

or widespread loss of characteristic features in a sensitive landscape with little capacity for change;

Moderate significance of effect: An effect of local significance; a noticeable change to the view/landscape character in an average, ordinary landscape with some capacity to accommodate development or a small change in a more sensitive landscape; and may be a key decision-making issue; for example, in combination, the cumulative impacts of VRs with a moderate significance would be more significant (district significance).

Minor significance of effect: An effect of very local significance and unlikely to be of importance to the decision-making process; small scale or temporary changes to view or to a low sensitivity landscape with capacity to accommodate development;

Negligible significance of effect: Minimal effect and not significant to the decision-making process.

- 5.3 Effects are judged to be 'Significant' if they are assessed as being Substantial effects or higher. The professional judgement of experienced landscape assessors is used throughout the assessment, particularly in those cases where the outcome lies between two levels of assessment, such as Substantial and Moderate. This is reflected in the landscape and visual impact significance matrices.

APPENDIX B
COTSWOLD DISTRICT COUNCIL LOCAL PLAN POLICY EXTRACTS

APPENDIX B

COTSWOLD DISTRICT COUNCIL LOCAL PLAN 2011- 2031 POLICY EXTRACTS

Policy EN1: Built, Natural and Historic Environment *(Page 137)*

New development will, where appropriate, promote the protection, conservation and enhancement of the historic and natural environment by:

- a) Ensuring the protection and enhancement of existing natural and historic environmental assets and their settings in proportion with the significance of the asset;
- b) Contributing to the provision and enhancement of multi-functional green infrastructure;
- c) Addressing climate change, habitat loss and fragmentation through creating new habitats and the better management of existing habitats;
- d) Seeking to improve air, soil and water quality where feasible; and
- e) Ensuring design standards that complement the character of the area and the sustainable use of the development.

Policy EN2: Design of the Built and Natural Environment *(Page 138)*

Development will be permitted which accords with the Cotswold Design Code (Appendix D). Proposals should be of design quality that respects the character and distinctive appearance of the locality.

Policy EN4: The Wider Natural and Historic Landscape *(Page 142)*

1. Development will be permitted where it does not have a significant detrimental impact on the natural and historic landscape (including the tranquillity of the countryside) of Cotswold District or neighbouring areas.
2. Proposals will take account of landscape and historic landscape character, visual quality and local distinctiveness. They will be expected to enhance, restore and better manage the natural and historic landscape, and any significant landscape features and elements, including key views, the setting of settlements, settlement patterns and heritage assets.

Policy EN5: Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) *(Page 143)*

1. In determining development proposals within the AONB or its setting, the conservation and enhancement of the natural beauty of the landscape, its character and special qualities will be given great weight.
2. Major development will not be permitted within the AONB unless it satisfies the exceptions set out in national Policy and Guidance.

Policy EN7: Trees, Hedgerows and Woodlands *(Page 146)*

1. Where such natural assets are likely to be affected, development will not be permitted that fails to conserve and enhance:
 - a) Trees of high landscape, amenity, ecological or historical value;
 - b) Veteran trees;
 - c) Hedgerows of high landscape, amenity, ecological or historical value; and/or

- d) Woodland of high landscape, amenity, ecological or historical value.
- 2. Where trees, woodland or hedgerows are proposed to be removed as part of development, compensatory planting will be required.
- 3. Development proposals affected by (2) above should, where appropriate, have regard to the potential for new or extended woodland to assist in carbon storage and to be a potential local source of biomass or biofuel.

Policy INF7: Green Infrastructure (*Page 177*)

- 1. Development proposals must contribute, depending on their scale, use and location, to the protection and enhancement of existing Green Infrastructure and/or the delivery of new Green Infrastructure.
- 2. New Green Infrastructure provision will be expected to link to the wider Green Infrastructure network of the District and beyond.
- 3. Green Infrastructure will be designed in accordance with principles set out in the Cotswold Design Code (Appendix D).

'STOW-ON-THE-WOLD ASSESSMENTS' FROM THE CDC SHELAA FOR SITE REFS S65 & S66

COTSWOLDS NATIONAL LANDSCAPE MANAGEMENT PLAN 2023-2025 POLICY EXTRACTS

APPENDIX D

COTSWOLDS NATIONAL LANDSCAPE MANAGEMENT PLAN 2023-2025 POLICY EXTRACTS

Policy CE1: Landscape *(Page 34)*

1. Proposals that are likely to impact on, or create change in, the landscape of the Cotswolds National Landscape, should have regard to be compatible with, and reinforce the landscape character of the location, as described by the Cotswolds Conservation Board's Landscape Character Assessment and Landscape Strategy and Guidelines. There should be a presumption against the loss of key characteristics identified in the landscape character assessment.
2. Proposals that are likely to impact on, or create change in, the landscape of the Cotswolds National Landscape, should have regard to the scenic quality of the location and its setting and ensure that views – including those into and out of the National Landscape – and visual amenity are conserved and enhanced.
3. Conserving and enhancing landscape character should be a key objective of Environmental Land Management and rural development support mechanisms in the Cotswolds National Landscape.
4. Rural skills training and the utilisation of those skills – such as dry stone walling, stone-masonry, traditional woodland management and hedge laying – will be supported to ensure the long-term retention, creation and management of the key features of the Cotswolds National Landscape.

Policy CE3: Local Distinctiveness *(Page 36)*

1. Proposals that are likely to impact on the local distinctiveness of the Cotswolds National Landscape should have regard to, be compatible with and reinforce this local distinctiveness. This should include:
 - Being compatible with the Cotswolds Conservation Board's Landscape Character Assessment, Landscape Strategy and Guidelines and Local Distinctiveness and Landscape Change;
 - Being designed and, where relevant, landscaped to respect local settlement patterns, building styles, scale and materials and in accordance with design guidance prepared by local planning authorities;
 - Using an appropriate colour of limestone to reflect local distinctiveness.
2. Innovative designs, compatible with the conservation of natural beauty – which are informed by local distinctiveness, character and scale – should be welcomed.
3. The development of design guidance – which is supported by a robust evidence base and which reflects relevant guidance published by the Cotswolds National Landscape Board – will be encouraged.

4. Provision should be made for the quarrying of limestone, at an appropriate scale, in order to provide building materials that help maintain and enhance the local distinctiveness of the National Landscape. Any production of aggregate and agricultural lime should be secondary and necessary for local and necessary operational purposes. Any such mineral sites should be required to demonstrate that they do not have any significant adverse effects on the natural beauty of the National Landscape including its special qualities or the integrity of existing wildlife sites.

APPENDIX E
EXTRACTS FROM TREE PRESERVATION ORDER No 315

APPENDIX F
EXTRACTS FROM NCA 107: COTSWOLDS

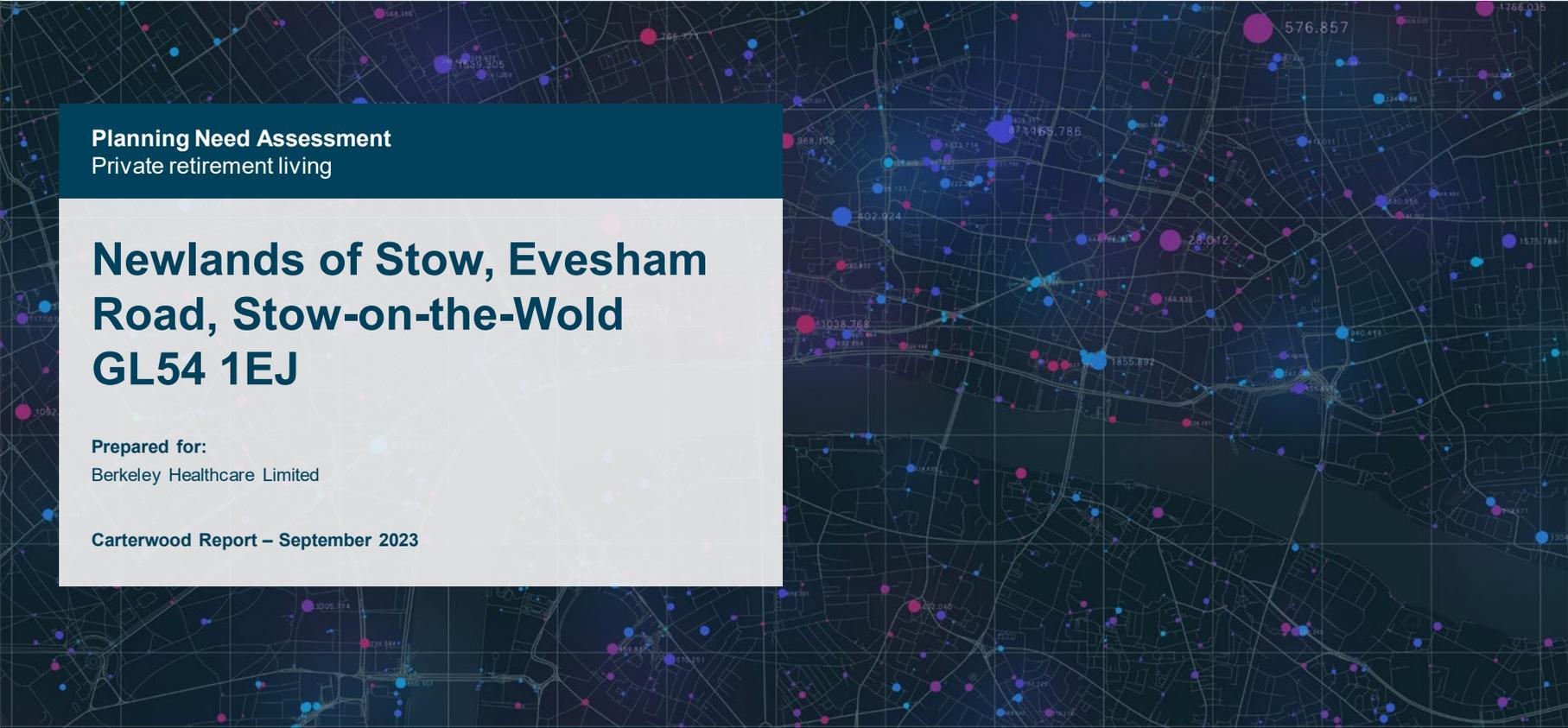
EXTRACT FROM THE COTSWOLDS AONB LANDSCAPE CHARACTER ASSESSMENT

**EXTRACT FROM THE COTSWOLD DISTRICT COUNCIL STUDY OF LAND SURROUNDING KEY
SETTLEMENTS – FOR STOW-ON-THE-WOLD**

APPENDIX I
ARCHITECT'S MASTERPLAN

APPENDIX J
EXTERNAL LIGHTING STRATEGY

APPENDIX FOUR – PLANNING NEED ASSESSMENT (SEE ACCOMPANYING DOCUMENT)



Planning Need Assessment
Private retirement living

Newlands of Stow, Evesham Road, Stow-on-the-Wold GL54 1EJ

Prepared for:
Berkeley Healthcare Limited

Carterwood Report – September 2023

Prepared by:

Jessamy Venables, Director
BSc (Hons) MSc MRICS

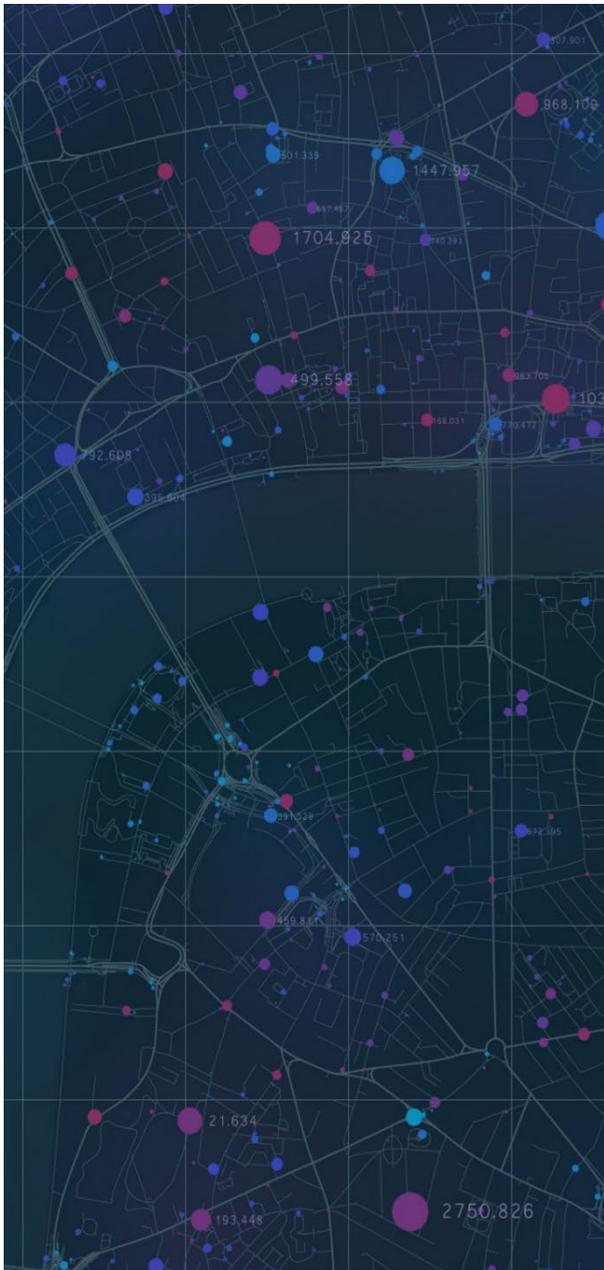
- Sector specialism
- Data quality
- Innovation

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Executive summary

Background and proposal

National context and key definitions

Local authority review

Need assessment – quantitative model and methodology review

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Key findings and conclusions

Data tables

T1 Planning need assessment summary	
Site	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Newlands of Stow, Evesham Road, Stow-on-the-Wold GL54 1EJ
Proposed scheme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Development comprising: “Full application for the demolition of Rose Lodge and an extension of the Newlands of Stow Integrated Retirement Community to develop 24 x Retirement Cottages (Use Class C3), 2 x ancillary Guest Suites, communal health and wellbeing facilities with, associated car parking, landscaping, engineering, and other associated works, on land adjacent to Tewkesbury Road”.
Notes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Need assessment for the proposed retirement cottages based on a market catchment radius of circa 10 miles and the Cotswold District Council area. The subject scheme is not included in our ‘planned supply’ figures in T3.

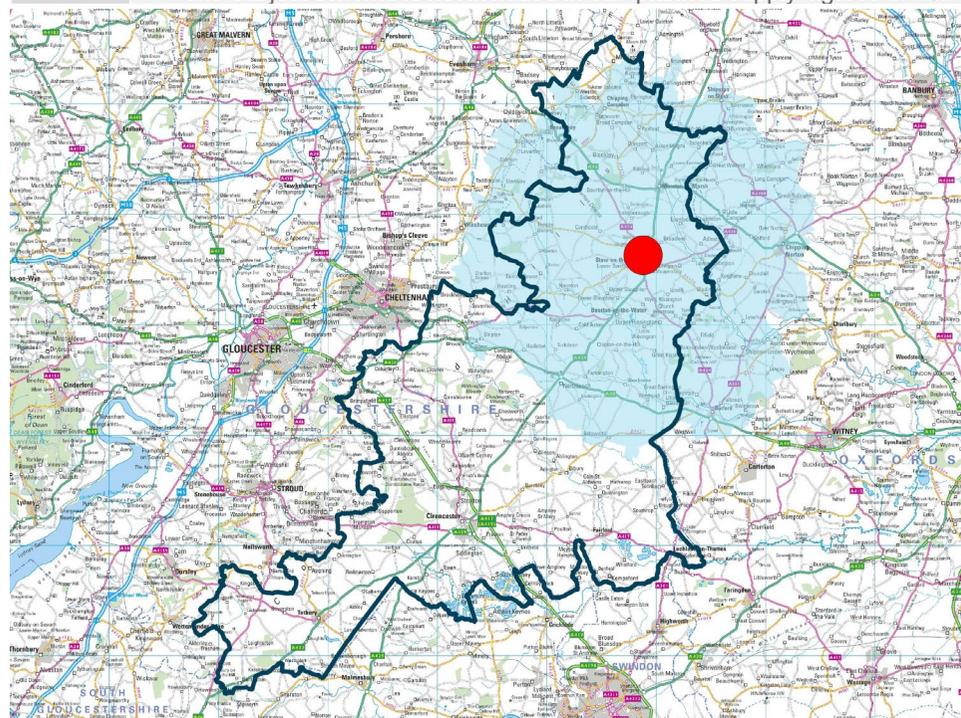


Figure 1: Location of the proposed addition to existing scheme and its catchment areas

The proposed extension to the existing scheme is shown by the red dot, with the market catchment area shaded light blue and the Cotswold District Council area outlined in dark blue

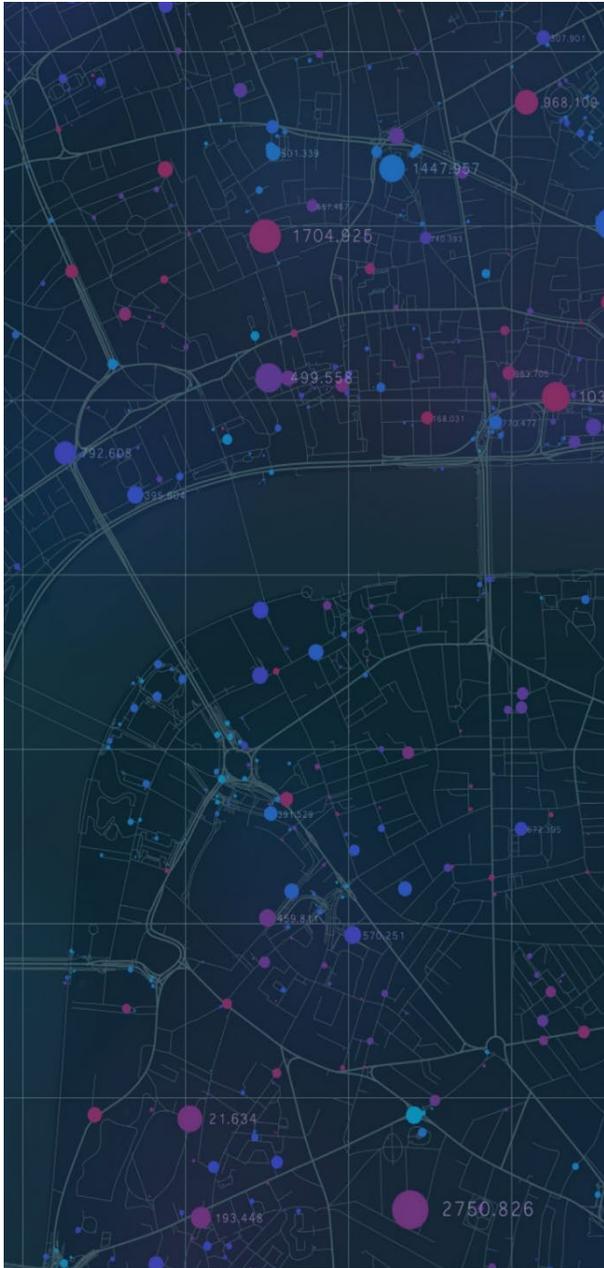
T2 National and local demand drivers for private retirement living
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Significant additional specialist housing for older people is required in the UK now and in the coming years, particularly provision for private sale or market rent, where supply is lower despite high levels of home ownership. The elderly population (65+) in the Cotswold District is projected to rise by over 42.9 per cent between 2023 and 2041, with Cotswold District Council recognising that private retirement living supply should be increased to meet need and enable older people to live in their own homes for as long as possible, with support available on site. Cotswold District Council clearly identify an existing backlog and increasing need for private/market retirement living accommodation. Our review of the Gloucestershire Local Housing Needs Assessment (2019) provides strong evidence that additional private retirement living accommodation is required, with an identified backlog of 619 units based on 2021, and a projected increased shortfall of 1,699 units by 2041. Our review of the available need methodologies shows a variation in suggested need for private retirement living accommodation in the market catchment and the Cotswold District Council local authority area. We believe that some methodologies remain silent on the need for private retirement housing for those aged between 65 and 74 years, even though need is evident from this age cohort based on the number who live in existing developments. Homeowners, comprising over 72 per cent of older person households in the Cotswold District, will not be eligible for ‘affordable’ retirement living/sheltered housing schemes and it is therefore critical that additional private supply is made available to meet this need. This will promote ‘right sizing’ and offer an appealing option to release large underoccupied family homes to the market and enable older people to remain in their local community. National planning practice guidance identifies that the need to provide housing for older people is ‘critical’, given projected increases in the number of older person households and limited existing supply. This an opportunity to futureproof Newlands of Stow, an existing, operational retirement community, by adding to the existing development to both increase the variety of accommodation available and improve the level of facilities on site, thereby assisting in addressing the existing and increasing need for private retirement living.

T3 Need analysis (2026) for private retirement living		
Catchment	Market (circa 10-mile radius)	Cotswold District Council
Gross need		
Total 75+ population	11,000	14,472
Estimated need for private retirement living (12.0%)	1,320	1,737
Supply		
Current supply of private retirement living	629	711
Planned supply by operational year	0	60
Total supply (units)	629	771
Net need		
Private retirement living need (units)	691	966

For assumptions see T24 on page 29

T4 Need for private retirement living units – medium to long term			
Catchment area		Circa 10 - mile market catchment	Cotswold District Council
Net need for private retirement living	Year		
	2023	574	867
	2026	691	966
	2028	729	1,067
	2033	909	1,284
	2038	1,103	1,551
	2043	1,321	1,859

T5 Need summary
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Our assessment of net need for private retirement living (assuming 12 per cent of population aged 75+) concludes that there is shortfall of 691 units in the 10-mile market catchment and 966 units in the Cotswold District Council local authority area, as at 2026, the earliest the proposed extension to the Newlands of Stow integrated retirement community could start to be made available. • The prevalence rate we have adopted, in our opinion, most closely accords with the requirements outlined in recent government literature and studies citing the importance of additional specialist housing for older people, particularly for private leasehold sale and market rent (Section 10), in line with high levels of elderly home ownership (Section 14). • By 2033 the ongoing shortfalls are expected to be 909 private retirement living units in the 10-mile market catchment and 1,284 in the Cotswold District Council local authority area, rising to 1,321 and 1,859 in the two catchments respectively by 2043 • For prudence, these shortfalls assume that prevalence rates and existing provision remain unchanged and all currently planned supply (both granted and pending a decision) is developed. • Existing private retirement living provision in the two assessed catchments is included in our analysis (see Section 16). • Our assessment concludes that there is a significant and increasing net need for private retirement living in the two assessed catchments. • The proposed addition of 24 private retirement living cottages to the existing high-quality Integrated Retirement Community scheme at Newlands of Stow, is specifically designed for older people with support needs. It will provide an appealing option to attract older homeowners to right-size to the development and benefit from the communal facilities available on site, within a welcoming, vibrant environment to enable residents to maintain their quality of life and independence for as long as possible.



Executive summary

Background and proposal

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Carterwood

Description of proposal

The extended retirement community – position on the care spectrum

National context and key definitions

Local authority review

Need assessment – quantitative model and methodology review

Need assessment – local market quantitative assessment

Need assessment – qualitative assessment

Key findings and conclusion

Data tables

1. Introduction

1.1 Carterwood has been commissioned to prepare a planning need assessment on behalf of Berkeley Healthcare Limited, in relation to the proposed development of an extension to the existing integrated retirement community, comprising 24 private retirement living cottages and additional community facilities on the site adjacent to Newlands of Stow, Evesham Road, Stow-on-the-Wold GL54 1EJ2.

1.2 In this report, we have considered the national and local context together, with a detailed study of the catchment areas for the proposed development.

Limitations to advice

1.3 The trading environment of the care sector in the UK, which impacts upon market conditions, remains in a volatile state. Contributing factors include some ongoing uncertainty around the post-Brexit trading conditions, operating with the legacy and future risks of COVID-19 and the effect of the conflict in Ukraine and the resulting inflationary pressures. Our reports are prepared using high-quality data and expert analysis from our experienced team. Any recommendations made are based upon the market and financial climate as at the date of the report, but do not take into account future economic or market fluctuations caused by the events outlined above or other unforeseen events.

1.4 This report contains data relating to the 2011 census. The England and Wales 2021 census took place on 21 March 2021; the first release of this data was published on 28 June 2022, with additional releases having followed in spring/summer 2023, and with the final release of all data outputs for England and Wales provisionally expected by November 2023. The Scottish census was delayed, with the first outputs expected in autumn 2023 with additional releases to follow and with all data expected to be available during 2025. We will monitor the census data release schedule, reviewing new data as it is released and ensuring the data is embedded into our analysis as quickly as possible.

T6 Instruction summary

Purpose of advice	Planning need assessment for private retirement living
Research date	12 July 2023
Prepared by	Jessamy Venables BSc (Hons) MSc MRICS
Report date	26 September 2023

2. Carterwood

2.1 Carterwood is a multi-award-winning property adviser dedicated to social care. We provide market analysis services and software to investors, developers, and operators within the elderly care home and retirement living sectors. We combine sector-specialism with unparalleled data quality and a commitment to innovation, to help our clients make better decisions. Carterwood acts for 85% of the top 20 care home group operators and 80% of the top 10 retirement living operators in the UK, and our commercially-focused team is one of the largest dedicated to health and social care.



2.2 We work with the leading operators, investors and developers in our markets.

T7 Elderly care home



T8 Retirement living



2.3 Carterwood's client base represents many operators currently seeking to develop new care homes, extra care and retirement living schemes. Accordingly, we are in an almost unique position in the sector, having assessed over 4,000 sites since 2008, for a range across a range of care categories.



of providers
scheme types and

3. Description of proposal



Figure 2: Aerial map showing the proposed site, for identification purposes only

- 3.1 The site is situated to the north west of, and adjacent to, the existing Newlands of Stow retirement village. It is located on the north-eastern side of Stow-on-the-Wold, north of the B4077 Tewkesbury Road and west of the A424 Evesham Road.
- 3.2 Newlands of Stow retirement community has developed over the past 30 years and currently incorporates a 25 bedroom care home, 15 assisted living apartments, 2 independent living apartments and 20 retirement living cottages.
- 3.3 The proposal comprises “Full application for the demolition of Rose Lodge and an extension of the Newlands of Stow Integrated Retirement Community to develop 24 x Retirement Cottages (Use Class C3), 2 x ancillary Guest Suites, communal health and wellbeing facilities with, associated car parking, landscaping, engineering, and other associated works, on land adjacent to Tewkesbury Road”.
- 3.4 The extension to Newlands of Stow to provide an additional 24 x 2 bedroom private retirement living cottages for private leasehold sale/market rent is intended to

futureproof the existing scheme by improving the community facilities available to include a gymnasium, rehabilitation facility and hydrotherapy pool. This will assist those residents who require respite and intermediate care and is also intended to be available for wider local community use.

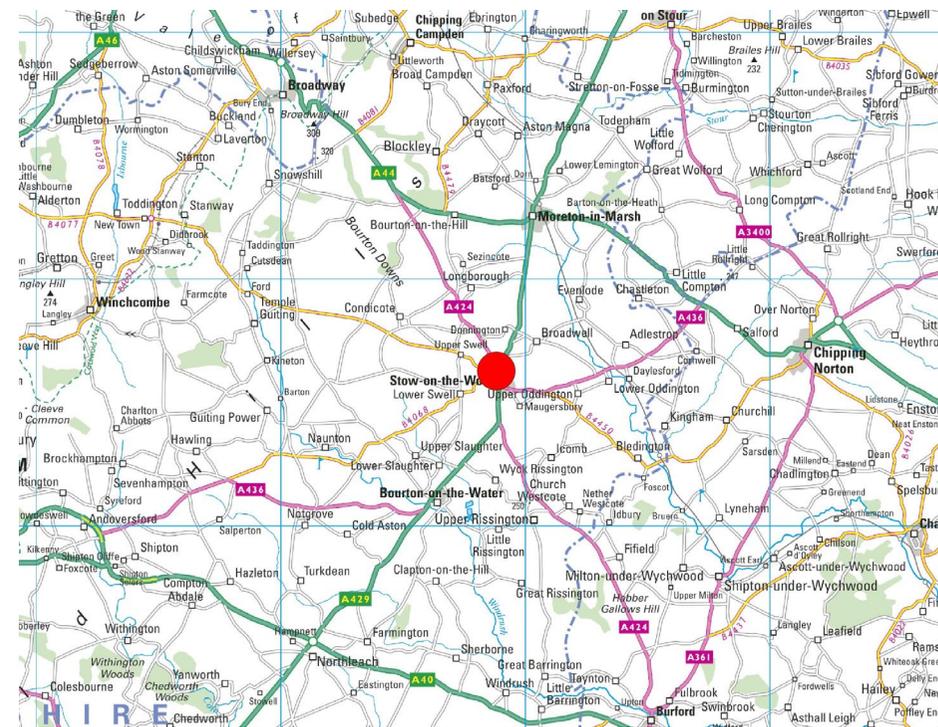


Figure 3: Location of the subject site

- 3.5 The proposed enlarged retirement village will provide improved opportunities for social interaction within a welcoming, vibrant environment. Should residents’ support needs increase, a variety of services will be available to them within their own homes, ensuring they can continue to live independently and age in place for as long as they are able. It is intended that the health and wellbeing provision will continue to reduce pressure on local GP practices and the NHS, and provide residents and their families with peace of mind that support is available on site.
- 3.6 Further details in respect of the proposal can be found in the planning statement prepared in support of the planning application.

4. The extended retirement community – position on the care spectrum

- 4.1 We have compared the proposed private retirement living accommodation within the extended Newlands of Stow community against other forms of specialist accommodation in respect of accommodation type, care/support and regulation. Table T9, below, shows the range of options available within this ‘spectrum of care’.
- 4.2 Due to the growing requirements placed upon the NHS and hospital beds, as well as the introduction of delayed-discharge legislation, which fines local authorities for ‘blocked beds’, hospital stays are intended to be kept to a minimum and a stay in a care home servicing this higher level of dependency may be the only short-term option.
- 4.3 The improvements to general health and wellbeing realised by a timely move to retirement living and support can also have associated benefits for the NHS, in terms of a reduction in GP/nurse visits and a reduced likelihood of, or shorter length of stay should admission to hospital be required. The proximity of residents on one site means a significant reduction in staffing requirements, particularly when compared with domiciliary care or support provided within the community over a wider geographical area, where much of the time is spent travelling between appointments.

- 4.4 A variant to the provision elements of the care spectrum below is informal/family care. An estimated 8.8 million or more unpaid carers provide significant support to elderly relatives, neighbours and friends (Age UK, 2019). This allows many thousands of people to remain in their own homes, particularly when the support is alongside home care and/or day care. Thus, a range of care requirements and a range of services coexist, sometimes with considerable overlap.
- 4.5 We consider that, within the retirement community, the private retirement living units will be able to cater for a proportion of residents who would otherwise have remained within their existing homes.

Key findings – extended development - position in the care spectrum

- The proposed extension to the retirement community will cater to older people, with support available, should this be necessary. The retirement living units and additional amenities proposed will enable older people to right-size to appealing, specifically designed homes within an environment that benefits the wellbeing of residents and maintains their independence, ageing in place with a physically and socially active lifestyle, for as long as possible.
- We consider, given the proposed private leasehold tenure/market rent, the extension to the development will provide an attractive alternative to those who would otherwise remain in their own, underoccupied family homes in the local area and enable to remain geographically close to family and friends.

T9 Elderly care spectrum						
Accommodation	Standard housing	Sheltered housing/retirement living	Housing with care Extra care/assisted living	Care homes	Care homes with nursing	Hospitals
Care provided	Domiciliary care			Personal care	Nursing and medical care	
Cost of care	Low to medium and highly variable			Medium to high	High	Very high
Accommodation types	Standard housing	Age-restricted, age-exclusive or sheltered housing	Extra care, assisted living, very sheltered housing	Residential setting		Acute hospital
Accommodation styles	House, cottage, flat, bungalow, suite, apartment			Bedroom, suite		Bedroom
CQC regulations	Regulated only if care provided			Highly regulated – all care and accommodation		
Existing scheme	Requirements met in the existing retirement community					
Proposed extension	Requirements met by the proposed extension					

5. UK elderly population trends and market size

Population

- 5.1 The elderly UK population is set to grow dramatically over the coming years, and this predicted rapid increase is likely to continue to drive demand for residential care, nursing care, extra care, integrated retirement communities and retirement living options.

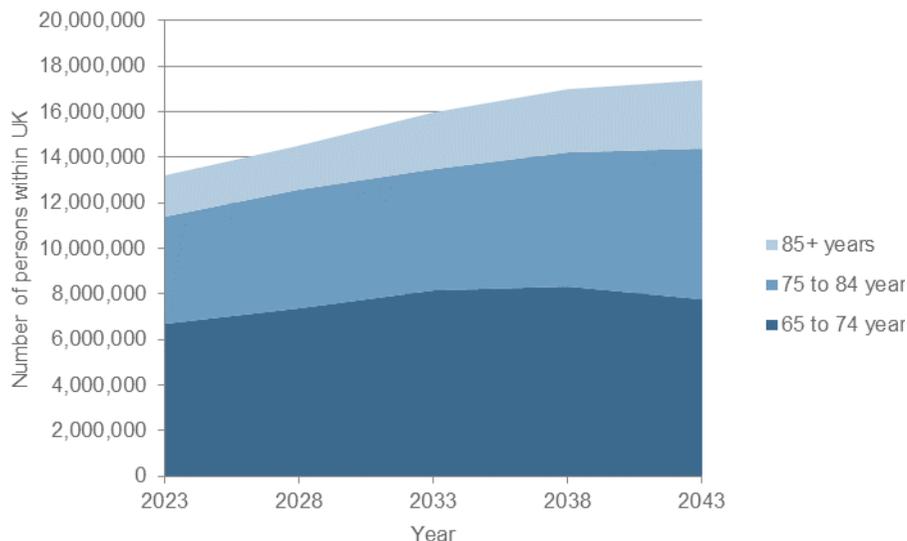


Figure 4: UK population growth 2023 to 2043

Source: 2011 Census, government population projections.

- 5.2 LaingBuisson’s *Care Homes for Older People UK Market Report (33rd edition)* states that the percentage of the UK population over the age of 85 is projected to multiply more than four times, from c. 1.68 million in 2020 (2.4 per cent of the population) to c. 7.09 million in 2111 (8.7 per cent of the population), while the 75- to 84-year-old segment will rise from c. 4.17 million in 2020 (6.3 per cent of the population) to c. 7.69 million in 2111 (9.4 per cent of the population).¹

- 5.3 It should be noted that the National Planning Policy Framework glossary² refers to ‘Older People’ as:

‘People over or approaching retirement age, including the active, newly retired through to the very frail elderly; and whose housing needs can encompass

¹ (Laing, 2023)

accessible, adaptable general needs housing through to the full range of retirement and specialised housing for those with support or care needs.’

Home ownership

- 5.4 The levels of home ownership among older people are very high in England and Wales, as illustrated by the data from the 2021 Census, below.

T10 Household tenure (2021) where HRP is aged 65+ years or older		
Tenure	England and Wales	
	No.	%
Owner occupied: owns outright	5,102,152	71.2
Owner occupied: owns with a mortgage/loan	413,710	5.8
Owner occupied: shared ownership	42,068	0.6
Rented from: council (local authority)	558,262	7.8
Rented from: registered social landlord	565,703	7.9
Rented from: private landlord / letting agency	351,025	4.9
Rented from: other	118,827	1.7
Living rent free	16,943	0.2
All households	7,168,690	100.0

Source: 2021 Census.

- 5.5 Home ownership levels of older people are very important for the analysis of private retirement living, as those property occupiers who own their home are less likely to be able or choose to access affordable rental options and instead will need to find alternatives that are available on a private leasehold or market rental basis.
- 5.6 Home ownership levels vary considerably across the UK, with higher levels generally found in areas of higher affluence and vice versa. T10 above shows the household tenure percentages for England and Wales where the ‘household reference person’ (HRP) is aged 65 years and older; this sets out a level of 71.2 per cent of owner occupied households are owned outright.

² (Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, 2023)

6. Retirement living

6.1 As the supply of specialist housing has expanded to meet the diverse needs of older people, so have the number of models and designs. Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) Housing for Older and Disabled People³ sets out the following four general types:

- **'Age-restricted general market housing:** generally for people aged 55 and over and the active elderly. It may include some shared amenities such as communal gardens but does not include support or care services.
- **Retirement living or sheltered housing:** usually comprises purpose-built flats or bungalows with limited communal facilities such as a lounge, laundry room and guest room. It does not generally provide care services, but provides some support to enable residents to live independently. This can include 24-hour on-site assistance (alarm) and a warden or house manager.
- **Extra care housing or housing-with-care:** usually consists of purpose-built or adapted flats or bungalows with a medium to high level of care available if required, through an onsite care agency registered through the Care Quality Commission (CQC). Residents are able to live independently with 24-hour access to support services and staff, and meals are also available. There are often extensive communal areas, such as space to socialise or a wellbeing centre. In some cases, these developments are known as retirement communities or villages – the intention is for residents to benefit from varying levels of care as time progresses.
- **Residential care homes and nursing homes:** These have individual rooms within a residential building and provide a high level of care meeting all activities of daily living. They do not usually include support services for independent living. This type of housing can also include dementia care homes.'

6.2 PPG⁴ advises that 'the health and lifestyles of older people will differ greatly, as will their housing needs, which can range from accessible and adaptable general needs housing to specialist housing with high levels of care and support. For plan-making purposes, strategic policy-making authorities will need to determine the needs of people who will be approaching or reaching retirement over the plan period, as well as the existing population of older people.'

6.3 It is important, therefore, that a variety of forms of specialist housing are made available for older people to accommodate all lifestyles and needs, to appeal to both 'younger old' and 'older old' people, together with a range of tenure options.

6.4 The proposed extension to the existing Newlands of Stow scheme is intended to provide retirement living and therefore widen the variety of housing and support options for older people available on site. The focus of this report is the provision of 'private retirement living'.

6.5 The Elderly Accommodation Counsel (EAC) HousingCare⁵ directory provides a comprehensive listing of all forms of retirement housing together with definitions of elderly specialist housing⁶ and retirement housing, as follows:

- **Sheltered and retirement housing** usually provides a scheme manager (warden) and an emergency alarm service. There are many types of sheltered/retirement housing, both to rent and to buy. Schemes usually consist of between 15 and 60 self-contained homes, which may be bedsits (studios), flats, bungalows or luxury apartments. The minimum age for residents is usually 60, sometimes 55 and very occasionally 50. Scheme managers generally do not provide personal care for residents or carry out tasks like shopping or housework.

National provision of private retirement living

6.6 We have utilised our dataset, sourced from EAC and updated to include our own research to determine the size of the private retirement living market in the UK. In T11, below, we have analysed the total market supply of private specialist older people's housing and classed either as 'with care' or 'without care'.

T11 Private specialist retirement housing supply (UK)			
Scheme type	Total schemes	Private units for sale or rent	% of private units
Without care			
Age-exclusive	1,114	23,001	12.3
Sheltered	3,568	132,637	70.9
Total	4,682	155,638	83.2
With care			
Enhanced sheltered	275	10,851	5.8
Extra care	368	20,577	11.0
Sub-total	643	31,428	16.8
All schemes			
Total	5,325	187,066	100.0

Updated May 2023

³ (Planning Practice Guidance, 2019) Paragraph: 010, Reference ID: 63-010-20190626

⁴ (Planning Practice Guidance, 2019) Paragraph: 003, Reference ID: 63-003-20190626

⁵ (Elderly Accommodation Counsel, 2022)

⁶ (Elderly Accommodation Counsel, 2022)

- 6.7 The majority of existing private specialist accommodation in the UK comprises ‘sheltered housing’, amounting to 155,638 units and there are also just over 23,000 age-exclusive housing units. Developments that provide ‘housing-with-care’ have evolved in recent years to respond to the growing need from older people for greater choice, quality and independence..
- 6.8 T12 shows the percentage of private specialist older people’s housing by year of development, with over a third of all supply having been completed during the 1980s. The age-exclusive and sheltered housing developed at that time may no longer be fully suitable for purpose in terms of layout, accessibility or the ability to easily retrofit adaptations to make the accommodation as suitable as possible for older people.
- 6.9 There is a strong wish among older people in the UK to remain independent for as long as possible. Retirement living appeals to this sentiment, given the style and design of the accommodation and, for private leasehold supply, the creation of a valuable legal interest – i.e. sale on a long leasehold basis.
- 6.10 The decision to move into retirement living is often influenced by immediate relatives. Remaining in a property that is larger than required can present problems in terms of access, location of bathrooms, differing levels and property and garden maintenance, all of which can lead to anxiety, isolation and issues accessing reliable support.
- 6.11 During the pandemic, specialist retirement housing kept many older people safe. The RE-COV⁷ Study provides evidence of the response and effectiveness of 38 retirement village/extra care operators during the pandemic, which resulted in a lower proportion of residents within participating survey respondents’ schemes having died from COVID-19, when compared with older people living in the general population in England, despite their care needs being higher.
- 6.12 Traditional housing is not preferable for lonely and/or isolated elderly people who may have little or no community support and protection. Our view is that retirement housing provides the ideal compromise between traditional housing and housing-with-care for looking after those who require some general support to assist them to live independently.

T12 Private specialist retirement living housing by year of development (UK)

Year of development	Total schemes	Private units for sale or rent	% of private units
Unknown	402	8,012	4.3
Prior to 1970	64	1,352	0.7
1970s	62	1,384	0.7
1980s	1,788	62,929	33.6
1990s	855	28,866	15.4
2000s	922	35,466	19.0
2010s	963	37,546	20.1
2020s	269	11,511	6.2
Total	5,325	187,066	100.0

- 6.13 By widening the retirement housing available at Newlands of Stow, this will improve the choice of accommodation available for older people who may only require a low level of support but who will be able to benefit from the available community facilities on site.

Key findings – UK market trends

- The elderly UK demographic is set to grow dramatically in the coming years. This will continue to drive demand for all specialist accommodation options for older people.
- The proposed extension to the existing Newlands of Stow retirement community will comprise private retirement living housing. This will provide potential residents with a greater variety of options on site and enable them to live in private retirement living, where some support is available, and benefit from the existing and additional proposed communal facilities.
- Home ownership levels of older people are important in the analysis of private retirement living, as those that own their own home are less likely to be eligible for registered social landlord (RSL) operated affordable rental options (usually called sheltered housing). Instead, they will need to access private leasehold sale or market rent alternatives.
- Research shows how retirement living residents were able to self-isolate effectively within their own homes during the pandemic where, crucially, they received support if required. The debilitating damage caused by loneliness and social isolation is mitigated in such developments and, on this basis, we consider the future need for retirement living will continue to increase.

⁷ (Dutton, 2021)

7. Local authority and Stow on the Wold planning need analysis

7.1 The existing, operational Newlands of Stow integrated retirement community is located within the Cotswold District Council local authority area. The proposed development aims to improve the variety of accommodation available by adding additional private retirement living as an alternative option on site. We have therefore conducted a review of the following strategic documentation with regard to the provision of private/market retirement living:

- *Stow on the Wold and the Swells Neighbourhood Plan. Housing Needs Assessment March 2022.* Aecom.
- *Gloucestershire Local Housing Needs Assessment 2019.* Final report and summary, September 2020. Opinion Research Services

7.2 We have provided, verbatim, relevant extracts of the documents, in relation to private retirement living provision, below, together with our review.

Neighbourhood Plan Housing Needs Assessment 2022

7.3 *'The specialist housing needs of older people (75+) are assessed below using two methods. The first is a tenure-led projection, based on rates of mobility limitation among this age group and the tenure of housing they currently occupy. The second, included for the purposes of comparison, is based on the Housing Learning and Improvement Network (HLIN) Strategic Housing for Older People (SHOP) tool, which is based on best practice nationally and sets a recommended level of provision per 1,000 head of population.'* (page 55)

7.4 *'The 2011 55-75 age bracket is considered the best proxy for the group likely to fall into need for specialist accommodation during the Plan period to 2031. It is assumed that those currently occupying their own home will wish to do so for as long as practicably possible in future, even where downsizing or moving into specialist accommodation. Equally, those who currently rent, either in the private or social sectors, are projected to need affordable rented specialist accommodation.'* (page 57)

7.5 *'According to Table 6-2 on the following page [not shown], roughly three quarters of households are owner occupied and one quarter are rented, of which 12% social rent.* (page 57)

7.6 *'The next step is to project how the overall number of older people in Stow on the Wold and the Swells is likely to change in future, by extrapolating from the ONS Sub-National Population Projections for the Cotswold District at the end of the Plan period. The figure must be extrapolated from the Local Authority level data because such projections are not available at neighbourhood level. This shows growth of 203 in the population aged over 75 over the plan period.'* (page 58)

7.7 *'A key assumption for the next stages of the calculation is that the older people living in the NA currently are already suitably accommodated, either because they occupy the existing stock of specialist accommodation, have made appropriate adaptations to their own homes or do not require support or adaptations. This is unlikely to be completely true, but it is not possible to determine how many such individuals are inadequately housed without evidence from a household survey (which itself may not give a complete picture). 'The people whose needs are the focus of the subsequent analysis are therefore the additional 203 individuals expected to join the 75+ age group by the end of the Plan period.'* (page 58)

7.8 *'These findings are set out in the table below, based on the assumption that those whose day-to-day activities are limited a lot may need housing with care (e.g. extra care housing, with significant on-site services, including potentially medical services), while those with their day to day activities limited only a little may simply need adaptations to their existing homes, or alternatively sheltered or retirement living that can provide some degree of oversight or additional services. However, it is important to note that, even those people who have high support or care needs can often be supported to live in their own homes. This is often reflected in policy of local authorities, with explicit aim to reduce the need to commission increasing numbers of care home beds.'* (page 60)

Type	Affordable	Market	Total (rounded)
Housing with care (e.g. extra care)	Multiply the number of people across all rented tenures (not just social rent as those aged 65+ who need to rent are overwhelmingly likely to need Affordable Housing) by the percent of occupiers in that tenure who have day to day activity limitations limited a lot	Multiply the number of people across all owner-occupied housing by the percent of occupiers in that tenure who have day to day activity limitations limited a lot	28
	11	17	
Adaptations, sheltered, or retirement living	Multiply the number of people across all rented housing by the percent of occupiers in that tenure who have day to day activity limitations limited a little	Multiply the number of people across all owned housing by the percent of occupiers in that tenure who have day to day activity limitations limited a little	42
	9	33	
Total	20	50	70

Figure 5: AECOM estimate of specialist housing need in Stow on the Wold and the Swells by the end of the plan period (based on 2011 census)

7.9 It is worth comparing these findings with the recommendations of the Housing Learning and Improvement Network (HLIN), one of the most simple and widely used models estimating for the housing needs of older people. Table 6-7 below [not shown] reproduces the key assumptions of HLIN’s Strategic Housing for Older People (SHOP) toolkit. The table serves as a guide to the numbers of specialist dwellings for older people that should be provided given the increase in their numbers over the Plan period, and how these should be split into the different tenures. (page 60)

7.10 ‘Stow on the Wold and the Swells is forecast to see an increase of 203 individuals aged 75+ by the end of the Plan period. According to the HLIN tool, this translates into need as follows:

- Conventional sheltered housing to rent = $60 \times 0.203 = 12$
- Leasehold sheltered housing = $120 \times 0.203 = 24$
- Enhanced sheltered housing (divided 50:50 between that for rent and that for sale) = $20 \times 0.203 = 4$
- Extra care housing for rent = $15 \times 0.203 = 3$
- Extra care housing for sale = $30 \times 0.203 = 6$
- Housing based provision for dementia = $6 \times 0.203 = 1.9$

7.11 This produces an overall total of 51 specialist dwellings which might be required by the end of the plan period. It is important to stress that the SHOP toolkit embeds assumptions that uplift the provision of specialist accommodation compared to current rates. (page 61)

7.12 ‘These two methods of estimating the future need in Stow on the Wold and the Swells produce a range of 51 to 70 specialist accommodation units that might be required during the Plan period, of which 18 to 20 affordable. These estimates are based on the projected growth of the older population, thereby assuming that today’s older households are already well accommodated. If this is found not to be the case, it would justify aspiring to exceed the range identified here. (page 62)

Gloucestershire Local Housing Needs Assessment 2019

7.13 ‘It is widely recognised that many older households often occupy larger family housing. Figure 69 [not shown] identifies the number of spare rooms that older person households had available to them at the time of the Census. Overall, three quarters of older households that own their home, almost half of those renting from a social landlord (48%) and three-in-ten of those renting privately had two or more spare rooms. (page 108)

7.14 ‘Whilst many of these households will choose not to move, around a quarter of older households nationally would move to another home if there was suitable housing available that met their aspirations in the right place. Many of these households would have considerable equity available from the sale of their larger home, therefore affordability is far less of a consideration for this group.’ (page 108).

7.15 ‘The Housing Learning and Improvement Network (Housing LIN) published “More Choice, Greater Voice: a toolkit for producing a strategy for accommodation with care for older people” in February 2008; and subsequently published the “Strategic Housing for Older People (SHOP)” resource pack in December 2011. Both the toolkit and the resource pack provide standardised rates for estimating the demand for a range of specialist older person housing products, based on the population aged 75 or over, and these have informed the evidence base for many adopted Local Plans. (page 108)

Form of Provision	More Choice, Greater Voice toolkit			SHOP resource pack		
	Owned	Rented	TOTAL	Owned	Rented	TOTAL
Demand per 1,000 persons aged 75+						
Leasehold Schemes for the Elderly (LSE)	75	-	75	120	-	120
Conventional Sheltered Housing	-	50	50	-	60	60
Sheltered ‘plus’ or ‘Enhanced’ Sheltered	10	10	20	10	10	20
Extra Care	12.5	12.5	25	30	15	45
Dementia	-	10	10	-	6	6
TOTAL	97.5	92.5	180	160	91	251

Figure 6: Benchmark figures for specialist older person housing

7.16 ‘These rates provide a useful framework for understanding the potential demand for different forms of older peoples housing, but neither publication provides any detail about the derivation of the figures. The More Choice, Greater Voice toolkit recognises that the suggested framework simply: “...represents an attempt to quantify matters with explicit numerical ratios and targets. It is contentious, but deliberately so, in challenging those who must develop local strategies to draw all the strands together in a way that quantifies their intentions.” (page 109)

7.17 ‘Similarly, the SHOP resource pack acknowledges that the framework simply provides a baseline, which extrapolates “...crude estimates of future demand from existing data”. There is no one correct answer when estimating the need for older person housing, however the rates provide a basis for identifying the potential levels of demand.’ (page 109).

7.18 ‘Figure 72 [shown below] identifies the existing stock of specialist Older Person housing provided by GCC [Gloucestershire County Council], based on data published by the Elderly Accommodation Counsel (EAC) and verified with each provider of specialist accommodation. This verification ensures that the data is as robust as possible and identified a total of 8,007 units. “Housing with support” is predominantly housing with the support as an add-on service and is usually low level support. It refers to such models as sheltered housing. In “housing with care” the care or support is an integral part of the model and a much higher level of care or support is offered than with “housing with support”. It generally refers to models such as extra care.’ (page 111)

Property Type		Local Authority						TOTAL
		Cheltenham	Cotswold	Forest of Dean	Gloucester	Stroud	Tewkesbury	
Housing with support	Owned	691	794	134	331	411	450	2,811
	Rented	778	806	644	674	810	620	4,332
Housing with care	Owned	225	59	0	161	56	32	533
	Rented	49	60	94	128	0	43	374
TOTAL		1,743	1,719	872	1,294	1,277	1,145	8,050

Figure 7: Existing stock of specialist Older Person Housing for each area

7.19 'While the Housing LIN model identifies future need, this is on the basis of existing types of provision (sheltered, extra care etc). It is unclear, at the present time, if Older People will aspire to these types of specialist housing in the future; indeed, demand for some types are already experiencing low demand, and other, newer types of provision may appear to meet changing aspirations in the market. Further, the policy aim of supporting people at home for longer could mean, for example, that floating support services and assistive technologies could help older people live in their own homes longer.' (page 111)

7.20 'The table below identifies the potential requirement for new specialist housing, taking account of the current population and existing stock together with the additional demand for the period 2021-2041 based on the projected change in population aged 75+. This table uses sheltered housing prevalence rates from the SHOP resource pack (shown in Fig.6, above) and local extra care prevalence rates from GCC (not shown).' (page 111 and table below, showing the Cotswold District Council area only, page 113)

		Rate per 1,000 persons aged 75+	Gross need	Existing supply	Backlog at start of period	Gross need 2041	New need	Overall Need
COTSWOLD			2021		2021	2041	2021-41	2021-41
Sheltered Housing	Owned	120	1,413	794	619	2,493	1,080	1,699
	Rented	60	707	806	-99	1,246	540	440
Extra care	Owned	10	118	59	59	208	90	149
	Rented	5	59	60	-1	104	45	44
Cotswold Total		195	2,297	1,719	578	4,051	1,755	2,332

Figure 8: Modelled Demand for Older Person Housing in Cotswold District, based on Housing LIN Toolkit and GCC Modelling

7.21 'ORS has undertaken a range of specific research projects on older people's aspirations and preferences for housing both nationally and targeted to specific areas. From this data, it is evident that the substantial majority of households seeking to move currently occupy houses, most with at least three or four bedrooms. Therefore, providing suitable housing for these households would be likely to lead to a large number of family homes being vacated. Most households are seeking two bedrooms, although there is also a reasonable demand for three

bedroom homes – typically from households currently living in properties with four bedrooms or more.' (page 114)

7.22 'In conclusion, population projections show a large increase in older people between 2021 and 2041, an increase of 52,232 persons aged 75+ and a corresponding need for dedicated housing options. However, it must be recognised that the identified need is based upon increasing the level of older persons housing provision to idealised levels. In practice, this level of delivery is likely to be unachievable, but it is important to recognise that the provision of dedicated older person housing schemes will form an important part of the overall housing mix. The provision of suitable housing in the community which older people find desirable and suitable to live in as they age will release a considerable number of larger properties which will then be available for families.' (page 115)

8. Carterwood review

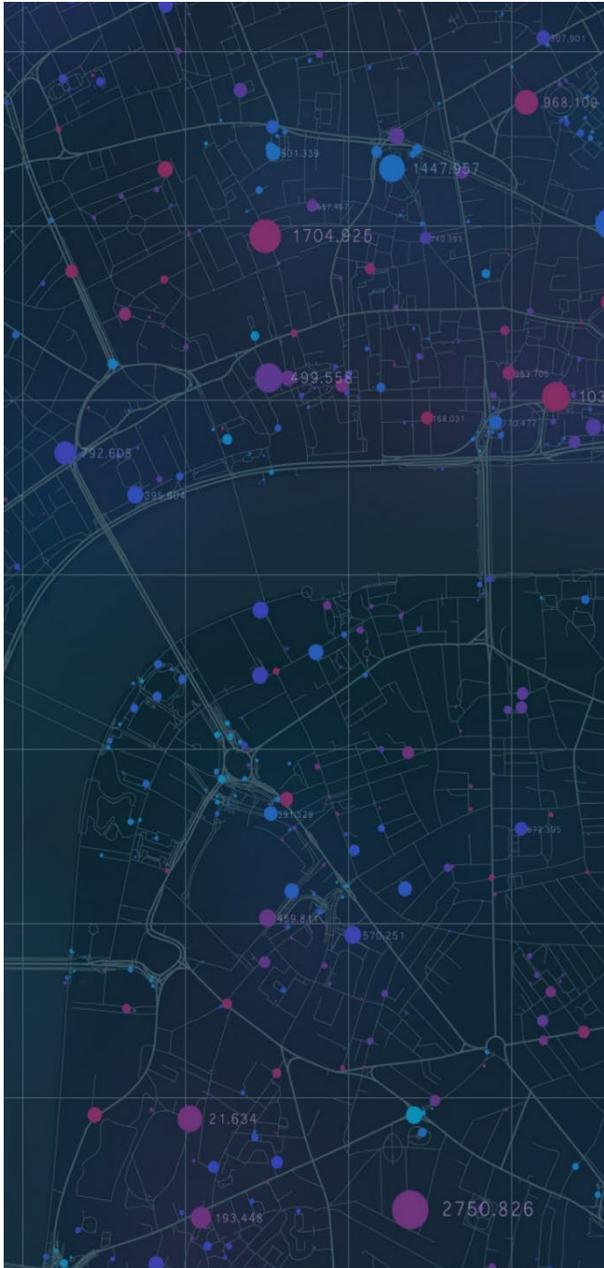
- 8.1 Our review of the Gloucestershire strategic documentation and the Stow on the Wold and The Swells Neighbourhood Plan provides evidence that additional retirement living housing is required in the Cotswold District Council local authority area.
- 8.2 The *Stow-on-the-Wold and the Swells Housing Needs Assessment* includes an assessment of need for specialist housing on two different bases, which highlights a need for an additional 24 to 33 units of private/market retirement living by the end of the plan period. The analysis, however, only bases the level of need on the number of additional older people who will potentially fall into the need category for specialist accommodation in the assessment area during the plan period to 2031. This method assumes that all those older people who have support needs are already living within the neighbourhood plan area are suitably housed and are not seeking to move to more appropriate accommodation for their requirements.
- 8.3 The *Gloucestershire Local Housing Needs Assessment* utilises the same specialist housing need toolkit as the one we have used as our preferred model to assess need in this report. It states that the prevalence rates suggested by the two toolkits it references have '*informed the evidence base for many adopted Local Plans*'.
- 8.4 The report advises that, based on existing 'owned' housing with support provision in the Cotswold District, of 794 units (note this is slightly different to our own assessment which provides an existing figure of 711 units as at August 2023), there is an existing backlog of 619 units in 2021. This is expected to increase to a shortfall of 1,699 private retirement living units by 2041.
- 8.5 It is evident that there is an increasing requirement for well-designed accommodation suitable for older people to enable them to 'right size' to more appropriate accommodation when they require some additional support. It is not in doubt that the Cotswold District has a requirement for additional older people's private retirement living accommodation. The question that the above documentation raises relates to is the quantity that needs to be developed to satisfy the need for additional provision.
- 8.6 Data from the most recent 14 sales of existing retirement and independent living units at Newlands shows that, with only one exception, all new residents had down-sized from their previous accommodation and 86 per cent had moved due to the availability of support services on site. The average distance travelled from residents' previous home was 11.4 miles, reducing to 8.3 miles when one outlier (where the distance was at just over 50 miles) was removed from our analysis.
- 8.7 The proposed addition to an existing integrated retirement community will seek to address this requirement by providing older homeowners within the Cotswold District with an alternative choice of accommodation and support though the

provision of retirement living. This will facilitate 'right sizing' from their existing homes to an environment where residents can maintain their independence with the availability of support on site, and age in place for as long as possible.

- 8.8 The proposal will provide additional well specified accommodation and facilities within a vibrant, attractive community setting, which will assist in addressing both local and national concerns over the critical lack of specialist accommodation, in this case for private retirement living, for older people.

Key findings – commissioning review

- Our review of the *Local Housing Needs Assessment* for the Cotswold District provides strong evidence that additional private retirement living is required, with an identified need for at least 619 units in 2021, and an expected shortfall of 1,699 by 2041, based on the level of existing provision.
- In terms of the Stow-on-the-Wold and The Swells Neighbourhood Plan Housing Assessment in 2022, there is a need for around 33 units by 2031. This assessment, however, assumes that all those older people who have support needs already living within the neighbourhood plan area are currently suitably housed and are not seeking to move to more appropriate accommodation for their requirements
- Homeowners, comprising over 70 per cent of households in the Cotswold District Council area (2021 census) are unlikely to meet housing list criteria or be eligible for 'affordable' developments. It is therefore critical that additional private supply is made available to meet such requirements, to promote rightsizing and enable all older people to remain in their local community in an environment where they can maintain their independence for as long as possible.
- From our analysis of the current situation in the Cotswold District Council local authority area, there is an existing shortfall, and additional need for private retirement living accommodation.
- The proposed addition to the existing integrated retirement community at Newlands of Stow will address this requirement and allow older people a better choice of accommodation when considering a move to satisfy their need for additional support.



Executive summary

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9. Need vs demand

- 9.1 The Communities and Local Government's Estimating Housing Need (2010) paper differentiates between 'need' and 'demand' as follows:
- *'These discussions also generally distinguish "need" – shortfalls from certain normative standards of adequate accommodation – from "demand" – the quantity and quality of housing which households will choose to occupy given their preferences and ability to pay (at given prices). The term "housing requirements" is sometimes used in this context, to refer to the combination of need and demand, particularly where market as well as affordable housing provision is being considered (as in the planning system).*
 - *It is also important to recognise the difference between statements about "need" which refer to existing or expected shortfalls (the backlog) and statements about the amount of affordable or general housing which "needs" to be provided over some time frame.⁸*
- 9.2 The assessment of need in traditional housing typically takes account of critical areas such as obsolescence of existing stock, which is a huge issue in the specialist housing market due to the age profile of most of the existing stock. Approximately 40 per cent of all stock of specialist housing (all types and tenures) was developed pre-1990, over 30 years ago, and to spatial standards recommended at that time, which are far below current market requirements, often with studio-style flat accommodation that would not be permissible in new developments. No model we have reviewed adequately, if at all, considers the supply side of the equation in this respect when estimating 'need'.
- 9.3 The models reviewed in our assessment only look at the need by population age either based upon projecting forward from current supply or by looking at potential need based upon predicted prevalence. Both approaches have strengths and weaknesses (which we have reviewed model by model), but all have been considered either at planning appeals, referenced in the NPPF, or incorporated by social services teams or the Greater London Authority (GLA) in their strategic modelling for future housing requirements, and therefore can be considered as models of predicting population 'need' as opposed to 'demand'.

⁸ (Bramley & et al., 2010)

⁹ (Planning Practice Guidance, 2019)

¹⁰ (Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, 2023)

10. National requirement for specialist housing for older people

- 10.1 The national requirement for the development of specialist housing for older people is growing. This is due to several factors, including:
- highly publicised ageing population demographic leading to a much older and more dependent population that will require an alternative approach to the previous 'norm';
 - National Planning Practice Guidance (PPG Housing for older and disabled people) identifies that the need to provide housing for older people is 'critical', given the projected increase in the number of households aged 65 and over accounts for over half of all households;⁹
 - paragraph 62 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) advises that planning policies should assess and reflect the size, type and tenure of housing needed for different groups in the community, including older people.¹⁰
- 10.2 The House of Commons Communities and Local Government Committee (Commission for Long Term Care) 'Housing for Older People Second report of Session 2017–19' (February 2018), states:
- *'We believe that, in the face of demand, there is a shortfall in supply of specialist homes in general and particularly for private ownership and rent and for the "middle market". This limits the housing options available to older people and the opportunity to derive the health and wellbeing benefits linked to specialist homes.'¹¹*
- 10.3 A series of studies have proved the impact of good quality, well designed independent accommodation combined with a range of facilities and flexible and responsive on-site support.
- 10.4 *'Too little, too late? Housing for an ageing population'¹²* (Mayhew 2020), with the Centre for the Study of Financial Innovation, ARCO and Cass Business School, sets out the following reasons for concern about the retirement housing shortfall:
- *'The increasing under-occupation of the housing stock caused by a rapidly ageing population has created a dysfunctional housing market;*
 - *Far too few homes are being built that cater for older people. Retirement housing has only accounted for about 125,000, or 2%, of all new homes built since 2000, but each year around 700,000 people turn 65 years of age;*

¹¹ (House of Commons, Communities and Local Government Committee, 2018)

¹² (Mayhew L. , Too Little, Too Late? Housing for an Ageing Population, 2020)

- *The number of households will continue to grow at a faster rate than the population and average household size will continue its long-run decline, resulting in increasingly inefficient use of the housing stock.* (page 37).
- 10.5 The above points to a huge market for retirement housing that would help correct these imbalances.
- 10.6 Surveys show downsizing is popular in theory but less so in practice. The main reasons for downsizing are that the family home has become too big for the needs of one or two people, too expensive to run or is otherwise unsuitable. One such survey commissioned by Legal & General (2014) found that 33 per cent of over-55s would consider moving but only 7 per cent actually did.¹³ Key reasons were the lack of availability of suitable properties and price. The latest edition of Legal & General's Last Time Buyers Report posits that 26 per cent of older households are amenable to downsizing, affecting 3.1m properties. This could release 6.2m beds, assuming two spare bedrooms per property, suggesting huge potential.¹⁴
- 10.7 The think tank Demos (Demos, Unlocking the housing market) suggests that annual demand for new homes purpose-built for older people is in fact over 30,000 new homes a year.¹⁵
- 10.8 The HAPPI 2 Inquiry by the All Party Parliamentary Group on Housing and Care for Older People found that it is vital to offer older people choice and opportunity in old age, including the right housing and care solutions at the right time. The majority of older people choose to stay put, adapting their home as they grow older, but many choose to move somewhere more accessible and/or with a level of care and support provided.¹⁶ The HAPPI 3 report (2016) estimates that 8 million people over 60 years of age, occupying 7 million homes, are interested in 'downsizing'.¹⁷
- 10.9 The 'Levelling Up' white paper¹⁸ (2022), under 'improving housing quality', makes reference to a new government task force to specifically address the issue for older people:
- *'A new Task Force will be launched shortly to look at ways better choice, quality and security of housing for older people can be provided, including how to address regional disparities in supply of appropriate and where necessary specialised housing.'*
- 10.10 The *Mayhew Review* (2022)¹⁹, completed by Professor Les Mayhew in November 2022 provides an independent review of the retirement housing sector, intended to feed into the Older People's Housing Task Force, incorporating views gathered from a wide range of operators, architects, investors, think-tanks and academics in the retirement sector.
- 10.11 The review suggests that if everyone lived in homes that were appropriate in size to their needs, an estimated 50,000 fewer homes would need to be built each year and that currently, as many bedrooms are being decommissioned through under-occupation as replenished by new homes. Specialist retirement housing currently only accounts for approximately 10 per cent of all older households in the UK with an average of about 7,000 retirement homes being built annually out of a total new-build of approximately 200,000. Three scenarios are evaluated with the third assuming that as much as a quarter (50,000 units) of all new housing would be specialist retirement accommodation. This would '*provide a radical departure from present housing policy which focusses on first-time buyers*' and displace more expensive nursing and residential care as people would be healthier and supported in their own home for longer, easing the care crisis and freeing up homes.
- 10.12 A lack of consistency in the planning system is highlighted in the review, as sites designated for retirement developments attract infrastructure levies alongside anecdotal evidence that local planning authorities discourage such development.
- 10.13 A number of recommendations are made, to include:
- An accelerated programme of retirement housing construction with up to 50,000 new units per year;
 - A significant expansion in the number of integrated retirement communities built each year and that all regions should benefit from their introduction;
 - Financial advice is made available for last-time buyers and a review should be conducted on financial incentives to increase down-sizing;
 - The Government's Older People's Housing Taskforce should be mandated to implement recommendations and report on the outcomes.
- 10.14 In December 2022, the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities commenced a consultation to consider how new planning policy might be developed to support the department's wider objectives. The draft proposed amendments to the NPPF expands upon the current assessment of housing needed for different groups in the community, including older people (by size, type and tenure), by breaking down the '*established need*' between three specific types of specialist housing: '*retirement housing, housing-with-care and care homes*'. The consultation closed on 2 March 2023 and while no announcement has yet been made, such changes, if agreed, should assist in ensuring that appropriate levels of new provision are brought forward for each form of housing for older people.

¹³ (Legal and General, 2014)

¹⁴ (Legal and General, 2018)

¹⁵ (Wood C. V., 2017)

¹⁶ (Best & Porteus J, Housing our Ageing Population: Plan for implementation., 2012)

¹⁷ (Best & Porteus, Making Retirement Living a Positive Choice, 2016)

¹⁸ (Presented to Parliament by the Secretary of State for LevellingUp/Housing/Communities, 2022)

¹⁹ (Mayhew L. , Future-proofing retirement living: Easing the care and housing crises, 2022)

- 10.15 On 4 April 2023 the Government announced that the new Older People's Housing Taskforce, intended to boost housing options for older people and work across the housing, health and care sectors, will be chaired by Professor Julienne Meyer. It is intended that the task force will run for up to 12 months and produce an independent report to the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities and the Department for Health and Social Care Ministers, with interim findings available after 6 months. The panel includes 18 members with expertise from the social and private retirement sector, local government, adult social care, and from investors and developers, with the first meeting having taken place on 15 May 2023.
- 10.16 The proposed addition to an existing integrated retirement community, to provide private retirement living, is closely aligned with the current national focus on increasing the supply and variety of specialist accommodation for older people.

11. UK and international comparisons

- 11.1 The Policy Exchange's 2018 publication Building for the Baby Boomers illustrates the gulf between the UK and other countries.²⁰
- *'The majority of older people in the UK live in ordinary mainstream housing with only a small percentage living in tailor-made specialist housing. Estimates range from 1% to 7% depending on definitions and how the data is calculated. By comparison, 17% of over 60s in the USA and 13% among that age group in Australia and New Zealand are living in tailor-made retirement properties.'*
 - *'When it comes to provision of housing for older people, the UK is clearly lagging behind other developed countries, and there is a vast opportunity for an increase in provision to meet the growing demand and need.'*

Key findings – national requirement for retirement living

- A wealth of studies predict that significant levels of additional specialist housing for older people is required now and in the years to come. This is particularly so in the private market, where the provision of retirement living is often lower when compared to affordable provision, despite high elderly home ownership levels.

²⁰ (Airey, 2018)

12. Local level need methodology review

12.1 It should be highlighted that there is no single recognised methodology for identifying need for specialist housing for older people. PPG Housing for Older and Disabled People suggests an assessment can be obtained ‘*from a number of online toolkits provided by the sector*’, although the only example cited is no longer available online.

12.2 The issues that we consider surround the available toolkits and their application are detailed below, not as criticisms of the models, but as a review of their attributes and shortcomings when determining need for specialist housing for older people at site-specific level.

Evidence base for prevalence rates adopted

12.3 Inevitably, there is no simple mathematical formula that links the currently available data to a prevalence rate. Given the range of variables, of which client choice is perhaps the greatest, the prevalence rates used in the models are based predominantly on existing supply levels at the time of publication.

12.4 From this starting point (and based on an educated estimate of the position at the time), the model authors have made a judgement on the prevalence rates’ current and likely future adequacy by referring to the indicators of need in terms of functional incapacity and health status. They also take account of the trajectory of development together with future aspirations and give weight to the policy drivers.

Obsolescence of existing stock

12.5 Models ignore the obsolescence of much of the supply of existing stock – many schemes still provide ‘studios’ or small one-bed units that are completely unsuitable for modern age-appropriate housing standards and would barely be marketable as traditional housing, let alone specialist housing for older people.

Failure to account for actual elderly homeownership levels to reflect private retirement living need

12.6 Some models suggest a reapportionment from approximately 75 per cent social rent, towards an equal split of provision for social rent and for sale, prior to increasing the proportion of units for sale towards 75 per cent of the market during the 2010s. On this basis, the level of provision would be more in line with UK levels of home ownership by those aged over 65 years if this change in the proportion of supply had occurred.

12.7 The apportionment of ‘need’ is often made arbitrarily, as local authority strategy can be focused primarily on social need. Given levels of homeownership nationally, this situation should logically be reversed.

Exclusion of elderly people between 65 and 74 years of age in need calculations

12.8 Most models, for some reason, exclude households between 65 and 74 years of age in their projections, and instead concentrate ‘need’ from those aged 75+ years. This is despite the planning restrictions in place on specialist older people’s housing schemes, which typically start from 65 years (sometimes 55 years).

12.9 Our analysis of existing retirement community residents on behalf of ARCO indicates that at least 20 per cent of residents in retirement communities are aged between 65 and 74 years – therefore, most models consistently underestimate need. Even care home need models (which have higher levels of dependency as eligibility criteria) assume a percentage of the population aged 65 to 74-years will occupy a care home bed. There is no evidenced-based rationale for the exclusion of those below 75 years of age (the Three Dragons model is the only model assessed that does try to explicitly account for this in its calculation of ‘need’ for older people).

Barriers to use

12.10 More Choice, Greater Voice has been widely quoted, especially during the first 6 or 7 years after publication, and was reflected in a number of housing strategies for specialist accommodation for older people and commissioning documents.

12.11 Housing in Later Life was less warmly embraced by local authorities, partly because it set more demanding targets but also because it was competing with the newly published SHOP@ toolkit.

12.12 The SHOP@ toolkit, to which the NPPG refers, was withdrawn as an online toolkit in late 2019, and is no longer available for third-party use unless specifically commissioned.

12.13 The Three Dragons/RHG model is not available as a free-to-access tool on the organisation’s website and must also be independently commissioned.

Carterwood approach

12.14 Given the challenges of the existing toolkits, we have undertaken our assessment of need considering all the models in turn and then applied the prevalence rate based upon our composite review of the strengths and weaknesses identified in our assessment.

12.15 Appendix B has a full review of each model assessed for reference purposes.

13. Catchment area assessment

- 13.1 In collaboration with ARCO, Carterwood conducted a national research project to calculate the distance travelled by extra care housing residents from their last place of residence. This showed that approximately 70 per cent of residents come from a radius of within 10 miles. Distance varies depending on the type, quality and location of the development, often influenced by the availability of existing supply, family involvement in the decision-making process and the ‘pull factor’ of larger, well-specified communities.
- 13.2 There was a correlation between the urban or rural nature of the location and travel distance, with the average to a semi-urban leasehold scheme being 7 miles, compared to 13 miles in a rural area. While the additional retirement living proposed at the existing integrated retirement community does not comprise extra care, we consider the distances travelled by potential new residents are likely to be similar.
- 13.3 Our need assessment is therefore based on a market catchment area, shaded blue in the map opposite, extending to a radius of circa 10 miles from the subject site. We have also completed an assessment based on the Cotswold District Council local authority area.
- 13.4 The perimeter of the market catchment is explained by the use of Census 2011-defined ‘output areas’ which enable a granular level of analysis. Varying considerably in size and shape, they are smaller in urban districts and larger in rural communities because they include circa 300 people of similar housing types/tenures. The catchment is therefore based on the nearest match to the output area data and it is not possible to use a perfect radius around a site.

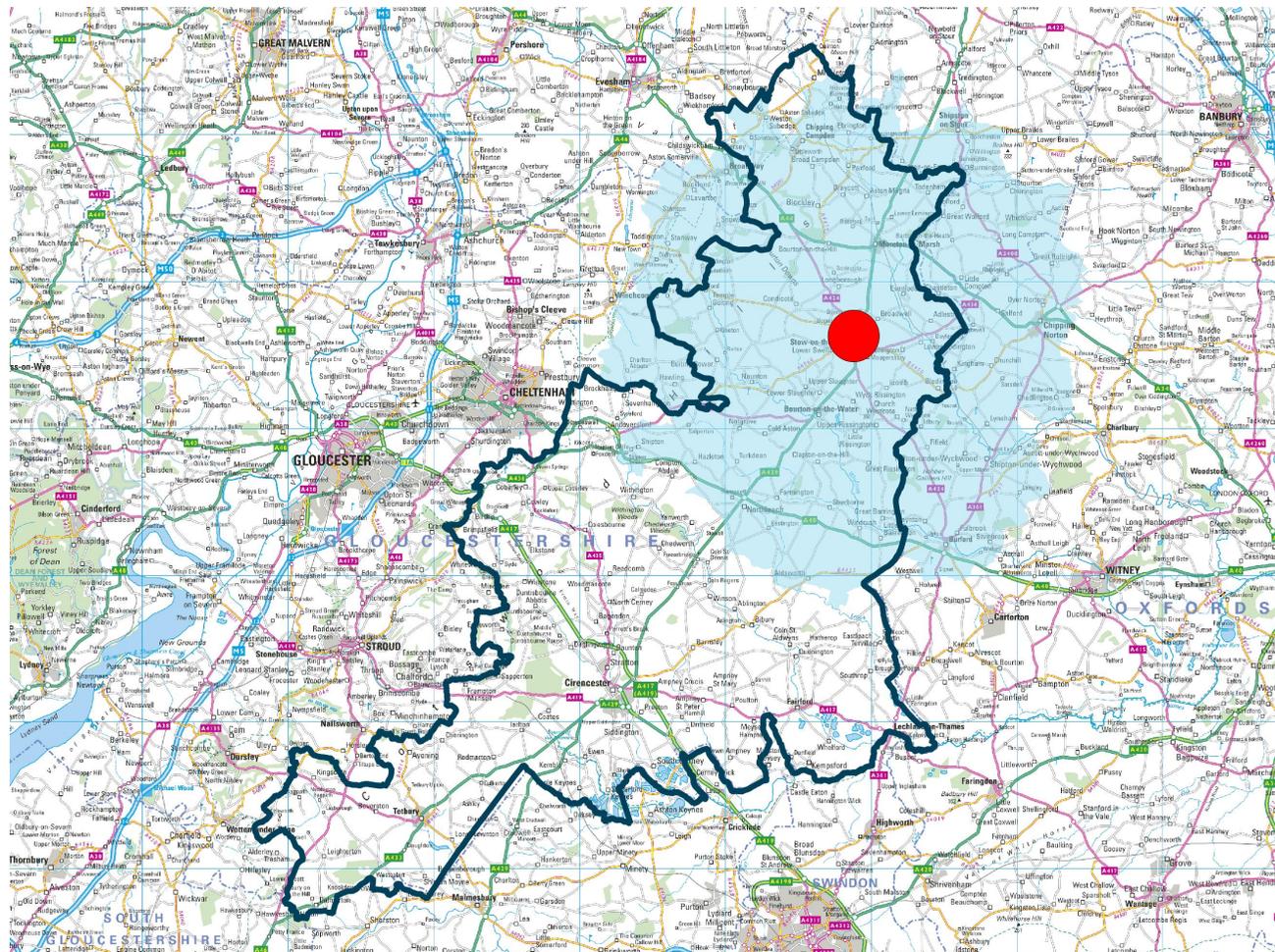


Figure 9: Catchment area bases of assessment

The red dot shows the approximate location of the proposed addition to the existing integrated retirement community. The blue shaded area illustrates the circa 10-mile market catchment and the dark blue outline illustrates the Cotswold District Council area.

14. Local demographic profile

Housing ownership

- 14.1 Housing tenure data at the time of the 2021 Census, summarised in Table T13, shows that 72.2 per cent of households within the Cotswold District Council area, were owned outright. This is in excess of the national average of 72.1 per cent.
- 14.2 Please note that the total figures across different tables may vary due to rounding and the amalgamation of different data sets and limitations of Census data.

Population profile

- 14.3 We have summarised the profile of the elderly population in T14, opposite. The 10-mile market catchment is significantly above the UK average in terms of the population composition of those aged over 65 and over 75, and closer to the UK average in terms of those aged over 85.
- 14.4 The Cotswold District Council local authority area is also characterised by an above-average population of those aged over 65, 75 and 85 years; however, this is not quite as distinct as the assessed 10-mile market catchment.

Population growth

- 14.5 The population growth measure considers the rate of growth of the target elderly demographic between 2023 and 2041 and shows the total growth rate over this 18-year period. It provides an indication of future demand for specialist housing for older people.
- 14.6 The elderly population growth rate is significantly in excess of the UK national average in the 10-mile market catchment until 2041. The Cotswold Council local authority area also significantly exceeds the UK average across all years assessed, more particularly between 2036 and 2041.

T13 Household tenure in Cotswold District (2021) HRP is aged 65 years and older		
Tenure	Cotswold District Council	
	No	%
Owner occupied: owns outright	11,025	72.2
Owner occupied: owns with a mortgage/loan or shared ownership	985	6.4
Social rented	1,835	12.0
Private rented or lives rent free	1,435	9.4
All households	15,280	100.0

Source: 2021 Census. HRP = household reference person

T14 Population profile (2023)						
Age profile	10-mile market catchment		Cotswold District Council		Differential to UK	
	No	%	No	%	%	%
All population	62,372	100.0	95,847	100.0	-	-
Age 65+	19,073	30.6	25,825	26.9	11.2	7.6
Age 75+	10,026	16.1	13,153	13.7	6.6	4.2
Age 85+	2,839	4.6	3,489	3.6	1.9	1.0

Source: 2011 Census, government population projections

T15 Population growth (2023-2041)				
Category	Elderly population growth rates (%)			
	10-mile market	UK comparison	Cotswold DC	UK comparison
2026 (from 2023)	5.0	1.3	5.3	1.7
2031	19.3	4.5	20.3	5.6
2036	31.9	7.4	33.7	9.2
2041	40.5	10.2	42.9	12.5

Source: 2011 Census, government population projections

15. Local market size assessment

- 15.1 We have prepared our assessment and adopted the prevalence rate that is used within both the original SHOP 2011 and Housing in Later Life (2012), which we consider most accurately takes account of the strengths and weaknesses of the other available models (as set out in Appendix B).
- 15.2 We consider the prevalence rate adopted more accurately accords with the requirements outlined in national literature, the PPG and more accurately reflects UK and local homeownership levels, which are heavily skewed towards the private market.

- 15.3 The provision of additional specialist housing for older people is a growth area that is being driven by both the government and through planning policy. There is a critical need both in a national and local context.
- 15.4 Given the high levels of homeownership by older people in the UK, the lack of current provision and the government policy drive towards promotion of support within an individual's own home, we consider that our assessment provides a highly robust measure with which to assess current and future need for private retirement living accommodation.

T16 Summary of local level need – Carterwood projections (2026)

Housing type	Prevalence rate for private retirement living – need per 1,000 population	'Need' in local population	
Model	Basis of assessment	10-mile	Cotswold District Council
Carterwood assessment	120.0 per 1,000 75+ population	1,320	1,737

16. Existing private retirement living supply

- 16.1 We subscribe to the Elderly Accommodation Counsel's (EAC) data, which offers enhanced data fields compared to the online version of www.housingcare.org. We have also updated the base EAC data with the results of our own research to assess the current supply of retirement living accommodation within the market catchment. We have recoded and classified where we have inspected a scheme and know it to be incorrectly coded within the raw data.
- 16.2 The challenges for EAC are manifold in maintaining this data set, as there is no regulatory data from which to build and maintain this database. It relies upon a small research team and operators/developers to update it themselves – this can sometimes lead to inconsistencies.
- 16.3 We have researched all schemes classified as follows:
- Sheltered housing
 - Age exclusive housing
 - Retirement living
- 16.4 We have conducted additional research to ensure that each scheme conforms to the recognised definition of sheltered housing or retirement living, where there is an element of on-site support. We have not included any registered social landlord schemes and have only included schemes catering to the private market.
- 16.5 There are 25 private/market retirement living housing schemes within the 10-mile catchment, providing 629 units of accommodation.
- 16.6 Within the Cotswold District local authority area there are a total of 26 private/market retirement living housing schemes, providing a total of 711 units of accommodation. Twelve of these schemes are also located within the market catchment.
- 16.7 As shown in T19, almost half of existing supply in the local authority area dates from the 1980s, with less than a third having been developed since 2010.
- 16.8 A full list of the individual schemes is included in Section 22 on page 37.

T17 , Existing supply of private retirement living (10-mile market catchment)			
Scheme type	Schemes (No.)	Units (No.)	Private units (No.)
All schemes			
Private/market retirement living	25	629	629

T18 Existing supply of private retirement living (Cotswold District Council)			
Scheme type	Schemes (No.)	Units (No.)	Private units (No.)
All schemes			
Private/market retirement living	26	711	711

T19 Existing supply by decade of construction (10-mile market catchment and Cotswold District Council)				
Scheme type	Private units			
	Private retirement living (units)		Private Retirement living (%)	
Catchment	10-mile	LA	10-mile	LA
Pre-1980s/unknown	20	32	3	5
1980s	279	345	44	49
1990s	103	81	16	11
2000s	73	45	12	6
2010s (2010-2014)	20	34	3	5
2010s (2015+)	112	162	18	23
2020s (2020+)	22	12	4	1
Total	629	711	100	100

Source: EAC, Carterwood

17. Planned private retirement living supply

- 17.1 From our data sources, we have reviewed all the planning applications that have been granted, refused, withdrawn or are pending a decision. A list of individual schemes is included in Section 23 on page 40.
- 17.2 This has been cross-referenced against the online planning website for the relevant local authority and, where an anomaly exists, we have contacted the planning officer, if required.
- 17.3 We have made enquiries with Cotswold District Council and the local authorities situated within the 10-mile market catchment area, and used our own data information sources and market knowledge to determine the number of planned units, either in the planning process or under construction. We have searched for planning applications submitted over the past 3 years. Our research was undertaken on 12 July 2023.
- 17.4 Where an application has been refused or withdrawn, we have entered the postcode into the local authority online planning facility to identify if a subsequent application or appeal application has been submitted. The results are included within the report.
- 17.5 Where a planning application has been granted, we have cross-referenced the postcode against our existing supply to ascertain if the scheme is operational. If it is, we have included it within the operational provision and not within the planning table.
- 17.6 Note that the planning registers that we subscribe to are not definitive and may exclude some applications, as they rely upon each local authority for provision of the information. We have excluded any sheltered housing and affordable housing with care schemes from our analysis.
- 17.7 We have not identified any planning applications for private retirement living in the 10-mile market catchment,.
- 17.8 We have identified one planning application for private retirement living in the Cotswold District Council area, which has been granted outline planning permission, forming part of a major mixed use application. This application does not fall within the market catchment of the site.
- 17.9 In T21, we have provided our opinion of the pipeline by year of delivery based upon desktop review. We have had regard to the stage of the planning application, scheme size, the nature of the site and its current development status.

T20 Planned supply of new private retirement living		
Scheme type	Market (10-mile)	Cotswold Council
New-build OPH units: pending decision	0	0
New-build OPH units: granted permission	0	60
Total planned units	0	60
Total number of schemes	0	1

Source: Carterwood, Glenigan, Planning Pipe and relevant planning departments

T21 Planned supply of new private retirement living by estimated year of delivery		
Planned supply pipeline by year of delivery	Market (10-mile)	Cotswold District Council
2023	0	0
2024	0	0
2025	0	0
2026	0	60
2027 onwards	0	0
Total	0	60
Total number of schemes	0	1
Total planned units estimated by 2026	0	60
Total number of planned schemes by 2026	0	1

Source: Carterwood

18. Five-year need analysis summary

- 18.1** By applying our need methodology to the market catchment and the Cotswold District Council local authority area, we have calculated the potential pool of need for private retirement living from people aged 75 years and above.
- 18.2** Our analysis of the current situation, as at 2023, based upon current need projections and existing supply, shows a shortfall of 574 private retirement living units in the 10-mile market catchment and 867 in the Cotswold District Council local authority area.
- 18.3** Our analysis as at 2026 (the earliest possible year the subject addition to Newlands of Stow could be developed, given its current status) shows a shortfall of **691** private retirement living units in the 10-mile market catchment and **966** in the Cotswold District Council local authority area.
- 18.4** These net need figures consider demographic growth over the period and include additional pipeline supply coming forward through the planning system and assessed as being deliverable by the year of assessment. They make no allowance for any closure of obsolete stock.

T22 Primary year for private retirement living need analysis		
Primary year of assessment	2026	Estimation of the earliest year the subject proposal is developed

T23 Five-year private retirement living requirement (10-mile market catchment)					
Year	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027+
Need					
Total 75+ population	10,026	10,399	10,726	11,000	11,266
Estimated need - private retirement living (12.0%)	1,203	1,248	1,287	1,320	1,352
Private retirement living supply					
Current supply of private retirement living	629	629	629	629	629
Planned units by operational year	0	0	0	0	0
Total supply (units)	629	629	629	629	629
Balance of provision					
Need (private retirement living)	574	619	658	691	723

Source: Carterwood, Census 2011, Government population projections, Glenigan, Planning Pipe, EAC

T24 Five-year private retirement living requirement (Cotswold District Council)					
Year	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027+
Need					
Total 75+ population	13,153	13,684	14,125	14,472	14,900
Estimated need - private retirement living (12.0%)	1,578	1,642	1,695	1,737	1,788
Private retirement living supply					
Current supply of private retirement living	711	711	711	711	771
Planned units by operational year	0	0	0	60	0
Total supply (units)	711	711	711	771	771
Balance of provision					
Need (private retirement living units)	867	931	984	966	1,017
Assumptions to tables T23 and T24					

- Key year of analysis is based upon 2026 projections – earliest possible year of opening given current development status.
- Planned supply based upon individual assessment of each scheme and assessment of likely development completion.
- Assumed zero closures of obsolete stock as no known closures imminent.

Source: Carterwood, Census 2011, Government population projections, Glenigan, Planning Pipe, EAC.

19. Tangible benefits to the wider community

Benefits to the housing chain

19.1 Older people moving into a private retirement living will release large family homes back into the community, which is key to offering more options for families living locally. A report (*The top of the ladder*, prepared in 2013) by Demos, a leading cross-party think tank, considered this in more detail²¹ and we set out some of the key findings from this research below:

19.2 *'One in four (25 per cent) over 60s would be interested in buying a retirement property – equating to 3.5 million people nationally. More than half (58 per cent) were interested in moving. More than half (57 per cent) of those interested in moving wanted to downsize by at least one bedroom, rising to 76 per cent among older people currently occupying three-, four- and five-bedroom homes.'*

19.3 *'More than four in five (83 per cent) of the over 60s living in England own their own homes, and 64 per cent own their home without a mortgage. This equates to £1.28 trillion in housing wealth, of which £1.23 trillion is unmortgaged. This is far more than the amount of savings this group has (£769 billion). Therefore, the over 60s interested in downsizing specifically are sitting on £400 billion of housing wealth.'*

19.4 *'If just half of the 58 per cent of over 60s interested in moving (downsizing and otherwise) as reported in our survey were able to move, this would release around £356 billion worth of (mainly family-sized) property – with nearly half being three-bedroom and 20 per cent being four-bedroom homes.'*

19.5 *'If all those interested in buying retirement property were able to do so, 3.5 million older people would be able to move, freeing up 3.29 million properties, including nearly 2 million three-bedroom homes. If just half of those interested in downsizing more generally were able to do so, 4 million older people would be able to move, freeing up 3.5 million homes.'*

19.6 The report's key conclusions are summed up in the following statement

19.7 *'We conclude by reflecting on the fact that the housing needs of our rapidly ageing population (the number of over 85s will double by 2030) is the next big challenge this government faces. And yet the costs associated with overcoming this are far lower than those related to the effects of the ageing population on health or social care. The money is there already – locked up in over a trillion pounds' worth of assets across the country. Hundreds of millions of pounds could be released to stimulate the housing market if (low-cost) steps were taken to unlock the supply to meet the demand already there – let alone if demand were further stimulated. While there must always be a place for social housing and affordable tenancy for older people, the vast majority of older people can be helped into more appropriate*

owner-occupied housing without any direct delivery costs incurred by government or local authorities.'

19.8 New research in 2020, prepared by the Centre for the Study of Financial Innovation, supports the above housing chain benefits and is described in detail in Section 10.

19.9 The development of retirement villages and improved knowledge of such schemes among older people should encourage downsizing and reduce the need for the development of additional larger family homes by freeing up existing supply back to the market. The availability of housing options that are accessible to the growing older population, particularly where an existing scheme already has a good local reputation, can enable some older householders to downsize or 'right size' from homes that no longer meet their needs or are expensive to run, and this can improve their quality of life.

Employment and economic benefits

19.10 The existing Newlands of Stow retirement village provides full-time and part-time roles in order to fulfil its obligations to residents and cover care and support requirements. The proposed extension to the retirement village will create additional support roles to meet the requirements of the increased number of older people occupying the scheme.

19.11 The 2021 *Homes for Later Living* report²² sets out how retirement properties create more local economic value and more local jobs than any other type of residential development. This includes the following points:

- A typical retirement development of 45 units could generate over £13m of additional economic activity in a local area, compared to letting a brownfield site lay undeveloped.
- A typical retirement housing development could also generate 85 additional construction jobs.
- On average, 63 per cent of residents' annual expenditure is in local shops. This is much higher than the average local spend by 80+ year olds in the general population.
- The residents of a typical 45-unit retirement development generate £550,000 of spending per year, £347,000 of which goes to local shops, supporting retail jobs and keeping shops open.

²¹ (Wood C. , *The Top of the Ladder*, 2013)

²² (*Homes for Later Living*, 2021)

Health and wellbeing

- 19.12 We have reviewed the House of Commons report of Housing for Older People (2nd report 2017/9), which summarises the benefits to health and wellbeing and the direct positive impact on the NHS and budgets:
- 19.13 *‘There is a significant body of evidence on the health and wellbeing benefits to older people of living in specialist housing and the resultant savings to the NHS and social care. This is particularly the case for extra care housing, which has onsite care and support and communal facilities. In addition, this type of housing helps family and carers finding it challenging to provide enough care and support.’²³*
- 19.14 Although the proposal is for the development of retirement living housing rather than providing additional extra care housing on site, the availability of care staff will mean that residents can be more closely monitored, should they go on to develop a care need and are more likely to be able to benefit from living adjacent to an existing care community.
- 19.15 Research by the International Longevity Centre-UK found that around a quarter of people with social care needs (or who went on to develop them) were less likely to be admitted to hospital overnight and had fewer falls. In comparison to older people in the general community, residents within an integrated retirement community reported having a higher quality of life, an increased sense of control and lower levels of loneliness.²⁴
- 19.16 Research from the University of Reading showed that retirement housing can help combat social isolation and promote fitness, with over 80 per cent of owner occupiers taking part reporting feeling happier in their new home and nearly a third feeling that their health had improved.²⁵
- 19.17 Research by Demos estimated the value of sheltered housing to the NHS and social care at £486 million per year, of which £17.8 million amounted to reduced loneliness.²⁶
- 19.18 Sometimes NHS CCG teams are concerned about the impact on local doctors’ surgeries. However, evidence indicates that there is a benefit. The concentration of individuals within one place should also assist in reducing need for community nurses and there are obvious advantages of having residents within one geographic location.

Key findings – tangible benefits for residents, the NHS & the wider community

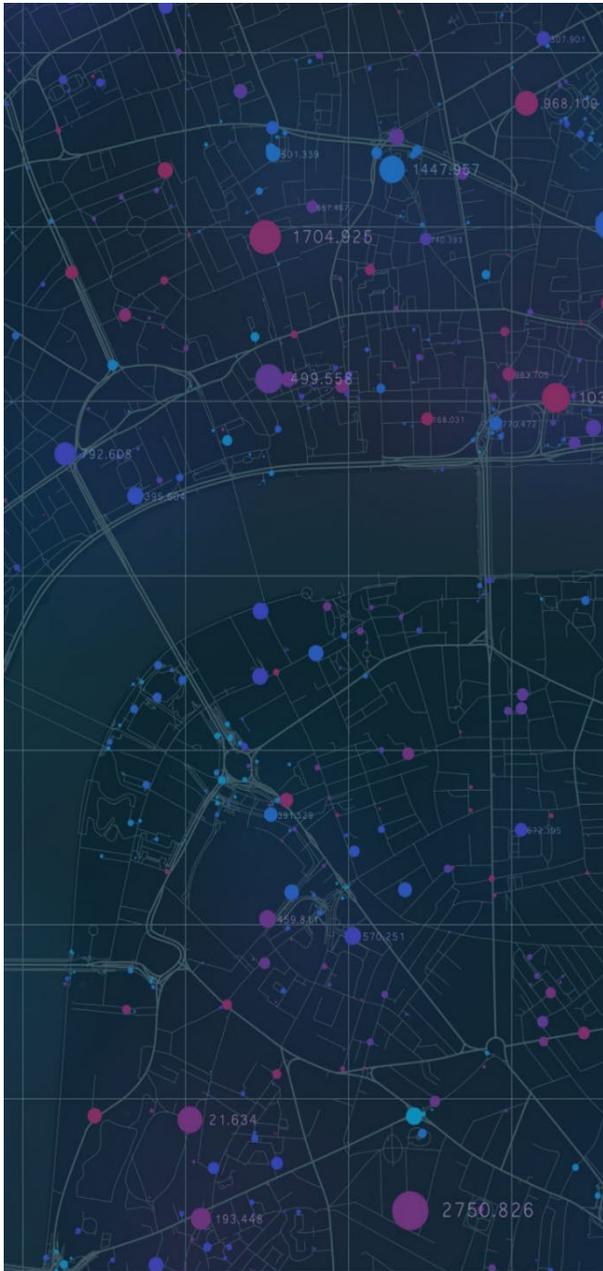
- The proposed extension is intended to futureproof the existing Newlands of Stow scheme through the provision of additional specialist housing and communal facilities. It will provide an appealing option to enable older people to move to retirement living housing in the community, providing safety and security combined with support. This in turn will result in a variety of benefits:
- To the housing chain – older people moving into the proposed development will release under-occupied larger family homes back to the market.
- Employment and economic benefits – the subject scheme will provide an increased range of full-time and part-time roles, in order to fulfil its obligations to residents and provide support services.
- Additional wellbeing benefits for residents – these include improvements to personal health, psychological and social wellbeing through social interaction, improved community facilities on-site and the availability of support.

²³ (House of Commons, Communities and Local Government Committee, 2018)

²⁴ (Beach, 2018)

²⁵ (Ball, 2011)

²⁶ (Wood C. , The Social Value of Sheltered Housing, 2017)



Executive summary

Background and proposal

National context and key definitions

Local authority review

Need assessment – quantitative model and methodology review

Need assessment – local market quantitative assessment

Need assessment – qualitative assessment

Key findings and conclusion

Quantitative need assessment for private retirement living units

Qualitative need assessment for private retirement living units

Data tables

20. Quantitative need assessment for private retirement living units

20.1 We have reviewed the available need methodologies and considered the strengths and weaknesses of each model.

20.2 We have calculated the potential need for private retirement living units from people aged 75 years and over in our analysis.

20.3 The prevalence rate adopted we consider more accurately reflect elderly home ownership levels, which are heavily skewed towards the private market and prudently account residents aged 65–74 years who occupy private retirement living schemes, arbitrarily excluded from models.

20.4 We have analysed the potential need for retirement living to 2043 and interpreted this as at 2026 (see T25), the earliest possible year the first private retirement living units in the addition to the Newlands of Stow integrated retirement community could be made available. This timescale could be longer, given the current planning status; however, for prudence, we have adopted this best-case scenario.

20.5 This indicates a significant shortfall of **691** private retirement living units in the circa 10-mile market catchment and **966** in the Cotswold District Council area based on 2026.

20.6 T26 shows the long-term need set against the rising elderly population until 2043 and indicates a significant increase in the net need for private retirement living provision.

20.7 Census data from 2021 is now available (for the local authority area), and we have applied the available 2018-based population growth rates (based on the 2011 census) to provide a comparison. This indicates a slightly reduced need for new private extra care units, nonetheless, the net need remains significant.

T25 Need analysis (2026) for private retirement living (Carterwood assessment)		
Catchment area	10 – mile market catchment	Cotswold District Council
Year of assessment	2026	2026
Need		
Total 75+ population	11,000	14,472
Estimated need private retirement living (12.0%)	1,320	1,737
Private retirement living supply		
Current supply of private retirement living	629	711
Planned beds by operational year	0	60
Total supply (units)	629	771
Net need		
Private retirement living units	691	966
Assumptions		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Estimated need for private retirement living assumed at 12.0 per cent of the total 75+ population. This is based upon the original SHOP tool and Housing for Later Life studies. Key year of analysis based upon 2026 projections – earliest possible year the new units could be available. Planned supply based upon individual assessment of each scheme and assessment of likely development completion. Zero allowance for reduction through obsolete stock – while this is an overly prudent assumption given the age and configuration of a lot of older stock, we have no detailed information at scheme-specific level to make a site-specific adjustment. 		

T26 Need for private retirement living units – medium to long term				
Catchment area		10 – mile market catchment	Cotswold District Council	
Net need for private retirement living	Year	Based on 2011 census data	2011 census data	2021 census data
	2023	574	867	810
	2026	691	966	903
	2028	729	1,067	1,004
	2033	909	1,284	1,217
	2038	1,103	1,551	1,473
	2043	1,321	1,859	1,770

21. Qualitative need assessment for private retirement living units

National context.

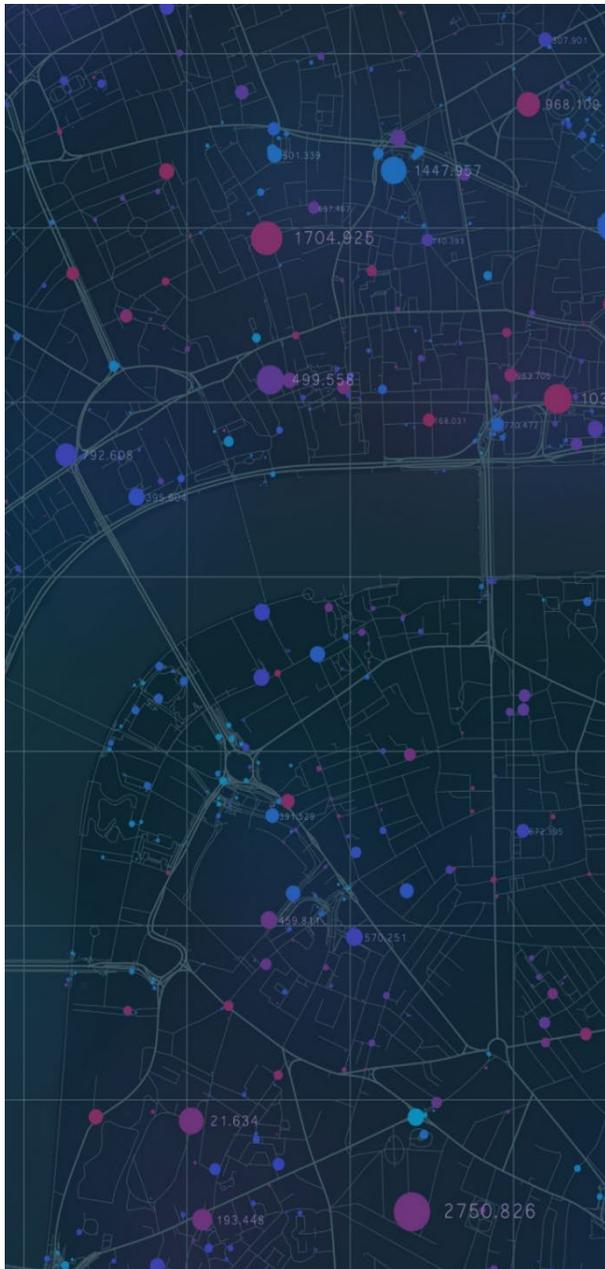
- 21.1 The elderly UK demographic is set to grow dramatically in the coming years and will continue to drive demand for all forms of specialist housing for older people.
- 21.2 Home ownership levels of older people are very important in the analysis of private retirement living as those that own their own home will not be eligible for registered social landlord affordable rental options. Instead, they will need to access private leasehold sale or market rent alternatives.
- 21.3 The pandemic has had a significant impact on the social care sector and research shows how specialist housing for older people enabled residents to self-isolate more effectively within their own homes where, crucially, they can also receive support, if required. This not only means they were supported, but also that debilitating damage caused by loneliness and social isolation was mitigated.

Local context

- 21.4 From our analysis of the current situation in the Cotswold District Council local authority area, there is an existing shortfall, and significant additional need for private retirement living accommodation and action is required to ensure adequate provision can be made for this form of specialist housing for older people.
- 21.5 Newlands of Stow is an existing, operational care village and was one of the first of such schemes to be developed in the UK. It provides a wide cross section of care, accommodation and facilities, from retirement living through to 24 hour nursing care within the Care Quality Commission registered care home on site.
- 21.6 The proposed extension, comprises an additional 24 private retirement living cottages and additional facilities to improve the health and wellbeing offer for residents. This, it is intended, will futureproof the existing scheme and create additional opportunities for those older people who would like to 'right size' from their existing homes into a development where they can remain independent for as long as possible and age in place.
- 21.7 Our review of the Cotswold District Council strategic documentation and that relating to Stow-on-the-Wold provides strong evidence that additional private retirement living accommodation is required, with an identified need for at least 33 private units in Stow-on-the-Wold by 2031, based on the neighbourhood housing plan. The wider Cotswold District Council analysis indicates an existing shortfall of 619 units (based on 2021) and this is anticipated to increase to a very significant shortfall of over 1,600 units by 2041.
- 21.8 Homeowners, comprising over 72 per cent of households in the Cotswold District Council area, are unlikely to meet housing list criteria or be eligible for 'affordable' developments. It is therefore critical that additional private supply is made available

to meet such requirements, to promote 'right' sizing and enable all older people to remain in their local community where they can maintain their independence for as long as possible.

- 21.9 The proposed extension to Newlands of Stow will serve to futureproof an existing retirement care village and enable it to continue to be a truly distinctive and innovative development intended to appeal to older local homeowners who may consider downsizing from their existing family homes but find that there are insufficient suitable options for them. This results in such homeowners having to stay where they are, remaining in their often-underoccupied existing homes, which may no longer be suitable for their support needs.
- 21.10 There are key advantages to the housing chain – older people moving into the proposed development will release large family homes back to the market. This, in turn, has a chain effect on housing stock and enables families to upsize into larger homes. Releasing the pressure valve at the top of the housing ladder reduces the need for the development of additional large, family-sized properties and provides a valuable contribution to meeting demand for general housing.
- 21.11 The current backlog of private retirement living accommodation should not be overlooked. While our need assessment is based on 2026 and includes the potential development of one other scheme that has planning permission, it is not guaranteed that this scheme will proceed or that it will provide private provision.
- 21.12 Older people cannot wait for supply to come on stream – planning guidance states the need is 'critical' and this is certainly evident in our analysis of the situation in this location. We consider there is a shortfall of 691 private retirement living units in the market catchment and 966 in the Cotswold District Council local authority area, based on 2026, the earliest the subject scheme could start to be made available.
- 21.13 The proposed extension to Newlands of Stow is designed to meet the need for private leasehold/market retirement living within the specialist elderly accommodation market. The proposition will provide an appealing option to attract older homeowners from the local area to 'right size' to private retirement living that provides social benefits to residents and associated advantages to the wider community.



Executive summary

Background and proposal

National context and key definitions

Local authority review

Need assessment – quantitative model and methodology review

Need assessment – local market quantitative assessment

Need assessment – qualitative assessment

Key findings and conclusion

Data tables

22. Summary of existing schemes

T27 Summary of existing private retirement living schemes								
Map ref	Catchment	Scheme	Manager/Operator	Distance to subject site (miles)	Total units	Private units	Scheme type	Year of construction
1	Market and local authority	Pegasus Court, Roman Way, Bourton on the Water, Gloucestershire, GL54 2BA	FirstPort	3.4	16	16	Sheltered	1991
2	Market and local authority	Willoughby Place, Station Road, Bourton-on-the-Water, Cheltenham, Gloucestershire, GL54 2FF	McCarthy Stone Management Services	3.6	20	20	Sheltered	2017
3	Market and local authority	Chardwar Gardens, Victoria Street, Bourton-on-the-Water, Gloucestershire, GL54 2BL	FirstPort	3.8	30	30	Sheltered	1989
4	Market and local authority	University Court, High Street, Moreton-in-Marsh, Gloucestershire, GL56 0DN	Cognatum Estates	3.8	9	9	Sheltered	2002
5	Market and local authority	University Farm, Moreton-in-Marsh, Gloucestershire, GL56 0DN	Cognatum Estates	3.8	36	36	Sheltered	1993
6	Market and local authority	Broadlands Court, Clapton Row, Bourton-on-the-Water, Gloucestershire, GL54 2BW	Grange Property Management	3.9	20	20	Sheltered	1987
7	Market and local authority	Bowling Green Court, Hospital Road, Moreton-in-Marsh, Glos, GL56 0BX	Lancaster Brooks Property Management Ltd	4.0	27	27	Sheltered	1987
8	Market and local authority	Keatley Place, Hospital Road, Moreton-in-Marsh, Gloucestershire, GL56 0DQ	McCarthy Stone Management Services	4.1	34	34	Sheltered	2017
9	Market and local authority	The Grange, High Street, Moreton-in-Marsh, Gloucestershire, GL56 0AU	FirstPort	4.2	32	32	Sheltered	1989
10	Market catchment only	Harmans Court, High Street, Milton-under-Wychwood, Chipping Norton, Oxfordshire, OX7 6LA	Grange Property Management	6.8	20	20	Sheltered	Unknown
11	Market catchment only	Penhurst Gardens & Buchanan House, Chipping Norton, Oxfordshire, OX7 5ED	ELM Group	7.6	44	44	Age exclusive	2016
12	Market catchment only	Millview, West Street, Chipping Norton, Oxfordshire, OX7 5EU	Midland Heart	7.7	25	25	Sheltered	1989
13	Market catchment only	Norton Green Court, The Green, Chipping Norton, Oxon, OX7 5DB	FirstPort	7.7	31	31	Sheltered	2002
14	Market catchment only	Kingstone Court, Wards Road, Chipping Norton, Oxfordshire, OX7 5BP	FirstPort	7.9	33	33	Sheltered	2005

15	Market catchment only	Shepard Way, Albion Street, Chipping Norton, Oxfordshire, OX7 5BE	Stonewater	7.9	38	38	Sheltered	1989
16	Market catchment only	Pentelow Gardens, London Road, Chipping Norton, Oxfordshire, OX7 5AH	McCarthy Stone Management Services	8.1	14	14	Age exclusive	2019
17	Market and local authority	Saxon Grange, Sheep Street, Chipping Campden, Gloucestershire, GL55 6BY	McCarthy Stone Management Services	8.2	20	20	Sheltered	2013
18	Market and local authority	Walton House Court, Northleach, Northleach, Gloucestershire, GL54 3HX	Grange Property Management	8.6	18	18	Sheltered	1987
19	Market catchment only	Kingsdale Court, Colletts Gardens, off Leamington Road, Broadway, Worcs, WR12 7BL	FirstPort	8.9	30	30	Sheltered	1987
20	Market catchment only	Bredon Court & Mews, Station Road, Broadway, Worcestershire, WR12 7DL	Self Managing Group	9.5	51	51	Sheltered	1990
21	Market catchment only	Pegasus Court, Station Road, Broadway, Worcs, WR12 7DE	FirstPort	9.5	21	21	Sheltered	1989
22	Market and local authority	Cotswold Gardens, Broadway Road, Willersey, Broadway, Worcestershire, WR12 7PH	Cognatum Estates	9.6	12	12	Age exclusive	2020
23	Market catchment only	Armistice Close, Tilemans Lane, Shipston-on-stour, Warwickshire, CV36 4QG	Shipston House Ltd	9.7	10	10	Sheltered	2021
24	Market catchment only	Windrush Court, High Street, Burford, Oxon, OX18 4RE	Burford Hill Residents Ltd	9.7	20	20	Age exclusive	1989
25	Market catchment only	Horsefair, Campden Road, Shipston-on-Stour, Warwick, Warks, CV36 4PD	Anchor	9.8	18	18	Sheltered	1987
26	Local authority only	The Orchard, The Croft, Fairford, Gloucestershire, GL7 4BL	Cognatum Estates	15.8	29	29	Sheltered	1997
27	Local authority only	Lygon Court, East End, Fairford, Gloucestershire, GL7 4LX	FirstPort	15.9	32	32	Sheltered	Unknown
28	Local authority only	Allcourt, Fairford Road, Lechlade-on-Thames, Gloucestershire, GL7 3FA	Cognatum Estates	16.6	20	20	Sheltered	2000
29	Local authority only	Barclay Court / Priory Mews, Trafalgar Road, Cirencester, Gloucestershire, GL7 2EN	Residential Management Group (RMG)	18.0	86	86	Sheltered	1989
30	Local authority only	Mill Place, Gloucester Street, Cirencester, Gloucestershire, GL7 2BG	Cognatum Estates	18.1	16	16	Age exclusive	2004
31	Local authority only	Palestra Lodge, The Waterloo, Cirencester, Gloucestershire, GL7 2PZ	Anchor	18.1	17	17	Sheltered	1989
32	Local authority only	Minerva Court, Tower Street, Cirencester, Gloucestershire, GL7 1EF	FirstPort	18.3	26	26	Sheltered	1988

33	Local authority only	Homeberry House, 13 Ashcroft Gardens, Cirencester, Gloucestershire, GL7 1RU	FirstPort	18.4	61	61	Sheltered	1984
34	Local authority only	Bath Gate Place, Hammond Way, Tetbury Road, Cirencester, Gloucestershire, GL7 1ZJ	McCarthy Stone Management Services	18.5	34	34	Sheltered	2017
35	Local authority only	Beecham Lodge, Somerford Road, Cirencester, Gloucestershire, GL7 1WR	Churchill Estates Management	18.7	35	35	Sheltered	2016
36	Local authority only	Westwood Court, Somerford Road, Cirencester, Gloucestershire, GL7 1TX	Broadleaf Management Services Ltd	18.9	14	14	Sheltered	2006
37	Local authority only	Ilsom Court Cottages, Cirencester Road, Tetbury, Gloucestershire, GL8 8RX	Housing 21	26.6	8	8	Sheltered	1983
38	Local authority only	Lewsey Court, London Road, Tetbury, Gloucestershire, GL8 8GW	McCarthy Stone Management Services	27.1	39	39	Sheltered	2015
39	Local authority only	Chantry Court, Market Place, Tetbury, Gloucestershire, GL8 8DD	Southernhay Estates Ltd	27.7	20	20	Sheltered	1986
Total in market catchment						629		
Total in local authority area						711		

23. Summary of planned provision

T28 Summary of planned provision of private retirement living											
Map ref	Catchment area	Site address	Applicant	Scheme	Net retirement living units	Development commenced	Earliest estimated year of delivery	Distance to subject site (miles)	Planning ref / date granted	Notes	
Granted											
A	Local authority only	Chesterton Farm, Cranhams Lane, Cirencester, GL7 6JP	Bathurst Estates	Outline application (with all matters except Access reserved for subsequent consideration) for a mixed use development comprising demolition of existing buildings (as detailed on the submitted demolition plan) and the erection of up to 2,350 residential dwellings (including up to 100 units of student accommodation and 60 homes for the elderly), 9.1 hectares of employment land (B1, B2 and B8 uses), a primary school, a neighbourhood centre including A1, A2, A3, A4 and A5 uses as well as community facilities (including a health care facility D1), public open space, allotments, playing fields, pedestrian and cycle links (access points onto Tetbury Road, Somerford Road and Cranhams Lane) landscaping and associated supporting infrastructure to include vehicle access points from Tetbury Road, Spratsgate Lane, Wilkinson Road and Somerford Road.	60	No	2026	19.3	16/00054/OUT - 03/04/2019	A reserved matters application has been submitted. The first phase of the wider development, called The Steadings, is now under construction (general housing) and the proposed homes for the elderly are intended be cited near the centre of the development.	
Pending											
No pending applications											

Source: subscribed data sources and relevant planning departments

24. Map of existing and planned schemes

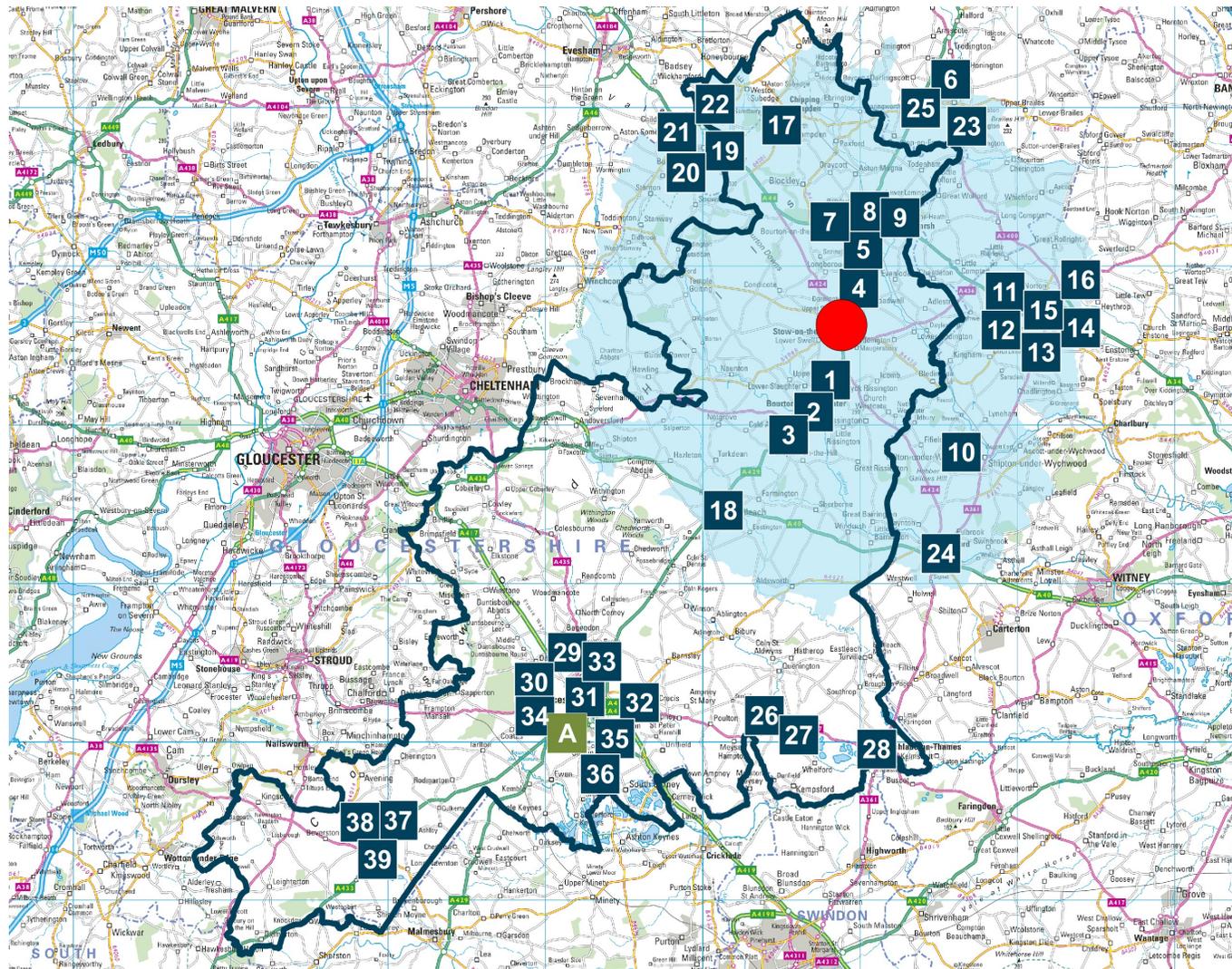


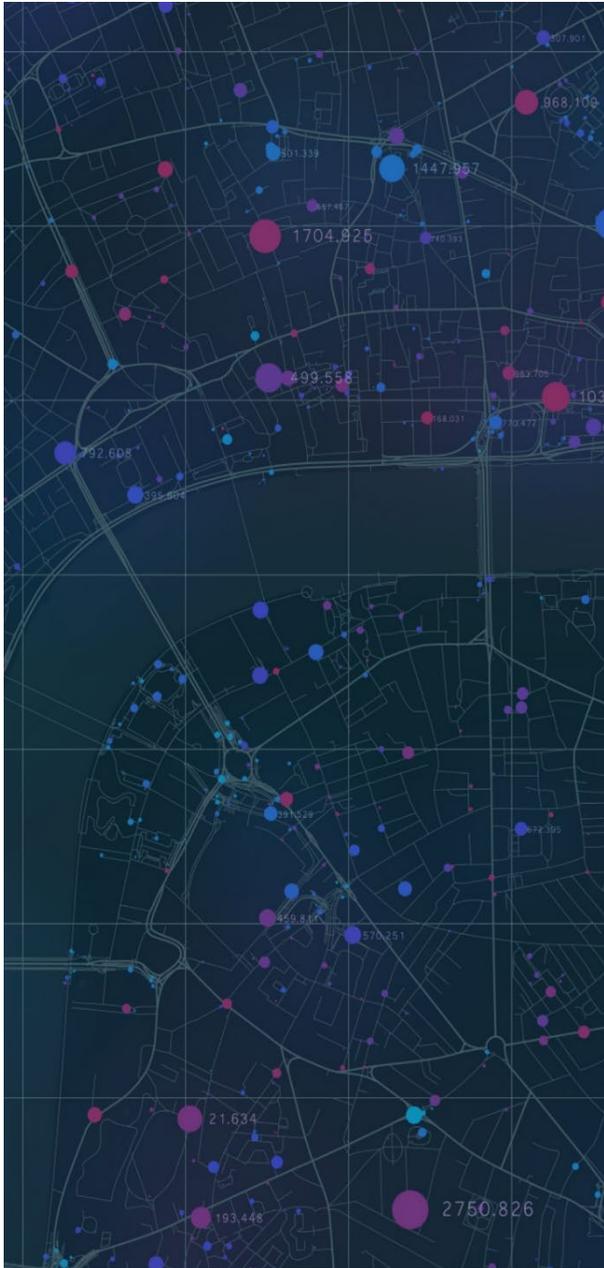
Figure 10: Existing and planned private retirement living schemes within the catchment areas assessed

Key:

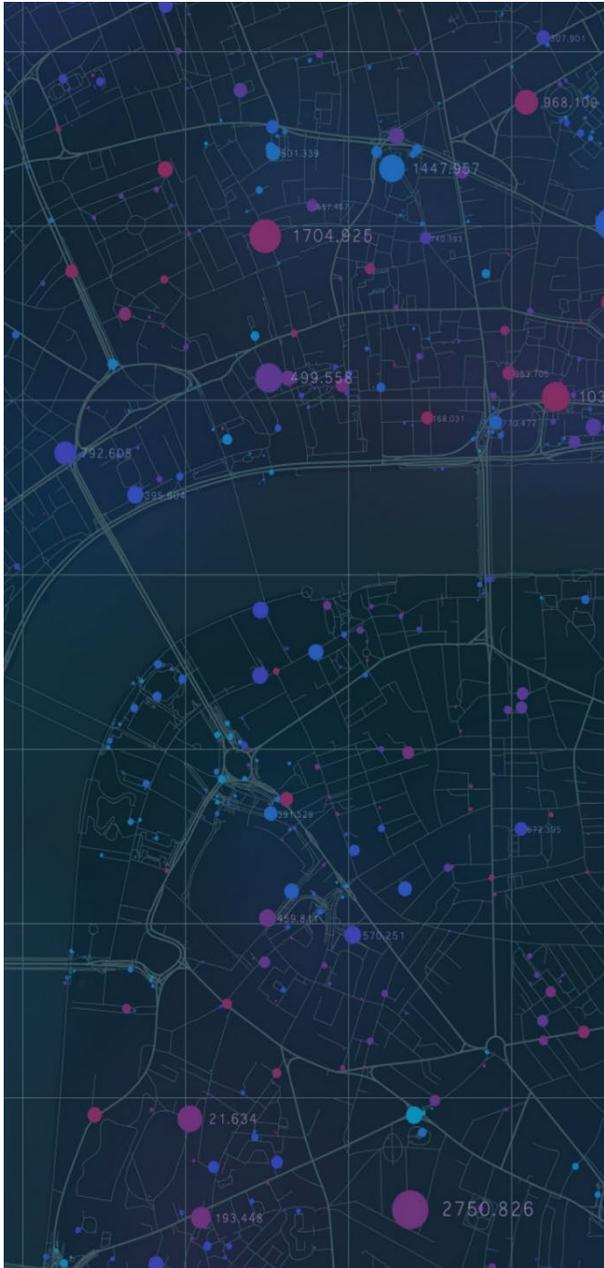
- The subject scheme
- Existing private retirement living schemes
- Planned private retirement living schemes

Please note that the locations of all existing and planned schemes are approximate.

The light blue shading shows the 10-mile market catchment and the dark blue line outlines the Cotswold District Council local authority area.



Appendices



Appendix

A: Sources of information and methodology

Sources of information

We have utilised the following sources of information:

- 2011 Census population statistics;
- 2021 Census population statistics (where available);
- ONS 2018-based population projections;
- EAC database;
- Carterwood database;
- www.cqc.org.uk;
- Department of Health;
- Relevant planning departments;
- Contains Ordnance Survey data © Crown copyright and database right (since 2010);
- Contains LPS Intellectual Property © Crown copyright and database right (since 2016);
- Glenigan;
- Planning Pipe;
- LaingBuisson's Care Homes for Older People UK Market Report (33rd edition);
- Communities and Local Government;
- National Planning Policy Framework;
- House of Commons Commission for Long Term Care;
- Centre for the Study of Financial Innovation;
- HAPPI, HAPPI2, HAPPI3;
- Demos;
- Policy Exchanges;
- ARCO;
- FPD Savills;
- Housing LIN;
- Sheffield Hallam University;
- Three Dragons/Retirement Housing Group;
- Worcester Research;
- Tetlow King;
- Joseph Rowntree Foundation;
- CASS Business School;
- Cotswold District Council.

In preparing our advice, we have also relied upon the following:

- Background information provided by the client;
- Documentation submitted with planning application.

In accordance with our definitions and reservations (attached at Appendix E), we have assumed that the information above is accurate and should it be proven through further investigations to be incorrect, then this could affect our advice.

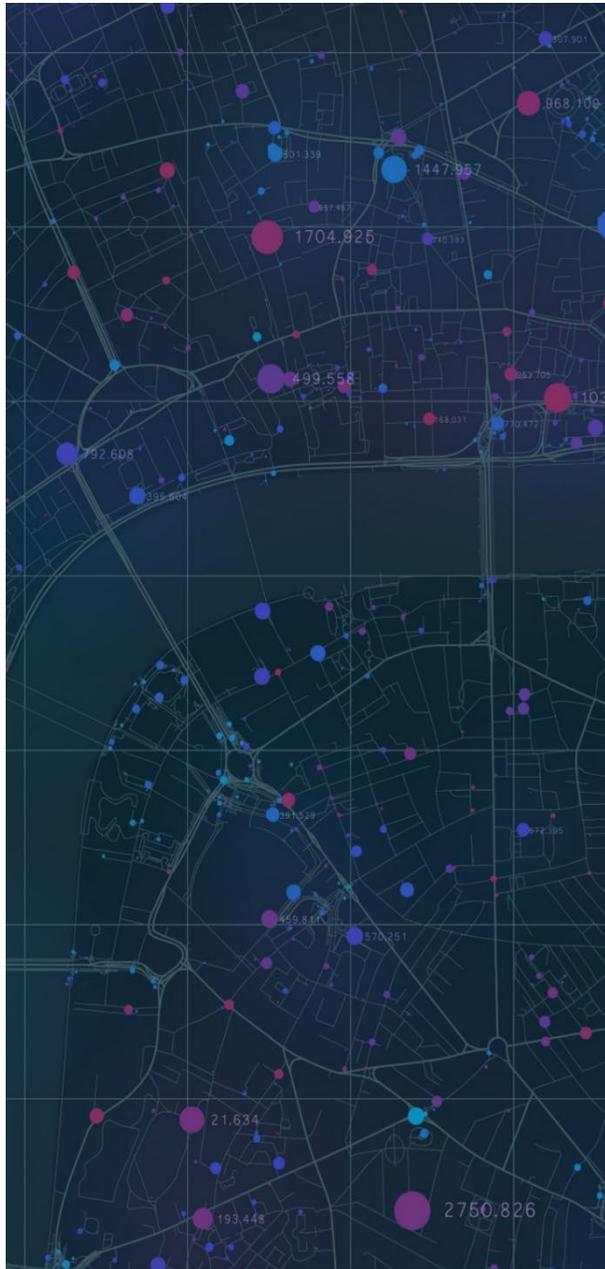
Confidentiality

This report is for the stated purposes only and for the sole exclusive use the client, to whom it is addressed.

Neither the whole, nor any part of this report or any reference to it, may be included now or at any time in the future, in any published document, circulation or statement, nor referred to or used in any way, without our written approval and context to which it may appear.

Conflicts of interests

There are no conflicts of interests that we are aware of that would prevent us from providing our advice.



Appendix

B: Quantitative local level model review

Model need prevalence rate summary

T29 Summary of local level population need toolkit/model prevalence rates (per 1,000 population over 75 years unless stated otherwise)		
Housing type	Sheltered Housing	
	For rent (affordable)	For sale (market)
Models reviewed		
More Choice Greater Voice (2008) – ‘Ratios suggested by the ‘norm’ page 45) (*1)	50.0	75.0
SHOP (Dec 2011) – Estimate of demand (page 36) (*2)	60.0	120.0
Housing in Later Life (2012) Indicative ratios for Bury (page 23) (*3)	60.0	120.0
SHOP@ (2013) – Projected ‘base case’ demand at 2030 (page 7) (*4) (*6)	50.0	75.0
Other national models		
Three Dragons (Nov 17) Report to GLA (*5)	15 to 20 per cent of all 75+ person <u>households</u> would want to live in specialist older people’s housing, if it was available. Need analysis based upon Greater London characteristics and therefore not applicable to the Cotswold District and does not separate out demand for sheltered housing/retirement living by prevalence rate. .	

NB – the ‘for rent’ figures above relate to ‘affordable rent’. The ‘for sale’ figures relate to market rent or leasehold. The percentages above provide baseline rates for each toolkit which may be skewed towards ‘for rent’ or ‘for sale’ depending on the relative affluence of a particular location.

Sources:

(1) *More Choice, Greater Voice: a toolkit for producing a strategy for accommodation with care for older people. Communities and Local Government, CSIP & Housing LIN, February 2008.*

(2) *SHOP Resource Pack, December 2011.*

(3) *Housing in Later Life: planning ahead for specialist housing for older people, Housing LIN, NHF et al, December 2012.*

(4) *SHOP@, Housing LIN & EAC, Delivering the Detail, October 2013.*

(5) *Three Dragons / RHG (November 2017) Assessing future potential demand for older person’s housing, care homes and dementia housing in London.*

(6) *Gaul, D. (2016) Housing LIN and Elderly Accommodation Counsel – SHOP@ Analysis Tool Review. [Note: The estimated future need assessed utilising the SHOP@ (2013) toolkit is set at the baseline level. The toolkit states that ‘it is accepted that the percentage of leasehold will increase in the future and this change will vary on whether the market is attractive to leasehold sales i.e. areas of affluence will see a higher percentage increase in leaseholds by 2035.]*

Assessment of gross need based upon the available models in Table T29.

T30 Summary of local prevalence rates			
Model	Prevalence rates for <u>private</u> sheltered housing (retirement living) – need per 1,000 population aged 75+	Private sheltered housing ‘gross need’ in local population in 2026	
		10-mile market	Cotswold District Council
More Choice, Greater Voice (2008) – ‘Ratios suggested by the norm’ (p. 45)	75 per 1,000 75+ population	825	1,085
SHOP (Dec 2011) – Estimate of demand (p. 36)	120 per 1,000 75+ population	1,320	1,737
Housing in Later Life (2012) Indicative ratios for Bury (p. 23)	120 per 1,000 75+ population	1,320	1,737
SHOP@ 2013 – Projected ‘base case’ demand at 2030 (page 7)	75 per 1,000 75+ population	825	1,085

Model review – strengths and weaknesses

T31 Summary of local prevalence rates		
Model	Strengths	Weaknesses
More Choice, Greater Voice (2008)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provides full breakdown of prevalence by tenure and housing type. While age of the study is a weakness, the targets suggested for 'market' supply of all types have not been met. As a ratio of the older population, the situation has either stagnated or deteriorated. With current national direction towards increasing supply, the suggested prevalence rates should now be considered more relevant than when first published, albeit the prevalence rates are lower than those in SHOP and Housing in Later Life, below. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Age of study; need based upon 'current' provision, which on every assessable measure was under-provided for based upon elderly population at the time; doesn't account for need from 65- to 74-year-old cohort.
SHOP (Dec 2011)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provides full breakdown of prevalence by tenure and housing type, includes some allowance for need that is not solely based upon current supply. While age of the study is a weakness, the targets suggested for 'market' supply of all types have not been met. As a ratio of the older population, the situation has either stagnated or deteriorated. With current national direction towards increasing supply, the suggested prevalence rates should now be considered more relevant than when first published. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Age of study; no longer supported by HousingLIN; doesn't account for need from 65- to 74-year-old cohort.
Housing in Later Life (2012)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Based upon SHOP above so same strengths. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Based upon SHOP above.
SHOP@ tool (2013)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Flexibility to reflect demand based upon tenure type, interactive online tool which was (while it was available) easy to use. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No longer available online; widely misused by social services teams who misunderstood its application; reduced the overall 'need' prevalence significantly despite national and local policy objectives to increase supply of specialist housing options— again arbitrarily with no evidence base other than opinion of local authorities; doesn't account for need from 65- to 74-year-old cohort.
Other models		
Three Dragons (Nov 17) / Retirement Housing Group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Accounts for need from 65- to 74-year-old cohort, considers national policy objectives explicitly rather than being a measure of solely existing supply. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> London-centric analysis makes it difficult to apply to other local authority areas, RHG model unavailable for site-specific use unless commissioned independently.

Need analysis – methodology comparison

We have provided a quantitative assessment of need for private retirement living for each of the models reviewed, as at 2026, for the assessed catchment areas.

The results show a broad spread of net need – with a shortfall of 196 and 691 private retirement living units in the circa 10-mile market catchment. The results in the Cotswold District Council area show a shortfall of either 314 or 966 private retirement living units, based upon the prevalence rate adopted and analysis as at 2026, assuming that all planned units proceed to be delivered.

Despite this range, it should be noted that the baseline rates have been applied from the assessment tools utilised and the underlying home ownership levels where the household reference person is aged over 65 years would indicate that the gross need for private retirement living should be at increased percentage levels when compared to the need for affordable provision. This applies to the More Choice Greater Voice and SHOP@ toolkits as set out in Note (6) to T29, above.

This accords with the commissioning and other local and national policy direction, which indicate a firm need for additional private specialist housing for older people.

T32 Primary year for private retirement living need analysis		
Primary year of assessment	2026	Estimate of the earliest year the subject scheme can be developed and the retirement living units made available

T33 All models' private retirement living need (10-mile market catchment) - 2026				
Model	More Choice, Greater Voice	SHOP	Housing in Later Life	SHOP@
Need				
Total 75+ population	11,000	11,000	11,000	11,000
Prevalence rate (%)	7.5%	12.00%	12.00%	7.5%
Estimated need for private retirement living	825	1,320	1,320	825
Private retirement living supply				
Current supply of private retirement living	629	629	629	629
Planned units by operational year	0	0	0	0
Total supply (units)	629	629	629	629
Net need				
Private retirement living units	196	691	691	196

T34 All models' private retirement living need (Cotswold District Council area) - 2026				
Model	More Choice, Greater Voice	SHOP	Housing in Later Life	SHOP@
Need				
Total 75+ population	14,472	14,472	14,472	14,472
Prevalence rate (%)	7.5%	12.00%	12.00%	7.5%
Estimated need for private retirement living	1,085	1,737	1,737	1,085
Private retirement living supply				
Current supply of private retirement living	711	711	711	711
Planned units by operational year	60	60	60	60
Total supply (units)	771	771	771	771
Net need				
Private retirement living units	314	966	966	314

Sources for T33 and T34: See table T29.

More Choice, Greater Voice, Housing in Later Life and Housing LIN models

i) More Choice, Greater Voice (February 2008)

From the publication of the More Choice, Greater Voice model onwards, the population of those 75 years of age and over has generally been adopted as the appropriate metric for sheltered housing and retirement living need calculations, for no specific reason.

Ratios of provision were built on evidence in 2008.

ii) Housing in Later Life (December 2012)

The general acceptance of the methodology and approach set out in *More Choice, Greater Voice*, alongside market signals suggesting falling demand for older style sheltered housing for rent, strengthening demand for retirement housing on a leasehold basis and a widening of the appeal of all tenures of extra care, resulted in an uplift in the suggested ratios of provision in the 2012 publication: *Housing in Later Life – planning ahead for specialised housing for older people*.

The focus of this toolkit was deliberately narrow – to assist local authorities in England in planning for specialist housing for older people and referred to a range of housing options built to assist older people with their accommodation and support needs in later life.

iii) SHOP (December 2011)

The same prevalence rates set out in *Housing in Later Life* were adopted in the first iteration of the SHOP (Strategic Housing for Older People) suite of documents. This 'toolkit' was originally developed for the Housing Learning and Improvement Network (Housing LIN) and the Housing Network of the Association of Directors of Adult Social Services (ADASS) by the Institute for Public Care at Brookes University and published in December 2011.

During mid-2020 Housing LIN updated its website as follows:

'This 2011 version of the SHOP Resource Pack is now out of date and uploaded as an archived record only. However, the Housing LIN has since worked with many councils individually to further develop and apply them to help produce their local housing strategies for extra care housing and supported housing. Please consult with us on your requirements so we can best advise on the most up-to-date resources and support available from the Housing LIN that would best suit your needs.'

iv) SHOP@ 'Delivering the Detail' (October 2013)

SHOP@ was launched in March 2013 and was pre-set with the number of units required per 1,000 of the population aged over

75 years, derived from the *More Choice, Greater Voice* prevalence rates.

SHOP@ was removed as a web-based resource in late 2019, despite being cited as an example of an online toolkit in PPG. Housing LIN now solely undertake SHOP@ assessments on a commissioned consultancy basis, predominantly for public sector bodies'.

The challenges surrounding the model, which is referenced in PPG (SHOP@ by Housing LIN), were articulately expressed by Nigel Appleton in his proof of evidence for the appellant, Retirement Villages, in the Shiplake retirement village planning inquiry in Oxfordshire (August 2019):

'Available online, the SHOP@ Tool has been widely used and has been recommended in successive Planning Practice Guidance, most recently in the PPG of June 2019. Whilst other methodologies have also been mentioned the availability of the SHOP@ Tool has regularly been cited as the basis for calculations in local authority documents and in planning inquiries.

The flaw inherent in the use of the SHOP@ Tool has been identified by some is that it is presented as providing objective assessment when it does nothing of the sort. The outputs it produces are heavily influenced by the assumptions that are inputted. Used in its default settings it relies upon current prevalence of provision as an indicator of future levels of need. This can lead to ludicrous outcomes: where an area with high levels of older people within its population has little provision and the default settings are used, it will project that little will be needed in the future.

This difficulty is recognised by the Housing LIN who have expressed concern about the reputational damage they are suffering as a consequence of the misuse of the SHOP@ Tool. They make the point that the default settings of the SHOP@ on-line tool are intended to illustrate the information that needs to be loaded rather than recommending a level of prevalence or tenure split. So concerned has the Housing LIN become by this distortion of their intention, which was that the tool should support their aspiration to be a "Market Shaper", working alongside colleagues in commissioning roles in Adult Social Care and promoting local discussion about future provision, that they have now withdrawn the SHOP@ Tool from being accessed online.

That the Housing LIN has taken this remarkable step, a month after the SHOP@ Tool was recommended in the June 2019

PPG, leads one to treat calculation based on this methodology with extreme caution.'

CRESR – Housing for Older People Supply Recommendations (HOPSR)

Housing for Older People Supply Recommendations (HOPSR) was created by the Centre for Regional and Economic Social Research (CRESR) at Sheffield Hallam University, in conjunction with the University of Sheffield. It is a tool to assist local authorities understand the requirements for older people's housing in their area. It provides the output of research with South Cambridgeshire District Council, Cambridge City Council and Cambridgeshire County Council, funded by NHS England's Healthy New Towns programme.

Below are extracts summarising the model's approach:

'HOPSR uses national data from the Elderly Accommodation Counsel (EAC) about older people's housing schemes. Looking specifically at the local authorities with the highest level of current supply, it uses this as the basis to recommend a level of supply for each local authority, accounting for local demographic, health and place trends.'

The model has been developed through a series of stages: The first stage assessed the level and composition of supply of age-exclusive housing, specialist housing, and care beds across the 100 English local authorities with the highest overall provision of each broad type of older person housing per 1,000 older people (aged 75 years or older).'

'This exercise does, however, reveal which authorities are supplying units at high levels given the measure of older people locally, and provides a sufficiently large sample on which to explore the factors associated with higher provision. In the 100 local authorities with the highest level of specialist housing, these provide 172.6 units per 1,000 people aged 75 years and older. This was made up of:

- 153.2 units of sheltered per 1,000 people aged 75 years and older
- 4.4 units of enhanced sheltered per 1,000 people aged 75 years and older, and
- 15.1 units of extra care per 1,000 people aged 75 years and older.'

'The second stage used statistical modelling to identify factors that are predictors of the variation in provision between the 100 local authorities with the highest overall level of supply of age-exclusive, specialist and care beds respectively. The variables included were: the percentage of persons aged 75 years and older who are in owner occupation, the percentage of persons aged 75 years and older living with dementia, the usage of home and day care per 1,000 persons aged 65 years and older, expenditure on home and day care per 1,000 persons aged 65 years and older, the proportion of persons aged 85 years and

older, the proportion of persons aged 75 years and older whose day-to-day activities were limited a lot, and whether the area is urban or rural.'

'This analysis revealed a number of relationships within local authorities, including:

- *The supply of specialist housing being positively associated with the level of people aged 75 years and older limited by a LTHCD.*
- *Sheltered housing is positively associated with the level of people aged 75 years and over limited by a LTHCD. Furthermore, the level of sheltered housing was negatively associated with supply of extra care per 1,000 people aged 75 years and over.*
- *Extra care accommodation was positively associated with the level of people aged 75 years and older limited by a LTHCD. As above, this form of provision was negatively associated with supply of sheltered housing per 1,000 people aged 75 years and over.*
- *Enhanced sheltered was not associated with any of the variables considered.'*

The CRESR model uses the above findings to recommend a level of supply at the aggregate rate for the 100 local authorities with the highest level of provision, but it adjusts this with localised data – for example, the proportion of people aged 75 years and older with a limiting LTHCD in the case of specialist housing. In addition, the model allows adjustments based on the current balance between the provision of sheltered and extra care housing. The model provides a self-critique:

'This model has a number of strengths and weaknesses. Its strengths are that it is based on the realities of supply and demand in other local authorities and it provides a distinctly grounded and realistic estimate of what supply is possible. One criticism of models based purely on future projected demand is that they can be viewed as somewhat idealistic, and therefore susceptible to challenge on this basis. One might argue that a weakness of employing quantitative estimates based on other local authority provision is that it makes the model merely reactive to what is happening in those other areas, rather than responding to underlying or changing needs. To counter this, the model should be re-run regularly to take account of changing provision which reflects changes to the determinants of demand and supply of specialist housing.'

Three Dragons/Retirement Housing Group

The Retirement Housing Group's (RHG) model and approach, which is recommended in Housing in Later Life, forecasts demand for specialist housing in London. The model is based on the number of older person households and not on the population of older persons, although household estimates by age are based on census population data. In England, 9.5 per cent of households aged 65+ are in specialist older person's housing, equating to 533,201 households. The equivalent for London is 8.5 per cent.

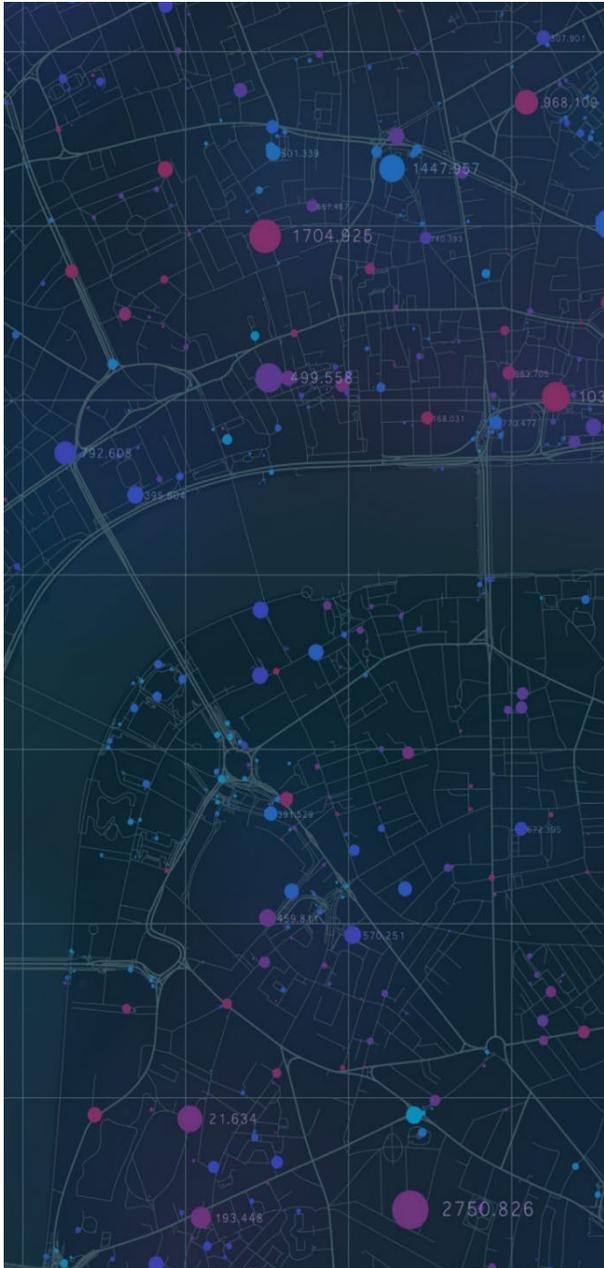
RHG's model is based on the propensity to move. The assumption is that nationally 15 to 20 per cent of all person households (age 75+) would live in specialist older person's housing if it were available.

Due to the higher proportion of general needs flats in London, the study uses 15 per cent (at the lower end of the spectrum). Analysis of older person's housing for sale suggests that 18 per cent is acquired by those aged under 75 and therefore assumes that 2.5 per cent of households aged 65 to 75 would also live in specialist older person's housing if it were available:

'The Inquiry into the further amendments to the London Plan has recognised our model as robust.'

- *'There is an acute shortage of specialised retirement housing. Out of 515,666 units of sheltered and extra care accommodation in England in 2015, 75% were for social rent with only about 174,000 for owner occupation.'*
- *'Estimated supply needs to more than double by 2025. At least 11,000 need to be built every year (see Housing our Ageing Population – positive ideas HAPPI 3) (June 2016).'*

In its report to the Greater London Authority (GLA) in 2017, Three Dragons expected that around 15 per cent of older households would want retirement housing by 2029, with most demand for privately owned or shared ownership. The point was made that although there are large stocks of affordable rented sheltered housing, much is old and requires updating. Total potential demand is for 4,000 plus units a year of both extra care and sheltered housing.



Appendix

C: List of tables, figures and works cited

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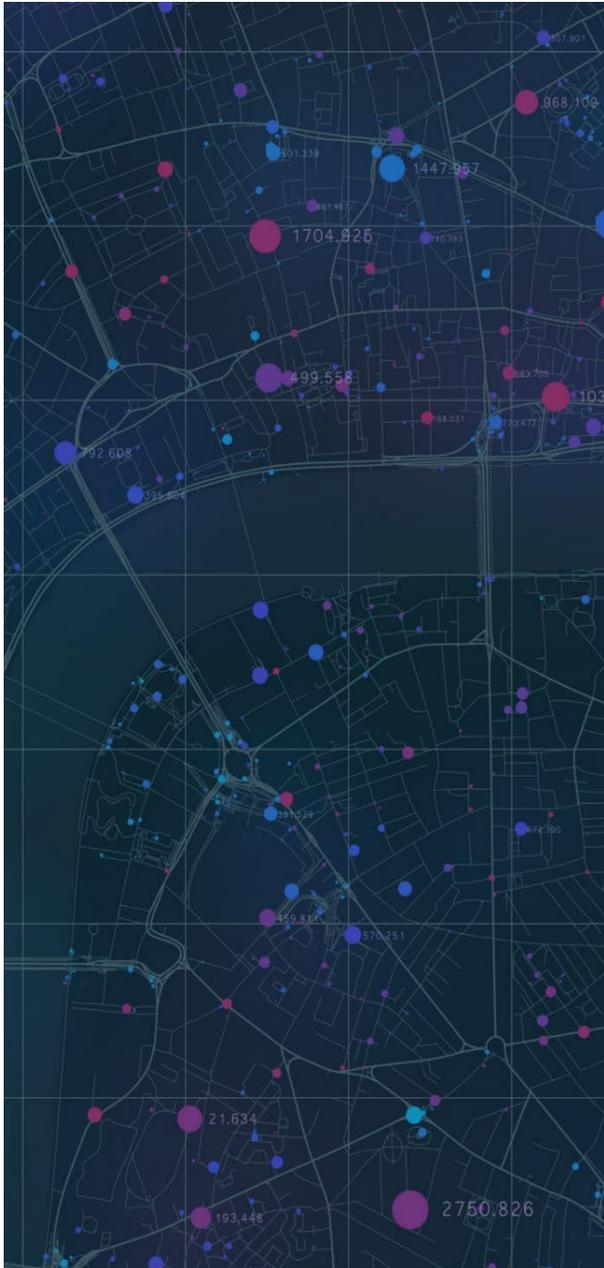
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Appendix

D: Definitions and reservations

Timing of advice

Our work commenced on the date of instruction and the collection and compilation of data and other research contained within our work was undertaken at varying times during the period prior to completion of this report.

The report, information and advice provided during our work were prepared and given to address the specific circumstances as at the time the report was prepared and the scope and requirements set out in the engagement letter. Carterwood has no obligation to update any such information or conclusions after that time unless it has agreed to do so in writing and subject to additional cost.

Data analysis and sources of information

Details of our principal information sources are set out in the appendices and we have satisfied ourselves, so far as possible, that the information presented in our report is consistent with other information such as made available to us in the course of our work in accordance with the terms of our engagement letter. We have not, however, sought to establish the reliability of these information sources by reference to other evidence.

The report includes data and information provided by third parties of which Carterwood is not able to control or verify the accuracy.

We must emphasise that the realisation of any prospective financial information or market or statistical estimates set out within our report is dependent on the continuing validity of the assumptions on which it is based and may be subject to other variables and factors outside the scope of our report. Any assumptions stated in the report will need to be reviewed and revised to reflect market conditions. We accept no responsibility for the realisation of the prospective financial or market information. Actual results may be different from those shown in our analysis because events and circumstances frequently do not occur as expected, and the differences may be material.

Measuring and predicting demand is not an exact science, and it should be appreciated that there are likely to be statistical and market related factors that could cause deviations in predicted outcomes to actual ones.

We have undertaken certain analytical activities on the underlying data provided by third parties to arrive at the information presented. We cannot and do not accept responsibility for the completeness or accuracy of this underlying data.

Where we have adapted and combined different data sources to provide additional analysis and insight, this has been undertaken with reasonable care and skill. The tools used and analysis undertaken are subject to both internal and external data-checking, proof reading and quality assurance. However, when undertaking complex statistical analysis it is understood that the

degree of accuracy is never absolute and there is inevitably variance in any findings, which must be carefully weighed up with all other aspects of the decision-making process.

The estimates and conclusions contained in this report have been conscientiously prepared in the light of our experience in the property market and information that we were able to collect, but their accuracy is in no way guaranteed.

All advice has been prepared on a 'desktop' basis and where we have prepared advice on a 'headline basis', we have conducted a higher level and less detailed review of the market. If commissioning a Headline Market Analysis report it we recommend commissioning a comprehensive market analysis report before finalising the decision-making process. Where we have provided 'comprehensive' advice, we have used reasonable skill and endeavours in our analysis of primary and secondary (for example, Census, Land Registry, etc.) data sources, but we remain reliant upon the quality of information from third parties, and all references above to accuracy, statistics and market analytics remain valid.

Purpose and use

The report has been prepared for the sole use of the client and any other persons specifically named in our engagement letter and solely for the purposes stated in the report. The report should not be relied upon by any other person or for any other purposes. The report is given in confidence to the client and any other persons specifically named in our engagement letter and should not be quoted, referred to or shown to any other parties without our prior consent.

The data, information and any conclusions in the report should not be used as the sole basis for any business decision, and Carterwood shall not be liable for any decisions taken on the basis of the same. The client should independently verify any data or information in the report which may be relevant to taking a business decision.

This report is for general informative purposes only and does not constitute a formal valuation, appraisal or recommendation. It is only for the use of the persons to whom it is addressed and no responsibility can be accepted to any third party for any reliance placed on the whole or any part of its contents. It may not be published, reproduced or quoted in part or in whole, nor may it be used as a basis for any contract, prospectus, agreement or other document without Carterwood's prior consent, which will not be unreasonably withheld.

Extraordinary market factors

The trading environment of the care sector in the UK, which impacts upon market conditions, remains in a volatile state. Contributing factors include some ongoing uncertainty around the post-Brexit trading conditions, operating with the legacy and future risks of COVID-19 and the effect of the conflict in Ukraine and the resulting inflationary pressures. Our reports are prepared using high quality data and expert analysis from our experienced team. Any recommendations made are based upon the market and financial climate as at the date of the report, but do not take into account future economic or market fluctuations caused by the events outlined above or other unforeseen events. With this in mind, it may be prudent to review a commissioned report periodically in light of any significant developments that may affect the care sector.

Census 2021

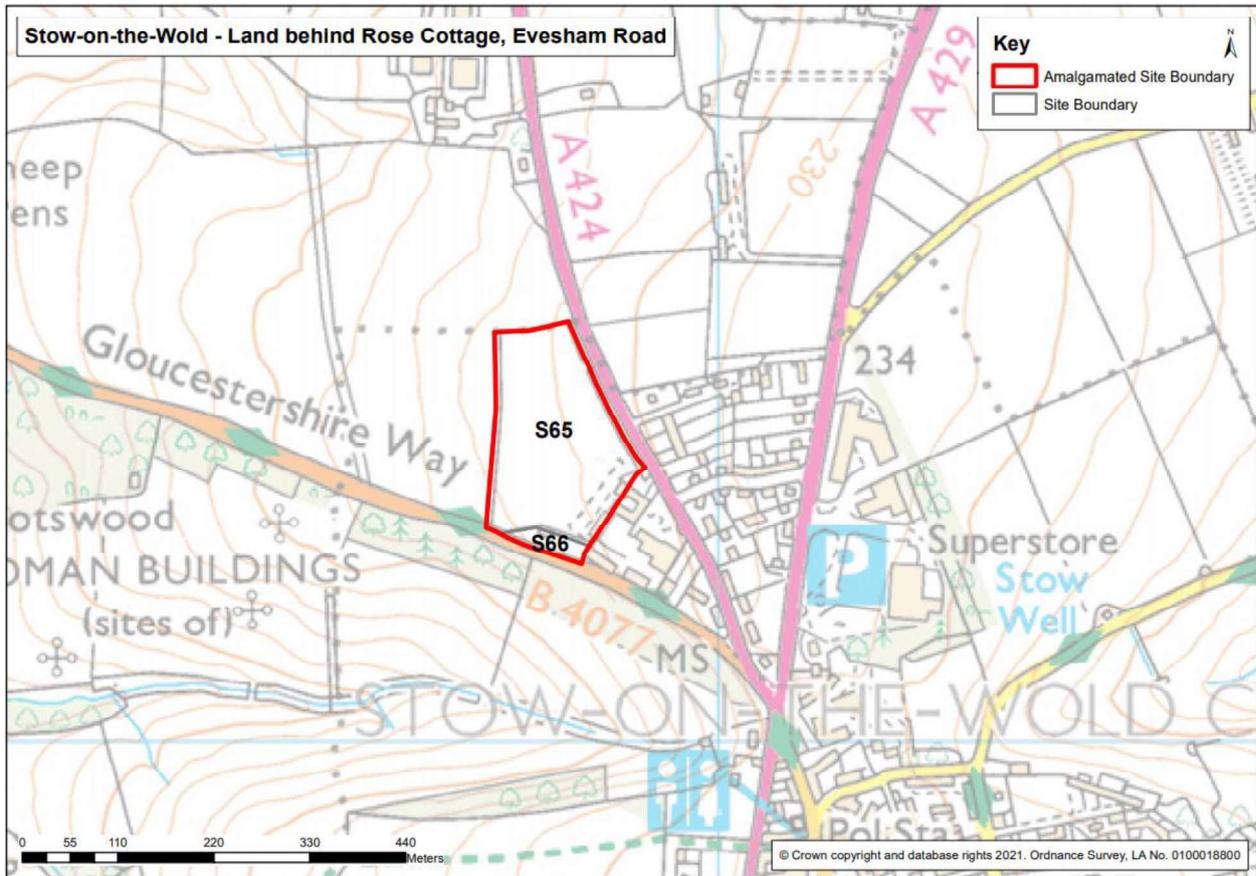
This report contains data relating to the 2011 census. The England and Wales 2021 census took place on 21 March 2021; the first release of this data was published on 28 June 2022, with additional releases following in spring/summer 2023, and with the final release of all data outputs for England and Wales provisionally expected by November 2023. The Scottish census was delayed, with the collection phase taking place between 28 February and 1 June 2022. We will monitor the census data release schedule, reviewing new data as it is released and ensuring the data is embedded into our analysis as quickly as possible.

Intellectual Property

Except where indicated, the report provided and any accompanying documentation and materials, together with all of the intellectual property rights (including copyright and trademarks) contained within it, belong to Carterwood, and ownership will not pass to you. Subject to payment of Carterwood's fees for the report, Carterwood grants you (the Client) a perpetual, royalty free licence to use the report for the purposes for which it was commissioned.

**APPENDIX FIVE – SHELAA 2021 EXTRACT (SEE
ACCOMPANYING DOCUMENT)**

Land behind Rose Cottage, Evesham Road (refs: S65, S66)



Proposal: Extension to the adjacent Care Village, Care Home, Residential C2 and C3

Assessment date: January 2021

Size: 3.38ha combined (S65 = 3.19ha; S66 = 0.19ha)

Land ownership: Single ownership

Site description

The site is located on the north-western edge of Stow-on-the-Wold on land that falls in a westerly direction. S65 is mostly a field that is maintained as cut grass. The south-western part of the site includes two buildings that are part of Newlands Care Village and the access road into the care village. S66 is a detached dwelling known as Rose Cottage and its curtilage.

The site is bound to the east by a tree lined hedgerow and Evesham Road (A424) with houses and agricultural land opposite; to the south by a tree-lined hedgerow and Tewkesbury Road (B4077) with a woodland verge and agricultural land beyond; to the west by a tree-lined verge and agricultural land beyond; and to the north by a stone wall with open countryside beyond. Newlands Care Village is opposite the south-western boundary.

Planning history

This is a summary of the key planning applications and is not a comprehensive list

Both sites are located outside the Stow-on-the-Wold development boundary and neither are allocated in the adopted Local Plan. Historic mapping shows that both sites were once part of the same field, which also previously incorporated land now occupied by the neighbouring Newland Care Village development.

S65

11/05440/TPO - TPO 315 Various works as per application. Permitted (for a Tree Preservation Order on the eastern boundary)

18/03196/TPO - G.1 - Limes (treat as one crown) - Crown raise by 3-4M to open up view under crown from windows, (this growth is mainly aged epicormic growth). Reduce crown away from building / roof by 2-3M by pruning

of secondary growth, 100mm cuts max, drop-crotched to retain shape. Thin crown by 15-20% by the removal of unnecessary internal growth and aged epicormic growth, 100mm cuts max; T.24 - Beech - Crown raise by 2-3M. Re-balance crown by the reduction of extremities back into balance 2-3M varying; T.25 - Copper Beech - Crown raise by 2M. Re-balance crown by the reduction of extremities back into balance 1-3M varying. Permitted

S66

91.00778 - New single storey extension to rear of existing cottage. Permitted

02/00572/FUL - Two storey extension to form enlarged kitchen and bedroom; single storey extension to lounge. Refused

02/01327/FUL - Single storey extension to lounge and two storey extension. Permitted

03/01727/FUL - Garden room and toilet/shower. Permitted

Land to the south-west - Newlands Care Village

90.00872 - Nursing Home for the elderly (new build) conversion and extension for 19 closecare apartments and 15 sheltered cottages. Permitted

98.01302 - Revision to permission reference CD.1536/J (replacement of eight cottages and nineteen flats with fifteen cottages). Permitted

99.01481 - Erection of 8 garden rooms and minor amendments to plans and elevations previously approved under CD.1536/K. Permitted

05/02096/FUL - Erection of extension to existing nursing home to provide 20 sheltered apartments; erection of four detached houses to provide additional sheltered accommodation; and change of use and extension of 'Westcombe' from residential to form consulting rooms, gym area, hydrotherapy pool and lounge area for use in association with the nursing home and sheltered accommodation. Withdrawn

06/02759/FUL - Fifteen extra care apartments (Category C2) attached to Newlands Nursing Home with extension to restaurant area and associated parking provision. Permitted

07/01816/FUL - Erection of five sheltered retirement cottages. Permitted

Landscape

These comments are made on the basis of a survey conducted by a qualified Landscape Officer. A full landscape and visual impact assessment would be required of any development proposal (desktop and site assessments) undertaken by an appropriately qualified and experienced landscape professional.

Parcel Specific Description

S65: The parcel is identified as a pastoral field on the edge of the Stow-on-the-Wold settlement and has an undeveloped rural character. The boundaries are defined by hedgerow and fencing of varying coverage and quality. Beyond the northern and western boundaries are further fields. This character continues to the south beyond Rose Cottage (S66) and Tewkesbury Road which is present along the southern boundary and is flanked by mature trees. Beyond the eastern boundary is the settlement. Long views across the parcel to distant hillsides are achieved due to the elevated open character.

S66: This parcel is occupied by Rose Cottage and its domestic curtilage. There is mature vegetation present within the garden which filters views. This vegetation and neighbouring trees along Tewkesbury Road limit the visual envelope to the local environment.

Landscape Context

National Character Area 107: Cotswolds

Landscape Character Type: The majority of the land within the parcels is within LCT 7: High Wold. Most of S66 and the south of S65 are within LCT 15: Farmed Slopes

Landscape Character Area: The majority of the land within the parcels is within LCA 7C: Cotswolds High Wold plateau. Most of S66 and the south of S65 are within LCA 15B: Vale of Moreton Farmed Slopes.

Constraints/Designations

Landscape: The parcel is located within the Cotswolds AONB.

Historic: Not within a Conservation Area. No listed buildings within or near the parcels.

Other (floodplain, PROW): TPOs present within the parcels. No PROW are present within or on the boundary of the parcels.

Landscape sensitivity

S65

Evaluation: **High**

Justification: This parcel is susceptible to development by reason of its location as an important open rural space and pasture upon elevated landform adjacent to the Stow-on-the-Wold settlement edge. It has significant openness to views from the north and west. Development of this sensitive parcel would erode the prevailing character and cause the encroachment of the built settlement into this valued rural landscape. The parcel's value is demonstrated by its location within the AONB and its contribution to the setting of the settlement and the rural approach to it from the north and west. Due to the above factors the parcel is considered to have **High** landscape sensitivity. Significant mitigation tree planting in this location would provide Green Infrastructure benefit but is likely to harm the open High Wold character and restrict views across this valued landscape.

S66

Evaluation: **Medium**

Justification: This parcel has been previously developed with residential development which has altered the baseline context. It is not located within the development boundary of Stow but does share the residential context of the neighbouring development. The parcel is within the AONB and occupies a sensitive settlement edge location. Any redevelopment of the parcel should be within the scale of the existing development to ensure the low density transition between the rural landscape and the settlement is maintained. Due to the above factors the parcel is considered to have **Medium** landscape sensitivity.

Biodiversity

These comments are made on the basis of a desktop and site survey conducted by a qualified Town Planner in winter. Further specialist survey work may be required before the site can be allocated in the Local Plan.

Neither site is within an area with a formal nature conservation designation. However, there is an area of Priority Habitat (deciduous woodland) adjacent to the southern boundary of S66 – this connects to Abbots Wood further to the south-west. Part of the site is also modelled to be within a Great Crested Newt amber zone.

The majority of S65 comprises a field of regularly mown grass. This is unlikely to have high biodiversity value, although further assessment is required to confirm this.

Both S65 and S66 contain buildings. These may accommodate bats and further assessment would also be required to confirm this if these buildings were to be demolished or impacted on by the proposed development.

The main features of ecological interest within both sites are the trees that surround them. These may provide habitat for protected species. Although these could be retained within a well-designed scheme, further specialist assessment would be required to understand whether protected species are present and the level of impact on those species.

The site also contains a dry stone wall, which is also a feature of ecological interest.

If this site were to be developed, there is an opportunity to provide additional trees around the boundary of the site to increase green infrastructure connectivity in the area.

Trees

These comments are made on the basis of a desktop and site survey conducted by a qualified Town Planner in winter. An Arboricultural Report that accords with BS 5837:2012 would be required of any development proposal.



The eastern boundary of S65 contains seven trees with Tree Preservation Orders (TPO), which are all lime trees. There are 11 further TPO trees spread evenly along the eastern boundary, which are all beech trees with one birch tree in the north-east corner. There is also an area-wide TPO in the south-east corner of S65.

S66 contains two TPOs in the eastern part of the site – these are silver birch and beech trees.

The hedgerows running alongside the sites appear on the 1884 Ordnance survey and are therefore likely to be pre-enclosure hedges and would be considered to be important under the Hedgerows Regulations 1997. The trees and hedgerows would need to be retained and a scheme for their management and protection during development works would be required within any development proposal.

Historic Environment (excluding archaeology)

These comments are made on the basis of a desktop and site survey conducted by a qualified Town Planner. A full historic environment or heritage assessment would be required of any development proposal.

Context: The site has a very rural and agricultural context. Historic mapping shows that the field boundaries around S65 have remained largely intact over the years, although the field once extended to incorporate S66 and the adjacent Newlands Care Village. The only directions where the site is not surrounded by open countryside are from part of the eastern boundary and the south-west. The development of the site would therefore be an extension of the settlement into open countryside.

The adjacent Newlands Care Village is a complex 1990s-built 2-3 storey of Cotswold stone buildings, located around a larger care home building. There are detached 1.5 storey buildings to the east on the opposite side of Evesham Road, which are set back from the road in large gardens. Rose Cottage is a mid-20th century built Cotswold Stone building also set within a large garden.

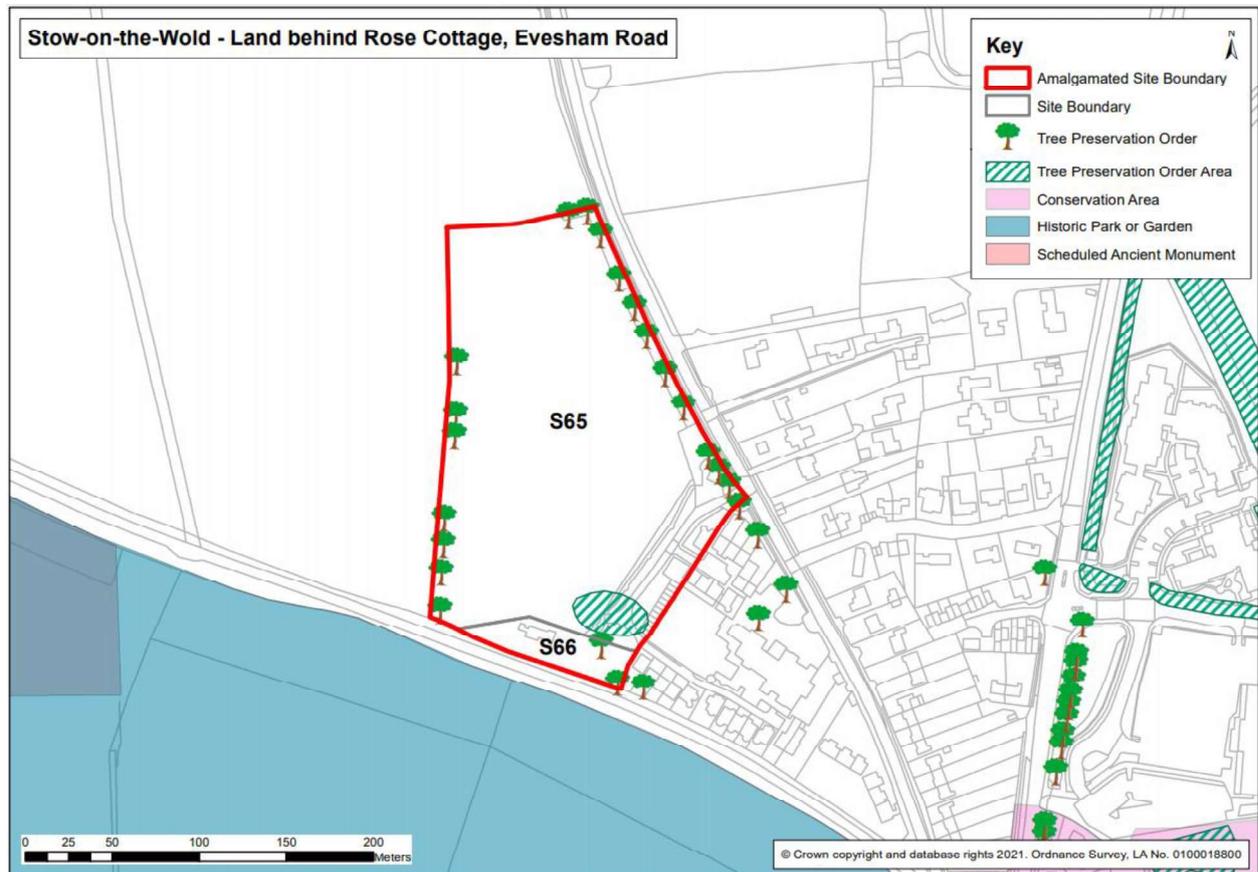
Designated heritage assets: The site does not contain any designated heritage assets. It is not located within the setting of any listed buildings. The Stow-on-the-Wold Conservation Area is located approximately 250m to the south-east of the sites but is screened by existing development and there would be no impact on the Conservation Area if the site were developed.

A Scheduled Monument is located 180m to the east of the site (Romano-British villa 350m south-east of Abbots wood). The proximity of the site to the Scheduled Monument may present some issues (e.g. increased potential for archaeology). There is also a Historic Park / Garden opposite the southern boundary.

Non-Designated heritage assets: Dry stone wall around the boundary. Evesham Road and Tewkesbury Road are both rural roads, which would become urbanised if S65 and S66 were developed, which would have a harmful impact on their character.

Heritage at risk issues: None known.

Historic Environment Constraints and Opportunities: None known



Other issues / constraints

- The Local Plan does not allocate sites for care home developments. The policies are instead permissive of new care homes outside development boundaries, subject to the other Local Plan policies and material considerations.
- The development would be considered to be 'major development within the AONB';
- Stow-on-the-Wold has had two large care developments completed in recent years. The emerging neighbourhood plan identifies an acute demographic issue in Stow – there is an aging population and the town is unable to attract or retain young people. There is a growing mass of evidence of the social and economic impacts this issue is having on the town. This development would exacerbate this issue.
- The Gloucestershire Housing with Care Strategy seeks to deliver more care in the home as opposed to building more specialist facilities and this proposal would be affected by this strategy;
- The development of either site would render the surrounding land susceptible to further development;
- A county trail (the Gloucestershire Way) runs along the southern boundary;
- Source Protection Zone; and
- Oxford / Kidlington air safeguarding area.

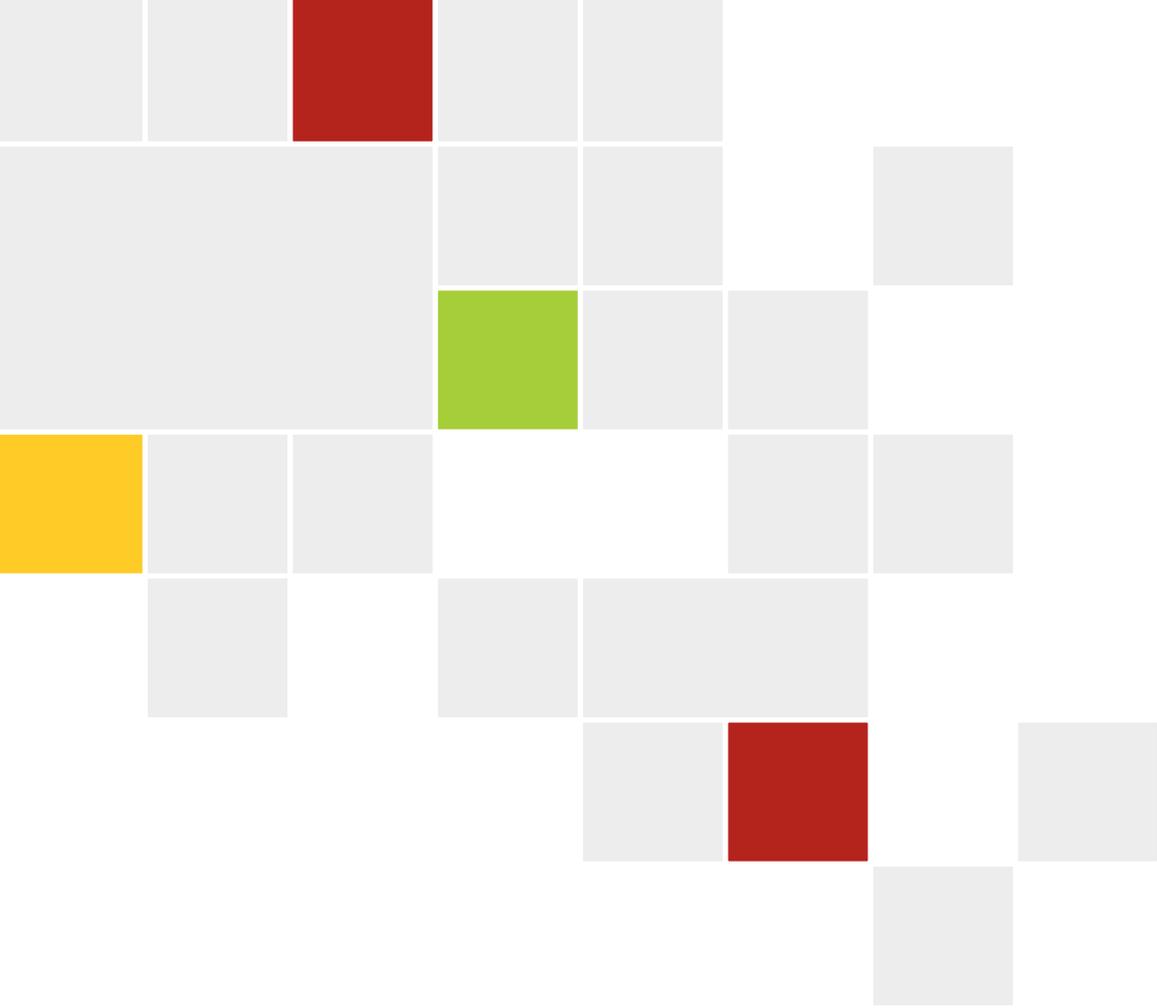
Summary

It may be possible to convert Rose Cottage into part of the wider Newlands Care Village complex. However, the development of S65 would almost certainly be classified as major development in the AONB. It would also have a significant adverse impact on the AONB. Furthermore, the development of this site would erode the character of the town and the rural setting the town sits within and would be an unacceptable extension of the settlement into open countryside.

Recommendation

S65 could potentially come forward as an extension to the care home if a planning application was made – the site does not need to be allocated in the Local Plan for this to occur.

Neither S65 and S66 are suitable for allocation in the Local Plan.



Boyer

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4th January 2024

By Email to: neighbourhood.planning@cotswold.gov.uk

Dear Sir/Madam

Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 (as amended)

Representations on the Stow-on-the-Wold and the Swells Neighbourhood Development Plan: Regulation 16 consultation

We write in connection with *Stow-on-the-Wold and the Swells Neighbourhood Development Plan* ('the Neighbourhood Plan' or 'the Plan') to submit a representation on the Regulation 16 consultation version of the Plan on behalf of the residents of Broadwell (see Appendix 1 for list). However, the representation has also been endorsed by: Broadwell Parish Council; Donnington Parish Meeting; Adlestrop Parish Meeting; Oddington Parish Council; Evenlode Parish Council; Little Rissington Parish Council and Upper Slaughter Parish Council.

1. Broadwell and Relationship to the Neighbourhood Plan

Broadwell village is an historic settlement mentioned in the Domesday Book of 1086 and designated as a Conservation Area in 1977. It has a broad village green ringed by Cotswold stone cottages, many of which are listed as buildings of special architectural and historic interest. This includes the Manor House (Grade II*) and the Church of St Paul, also Grade II* with a number of historical monuments in the churchyard listed as Grade II, II* and I. The village and the surrounding area, including Stow-on-the-Wold, lies within the Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty ('AONB') or Cotswolds National Landscape, as it is now known, designated as an exceptional landscape whose distinctive character and natural beauty are precious enough to be safeguarded in the national interest. The attractive village has a population of about 355¹ and lies approximately 1.4km from the northern edge of the Plan's Designated Neighbourhood Area, the Stow-on-the-Wold's Parish boundary and the Stow-on-the-Wold Development Boundary (Policy SSNP1 refers). The two Parish boundaries meet on the Broadwell lane from the A429 Fosse Way to the north-east of Stow-on-the-Wold.

2. Summary of Objection

The proposed allocation at "Land North East of Stow" via Policy SSNP7 of the Plan is the principal subject of this representation and the very strong objection by the residents of Broadwell and many Parish Councils to the Plan. Broadwell residents have very grave concerns about the location, scale and impact of this large, proposed allocation for approximately 170 homes – but indicated in the Plan as including a further 70 homes on land in Broadwell Parish in the future² - a community hub and a 150-space public car park due, in summary, to its significant and very harmful and damaging impact upon the Cotswolds National Landscape, heritage assets, traffic congestion, air pollution and the very qualities of the town itself. Indeed, any development on this land would be inappropriate for these and similar reasons, as set out fully in this representation.

¹ 2011 Census

² See Appendix E to the Plan & CDC Strategic Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment (2021)

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This objection should be read in conjunction with previous objections submitted at Regulation 14 and other stages of the Neighbourhood Plan-making process.

3. Context for the Representations – Basic Conditions

Provision for “Neighbourhood Planning” is made through the *Town & Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended)*, the *Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (as amended)*, the *Localism Act 2001* and the *Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 (as amended)*.

The Government’s *National Planning Policy Framework (2023)* (‘NPPF’) states that Neighbourhood Plans must meet certain ‘basic conditions’ and other legal requirements³ before they can come into force.

As indicated by Cotswold District Council (‘the District Council’) in the publication of this Regulation 16 consultation, following the consultation, all representations received will be sent to an independent examiner, along with the Plan and supporting evidence. The Examiner will then consider whether the submitted Plan meets the ‘basic conditions’ – the legal requirements that a Plan must meet in order to proceed to referendum.

The ‘basic conditions’ are set out in Paragraph 8(2) of Schedule 4B to the *Town and Country Planning Act 1990* as applied to neighbourhood plans by section 38A of the *Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004*. The ‘basic conditions’ are:

- a) having regard to national policies and advice contained in guidance issued by the Secretary of State it is appropriate to make the...neighbourhood plan;
- b) the making of the...neighbourhood plan contributes to the achievement of sustainable development;
- c) the making of the...neighbourhood plan is in general conformity with the strategic policies contained in the development plan for the area of the authority (or any part of that area);
- d) the making of the...neighbourhood plan does not breach, and is otherwise compatible with, EU obligations; and
- e) prescribed conditions are met in relation to the...plan and prescribed matters have been complied with in connection with the proposal for the neighbourhood plan.

Despite Stow-on-the-Wold Town Council taking over a decade to submit its draft Neighbourhood Plan, the residents of Broadwell [and surrounding Parishes] consider that the Plan and its policies, in particular the proposed allocation (Policy SSNP7) and development of land north-east of Stow, fail: i) to respect the special qualities of the area, especially the Cotswolds National Landscape; ii) does not represent a “shared vision” for the area that pays sufficient regard to the immediately adjacent communities; iii) does not constitute “sustainable development” and; iv) would, if progressed, be inconsistent with and undermine strategic policies in the adopted *Cotswold District Local Plan (2011-2031)* (‘Local Plan’) and the NPPF (on the National Landscape and other matters including harm to heritage assets). Such important planning matters have recently been considered by an Inspector on an appeal (APP/F1610/W/22/3311172) for a single dwelling at Redhill Farm, Redhill Farm Road, Broadwell – see Appendix 2. This was held by the Inspector to conflict with the development plan as a whole, with no material considerations, including the NPPF, that would outweigh that conflict. Therefore, the appeal was dismissed.

This decision serves to highlight the essential requirement that development complements the character of the area, does not result in the loss of open spaces which make a valuable contribution to the character and appearance of Conservation Areas and that great weight is given to conserving and enhancing the natural beauty of the AONB. This representation, this appeal decision, the

³ As set out in Paragraph 8 of Schedule 4B to the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended)

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supporting information and other matters are factors of such substance and importance that the proposed allocation (SSNP7) must be deleted from the Plan and changes made for it to proceed any further.

The representation now moves on to examine specific aspects of Policy SSNP7 of the Neighbourhood Plan that are considered to conflict with Paragraph 8(2) of Schedule 4B and the 'basic conditions' that need to be satisfied by Neighbourhood Plans.

a) **Conflict with national policies and advice contained in guidance issued by the Secretary of State**

The proposed allocation (SSNP7) lies within the Cotswolds National Landscape - a place of national importance protected for the nation's benefit - adjacent to the Stow-on-the-Wold Conservation Area and close to listed buildings and other heritage assets (designated and non-designated). Designated as an AONB in 1966 and covering 790 square miles, the Cotswolds National Landscape is the largest national landscape in the UK. The site is shown at Figure 1 outside the north-eastern edge of Stow.

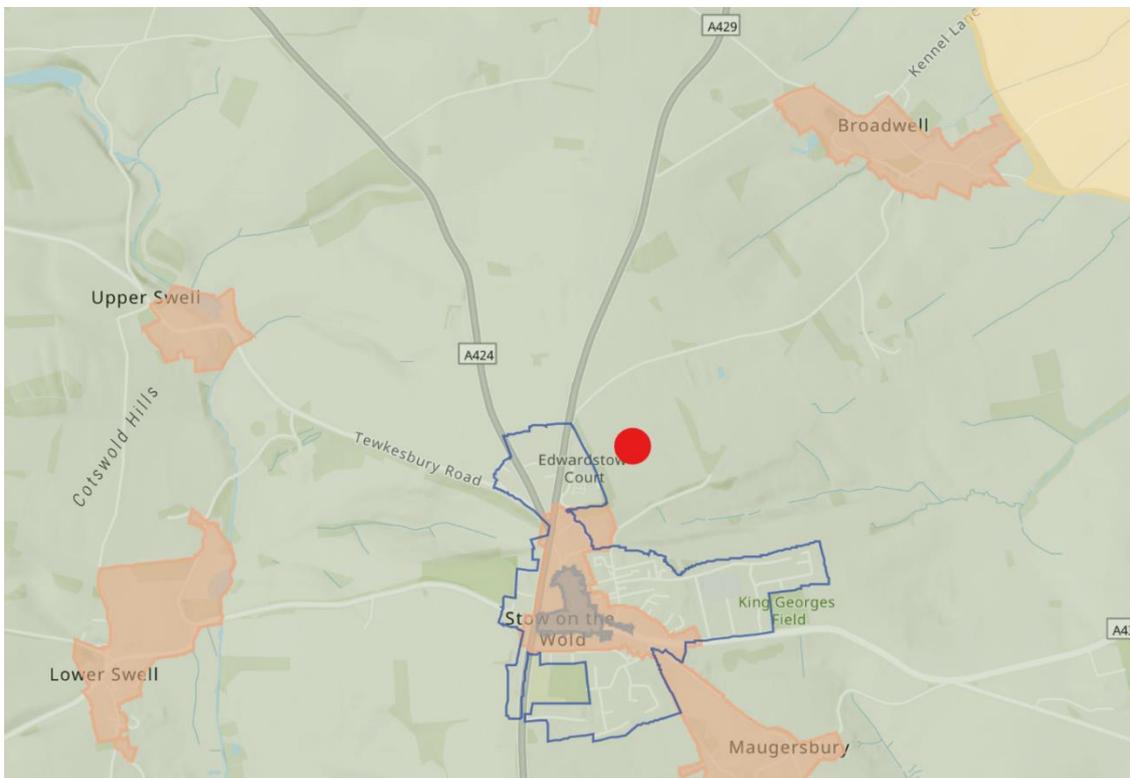


Figure 1 – Proposed SSNP7 Allocation at Stow-on-the-Wold within Cotswolds National Landscape (Green) & Conservation Area (Orange)

National Planning Policy Framework

The NPPF states at Paragraph 182:

'Great weight should be given to conserving and enhancing landscape and scenic beauty in National Parks, the Broads and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty which have the highest status of protection in relation to these issues. The conservation and enhancement of wildlife and cultural heritage are also important considerations in these areas and should be given great weight in National Parks and the Broads. The scale and extent of development within all these designated areas should be limited, while development within their setting should be sensitively located and designed to avoid or minimise adverse impacts on the designated areas.' [our emphasis]

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Paragraph 183 of the NPPF, goes on to state:

*'When considering applications for development within....Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, **permission should be refused for major development**⁴ other than in exceptional circumstances, and where it can be demonstrated that the development is in the public interest. Consideration of such applications should include an assessment of: a) the **need** for the development, including in terms of any national considerations, and the impact of permitting it, or refusing it, upon the local economy; b) the cost of, and **scope for, developing outside the designated area**, or meeting the need for it in some other way; and c) **any detrimental effect on the environment, the landscape** and recreational opportunities, and the extent to which that could be moderated.'* [our emphasis]

The *Cotswolds National Landscape Management Plan 2023-2025* includes policies regarding "major" development and states that whilst Paragraph 183 [formerly 117] of the NPPF specifically addresses the issue of major development in the context of planning permissions (i.e., as part of the development management process) legal opinion has stated that:

*'it would arguably amount to an error of law to fail to consider [paragraph 177] at the site allocations stage of plan making ... The consequence of doing so would be to risk allocating land for major development that was undeliverable because it was incapable of meeting the major development test in the NPPF'*⁵

Major Development

As such, it is appropriate to address the issue of major development at the plan-making stage as well as at the development management stage. The *Cotswolds National Landscape Management Plan 2023-2025* states that the 'Assessment of Site Allocations Against Major Development Considerations' undertaken by the South Downs National Park Authority in 2015 and 2017 as part of their Local Plan process is an excellent case study in this regard⁶.

In this document it states that one site, being proposed for 200 dwellings on a net area of 6.6 hectares **is clearly major development** by virtue of, *inter alia*, its scale, its landscape impact, its proximity to a Conservation Area and listed buildings, its archaeological potential, its proximity to ecological designations, and its impact on views. In terms of scale, however, smaller developments can be "major" development having regard to scale, proposed capacity and the local context of the settlements to which they relate.

This is consistent with the Secretary of State's decision to dismiss an appeal (APP/F1610/A/13/2203411) in March 2015 for up to 146 dwellings including access, car parking, open space, landscaping and associated works at Griffin Close, off Oddington Road, Stow-on-the-Wold, GL54 1AL. At this time, it was estimated by the Cotswolds Conservation Board that the number of dwellings applied for at Griffin Close would increase the housing stock in Stow by more than 10%. With 170 dwellings proposed to be allocated on land to the north-east of Stow via Policy SSNP7 of the Plan, this is likely to be similar. With a population of 1,905 in Stow, 170 new dwellings would increase the population by 408⁷, which is a 21% increase. To add a further 70 dwellings in Broadwell Parish would mean a 30% increase. This is significant and therefore "major" as a result of its scale in the local context of this small hilltop market town, its landscape sensitivity, use of agricultural land, location outside the built-up limits of Stow and its other environmental constraints. This is without factoring in the other development proposed for the site at Broadwell Lane and its environmental impacts, which is not covered by the Plan being outside the "Designated Plan Area".

⁴ For the purposes of paragraphs 182 and 183 of the NPPF, whether a proposal is 'major development' is a matter for the decision maker, taking into account its nature, scale and setting, and whether it could have a significant adverse impact on the purposes for which the area has been designated or defined.

⁵ Landmark Chambers (2017) In the matter of the South Downs National Park and in the matter of paragraph 116 of the NPPF – see Appendix 1

⁶ [SDNP-Major-Sites-Assessment-Report.pdf \(southdowns.gov.uk\)](https://www.southdowns.gov.uk/SDNP-Major-Sites-Assessment-Report.pdf)

⁷ Using the national average household size of 2.4 persons

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Exceptional Circumstances

As set out in the legal opinion (see Appendix 3 and above), with this being a “major” development it is appropriate to consider and apply Paragraph 183 of the NPPF. This is clear that major development should not be countenanced other than in exceptional circumstances, and where it can be demonstrated that the development is in the public interest. We therefore assess Policy SSNP7 of the Plan against the three bullet points set out in Paragraph 183:

a) the need for the development, including in terms of any national considerations, and the impact of permitting it, or refusing it, upon the local economy

It is acknowledged that the NPPF seeks to significantly boost the supply of housing across the country. However, this is already being achieved in both Cotswold District and Stow-on-the-Wold.

Five-Year Housing Land Supply to 2028

As required by the NPPF, Cotswold District has a supply of specific deliverable sites above its housing requirement for the five-year period 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2028. Taking account of a 5% buffer, the District can demonstrate a supply of 6.9 years’ worth of deliverable housing sites.⁸

Meeting Local Plan Housing Requirement

The District Council also estimates that 9,671 dwellings will be delivered in the District over the period of the adopted *Local Plan*. This is 115% of the 8,400 dwelling housing requirement. This will significantly boost the supply of housing whilst also providing sufficient flexibility to ensure that the District’s housing requirement is delivered in full over the Plan period.

Housing Delivery Test

Cotswold District also passes the Housing Delivery Test. In the 2021 measurement, the District had delivered 1,074 dwellings. When measured against a residual housing requirement of 848 dwellings, the Housing Delivery Test score was 127% so no action is needed.

Stow-on-the-Wold

According to the Inspector’s Report⁹ on the *Cotswold District Local Plan (2011-2031)* the distribution of new housing development between Principal Settlements – which includes Stow-on-the-Wold – was likely to result in 235 dwellings in Stow. The *Cotswold Housing Land Supply Report – August 2023* reports that 255 dwellings had been provided in the town by March 2023, with an extant permission for 5 dwellings and likely future “windfall” development of some 34 dwellings, meaning 294 dwellings being provided in the Plan period to 2031. Therefore, the housing expected to be provided in Stow through the Local Plan has already been met and is expected to be exceeded by 59 homes or 25% of the Local Plan “allowance” for Stow. The proposal – for 170 additional homes [or 240 homes if including the other land at Broadwell lane] – would more than double the dwellings anticipated at Stow over the Local Plan period, contrary to the spatial strategy and principles of sustainable development.

Neighbourhood Plan

The NPPF (Paragraph 67) states that strategic policies should set out a housing requirement for designated neighbourhood areas, which reflects the overall strategy for the pattern and scale of development and any relevant allocation. Paragraph 68 adds that this is to take into account factors such as the latest evidence of local housing need, the population of the neighbourhood area and the most recently available planning strategy of the local planning authority.

⁸ Cotswold District Council Housing Land Supply Report – August 2023

⁹ Report on the Examination of the Cotswold District Local Plan 2011-2031, 5th June 2018

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The Neighbourhood Plan at Appendix F recognises that the Town Council has understood that there is no 'top down' driver for the Neighbourhood Plan making site allocation proposals for the Plan period to 2031, either at Stow or in the Swells. In this regard, the District Council considers any 'indicative housing figure' (as per §67/68 of the NPPF) to be zero.

The Neighbourhood Plan clearly sets out the motivation for the allocation (SSNP7) in the following paragraph in Appendix F of the Plan:

'However, early community engagement work during 2018 and 2019 indicated that many in the town were growing concerned at the problems of traffic congestion, the dominance of tourism in the local economy, the inadequate provision of modern community facilities and worsening access to affordable housing. In response, the Town Council determined to explore options for allocating land to address these matters, recognising the significant constraints imposed by the Cotswolds AONB designation across the whole of its area.'

This and the other evidence set out above totally confirms that:

- 1) the District Council and the statutory Development Plan is not in a position where it needs to release further sites for open market housing; and
- 2) that there is absolutely no need for the proposed residential development of 170 dwellings to the north-east of Stow – with a further 70 dwellings to follow - which is clearly driving the proposed allocation of the site via the Neighbourhood Plan.

We understand that the Town Council has other ambitions for the town (e.g. provision of modern community facilities, supported by Policy S13 of the Local Plan) but these must not, cannot and do not, in our opinion, justify the allocation of 10 hectares of land in the Cotswolds National Landscape for 170 dwellings and related development, with a likely total of 240 homes on 13 hectares.

Indeed, other than through land ownership, we question the relationship of the proposed residential development to the provision of local community facilities and provision of a 150-space public car park, which is likely to be contrary to Paragraph 57 of the NPPF and the *Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations 2010* since the other elements included in the allocation are: a) not necessary to make the [residential] development acceptable in planning terms; b) not directly related to the [residential] development; and c) not fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind to the [residential] development.

Affordable Housing

We can appreciate the benefits that affordable housing would bring to the town. However, once again we do not see this as constituting "exceptional circumstances" for unnecessary and harmful development in the AONB/National Landscape.

The *Stow-on-the-Wold and the Swells Neighbourhood Plan Housing Needs Assessment (HNA) March 2022* identifies a need for 37 affordable homes over the Plan-period.

However, Application No. 23/01513/FUL for the erection of 37 affordable dwellings and associated works at Oddington Road, Stow-on-the-Wold was resolved to be approved by the District Council at its Planning & Licensing Committee meeting on 13th December 2023, subject to a s106 planning obligation. This will not only meet the need for 37 affordable homes over the Plan period (2021-2031) but also accords with the adopted Local Plan (Policy H3) being a "Rural Exception Site". The District Council's report on this application includes the following summary from the Forward Plans Team:

'The application site offers an opportunity to secure the delivery of 37 affordable homes now. The proposed scale of development is smaller and the development proposal would be less harmful to the AONB than the emerging NDP allocation. Furthermore, given the degree of objection from the Local Planning Authority and Cotswold National Landscape, the emerging NDP would require

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significant revisions before it could be deemed to be in general conformity with the Local Plan; a requirement of the Neighbourhood Plan making process.'

Local Economy

In terms of the effect upon the local economy, the appeal dismissed at Griffin Close considered this matter and concluded that:

- there was no compelling evidence that there was an urgent need to meet the housing target
- that Stow town centre is healthy and vibrant
- the commitments identified by the Local Plan will meet housing requirements
- tourism is crucial to the long term economic prosperity of Stow
- the high quality of the town's environment has been a key factor in its economic success
- enhancing the town centre further by reducing congestion would be a benefit and
- it is vital to ensure that the town's setting and historic character are maintained.

The Inspector and the Secretary of State both concluded that the proposal at Griffin Close would harm the setting of Stow. The proposal [at Griffin Close] was smaller, further from the town, the Fosse Way and its heritage assets and in a less harmful location in the AONB than the proposed allocation (SSNP7) in the Neighbourhood Plan. It was concluded that it would also be likely to have an adverse effect on tourism and thereby, the local economy and also add to congestion. Overall, it was concluded by the Inspector and Secretary of State that the Griffin Close scheme would be unlikely to provide a significant benefit to the local economy. We have no reason to believe anything has changed and conclude the same about the proposed allocation in the Neighbourhood Plan on such matters.

b) the cost of, and scope for, developing outside the designated area, or meeting the need for it in some other way;

Firstly, as set out above there is no need for further residential development in Stow. Any affordable housing need will be met by the 37 new homes at Oddington Road (App. No. 23/01513/FUL).

Secondly, the whole of the Designated Neighbourhood Area lies within the AONB/National Landscape.

Thirdly, subject to need, there could be alternatives to the proposed allocation, which would have much less significant landscape and visual effects than those associated with the proposed allocation.

This is recognised in the District Council's *Stow-on-the-Wold Site Assessments Strategic Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment (2021)*. This Assessment was of a larger site (S61) at the time – see Figure 2 overleaf. The proposed Neighbourhood Plan allocation excludes land in the north-east quadrant of S61 as this lies within Broadwell Parish and outside the Designated Neighbourhood Area so cannot be included. However, it is clear from the "Draft Indicative Layout" of the proposal provided by Bloor Homes and Appendix E of the Plan that this land will come forward for development [70 additional dwellings is mentioned] at some point in the future – if the Neighbourhood Plan progresses – adding to all the adverse impacts, landscape and heritage harm, traffic congestion, air pollution and highway safety issues set out in this representation.

The District Council's Assessment of the S61 site included the following:

*'The site is on the same side of Stow at the refused planning permission for up to 146 dwellings on the land east of Griffin Close (13/01856/OUT), which subsequently had an appeal dismissed (APP/F1610/A/13/2203411). All parties at the appeal agreed that the land east of Griffin Close [also referred to as Oddington Road] scheme was major development in the AONB. With S61, the development would also be considered to be 'major development within the AONB'. The scale of development would be considerably larger than the land east of Griffin Close site (i.e. S61 proposes 350 dwellings on a 13.1ha site as opposed to 146 dwellings on a 7.5ha site at land east of Griffin Close). Additionally, the development of S61 would be **more harmful to the AONB** for various reasons, including that S61 is also **on higher ground than the Griffin Close site and is more***

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visible within the surrounding landscape; the development would harm the rural setting of a Scheduled Monument; it would harm the setting of the Conservation Area; and it would harm the settings of a Grade I listed building and a Grade II listed building. It is noteworthy that the land east of Griffin Close site was also refused at a time when the Council was unable to demonstrate a five-year housing land supply.' [our emphasis].

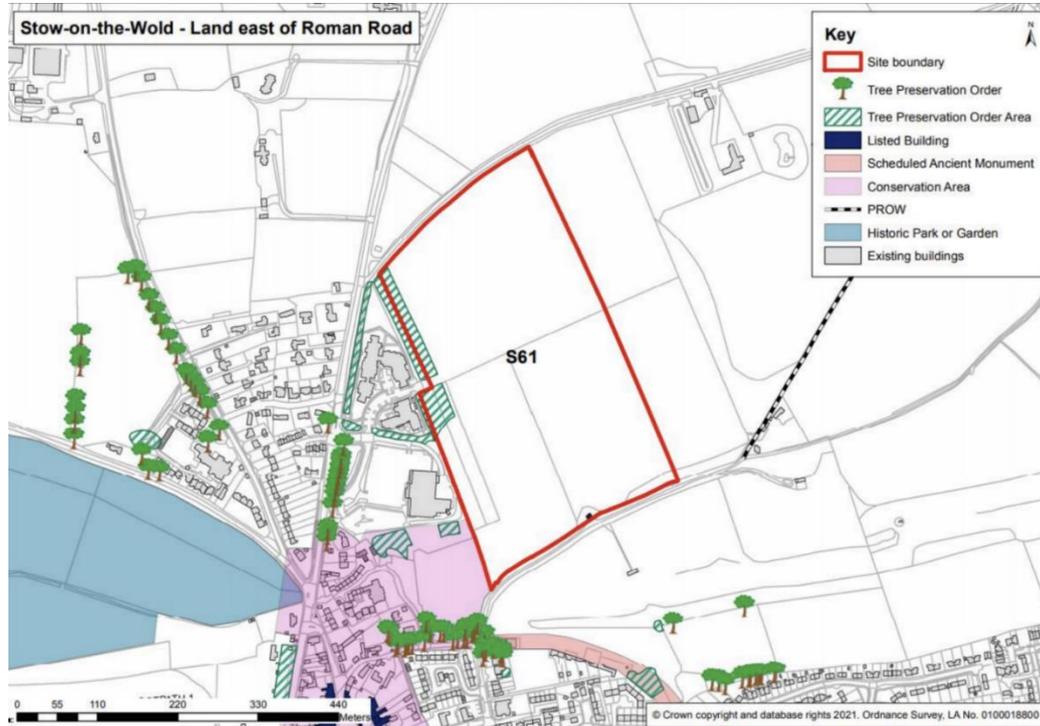


Figure 2 – S61 - Stow-on-the-Wold Site Assessments Strategic Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment (2021)

As with the first test, the proposed allocation (SSNP7) to the north-east of Stow and east of the Fosse Way (A429) clearly fails the second test in the NPPF.

c) any detrimental effect on the environment, the landscape and recreational opportunities, and the extent to which that could be moderated

The *Cotswolds AONB Landscape Character Assessment*¹⁰ indicates that Stow is unique in the Cotswolds, being a small town situated on the High Wold Plateau, Landscape Character Type (LCT): 7C. The

The *Cotswold AONB Landscape Strategy and Guidelines* state that the High Wold comprises a broad, elevated, gently undulating plateau dissected by a network of dry valleys with distinctive convex profiles. It is an expansive, large-scale landscape with long views and an impression of cohesion that belies its fragmentation. Land use is predominantly arable, with a limited amount of permanent and improved pasture. Fields are large and regular. Small plantations and shelterbelts form a part of this geometric pattern. Although there is much evidence of occupation since ancient times, settlement is sparse and generally limited to small villages, hamlets and isolated farmsteads, linked by roads following the ridge tops. The one exception is the town of Stow-on-the-Wold sitting at 230m above sea level on a tongue of High Wold.

¹⁰ P6 Appendix 16 and P2 page 27

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In terms of landscape sensitivity, the *Landscape Strategy and Guidelines* add that despite its predominantly agricultural character, the wide, elevated, gently undulating plateau landscape retains a strong sense of remoteness and tranquillity contributing to its high sensitivity. Wide panoramic views, a high degree of inter-visibility, and limited woodland cover also add to the sensitivity of the High Wold landscape to development.

The District Council's Assessment of S61 in the *Stow-on-the-Wold Site Assessments Strategic Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment (2021)* is especially apposite and although relating to a larger site it is equally relevant to the consideration of the proposed allocation in the Neighbourhood Plan for the reasons set out, viz:

'This parcel is susceptible to development due to its rural character and location within the Cotswolds AONB. It has openness to views from the east and would also impact upon views from the north and south. Development of this sensitive parcel would erode the prevailing character and cause the encroachment of the built settlement into this valued rural landscape. The parcel's value is demonstrated by its location within the AONB and its contribution to the setting of the Conservation Area that is present to the south-west and the approach to the settlement. This approach to the settlement from the east is recognised along a publicly accessible rural lane that also forms part of the promoted walking route known as The Monarch's Way. St Edward's Well is a listed structure present along this walking route to the south of the parcel and contributes to the tranquil experience enjoyed along this lane.'

This is illustrated by the photograph of the site taken from Broadwell Lane shown as Figure 3 whilst Figure 4 shows the allocation site from close to the junction of the A429 with Broadwell lane.



Figure 3 – View of Proposed Allocation Site from Broadwell Lane (Taken 16/12/23)



Figure 4 – View of Proposed Allocation from Broadwell Lane near A429

The site is very sensitive to development by reason of its location as an important open, rural space and large tract of agricultural land to the north-east of Stow on the northern approach to the town.

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It is – as with Stow-on-the-Wold – sited on a hilltop, so very open to the north, south and east, with wide sweeping views across the Cotswolds landscape towards Oddington, Adlestrop, Cornwell, Chastleton and Kingham.

The site's value is demonstrated by its location within the AONB/National Landscape and its significant contribution to the setting of Stow, the Conservation Area and approach to the settlement. Development here would extend the settlement out into attractive open countryside, on productive Grade 3 agricultural land and would be highly visible. See Figure 5 for the Draft Indicative Layout plan.



Figure 5 – Proposed Allocation – Draft Indicative Layout

The site is on the same side of Stow and A429 as the refused proposal for up to 146 dwellings on the land east of Griffin Close site, which subsequently had an appeal dismissed. In this appeal decision the Inspector concluded:

'...the proposal would have a significant adverse effect on the character and appearance of the AONB and the setting of Stow. In this respect it would not conserve the landscape or scenic beauty of the AONB, contrary to the aims of the Framework [i.e. NPPF].'

The Secretary of State agreed with the Inspector and stated *'that this is a matter which weighs heavily against the grant of planning permission'*.

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This allocation would be even more harmful to the AONB/National Landscape than the land east of Griffin Close site. The site is on higher ground than the Griffin Close site and is more visible within the surrounding landscape close to the historic core and a number of heritage assets. Stow is a hilltop town and development in this location would not be in keeping with the settlement pattern. The scale of development on the hilltop and slopes would erode the character of the town, as well the rural setting in which the town sits. It would adversely affect the intrinsic value of the AONB/National Landscape and would have a "high" landscape impact. This was the assessment of the District Council when appraising S61. It still applies. We wholeheartedly support the assessment.

The District Council also concluded that the development of this land would harm the rural setting of the Stow Camp Scheduled Monument, the setting of the Conservation Area, the settings of a Grade I listed building and a Grade II listed building and non-designated heritage assets. See Appendix 4 for full assessment.

There are also the transport, congestion, pollution and climate change environmental impacts addressed more fully later in this representation. The proposed allocation is in the worst possible location in terms of exacerbating the already unsatisfactory transport and congestion problems in Stow. The Plan also contains no meaningful or effective proposals to address these problems. The traffic impact will be considerable and the scope for improvement is limited both on the A429 and at Broadwell lane, where a single access serving 240 dwellings, community hub and 150-space car park is unsatisfactory and unsafe. In short, the NPPF requirement for a 'safe and suitable access for all users' cannot be achieved and the cumulative impacts on the road network are likely to be severe, contrary to Paragraph 115 of the NPPF.

In summary on this NPPF test, the proposed allocation in the Plan would have a number of serious and harmful detrimental effects upon the environment, the landscape, heritage assets and other matters, which could not be adequately mitigated or moderated. As the Secretary of State said on the appeal decision for the Griffin Close proposal, any environmental and recreational opportunity benefits would be relatively minor overall, whereas the landscape harm would be considerable. This applies even more to the allocation site, for all the reasons set out.

For all of these reasons, the proposed allocation SSNP7 and the Neighbourhood Plan fail the first 'basic condition' because, having regard to national policies and advice contained in guidance issued by the Secretary of State it is not appropriate to make the neighbourhood plan as proposed.

b) the making of the...neighbourhood plan fails to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development

The principle of "sustainable development" is at the heart of the NPPF and underpins the adopted Local Plan. In attractive rural areas like Cotswold District with a nationally important landscape and heritage considerations a balance has to be struck in order to achieve sustainable development, accommodating some modest growth whilst having regard to the high quality of the built and natural environment and the need to avoid long distance commuting and therefore longer journeys by private motor vehicles, which add to carbon emissions and exacerbate climate change.

The spatial development strategy in the adopted Local Plan reflects the particular geography and character of the district and seeks to ensure that objectively assessed development needs are met primarily in a number of large towns and defined Principal Settlements in a manner which protects the high quality of the built and natural environment. The larger settlements of Cirencester, Tetbury, Bourton-on-the-Water and Moreton-in-Marsh, all of which contain key centres in the retail hierarchy, are to accommodate a significant amount of housing development over the Plan period. However, heritage assets, the nature of the surrounding landscape, and other environmental considerations mean that development opportunities are limited in and around certain settlements, including Stow-on-the-Wold.

As indicated above, the Local Plan's housing strategy is being delivered effectively in settlements where there is access to shops, services, jobs and other facilities and opportunities to travel other than by car.

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This helps avoid commuting, congestion, pollution, climate change and harming the environment whilst also helping to address the *Climate Change Emergency* declared by the Council in July 2019. This approach to housing and the spatial development strategy for Cotswold District is considered to be wholly in accordance with the NPPF to ensure growth is delivered in the most sustainable manner. It was found sound by the Inspector examining the Local Plan in June 2018 and has been supported by Inspectors at subsequent appeals.

Stow has a Primary School but no Secondary School so children would have to travel to Bourton-on-the-Water or Chipping Campden by bus or by car adding to vehicle movements, congestion, pollution and climate change issues. The level of development set for the town in the Local Plan was appropriate for its level of services and sustainability. To double this would not be sustainable.

The NPPF states that Plans should apply a presumption in favour of sustainable development. For plan-making this means that: a) all plans should promote a sustainable pattern of development that seeks to: meet the development needs of their area; align growth and infrastructure; improve the environment; mitigate climate change (including by making effective use of land in urban areas) and adapt to its effects. The proposed allocation in the Neighbourhood Plan fails in all of these requirements. It constitutes "major" development in the AONB/National Landscape and is in conflict with both the NPPF and the Cotswold Local Plan. This means that:

- a) the presumption in favour of sustainable development is to be applied through the application of the 'specific policy' on the AONB, with reference to Paragraph 11, Footnote 7 of the NPPF; and
- b) exceptional circumstances must be shown to justify the allocation and it must be demonstrably in the public interest, with reference to Paragraph 183 of the NPPF.

If the allocation meets this test, it will be sustainable development; if it does not, it will not be. Exceptional circumstances necessary to justify this major development in the AONB do not exist and the allocation and the making of the Plan would not be in the public interest. The Plan and the allocation do not therefore constitute "sustainable development" and therefore fail this vitally important second 'basic condition' test.

c) the making of the...neighbourhood plan is not in general conformity with the strategic policies contained in the development plan for the area of the authority (or any part of that area)

This has largely been addressed in the preceding paragraphs. However, in summary, the proposed allocation and Neighbourhood Plan would not be in general conformity with the strategic policies in the Cotswold Local Plan for the following reasons:

1. It would conflict with Policy DS1 (Development Strategy) by proposing a large, disproportionate and unsustainable amount of additional residential development at one of the Principal Settlements that is heavily constrained by environmental and heritage designations and incapable of accommodating such a significant amount of growth on an exposed hilltop and sloping valley site without resulting in harm to the nationally-important landscape, the wider environment and heritage assets and leading to greater use of the private car, out-commuting, additional carbon emissions, pollution and adverse impacts upon climate change.
2. It would conflict with Policy DS2 (Development within Development Boundaries) on a site that has been judged by the District Council to be unsuitable for residential development – see Appendix 3.
3. It would be contrary to Policy DS4 which states that new-build open market housing will not be permitted outside Principal [and Non-Principal Settlements] unless it is in accordance with other policies that expressly deal with residential development in such locations [which does not apply]. This would undermine the principles of restraint and protection of the countryside for its own sake.

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4. Conflict with Policy EN1 (Built, Natural and Historic Environment) as it does not promote the protection, conservation and enhancement of the historic and natural environment.
5. Conflict with Policy EN4 (The wider natural and historic landscape) as it will have a significant detrimental impact on the natural and historic landscape (including the tranquillity of the countryside) of this part of Cotswold District. This includes the Cotswolds AONB/National Landscape. Paragraph 10.4.10 of the Local Plan states that a particularly important issue for the AONB is the conservation and enhancement of the setting of historic settlements. This includes individual farmsteads, as well as towns and villages. Development pressure over recent decades has resulted in some inappropriately designed and located modern developments that have had a detrimental impact on the edges of settlements. This is in danger of being repeated with the proposed allocation of SSNP7 in the Neighbourhood Plan.
6. Conflict with Policy EN5 (Cotswolds AONB) which states that the conservation and enhancement of the natural beauty of the landscape, its character and special qualities will be given great weight. For the reasons set out in this representation there would be a serious breach of this policy if the proposed allocation and Neighbourhood Plan were to progress any further. As some of the most sensitive landscapes in the country these areas are particularly vulnerable to the effects of development and change. Many of the key issues for the Cotswolds AONB are outlined in the *Cotswolds National Landscape Management Plan (2023-2025)*, produced by the Cotswolds Conservation Board in consultation with its partners, including Cotswold District Council. As a material consideration in preparation of the Local Plan, relevant policies within the *Management Plan* are reflected in Local Plan policies.
7. Conflict with Policy EN10 (Historic environment: designated heritage assets) and Policy EN11 (Conservation Areas) because of the impact upon the setting of the Conservation Area, listed buildings and other heritage assets.

Section 72(1) of the *Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990* obliges the local planning authority to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of a conservation area. Section 66 (1) applies to listed buildings. Paragraph 205 of the NPPF states that when considering the potential impact of a proposal on the significance of a designated heritage asset (e.g. a listed building or conservation area), great weight should be given to the asset's conservation. Paragraph 200 clarifies that significance can also be harmed through alteration or development within the setting. The proposed allocation would harm both designated and non-designated heritage assets being a large 10-hectare site resulting in physical and visual intrusion into the open views of the surrounding countryside from such assets, which are part of the intrinsic character of the site and the town's attractive hilltop and valley surroundings.

8. Conflict with Policies INF3 (Sustainable Transport) and INF4 (Highway Safety).

The A429 is a major road running from Junction 17 of the M4 Motorway near Chippenham in Wiltshire to Coventry in the West Midlands, and for much of its route follows the Roman Fosse Way. It passes through the Cotswolds and via many of its towns including Cirencester, Stow-on-the-Wold, Moreton-in-Marsh, Warwick and Kenilworth. It therefore carries heavy goods vehicles and considerable amount of local, tourist and other traffic. There is often considerable traffic congestion on the main roads leading into, and through Stow, particularly in the peak tourist holiday periods. This is bound to have a detrimental impact upon the vital tourist trade but also upon residents and businesses in the town and surrounding villages and would be exacerbated by the traffic generated by the proposed allocation (SSNP7), especially as it is located just off the A429 Fosse Way, the source of the congestion. This congestion manifests itself most prominently in long queues on the main access roads: all the way up the hill on the A429 south of the Unicorn junction in the centre of Stow; on the approaches on the A429 from the north leading to the Tesco traffic lights; on the A436 from the east leading up to the Unicorn junction; on the A424 Evesham road where it joins the Upper Swell Road at the traffic light junction with the A429 to the north of the Unicorn junction; and, in between the A429 traffic lights.

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This heavy congestion and the considerable delays it causes are detrimental to the town, local residents, businesses and air quality with "rat-running", danger to pedestrians, erosion of verges and harmful emissions.

In addition, the proposed 150-space car park to be located within the allocation will not address the deficiency of car parking in the square in Stow-on-the-Wold, which is used by local residents as a daily hub for convenience shopping, the pharmacy, post office, etc. and will continue to adversely affect local businesses in the town.

The primary transport route is the A429 Fosse Way, which carries by far the greatest level of through traffic. See Figure 6 for a snapshot in time. Experience is much worse in the summer.



Figure 6 – Traffic Congestion on the A429 Fosse Way (16/12/23)

With car ownership levels of 670 per 1,000 people in Cotswold District¹¹, the allocation for 170 dwellings would result in 408 residents¹² producing some 273 vehicles at the residential development, not including traffic associated with the community building and 150-space car park.

Due to the distance from places of work it is most probable that future occupants of the residential development would have employment over a wide dispersed area of the Cotswolds and beyond. Also with a remote location from the Primary School, the Doctor's Surgery, Secondary Schools and anything other than the Tesco supermarket, residents and visitors to the proposed allocation will all be car dependent, adding to congestion, pollution and highway safety issues and highlighting its unsustainability.

Few if any would travel by public transport given the location of the site and because the choice and variety of destinations served by/from the public transport readily accessible from Stow is very limited. This will inevitably increase the use of the private car and fail to meet all of the NPPF's requirements for minimising journey lengths, promoting sustainable development and planning development in locations and ways that reduce carbon emissions and exacerbate climate change.

There is also the risk to highway and pedestrian safety from turning traffic on and off the A429 from and towards Broadwell via a junction with awkward geometry – see Figure 7 - given the amount of traffic generated by the proposed allocation in addition to the considerable traffic already visiting tourist attractions in Stow or passing along the Fosse Way.

¹¹ RAC Foundation (2012) based upon 2001 and 2011 Census data

¹² Assuming a household size of 2.4 persons per dwelling

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Figure 7 – Junction of Broadwell lane with A429

At present there are often long tailbacks along the A429 and adjacent roads in and around the Unicorn junction in Stow. Under these conditions it is difficult to enter the traffic flow from side roads due to congestion caused by the traffic levels and the various sets of traffic lights. As traffic builds up, there is pollution and the Council's air quality monitoring¹³ in 2021 of nitrogen dioxide (NO₂) levels at the Unicorn junction, showed that in 6 out of 12 months across the year there was an exceedance of the average used for nitrogen dioxide levels, which is assessed for compliance with the National Air Quality Objective of 40 ug/m³, set to protect health. The worst figure was 55 ug/m³ in September 2021.

Paragraph 29 of the NPPF states that Neighbourhood Plans should not promote less development than set out in the strategic policies for the area or undermine those strategic policies. This is to avoid a district failing to meet its objectively assessed needs for development. However, the NPPF does not state that Neighbourhood Plans should promote more development than set out in the Development Plan and Neighbourhood Plans do not have to allocate sites for development although many have and continue to do so.

As indicated above, the strategic policies in the Development Plan were found 'sound' following a detailed examination in 2018 and the Local Plan adopted in August 2018. The Local Plan is operating effectively and is delivering or facilitating the delivery of the necessary market and affordable housing so far and on track to exceed the housing requirement in the Plan period to 2031 in line with the spatial development strategy and NPPF to achieve sustainable development.

The District Council is partially updating its Local Plan and has reached 'Issues and Options' stage identifying the matters that the Local Plan needs to respond to. It would be inappropriate and

¹³ CDC - 2022 Air Quality Annual Status Report (ASR)

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unnecessary for the Neighbourhood Plan to seek to try and deal with “strategic” matters in a Neighbourhood Plan that fails to pay proper regard to the spatial development strategy in the Local Plan and conflicts with national policy guidance in the NPPF on the AONB/National Landscape and sustainable development.

d) the making of the...neighbourhood plan does not breach, and is otherwise compatible with, EU obligations

We have no comments on this ‘basic condition’ so leave the assessment of compliance, or otherwise, with this requirement to the District Council and/or the appointed Examiner.

e) prescribed conditions are met in relation to the...plan and prescribed matters have been complied with in connection with the proposal for the neighbourhood plan

We have no comments on this ‘basic condition’ so leave the assessment of compliance, or otherwise, with this requirement to the District Council and/or the appointed Examiner.

4. Summary & Conclusions

In conclusion, we consider that there are many reasons why the proposed allocation (SSNP7) and the Stow-on-the-Wold Neighbourhood Plan fail to meet the ‘basic conditions’ in the legislation. It should not proceed any further, certainly not to examination or referendum, without significant revisions – including the deletion of Policy SSNP7 – to address the conflict with national policies and advice, be in general conformity with the Local Plan and contribute towards sustainable development, all important requirements of the Neighbourhood Plan-making process, which it fails to achieve.

The reasons for this, in summary, are:

1. The proposed allocation is major development in the Cotswolds National Landscape but fails to demonstrate the necessary exceptional circumstances and the development is not in the public interest.
2. There is a 5-year housing land supply in the district, the Local Plan is on track to deliver and exceed its housing requirement in the Plan-period and the District has satisfied its Housing Delivery Test.
3. The housing expected to be provided in Stow has been met and is expected to be exceeded by 59 homes or 25% of the Local Plan “allowance” for Stow.
4. The proposal – for 170 additional homes [or 240 homes if including the other land at Broadwell lane] – would more than double the dwellings anticipated at Stow over the Local Plan period, contrary to the spatial strategy and principles of sustainable development.
5. In short, there is absolutely no need to release further sites for open market housing.
6. The affordable housing need should be met by the recent “approval” at Oddington Road (23/01513/FUL).
7. The allocation would be likely to have an adverse effect on tourism and thereby, the local economy and add to congestion.
8. The site is very sensitive to development due to its location as an important open, rural space and large tract of agricultural land to the north-east of Stow on the northern approach to the town. It is very open to the north, south and east, with wide sweeping views across the Cotswolds landscape towards Oddington, Adlestrop, Cornwell, Chastleton and Kingham.

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9. The site's value is demonstrated by its location within the AONB/National Landscape and its significant contribution to the setting of Stow, the Conservation Area and approach to the settlement.
10. The allocation would extend the settlement out into attractive open countryside, on productive Grade 3 agricultural land and would be highly visible.
11. The adverse landscape impact upon the AONB/National Landscape would be considerable and very damaging and harmful to this nationally important landscape.
12. The Plan and allocation do not promote a sustainable pattern of development that aligns growth and infrastructure, improves the environment, reduces travel or mitigates climate change.
13. The allocation, in short, does not qualify as a location for sustainable development.
14. The site makes a significant contribution to the setting of the Conservation Area, other heritage assets and the approach to the settlement and would be harmed substantially by the proposed allocation.
15. The allocation would materially worsen traffic congestion and long delays on the main roads leading into, and through Stow, particularly in the peak tourist holiday periods, leading to a detrimental impact upon the vital tourist trade but also upon residents and businesses in the town and surrounding villages.
16. This will be likely to worsen air quality and increase pollution from nitrogen dioxide (NO₂) from vehicles queuing on the A429 and adjacent roads around the Unicorn junction.
17. The Plan and allocation would undermine the development strategy for the area.
18. It would be inappropriate for the Neighbourhood Plan to try and deal with "strategic" matters in a way that fails to pay proper regard to the spatial development strategy in the Local Plan and conflicts with national policy guidance in the NPPF on the AONB/National Landscape and sustainable development.

We hope that these representations are of assistance and look forward to the Council's response and the opportunity to comment on any future stages of the preparation of the Neighbourhood Plan in 2024. However, if you have any queries, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours faithfully,

Duncan Chadwick
Managing Director
Chadwick Town Planning Limited

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APPENDIX 1 - ENDORSING INDIVIDUALS/RESIDENTS OF BROADWELL

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Tim Tasker
Emily Tasker
Gavin Burtonwood
Kate Burtonwood
Tony Leonard
Antigone Dean
Rebecca Ross
Ben Ross
Georgina Thorley
Giles Thorley
Robin Williams
Fiona Williams
Henry Ashton
Emma Ashton
Henry Kenner
Deidre Boyle
Andy McGregor
Stella Morris
Nicola Akers
Eloise Duckworth
Juliet Jones
Colin Gibson
Vanessa Gibson
Chris Wheeler
Anna Wheeler
Nicky Noorani
Asad Noorani
Caspar Gilroy

Georgina Gilroy
Sally Ashurst
William Neill
Keith Fell
John Curtis
Alison Curtis
David Hedges
Rosalind Hedges
Muriel Williams
Valerie Collins
Margrit Hudson
David Hudson
Anna Wodzianskii
Simon Yeats
Angela Bell
Michael Bell
Victoria Heselton
Margaret Turner
Jane Malloy
Catherine Malloy
Michael Molloy
Adriana Sanchez Reyes
John Forbes Campbell
Helen McNeill
David Walker
Judith Walker
Lucye Deacon
Harold Porter

Frances Dodwell
Chris Caulkin
Laura Caulkin
Michelle Harle
Roger Harle
Dan Baring
Andy Lucas
Shy Robson
David Robson
Jennifer Baring
Katherine Dennis
Henry Dennis
Patrick Moon
Raija Blizzard
Margaret Caley
Angela Goodchild
John Wills
Liz Wills
Michael Goodchild
John Matthews
Charlotte Percy
Mary Aisbitt
Emma Keswick

Jennifer Brown

Jane de St. Croix

Sophie and Matthew Burrard-Lucas

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GL56 0TZ
GL56 0TW
GL56 0TW
GL56 0TY
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GL56 0TU
GL56 0TY
GL54 1LQ
Upper Swell
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GL56 0UF
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GL56 0YB
GL56 0YB
GL56 0XZ
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GL54 2JW

GL54 1LP
GL54 1LG
GL56 0RG



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APPENDIX 2 - APPEAL DECISION AT BROADWELL - APP/F1610/W/22/3311172

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Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 16 August 2023

by **E Pickernell BSc MSC MRTPI**

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 7th November 2023

Appeal Ref: APP/F1610/W/22/3311172

Redhill Farm, Redhill Farm Road, Broadwell GL56 0UF

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 against a refusal to grant planning permission.
- The appeal is made by Mr H C Pond against the decision of Cotswold District Council.
- The application Ref 21/02947/FUL, dated 23 July 2021, was refused by notice dated 8 June 2022.
- The development proposed is the erection of a detached dwelling and associated works.

Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

2. For clarity I have used the description of development given on the decision notice in the banner heading above, as it more accurately describes the development.
3. The reasons for refusal do not relate to the effect of the proposal on the Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) however, I have a duty under section 85(1) of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 to have regard to the purpose of conserving and enhancing the natural beauty of the AONB. The parties have been given the opportunity to comment further on this matter and I have taken these comments into account in making my decision.

Main Issues

4. The main issues are:
 - The effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the area, bearing in mind it would be within the Broadwell Conservation Area (CA) and within the AONB, and
 - whether there would be suitable provision for the collection of refuse and recycling.

Reasons

Character and appearance

5. Broadwell is a rural Cotswold village, set within attractive countryside which is part of the AONB, the special qualities of which include well-managed arable and livestock farms and distinctive settlements, developed in the Cotswold Vernacular. Therefore Broadwell, including its green spaces is an intrinsic part of the AONB.

6. The appeal site comprises part of an agricultural field, which is adjoined by development, but is nevertheless part of the countryside. Much of the central section of the village including the appeal site is within the Broadwell CA. This is characterised by, and derives its significance from, pockets of development interspersed with open green spaces, including the appeal site. These green spaces create a corridor through the CA which links to the open fields beyond, giving the area a distinctive rural character and a sense of the countryside protruding into the village, with the settlement sitting comfortably within its rural setting.
7. The appeal site is accessed from the road to the northwest and is set in an elevated position above the narrow lane adjoining the southern boundary of the appeal site. The lane is bound by hedging and sections of stone wall and slopes downhill to the east, towards the village green. The north-eastern boundary of the site is well treed and adjoins a footpath and stream which are set at a lower level. To the west of the appeal site a small number of properties front the lane and have parking to the rear, accessed via the same road entrance as the appeal site.
8. The proposed driveway and dwelling would result in the loss of part of the open green space resulting in the erosion of this area, and consequently, the contribution it makes to the character and appearance of the CA. The development would be perceived from several vantage points within the CA including from the lane to the south, on approach from the southeast and from the road to the northwest. It would also be visible from the footpath to the northeast and nearby properties.
9. The dwelling would be similar in design and scale to the adjacent properties, and would utilise natural materials, however due to the topography of the area, it would be in a more elevated position in relation to the lane, which drops away to the east. Furthermore, its siting in relation to Bay Tree Cottage is greater than the spacing between others in the adjacent group of dwellings. This would result in the development appearing particularly prominent, incongruous and at odds with surrounding development. Moreover, the driveway, in combination with the adjacent existing driveways and areas of hard standing would have an urbanising effect on the area, resulting in harm to its rural character.
10. Whilst much of the wider site would remain undeveloped, the proposal would nevertheless represent a significant incursion into the open green space, resulting in a harmful impact on the character and appearance of the CA.
11. As required by paragraph 199 of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework), great weight should be given to the conservation of a designated heritage asset, irrespective of the amount of harm identified. In this case the proposal would lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of the CA. Paragraph 202 of the Framework states that if a development would lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, then this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal.
12. There would be economic and social benefits arising from the provision of a dwelling including increased choice of homes, new residents supporting the facilities and services of the village and those of nearby settlements, and local employment and materials supply through the construction phase. Although the Council can demonstrate a 5-year housing land supply, the Framework

aims to significantly boost the supply of homes. Nevertheless, given the limited scale of the development I attach modest weight to these benefits. However, given the great weight that must be given to the conservation of heritage assets, I conclude that the public benefits of the proposal do not outweigh the harm.

13. Existing trees and buildings intercede in long views towards the site from the surrounding countryside, and the proposal would not have a significant impact upon the wider landscape. However, in more localised views, the proposal would result in the erosion of the undeveloped character of the site, diminishing the open green space. It would therefore be harmful to local landscape character and the AONB.
14. Having regard to all of the above, the proposal would have a harmful effect on the character and appearance of the area, with particular regard to the CA and the AONB. It would therefore conflict with policies DS3, EN1, EN2, EN4, EN5, EN10 and EN11 of the Cotswold District Local Plan 2011 – 2031 (Adopted August 2018) (LP) and relevant paragraphs of the Framework which seek to ensure, amongst other things, that development complements the character of the area, and does not result in the loss of open spaces which make a valuable contribution to the character and appearance of CAs. They also seek to ensure that great weight is given to conserving and enhancing the natural beauty of the AONB.
15. Policies EN4 and EN5 were not referenced in the reasons for refusal, however they refer to the impact of proposals on the landscape and the AONB and are therefore determinative to my decision.

Refuse and recycling collection

16. The proposed development includes the provision of a bin store adjacent to the proposed dwelling. Bins would be presented at the kerbside for collection adjacent to the road access to the northwest. This arrangement would require occupants to move refuse and recycling materials and containers a considerable distance along a crushed stone track.
17. I note that the adjacent properties have a long driveway to the rear, however they also have access directly onto the lane to the south. As such the residents of these properties have access to an alternative kerb side collection point which would not necessitate the movement of refuse and recycling materials a considerable distance. Due to the site levels, a similar arrangement would not be possible at the appeal site.
18. Taking account of the distance involved, the proposed arrangements for refuse and recycling collection would be inconvenient and impractical for future occupiers, even if they opted for a smaller wheelie bin or bags and regardless of the frequency of collections. The fact that such an arrangement may not be uncommon in rural areas does not lead me to come to a contrary conclusion.
19. Consequently, the proposal would not provide suitable provision for the collection of refuse and recycling and in this regard the proposal would conflict with paragraph 130 of the Framework which, amongst other things, seeks to ensure that developments function well over their lifetime and create places which are safe, inclusive and accessible with a high standard of amenity for future occupiers.

Other Matters

20. The appeal site is within the setting of several listed buildings (LBs). I therefore have a statutory duty under Section 66(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 to have special regard to the desirability of preserving the LBs, their setting, or any features of special architectural interest which the LBs possess.
21. The three nearest LBs are Rectory Farm House, Red Hills Farm House, and The Gables which are all Grade II listed. They all originate from the late 17th Century and derive their significance from their history and architecture which includes dressed limestone walls and slate roofs. The proposed dwelling would be some distance from the LBs and whilst there would be a degree of intervisibility between the sites, trees and/or buildings intercede in these views. Therefore, the proposal would not detract from the features of the LBs or the way in which they would be experienced from public vantage points. Therefore, the proposal would preserve the setting of the LBs and would not cause harm to their special interest or significance. The impact on the setting of the LBs has not been raised as a reason for refusal by the Council and there is no evidence before me which leads me to reach a contrary conclusion.
22. I acknowledge that pre-application discussions took place with the Council which suggested that a dwelling in this area might be acceptable to them. However, I have based my decision on an impartial assessment of the planning merits of the proposal.
23. I have given consideration as to whether any conditions could be imposed to mitigate the harm identified, including those relating to hard and soft landscaping and the appearance of the proposed dwelling. However, no conditions would be capable of reducing the harm of the development sufficiently to result in me reaching a contrary conclusion.

Conclusion

24. The proposal conflicts with the development plan as a whole, and there are no material considerations, including the Framework, that would outweigh that conflict. Therefore, the appeal is dismissed.

E Pickernell

INSPECTOR



Chadwick Town Planning

APPENDIX 3 - LEGAL OPINION – SOUTH DOWNS NATIONAL PARK

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Registered in England: No. 13175963
VAT Registration No. 371 4873 78

**IN THE MATTER OF THE SOUTH DOWNS NATIONAL PARK
AND IN THE MATTER OF PARAGRAPH 116 OF THE NPPF**

OPINION

INTRODUCTION

1. At paragraph 62 of his judgment in *Wealden DC v Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government* [2017] EWCA Civ 39, Lindblom LJ held that paragraph 116 of the NPPF was a policy for development control. In light of that observation, I am asked for my opinion on whether the major development test in paragraph 116 is relevant at the site allocations stage of development of a Local Plan or whether it is only relevant to development control.
2. The National Park Authority has previously been advised on this point by James Maurici QC, in an advice dated 3 October 2014. Mr Maurici QC advised as follows:

*“It seems to me that para.116 would have to be considered in this context. Para.14 of the NPPF says that Local Plans should seek to “meet the development needs of their area” and to “meet objectively assessed needs” unless “specific policies in this Framework indicate development should be restricted”. Footnote 9 then refers to a number of policies including those on AONBs and National Parks. That must include para.116 which provides the relevant restriction on major development in such areas. That seems to me to mean that the matters in the bullet points in para.116 would have to be addressed in the plan making process. It seems to me likely also that a test of exceptionality needs to be applied. Such tests exist elsewhere in the NPPF in plan-making terms, see e.g. para.83 which is concerned with amending Green Belt boundaries and which was considered in *Gallagher Homes Limited v Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council* [2014] EWHC 1283 (Admin) at para.125. *Hickinbottom J* there went on to say that “each case is fact-sensitive and the question of whether circumstances are exceptional for these purposes requires an exercise of planning judgment” albeit that “what is capable of amounting to exceptional circumstances is a matter of law, and a plan-maker may err in law if he fails to adopt a lawful approach to exceptional circumstances.*

Of course other parts of the NPPF would also be relevant, e.g. the first bullet in para.157”

3. I agree with that advice and I do not consider that the judgment of Lindblom LJ requires that advice to be reconsidered. Mr Maurici QC's opinion explains why paragraph 116 is relevant at the site allocations stage, notwithstanding the fact that it is a development control policy: paragraph 14 of the NPPF and footnote 9 requires it. Lindblom LJ's judgment does not disturb that reasoning.
4. I also note, for instance, that the June 2016 Inspector's Report on the Examination into the Tunbridge Wells Site Allocations Local Plan considered it appropriate to apply the paragraph 116 test to allocations that arguably amounted to major development: see paragraph 75.
5. In my opinion, it would arguably amount to an error of law to fail to consider paragraph 116 at the site allocations stage of plan making for the National Park. The consequence of doing so would be to risk allocating land for major development that was undeliverable because it was incapable of meeting the major development test in the NPPF.
6. Unless there is anything further I can clarify or address, and on account of the fact that my advice coheres with that of Mr Maurici QC, I do not consider that it is necessary to say anything further. However, I am happy to provide further advice if the National Park Authority wants further reassurance or if there is anything else arising that I can assist with.

10 October 2017

TOBY FISHER
Landmark Chambers



Chadwick Town Planning

APPENDIX 4 – COTSWOLD DISTRICT COUNCIL – SHLAA ASSESSMENT OF SITE

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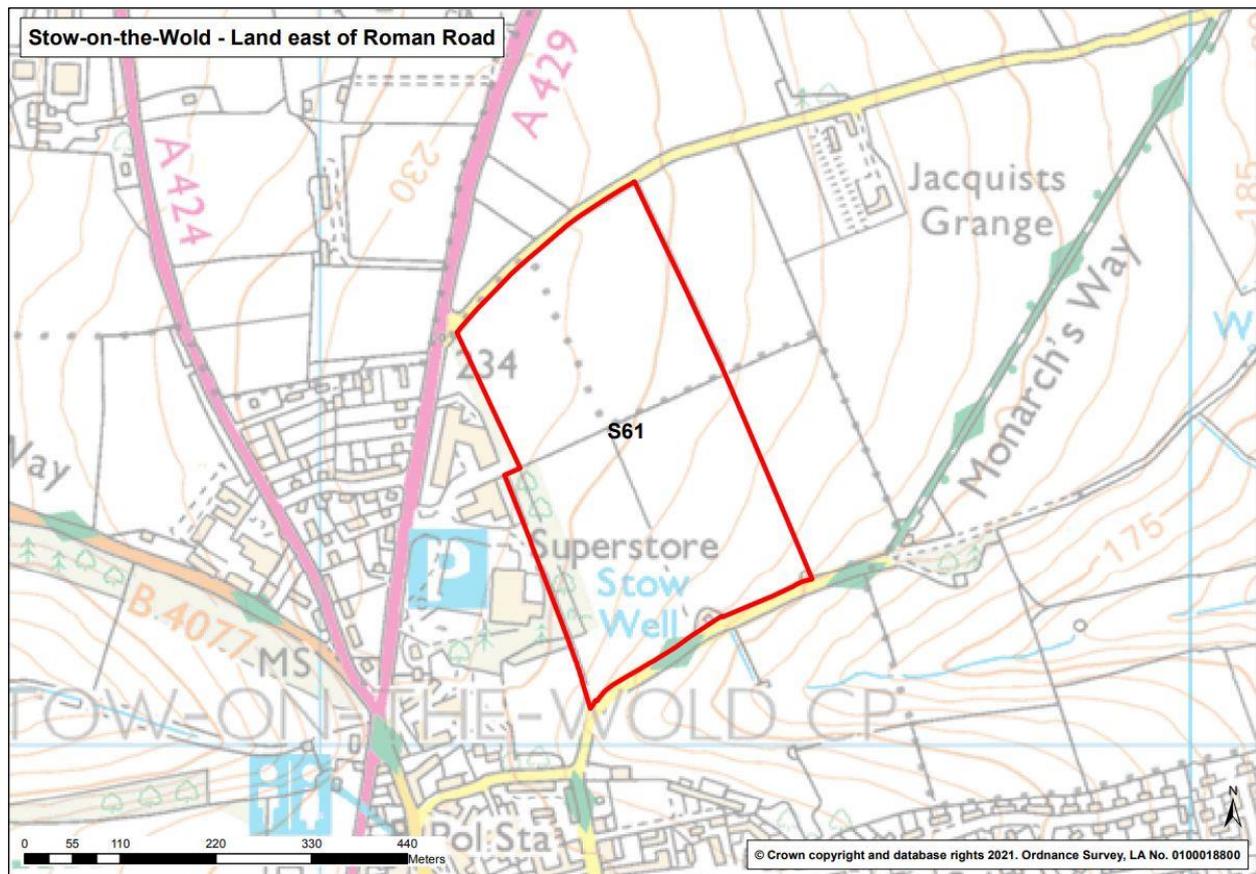
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Registered in England: No. 13175963
VAT Registration No. 371 4873 78

Land east of Roman Road (ref: S61)



Proposal: 350 homes with access provided from Broadwell Road to the north

Assessment date: January 2021

Size: 13.08ha

Land ownership: Single ownership

Site description

The site is located on the north-eastern edge of Stow-on-the-Wold on sloping ground, which falls in a south-easterly direction into a valley. It comprises three arable fields, which are all in productive use.

The site is bound to the north by Broadwell Road – a national speed limit rural lane – with arable fields beyond. There are further arable fields and an isolated dwelling to the east. To the south is Well Lane, which is part of the Monarchs Way, and there is a further arable field beyond. Stow's main built environment is located further to the south.

Hawkesbury Place Retirement Living and a Tesco supermarket adjoin the western boundary, which both front onto the A429 Fosse Way further to the west. A broad strip of trees separates the site from these developments.

Planning history

This is a summary of the key planning applications and is not a comprehensive list

Historic mapping identifies that the site has remained in agricultural use and has never been developed. The site was once divided into four fields – today's northern field was two fields until the 1960s.

The site is located outside Stow's development boundary, as defined by the adopted Local Plan, and has no recent relevant planning history.

A care village comprising 44 extra care apartments and a 48 bed dementia care home has recently been completed on the land to the west (refs: 13/05360/OUT and 16/00139/REM).

Landscape

These comments are made on the basis of a survey conducted by a qualified Landscape Officer. A full landscape and visual impact assessment would be required of any development proposal (desktop and site assessments) undertaken by an appropriately qualified and experienced landscape professional.

DESCRIPTION:

The parcel is formed by three arable fields that are located to the north east of the settlement. Hedgerow and trees are present to the northern, southern and western boundaries. The vegetation on the eastern boundary is not as complete and is generally confined to the northern half of this boundary. The fields within the parcel are also divided by hedgerow.

Beyond the boundaries to the north, south and east is a continuation of the rural agricultural context present within the parcel. Beyond the western boundary is a supermarket and retirement development that are located within the Stow on the Wold development boundary.

The topography of the parcel is sloping from the high ground in the north west to the low lying south east. The level change across the parcel is circa 25m.

There is no public access to the parcel. Beyond the eastern boundary is BROADWELL RESTRICTED BYWAY 2. This connects to a publicly accessible lane to the south. Both the byway and the lane form part of the promoted walking route known as The Monarch's Way. St Edwards Well is a listed structure present to the south of the parcel along the rural lane. The parcel is not within a Conservation Area but it is present to the south western boundary.

Landscape Context

National Character Area 107: Cotswolds

Landscape Character Type: Majority of parcel is within LCT 15: Farmed Slopes. The north west of the parcel is within LCT 7: High Wold

Landscape Character Area: Majority of the parcel is within LCA 15B: Vale of Moreton Farmed Slopes. The north west of the parcel is within LCA 7C: Cotswolds High Wold plateau

Constraints/Designations

Landscape: The parcel is located within the Cotswolds AONB.

Historic: Not within a Conservation Area but does neighbour one on the western boundary. St Edward's (Stow) Well is located along the southern parcel boundary and is Grade 2 listed.

Other (floodplain, PROW): Group TPOs are present along the western boundary of the parcel. No TPO present within the main body of the parcel. No PROW are present within the parcel but the Monarch's Way is located alongside the southern parcel boundary. Other PROW are present within the local landscape.

Landscape sensitivity

Evaluation: **High**

Justification: This parcel is susceptible to development due to its rural character and location within the Cotswolds AONB. It has openness to views from the east and would also impact upon views from the north and south. Development of this sensitive parcel would erode the prevailing character and cause the encroachment of the built settlement into this valued rural landscape. The parcel's value is demonstrated by its location within the AONB and its contribution to the setting of the Conservation Area that is present to the south-west and the approach to the settlement. This approach to the settlement from the east is recognised along a publicly accessible rural lane that also forms part of the promoted walking route known as The Monarch's Way. St Edward's Well is a listed structure present along this walking route to the south of the parcel and contributes to the tranquil experience enjoyed along this lane.

Biodiversity

These comments are made on the basis of a desktop and site survey conducted by a qualified Town Planner in winter. Further specialist survey work may be required before the site can be allocated in the Local Plan.

S61 is not within an area with a formal nature conservation designation. However, part of the site is modelled to be within a Great Crested Newt Amber Zone. The strip of trees in the west of the site and at the south-east corner are also both Priority Habitat (deciduous woodland).

The cultivated arable fields are not expected to have significant biodiversity value, although further investigation would be needed to establish whether protected species are present.

There are higher quality trees, hedgerows and grass / scrub areas around the periphery of the fields, which have more potential to be habitat for protected species. In particular, the northern boundary adjacent to Broadwell Road and the southern boundary with Well Lane contain some mature trees and more diverse hedgerow species. The southern boundary also contains an uncultivated field margin, which is of ecologic interest.

The area of semi-mature tree planting to the west of the site forms a dense thicket, which is likely to provide habitat for nesting birds and small mammals. There is also an area of uncultivated grassland adjacent to the south-west of the site, which again looks to be of ecological interest.

If this site were to be developed, there is an opportunity within the site to better link the woodland belt that runs along the southern boundary (Well Lane) with the woodland along the western boundary. This would create a continuous corridor which connects with the woodland running along Broadwell Road to the north.

There is also potential to enhance the less well-established hedgerows with a greater diversity of species, as well as restoring the historic field pattern with new species rich hedgerows.

Looking beyond the site boundaries, an enhanced wildlife corridor could also be provided with the watercourse close to the southern boundary, although this would be subject to third party agreement.

Trees

These comments are made on the basis of a desktop and site survey conducted by a qualified Town Planner in winter. An Arboricultural Report that accords with BS 5837:2012 would be required of any development proposal.



The western part of the site contains an area of semi-mature tree planting which is protected by an area-wide Tree Preservation Order (TPO). This screens the adjacent supermarket and care home development from the wider landscape.

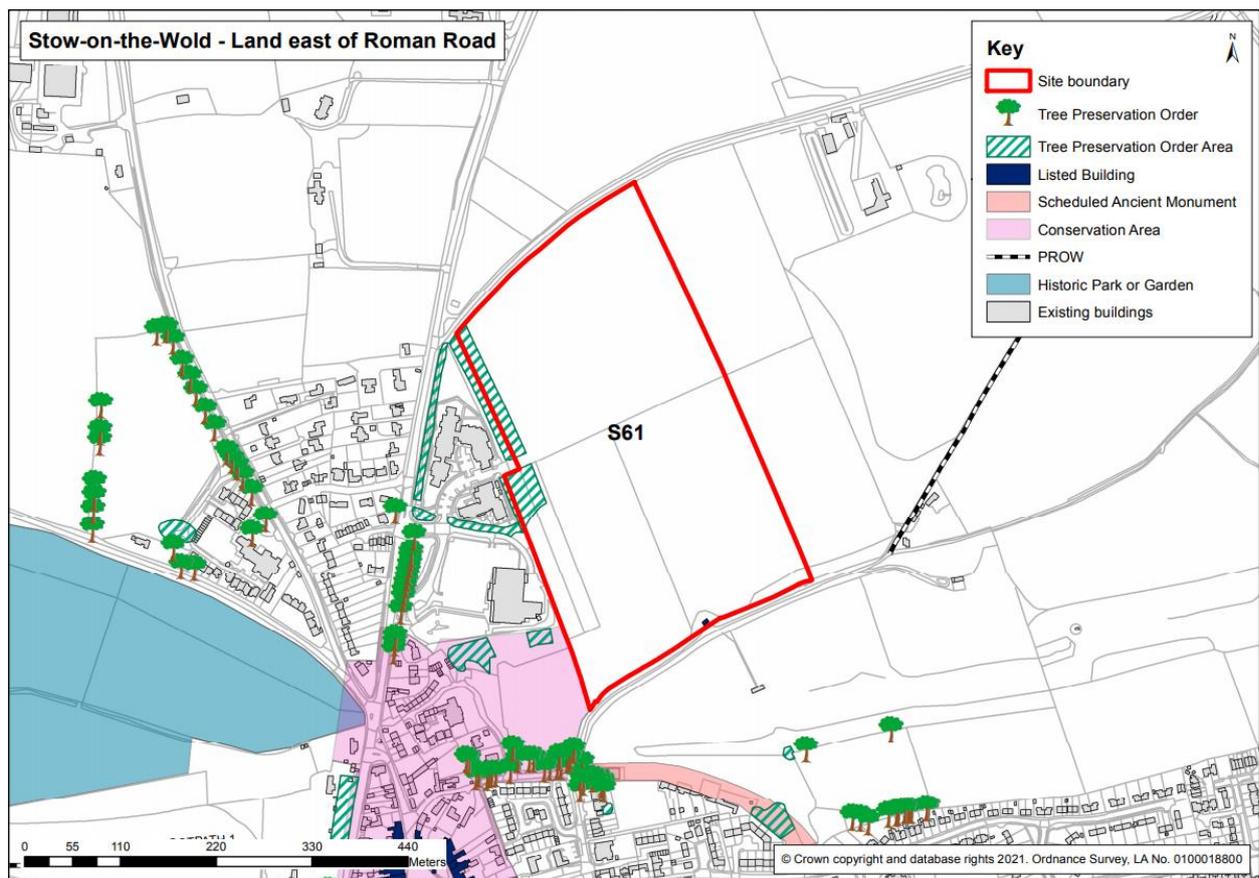
None of the other trees present are protected by a TPO. However, there are mature deciduous trees along the southern and northern boundaries, as well as several smaller trees within the hedgerow that divides the north and south of the site. None of these trees are especially fine specimens which are worthy of protection in their own right. Their value centres on their collective contribution, which provides a wildlife corridor within a landscape that is otherwise devoid of trees and their useful function in providing screening within the wider landscape. Their removal would make the site less developable as the site would be more exposed to views.

Several hedgerows within the site appear on the 1884 Ordnance survey and are therefore likely to be pre-enclosure hedges and would be considered to be important under the Hedgerows Regulations 1997. In particular, the hedgerows along the northern and southern boundaries and the hedgerow that divides the northern and southern fields appear to be well established and contain a higher diversity of species. The hedgerow dividing the two southern fields is less-well established and has less diverse species.

Overall, the existing trees and hedgerows should be retained if a development proposal were to come forward. There are also opportunities for tree planting, particularly along the eastern, southern and northern boundaries where it would be beneficial to provide additional screening and a net gain in biodiversity.

Historic Environment (excluding archaeology)

These comments are made on the basis of a desktop and site survey conducted by a qualified Town Planner. A full historic environment or heritage assessment would be required of any development proposal.



The site does not contain any designated heritage assets. However, there are some low stone walls around the boundaries, which are non-designated heritage assets.

The site is located 60m to the north of a Scheduled Monument (prehistoric enclosure known as Stow Camp). This is located on the opposite side of a valley but on the same contour as the southern boundary of the site. The topography on S61 rises to the north, which would make development this site prominent when viewed from the Scheduled Monument.

Stow Camp currently delineates the built up part of Stow from the countryside beyond. Development has traditionally been located inside the boundary of Stow Camp. The open views of the surrounding countryside from the Stow Camp are part of the Scheduled Monument's intrinsic character and would have been a primary reason why this location was chosen for a prehistory enclosure. Today, S61 forms part of the rural setting of the Camp. The development of S61 would therefore likely have detrimental impact on the setting of the Scheduled Monument and its intrinsic value.

Part of Stow-on-the-Wold is designated as a Conservation Area. This is located adjacent to the south-western boundary of the site. The site forms part of the rural setting of the Conservation Area and the outlook of the

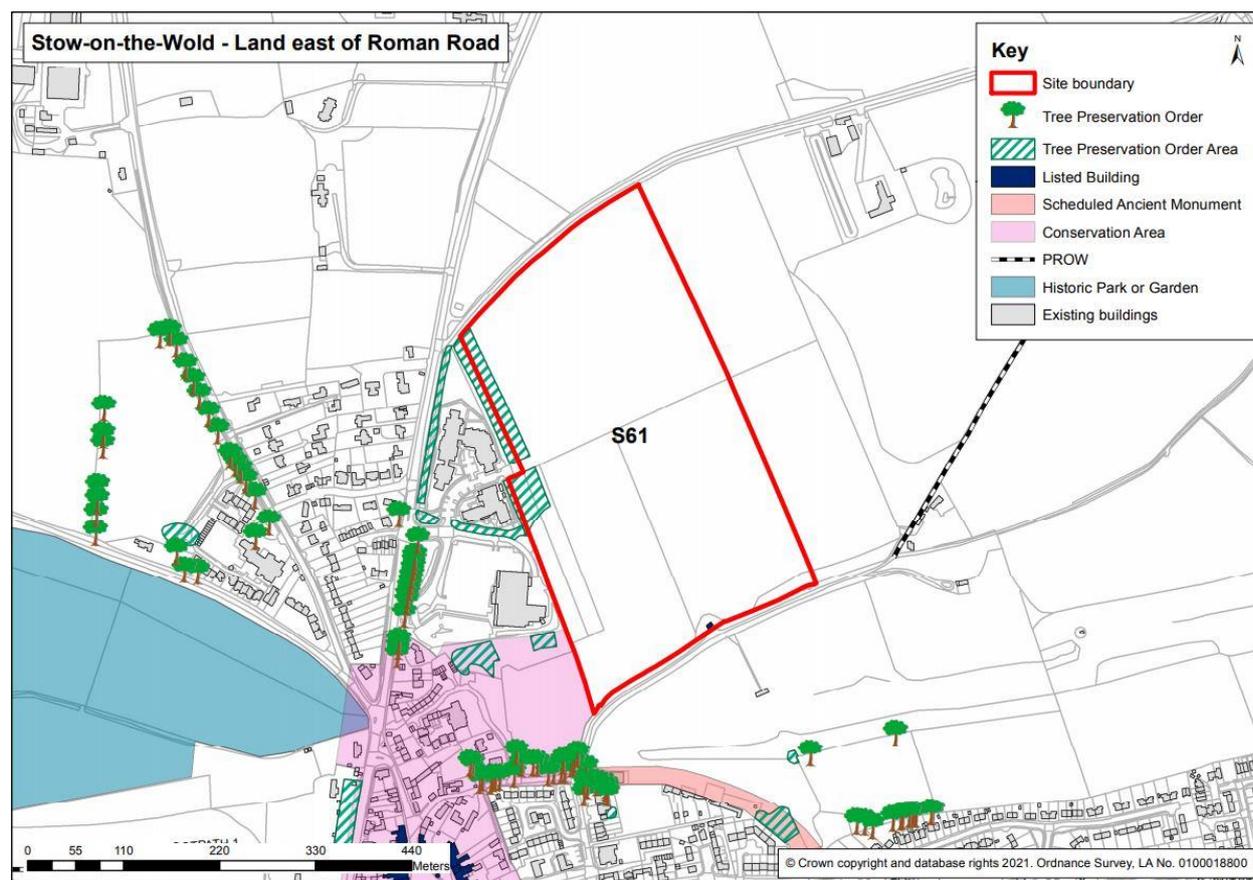
Conservation Area into the surrounding countryside. The development of the southern part of the site in particular would likely have a detrimental impact on the Conservation Area.

The southern part of the site also incorporates St Edwards (Stow) Well, which is a Grade II listed structure. A significant part of S61 is also visible from the Grade I listed St Edward's Church to the south. The development of this site is likely to harm rural views from the church tower. It would also harm the setting of the St Edwards Well. The development of the site would therefore be expected to harm the setting of listed buildings.

Being close to the Fosse Way Roman road and Stow Camp Scheduled Monument, the site may have archaeological significance. Further investigation would be needed.

Historic environment opportunities

The field boundary which separates the southern two fields historically used to continue on northwards to subdivide the northern field. There is an opportunity to reinstate this hedgerow and restore the historic field pattern.



Other issues / constraints

- The site is on the same side of Stow as the refused planning permission for up to 146 dwellings on the Land east of Griffin Close (ref: 13/01856/OUT), which subsequently had an appeal dismissed (ref: APP/F1610/A/13/220341 I). All parties at the appeal agreed that the Land east of Griffin Close scheme was major development in the AONB. With S61, the development would also be considered to be 'major development within the AONB'. The scale of development would be considerably larger than the land east of Griffin Close site (i.e. S61 proposes 350 dwellings on a 13.1ha site as opposed to 146 dwellings on a 7.5ha site at Land east of Griffin Close). Additionally, the development of S61 would be more harmful to the AONB for various reasons, including that S61 is also on higher ground than the Griffin Close site and is more visible within the surrounding landscape; the development would harm the rural setting of a Scheduled Monument; it would harm the setting of the Conservation Area; and it would harm the settings of a Grade I listed building and a Grade II listed building. It is noteworthy that the Land east of Griffin Close site was also refused at a time when the Council was unable to demonstrate a five year housing land supply.
- Any new tree planting which is used to screen the development would take a long time to establish. There will be significant harm to long-distance views in the interim period.

- Stow is a hill top town. The adjacent care home and superstore developments are on the hill top. The development of S61 would introduce development on the valley side, which would break away from this development pattern. Confining development to the hill top also means that the profile of the development that is seen on the skyline within the wider landscape is more limited than it would be if development were to extend down the hillside.
- Broadwell Lane is a rural road with a 60mph speed limit. This road would likely need to be upgraded if S61 were developed. The junction of Broadwell Road with the A429 Fosse Way is also narrow and has an acute angle for turning right onto the Fosse Way. This junction may also need to be upgraded, potentially as a traffic light controlled junction. The suitability and achievability of such an upgrade would need to be explored further with the Highways authority, but the delay of traffic on the A429 and the introduction of another traffic light controlled junction in the AONB may be constraints to the development viability and would increase the landscape impact.
- Productive agricultural land (soil survey would be required to establish if this is best and most versatile agricultural land);
- A national trail (the Monarch's Way) runs along the southern boundary;
- Local area electricity network pylons cross through the site from north to south;
- Source Protection Zone; and
- Oxford / Kidlington air safeguarding area.

Summary

The site is on the same side of Stow as the refused planning permission for up to 146 dwellings on the Land east of Griffin Close site, which subsequently had an appeal dismissed. With S61, however, not only would the development also be considered to be 'major development within the AONB' but the scale of development would be considerably larger and more harmful to the AONB than the Land east of Griffin Close site. The site is on higher ground than the Griffin Close site and is more visible within the surrounding landscape.

Stow is a hilltop town and development in this location would not be in keeping with the settlement pattern. The scale of development on a slope would erode the character of the town, as well the rural setting in which the town sits. It would adversely affect the intrinsic value of the AONB and the proposal is assessed to have "High" landscape impact.

The development of S61 would also harm the rural setting of a Scheduled Monument, it would harm the setting of the Conservation Area, and it would harm the settings of a Grade I listed building and a Grade II listed building.

Other considerations, such as the loss of productive agricultural land, whether the access via Broadwell Road is suitable for the scale of development and potential archaeological issues would also need to be explored further but may also be further constraints to the development of this site.

Recommendation

S61 is unsuitable for allocation in the Local Plan.



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24 November 2023

Cotswold – Consultation on Stow on Wold & The Swells Neighbourhood Plan 2023 - 2031

Dear Sir/Madam,

Thank you for allowing Thames Water to comment on the above.

As you may be aware, Thames Water are the water and sewerage undertaker for the District and hence are a “specific consultation body” in accordance with the Town & Country Planning (Local Planning) Regulations 2012. We have the following comments on the consultation document:

Comments on Water Supply and Wastewater/Sewerage Infrastructure

We consider that there should be a separate policy covering water supply and wastewater infrastructure in the Neighbourhood Plan.

Wastewater/sewerage and water supply infrastructure is essential to any development. Failure to ensure that any required upgrades to the infrastructure network are delivered alongside development could result in adverse impacts in the form of internal and external sewer flooding and pollution of land and water courses and/or low water pressure.

Thames Water seeks to co-operate and maintain a good working relationship with local planning authorities in its area and to provide the support they need with regards to the provision of sewerage/wastewater treatment and water supply infrastructure.

A key sustainability objective for the preparation of Local Plans and Neighbourhood Plans should be for new development to be co-ordinated with the infrastructure it demands and to take into account the capacity of existing infrastructure. Paragraph 20 of the revised National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), 2023, states: “Strategic policies should set out an overall strategy for the pattern, scale and quality of development, and make sufficient provision for... infrastructure for waste management, water supply, wastewater...”

Paragraph 11 states: “Plans and decisions should apply a presumption in favour of sustainable development. For plan-making this means that:

a) all plans should promote a sustainable pattern of development that seeks to: meet the development needs of their area; align growth and infrastructure; improve the environment; mitigate climate change (including by making effective use of land in urban areas) and adapt to its effects”

Paragraph 28 relates to non-strategic policies and states: “Non-strategic policies should be used by local planning authorities and communities to set out more detailed policies for specific areas, neighbourhoods or types of development. This can include allocating sites, the provision of infrastructure...”

Paragraph 26 of the revised NPPF goes on to state: “Effective and on-going joint working between strategic policy-making authorities and relevant bodies is integral to the production of a positively prepared and justified strategy. In particular, joint working should help to determine where additional infrastructure is necessary...”

The web based National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG) includes a section on ‘water supply, wastewater and water quality’ and sets out that Local Plans should be the focus for ensuring that investment plans of water and sewerage/wastewater companies align with development needs. The introduction to this section also sets out that “Adequate water and wastewater infrastructure is needed to support sustainable development” (Paragraph: 001, Reference ID: 34-001-20140306).

It is important to consider the net increase in wastewater and water supply demand to serve the development and also any impact that developments may have off site, further down the network. The Neighbourhood Plan should therefore seek to ensure that there is adequate wastewater and water supply infrastructure to serve all new developments. Thames Water will work with developers and local authorities to ensure that any necessary infrastructure reinforcement is delivered ahead of the occupation of development. Where there are infrastructure constraints, it is important not to under estimate the time required to deliver necessary infrastructure. For example: local network upgrades take around 18 months and Sewage Treatment & Water Treatment Works upgrades can take 3-5 years.

The provision of water treatment (both wastewater treatment and water supply) is met by Thames Water’s asset plans and from the 1st April 2018 network improvements will be from infrastructure charges per new dwelling.

From 1st April 2018, the way Thames Water and all other water and wastewater companies charge for new connections has changed. The economic regulator Ofwat has published new rules, which set out that charges should reflect: fairness and affordability; environmental protection; stability and predictability; and transparency and customer-focused service.

The changes mean that more of Thames Water’s charges will be fixed and published, rather than provided on application, enabling you to estimate your costs without needing to contact us. The services affected include new water connections, lateral drain connections, water mains and sewers (requisitions), traffic management costs, income offsetting and infrastructure charges.

Thames Water therefore recommends that developers engage with them at the earliest opportunity (in line with paragraph 26 of the revised NPPF) to establish the following:

- The developments demand for Water Supply infrastructure;
- The developments demand for Sewage/Wastewater Treatment and network infrastructure both on and off site and can it be met; and

- The surface water drainage requirements and flood risk of the development both on and off site and can it be met.

We ask for developers and the Local Authority to engage with us as early as possible to agree a drainage strategy and a phasing plan for proposed development sites.

Thames Water offer a free Pre-Planning service which confirms if capacity exists to serve the development or if upgrades are required for potable water, waste water and surface water requirements. Details on Thames Water's free pre planning service are available at:

<https://www.thameswater.co.uk/developers/larger-scale-developments/planning-your-development/water-and-wastewater-capacity>

In light of the above comments and Government guidance we consider that the Neighbourhood Plan should include a specific reference to the key issue of the provision of wastewater/sewerage and water supply infrastructure to service development proposed in a policy. This is necessary because it will not be possible to identify all of the water/sewerage infrastructure required over the plan period due to the way water companies are regulated and plan in 5 year periods (Asset Management Plans or AMPs). We recommend that the Neighbourhood Plan include the following policy/supporting text:

“Where appropriate, planning permission for developments which result in the need for off-site upgrades, will be subject to conditions to ensure the occupation is aligned with the delivery of necessary infrastructure upgrades.”

“The Local Planning Authority will seek to ensure that there is adequate water and wastewater infrastructure to serve all new developments. Developers are encouraged to contact the water/waste water company as early as possible to discuss their development proposals and intended delivery programme to assist with identifying any potential water and wastewater network reinforcement requirements. Where there is a capacity constraint the Local Planning Authority will, where appropriate, apply phasing conditions to any approval to ensure that any necessary infrastructure upgrades are delivered ahead of the occupation of the relevant phase of development.”

Water Efficiency/Sustainable Design

The Environment Agency has designated the Thames Water region to be “seriously water stressed” which reflects the extent to which available water resources are used. Future pressures on water resources will continue to increase and key factors are population growth and climate change.

Water conservation and climate change is a vitally important issue to the water industry. Not only is it expected to have an impact on the availability of raw water for treatment but also the demand from customers for potable (drinking) water. Therefore, Thames Water support the mains water consumption target of 110 litres per head per day (105 litres per head per day plus an allowance of 5 litres per head per day for gardens) as set out in the NPPG (Paragraph: 014 Reference ID: 56-014-20150327) and support the inclusion of this requirement in the Policy.

Thames Water promote water efficiency and have a number of water efficiency campaigns which aim to encourage their customers to save water at local levels. Further details are available on the our website via the following link:

<https://www.thameswater.co.uk/Be-water-smart>

It is our understanding that the water efficiency standards of 105 litres per person per day is only applied through the building regulations where there is a planning condition requiring this standard (as set out at paragraph 2.8 of Part G2 of the Building Regulations). As the Thames Water area is defined as water stressed it is considered that such a condition should be attached as standard to all planning approvals for new residential development in order to help ensure that the standard is effectively delivered through the building regulations.

Within Part G of Building Regulations, the 110 litres/person/day level can be achieved through either the 'Calculation Method' or the 'Fittings Approach' (Table 2.2). The Fittings Approach provides clear flow-rate and volume performance metrics for each water using device / fitting in new dwellings. Thames Water considers the Fittings Approach, as outlined in Table 2.2 of Part G, increases the confidence that water efficient devices will be installed in the new dwelling. Insight from our smart water metering programme shows that household built to the 110 litres/person/day level using the Calculation Method, did not achieve the intended water performance levels.

Proposed policy text:

“Development must be designed to be water efficient and reduce water consumption. Refurbishments and other non-domestic development will be expected to meet BREEAM water-efficiency credits. Residential development must not exceed a maximum water use of 105 litres per head per day (excluding the allowance of up to 5 litres for external water consumption) using the ‘Fittings Approach’ in Table 2.2 of Part G of Building Regulations. Planning conditions will be applied to new residential development to ensure that the water efficiency standards are met.”

Comments in relation to Flood Risk and SUDS

The National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG) states that a sequential approach should be used by local planning authorities in areas known to be at risk from forms of flooding other than from river and sea, which includes "Flooding from Sewers".

When reviewing development and flood risk it is important to recognise that water and/or sewerage infrastructure may be required to be developed in flood risk areas. By their very nature water and sewage treatment works are located close or adjacent to rivers (to abstract water for treatment and supply or to discharge treated effluent). It is likely that these existing works will need to be upgraded or extended to provide the increase in treatment capacity required to service new development. Flood risk sustainability objectives should therefore accept that water and sewerage infrastructure development may be necessary in flood risk areas.

Flood risk sustainability objectives should also make reference to 'sewer flooding' and an acceptance that flooding can occur away from the flood plain as a result of development where off site sewerage infrastructure and capacity is not in place ahead of development.

With regard to surface water drainage it is the responsibility of the developer to make proper provision for drainage to ground, watercourses or surface water sewer. It is important to reduce the quantity of surface water entering the sewerage system in order to maximise the capacity for foul sewage to reduce the risk of sewer flooding.

Limiting the opportunity for surface water entering the foul and combined sewer networks is of critical importance to Thames Water. Thames Water have advocated an approach to SuDS that limits as far as possible the volume of and rate at which surface water enters the public sewer system. By doing this, SuDS have the potential to play an important role in

helping to ensure the sewerage network has the capacity to cater for population growth and the effects of climate change.

SuDS not only help to mitigate flooding, they can also help to: improve water quality; provide opportunities for water efficiency; provide enhanced landscape and visual features; support wildlife; and provide amenity and recreational benefits.

With regard to surface water drainage, Thames Water request that the following paragraph should be included in the Neighbourhood Plan: ***“It is the responsibility of a developer to make proper provision for surface water drainage to ground, water courses or surface water sewer. It must not be allowed to drain to the foul sewer, as this is the major contributor to sewer flooding.”***

Draft Site Allocations

There are no new allocations in the draft Neighbourhood Plan and the level of information does not enable Thames Water to make an assessment of the impact the proposed development will have on the waste water/sewerage network infrastructure and sewage treatment works. To enable us to provide more specific comments we require details of the type and scale of development together with the anticipated phasing.

We recommend Developers contact Thames Water to discuss their development proposals by using our pre app service via the following link: <https://developers.thameswater.co.uk/Developing-a-large-site/Planning-your-development/Water-and-wastewater-capacity>

It should be noted that in the event of an upgrade to our sewerage network assets being required, up to three years lead in time is usual to enable for the planning and delivery of the upgrade. As a developer has the automatic right to connect to our sewer network under the Water Industry Act we may also request a drainage planning condition if a network upgrade is required to ensure the infrastructure is in place ahead of occupation of the development. This will avoid adverse environmental impacts such as sewer flooding and / or water pollution.

We recommend developers attach the information we provide to their planning applications so that the Council and the wider public are assured wastewater and water supply matters for the development are being addressed.

Where developers do not engage with Thames Water prior to submitting their application, this will more likely lead to the recommendation that a Grampian condition is attached to any planning permission to resolve any infrastructure issues.

We trust the above is satisfactory, but please do not hesitate to contact David Wilson on the above number if you have any queries.

Yours faithfully,

David Wilson
Thames Water Property Town Planner