

Land at Glebe Farm , Minchinhampton Landscape Note edp1965_r007a

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The following note has been prepared by the Environmental Dimension Partnership Ltd (EDP) on behalf of Archstone Land ('the client') who are promoting the allocation of Land at Glebe Farm ('the site') for housing provision via the Local Plan Review.
- 1.2 As part of that process, statutory consultees have provided comment regarding the suitability (in their view) of specific sites. This note has been prepared specifically to address the consultation response for the site issued by the Cotswolds Conservation Board (CCB) dated 07 February 2020 in respect of Landscape matters. Heritage matters as appropriate, will be addressed by a separate note (ref: edp1965_r006a).

2. Background and Consultations

- 2.1 The involvement of EDP commenced in 2014 and to date we have undertaken surveys and prepared reports in relation to ecology, arboriculture, heritage, archaeology and landscape matters. These reports, and the consultation undertaken to inform them, were produced in connection with a planning application submitted in 2015 (ref. S15/2567/FUL), which was a hybrid application comprising a detailed application for 150 dwellings and an outline planning application for a potential doctor's surgery/community facility.
- 2.2 EDP has provided input from the beginning of the design process. A Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment – Third Edition (GLVIA3) compliant Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) was prepared in 2015 (L_EDP1965_03a). The report set out the baseline for the site and assessed the potential for any effects as a result of the sites development for housing. This work included consultation meetings with officers from Stroud District Council (SDC), also attended by a representative of the Cotswold Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) Management Board. Feedback from these meetings, about appropriate design response and landscape terms, has been factored into the design of the Planning Layout.
- 2.3 Further technical work was undertaken in the summer of 2019 to support promotion of the site, EDP again attended consultation meetings with officers from SDC, also attended by planning and landscape representatives from the Cotswold AONB Management Board. Following this meeting EDP have provided some additional testing and justification of landscape matters.
- 2.4 Following this, and, in response to the Local Plan Review, in February 2020, the CCB provided formal comment on the consultation version of the draft plan identifying a number of recommendations, this included, in relation to housing allocations that: *"The Minchinhampton allocation (PS05)*

should be deemed to constitute major development (primarily because of its potential to have a significant adverse effect on the adjacent scheduled monument) and should, therefore, be withdrawn”.

3. Discussion and Conclusion

3.1 The response goes on to consider the potential scale of the site (PS05 Tobacconist Road) and acknowledges that CCB previously identified a threshold of 100 dwellings to constitute major development. It should be noted that the emphasis here is regardless of the settlement size and “...any development in the AONB of 100 dwellings or more should constitute major development, regardless of the size of the AONB settlement”.

3.2 Within the discussion, the response concludes that this should not be a definitive number and should have consideration for the size of the existing settlement. Based on the board’s identification of the ‘built-up area sub-division’ of Minchinhampton, Image EDP 1 below identifies the ‘built-up’ area based on the 2011 census return, and the potential addition built-up area of the proposed allocation (PS05). The Minchinhampton sub-division equates to c.108 hectares (ha), with the additional potential built-up area of the site equating to c.5ha, therefore below the 5% threshold and the 100 dwellings.

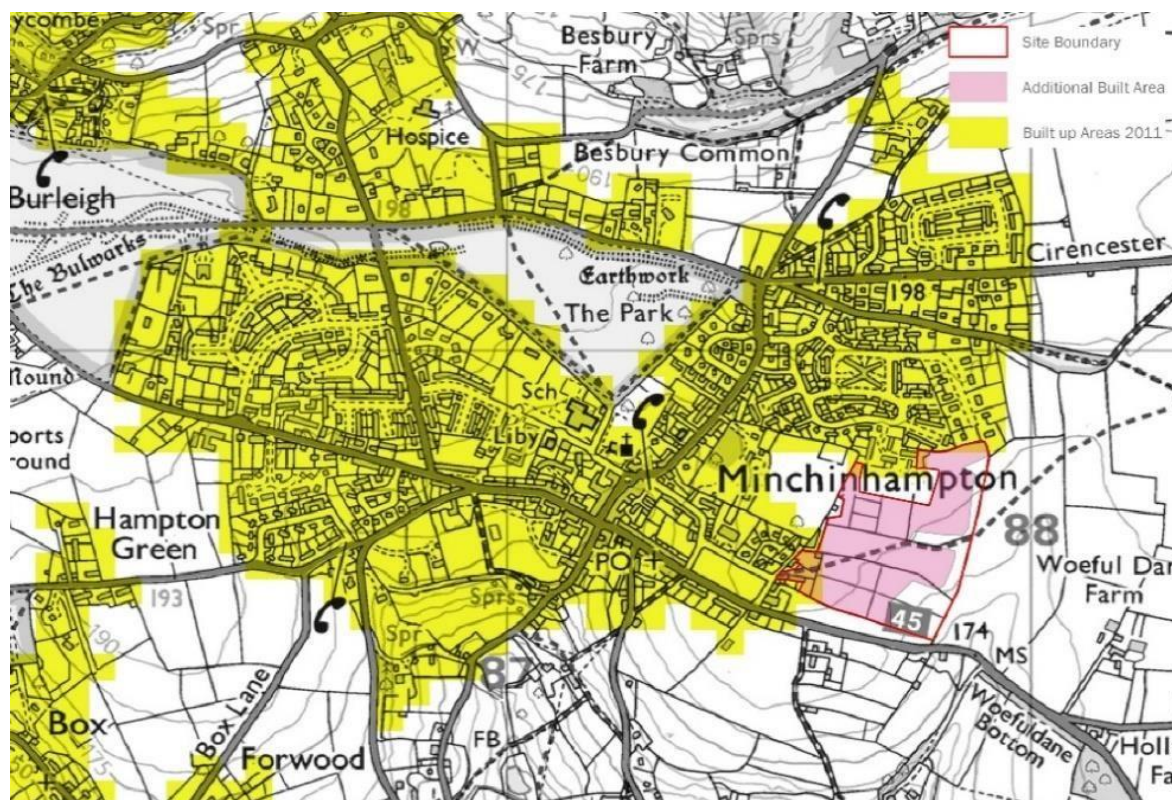


Image EDP 1: ONS ‘Built-up Area’ and Proposed Site ‘Built-up Area’.

- 3.3 Notwithstanding the above 'metric' approach, it is unclear why when considering the site specifics, CCB have had no regard to the extensive landscape and visual work and engagement EDP have had undertaken, this included engagement with their own landscape advisor. In addition, whilst there is agreement of the current baseline conditions, there is an inference that this could change, albeit no evidence is provided.
- 3.4 It is worth emphasising that a full Landscape and Visual Appraisal, compliant with the GLVIA 2013, was developed alongside the original application. This process identified the main landscape and visual receptors likely to be affected by the proposed development and resulted in a baseline appraisal in the context of which landscape and visual effects could be assessed. The submission material and subsequent promotional material (in particular the Design and Access Statement) demonstrate that the main landscape and visual implications of the proposed development and the potential impacts were identified, and that opportunities for mitigation and enhancement were developed in conjunction with the master planning process in order to minimise adverse impacts. Furthermore, as part of the evidence base, SDC commissioned White Consultants to review the proposed allocations, in relation the site, the review concludes that *"the extent of any adverse effects is localised...unlikely to be significant once the improved mitigation proposed is established"*.
- 3.5 Whilst the development of any greenfield site will inevitably result in some loss or harm to landscape receptors, the submissions and engagement to date has demonstrated that the objective assessment of these impacts has been considered in the context of the relative value and sensitivity of the landscape and townscape within which the site lies. Land which has been shown to be capable of accommodating residential development of the nature proposed without significant adverse effects.
- 3.6 The evidence was revisited in Summer 2019, and additional technical work was provided to demonstrate that, the parameters of the development, as outlined in the submitted promotional material, can be accommodated on the site in such a way that it is in keeping with the character of Minchinhampton and its surrounds. The development is both sympathetic and responsive to its context – preserving and enhancing landscape features of value whilst maximising opportunities for a multifunctional and connected green infrastructure of benefit to future inhabitants and existing residents.
- 3.7 CCB's acknowledgement that the site is the most appropriate housing location around Minchinhampton in landscape and visual terms is welcomed.
- 3.8 The conflation and consideration of matters pertaining to the historic environment is addressed in a separate note (ref: edp1965_r006a).