

14th May 2021

Framptons Planning
Oriol House
42 North Bar
Banbury
Oxfordshire
OX16 0TH

Dear Sir/Madam,

Re: Landscape consultation response for outline planning permission, application ref: 21/00500/OUT for the erection of up to 43 dwellings, construction of new vehicular access and provision of associated highway and drainage infrastructure, open space and landscaping.

We are in receipt of a consultation response by the Landscape team with regards to application number 21/00500/OUT. MHP Design (Chartered Landscape Architects) have been instructed on behalf of our client Greystone to provide the following additional information in response to the comments to assist the council in understanding and assessing the landscape issues of the site:

1. The MHP Illustrative Layout drawing 20147.101 has incorporated carefully considered mitigation measures and proposed screening in response to the findings of MHP Landscape and Visual Appraisal (LVA) (Final issue 20-11-17 V3) in order to prevent and minimise adverse landscape and visual effects as part of an iterative design process. Mitigation measures are designed to integrate the proposals into the surrounding landscape. An extensive 7.5m planting buffer is proposed along the western and northern edges of the site to screen views and reduce the visual scale and massing of proposals when viewed from Council Hill and adjacent footpaths (Viewpoints 8-9 and viewpoint 4 of the LVA). In addition to this, extensive areas of open space and green corridors are proposed within the development to further break up the massing of built form and ensure built form is successfully screened by proposed mitigation in views experienced by receptors on Council Hill and significantly limiting the degree of change experienced by receptors on these footpaths.
2. There is very limited intervisibility between St Peter's Church and the study site. The only location identified where these are experienced within the same view is from elevated land on Council Hill (Viewpoint 9 of the LVA) from which the tower of St Peter's is visible above the tree line with the study site field visible in the midground. Proposed mitigation and screening of the study site as outlined in point 1 will minimise the visibility of the proposals within this view and integrating them into surrounding landscape by bringing the tree line forward to the edge of the development. The residential development of the Ironstone Hollow to the immediate west of the study site, also situated on the site of a former quarry has been successfully screened by intervening vegetation and once established a similar effect can be expected by the proposed mitigation incorporated into the site design.

3. There is no inter-visibility between the study site and the Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. The study site is contained to the south by the raised landform and built form of the former railway line and to the west by the built form of the village and raised landform of the former tramline which contains views of the site from both the south and west where the boundaries of the AONB landscape are situated.

4. There is no defined settlement boundary surrounding Hook Norton. Whilst paragraph 4.2 of the Hook Norton neighbourhood plan explains that respondents were not in favour of a general expansion beyond the settlement limits, several recent approved developments set a precedent of this occurring within Hook Norton including Land off Sibford Road, Hook Norton (14/00844/OUT), Land North of the Bourne and Adjoining Bourne Lane (11/01755/OUT) and Land off Station Road (12/00472/F) on the former railway line. The neighbourhood plan goes on to explain that “The area between Ironstone Hollow and the old railway evoked a close split between those respondents who thought it appropriate for housing and those who did not” illustrating a degree of support within the village for the study site being suitable for housing. Furthermore, the neighbourhood plan goes on to state “Sites suggested as potentially suitable...were: land between Ironstone Hollow and the old railway;...In each of these cases, the smaller potentially suitable areas were those closest to existing housing.” The proposed layout reflects this desire limiting the developable area to that closest to existing housing to the south and west whilst respecting the identified site constraints and leaving the eastern portion of the field (furthest from existing housing) free from development. Policy HN – H2: Location of Housing within the Hook Norton Neighbourhood Plan, to which paragraph 4.2 refers, does not identify a need for housing to stay within the existing settlement limits but rather to take account of existing or potential alternative uses of the site and to comply with policies of the neighbourhood plan.

5. Policy ESD 13: Local Landscape Protection and Enhancement seeks to conserve and enhance the distinctive and highly valued local character of the entire district. This policy does not preclude development but rather requires development to respect and enhance local landscape character, securing appropriate mitigation where damage to the local landscape character cannot be avoided. “Opportunities will be sought to secure the enhancement of the character and appearance of the landscape, particularly in urban fringe locations, through the restoration, management or enhancement of existing landscapes, features or habitats and where appropriate the creation of new ones, including the planting of woodlands, trees and hedgerows.” The MHP LVA was produced as part of an iterative design process to identify where mitigation would be appropriate. The MHP illustrative layout drawing 20147.101 incorporates mitigation including the careful consideration of the siting, massing and density of the proposed built form; the retention and enhancement of existing landscape features of value and the creation of new vegetation belts, trees and hedgerows. The appearance of Hook Norton surrounded by substantial woodland when viewed from Council Hill (Viewpoints 8 and 9) is a result of layers of vegetation belts surrounding and throughout the village of Hook Norton rather than the result of areas of substantial woodland being situated on the edge of Hook Norton. The proposed mitigation measures reflect this local characteristic extending the treed edge of Hook Norton and once established is likely to have a similar screening effect to that of the existing vegetation belts of similar sizes that currently surround the

settlement. Once mitigation has established the proposals will not be seen to be visually intrusive into the open countryside but rather conform to established local character and integrate well into the surrounding landscape with limited to no visibility from Council Hill. Several character areas are established within the illustrative layout and design and access statement to reflect the local character of Hook Norton and follow the guidance as set out within Council's Countryside Design Summary Supplementary Planning Guidance and within the Oxfordshire Wildlife and Landscape Study.

I trust the information set out in this letter is of assistance, however, please do not hesitate to contact me should there be any further matters you wish to discuss.

Yours Sincerely,



Amanda Price CMLI
On behalf of MHP Design Ltd