

26<sup>th</sup> May 2021

Framptons Planning  
Oriol House  
42 North Bar  
Banbury  
Oxfordshire  
OX16 0<sup>TH</sup>

Dear Sirs,

**Re: Landscape note regarding the proposed highway access and potential landscape and visual effects. 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.**

Thank you for forwarding the email from Cherwell District Council which raised a query on the proposed site access off Station Road. I set out the background design rationale for this access and comments on the predicted landscape and visual effects arising from the implementation of the proposed access.

The design rationale behind the proposed access point is firstly safety and acceptability to the highways authority. However, the location also reflects the desire for the development to be closely connected to the existing settlement so that it is not seen as isolated or incongruous. The more recent residential development immediately south of the application site also contributes notably to integrating the development into the settlement on Station Road. This is a notable change in the landscape baseline.

The access point is also located so that vehicles leaving the future development will not directly face onto existing dwellings or gardens. You will note that the access lies immediately adjacent to a well established group of vegetation, located south of Station Road which also acts to screen the proposed access.

The location of the access is also influenced by the design intention that views into the site from Station Road created by the new access, would focus on green open space, well planted with trees, thereby retaining a rural character and rural edge of settlement feel to the development. The open space also providing space to achieve the engineering of the access road to accommodate the level difference of approximately 1500mm between the present highway and ploughed field.

The access will need to be constructed to create a near level approach at existing highway level. This will require a small amount of excavation rather than filling in the area of the existing hedge/vegetation. Existing vegetation will need to be removed from the physical area of the road and its pedestrian footways to accommodate the physical construction but this 'opening' has been considered from the inception of the present proposals including the landscape and visual appraisal.

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The highway engineer confirms that an embankment up to 4 metres in width would be required to deliver the access at an acceptable gradient into the site which can be totally accommodated within the proposed open space provided. In terms of impact on the existing roadside trees and hedge remnants, this build up is almost entirely contained to the land which is currently ploughed and in arable crop production. This is relevant as tree roots are therefore much more likely to be deep or absent and more likely to be focused on the drier land adjoining Station Road.

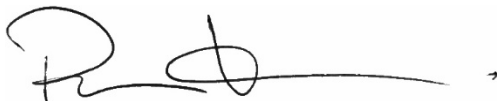
It has always been envisaged that some vegetation will have to be removed to facilitate an access but this loss has been considered through the strategic positioning of the site public open space. This provides notable opportunities to mitigate tree loss through new planting of native trees in this location adjoining Station Road. Vegetation that will be removed is assessed to be of moderate to poor quality and changes in ground level are predominately limited to the area where this vegetation is to be removed.

In terms of landscape and visual effects arising specifically from the proposed access, it should be noted that the initial landscape assessment informed the design of the masterplan. Retaining the edge of settlement and rural character of Station Road in this location is a key design objective of the proposal. Seeing elements of new built form is not necessarily unacceptably harmful particularly where the well treed character of the village is replicated to ensure that the development assimilates into its settlement edge location.

It is also relevant that the proposal commits to the restoration of the site hedge adjacent to Station Road which is presently in a poor and fragmented condition and deteriorating. This is also an important element in mitigating visual effects of the development on the edge of settlement character of Station Road. The open space provided between plots 4 to 6 and 12 is a deliberate design intention to limit the visual prominence of new built form seen from Station Road at this existing gateway to the village.

I accept that there remains some professional disagreement to the extent of landscape and visual effects or the threshold at which harm becomes unacceptable in this location. Taking the above into consideration, I hope that this note provides useful clarification and reassurance that the proposals have fully considered potential impacts on landscape character and visual amenity on Station Road and adjoining settlement.

Yours Sincerely,



Paul Harris CMLI  
Director

**On behalf of MHP Design Ltd**