



PLANNING FORUM

Notes of online meeting held at 5.00 pm on Tuesday 23 June 2020

Those present: Rob Rimell (Chair), Andrew Booton, Peter Sayers, Adrian Phillips, Andrew Kitching, Mike Richardson, Tess Beck (Minutes) & Mike Duckering

Apologies: David Oakhill

Elms Park, Tewkesbury Road, Cheltenham

Demolition of a dwelling and the erection of 260 dwellings (Use Class C3), new vehicular and pedestrian access off Manor Road, attenuation basin and ancillary infrastructure.

Planning ref: 20/00759/FUL

OBJECT

This proposal is one small part of the North West Cheltenham JCS urban extension. It is difficult to comment on this without access to a master plan or the allocation as a whole, including details of the infrastructure that will support the development.

The site's layout has been dictated by the power line and the pylon. This restricts landscaping options. If the power line is allowed to remain, this is likely to have a similar effect on the rest of the North West Cheltenham development. It should be a condition of any planning permission granted that the power cable be buried (we understand that burying a 132 kv power line might cost between £500,000 and £1m a kilometre). The green space could then be distributed throughout the development and used to create recreational space much more sympathetic to the location, e.g. village green layouts.

There has been no attempt at place making. The street plans and building designs appear to be mass produced with no attempt at making them sympathetic to the area. The apartment block is particularly dismal and inappropriate to the surroundings. The layout and forms of the development should make reference to neighbouring Swindon Village.

The cul de sac layout mitigates against safe and convenient cycle and pedestrian routes both within the site and to neighbouring areas. There needs to be more provision for sustainable transport. There is no mention of measures to ensure that the new estate would contribute towards the CBC target of net zero carbon emissions by 2030.

The balancing pond is a token attempt to address Environment Agency concerns about flood management, and contributes little in the way of landscape or recreational use. We recommend instead that the developers use the Building with Nature (BwN) model for managing water <https://www.buildingwithnature.org.uk/about>.

Far more attention should be given to the landscaping round the perimeter of the development, and within the site, taking into account the surrounding rural area, and again adhering to the BwN principles. We note that Tewkesbury Brough Council has formally adopted the BwN standards in its emerging local plan and urge CBC to do likewise for large new developments like this.

Premier Products Ltd, Bouncers Lane, Cheltenham

Erection of 49 residential dwellings and other associated works (part revised scheme following 17/00929/OUT & 18/01527/REM)

Planning ref: 20/00780/FUL

OBJECT

When the Civic Society Planning Forum commented on the previous iteration of this scheme, we suggested higher density of housing using terraces, but that was in order to create more amenity space, rather than to increase overall density. There is still no amenity space; there has been no attempt at placemaking; nor is there any mention of carbon reduction targets.

The Victorian pastiche designs are poor and unimaginative, and do not reflect the area's character. The developers could take inspiration from the houses on the opposite side of Bouncers Lane.

We echo the concerns in the public comments about the unsatisfactory parking and potentially dangerous access arrangements for the houses facing Bouncers Lane.

Douro Lodge, Lansdown Crescent, Cheltenham

Erection of a studio flat

Planning ref: 20/00564/LBC

NEUTRAL

This is a conservation area with many Grade II listed buildings. The Civic Society Planning Forum suggests that any new building should aspire to good design which would enhance its surroundings: there is plenty of inspiration in the immediate area, including coach houses. If the building was well designed, it could be above ground rather than buried from view. Improving the landscaping of this car park will be a net win.