

8.7.2016

RE: 16/04302/FUL - Proposed Replacement Dwelling Brock-O-Dale, Alcombe, Corsham, Wiltshire SN13 8QJ.

The Cotswolds Conservation Board wishes to raise an **objection** in this case.

The Board does not object to the principle of a replacement dwelling, but it considers the proposal subject to the current application by reason of its size, new location, external materials and design will result in a dwelling that will be very visible in the landscape.

The existing bungalow is modest in scale and height, is tucked well into the landscape and has established landscaping yet is still visible from public viewpoints in the wider landscape. By moving the building on to a more exposed part of the site, increasing the scale of the elevations substantially, having large areas of exposed glass and white render will make the proposed dwelling even more obvious in the wider landscape both in the day time and at night time to the detriment of the character and special qualities of the AONB.

The site is shown within the Cotswolds AONB Landscape Strategy and Guidelines (2016) as within Landscape Character Type 4 Enclosed Limestone Valley (specifically Landscape Character Area 4D Lower By Brook Valley). The landscape sensitivity of this Landscape Character Type is described as:

“Sections of the enclosed limestone valleys are quiet and rural and retain a distinct secluded character with strong associations of peace, tranquillity and a sense of remoteness. Landscape character here is strong, and these sections of the valleys are highly sensitive to developments that may compromise these characteristics. Of similar sensitivity are the highly visible landscapes on the upper slopes of the valleys. The heavily settled areas of some valley floors close to major communication routes are generally less sensitive but should be contained within the existing settlement boundaries. New development should be avoided on visible valley sides....”

The Landscape Strategy and Guidelines states in relation to isolated forms of development such as new single dwellings:

“ Avoid development that will intrude negatively into the landscape and cannot be successfully mitigated against,

- *Protect the undeveloped, unlit character of much of the Enclosed Limestone Valleys.*
- *Maintain the sense of openness and consider the impact of built development on views to the valley sides from the valley floor and across the valley, including the impact of cumulative development.*
- *Oppose new housing in the rural landscapes of the valleys (unless special circumstances apply in accordance with Paragraph 55 of the NPPF and development conserves and enhances the AONB as required by the CRoW Act 2000)*
- *Avoid conversion of isolated farm buildings*
- *Conserve the distinctive rural and dispersed settlement pattern.*
- *Conserve distinctive rural / agricultural landscapes that fringes and forms a backdrop to settlements on the lower valley slopes and valley floor.*
- *Restore existing stone farm buildings and structures in preference to new built development.*
- *Existing buildings should be carefully conserved and where converted to new uses buildings must retain their historic integrity and functional character. Sound conservation advice and principles must be sought and implemented”*

In conclusion the site is located in the Cotswolds AONB, a nationally protected landscape which has the highest status of protection in relation to landscape and scenic beauty and as such is afforded “great weight” in the decision making process. In addition the Adopted Cotswolds AONB Landscape Strategy and Guidelines adds further weight to the specific sensitivities of this landscape to this form of development. The replacement of the existing dwelling is possible in principle, but requires reconsideration to ensure a design, location and use of materials and new openings that conserves and enhances the site within the landscape and does not result in becoming a very obvious new built development.