

Cotswolds Conservation Board  
Fosse Way  
Northleach  
Gloucestershire  
GL54 3JH



31<sup>st</sup> October 2018

Martin Perks  
Planning Officer  
Cotswold District Council

By email to [martin.perks@cotswold.gov.uk](mailto:martin.perks@cotswold.gov.uk)

Dear Mr Perks

**17/05211/FUL | Erection of 28 hotel bedrooms and dining pavilion, creation of car parking and new access and use of barn as plant room | Hare and Hounds Fosse Cross Chedworth Cheltenham Gloucestershire GL54 4NN**

The Cotswolds Conservation Board ('the Board') OBJECTS to the above planning application. The Board also objected to the previous planning application for this site (Planning Ref: 16/05371/FUL) on 16/03/17 and again on 05/08/17. This response should be read in conjunction with those previous responses.

The Board is concerned that the issues that we raised in our previous responses have not been adequately addressed. In fact, the current planning application has increased the number of proposed parking spaces, which would have a further adverse impact.

The Board recognises the desirability of securing the long term viability of the Hare and Hounds. However, this long term viability should be delivered in a way that is consistent with the site's status as a significant heritage asset in a nationally important landscape. It is the Board's opinion that the proposed development does not achieve these combined objectives.

As stated in our previous consultation responses, the Board is of the opinion that the scale and design of the proposed development is such that it would have a significant adverse impact on the Grade II listed building of the Hare and Hounds and its setting, as well as on the landscape character of this part of the AONB. As such, it would also have a significant adverse impact on the purpose for which the Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) was designated – to conserve and enhance the natural beauty of the AONB. Under Section 85 of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000, the local planning authority must have regard to this purpose when making a decision on this planning application.

Further details regarding the Board's objections to the proposed development are provided in Annex 1, below.

Conserving, enhancing, understanding and enjoying the Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty

Given the points raised above (and in Annex 1), it is the Board's opinion that the scale of any proposed development at this site should be the minimum that is required to secure its long term viability, both as a business and as a listed building. To-date, the applicant has provided no compelling evidence to demonstrate that the long term viability could not be secured through a smaller scale development of the site. Prior to a decision being made on this planning application, consideration should be given to the potential for the long term viability to be secured through a smaller scale development.

If you have any queries regarding these comments, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "John Mills". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long, sweeping underline.

John Mills MRTPI  
Planning and Landscape Officer

**ANNEX 1. 17/05211/FUL | Erection of 28 hotel bedrooms and dining pavilion, creation of car parking and new access and use of barn as plant room | Hare and Hounds Fosse Cross Chedworth Cheltenham Gloucestershire GL54 4NN**

**Scale of the development**

The proposed development would increase the footprint of the buildings on the site by approximately 50%. The new buildings would also be of a similar height to the existing buildings, including the Grade II listed building. The Board is of the opinion that this scale of development is out of proportion to the existing buildings and their setting.

Policy EN2 of the Cotswold District Local Plan requires development to accord with the Cotswold Design Code, which itself forms part of the Local Plan (Appendix D). With regards to the scale and proportion of new development, the Cotswold Design Code states that:

- New buildings should be carefully proportioned and relate to ... their landscape ... context.
- Excessive or uncharacteristic bulk should be avoided.
- New buildings should generally not dominate their surroundings, but should complement the existing structures or landscape, and sit comfortably within their setting.
- Extensions to existing buildings should be in scale and character with the parent building. Additions should not dominate the original building, individually or cumulatively.
- Subservience in mass and height is often important, leaving the building's evolution apparent.
- The scale of contemporary buildings should respond to their context.

The proposed development does not comply with any of these criteria. As such, the proposed development is also contrary to the requirements of the Local Plan, particularly Policy EN2.

**Design of the development**

The Board acknowledges that Cotswold stone cladding and – for some buildings – stone roof tiles have been incorporated into the design of the proposed buildings. However, none of the buildings incorporate local Cotswold vernacular into their design to a significant degree. For example, the large, square dormer windows facing into the courtyard do not respect local building styles. In particular, the proposed accommodation block is of an inappropriate industrial design.

The Cotswold Design Code states that a well-executed, contemporary design approach can be appropriate on some sites. However, the Cotswold Design Code also states that a contemporary approach should reinforce a sense of place, make strong local references and respect elements of the Cotswold vernacular, in order to maintain the architectural distinctiveness of the area. The Board is of the opinion that the proposed development fails to adequately address these design principles.

The Cotswold Design Guide also specifies that the massing and the elevations of contemporary buildings should usually be broken to avoid overly horizontal proportions and a monolithic or brutal appearance. The scale, modulation and architectural lines of contemporary buildings should respond to their context, for example with vertical articulation reflecting the narrower plots within town centres. The uniform height of the proposed development, particularly the accommodation block, does not reflect this requirement.

As such, the Board is of the opinion that the proposed development fails to accord with the Cotswold Design Code and to respect the character and distinctive appearance of the locality, as required by Policy EN2 of the Local Plan.

The Board acknowledges that the proposed development proposes some enhancements to the listed building. However, on balance, the Board is of the opinion that the scale of the development is such that it would fail to enhance the character and appearance of the Grade II listed building and its setting, as required in Policy EN10 of the Local Plan.

### **Landscaping of the development**

The Board is concerned that the number of proposed parking spaces has increased from 56 to 67, resulting in a reduction in the size of the proposed landscaped 'buffer' between the car park and the A417. The Board understands that this change has been made to ensure that the car parking provision is sufficient to meet the demand for parking associated with the proposed development.

However, the Board is of the opinion that, if the development is approved, the larger 'buffer' proposed in the previous planning application should be maintained in order to minimise the adverse visual impacts of the car park. Instead of increasing the number of parking spaces, the Board recommends that the scale of the proposed development should be reduced to a scale where sufficient parking can be provided whilst still accommodating the larger buffer zone within the car park.

With regards to both the buffer and the proposed hedgerow and tree planting, care should be taken to ensure that these do not adversely affect the character and setting of the site.

In addition, as stated in previous responses:

- The use of vegetation to screen the accommodation buildings appears incongruous. As it is situated within an AONB and adjacent to a listed building, the design should be of a standard that such extensive screening should not be necessary in order to lessen the impact of development in both the immediate and wider landscape.
- It would be preferable if the northern elevations were set back more from the boundary wall in order to preserve the existing openness and views to the surrounding countryside.
- Lighting of the car park is of particular concern. Should permission be granted, lighting should be kept to a minimum and controlled by planning conditions.

### **Cotswolds AONB Management Plan 2018-2023**

Policy EN5 of the Cotswold District Local Plan, which relates to the Cotswolds AONB, states that:

- In determining development proposals within the AONB or its setting, the conservation and enhancement of the natural beauty of the landscape, its character and special qualities will be given great weight.

One of the key documents that guides the conservation and enhancement of the Cotswolds AONB is the Cotswolds AONB Management Plan, which should be a 'material consideration' in planning matters. A new Management Plan, covering the period 2018-2023, was adopted by the Board on 20<sup>th</sup> September 2018. Two of the most relevant policies in the Management Plan are Policy CE3 (Local Distinctiveness) and Policy CE5 (Historic Environment and Cultural Heritage).

Policy CE3 states that:

- Proposals that are likely to impact on the local distinctiveness of the Cotswolds AONB should have regard to, be compatible with and reinforce this local distinctiveness. This should include:
  - Being designed and ... landscaped to respect local ... building styles, scale and materials.

Policy CE6 states that:

- Proposals that are likely to impact on the historic and cultural heritage of the Cotswolds AONB should have regard to these features and seek to conserve and enhance them. This should include respecting historical features, buildings, sites, layout and context including the relationship between the existing feature ... and the landscape.

For the reasons outlined in relation to the scale, design and landscaping of the proposed development, the Board is of the opinion that the proposed development does adequately reflect these policies. In line with Policy EN5 of the Local Plan, these considerations should be given great weight.