

## Urban Design Comments

### O/23/96432 – Land to the West of Cobbett Way, Botley

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**From:** Urban & Landscape Design Team to Development Management

**Urban Design Officer:** Marta Oliveira

**Planning Officer:** Summer Sharpe

**Date:** 13 December 2023

**Proposal:** Outline application for residential development of up to 34 dwellings and associated infrastructure (access only to be considered).

**Summary:**

- The site is located outside the urban edge within the countryside and a settlement gap.
  - Countryside location where there is a presumption against new residential development.
  - Well-achieved balance between built form and landscape.
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These comments are made in relation to the plans and supporting information dated 22 November 2023 and should be read in conjunction with comments from the Landscape, Tree and Ecology Officers and Highways Specialist.

## 1. Site Context & Analysis

The site lies within open countryside in a settlement gap, directly to the west of Cobbett Way. Given the location of the site within the countryside, there is an in-principle objection to this form of development. The following comments are made on the assumption that suitable justification can be made for a departure from planning policy.

The application site has a number of significant constraints which would influence the nature, form, scale and appearance of any potential development. These include physical constraints such as trees, flood zone, pedestrian access (outside the site boundary) and others such as overhead power lines, esso pipeline, sewer, and their respective easements zones. In addition to this usual set of constraints is the fact that the site is within the countryside and the settlement gap. It seems that the majority of these constraints have been noted, as they are mentioned within the supporting design and access statement submitted with the application. It does appear as if a in depth analysis of the site has been undertaken in order to fully establish the importance of these constraints or how they could influence any proposed development. However, it would be important to submit an overlay of the site constraints plan with the proposed layout to properly assess this concern.

Considering the complexity of the site is of a major importance.

## 2. Streets, Spaces and External Layout

### Site Access & Parking

Whilst it is for Highway colleagues to comment on the technicalities of whether the proposed vehicular access to the site is suitable, in highway terms; it would be encouraged to investigate

if there is pedestrian right of access to the site from north, more specifically from Broak Oak Road.

In terms of parking, more information would need to be submitted in order to produce more detailed comments on this matter.

#### **External Layout**

In general, the proposal appears to sit comfortably within the site, displaying a relaxed form of development where most of the space is utilised in a considerate way and the proposed dwellings are set with sufficient distance between each other. It is also felt that the proposal provides sufficient, private and useable amenity spaces for future occupants. Therefore, the proposed layout is considered to be acceptable and balanced.

The green open space proposed between the residential development and the western and southern boundary works as a buffer for these very different functions as well as contributing to the transition in scale to a looser grain. This area forms an important part of the concept and, seems to be successfully design and delivered and would add value to the sequence of public open spaces, such as the meeting area and the link to the pedestrian access to the north of the scheme.

### **3. Height, form, scale & Mass**

No objections in principle to the “Building Heights Plan” illustrated on page 20 of the DAS. This will need to be discussed further as the design evolves.

### **4. Sustainability**

All sustainable measures mentioned are welcomed.

To support the Council’s commitment to mitigate climate change:

- Provide minimum parking provision
- Provide charging points for electric vehicles, Ebikes and other forms of micro-mobility
- Consider introducing green and blue roofs and walls to reduce hard surfaces and control water at source
- Include additional trees and soft landscape to reduce hard surfaces, slow surface water run-off, provide shade and create habitats / corridors for biodiversity
- Incorporate permeable surfaces and multi-functional SuDS in accordance with advice from Landscape and Ecology Officers
- Consider installation of photovoltaics
- Reduce levels of CO2 emissions via energy efficiency and choice of materials
- Incorporate efficient mains water consumption measures
- Orient buildings to maximise solar gain and provide natural surveillance of surrounding street and spaces to encourage active travel

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- Include measures to provide outdoor shade and minimise indoor heating
- Ensure habitable rooms enjoy dual aspect to maximise solar gain, improve ventilation and maximise overlooking of surrounding streets and spaces