

Appendix C – Landscape Architect’s Comments

Adrian, the above application seeking the residential development of 110 homes on the above site is noted. I also note that the core strategy does not advocate any further building in Crewkerne, and that will only change if there is Inspectorate support to the contrary, which appears unlikely on the basis of the Inspector’s preliminary findings.

In terms of the principle of development here, looking at the findings of the landscape peripheral study, the area is indicated as having both a low, and moderate-low capacity for development, and whilst it would longer term have a relationship of sorts with the Easthams site to the south, and Wadham to the west, development here would exacerbate the adverse impact of this outward extension of Crewkerne, separate from the town’s main form that lays in the valley to the southwest of the site. Hence there is no landscape support for the principle of development in this location, LP policy EC3.

The other major adverse impact derives from the point of highway access, and its route into the site, which;

- (a) would knock out an extensive length of woody vegetation by the A30 roadside, to erode the distinctive character of the A30 approach to the town;
- (b) create a huge gap in the hillside where the current banks above the A30 would need to be regarded, again eroding local landscape character;
- (c) requires extensive earthworking to first (i) cut the access road into the higher ground, and (ii) build up road linkage across the site at (as shown) the southwest boundary where the land ‘corrugates’, which will be greatly at variance to local topography, and;
- (d) creates too great a separation between potential housing areas for the development to demonstrate cohesion.

Connectivity with the town is poor, and there is little cohesion in the proposed building layout – which is (rightly) primarily determined by landscape sensitivities, and the site’s varying topography. Whilst the steepest slopes are avoided, I note that housing is planned within field 3 on a 1 in 6 slope, and generally the folds in the topography will not readily accommodate standard structural forms and road gradients. Experience has shown that building over such slopes will require a great deal of ground manipulation; and result in substantial elements of retention; and massing impacts due to the change of level across the site. Any greater densities than the indicative masterplan intends are bound to exacerbate these probabilities, hence there is no landscape support for the indicative layout, LP policy ST5 paras 4 and 5.

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