

Response to Comments of Statutory Consultees

Land off Oakhurst Rise, Charlton Kings



1.0 Introduction

1.1 An application for Outline Planning permission was submitted in Summer 2017 and was refused permission on 31st July 2018. Reason for Refusal 2 was on heritage grounds and stated that

“The proposed development would have a significant impact on the setting of nearby listed buildings, particularly Ashley Manor, an important grade II listed villa of more than special interest. The resultant 'less than substantial' harm to these designated heritage assets must be afforded significant weight, and this harm would fail to be outweighed by the public benefits arising from the proposal in the overall planning balance. The development would therefore be in conflict with Section 66(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, adopted policy SD8 of the Joint Core Strategy (2017), and paragraphs 193, 194 and 196 of the National Planning Policy Framework 2018.*

1.2 As a result of this decision and the comments made on the application by both Historic England and the Cheltenham Borough Council's Conservation Officer, the scheme has been redesigned to take account of those comments.

1.3 In particular Historic England was concerned about the wider setting of the Grade II* St Edward's School, once The Oaklands, and a Regency Villa. Historic England considered that, although the land to the north of the building, the subject of the application has never been part of the designed setting of the Villa's gardens, that the nature and openness of this unused land is part of the wider setting of the building today and that therefore this openness should be respected in any scheme for development.

1.4 As a result of this the scheme has been reduced the number of units from 100 to 69, a significant and appreciable reduction which has rendered great

change to the revised layout. These units have now been laid out in a scheme of low-density, domestic development with large areas of open space around the edges of the site and also within its very heart.

1.5 In the centre of the revised layout the historic, subterranean Icehouse, marked by a vegetated mound, is now protected by a large area of green space with a direct, unimpeded, undeveloped view towards The Oaklands, the building with which it was once associated. This open tract of land would maintain the connection between the two historic structures and was an element of design requested by the Council's Conservation Officer.

1.6 In the same way a much deeper green area has been left on the south side of the plot, where the site runs adjacent with The Oaklands: there is only a single, smaller building now proposed in this area. This open area would protect the present day wider setting of the

listed building enabling it to be read and experienced from today's wider setting. It is also proposed that the historic Shelterbelt along his boundary, shown on historic plans and maps of the site, (details of which can be found in the Heritage Statement) be reinforced and restored where necessary with appropriate species. This would protect the Villa from views to the north as was always intended.

1.7 Similarly, to the eastern and northern boundaries of the site, development has been pulled back away from the site edges and reduced in density in order to preserve the open space around the non-designated asset Glen Duggan and the designated Charlton Manor. This will reduce the level of intrusion into their setting such that any perceived harm to their settings would be on the low end of less-than-substantial.

1.8 It is considered that the revised design has addressed the comments of both Historic England and

Cheltenham Borough Council and that any degree of harm, if harm is still perceived to be present, will only be on the low end of less-than-substantial and that this will need to be weighed against the public benefit of the new houses for the residents of Cheltenham.