

# Site Assessment Checklist

## Tips to help you carry out an assessment:

- Use your local knowledge to consider answers to the following questions and also visit the site. Take photos / use maps to clearly show locations where possible.
- Go online and visit the Stroud District Council planning pages for current/historical planning applications – [www.stroud.gov.uk/PLO](http://www.stroud.gov.uk/PLO)
- Go online and visit Gloucestershire County Council's public rights of way map – [www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/prow](http://www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/prow)
- The Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment for Stroud can be e-mailed to you or found online at [www.stroud.gov.uk/info/plan\\_strat/SHLAA\\_2011](http://www.stroud.gov.uk/info/plan_strat/SHLAA_2011)

## 1. Location and general information

a.	Site address: Land off Harding Drive, Ownership: Josephine Munyard. Colin, John, Clutterbuck Agent: Mark Snook Planning, The Pike House, Kingshill, GL11 4BJ
b.	Area: Approx. 1.8Ha. Area outside the Town Settlement boundary. Site is part of the Cotswold AONB.
c.	SHLAA capability assessment if known (Strategic housing land availability assessment (see above)) ie how many houses could the site hold?: No SHLAA assessment as AONB, under 0.2Ha and outside Town settlement boundary.
d.	Current use (What the land is currently used for and by whom) Grade 3 Agricultural land laid to pasture.
e.	Site planning history (eg alternative uses for the site in the past eg rubbish disposal/cemetery: (check Stroud District Council's planning website see above) No site planning history until present application. S.15/0281/OUT
f.	Location of buildings/ foundations if buildings removed: Only a few derelict low wooden farm erections.
g.	Is the land available? (Do you know the landowner & has anyone communicated with them? - For what uses might they consider selling the land?): The landowners propose to develop the land with: at present, 27 dwellings. These are planned to be located on 2 thirds of the site, with 30% affordable home allocation. The local community have put in an application to have the land designated as a Town Green.
h.	Current or expired planning permissions: (check Stroud District Council's planning website see above)  S.15/0281/OUT  (See plans attached)

## 2. Designations and known constraints

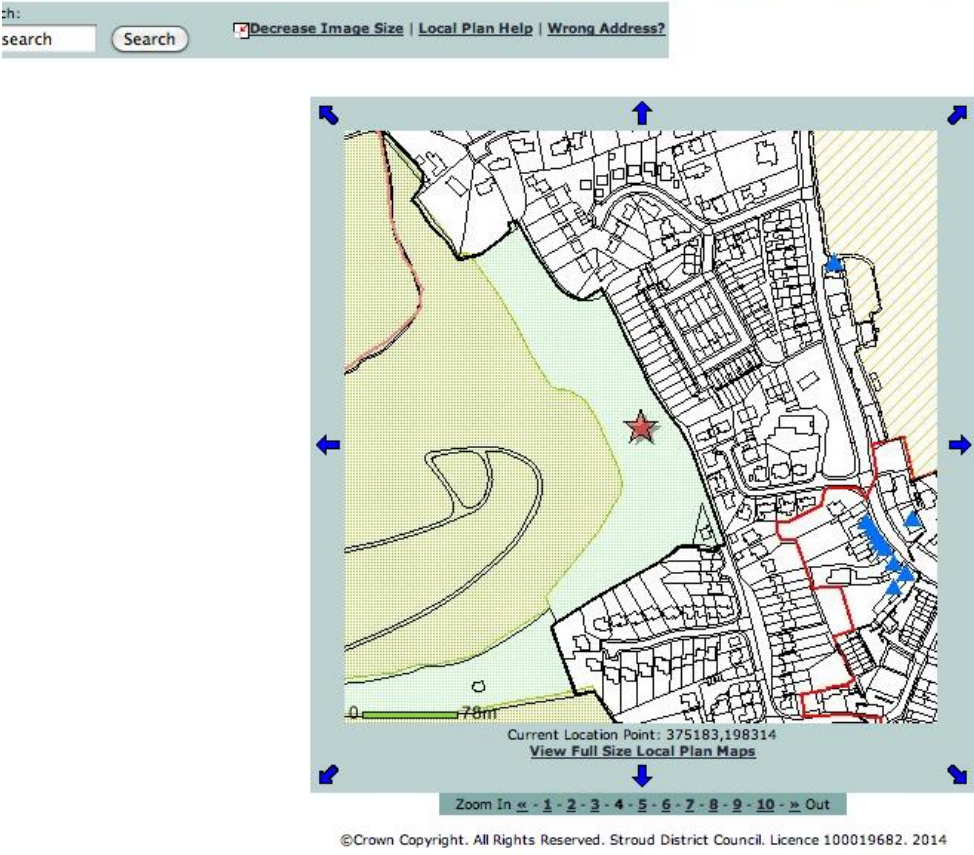
a.	<p>Are there any planning constraints eg is the land in a Conservation Area/AONB/SSSI? <i>(use the maps provided by the Project Administrator/available in the office to establish any or check Stroud District Council's planning website, see above)</i></p> <p>Land in AONB and outside the settlement boundary.</p>
b.	<p>Does the site flood?</p> <p>Flood risk zone 1. Low risk of flooding. However, the land is on a slope and the pasture absorbs the run off from the ancient woodlands (Westfield woods) above. With the pastureland turned to concrete, there is likelihood that the runoff would affect the housing below.</p>
c.	<p>Are there any easements or covenants on the land?</p> <p>None evident from title deed and there are no designated footpaths</p>
d.	<p>Wildlife settlements on the land eg wild orchids, crested newts, badgers</p> <p>The whole area being and area beneath ancient woodland is rich in wildlife. A recent study carried out on the owners' behalf by the company Abricon, seemed to find no significant wildlife on the site. This tends to run counter to the Stinchcombe wildlife Trust survey, which showed the presence of a wide range of flora and fauna round this ancient woodland. It should be noted that the owner, knowing that the land was earmarked for development, ploughed up the pasture on several occasions and residents reported seeing remains of invertebrates and reptiles, which may explain the paucity of wildlife evidence reported in the latest Abricon survey.</p> <p>The situation of this parcel of land, with its warm slopes has been identified by Gloucester wildlife scientist as a perfect habitat for a number of species including slowworm and dormice. Residents, whose properties abut this land report sightings of deer, muntjac, badger, fox and other mammals.</p>
e.	<p>Agricultural best and most versatile land quality /Tree preservation orders in place/ ancient woodland:</p> <p>Land forms part of the ancient woodland escarpment.</p>
f.	<p>Gas pipelines/ pylons/power /telephone cables/ drains/ springs/water courses:</p> <p>None, as farmland</p>
g.	<p>Any rights of way/footpaths, official or otherwise: <i>(check public rights of way map online, see above)</i></p> <p>None reported, although people in the neighbourhood, especially those in Garden Suburb, have had predecessors and present residents enjoying the use of the site.</p>

## 3. Site connections and access

a.	<p>Walking/cycling/driving distance to local facilities- shop, school, open space, bus stop, other facility:</p> <p>The site is within 200m of Dursley bus station and 300m of the town centre</p>
b.	<p>What kind of access ie minor path or direct onto a major route? Any speed restrictions? Is the access pedestrian &amp;/or vehicular? Might there be better or more direct access via a ransom strip (owned by whom?) Good access = easy access and good roads approaching it; fair = poor access into the site but good approach roads (or good access into the site but poor approach roads); poor= poor access into the site and poor approach roads):</p>

The access to the site will be from May Lane. There is a path, which terminates at the Bus station and pedestrians would have to cross the station parking to reach the path running past the library and up towards the town or crossing at what is quite a blind spot due to the curvature of the road. This route is already used by residents who live on Hardings Drive. The increase in traffic flow into the proposed development would have to be investigated given that the exit onto May Lane has visibility issues for traffic coming from Stinchcombe. Generally however, access is fair.

#### 4. Landscape, views and form

a	Is the boundary clearly defined and how (fence/hedge/neighbouring buildings/road etc: Yes
b	The nature of the site (eg flat v sloping (how steep?) grass/woods/farmed land/brownfield: Sloping (see photos)
c	<p>Who/what adjoins the site – is it overlooked by any housing or perhaps businesses? How might they be impacted by development on the land OR how might they impact on the development eg noise or traffic from businesses: The site is has housing to the south and east.</p> <p>ch' controls to find your area of interest. The position of the star on the map will determine which policies are relevant to that location. These policies will be displayed below the map window.</p>  <p>Protection of Cotswolds AONB.</p> <p>The objections to the proposal were listed on the SDC site and demonstrate the perceived impact by the locals. (see listing below)</p>
d	Is the site visible from buildings of open spaces further away?:

	<p>Yes. (see photos of the different distant views of the site and how the development of the site might affect the vista of the townscape).</p> <p><b>8 Summary</b></p> <p>This report describes an assessment of the potential landscape and visual effects that may be associated with a proposal to develop 27 dwellings on a small parcel of land to the west of Dursley in Gloucestershire. The site is located immediately to the west of the township of Dursley on the steeply rising scarp slope of Stinchcombe Hill. Existing residential development is located immediately to the south, east and north of the site, with mature woodland on the steep hillside to the west. The surrounding area exhibits a complex topography with the steeply rising escarpments to the west and south and a series of discrete and dramatic outlying hills within the rolling vale to the east of Dursley.</p> <p>Local land use comprises a mix of urban settlement, permanent pasture (within a strong framework of hedgerows), and extensive areas of mature deciduous woodland on the escarpment to the west and south. The site, and most of the surrounding area (excepting the settlements of Dursley and Cam), is located within the Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB).</p> <p>The site extends to an area of 1.8 hectares and currently comprises an area of improved grassland which contains no features of significant landscape or ecological value. However, in consideration of its setting within the Cotswold AONB and its prominence in views from the town and areas to the east, the site is judged to have a moderate landscape sensitivity.</p> <p>The proposed scheme is the development of 27 residential units comprising detached and semi-detached houses, with private gardens, car parking areas and communal green infrastructure. The design approach is to create a small residential development that will reflect the scale and density of the local built environment, whilst integrating with the adjacent residential communities. A landscape mitigation strategy has been put forward to minimise any potential landscape and visual impacts and to provide enhancement. The proposed development will not result in the loss or deterioration of any valued landscape features and it is anticipated that the adopted design strategy and mitigation measures will help to integrate the development into the surrounding landscape. Hence, it is predicted that the development will have only limited adverse effect upon the fabric</p> <p>20Land adjacent to Hardings Drive, Dursley, Gloucestershire Landscape &amp; Visual Appraisal</p> <p>and character of the local area and that of the wider Cotswold landscape. Indeed it is anticipated that the sympathetic development of the site, along with the creation of new and enhanced wildlife habitats, may have a beneficial landscape impact.</p> <p>Although the site is visually prominent in the landscape, the proposed housing layout and associated landscape strategy will serve to minimise the potential visual impacts. The development may have moderate to significant visual impacts upon receptors immediately adjacent to the site, but in the wider landscape, the majority of impacts will be negligible or slight. The visual effects of the built development are predicted to diminish over time as the proposed planting within the site begins to mature and the development gradually integrates into the local landscape setting.</p>
e	<p>Views out and in- quality and value</p> <p>The views out of the site will be aesthetically very pleasing. Views in, may have an impact on the view-line of the town. (see photos below)</p>

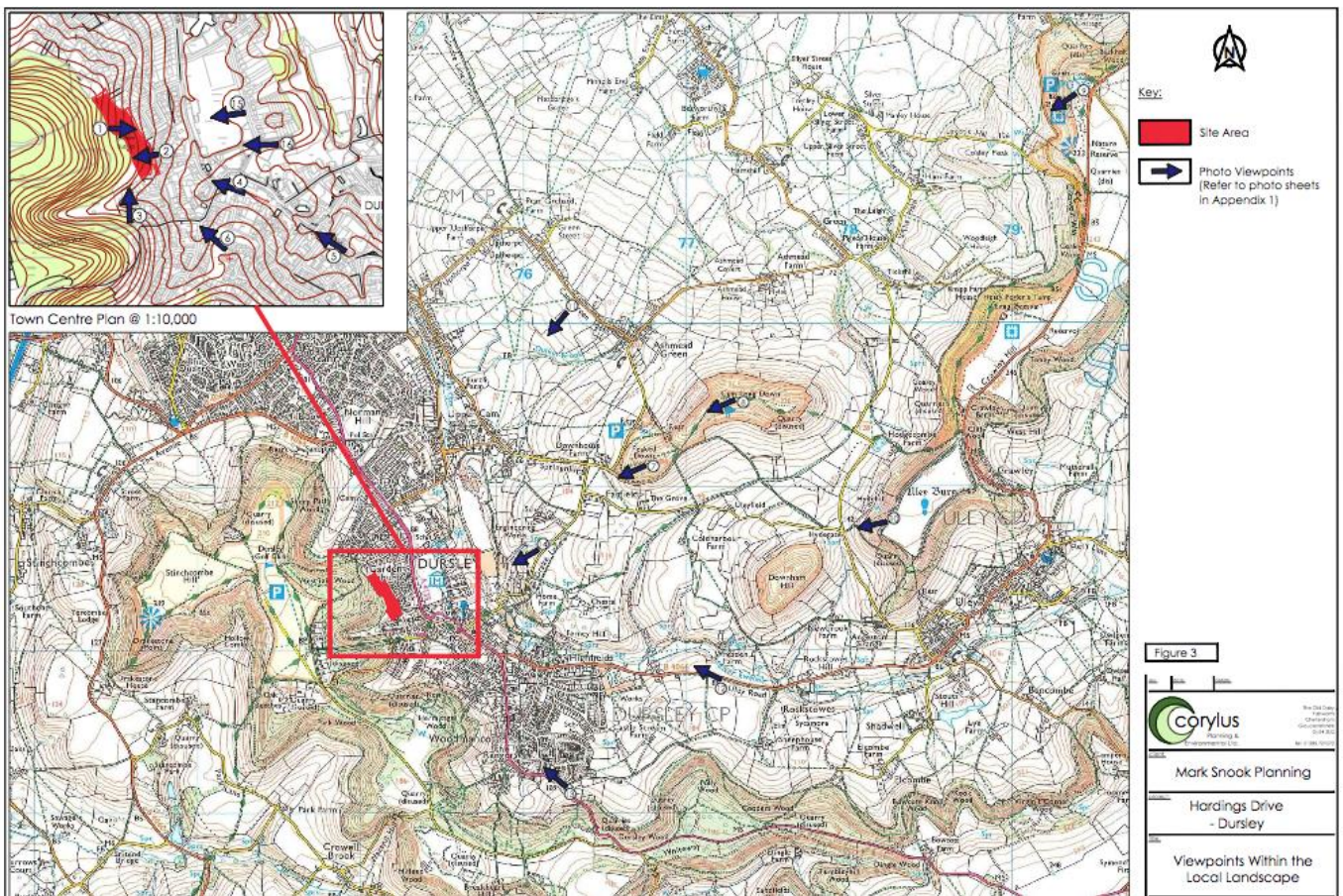
**5. Your findings based on information**

a.	<p>Use all this information to make a judgement on the development potential of the site eg excellent/good/poor/out of the question:</p> <p>It is difficult to make a judgment on the potential development of the site, given that there has been much opposition from the surrounding neighbourhood. The land is designated as an AONB. It falls outside the settlement boundary. Animals from the ancient woodland stray onto the land for foraging and there is some contrary evidence regarding the impact on wildlife. Much will depend on</p>
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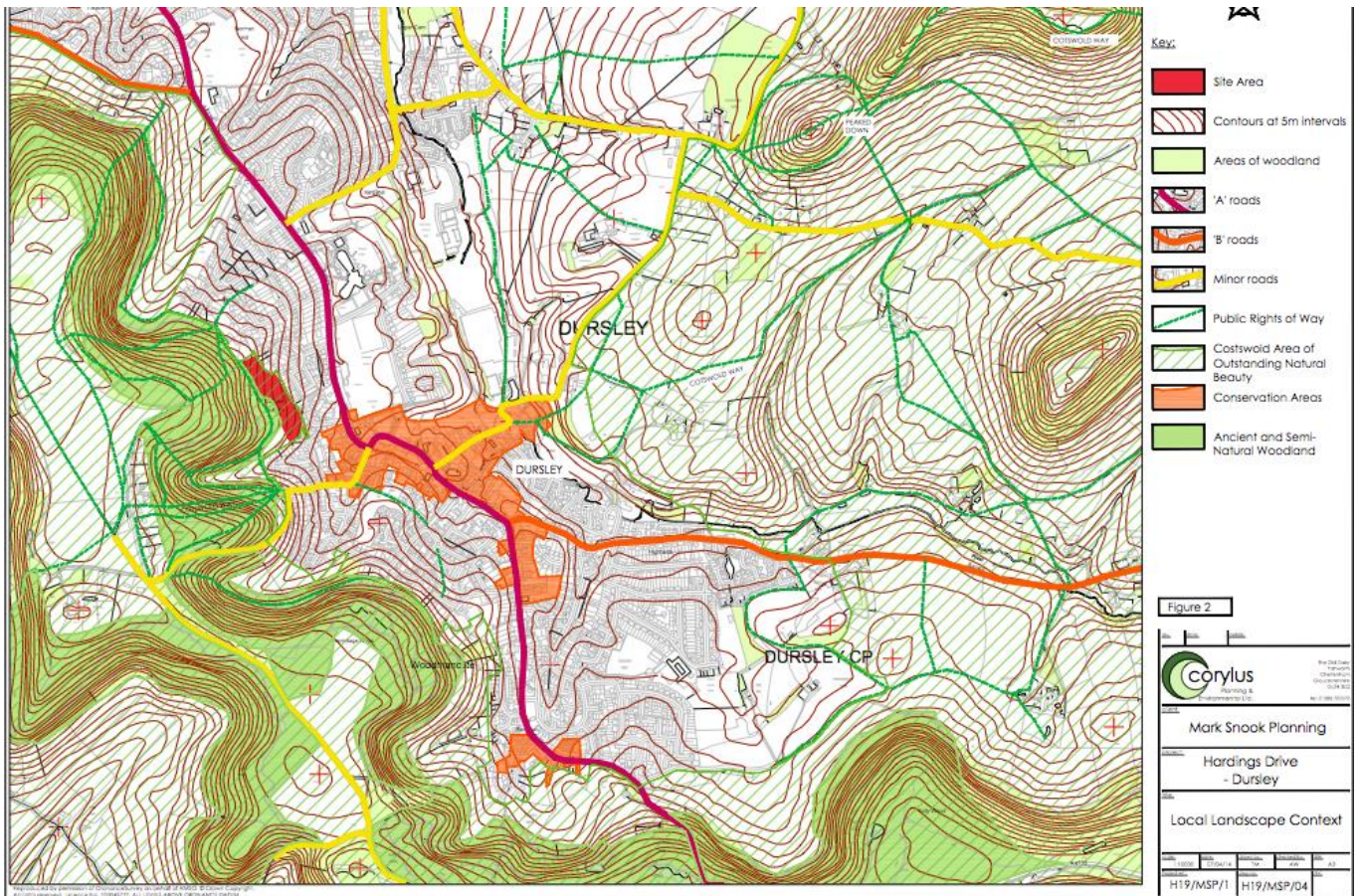
	the community's view of such a development and whether it will open the door to further developments on areas outside the settlement boundary and encroaching on AONB.
b.	For what uses would you consider it worth developing?: There is a proposal for a housing development
c.	What conditions/mitigation would you expect before any development could go ahead? Preservation and enhancement of wildlife areas. Planting of trees to shield the development from view: Ensuring that water run off from the woods above does not adversely affect the housing in Garden Suburb and other lower lying areas.

If you have any questions about completing this form please contact Dursley Town Council on 01453 547758 or email: [ndp@dursleytowncouncil.gov.uk](mailto:ndp@dursleytowncouncil.gov.uk)

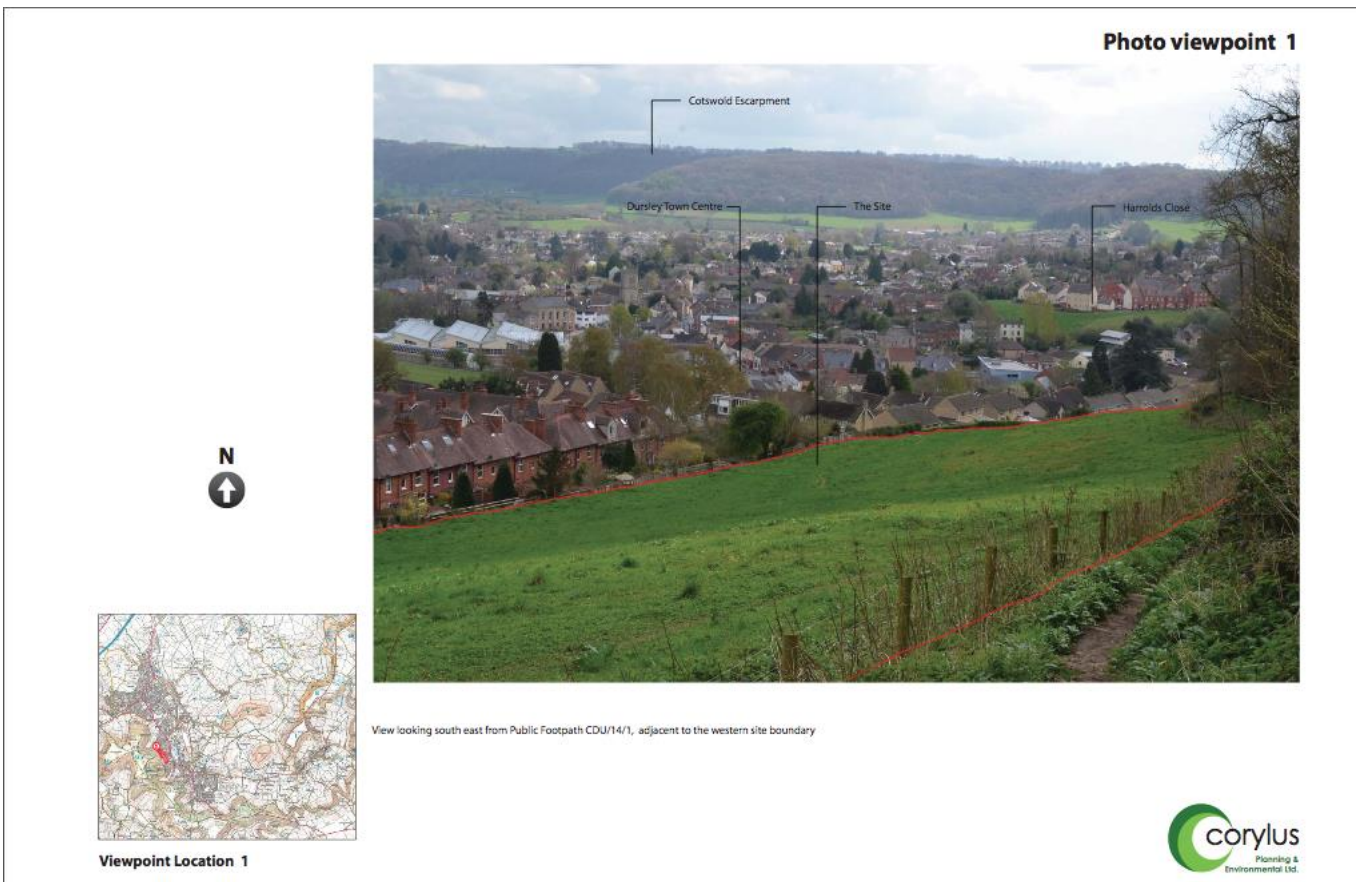


Map of Dursley showing the areas of the proposed development in red. Insert showing the topography and the degree of sloping. Also the area being on elevated land has an impact on the Townscape.





Enhanced topographical map.



Views from the site.



**Photo viewpoint 11**



**Viewpoint Location 11**

View looking southwest from the settlement of Cam Green (c. 2 km from the site)



Views into the site from surrounding areas.

**Photo viewpoint 6**



**Viewpoint Location 6**

View looking north west from Herrolds Close - (c. 350 m from the site)





Viewpoint Location 15

View looking west from 'The Knapp' (c. 300 m from the site)



**Photo viewpoint 3**



Viewpoint Location 3

View looking north from Public Footpath CDU/17/1 (c. 100 m from the site)





Photo viewpoint 10

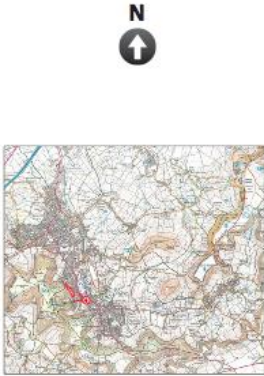


Viewpoint Location 10

View looking west / southwest from bridleway CUL/S/1 near to Uley Bury Hill Fort (c. 3 Km from the site)



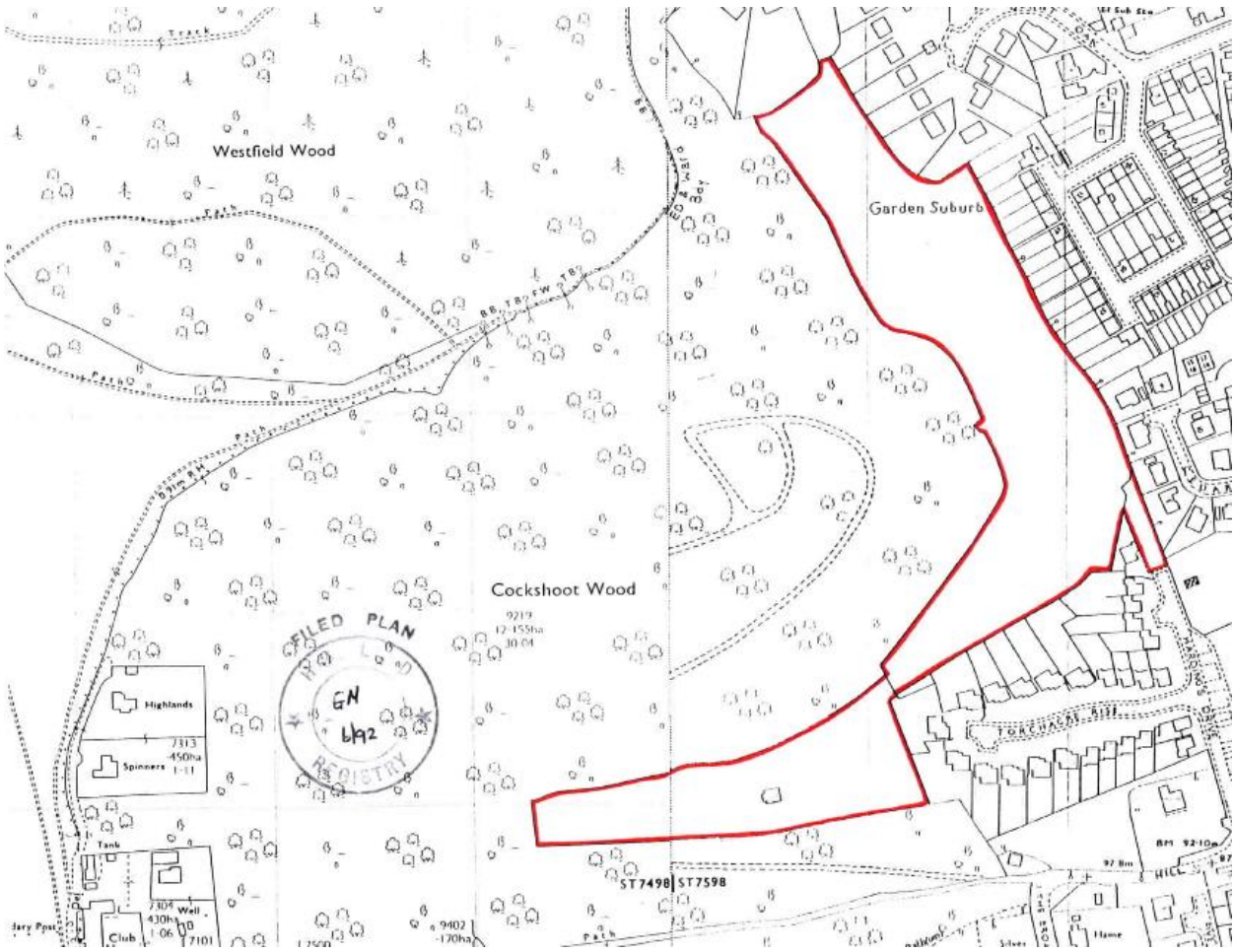
Photo viewpoint 4



Viewpoint Location 4

View looking north west from Parsonage Street in the centre Dursley (c. 270 m from the site)





Map showing the proximity of the woods, which is a wildlife habitat.



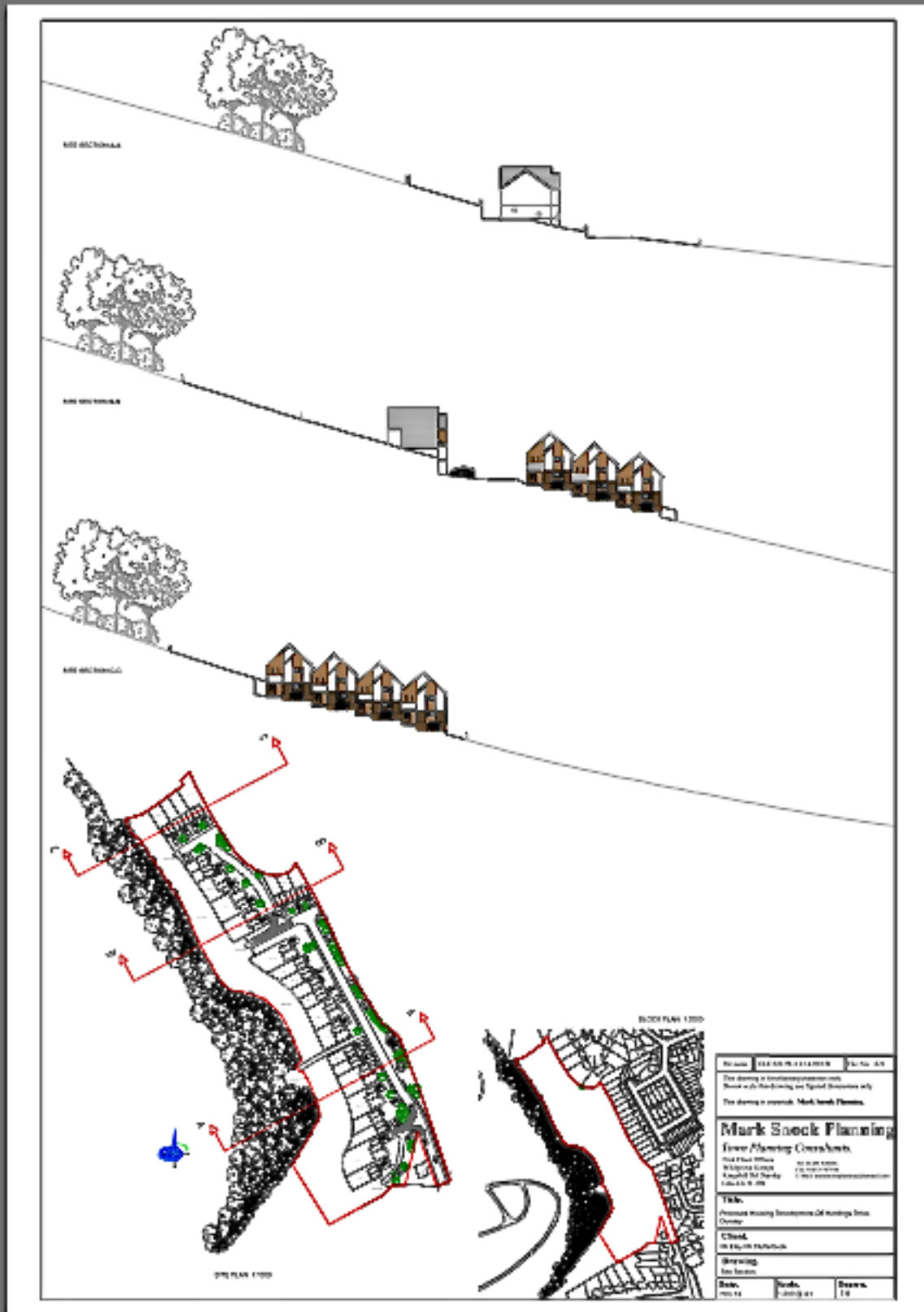


Diagram showing how a proposed development would lie on the topography of the site.

## 4.0 Proposed scheme

- 4.1 This application seeks outline planning permission for residential development with all matters reserved for future consideration.
- 4.2 As part of this application a much higher density scheme was originally designed and presented to the planners as part of a pre-application discussion. Following on from this meeting, the feedback gained during the initial neighbourhood consultations and the advice of the applicant's appointed landscape architect the illustrative scheme was re-designed at significantly lower densities which maintain a gap between the built form and the wooded escarpment.
- 4.3 The illustrative scheme now shows one way in which it would be possible to develop the site. We have shown 27 dwellings, being a mix of 2, 3 and 4 bed units.
- 4.4 The dwellings would be arranged on the lower slope of the site due to topography constraints and to lessen visual impact. The dwellings would be arranged generally in a linear form fronting the access road.
- 4.5 A large area of the site would remain undeveloped and this would be utilised to provide open space and for landscaping purposes. The provision of footpath links through the site would also be incorporated into the scheme to enable formal access into the woodland to the west.
- 4.6 A band of landscaping would help screen the dwellings from the adjacent residential properties, however close attention has been paid to keeping to the 21m distances between directly opposing windows as recommended in the Residential Design Guide.
- 4.7 The scheme would incorporate 30% affordable housing, being a mix of bed spaces. It is envisaged that of these units half would be available for rent and half on an intermediate shared ownership basis.
- 4.8 The application has been made in outline, therefore matters such as external appearance, materials, layout and so on would be subject to further scrutiny at the reserved matters stage. Access is not included in the reserved matters.

Extract of the proposed development.



## **2.0 Description of Site and Surroundings**

- 2.1 The application site is located to west of the market town of Dursley in the County of Gloucestershire. Dursley is situated approximately equidistant between the city of Gloucester to the north and Bristol to the south and with the adjacent village of Cam has an approximate population of 15,197.
- 2.2 The grid reference for the site is Easting 375224 Northing 198239.
- 2.3 The site area is approximately 1.8 ha. It comprises of a parcel of Grade 3 agricultural land that is currently laid to pasture.
- 2.4 The site is sloping in nature, abutting the lower escarpment of Westfield Wood to the west and being surrounded by well established residential areas to the north, east and south. A more detailed description of the site in its landscape context is provided in the enclosed Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVA) prepared by Andrew Woolley of "Corylus Planning and Environmental Ltd".
- 2.5 The site is within the Cotswold Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). There are no public footpaths across the site.
- 2.6 Following recommendations set out in the LVA a large part of the site (approximately a third) is to remain undeveloped, around 6000 sq m will be retained for open space/amenity and landscaping purposes to minimise the impact of the development on the landscape and adjacent woodland.
- 2.7 The site is currently accessed via an existing field access from the Hardings Drive and this is also the intended point of access for the proposed development.
- 2.8 The site is situated a short walk from the town centre (approximately metres) and all the facilities this has to offer, i.e. library, secondary and primary schools, a range of shops, Sainsbury's Supermarket, doctors, dentists, places of worship, cafes, restaurants and public houses, swimming pool, banks etc.

# ***STATEMENT OF COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT***

**with respect to Planning Application S.12/2090/FUL  
Land at Hardings Drive Dursley Glos. GL11 6JN**

1. Stakeholders will have the opportunity to comment on the proposals as part of the planning application procedure.
2. We did however consult local residents with properties adjoining the site in August 2013 and a copy of the notification letter is attached below. Residents were also provided with a copy of a proposed site plan showing a higher density scheme of 54 units.
3. We received a number of responses, broadly the concerns raised included the following issues:

Area of Outstanding natural beauty

Wildlife

Naturally absorbing water from hillside/drainage

Sewerage

Light deprivation

Property values

Tourism/Cotswold Way

Walkers

Loss of privacy

Green belt

Not allocated in local plan

Subsidence

Overlooking/Overdevelopment



Recreational area for local people

Flood risk to lower properties

Visibility from local landmarks and impact on landscape

No demand as quota filled

Road network/congestion

Parking

Safety/Noise

Local facilities

Steep gradient

4. The scheme has now been revised to address a number of these issues with the general density of development having been considerably reduced. The application is also supported by a number of assessments i.e. ecological, landscape appraisal, transport assessment.

### **To Whom It May Concern:**

Neighbourhood views on how the site might impact.



How any development might appear.