

## Tara Maizonnier

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**From:** Worley, Emma  
**Sent:** 04 October 2017 10:08  
**To:** Worley, Emma  
**Subject:** FW: 17/01631/OUT Kidderminster Road, Hampton Lovett

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**From:** Marshall, Eileen  
**Sent:** 03 October 2017 15:36  
**To:** Worley, Emma  
**Subject:** FW: 17/01631/OUT Kidderminster Road, Hampton Lovett

Hi Emma

I have read the Landscape section of the attached comments from WCC. The comments are very much made from a stance of assuming the development to be supported in principle – the comments are absent in terms of the merit or otherwise of development this piece of land for residential use. However, the site is not allocated for housing within the SWDP and I do have some concerns from a landscape perspective.

Despite the industrial estate to the west of Kidderminster Road, the character of Kidderminster Road in the locality of the application site may be regarded as semi-rural to more rural going from south to north. On leaving Droitwich along the A442, housing estates are left behind visually before the roundabout at the junction with Pointon Way and you enter a swathe of open rural land alongside Elmbridge Brook before the roundabout itself (designated as Significant Gap in the SWDP). At the roundabout and on leaving it you become aware of the industrial units to the west, in a well landscaped setting – and beyond Wassage Way the character is distinctly rural. To the east of the Kidderminster Road the character is essentially rural. The Doverdale Park Home site is fairly well contained visually from the road and historically is a legacy of the former wartime POW camp on this site. It is not unusual to find mobile home parks in rural locations. Significantly there is no high-density residential development in this immediate area. Settlement is of isolated roadside dwellings on Kidderminster Road and a row of dwellings to the north of The Forest, the access road to the historic Hampton Lovett Church.

The County Landscape Character Assessment (LCA) identifies the site as being within the Landscape Type (LT) Principal Timbered Farmlands. The Urban Landscape Type stops some distance to the south, at the boundary of the Westlands housing estate and Berry Hill Industrial Estate with the swathe of open countryside/Significant Gap referred to above. The LCA describes this LT as being *'A small- to medium-scale wooded, agricultural landscape ..... This is a complex, in places intimate, landscape of irregularly shaped woodlands, winding lanes and frequent wayside dwellings and farmsteads.'* Key Characteristics for the LT include *'dispersed settlement pattern'* and the LCA advises this LT has a *'dispersed pattern of farmsteads and wayside cottages and lack of strong settlement nuclei..... any concentrations of new development in particular localities would disrupt the inherent pattern of settlement dispersal.'* Landscape Guidelines for the LT include *'maintain the historic dispersed settlement pattern.'* Within the LCA, the more localised Landscape Description Unit of the Westwood Principal Timbered Farmlands within which the site falls is described as *'an area of mixed farming with farmsteads and groups of wayside dwellings associated with a moderate to high level of*

*dispersal and a small to medium scale field pattern.*’ The described settlement pattern is exactly as is found on the ground.

The proposed residential development would be completely at odds with the LCA in terms of identified settlement pattern and would, indeed, disrupt the inherent pattern of settlement dispersal. The proposals do not take into account the latest Landscape Character Assessment and its guidelines with respect to settlement pattern. Furthermore, they are not appropriate to, and would not integrate with, the character of the landscape setting – being an essentially rural, and identified agricultural landscape. I suggest, therefore, that the proposals would be contrary to policy SWDP25.

In terms of visual impact, the development would be visible from dwellings on Kidderminster Road to the NW corner of the site and on The Forest (especially in winter months when the existing vegetation is not in leaf). Also from and the public right of way (PRoW) to the northern boundary which follows The Forest (which is also part of the Monarch’s Way long distance footpath) and then continues in a south-easterly direction, and also from the A442 (particularly to the northern part of the site) – at least until such time as the planting shown on the Indicative Site Plan matures sufficiently to provide a satisfactory softening of the development (I suggest at least 10-15 years). The site at present is open to view from the eastern half of The Forest and existing vegetation to the western half of the northern boundary with The Forest is intermittent. The development would also be highly visible from homes on Doverdale Park, and housing is proposed tight to the northern and eastern boundaries. The Planning Statement refers to the ‘*loss of sections of hedgerow along the A442*’ although I cannot find a plan that illustrates the extent of the loss of mature hedgerow. Can this please be clarified? Removal of hedging to the road frontage to accommodate the new access and any required visibility splays would open up the site further to view – again at least until such time as any replacement planting matures sufficiently. In the meantime the development would be highly visible in local views – from dwellings and rights of way.

According the Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment Edition 3 (GLVIA3), residents at home and users of public rights of way may be considered amongst the most sensitive of visual receptors, and travellers on the A442 and the railway to the east of moderate susceptibility to change. Views from the railway would be partly screened by existing vegetation, although there are sections where passing trains are clearly visible – also vegetation appears to be largely outside the site and, therefore, presumably not in the control of the applicant. Its removal by Network Rail could further open up the site to views from the railway. Combined with the scale of the proposed changes, the addition of features (built and planted) in the view particularly from the PRoW (The Forest) and the changes in its composition, that the change would be entirely visible for the whole length of The Forest (Monarch’s Way) and from the PRoW beyond to the east, that the change would be viewed in close proximity and would be both permanent and irreversible, the magnitude of visual effects would, in my opinion, be considered to be High. Combined with the sensitivity of receptors using the PRoW (Monarch’s Way), the overall significance of visual effects would, in my opinion, be High Adverse in consideration of views from The Forest. In consideration of Views from the A442 and the railway, given that receptors may be regarded as of moderate sensitivity, I suggest the significance of visual effects would be Medium Adverse.

I note the LVIA (and updated LVIA) that has been submitted in support of this application and the various appendices. Whilst this is professionally prepared using recognised methodology, there is an emphasis in GLVIA3 on professional judgement. I do not agree with the findings of the LVIA with respect to settlement pattern – the LVIA suggesting that the effect would be Neutral – for the reasons outlined above. The LVIA also underestimates the sensitivity of users of Monarch Way (and doesn’t seem to acknowledge its route to the northern boundary of the site), the A442 and the railway. I do not agree that Residual Effect on views from properties on The Forest (or from

the PRoW that goes along The Forest) would be Low Beneficial – although I do agree that in consideration of views from other residential properties identified, including Doverdale Park, Residual Effects after 15 years would be adverse in varying degrees. As sensitivity of users of the highway and railway have been underestimated, in my opinion the Residual Effect from these would be Medium Adverse rather than Low Adverse/Negligible as suggested in the LVIA.

Happy to discuss further.

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