

ON BEHALF OF REDCLIFFE HOMES LTD

**PROPOSED ERECTION OF 35 DWELLINGS
AND PROVISION OF ASSOCIATED
INFRASTRUCTURE**

**LAND SOUTH OF BADMINTON ROAD, OLD
SODBURY**

PLANNING STATEMENT

May 2021



**PROPOSED ERECTION OF 35 DWELLINGS AND PROVISION OF
ASSOCIATED INFRASTRUCTURE**

LAND SOUTH OF BADMINTON ROAD, OLD SODBURY

PLANNING STATEMENT

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1.0 **INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 On behalf of Redcliffe Homes, Grass Roots Planning Ltd has been preparing a detailed planning application for 35 new homes and supporting infrastructure on a parcel of land which lies to the south of Badminton Road, on the western edge of Old Sodbury, South Gloucestershire.
- 1.2 Redcliffe Homes are a local builder based a short distance from the site in Chipping Sodbury High Street and develop various small to medium sized sites across the South West, and within South Gloucestershire specifically. They predominantly deliver schemes that focus on larger scale family housing in semi-rural locations such as at Old Sodbury, and have extensive experience in designing schemes that respond positively to such contexts.
- 1.3 The proposed development has been well thought out and follows pre-application advice and a public consultation exercise. It is also underpinned by a robust suite of technical assessments that have helped shape the development in a positive way.
- 1.4 The application comprises of the following plans and documents:
- Application Forms and Certificates;
 - Statement of Community Involvement prepared by Grass Roots Planning;
 - Design and Access Statement prepared by PAD Design;
 - Flood Risk Assessment prepared by Andy Clay Consulting;
 - Transport Assessment prepared by Key Transport;
 - Tree Survey prepared by Tim Pursey;
 - Ecology Survey prepared by Grass Roots Ecology;
 - Noise and Vibration Survey prepared by Acoustic Consultants Ltd;
 - Energy Assessment prepared by Redcliffe Homes; and
 - Heritage Assessment prepared by Armour Heritage.

2.0 THE APPLICATION SITE AND SURROUNDING AREA

- 2.1 The site lies to the west of the centre of the village of Old Sodbury and is bound by a railway line to the south (albeit this significantly drops away in level into a deep cutting), Badminton Road and a strip of allotments that runs along this road to the north, a transport yard and property known as Chestnut House to the east and Sodbury House, a small hotel, to the west.
- 2.2 The site consists of 1.41 hectares (3.49 acres) of land.
- 2.3 The site comprises two distinct parcels, the first is a field which is currently used for grazing, previously it has been used as a site compound for the nearby railway works to the cutting and embankment that lies to the south. As part of this, the access was improved for use by large scale HGVs, cranes and contractors. The second parcel consists of a small piece of garden land associated with the adjacent Sodbury House which is a small hotel.
- 2.4 The site boundaries are predominantly hedgerows but the southern boundary is a post and wire fence; a hedgerow divides the two separate parcels of land that comprise the application site as a whole. A small number of mature trees lie within these boundary hedgerows.



Figure 1. General location of the site (see submitted site plan for exact boundaries)

- 2.5 The surrounding area comprises a mix of residential development, small office building (Hartley House to the North) and agricultural fields. A public right of way intersects the site. The site is shown in figure 1 above.
- 2.6 Old Sodbury has a number of local facilities and services, including a church, primary school, village hall, pub, small industrial area, service station which includes a small convenience store, and a few small employment areas.

3.0 **THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT**

3.1 The application seeks detailed planning permission for 35 dwellings and the provision of various supporting infrastructure including roads, pathways, landscaping and drainage infrastructure including an attenuation pond and drainage channel to a nearby water course (the River Frome) located to the west.

3.2 The housing is provided in a range of house types including terraced, semi-detached and detached formats. These homes are predominately houses of a size suitable for a range of families but two are provided as one bed maisonettes. The character of development generally comprises semi-detached and detached dwellings which are built in Cotswold stone and red clay tiles, exhibiting a traditional form.

3.3 The exact mix of housing is as follows:

- Open Market:
 - 7 two-bed homes
 - 8 three bed-homes
 - 8 four-bed homes
- Affordable:
 - 2 one-bed homes
 - 4 two-bed homes
 - 5 three-bed homes
 - 1 four-bed home

3.4 The layout is shown in figure 2 overleaf.



Figure 2. Extract of Proposed Site Layout

- 3.5 An area of Public Open Space (POS) is located in the south western corner of the site and this also accommodates an attenuation pond that feeds into a connection to the River Frome to the west. The hedgerows that surround the site are also to be provided with a strip of maintenance land that will fall outside of the individual house plots; these areas will be managed by the management company that will maintain the wider POS areas proposed to ensure that the boundary planting is not removed by future residents and can be appropriately managed to ensure it remains in place in perpetuity.
- 3.6 Car parking is provided on plot, including garaging and on driveway, most of which is situated to the side of properties to minimise the number of cars viewed in the street scene.
- 3.7 Landscaping is proposed throughout but one of the main proposals in this regard is new tree planting around the perimeter of the site, much of this will fall within the maintenance corridor described above, allowing it to be properly managed in perpetuity. The landscaping is currently illustrative in form at present but we propose that the finer detail be secured via planning condition.

4.0 Planning Status and History

4.1 The site entrance onto Badminton Road was subject to an application for works to Common Land in 2020 (Ref: COM/3249848), this proposed the expansion of hard surfacing across the bell mouth area to create an improved access into the site for vehicles. Common Land Consent was granted by the Planning Inspectorate on the 28th October 2020.

4.2 Apart from this Common Land Application the site has no known planning history as far as we can identify, the access and engineering works that have been undertaken by Network Rail have been undertaken under statutory operators permitted development rights.

4.3 The site currently lies outside of the Old Sodbury Settlement boundary as shown in figure 3 below. It also lies outside of the adjacent AONB and Green Belt designations.

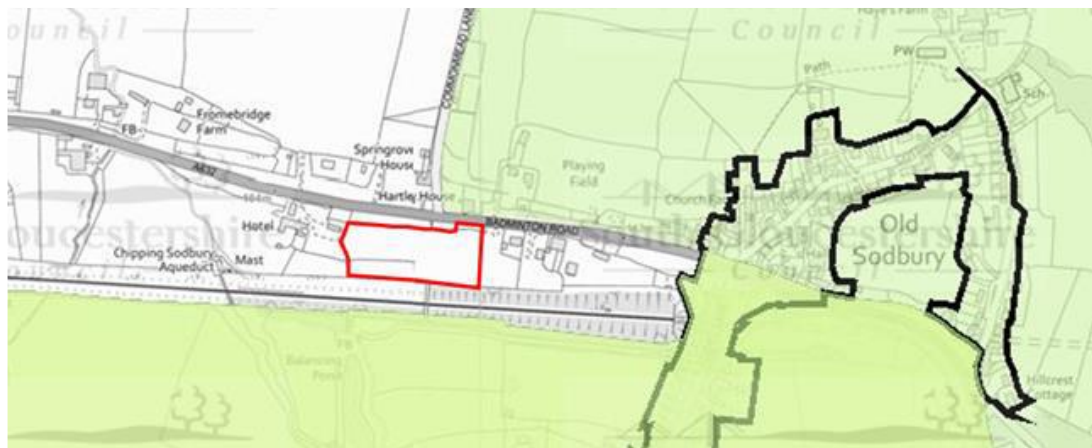


Figure 3. Extract of Current Development Plan Map

4.4 A grade 2 listed building (Hartley House) lies to the north of the site, beyond Badminton Road. This is shown in figure 4 below, and its listing notes the following features of importance:

"Former toll-house. Early-mid C19. Rendered. Slate roof. Two storeys. Three sided bay front to road. All windows modern under dripmoulds with returns. Blocked, ashlar oriel on front. Gabled, 2 storey, one window wing to right. The range to the north is not of special interest."

4.5 A further grade 2 listed building known as Springgrove also lies slightly further to the north on the opposite side of Commonhead Lane from Hartley House. Its listing states:

"Late C18. Rendered with exposed quoins. Double Roman tiled roof. Ashlar stacks. Coped verges. Two storeys. Three windows, glazing bar sashes in main stone surrounds. Central Tuscan column porch; panelled door. Later extensions to both sides and rear."



Figure 4. Extract of Historic England Mapping

5.0 CONSULTATION PROCESS

Pre-application Submission

- 5.1 We submitted a pre-application enquiry in respect to part of the application site on the 13th February 2019. This proposed 28 dwellings in the configuration shown in figure 5 below.



Figure 5. Layout Submitted as part of Pre-application Enquiry

- 5.2 SGC responded to this enquiry on the 22nd March 2019 and the salient points of the response can be summarised as follows:

- Due to the Council being able to demonstrate a 5-yr Housing Land Supply, with deliverable sites being available which are preferable on sustainability grounds, conflict with policy CS5 was identified;
- Access to everyday facilities and employment by walking or cycling was considered to be limited;
- An FRA should demonstrate how the drainage proposed considers infiltration and follow the SUDs hierarchy as high up as possible;
- Given presence of nearby listed buildings, a heritage assessment would need to support any application submitted – comments were also given setting out that while the northern boundary screen planting may be appropriate to protect the setting of the nearby listed Toll House, rear garden encroachment may affect the effectiveness of this measure;
- Ecology surveys would be required and the development should seek to offer biodiversity enhancements such as bat roosting, bird nesting and refugia;
- General mix of housing proposed was considered appropriate and a mix of affordable housing was suggested;

- Issues regarding the high speeds associated with the A432 were identified and the need for safe crossing points set out – full requirements for a transport assessment were given; and
 - The site would be more appropriately pursued via the call for sites process.
- 5.3 Due to the factors identified, the officer dealing with the pre-application enquiry advised against a planning application being submitted at that time and instead suggested the site be pursued via a Call for Sites submission.

Call for Sites Submission

- 5.4 Following receipt of the pre-application response a Call for Sites submission was made in October 2020. However, given the withdrawal of the JSP, progress with the emerging Local Plan Review has been slow. Accordingly, the submission of a planning application for the site was again considered in 2021.

Network Rail Discussions and Changes

- 5.5 As the site drains into ditches that lie adjacent to, but not within, the site boundary that are maintained by Network Rail (in respect to the ditch that runs along the southern boundary) a meeting was arranged with them to discuss how surface water from any development might be drained into these features. This meeting and subsequent discussions identified that Network Rail would be resistant to this and whilst riparian rights to drain into these ditches exist, we have sought an alternative solution to surface water runoff.
- 5.6 Following receipt of SGC's pre-application response, the issues raised were considered by the technical team who have prepared the development proposals and a number of changes made. The largest change relates to the inclusion of some additional land to the south east to create a more logical layout and provide an alternative route for surface water runoff, given the concerns that have been raised by Network Rail.
- 5.7 This change meant that the number of dwellings proposed on the site increased to 36 because the additional land allowed for a much more logical layout that utilised the site more efficiently.

Public Consultation

- 5.8 The amended scheme was then subject to public consultation. This consisted of a letter drop to local residents, Sodbury Town Council and nearby businesses informing them of a website where full details of the proposals and how various technical studies had informed them.
- 5.9 The website details are set out in the Statement of Community Involvement (SCI). The proposals presented as part of this were subject to consultation over the 26th January – 18th February 2021 period.
- 5.10 At the request of Sodbury Town Council, a virtual public meeting was held on the 3rd February 2021 where the development team presented the proposals to attendees and then held a Q&A session to directly answer any comments or queries that they had.
- 5.11 The public consultation responses received are summarised in the separate SCI that supports the application.
- 5.12 Following the identification of concerns from the nearest residents to the site, the development closest to this property was amended to replace three two storey houses with two bungalows.

6.0 **PLANNING POLICY**

- 6.1 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that planning applications be determined in accordance with the development plan, unless other material considerations indicate otherwise.
- 6.2 In this case the relevant development plan which applies to the application proposals is the South Gloucestershire Core Strategy (2006 – 2027) and the Policies, Sites and Places DPD.
- 6.3 The 'other material considerations' referred to in Section 38(6) of the Act would include the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG), Planning Policy Statements (PPS), Planning Circulars, and relevant Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) or Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD) (emerging and adopted).

South Gloucestershire Core Strategy (2006 – 2027)

- 6.4 South Gloucestershire Council adopted their Core Strategy in 2013 and this seeks to cover the plan period 2006 – 2027. This sets out the Council's vision for development including strategic housing, employment, community, and retail facilities.
- 6.5 Relevant policies to the application's assessment are the following:

CS1: High Quality Design – Development will be required to be of high quality, respecting and enhancing the character of the area and promoting distinctiveness. Density and layout should be well integrated with existing adjacent development and connect into the wider network of foot, cycle and public transport links.

CS4: Renewable or low carbon district heat networks – Major development proposals (more than 100 dwellings that are wholly or in part greater than 50dph) should, where practical and viable: include renewable or low carbon heating and distribution infrastructure on site; connect to an existing renewable or low carbon heat distribution network; and provide evidence that renewable and low carbon sources of heating have been fully explored and are unfeasible.

CS4a: Presumption in favour of Sustainable Development – This policy repeats the presumption found in the NPPF.

CS5: Location of Development (including Green Belt) – This policy sets out a spatial strategy for the SGC area and states that at Yate / Chipping Sodbury, new development will be of a scale appropriate to achieve greater self-containment and to improve the role and function of the towns.

CS6: Infrastructure and Developer Contributions – All new development of a sufficient scale that would add to the overall demand and impact on infrastructure will be required to provide: site specific measures to directly mitigate the impact of the development.

CS7: Strategic Transport Infrastructure – Priority will be given to the implementation of strategic infrastructure proposals that reduce congestion and improve accessibility by means other than the private car.

CS8: Improving Accessibility – New development proposals which generate significant demand for travel will be more favourably considered the nearer they are located to existing and proposed public transport infrastructure and existing facilities and services. Proposals must promote sustainable travel options including providing integration with existing walking, cycling and public transport infrastructure; contributions to bus services, etc.

CS9: Management of the Environment and Heritage: New development will be expected to conserve and enhance the natural environment, avoiding or minimising impacts on biodiversity and geodiversity; conserve and enhance the character, quality, distinctiveness and amenity of the landscape; reduce and manage the impact of flood risk through the implementation of Sustainable Drainage Systems; and avoiding areas of flood risk.

CS15: Distribution of Housing – A minimum of 28,355 new homes will be delivered over the plan period 2006 – 2027.

CS16: Housing Density – Housing development is required to make efficient use of land, to conserve resources and maximise the amount of housing supplied, particularly in and around town centres and other locations where there is good pedestrian access to frequent public transport services.

CS17: Housing Diversity – All new housing development comprising both market and affordable housing, must provide a wide variety of housing type and size to accommodate a range of different households.

CS18: Affordable Housing – Development of over 10 dwellings will be required to provide 35% affordable housing on site.

CS24: Green Infrastructure, Sport and Recreation Standards – New developments must comply with all the appropriate local standards of provision in terms of quantity, quality and accessibility; provision must be delivered on-site, unless it is demonstrated that partial or full off-site provision or enhancement creates a more acceptable proposals; and the functionality and usability of spaces and facilities must be suitable for their intended purposes.

CS30: Yate and Chipping Sodbury – Development proposals will provide for the development of housing, employment and associated local facilities; make provision for and seek contributions towards the Yate / Chipping Sodbury Transport Package; and increase allotment provision and enhance sport and recreation provision.

CS34: Rural Areas – sets out a strategy for such areas in SGC including the need to protect rural services and facilities and provide affordable housing. This policy defines all area that lie outside of Core Strategy Established settlement boundaries as 'rural areas'.

Policies, Sites and Places DPD

6.6 The Policies, Sites and Places (PSP) DPD was adopted by the Council in November 2017. This part of the development plan sets out the development management policies and some site allocations for development.

6.7 Relevant policies to the application's assessment are the following:

PSP1: Local Distinctiveness – Development proposals must make a positive contribution to the distinctiveness of the area / locality.

PSP2: Landscape – Development proposals will be acceptable where they conserve and enhance the quality, amenity, distinctiveness and special character of the landscape. Amenity space, hard and soft landscape works and open space provision will be required to be of a high standard of design, appropriate to the use and character of the development and its location.

PSP3: Trees and Woodland – Development proposals should minimise the loss of existing vegetation on a site that is of importance in terms of ecological, recreational, historical or landscape value. Development proposals should include the protection of trees; replacement

trees where tree loss is essential; additional tree planting; and new planting schemes that retain and integrate native trees and hedgerows.

PSP6: Onsite Renewable and Low Carbon Energy – All development proposals will be encouraged to minimise end-user energy requirements over and above those required by the current building regulations through energy reduction. All major greenfield residential development will be required to reduce CO2 emissions further by at least 20% via the use of renewable and / or low carbon energy generation.

PSP8: Residential Amenity – Development proposals will be acceptable provided that they do not create unacceptable living conditions.

PSP11: Transport Impact Management – Development proposals which generate a demand for travel, will be acceptable where they provide appropriate, safe, accessible, convenient and attractive access; it would not generate traffic that would create or contribute to severe congestion or have an unacceptable effect on highway and road safety.

PSP16: Parking Standards – New development proposals will be acceptable where they provide the appropriate parking standards for residential development including cycle parking and garages.

PSP19: Wider Biodiversity – Development proposals resulting in a loss or deterioration of irreplaceable habitats including unimproved grassland, ancient woodland and ancient trees will be refused unless the need for, and benefits of, the development in that location clearly outweigh the loss.

PSP20: Flood Risk, Surface Water and Watercourse Management – Development proposals will be expected to reduce surface water runoff; incorporate Sustainable Drainage Systems; ensuring that surface water drainage proposals are design to not increase off-site flood risk; and wherever practicable achieve the top tier of the surface water drainage hierarchy.

PSP37: Internal Space and Accessibility Standards for Affordable Dwellings – Affordable Housing shall be consistent with the nationally described (minimal internal) space standards; meet accessibility standards; and provide 8% of units to meet wheelchair standards.

PSP43: Private Amenity Space Standards – All new residential units will be expected to have access to private amenity space. Provision should, as a guide, meet or exceed the standards set out in this policy.

New Local Plan / JSP

- 6.8 In addition to this, SGC are currently preparing a new Local Plan which will follow on from the emerging West of England Spatial Development Strategy. This spatial planning document is intended to replace the now defunct Joint Spatial Plan and is expected to be published for consultation later this year. The SDS will set out how the region's housing needs will be met, giving consideration to how unmet need arising in Bristol City might be met in the adjacent authorities.
- 6.9 South Gloucestershire initiated consultation in respect to their Local Plan between November 2020 – March 2021; whilst this is at a very early stage it identified the need to provide development in smaller settlements such as Old Sodbury to help sustain their role and function, as well as supporting existing facilities. The Phase 1 consultation also acknowledged that housing delivery will need to be increased to deal with uplifts associated with the new Standard Method for calculating housing need and to address unmet need from Bristol City.
- 6.10 Both of these documents envisage some strategic growth in the smaller SGC settlements and we consider that the application site represents the optimal location and scale of development for the village to invigorate it in response to aging demographics and help sustain its existing services which might otherwise be lost.

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF2)

- 6.11 The National Planning Policy Framework sets out the government's planning policies for England. Central to this guidance is the presumption in favour of sustainable development. The NPPF was revised in July 2018 (NPPF2) and February 2019 and a number of significant changes were made, including the implementation of the standard method for calculating housing need ('the standard method'), the Housing Delivery Test, and differences in calculating five-year housing land supply.
- 6.12 Relevant paragraphs to the application's assessment from NPPF2 include the following:

Paragraph 11: Plans and decisions should apply a presumption in favour of sustainable development. For decision-taking this means approving development proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan without delay; or where there are no relevant development plan policies, or the policies which are most important for determining the application are out-of-date, granting permission unless:

- i) the application of policies in this Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a clear reason for refusing the development proposed; or
- ii) any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole.

Footnote 6: The policies referred to are those in the Framework relating to: habitats sites and / or designated as SSSIs; Green Belt; Local Green Space; AONB; National Park; Heritage Coast; irreplaceable habitats; designated heritage assets; and areas at risk of flooding or coastal change.

Footnote 7: For applications involving the provision of housing, situations where the local planning authority cannot demonstrate a five year supply of deliverable housing sites; or where the Housing Delivery Test indicates that the delivery of housing was substantially below (less than 75% of) the housing requirement over the previous three years.

Paragraph 48: Local planning authorities may give weight to relevant policies in emerging plans according to: the stage of preparation of the emerging plan (the more advanced its preparation, the greater the weight that may be given); the extent to which there are unresolved objections to relevant policies; and the degree of consistency of the relevant policies with the Framework.

Paragraph 49: Arguments that an application is premature are unlikely to justify a refusal of planning permission other than in the limited circumstances where both the development proposed is so substantial, or its cumulative effect would be so significant, that to grant permission would undermine the plan-making process by predetermining decisions about the scale, location or phasing of new development that are central to an emerging plan; and the emerging plan is at an advanced stage but is not yet formally part of the development plan for the area.

Paragraph 50: Where planning permission is refused on grounds of prematurity, the LPA will need to indicate clearly how granting permission for the development concerned would prejudice the outcome of the plan-making process.

Paragraph 59: To support the Government's objective of significantly boosting the supply of homes, it is important that a sufficient amount and variety of land can come forward where it is needed.

Paragraph 73: LPA's should identify and update annually a supply of specific deliverable sites sufficient to provide a minimum of five years' worth of housing against their housing requirement including the addition of an appropriate buffer.

Footnote 37: Unless these strategic policies have been reviewed and found not to require updating.

Paragraph 103: The planning system should actively manage patterns of growth and significant development should be focused on locations which are or can be made sustainable, through limited the need to travel and offering a genuine choice of transport modes.

Paragraph 117: Planning policies and decisions should promote an effective use of land in meeting the need for homes and other uses.

Paragraph 123: Where there is an existing or anticipated shortage of land for meeting identified housing needs, it is especially important that planning policies and decisions avoid homes being built at low densities, and ensure that developments make optimal use of the potential of each site.

Paragraph 127: Planning policies and decisions should ensure that developments are ... sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation or change (such as increased densities).

Paragraph 163: LPAs should ensure that flood risk is not increased elsewhere. Where appropriate, applications should be supported by a site-specific flood risk assessment.

Paragraph 170: Planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by ... minimising impacts on and providing net gains for biodiversity, including establishing coherent ecological networks.

7.0 **CONSIDERATION OF MAIN ISSUES AND MATERIAL CONSIDERATIONS**

7.1 Following the pre-application advice, public consultation, and technical work undertaken, the main issues relating to the assessment of the application are considered to include:

1. Whether housing is needed in this location;
2. Whether the principle of development is acceptable and the proposals contribute to sustainability objectives;
3. The proposal's impact on the highway network;
4. The proposal's impact on flood risk and drainage;
5. The proposal's impact on trees;
6. Potential impacts on nearby Listed Buildings;
7. Whether the design solution adopted for the site respects the character of the area;
8. The proposal's impact on landscape;
9. The proposal's impact on ecology; and
10. Whether there are any other material considerations that would outweigh the benefits of the scheme.

7.2 We will now go on to assess the main issues and benefits of the scheme.

Issue 1: The Need for Housing

Development Plan Context

7.3 The South Gloucestershire Core Strategy was adopted in 2012 and covers the period 2006 – 2027, creating a set of policies designed to represent a strategic plan for the area. Policy CS5 and CS15 identify the requirement for housing over the plan period and the broad locations and distribution of development. In respect to settlements that do not have any strategic allocations included within the Core Strategy these policies rely on settlement boundaries established in the 2006 Local Plan, which are therefore over 14 years old.

7.4 Policy CS5 indicates the need to deliver a minimum of 28,355 dwellings (1,350 pa) up to the year 2027 (22,545 dwellings (1,610 pa) from the date the plan was adopted in 2013). Policy CS15 describes the distribution of housing, which states that the majority of housing will be delivered in the northern and eastern fringes of Bristol, followed by Yate and Chipping Sodbury. The overriding objectives of both of these policies is to provide homes that meet

the objectively assessed need in the identified sustainable locations, which we consider is an acceptable principle to apply to any decision-making process.

- 7.5 The specific reference given to Yate/Chipping Sodbury in policy CS15 underlines the fact that the settlement is considered to be a suitable and sustainable location for housing growth. Sites that lie within walking distance of these settlements, including land within Old Sodbury, should be considered to accommodate need to assist in meeting the policy aim of delivering growth in the sustainable location of Yate/Chipping Sodbury, as opposed to more peripheral and rural locations in the SGC area.
- 7.6 It is our view that the proposals meet favourably with both policy CS5 and CS15 as this seeks to deliver a minimum of 28,355 dwellings, with a significant proportion to be delivered in Yate/Chipping Sodbury, and we consider that locations within walking distance of Chipping Sodbury, such as the application site, will achieve this aim. Note also needs to be given to the fact that the settlement boundaries that control development referred to under policy CS15 are now over 14 years old and are not fit for purpose in respect to the delivery of housing to achieve CS5's aims.

House Prices

- 7.7 Across the UK it is commonly acknowledged that house prices have been rising rapidly over the last 10 years with people now recognising that there is a 'housing crisis', the response to which is a need to increase housing supply. In recognition of this issue, the government has pledged to build 300,000 new homes per year.
- 7.8 In South Gloucestershire the issue has been even more acute, with house prices rising by over 1/3 over the last 10 years as figure 6 demonstrates. This will primarily be because the area is in high demand due to the quality of the area's transport links and availability of extensive employment opportunities, particularly in Bristol.

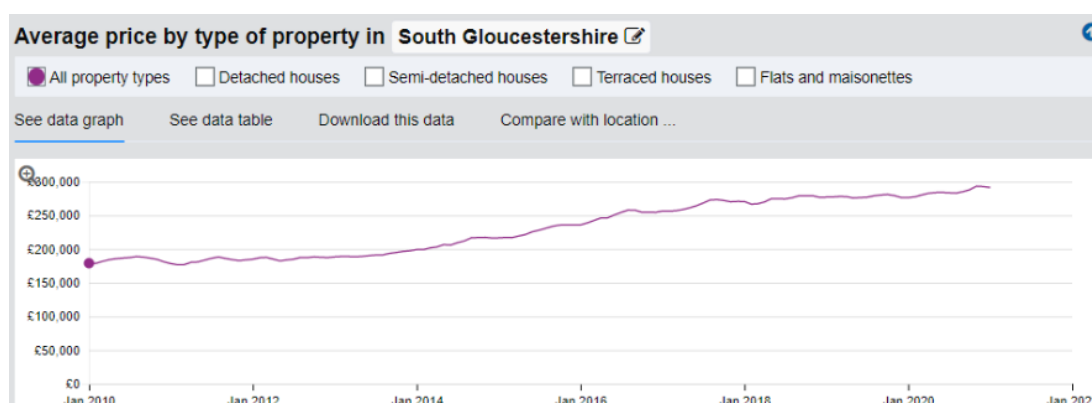


Figure 6. UK House Price Index Data for South Gloucestershire

- 7.9 House prices are predominantly driven by demand and supply and the fact is that there is insufficient housing being delivered to match supply, which is why we are seeing house price increases in the Bristol and SGC area that are outstripping the national average. We consider that this is a material consideration that underlines the need for SGC to continue with their proactive stance to development in sustainable locations.

Housing Delivery in Old Sodbury

- 7.10 Old Sodbury specifically has delivered almost no new housing over the last few decades, set against a backdrop of rising house prices and large-scale development that has occurred elsewhere in the authority area to address this significant issue.
- 7.11 The lack of new housing, including smaller and more affordable homes, will have had a significant impact on affordability in the village and Rightmove data suggests house prices will be unaffordable to many with very limited supply of smaller, less expensive starter and small family homes being available in the locality.

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- 7.12 Prior to 2018 the council could not demonstrate a five-year housing land supply. In the 2018 monitoring year this position changed to 6.28 years, which occurred because of a alteration to the methodology connected to the calculation of such a supply. This means that SGC no longer needs to take into account the shortfall which has accrued since 2006 (over 1,000+ dwellings), and they are no longer a 20% buffer authority (instead applying 5%) due to the outcome of the Housing Delivery Test ('HDT') which shows the authority has delivered 125% of its housing requirements over the last three years.
- 7.13 However, after the long running deficit on land supply was remedied in 2018, there has generally been a decline in housing land supply since that point as figure 7 shows. In light of this the Council has accepted that the supply is 'marginal' (and that position was also set out in an appeal decision relating to land at Gloucester Rd, Thornbury) and that was also the conclusion of an Inspector dealing with the Morton Farm appeal at Thornbury. For this reason, the Council has been recently allowing applications for residential development on sites that are not currently identified in the development plan on the basis that the NPPF requires it to significantly boost supply and given the marginal nature of the supply identified.

Year	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Supply (Yrs)	4.28	4.54	4.66	6.28	5.36	5.28

Figure 7. Housing Land Supply Position in SGC

- 7.14 We fully support the Council's proactive stance to development to provide this boost to housing supply, particularly as we do not agree that a five-year housing land supply can be evidenced and have previously presented evidence to the Council to demonstrate this.
- 7.15 Therefore, given that land supply in SGC is at best 'marginal', the principle of development on sites that lie outside of settlement boundaries cannot be deemed inappropriate if it would otherwise be acceptable in terms of its benefits and impacts.

Affordable Housing Need

- 7.16 Data obtained from the Council in October 2020 confirmed that there were 3 households on the housing register who selected Old Sodbury as their first choice and 541 households who would consider moving to the parish to meet their immediate housing needs.
- 7.17 Currently there are no developments in Old Sodbury that would be contributing towards meeting this need and any currently unidentified small infill development that may be possible is unlikely to deliver affordable housing because it will fall below the 10-unit threshold which means affordable housing cannot be levied by the council.
- 7.18 While we note that the transport yard development that lies adjacent to the application site (Application Refs: PK01/3133/F and PK11/0467/NMA) may deliver affordable housing in the future there is currently no certainty given that the recent application was withdrawn and we are aware of viability issues surrounding this site.
- 7.19 In any event, there is a wider need that would not be addressed by that development which is pressing in nature and specific to Old Sodbury. Therefore the need for affordable housing, including needs specific to the settlement of Old Sodbury, represents a strong material consideration in favour of this planning application.

Issue 2: Principle of Development

- 7.20 Whilst the development plan is the starting point for decision making and the assessment of whether a proposal is acceptable in principle, the weight to be given to policies such as CS5 and CS34 needs to be reviewed in the context of whether these policies, and others in the

development plan that control the location of development outside of settlement boundaries that were established in 2013, are up-to-date.

- 7.21 The Core Strategy Inspector, at paragraphs 84 and 86 of his report, stated the following:

'without a NPPF compliant SHMA, the degree of reliance that can be placed upon this [housing requirement] figure is uncertain because it is not clear what the housing needs of the wider HMA are...'

'I therefore consider South Gloucestershire should aim to adopt a replacement plan as soon as reasonably possible... the timetable for the newly instigated SHMA process means that this can and should be brought forward so that a review / replacement plan is in place by the end of 2018'.

- 7.22 In conjunction with this, the Policies, Sites and Places DPD sets out at paragraph 1.18 that *'a strategic development plan document for the West of England, the Joint Spatial Plan, is being progressed to determine the overall housing numbers for the WoE and South Gloucestershire over the period 2016 – 2036. Therefore, housing allocations and a review of settlement boundaries are to be progressed in a new Local Plan, which is due for adoption in 2019.'*

- 7.23 This work to update the plan and provide revised settlement boundaries has clearly not been completed to the envisaged timetables and a replacement plan is not in place; as such, settlement boundaries and the overall housing need have not been reviewed since the adoption of the Core Strategy – a review of which was set for the end of 2018. This is a serious flaw as the Core Strategy Inspector's concerns regarding the housing figures adopted at that time related to the lack of cross boundary assessment and how unmet need in adjacent areas (such as Bristol City) was not being considered or addressed, specifically:

'The Council took this to be a vindication of its stance on housing need having concluded that it would be possible to provide 26,400 dwellings by 2027 because of the additional allocation at Filton Airfield. Unfortunately as the RTP study makes clear, this level of growth ignores any deficit in supply if there is unfulfilled housing need in other parts of the West of England HMA. RTP suggest that the Council should provide further housing land, either to its sustainable capacity or what it identifies as the 'HMA shortfall' of 800 homes per annum.'

- 7.24 As the JSP has now been withdrawn and a new replacement strategic plan (the SDS) for the region is yet to be put in place, in our view, the current development plan is out-of- date. This is because the Core Strategy Inspector made it clear that a replacement plan was needed

by the end of 2018 to deal with increased housing requirements. Indeed, this has been borne out with the current Standard Method setting the annual requirement for SGC at 1,412 homes per annum, up from the 1,360 required by the Core Strategy, and this is likely to increase further once the new spatial plan for the area is produced and consideration given to unmet need that is arising within Bristol City's boundaries. Furthermore, the settlement boundaries in areas where there was no strategic growth (and therefore established in 2006 as they were based on the old Local Plan) were meant to have been reviewed by 2019 which would have looked at settlements such as Old Sodbury.

- 7.25 A further element of uncertainty arises from statements made by the Council while giving evidence at the Morton Farm, Thornbury appeal, where it was argued that by updating the SHMA as requested by the Core Strategy Inspector the CS housing figures had been reviewed in accordance with the Inspector's recommendation – in such an instance paragraph 32 of the '*Technical Consultation on updated to national planning policy and guidance*' indicates the development plan housing requirement should be used for the purposes of calculating 5YHLS, which would include a consideration of the historic shortfall. Therefore, we do not consider that the Council have undertaken the review that the Core Strategy Inspector required.
- 7.26 Recently, to address these deficiencies and respond to the withdrawal of the JSP, SGC have begun embarking on a review of their Local Plan. Within these documents it is clear that certain policies, such as policies CS5 and CS15, will be replaced as the '*existing spatial strategy*' is not working to deliver sufficient levels of housing growth.
- 7.27 Given these considerations it is our professional opinion that dismissing the principle of development on the application site on the narrow basis of the land lying outside of the settlement boundary established in policies CS5 and CS34 would be inappropriate, because such boundaries are out-of-date.
- 7.28 In any event the ability to demonstrate a 5YHLS, or having an up-to-date plan, does not necessarily preclude development coming forward in an authority area. There may be other material considerations, including those set out in the NPPF, which outweigh any potential conflict with the adopted development plan.
- 7.29 The need for housing in this location is clear and the development plan already seeks to direct housing to the Chipping Sodbury/Yate area and places that lie within close proximity to this location should be considered as acceptable in principle to boost housing supply in accordance

with paragraph 59 of the NPPF, unless they are deemed either inaccessible in sustainability terms or their development would result in a significant adverse impact.

- 7.30 We will go on to explain how the site is accessible and its development will not result in adverse impacts. Separate to this though, we consider that the principle of development here cannot be dismissed on the basis that the site is outside of the settlement boundary because these boundaries are out-of-date, and in fact development here should be supported in principle as it would locate homes in accordance with the current spatial strategy for the area, as the site is easily accessible to Chipping Sodbury.

Sustainability

- 7.31 Connected to the issue of principle is sustainability, and in particular locational sustainability in how a site might be accessible to everyday services and public transport.
- 7.32 The accessibility element of the consideration of sustainability was considered as part of a recent appeal relating to a site in Old Sodbury (Ref: APP/P0119/W/20/3253685) where the Inspector in that case concluded the following at paragraph 22 of that decision:

It is acknowledged that the proposal would contribute to housing land supply and generate additional footfall that would lead to an increase in vitality within the village and rural community by supporting local shops and services, among other things. The site is also well located in respect of its proximity to local shops and services whereby future occupants could use sustainable modes of travel, such as walking and cycling, reducing reliance on the private car and the impact on climate change therein. However, given the small scale of the proposal, any such benefits would carry only limited weight in its favour.

- 7.33 It is notable that the Council in that case were not advancing a reason for refusal based on the site, or settlement of Old Sodbury, being an unsustainable location for new development. We would agree with this conclusion given that relative to many other semi-rural parts of SGC Old Sodbury offers a range of everyday facilities.
- 7.34 The submitted transport assessment sets out how the site is accessible to everyday facilities and also how residents will be provided with opportunities to utilise public transport if they so wish.
- 7.35 It also sets out that much wider facilities and employment opportunities are located in Chipping Sodbury, the high street of which is within walking distance of the site, and how the

whole of the town, and Yate beyond, are within easily cycling distance for those who want to utilise that form of sustainable transport.

- 7.36 Therefore, we consider that the proposed development's principle cannot be dismissed on accessibility grounds because it lies within walking and cycling distance of a wide range of facilities and employment. Furthermore such a position would be inconsistent with the approach taken to the aforementioned appeal in the village.

Issue 3: Highways Impact

- 7.37 The application is supported by a Transport Statement (TS) prepared by Key Transport and from the project's inception they have advised on how to provide a safe and suitable access into the site and maximise opportunities for sustainable travel options to be utilised by future residents.
- 7.38 The proposed access as shown on the plan contain at figure 3 of the Transport Statement, which shows how an access into the site is to be provided with visibility splays that have been designed to the average speeds that have been identified via speed surveys undertaken on Badminton Road. Improved footways are also proposed as part of the development.
- 7.39 The TS also show the site relative to a range of everyday facilities and concludes that opportunities to either walk or cycle to these, and access the bus service that stops near to the site, are credible options. Therefore residents will have the clear option to access everyday services and employment by sustainable means. Whilst residents cannot be forced to take up such opportunities the TS also sets out measures (improvement to pedestrian links/crossings, travel plan vouchers and other incentives and measures to control speeds on the A432) that will ensure that residents are encouraged to take up such opportunities as much as practically possible.
- 7.40 During public consultation, many respondents outlined concerns that traffic travels at excessive speeds through the village and the nature of the road means that it severs pedestrian linkages through the village. In response to this issue, many thought that a signalled controlled crossing is required to not only slow traffic speeds but also allow for easier pedestrian crossing of the Badminton Road to improve permeability within the settlement.
- 7.41 In light of these concerns, we have suggested that a new signal-controlled crossing be delivered in the centre of the village and the proposed development provide the funds to deliver this. A proposal for this crossing is set out in the submitted Transport Statement and

we would welcome further discussion with the highways department to agree the extent of these works.

- 7.42 In summary the proposed development will locate new residents where access to everyday facilities is possible and realistic via non-car modes of travel and a safe access into the site is provided. The flow of new traffic has been considered and will make no difference to the prevailing road conditions in the area which are safe and not particularly congested. In fact, by providing measures to improve pedestrian access throughout the village and to wider area, including traffic calming measures and a new signalled controlled pedestrian crossing, the development will provide significant benefits in relation to this issue.
- 7.43 Therefore, the proposals meet favourably with policies CS8, PSP11 and PSP16.

Issue 4: Flood Risk and Drainage

- 7.44 This issue is covered in detail within the separate FRA that supports the planning application, but for the purposes of the assessment of planning issues is briefly summarised here.
- 7.45 The site lies within Flood Zone 1 and is therefore not at risk from fluvial flooding. The Environment Agency's mapping also confirms that the site is not subject to any surface water flooding issues. Therefore, the site is at low risk of flooding and does not conflict with NPPF or local policies in regard to directing development away from areas that are prone to flooding.
- 7.46 The site's surface water discharge rates have been calculated and the outline drainage strategy designed to ensure that discharge rates from the site do not exceed greenfield levels.
- 7.47 Currently the site has no formal drainage arrangements and infiltration tests that have been undertaken show that the land does not offer significant soil infiltration. This means that currently the site drains away either through extremely slow percolation or via overtopping into adjacent features such as the network rail-controlled ditch on the southern boundary or another ditch that lies on the western boundary. In either event, the surface water leaves the site in an uncontrolled way and a proportion is likely to leave the site and enter network rail-controlled land.
- 7.48 The surface water drainage strategy that is proposed will alleviate this existing situation by directing all surface water to an attenuation basin, and then to a culvert and ditch that will lead to the River Frome to the west, thereby bypassing the Network Rail infrastructure and providing a biodiverse area that will be designed to be permanently wet in part.

- 7.49 A foul drainage connection is to be provided to the existing pipe network that crosses the site and discussions have already been held with Wessex Water in respect to the detail of that connection.
- 7.50 In conclusion, the proposals positively deal with drainage and will result in betterment when compared with the existing situation, therefore no adverse effects or conflict with policies CS9 and PSP20 can be identified.

Arboriculture

- 7.51 As set out in this site description section of this statement the site boundaries consist predominantly of mature hedges interspersed with a few larger distinct trees. Accordingly a tree survey of the site was undertaken by Tim Pursey to inform the emerging layout for the site and his report and tree protection plan supports this application.
- 7.52 This assessment identifies one tree of 'A-Class' Status adjacent to the site and two of 'B-Class' Status within the site. The larger B-Class Tree (T3) will be retained within the layout and made a focal point of an area of open space, and it and the other trees adjacent to the site are provided with tree protection fencing as detailed in the report, this can be secured via planning condition.
- 7.53 The other smaller B-Class tree will be removed to facilitate the provision of a more sensitively designed attenuation feature but its loss will be compensated for by extensive new tree planting.
- 7.54 A small section of hedge (G7) which is of low quality (C-Class) is also proposed for removal, this loss will be mitigated by new hedgerow planting of at least an equivalent length of new hedge on the southern boundary.
- 7.55 Therefore the proposed development offers the opportunity to provide significantly more trees and hedgerows when compared to the site's current condition and the delivery of this will be secured via condition. Accordingly, the proposals positively respond to policies CS1, CS9, PSP1, PSP2 and PSP3.

Heritage

- 7.56 Armour Heritage were instructed at an early stage to undertake a heritage assessment of the site and consider the potential for buried archaeological remains being present.
- 7.57 Given the proximity of listed buildings to the north of the application site they were also instructed to assess the setting of these and advise on the potential impact that development may have on their setting.
- 7.58 Their report on such matters supports this application. This concludes the site's potential to accommodate buried archaeological remains is limited and therefore we suggest that a watching brief should be sufficient during initial, phases of development, and this can be secured by condition.
- 7.59 This assessment work identified that the application site is of limited relevance to the setting of either of the listed buildings, with the nearest Hartley House (a former Toll House) setting being clearly linked to its position relative to Badminton Rd, the alignment of which has not changed significantly over the years. In the pre-application response, the council's conservation officer noted that while the existing hedgerow and trees could potentially screen the development from Hartley House, the location of private back gardens could lead to this being eroded as residents cut back and remove vegetation. As explained elsewhere in this document, this boundary is to be reinforced and provided with a maintenance strip to allow the management company to ensure that this planting is maintained in perpetuity to ensure this screening remains in place.
- 7.60 Spring Grove House, another Grade 2 Listed building located further to the north, has also been assessed, and the site was found to be of negligible relevance to its setting and again the intervisibility between that building and the site will be very limited.
- 7.61 Accordingly the assessment undertaken has concluded that the proposed development's effect on the setting of these listed buildings will be extremely limited and the proposals do not directly conflict with policies CS9 and PSP17 of the development plan.

Design

- 7.62 The pre-application response provided a range of comments on the layout submitted to the council in 2019, and the site layout and design has changed substantially in response, with the layout now produced by PAD Design, a well regarding Urban Design and Architectural practice.

- 7.63 The submitted DAS sets out the detail relating to how a robust technical evidence base led to the establishment of a constraints and opportunities plan for the site that in turn led to a revised layout plan for the site.
- 7.64 This layout plan has also been informed by an analysis of relevant policies relating to design and layout, bin storage and collection, and car parking as well as an assessment of the historic character of the area.
- 7.65 Much of the prevailing character of the area is defined by linear development along roads which was of its time and not to be replicated in the modern age because of policies related to the efficient use of land. The analysis of the site's urban fringe character and the prevailing built form of the area has led to a lower density layout that provides generous plot sizes, with defensible front garden areas and key buildings to provide visual stops and enclose public realm spaces. The development has also been arranged to provide a positive frontage to the PROW that is retained through the site to provide positive architectural interest to people passing through the site and natural surveillance.
- 7.66 The development provides a range of housing types, both open market and affordable that will meet a diverse range of needs, and is therefore considered to respond positively to policy CS17.
- 7.67 All of the houses proposed meet the relevant internal space standards and development has been sensitively located in respect to the nearest residential property, Chestnut House, by providing separation distances well in excess of 21m, even though the nearest plot (no.35) is a bungalow that presents a side elevation with no habitable windows to this existing property which means less than 21m could be considered to be appropriate. We have done this to be sensitive to the existing occupants, and a bungalow, rather than a two-storey dwelling here, better retains their current outlook, although we note there is no right to a private view in planning law.
- 7.68 The scale of the development will be up to predominately two storeys in height to respect the prevailing character of the area, with the exception of two bungalows placed in the eastern part of the site which will cater for downsizers and also provide a softer transition to the existing property that lies adjacent to this boundary.
- 7.69 The architecture adopted in the detailed design of the dwellings reflects that found in the local area including the following features:

- Generous feature canopies, porches and bay windows.
- Stone heads and sills.
- Brick chimneys.
- Shallow gable depths.
- Generous roof pitches.
- Predominantly eaves fronted dwellings with feature gable fronted plots to add variety.
- Stone mullions and label moulds.

7.70 Example elevations are provided in figure 8 and are reflective of the local area's character and appearance. The materials selected also reflect the prevailing character of the area and will engender a high design quality.



Figure 8. Proposed Streetscenes

7.71 In summary we consider that the proposed layout and design of the buildings is an appropriate response for the site and the proposed development meets favourably with policies CS1, CS16, CS17 of the Core Strategy and PSP1, PSP8, PSP37 and PSP43 of the Policies, Sites and Places DPD.

Landscape and Visual Impact

7.72 The site's landscape impact has been assessed by Steele Landscape Design and their Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment supports the application.

7.73 This assessment identifies that the application site has a low-medium sensitivity to accommodate development and the development's impact on the character of the site would be light-moderate adverse without mitigation. With the mitigation proposed in the form of a range of new planting, in particular to strengthen the existing boundaries of the site to ensure

that view of the development is screened and filtered, the effects are considered to be slight adverse.

- 7.74 The initial landscaping concept that has been agreed between the landscape architect and architects is set out on submitted plan 13351/5015C and further detail in respect to species and exact planting details can be secured via condition, unless the council would like to see these finer details now. It should be noted again that an extensive maintenance corridor to the retained and reinforced hedgerows is provided to allow them to be protected and maintained appropriately in perpetuity.
- 7.75 In terms of the development's effect on the wider landscape character of the area the assessment concludes that given that the site is only experienced from close quarters and vantages circa 250m from the site itself, the change will be of a slight adverse magnitude once mitigatory planting is introduced on the site.
- 7.76 The site does not fall within a specially designated area for landscape quality, with the AONB lying to the north with very little views from within it to the application site. Generally the effects that the LVIA have identified are extremely limited and typical of a development of the sort proposed here.
- 7.77 Accordingly, no conflict with policies CS1, CS9 and PSP2 can be identified in respect to the proposals.

Ecology

- 7.78 The application is supported by a full ecological impact assessment undertaken by Grass Roots Ecology, which considers the ecological value of the site and identifies any appropriate enhancement measures or mitigation that may be required. A detailed phase 1 habitat survey and a series of site-specific reptile surveys have been undertaken during optimum survey periods. The survey work identified that no trees on site represent obvious roosting opportunities for bats and given the small size and location of the survey area bat activity surveys were not considered to be required.
- 7.79 The assessment concluded that the site is of low ecological value and given that the majority of hedges and trees are to be retained, and those lost will be replaced in greater volume, the impacts of the development in ecological terms are not considered to be significant.

- 7.80 In fact, the replacement of grassland that would otherwise be grazed pasture with a more diverse range of habitat including a new water feature (attenuation pond and peripheral habitat), appropriately managed grassland and new tree and hedgerow planting is considered to be of benefit if appropriately managed via a LEMP that will be secured via condition.
- 7.81 In summary the mitigation that will be incorporated into the LEMP and detailed landscape plans will include:
- Bolster Planting to retained hedgerows and creation of new hedgerows along the site's southern boundary;
 - Permanently wet part of the attenuation feature and appropriate species rich seeding to its remainder and periphery;
 - Plant grass land areas with Emorsgate Seed Mix (EM4) which is suitable for clay soils;
 - Provision of bat/bird boxes and bat roosting features (inset bricks/roosting boxes) provided to 50% of dwellings; and
 - Construction protection measures to be set out in a separate CEMP.
- 7.82 Accordingly, no adverse effects on ecology will result from the proposed development and in fact biodiversity will be enhanced. Therefore the proposals comply with policies CS9 and PSP19 of the development plan.

Other Material Considerations

Designing out Crime

- 7.83 Prior to the submission of the planning application discussions were held with the Police Liaison Officer in respect to the emerging layout to ensure his views on security, natural surveillance and other issues were fully taken into account.
- 7.84 After two sets of email correspondence it was confirmed that the layout was agreed with no further comments to be addressed.

Energy Minimisation and Sustainable Construction

- 7.85 As explained in the Energy Statement that supports the application, Redcliffe Homes take a fabric first approach to the minimisation of CO2 emissions and energy demand resulting from

their developments and are proud to go beyond the requirements of building regulations in this regard.

- 7.86 However, even after implementing these measures there will be residual energy demand and Redcliffe has therefore looked at options to generate energy on site to meet 20% of this residual energy requirement. Their assessment has suggested the optimal way of achieving this will be via the use of Photovoltaic Solar Panels given the extensive availability of south facing roofscapes within the development.
- 7.87 The installation of the PV panels can be secured via condition.
- 7.88 In addition to these measures Redcliffe are committed to ensuring that their residents have opportunities to shift from fossil fuel-based travel to cleaner electric vehicles, therefore all open market plots are to be provided with an electric vehicle charging point to allow the flexibility to use such vehicles if residents so wish, thereby reducing the CO2 impact of any car trips taken from the site. These measures go above and beyond that required by adopted planning policy.
- 7.89 Therefore, the proposed development responds positively to the climate change agenda and meets fully with policy PSP6.

Public Rights of Way

- 7.90 As explained earlier, an existing right of way runs through the site for a short distance linking Badminton Road with the railway bridge that then links into a wider network of paths beyond to the south.
- 7.91 The footpath itself will be provided with a consolidated surface (if the PROW Team would prefer a different surface we would be happy to discuss this further) and will be drained, which will improve it from its current condition which is often muddy and waterlogged due to the lack of any formal drainage on the site.
- 7.92 A knee rail will be provided to delineate the path and the development predominately fronts the footway to provide positive natural surveillance. Where the PROW crosses the internal access road, pedestrians will be given priority and the exact details of how this crossing will be delivered, and traffic calmed, will be secured via S278/38 agreement in due course. We would be happy to involve the PROW team in these detailed discussions.

- 7.93 Therefore, the PROW will be enhanced and retained and active travel using it promoted in accordance with policy PSP10.

Infrastructure and S106 Contributions

- 7.94 Consultees raised issues with the capacity of the primary school in Old Sodbury during the pre-application process, however, we are not aware of any capacity constraints at the school and it is the Local Education Authority's duty to deliver sufficient school places under their statutory obligations, albeit the development will provide funding towards the provision of new places in the area.
- 7.95 The Local Plan Review document published for consultation between November 2020 – March 2021 stated that *"some schools, particularly smaller schools in rural areas, have issues with their long-term sustainability and quality of education due to surplus capacity by a lack of new students"*. This is further discussed on page 125 which outlines the long-term implications of a lack of new primary school age pupils within a local area, resulting in a lack of funding for the school and difficulties of securing teachers.
- 7.96 The Small and Rural Schools Strategy (June 2020) set out the information for the need for school places across South Gloucestershire. This sets out that there are 6 surplus places currently at Old Sodbury Primary School and it has fewer than 100 children on the rolls. It is also within financial difficulty and therefore our position is that some moderate growth to local villages, such as Old Sodbury, will ensure that these school remain viable and open in the longer-term by providing new school-aged pupils.
- 7.97 It has been alleged that residents might have to travel outside of the area to gain access to primary school places and that would be unsustainable due to the additional travel required. However, our analysis of the pupil draw into Old Sodbury (see figure 9 below) suggests that pupils are accommodated at the school who live distances much greater than the distance between the application site and the school.

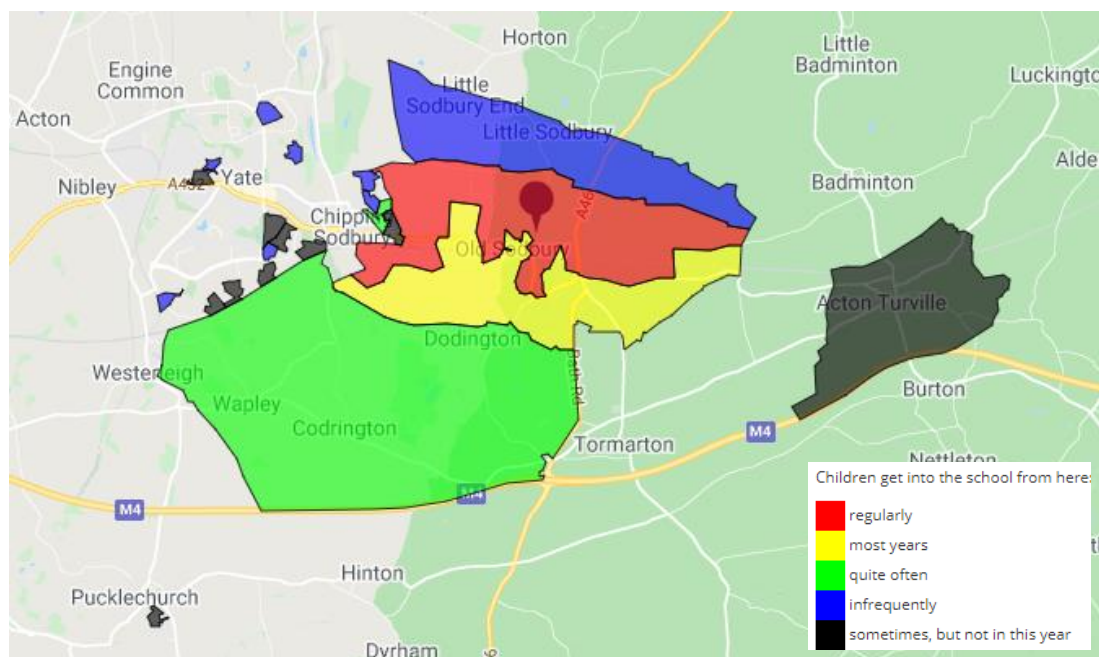


Figure 9. Most Recent Catchment Data for Old Sodbury School

- 7.98 This means that if the development were to be granted on the application site and generate primary school pupils, then it is most likely that they would attend the school with other potential pupils from further afield sent to schools elsewhere. For example, pupils from the Wapley/Codrington/Westerleigh area would be likely redirected to the schools in the southern fringe of Yate, which is actually much closer in terms of distance. Therefore, the argument that providing new pupils in Old Sodbury would result in adverse sustainability impacts due to increased travel does not stand up to scrutiny.
- 7.99 In respect to open space, whilst the site provides onsite informal open space a formal play area is not proposed. The reason for this is that it was thought the financial improvements to the existing facilities in the local area would be more appropriate.
- 7.100 The development will also deliver highways improvements as previously described as well as contributing towards wider local infrastructure via CIL.

Noise and Vibration

- 7.101 Although land directly adjacent to the application site, located the same distance from the railway line to the south, has been previously approved without any concerns regarding noise or vibration we thought it prudent to undertake an assessment of this issue and include an analysis of the nearby Badminton Road's potential impact on the residential amenity for future occupants.

- 7.102 The report on this issue that supports the application identifies that subject to minor mitigation measures (relating to glazing and vents), compliance with PSP9 can be achieved and no adverse impacts from noise and vibration can be identified.

8.0 **CONCLUSION**

8.1 In conclusion, we consider that the proposals offer a highly sustainable development, in a suitable location, that accords with the core planning principles of the NPPF, the adopted CS and the emerging JSP which seeks to direct development to the Yate/Chipping Sodbury area. Old Sodbury is clearly closely related to Chipping Sodbury and accessible to its facilities and services, whilst also providing key everyday facilities of its own and bus links which means that it offers a sustainable location for housing growth where opportunities to limit travel by car are available and credible.

8.2 We have identified that there is a need for both market and affordable housing in South Gloucestershire and particularly within Old Sodbury, and there is currently no robust and deliverable strategy to address this need.

8.3 There are significant benefits to the scheme which are summarised as follows:

- Addressing the need for market and affordable housing;
- Providing development in a sustainable location;
- Providing new residents who will sustain the existing services in the village;
- Providing improved highway safety on Badminton Road and a new pedestrian crossing to increase permeability and make the centre of the village more accessible and attractive for pedestrians;
- Enhancing the ecological value of the site including significantly more trees and hedgerows when compared to its current state;
- Providing the rural rate of CIL which will provide significant funds towards local infrastructure; and
- Providing a range of tenure and type of housing to meet local needs.

8.4 Therefore, we conclude that the development proposed is inherently sustainable, is of high-quality urban design that responds to the character of the surrounding area and the site's constraints and opportunities.

8.5 Issues such as highways, drainage, arboriculture, landscape, ecology, heritage, noise, affordable housing, and design have been examined and the various assessments undertaken have found no adverse effects that would outweigh the benefits of the proposals.

8.6 We consider that the Core Strategy Inspector's conclusions and requirements for a review in 2018, the 2006 date that settlement boundaries for towns and villages were established and

the at best marginal housing land supply, means that many of the development plan policies that restrict housing supply are out-of-date. However, irrespective to whether that position is agreed with or not, we consider that the proposals comply with the general thrust of the spatial strategy and the proposals will deliver sustainable development, for which there is a presumption in favour, in any event.

8.7 Any minor policy conflicts identified by the council would be outweighed by the positive benefits of the scheme and the material considerations we have identified.

8.8 We therefore commend the application to the Council for approval.