

Internal Memorandum



Development Management Case Officer: Neil Underhay

Application:	Outline planning application for the erection of up to 90no. dwellings (including 30% affordable housing), public open space, children's play area, landscaping, sustainable urban drainage system and engineering works, with vehicular access off Mulberry Road. All matters reserved except for means of access.	Reference Number:	22/P/0459/OUT
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Location:	Land North of Mulberry Road, Congresbury	Date:	23/03/22
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Comments from the Conservation & Heritage Officer regarding the above application:

The proposed development is sited within setting of Grade II Listed Park Farm, Collins Bridge and 'Bridge over River Yeo', it is also within the wider setting of Grade II* listed Urchinwood Manor.

Park Farm is the only listed asset in which setting will be directly harmed as a result of the proposed development. Park Farm is a farm complex originally believed to have been built in 16th century with later remodelling and extensions in late 17th/early 18th century and the again in the 19th century, which sits adjacent to the northern end of the site.

The proposed development for 90 dwellings is a large-scale dense development in the adjacent open green space to the listed building. The development will alter the rural landscape which was originally associated with the historic farmstead. Although elements of the land to the west of the site have been developed the farm still remains connected to the more open countryside around it. Part of this connection will be lost through the dense urban development in this southern field.

This open countryside adds to the significance of the listed farm building and offers further understanding of its historic use as farm and its connection with the open countryside. This adds historic context to the listed farm building and its associated curtilage barns. The change of the site from open green land will sever part of the connection the listed farmhouse has to its original setting and as a result will cause some harm to the significance of this heritage asset.

Other aspects of the proposed development will also harm the wider setting of the listed farm such as the increase in noise, traffic and domestic clutter which form part of a more urban landscape.

Relevant Legislation / Planning Guidance:

Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990

National Planning Policy Framework, principally paras 189 – 202 (2019)

North Somerset Core Strategy (CS5: Landscape and the historic environment)

North Somerset Sites and Policies Plan (DM3: Conservation Area, DM4: Listed Buildings)

Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 3 -The Setting of Heritage Assets (2015)

Although there is mention of the existing hedgerow acting as a screen between the listed farm complex and the proposed development in the submitted Heritage Statement, this cannot be fully relied upon in the construction of this development as the hedge may be removed or die. More robust screening should be considered as part of the landscape plan for the development.

The outline plan shows that there has been consideration put in to the site layout in regard to the setting of the listed building where there is the inclusion of green space and some tree planting to the north and east of the proposed development which will help provide a green buffer between the listed building Park Farm and the proposed development. The proposed green space will also allow for some retention of the existing rural aspects between the site and Grade II* listed Urchinwood Manor to the west. This area of green space would offer some mitigation against the impact of the development on the setting of the listed assets.

There is a historic footpath which runs through the site connecting the land around the farm which still remains a public right of way today. As the outline proposals stand this will be lost in its current location and would be diverted around the proposed dwellings within the green space. It would be good to see if this could be retained as the current route, which would help retain further historic element as part of the scheme.

The illustrative master plan set out in the submitted Design and Access Statement shows a road to the north of the site opposite the green buffer put in place made to help mitigate harm to the setting of the listed building. Although this does offer further separation from the listed building and the proposed housing the addition of the road and cars within this area will still cause harm some to the wider setting of the listed building. It may be possible to mitigate this further at a later point in the application by providing a road surface which would blend more into the green buffer area rather than the use of standard black tarmac.

Overall, the current proposed development will harm the setting of the listed farmhouse and is contra to Policy DM4 (Listed Buildings) of the North Somerset Sites and Policies Plan. This harm is at the lower end of less than substantial in terms of the NPPF, and paragraph 202 of the NPPF and part I section 66 of The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 need to be applied to the planning decision.

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