

Wellington Heath Parish Council

11 Nov 2016

To HCC Planning Mr Fernando Barber-Martinez
Copy AONB Paul Esrich
Copy Liz Harvey

Planning application 163182 The Gables, Ochre Hill, Wellington Heath

Dear Sir,

Wellington Heath Parish Councillors are concerned about the details of this planning application, however this could be addressed by conditions. We welcome the removal of the existing white storage building.

The site is in an extremely prominent location on the top of Ochre Hill ridge in the Malvern Hills AONB. The village of Wellington Heath has been characterised in Herefordshire Council's Landscape Character Assessment as a rare landscape type 'Forest Smallholdings and Dwellings'. A well used public footpath runs adjacent, and on the opposite side it is very visible from viewpoints on footpaths in Frith Wood including the Geoparkway and the Herefordshire Trail.

Herefordshire Core Strategy policies SS6 and LD1 are applicable, particularly regarding local distinctiveness in the AONB. The Malvern Hills AONB Guidance on Building Design referenced by paragraph 4.8.17 of the Core Strategy applies, particularly pages 79 and 79 relating to the landscape type Forest Smallholdings and Dwellings.

The overall form of the proposal is a welcome reflection of the older wayside dwellings but it is not sufficiently consistent with guidance which state "Enhance the characteristic mix of materials including red brick, which reflects the softer, less uniform appearance of traditional handmade brick, stone which complements the stone that is used locally, and timber framing". The proposed bricks are too angular, something more reflective of the softer, less uniform appearance of traditional hand made bricks is required.

The balcony and door height windows on the east side are inconsistent with AONB guidance, however they are reasonably modest and we appreciate the desire to make the most of the views. The west side of the property is some distance from the publicly accessible viewpoints in Frith Wood, hence the balcony and high windows will be visible to the naked eye but not obtrusive.

We would also suggest that the recently published AONB Guidance on the Selection and Use of Colour in Development is brought to the attention of the applicants. <http://www.malvernhillsaonb.org.uk/managing-the-aonb/guidance-documents/>

C F Rozelaar
Chair of Wellington Heath parish council planning committee