

6.6 Devizes

Community Area: Devizes

Settlement: Devizes

Landscape Character Context

Kennet Landscape Character Assessment

9 Vale of Pewsey

Landscape

- The Vale of Pewsey forms a broad, low-lying landscape unit separating the two main chalk upland blocks of the Marlborough Downs and Salisbury Plain to the north and south.
- It is dominated by intensive agriculture, and characterised by a mixed pattern of farmland, woodland and hedgerows.
- The predominantly arable cover found on the edges of the Vale change to a more mixed farmland toward the centre, but retain an open pattern, with a weak or absent hedgerow structure.
- By the end of the medieval period the modern day settlement pattern was established.
- The landscape of the Vale of Pewsey, as it survives today, is a product of the 18th and 19th century Enclosure Acts, which had removed virtually any trace of earlier field systems.

Visual

- The flanks of the Vale retain the wide open character found on many of the upland chalk areas, where intensive arable farming dominates. These enable long views east and west along the Vale
- Views north-south, except from more elevated positions, are interrupted by hedgerow trees and small blocks of woodland. Landscape quality is enhanced in a number of locations by attractive parkland and areas of estate farmland.
- Areas of pasture on the Vale floor, particularly those associated with the catchment of the Avon, are very attractive where they pass through enclosed farmland, but become less well defined within open arable areas.

Settlement

- The Vale has for hundreds of years been the economic heart of the Kennet District area, and encompasses the great majority of the settlements.
- Characteristic spring line settlements in the west of the area, situated along the junction of the Lower Chalk and Upper Greensand.
- Soft red brick and flint predominate as building materials, often used in decorative styles.
- The use of local Malme stone at Woodbury and Manningford and Lower Greensand at Potterne and Market Lavington, together with the brick and tile works at Market Lavington has influenced building styles in the western part of the Vale.

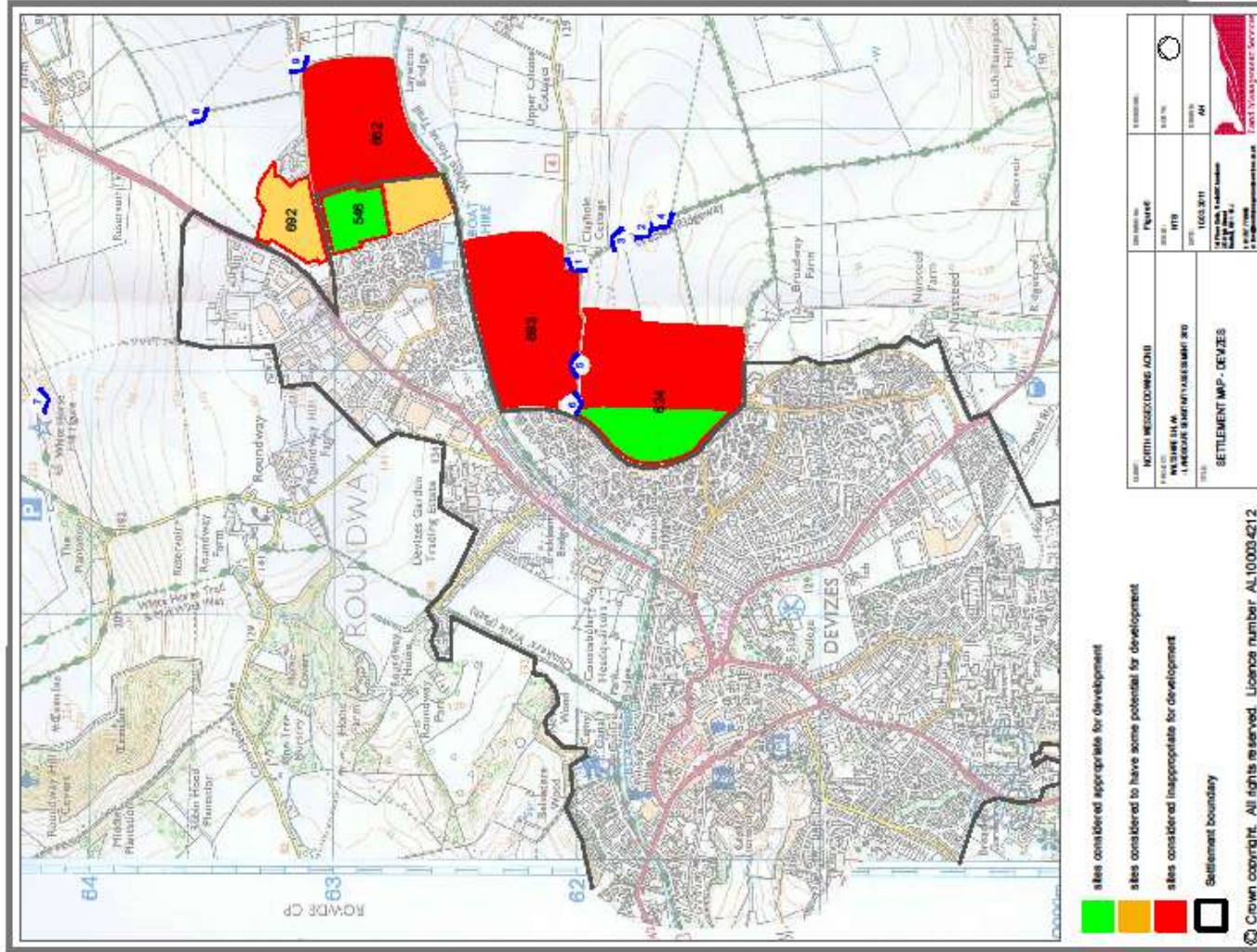
Site Assessments

Unlike the other sites reviewed as part of this report the settlement of Devizes and all the sites proposed as part of the SHLAA lie outside the AONB.

The AONB boundary lies immediately west and north of Devizes. The assessments below consider whether development would be detrimental to the setting of the AONB.

The land rises steeply to the north of Devizes towards Round Hill with the distinctive White Horse carved into the chalk, which forms part of the White Horse Trail.

The photograph overleaf (DEV 7) shows the view from the White Horse towards Devizes which encompasses all of the sites considered in the assessment below.



DEV7



SITE: 546

Site has already been developed.

Photographs

SITE: 624

Photographs

DEV2



DEV4



DEV6



DEV5



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| <p>Relationship with adjacent settlement</p> <p>There is a defined settlement edge along the road on the eastern edges of Devizes with open countryside to the east. The site forms part of this open countryside. The land rises to a broad hill east of the Gypsy Path which means that the land falls towards the settlement in the western section of the site (see photograph DEV6).</p> |
| <p>Relationship with wider countryside</p> <p>The higher land is open countryside with a number of characteristic features of the AONB land east of the Wessex Ridgeway, principally the arable land use and hedgerow boundaries.</p> |
| <p>Impact on key landscape character</p> <p>Development of the whole of the site would bring development much closer to the AONB and would result in the loss of some features characteristic of the wider AONB to the east. The land currently has a predominantly rural character although noise and evidence of fly tipping create more of an urban fringe character along the footpaths.</p> |
| <p>Impact on key visual characteristics</p> <p>The land is largely screened in near views from the AONB by an existing mature hedge. The larger eastern part of the site is highly prominent in longer distance views from the White Horse (DEV7) and development would have a significant impact on the scale of the settlement in these views.</p> |
| <p>Impact on key settlement characteristics</p> <p>Development of the whole site would result in a significant extension of the settlement towards the AONB.</p> |
| <p>Summary of compliance with NPPF Paragraphs 115 and 116</p> <p>Development of the land west of the Gypsy Path would not impact on the setting of the AONB. Development of the larger area of land east of the Gypsy Path would impact on the scenic beauty of the AONB, in particular in views from the White Horse</p> |
| <p>Recommendations</p> <p>The western section could be taken forward as part of the SHLAA. The eastern section would impact on the setting to the AONB and should not be taken forward as part of the SHLAA.</p> |

SITE: 662

Photographs

DEV9



DEV3



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| Relationship with adjacent settlement |
| The land lies on the north eastern edge of the settlement. It is bordered by new development to the west and by open countryside to the north, south and east. |
| Relationship with wider countryside |
| The land is open countryside under arable farming. This is a significant large area of rural landscape, which is visible from land within the AONB to the north (DEV7). |
| Impact on key landscape character |
| The land is predominantly one large field, which is less characteristic of the mixed field pattern of the Vale of Pewsey. The site borders the Kennet and Avon Canal. |
| Impact on key visual characteristics |
| The site is prominent in near views from rights of way within the AONB, from the Kennet and Avon Canal and in more distant views from the White Horse. Development of the land, in particular the larger, more open eastern section would impact on views from the AONB. |
| Impact on key settlement characteristics |
| Development would result in a significant extension of the settlement into open countryside. |
| Summary of compliance with NPPF Paragraphs 115 and 116 |
| Development of the larger eastern part of the site would have a significant detrimental impact on views from within the AONB. The smaller western part of the site, south of Site 546, could potentially be developed without impact on the setting of the AONB, although retention of features such as Lay Wood to retain a buffer would be important. |
| Recommendations |
| Only the smaller western part of the site should be taken forward as part of the SHLAA to avoid impact to the setting of the AONB. |

SITE: 692

Photographs

DEV8



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| Relationship with adjacent settlement |
| The site lies on the north eastern fringes of the town but is enclosed by an industrial park to the north west, existing residential development to the south and open countryside to the east. Although open the site itself is unmanaged and not open to public access. |
| Relationship with wider countryside |
| The land is typical of urban fringe land which can provide an important buffer between countryside and settlements. |
| Impact on key landscape character |
| The land is bordered by fragmented, unmanaged hedges but otherwise has no characteristics of the wider countryside and the AONB. |
| Impact on key visual characteristics |
| The land is fairly well enclosed and is not prominent in near views from the footpath on the edge of the AONB to the east (DEV8) or in more distant views from the AONB at White Horse Hill (DEV7). |
| Impact on key settlement characteristics |
| Development would infill a triangle of land which is largely enclosed by existing development. |
| Summary of compliance with NPPF Paragraphs 115 and 116 |
| Development would not be prominent in views from the AONB and the site is not characteristic of the wider countryside |
| Recommendations |
| If taken forward as part of the SHLAA development would not impact on the setting of the AONB, although it is important that the transitional character of the land between the town and wider countryside is retained, in particular along the north eastern site boundary. |

SITE: 693

Photographs

DEV1



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| Relationship with adjacent settlement |
| The land is separated physically and visually from the existing settlement by the line of the Kennet and Avon Canal. |
| Relationship with wider countryside |
| The land is under grazing with a field pattern typical of the more mixed character of Pewsey Vale bordered by hedges with hedgerow trees |
| Impact on key landscape character |
| Development would extend residential development into an area of open countryside with strong rural character, typical of the wider countryside. Development would impact on the setting of the Kennet and Avon Canal and the character of the AONB to the south and east. |
| Impact on key visual characteristics |
| The land is prominent in near views from within the AONB and in more distant views from the higher land in the vicinity of the White Horse. |
| Impact on key settlement characteristics |
| This would be a substantial extension of the settlement into open countryside and would bring development to the very edge of the AONB. |
| Summary of compliance with NPPF Paragraphs 115 and 116 |
| Development would impact on the setting to the AONB, with the loss of characteristic features and in views from the AONB, and as such would not conserve the scenic beauty of the AONB |
| Recommendations |
| Residential development would be prominent in views from the AONB and would bring development to the very edge of the AONB. It would impact on the setting to the AONB should not be taken forward as part of the SHLAA. |

Conclusions and Observations on Cumulative Impacts

The cumulative impact of development of all of the sites on the eastern edge of Devizes would be significant, and would result in a substantial expansion of the settlement to the very edge of the AONB. The larger sites beyond the settlement boundary are particularly important in views from the higher ground within the AONB, in the vicinity of the AONB. The cumulative impact of development of all sites would be highly detrimental to the quality and character of these views.