

APPLICATION NO.	P15/V2582/RM
APPLICATION TYPE	OUTLINE
REGISTERED	12.3.2015
PARISH	Greater Faringdon
WARD MEMBER(S)	Roger Cox Mohinder Kainth
APPLICANT	GSC Estates (Faringdon) Limited
SITE	Land at 4&20 site Park Road Faringdon SN7 8LA
PROPOSAL	Reserved matters application for the construction of two class A1 retail stores and class A5 drive thru coffee shop following outline consent P15/V0394/O.
OFFICER	Adrian Butler

Please note that this application may be determined under delegated powers available to the Head of Planning prior to the meeting in which case the application will be withdrawn from the agenda.

SUMMARY

This is a reserved matters application pursuant to an outline planning permission granted for residential development under application no. P15/V0394/O. This outline planning permission established the principle of retail development on the site together with vehicular access from Park Road. The access works also included providing a right hand turn lane, widening of Park Road at the roundabout, bus stop provision, a toucan crossing and footway and cycleway provision.

This reserved matters application seeks approval of the detail of the scheme including appearance, landscaping, layout and scale of the development.

The outline permission restricts the development floor spaces as follows:

1. A Class A1 use retail unit comprising 1,780 sq m of floorspace with a net sales area of 1,254 sq m;
2. A Class A1 use retail unit comprising 872 sq m of floorspace with a net sales area of 650 sq m; and
3. A Class A5 use retail unit comprising 165 sq m of floorspace.

End users are given as Aldi, Waitrose and Costa Coffee. However, this authority has no control over which retail operators may occupy the premises.

The plans presented demonstrate that this quantum of development plus satisfactory car parking, service areas and turning spaces can be accommodated whilst retaining reasonable space for strategic landscaping and a landscape buffer to the A420 as expected by policy E3iv of the adopted local plan.

The northern part of the site is flood zone 2 and 3. The development avoids these areas with the exception of part of the access road. This was agreed at outline stage.

The buildings are of reasonable design. They comprise shallow mono pitched roofs or flat roofed in the case of the smaller Class A1 unit. Heights vary with the largest unit having a maximum height of 7.84m, the mid-sized unit being 5.25m and the smaller Class A5 unit being 5.38. The limited height and fall of the land towards the north ensure there are no unreasonable impacts for the setting of Faringdon Folly including views of the Folly across this site. The detailed list of materials comprise metal

cladding, artificial stone, large glazed elements with canopies and projections breaking the elevations and adding visual interest.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The application relates to land on the south eastern edge of Faringdon and to the north of Park Road at its junction with the A420. The site and adjacent land is undeveloped and it is allocated in the adopted local plan (policy E3iv) for employment purposes falling within Classes B1 and B2.
- 1.2 The land gently falls towards the north before rising again gently and then dropping to the stream. Levels also fall towards the A420 boundary before climbing steeply beyond the application site to the A420 itself. A culverted stream passes beneath the site hence the fall in levels towards this. The A420 is defined by a field hedge that has grown to some 3m in height although with the rise in levels beyond the hedge to the A420 it does little to screen views across the site.
- 1.3 There are no neighbouring buildings to the site with the nearest being the petrol station and business units to the west. There are no particular features on site and no public rights of way are known to cross the site. The site is within the Lowland Vale landscape (policy NE9 of the adopted local plan). A site location plan is attached at **Appendix 1**.

2.0 PROPOSAL

- 2.1 This is a reserved matters application pursuant to an outline planning permission granted for residential development under application no. P15/V0394/O. This outline planning permission established the principle of retail development on the site together with vehicular access from Park Road. The access works also included providing a right hand turn lane, widening of Park Road at the roundabout, bus stop provision, a toucan crossing and footway and cycleway provision.
- 2.2 Three retail units are proposed and as required by the outline planning permission these comprise two Class A1 retail units and one Class A5 retail unit. End users are indicated to be Aldi, Waitrose and a drive through Costa Coffee. In accordance with the outline permission the units comprise:
1. A Class A1 use retail unit comprising 1,780 sq m of floorspace
 2. A Class A1 use retail unit comprising 872 sq m of floorspace
 3. A Class A5 use retail unit comprising 165 sq m of floorspace.

The authority cannot control the end users of the proposals and therefore, this application must be treated as a retail development only with no weight given to the applicant's suggestions as to whom the occupants may be.

- 2.3 The layout plan shows the two smaller retail units on the Park Road frontage with outside storage and servicing areas between them. The largest unit is to the north and separated from the smaller units by car parking areas, a coach parking/bus set down area and landscaping. A large open area to the north of the site remains. Landscaping is also proposed on the A420 boundary.
- 2.4 The proposed retail units comprise shallow mono pitched roofs or flat roofed in the case of the smaller Class A1 unit. Heights vary with the largest unit having a maximum height of 7.84m, the mid-sized unit being 5.25m and the smaller Class A5 unit being 5.38. Materials comprise metal cladding, artificial stone, large glazed elements with canopies and projections breaking the elevations and adding visual interest.
- 2.5 Parking is provided for 180 car parking spaces with each unit being allocated specific parking areas. Vehicular access is from Park Road in accordance with the outline

permission with the access leading though the centre of the layout serving the parking areas, coach parking area and servicing areas. Servicing to the largest retail unit is on its northern side.

3.0 **SUMMARY OF CONSULTATIONS & REPRESENTATIONS**

3.1 Below is a summary of the most up to date responses received. A full copy of all the comments made can be viewed online at www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk.

Town Council	No comments received to date
Oxfordshire County Council One Voice	<p><u>Highways</u> No objection</p> <p><u>County Councillor Heathcoat</u> I am hugely supportive of this proposed development. The site has been an “eye-saw” for far too long. It stands on the corner of one of the main entrances to the medieval market town of Faringdon just off the A417, Park Road. The diversity of this development will draw people in and thus support the economy of Faringdon. The site will also provide employment for local people. I have studied the plans and the development will sit well in this area. I would hope that OCC E&E Planners will ensure that the road layout on/off the site is designed to take the increase of traffic in this area which is already busy with traffic.</p>
Landscape officer	Final comments awaited
Countryside Officer	No objection.
Thames Water	No objection.
Environmental Protection Team	No objection Recommends a condition to control noise from machinery and plant to minimise any impacts for housing permitted on the south side of Park Road.
Drainage Engineer	No objection Drainage is not part of Reserved Matters, but has an impact on the proposed site layout and landscaping proposals. The approved Flood Risk Assessment and condition 13 stipulate the Finished Floor Levels and access road levels. Although it appears that the levels have been complied with, it would be helpful for the FFLs to be clearly stated on the plans and elevation drawings and be to Ordnance Survey datum. The landscape plans do not include the proposed details to the land NE of the build development which includes the proposed open channel and balancing pond.
Faringdon Chamber of Commerce	<p>Comments.</p> <p>1. It is not clear what connections there will be to the town centre from this development (e.g. footpath or cycle path). The Chamber would like to see access to the Town Centre along with information of the facilities the centre has to offer to be part of this development (e.g. signage with information on retail and heritage).</p>

	<p>2. The current elevation drawings show the cladding on the Aldi building to be grey, which will be seen from the A420. There is concern that this may not give a good first impression of Faringdon.</p> <p>3. Access to the development could increase the congestion at this junction, which is already difficult during peak hours</p>
Vale equalities officer	<p>No objection</p> <p>Suggest customer toilet areas be 2.2 x 2m in size. The Aldi store ought to have 6 disabled parking bays</p>

4.0 RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

4.1 P15/V0394/O - Approved (01/10/2015)

Outline application (all matters reserved except highway access) for two class A1 retail stores, Class A5 drive thru coffee shop, coach parking, car parking, access, drainage, landscaping and associated works (revised illustrative layout, landscape strategy and flood risk assessment)

4.2 Application P08/V1657/O relates to an undetermined outline planning application on the site for the development of a business park for B1 and B2 uses, including access roads, car parking and landscaping. It has been resolved to approve the application subject to a s.106 being entered into but the s.106 has yet to be completed.

Application no. P15/V2113/O relates to an undetermined outline planning application for a Class B1 office building and 9 dwellings on land immediately to the west.

5.0 POLICY & GUIDANCE

5.1 Vale of White Horse District Council Local Plan 2011

The development plan for this area comprises the adopted Vale of White Horse local plan 2011. The following local plan policies relevant to this application were ‘saved’ by direction on 1 July 2009.

Policy No.	Policy Title
GS1	Developments in Existing Settlements
E3iv	New business development in Faringdon and specifically land adjacent Park Road and the A420
S1	Hierarchy of new retail provision
DC1	Design
DC3	Design against crime
DC5	Access
DC6	Landscaping
DC7	Waste Collection and Recycling
DC8	The Provision of Infrastructure and Services
DC9	The Impact of Development on Neighbouring Uses
DC12	Water quality and resources
DC13	Flood Risk and Water Run-off
DC14	Flood Risk and Water Run-off
HE9	Archaeology
NE9	Lowland Vale

5.2 Emerging Local Plan 2031 – Part 1

The draft local plan part 1 is not currently adopted policy. Paragraph 216 of the NPPF allows for weight to be given to relevant policies in emerging plans, unless other material considerations indicate otherwise, and only subject to the stage of preparation

of the plan, the extent of unresolved objections and the degree of consistency of the relevant emerging policies with the NPPF. At present it is officers' opinion that the emerging Local Plan housing policies carry limited weight for decision making. The relevant policies are as follows:-

Policy No.	Policy Title
Core Policy 1	Presumption in favour of sustainable development
Core Policy 6	Meeting Business and Employment Needs
Core Policy 7	Providing supporting infrastructure and services
Core Policy 20	Spatial strategy for Western Vale Sub-Area
Core Policy 32	Retail Development and other Main Town Centre Uses
Core Policy 33	Promoting sustainable transport and accessibility
Core Policy 35	Promoting public transport, cycling and walking
Core Policy 36	Electronic communications
Core Policy 37	Design and local distinctiveness
Core Policy 39	The historic environment
Core Policy 42	Flood risk
Core Policy 43	Natural resources
Core Policy 44	Landscape
Core Policy 45	Green infrastructure
Core Policy 46	Conservation and improvement of biodiversity

5.3 Supplementary Planning Guidance

- Design Guide – March 2015
- Sustainable Design and Construction – December 2009
- Flood Maps and Flood Risk – July 2006
- Planning and Public Art – July 2006
- Land between the A420 & Faringdon North of Park Road, Faringdon – July 2008 (relates to this site and wider areas around it some of which have been developed for housing)

5.4 National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) – March 2012

5.5 National Planning Practice Guidance 2014 (NPPG)

5.6 Faringdon Neighbourhood Plan Re-Submission February 2015

Paragraph 216 of the NPPF allows for weight to be given to relevant policies in emerging plans, unless other material considerations indicate otherwise, and only subject to the stage of preparation of the plan, the extent of unresolved objections and the degree of consistency of the relevant emerging policies with the NPPF.

The Faringdon Neighbourhood Plan (FNP) has been through Examination but is yet to be adopted as there are issues largely regarding housing matters that need to be addressed. Nonetheless, at Examination the design policies are not proposed for change and it is considered some weight can be attributed to them. A revised FNP has been produced.

The FNP notes Park Road is a gateway to the town and expects high design standards for development on this site. Policy 4.7E of the FNP requires:

“All alterations or new build of commercial buildings, and especially those that are publicly visible or that form gateways to Faringdon, should be of a scale and form appropriate to their location and landscape setting and will be expected to create a high quality environment combining the best modern design with local influences”.

5.7 Environmental Impact

The development includes more than 1 hectare of urban development which is not dwellinghouse development. It constitutes Schedule 2 development under the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) (Amendment) Regulations 2015. Officers have undertaken a screening opinion in accordance with the EIA Regulations. Having taken account of the selection criteria at Schedule 3 of the Regulations it was decided this proposal is not EIA development.

5.8 Other Relevant Legislation

- Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas Act) 1990
- Community & Infrastructure Levy Legislation Human Rights Act 1998
- Equality Act 2010
- Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998
- Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006
- The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010
- Localism Act

5.9 Human Rights Act

The provisions of the Human Rights Act 1998 have been taken into account in the processing of the application and the preparation of this report.

5.10 Equalities

In determining this planning application the Council has had regard to its equalities obligations including its obligations under section 149 of the Equality Act 2010.

6.0 PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

The relevant planning considerations in the determination of this application are:

1. Design and layout including landscaping
2. Parking provision

Design and Layout

6.1 The NPPF provides that planning decisions should address the connections between people and places and the integration of new development into the natural, built and historic environment (paragraph 60). It gives considerable weight to good design and acknowledges it is a key component of sustainable development.

6.2 A number of local plan policies seek to ensure high quality developments and to protect the amenities of neighbouring properties (Policies DC1, DC6, and DC9). In March 2015 the council adopted its design guide, which aims to raise the standard of design across the district.

6.3 As mentioned above the Faringdon Neighbourhood Plan seeks a high standard of design on this gateway site.

6.4 The site is open to views from the elevated parts of the A420. There are also views over the site from the Folly Park/Jespers Hill. Views from Park Road are limited due to hedgerows, existing trees on the site frontage and buildings beyond the site towards the town.

6.5 The site is seen in the context of the edge of the built up area of Faringdon with the more formal space of Folly Park rising to the north east, the edge of the town and open land which will accommodate housing on the opposite side of Park Road. The layout of the proposal is similar to the illustrative plan presented as part of the outline application. The layout demonstrates that the quantum of development can be

accommodated reasonably with adequate circulation areas to the proposed car parks and service areas for the retail units.

- 6.6 The adopted local plan, draft local plan and site SPG all expect a strategic landscape buffer to the A420 edge of the site. This buffer is in addition to the wide verge to the A420. Areas for planting are provided to the A420 boundary including retention of the boundary hedge. In addition, planting is included throughout the site. Tree planting includes native species, multi stem trees and large feature trees with girths of 12-14cm at planting. The planting scheme will assist in softening the impact of the development and breaking the outline of the buildings. Areas to the north of the site are to be retained but may include an attenuation pond subject to the final drainage strategy that is to be agreed by planning condition as part of the outline permission. Tree and shrub planting is proposed against the northern elevation of the large retail unit to break and soften views from Jespers Hill and the A420. The open part of the site north of the buildings is to remain open and in its current state. Attenuation ponds are depicted and the details of these (if required) will be provided as part of the details discharging drainage conditions on the outline permission.
- 6.7 For users of the A420 travelling east towards the Park Road/A420 roundabout there are views over the site to Faringdon Folly. The roof heights proposed and fall of levels of this site from south to north ensure views over the site to Faringdon Folly are not compromised.
- 6.8 The largest building is largely rectangular in shape and set to the rear part of the developed part of the site. The shop front faces east to its car park with the longer flank walls to the south and north. It includes a mono pitched roof sloping downwards from south to north. Grey and silver metal cladding is proposed for the main walls (silver coloured cladding on the upper walls). The elevations are broken by windows including windows of height for the shop front and returning on the southern elevation. Elements of full height artificial stone walling are provided turning the corners. Canopies on the shop frontage and turning onto the southern side of the building seek to add interest and relief to the walls.
- 6.9 The second largest unit is again rectangular in shape and set on the Park Road frontage. It has a flat roof with raised elements at the corners. The main shop front is glazed and faces into the site (north). The elevations are primarily silver coloured metal cladding with artificial stone 'book ends'. The Park Road frontage contains a part artificial stone and part metal cladding elevation with two windows and a door. This elevation is partly screened by the grass verge being at a higher level to the site and for Park Road users it will be mainly the upper part of the building that is visible.
- 6.10 The smallest unit is set at the confluence of the A40 with Park Road. It will be set at a lower level to the roads with the bottom half of the building 'hidden' by the land form. The building has a mono pitched roof extending downwards from north to south. The elevations are broken by various projections, by large windows and elements of the building to be constructed in artificial stone. The main walling materials are grey and silver coloured metal cladding.
- 6.11 The buildings designs are functional. There is little to inform the design of buildings in this location and care is needed to ensure the buildings are low key protecting views over the site to the higher ground around the Folly. This is achieved. The appearance of the units with the variation in materials, projections, different sizes and with the planting scheme proposed are considered reasonable on this site and in accordance with design policies in the adopted local plan.

Parking

- 6.12 Access arrangements from park Road are agreed as part of the outline permission.

- 6.13 Adopted local plan policy DC5 requires safe access for developments and that the road network can accommodate the traffic arising from the development safely. The NPPF (Paragraph 32) requires plans and decision to take account of whether:-
- the opportunities for sustainable transport modes have been taken up depending on the nature and location of the site, to reduce the need for major transport infrastructure;
 - safe and suitable access to the site can be achieved for all people; and
 - improvements can be undertaken within the transport network that cost effectively limit the significant impacts of the development.
- 6.14 Paragraph 32 goes on to state: *“Development should only be prevented or refused on transport grounds where the residual cumulative impacts of development are severe.”*
- 6.15 The proposal includes 180 car parking spaces. This is short of the 198 spaces that parking standards would expect but officers consider that in line with the NPPF applicants and authorities need to be flexible and this reduction in parking allows a reasonable landscape buffer to the A420 and ensures buildings are beyond flood zones 2 and 3. Furthermore, 198 spaces is based on the gross floor areas of the buildings at the maximum parking standard requirement. The Council’s parking standards do allow consideration of parking for retail proposals above a 1,000 sq m threshold on their merits. In this case the site can be accessed by public transport from within and beyond the town with buses passing the site (through the outline permission the applicant is committed to providing financial contributions towards improved bus services along Park Road). The permission also requires bus stops on both sides of Park Road close to the site thereby improving access by public transport. A footway extending to the site alongside Park Road is proposed together with a footway/cycle path to the north although connection to Jespers Hill car park cannot be provided as this land is beyond the applicants control. These make the site accessible on foot and by cycling (including the cycle way that extends partly alongside Park Road).
- 6.16 Cycle parking is provided in front of the Class A1 units. In addition trolley storage is provided.
- Historic Environment and Archaeology**
- 6.17 Section 16(2) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires a local planning authority to have special regard to the desirability of preserving a listed building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses. Considerable importance and weight should be given to this requirement.
- 6.18 Paragraph 132 of the NPPF confirms that *“When considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated asset, great weight should be given to the asset’s conservation. The more important the asset, the greater the weight should be”*. The NPPF adds at paragraph 133 that proposals causing substantial harm to or total loss of significance of a designated heritage asset should be refused unless the substantial harm or loss is necessary to achieve substantial public benefits that outweigh the harm or loss. Paragraph 134 of the NPPF explains that less than substantial harm to the significance of the heritage asset should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal.
- 6.19 Policy HE4 of the adopted local plan seeks to protect the setting of listed buildings.
- 6.20 Faringdon Folly is on high ground over 800m from the site. The units are designed to maintain views to the Folly and the impact for its setting is negligible. There are no

other listed buildings likely to be adversely affected by the proposal.

- 6.21 Section 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 states that special attention should be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of a conservation area. In this case considerable importance and weight is given to the desirability of protecting or enhancing the character or appearance of the conservation area.
- 6.22 Policy HE1 of the adopted local plan seeks to preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the conservation area.
- 6.23 The conservation area extends from areas within the town centre out to Folly Hill. There is no adverse impact for the setting of the conservation area due to separation through distance and buildings between the site and the town centre. Whilst there may be some views from Folly Hill towards the site, the proposals will be seen in the context of the developed town. Open land at Jespers Hill between the site and conservation area is retained. There are considered to be no adverse impacts for the setting of the conservation area.

7.0 CONCLUSION

- 7.1 The principle of this development has been accepted through the earlier outline planning permission.
- 7.2 The layout of the scheme including planting proposals is acceptable. Likewise the appearance of the three retail units are considered acceptable at this gateway site to the town. Parking provision is acceptable.
- 7.3 There are no adverse impacts for historic assets.
- 7.4 The proposal is considered compliant with design policies in the adopted local plan, design guide and the NPPF.

8.0 RECOMMENDATION

- 8.1 **It is recommended that reserved matters are approved subject to the following conditions:**

- 1 : Approved plans**
- 2: Sample panel of stone work**
- 3: Cycle parking provision**

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