

<b>APPLICATION NO.</b>	<a href="#">P16/V0775/O</a>
<b>SITE</b>	Land South of Highworth Road Faringdon, SN7 7EY
<b>PARISH</b>	GREAT FARINGDON
<b>PROPOSAL</b>	Outline application for residential development of up to 190 houses (as amended by Drawings and Design and Access Statement accompanying agent's email of 22 May 2017 and Heritage Statement received 24 August 2017 and clarified by Ecology Technical Note from ECOSA accompanying agents email of 21 July 2017)
<b>WARD MEMBER(S)</b>	Roger Cox Mohinder Kainth
<b>APPLICANT OFFICER</b>	Drivewalk Limited Holly Bates

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## **RECOMMENDATION**

It is recommended that authority to grant outline consent is delegated to the head of planning subject to:

- I. A Section 106 legal agreement being entered into in order to ensure financial contributions towards local infrastructure and to secure affordable housing (and authority to vary the items in the agreement as appropriate to reflect CIL implementation should this occur between the committee resolution and the signing of the S106 legal agreement); and
- II. Conditions (or provision in S106 as appropriate) as follows:

### **Standard**

1. Commencement two years after reserved matters approval, reserved matters within three years.
2. Reserved matters to be submitted.
3. Approved plans list.

### **Pre-commencement**

4. Site access and connecting footway to be agreed.
5. Emergency access to be agreed.
6. Off-site highway works to be agreed.
7. Construction traffic management plan to be agreed.
8. Sustainable urban drainage scheme to be agreed.
9. Foul water drainage details to be agreed.
10. Water supply impact study to be agreed.
11. Tree protection and method statement to be agreed.
12. Contamination risk assessment to be agreed.
13. Written scheme of archaeological investigation to be agreed.
14. Programme of archaeological work to be agreed.

**With reserved matters**

- 15. Biodiversity enhancement plan to be agreed.**
- 16. Housing mix to be agreed.**
- 17. Noise survey undertaken and any required mitigation to be agreed.**
- 18. Electric charging points designed into properties with garages.**

**Pre-occupation**

- 19. Visibility splays to be agreed.**
- 20. Residential travel plan to be agreed.**
- 21. Travel information pack to be agreed.**

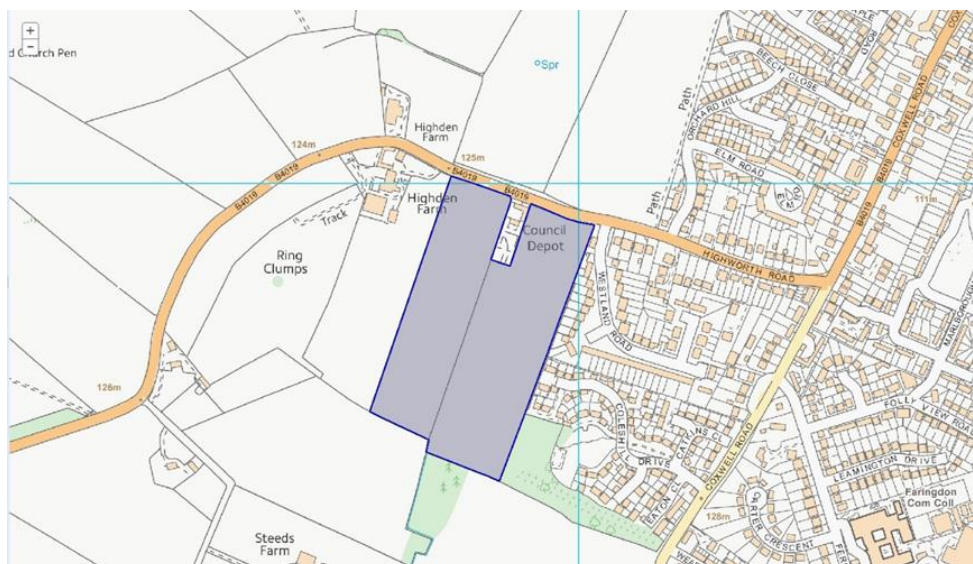
**Compliance**

- 22. New estate roads to Highway Authority specification.**
- 23. No drainage to highway.**
- 24. No occupation until drainage scheme implementation.**
- 25. Hours of construction work.**

**1.0 INTRODUCTION AND PROPOSAL**

- 1.1 This application comes to planning committee due to an objection being received from Faringdon Town Council.
- 1.2 This application relates to land to the south-west of Faringdon extending to around 8.44 hectares of undeveloped agricultural land. It forms part of a strategic site allocation contained within the council's adopted Local Plan 2031 Part 1. A site location plan is included below.

1.3



- 1.4 The application seeks outline planning consent with all matters reserved other than access, for up to 190 dwellings. An illustrative masterplan has been submitted with the application demonstrating how the dwellings could be accommodated on the site and includes landscaping, public open space, vehicular access to Highworth Road and pedestrian/cycle links to adjacent development. Extracts from the application plans are **attached** at Appendix one.

2.0 **SUMMARY OF CONSULTATIONS & REPRESENTATIONS**

2.1 A summary of the responses received to the current amended proposal is below. An amended set of plans have been submitted during the course of the application to reduce the number of proposed dwellings and demonstrate that the quantum of development can be accommodated on the site. A full copy of all the comments made can be seen online at [www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk](http://www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk)

2.2

Consultee	Response
<p><b>Faringdon Town Council</b></p>	<p><b>Object.</b>                      Considers the proposal to be contrary to the Faringdon Neighbourhood Plan for the following main reasons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The connection to The Steeds development to the south should be improved</li> <li>• Concerned over whether visitor parking could be accommodated on site based on the indicative layout</li> <li>• No information on sustainable methods of construction within application</li> <li>• Design and Access Statement does not reference Faringdon Neighbourhood Plan</li> <li>• Indicative layout does not show front and back gardens as required by the Neighbourhood Plan</li> <li>• Indicative layout is out of character with the surrounding area</li> <li>• The former youth centre site should be incorporated into the proposals</li> <li>• No provision made for expanding GP capacity in the town</li> <li>• No provision for allotments as required by the Neighbourhood Plan</li> <li>• Impact on landscape</li> <li>• Support Great Coxwell comments.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Great Coxwell Parish Council (neighbouring parish)</b></p>	<p><b>Object.</b>                      Main concerns:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Quality of the green interface provided along the southern boundary of the site conflicts with the Great Coxwell Neighbourhood Plan</li> <li>• Impact of the proposals on the setting of the Grade I listed “Great Barn” and surrounding landscape</li> <li>• Need to ensure compliance with Great Coxwell Neighbourhood Plan at reserved matters stage</li> </ul>
<p><b>Oxfordshire County Council Highways and Transport</b></p>	<p><b>No objections</b>, subject to S106 contributions and conditions covering:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Construction Traffic Management Plan (condition 7);</li> <li>• Surface water drainage scheme (8);</li> <li>• Details of vehicular access, connecting footway and visibility splays (4 &amp; 19);</li> <li>• Travel Plan (20);</li> <li>• Residential travel information packs (21);</li> <li>• Emergency access details (5);</li> </ul>

<b>Oxfordshire County Council Education</b>	<b>No objections</b> , subject to contributions towards primary, secondary and nursery provision.
<b>Oxfordshire County Council Property</b>	<b>No objections</b> , subject to contributions towards Faringdon Library and Wantage Day Care Centre facilities.
<b>Oxfordshire County Council Archaeology</b>	<b>No objections</b> , subject to conditions (13 & 14).
<b>Conservation Team – Vale</b>	<b>No objections</b> subject to conditions (which would be dealt with at the RM stage).
<b>Natural Trust</b>	<b>Concerns</b> that the development would have a negative impact on the historic integrity and devalue the significance of the setting of the Grade I listed Great Barn; and that it would be highly visible from Badbury Hill.
<b>Landscape Officer – Vale</b>	<b>No objections</b> to the development in landscape terms but retains concerns regarding more detailed elements of the proposal which would be assessed at any later reserved matter stage.
<b>Waste Team – Vale</b>	<b>No comments</b> to make at this outline stage; applicant should refer to waste/recycling guide for later stages.
<b>Environmental Protection Team (Noise) – Vale</b>	<b>No objections</b> , subject to condition (17).
<b>Environmental Protection Team (Air Quality) – Vale</b>	<b>No objections</b> , subject to condition relating to mitigation (which would be dealt with at any later subsequent RM stage see condition 18).
<b>Environmental Protection Team (Contaminated Land) – Vale</b>	<b>No objections</b> , subject to condition (12).
<b>Countryside Officer – Vale</b>	<b>No objections</b> to additional information supplied, subject to a biodiversity offsetting contribution and condition requiring a Biodiversity Enhancement Plan (15).
<b>Natural England</b>	<b>No comments</b> to make on this application.
<b>Drainage Engineer – Vale</b>	<b>No objections</b> , subject to conditions relating to surface water and foul water drainage (8 & 9).

<b>Thames Water Development Control</b>	<b>No objections</b> , subject to Grampian conditions requiring drainage strategy and impact studies of water supply infrastructure (9 & 10)
<b>Forestry Officer – Vale</b>	<b>No objections</b> , subject to conditions requiring tree and hedge survey and tree protection plan (11).
<b>Urban Design – Vale</b>	<b>No objections</b> overall to amended plan, but note a number of matters which must be addressed at the reserved matters stage.
<b>Leisure Team – Vale</b>	<b>No objections</b> , subject to contributions.
<b>Housing Team – Vale</b>	<b>No objections</b> ; comments regarding required affordable housing mix.
<b>Neighbours – Object (53)</b>	<p>Fifty-three letters of <b>objection</b> were received to the original or amended proposal. The main areas of concern can be summarised as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Outside built limits of town</li> <li>• Contrary to Faringdon Neighbourhood Plan</li> <li>• Impact on local infrastructure, particularly schools and GP surgery</li> <li>• Overdevelopment of the site</li> <li>• Impact on local landscape</li> <li>• Impact on character of town</li> <li>• Increased flood risk</li> <li>• Impact on biodiversity and loss of habitats</li> <li>• Increased traffic on local roads</li> <li>• Lack of local sewer capacity</li> <li>• Harm to low local water pressure</li> <li>• Increased overlooking and loss of light to existing neighbours</li> <li>• Loss of agricultural land</li> <li>• Cumulative impacts with other permitted development in the town</li> <li>• Lack of public transport provision on Highworth Road</li> <li>• Proposal isn't compatible with aims of Great Western Community Forest</li> <li>• Potential conflict with youth centre</li> <li>• Insufficient car parking</li> <li>• Need for sustainable methods of construction</li> <li>• Noise and disturbance</li> </ul>

### 3.0 **RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY**

#### 3.1 [P13/V1653/O](#) - Withdrawn (20/10/2016)

Outline application for a residential development comprising 70 dwellings and associated parking, access roads, footpaths, public open space and structural landscaping (As amended by Masterplan Drawing No: 56618-SK6, Landscape

and Visual Impact Assessment and Schedule of Accommodation accompanying agent's letter dated 14 August 2014).

### 3.2 **Screening Opinion requests**

P15/V1156/SCR – EIA required (02/06/2015)

Screening opinion request for approximately 200 homes of varying type, size and tenure including 40% affordable housing.

## 4.0 **ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

4.1 This is EIA development and the application is accompanied by an Environmental Statement.

## 5.0 **MAIN ISSUES**

5.1 The main planning considerations for this application are:

- Current housing policy (from paragraph 5.2)
- Traffic, parking and highway safety (5.5)
- Landscape and visual impact (5.16)
- Design and layout (5.30)
- Biodiversity and ecology (5.44)
- Historic environment (5.49)
- Archaeology (5.60)
- Flood risk and drainage (5.63)
- Residential amenity (5.72)
- Financial contribution requests (5.83)

### 5.2 **Current housing policy**

The adopted Local Plan Part 1 2031 focuses housing growth at the market towns and larger villages and identifies Faringdon as the market town in the Western Vale Sub-Area. Within this strategy, Core Policy 20 identifies the strategic site allocation of south-west Faringdon as suitable for new housing. This application site forms part of the site allocation template.

5.3 Officers acknowledge the concerns raised by neighbouring residents that the site is located outside of the built limits of the town. These are fully acknowledged, however this particular site has been through the Local Plan process, examined by an Inspector and is adopted in the Local Plan 2031 Part 1.

5.4 Therefore, Officers consider that the principle of the application is acceptable in delivering housing as part of the plan-led sustainable growth as set out in the adopted Local Plan 2031 Part 1.

### 5.5 **Traffic, parking and highway safety**

Access is the only matter for consideration at this outline stage. The application is supported by a Transport Assessment. Officers fully acknowledge the concerns raised by local residents regarding the increase in traffic on local roads and on highway and pedestrian/cycle safety. Oxfordshire County Council as local highway authority (OCC) have carefully reviewed all of the information

submitted and have raised no objections on highway grounds, subject to conditions and contributions.

**5.6 Vehicular access**

The development is proposed to be served by one main vehicular access point off of the Highworth Road (B4019). It would be in the same location of the existing field access and would be formed as a priority T-junction with appropriate bell-mouth. Visibility splays are to be provided of 2.4 metres by 120 metres in both directions which OCC have confirmed are acceptable in this location.

5.7 A contribution towards a signalised junction at Gravel Walk/Marlborough Road/Station Road/Coxwell Street mini roundabout is required to mitigate the additional traffic movements associated with this development. The final amount is still awaited from OCC and will be confirmed as part of the S106 legal agreement. Off-site highway works will be secured by way of a highway s278 legal agreement, and a condition is recommended in relation to this (condition 6).

5.8 Some comments have been received regarding the level of car parking to be provided, and road surfacing. The internal layout of the site is not a matter for consideration at this stage, it would form part of any subsequent reserved matters application including car parking and surfacing. Some illustrative details have been provided to demonstrate that a hierarchy of streets could be provided and a swept path analysis shows that the illustrative layout could accommodate the movements of a service vehicle.

**5.9 Pedestrian and cycle links**

The need for better pedestrian and cycle connections is a key headline issue identified in the Faringdon Neighbourhood Plan. Policy 4.3A states that new developments should create attractive street connections into the town centre that encourage walking and cycling. Policy 4.3E requires improvements to the quality and extent of pedestrian and cycle networks and new lockable cycle parking close to local amenities.

5.10 Pedestrian and cycle links from the development are to be provided to the east (linking to Coleshill Drive) and to the south (to The Steeds development P15/V1934/O & P17/V0118/RM). These linkages, as well as an additional footpath along Highworth Road either side of the access road to the development, provide a good level of connectivity for the site considering its edge of town location. These linkages are to be secured via the S106 agreement.

5.11 Officers are therefore satisfied that safe and convenient pedestrian and cycle links would be provided, in terms of all pedestrian requirements including school children and the elderly as suitably wide and safe pavements and appropriate internal links which offer routes away from traffic would be provided.

5.12 **Bus service and infrastructure**

A proportionate contribution towards upgrading the 66 (Swindon-Faringdon-Oxford) bus service to Premium Route status to meet the population growth from this development is required.

5.13 Contributions towards bus shelters and cycle parking provision at existing stops are also required to mitigate the effect of the new residents. Policy 4.3E of the Faringdon Neighbourhood Plan also requires new lockable cycle parking close to local amenities.

5.14 The closest bus stop to the site (350 metres away) only serves the local community bus and while a helpful service, would not be able to be used by commuters. Bus stops on Coxwell Road would be used by new residents for commuting and would therefore need upgrading to meet the demand, including a new shelter and cycle stands in line with policy.

5.15 **Highways conclusion**

Overall, the development would also provide safe and convenient vehicular access points, and pedestrian and cycle links. Officers consider that the application complies with the Faringdon Neighbourhood Plan policies, local plan policies and national policy with regards to traffic and highway safety

5.16 **Landscape and visual impact**

The application site is not located within any national landscape designation, but is within the local landscape designation of the North Vale Corallian Ridge (Local Plan 2011 Policy NE7) which seeks to protect the special prevailing character and appearance of this landform. The site is also within the Great Western Community Forest (Local Plan 2011 Policy NE12) designation area.

5.17 Officers fully acknowledge the concerns raised by local residents regarding the visual impact of the scheme and its impact on the landscape. The application site has been through the local plan examination process and has been found to be sound by the local plan inspector. The principle of development on this site is therefore acceptable, but the detailed proposals will be highly important to the successful integration of the scheme.

5.18 The application is supported by a landscape and visual assessment which has been reviewed by the council's Landscape Officer who has confirmed that it is an appropriate assessment of the site. It concludes that the proposal would not significantly adversely affect the character of the surrounding rural landscape or the landscape character of the village.

5.19 Overall, the landscape officer has no objections to the development in landscape terms but retains concerns regarding more detailed elements of the proposal which would be assessed at any later reserved matter stage.

5.20 **Landscape assessment and mitigation**

As part of the evidence base supporting the local plan, the site was assessed in the Landscape Capacity Study 2014: Site Options. It was assessed to have



a Medium to Low Landscape Capacity, and recommended that the original larger proposed site allocation was reduced in area. The final local plan allocation, and this application site, are therefore reduced in size from this original assessment and concentrate development closer to the town.

- 5.21 The landscape impacts of this application mainly relate to the loss of the open fields, the extension of the village westwards and the visual impact of the built form specifically given the sloping land levels, predominantly when seen from the local footpath network, adjacent roads and views from the north and east.
- 5.22 A planting scheme including significant landscape buffers to the west and south boundaries and tree planting to break up the built mass of development on the slopes will mitigate the development and over time reduce the major and moderate impacts to minor. The details of the landscape scheme, to be assessed at any future reserved matters stage, will be highly important to the development's successful integration.
- 5.23 The illustrative masterplan shows that development would not come forward at the highest part of the site, which would be reserved for public open space. This is a suitable approach and would be expected to be carried forward to any subsequent reserved matters stage.
- 5.24 Officers note that while the submitted Landscape and Visual Appraisal document refers to proposed mounding and planting on the southern boundary, this is not currently identified on the illustrative masterplan. Officers confirm now that this mounding and significant planting on the southern boundary will be required at any subsequent reserved matters stage.
- 5.25 Officers acknowledge that the morphology of the settlement would be changed by this development. However, it would be seen within the context of the existing and other permitted development to the south of the site (local plan strategic site at The Steeds) and together would assimilate as a new settlement edge over time.
- 5.26 **Trees**  
The council's forestry officer has been consulted on the development and raises no objections to the scheme, subject to the inclusion of a condition requiring an arboricultural statement and tree protection plan. This is included at condition 11.
- 5.27 **Agricultural land**  
The application would result in loss of agricultural land. The land appears to be classified as Grade 3 – Good to Moderate. Officers therefore acknowledge there will be limited harm in the loss of this agricultural land. The application site does form part of a local plan allocation which has been assessed and found sound by a local plan inspector and therefore this would have formed part of the examination considerations.

5.28 The development would lead to a loss of agricultural land, although Officers do not consider it to be 'significant' in terms of the NPPF paragraph 112 when account is taken for the threshold for consultation with Natural England is 20 hectares of agricultural land for development. This would be considered in the planning balance.

5.29 **Landscape conclusion**

Officers acknowledge there will be some limited landscape harm and limited harm in terms of a loss of agricultural land as a result of the proposal and this weighs into the planning balance. The mitigation proposed will alleviate these impacts and overall Officers are satisfied that the proposed development would not cause unacceptable landscape or visual harm to the North Vale Corallian Ridge or Community Forest. The benefits of the scheme are considered to outweigh the limited harm identified.

5.30 **Design and layout**

While in outline form, the application has come forward with an illustrative masterplan to demonstrate how the development could be accommodated on the site. Faringdon Town Council have concerns regarding shared surfaces, resource consumption, housing design and secured by design and some local residents have also raised design as an issue. These elements will be important to consider at any subsequent reserved matters stage.

5.31 Officers consider that there are positives and negatives with the amended illustrative masterplan. The urban design officer has reviewed the amended plan and considers that while it is an improvement, there are elements which need to be addressed for any subsequent future reserved matters application.

5.32 **Layout**

The illustrative masterplan directs development away from the highest part of the site, and forms a crescent style development around it as a focal point. This is a suitable approach to minimise the visual impact of the development. It provides a legible hierarchy of streets, a network of green routes and open space with pedestrian/cycle connections. A significant landscape buffer is identified to the western boundary of the site. These elements contribute towards a suitable approach to the layout and design of the site.

5.33 However, further detailed elements such as boundary treatments, space for tree planting and the carefully designed mound/planting on the southern boundary and landscaping on the western boundary will need to be included and satisfactorily addressed at any subsequent reserved matters stage.

5.34 Any subsequent reserved matters will also need to address the detailed points made by the urban design officer with regards to elements such as reducing the use of parking courts, ensuring corner buildings present active frontages to both aspects and incorporating strong green corridors and focal points.

5.35 **Built form**

The design and access statement confirms that the buildings would be up to 2 storeys in height, with the development surrounding the hilltop public open space at the highest part of the site being up to 1.5 storeys in height to minimise the impact. Officers are satisfied with this approach and details would be submitted as part of any subsequent reserved matters.

5.36 **Density**

Core Policy 23 of the Local Plan 2031 Part 1 requires a minimum density of 30 dwellings per hectare (dph) unless specific local circumstances indicate otherwise.

5.37 The average density for the site using the developable area would be approximately 27 dph. This would likely increase (areas including smaller dwellings and/or flats) or decrease (areas including larger dwellings) depending on the specific area of the site, which the design and access statement indicates would have three identifiable character areas. The specific density areas would be determined at any subsequent later reserved matters stage.

5.38 27dph is below the desired minimum 30dph as set out in policy CP23. However, this policy allows for consideration of site specific context. Officers consider that 27dph is acceptable for this edge of town site with its sensitive landscape effects and sloping nature of the site.

5.39 **Open space and landscaping**

Saved Local Plan 2011 Policy H23 requires that sites deliver 15% useable public open space. The application submission states that 17% open space would be provided on site, which meets this policy requirement. The landscape officer originally had concerns that some of the open space would be attenuation areas. These areas usually cannot be considered to form useable open space as they often have gradients and are often damp at the base. However, further clarification has confirmed that the attenuation areas would be underground via a crate system (see para 5.60) and the public open space would be on top so the landscape officer considers this to be acceptable.

5.40 The masterplan submitted as part of any subsequent reserved matters application will need to include provision of a play area to serve the additional population created. This will be referenced in the S106 legal agreement. The masterplan will also need to show the required landscaping, designed carefully as landscape features and fully integrated into the site design with sufficient space.

5.41 **Design conclusion**

Overall, with the additional information provided, Officers are satisfied that a development of up to 190 dwellings is able to come forward at a density and layout which can respond to the character of the area and integrate with its surroundings without resulting in harm to the appearance of the locality. All detailed elements regarding layout, scale, appearance and landscaping would be covered at a subsequent later reserved matters stage.

5.42 Appropriate design character is also a key headline issue in the Faringdon Neighbourhood Plan, policies 4.7A and 4.7C are particularly relevant. Officers expect that any subsequent reserved matters applications will adhere to the relevant policies of the Faringdon Neighbourhood Plan, as well as the Local Plan and the Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document.

5.43 Officers propose that an informative be added to any outline consent granted which makes it clear that the current illustrative layout plan is not acceptable and that Officers would expect all outstanding matters to be satisfactorily addressed at the reserved matters stage.

5.44 **Biodiversity and ecology**

The main consideration is whether the site can demonstrate that it can be delivered without causing a net loss for biodiversity. The applicants have carried out biodiversity impact calculations to address this matter.

5.45 The impact calculations have been reviewed by the council's ecologist who has determined that the net biodiversity loss would be 3.59 units. The proportionate calculation for a financial contribution towards off-site biodiversity enhancements to mitigate this would be £25,710.

5.46 Additional mitigation proposed by the applicant includes the installation of 20 integrated bar roosting tubes, 20 integrated bird nesting boxes and 5 invertebrate boxes.

5.47 Subject to the contribution and a condition requiring a biodiversity enhancement plan including to secure the mitigation measures (condition 15), the council's ecologist raises no objections to the scheme. Surveys for reptiles are not considered to be necessary as the field has been fully ploughed and therefore is not a suitable habitat for the species.

5.48 Officers therefore consider that the scheme complies with the requirements of Policy CP46 of the adopted Local Plan 2031 Part 1 because measures can be provided that would mitigate against and compensate for the adverse effects likely to result from the development.

5.49 **Historic environment**

The application site is not within a conservation area or immediately adjacent to any listed buildings. However, given its size and location, it is important to assess the effects of the development on heritage assets within its setting. The National Trust have concerns regarding the impact of this proposal on the setting of key heritage assets. Alongside the Local Plan policies, Faringdon Neighbourhood Plan also requires the conservation of the town's historic buildings and conservation area.

5.50 The application has been supported by a heritage statement. The council's conservation officer has reviewed this and has raised no objections to the application subject to conditions. The key heritage assets to be assessed are considered to be:

5.51 **The Great Barn, Great Coxwell**

The Great Barn, is a Grade I listed building located approximately 1.6km to the south-west of the application site, in Great Coxwell. It is of high national significance and has high historic and aesthetic value.

5.52 The heritage statement submitted has concluded that while the proposal site is not visible from the barn, from the western boundary of the proposal site the roof of The Great Barn is visible. As such it is important to consider the potential for the rooflines of the proposed development to be visible from The Great Barn.

5.53 Mitigation in terms of planting trees and hedges along the western and southern boundary of the site would further obscure the proposed development. Officers consider that with this mitigation, the effects of the development would be minimised.

5.54 **Badbury Camp**

Badbury Camp is a designated scheduled monument and is located approximately 2.4 km to the west of the application site. This is of high national significance and its setting contributes substantially to its significance.

5.55 While the application site is a substantial distance from Badbury Camp, Officers consider that it would be visible from the hill and as such has an effect on its setting. Mitigation is proposed in terms of: planting of trees and hedges along the western boundary of the site, a buffer zone (such as an area of green space) on the highest area of the site and careful consideration of roof heights as the ground rises towards the highest part of the site.

5.56 Officers consider that with this mitigation, the effects of the development would be minimised.

5.57 **Heritage conclusion**

The proposed development would result in less than substantial harm to the identified heritage assets.

5.58 Where less than substantial harm is identified, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal. Officers have reviewed all of the information and consider that the public benefit of contributing 190 dwellings towards the plan-led growth of the district in a sustainable location does outweigh the less than substantial harm in this specific case. This is also taking into consideration the mitigation which can be provided which would likely reduce the less than substantial impact to a negligible impact.

5.59 The conservation officer raises no objections to the development subject to conditions relating to landscaping, samples of materials and detailed drawings showing heights of buildings. All of these elements of the scheme are highly important and would be considered at any subsequent reserved matters stage which assesses landscaping, layout, scale and appearance. It would not be appropriate to condition them at this stage because they would be fully considered as part of a reserved matters application.

5.60 **Archaeology**

The application is supported by an archaeological field investigation, which has been assessed by the County Council Archaeologist. The field investigation has revealed two small areas where archaeological features dating to the later prehistoric period have been found.

5.61 The OCC Archaeologist has commended that none of the revealed features are of sufficient significance as to preclude the principle of development and as such planning conditions requiring implementation of a programme of archaeological work are appropriate (conditions 13 and 14).

5.62 With the inclusion of these conditions, Officers are satisfied that the proposal would not result in damage to any significant archaeological remains or their settings, in compliance with local and national planning policy.

5.63 **Flood risk and drainage**

The Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) submitted with the application has confirmed that the site lies within Flood Zone 1, the zone at the least risk of flooding.

5.64 Drainage and water pressure are known local concerns and a number of representations received make reference to these important issues. Each element is addressed here.

5.65 **Surface water drainage**

The FRA confirms that the proposed surface water management strategy centres on using two main forms of sustainable drainage system (SuDS):

- “Porous pavements – structures which allow rainwater to infiltrate through the surface and underlying layers where runoff is temporarily stored before discharge to the local drainage network at controlled rates or infiltrate if the ground conditions are suitable; and
- Geocellular crates – Plastic units which fit together to form storage tanks of required shape and volume. Tanks can be wrapped in impermeable membrane to form a storage vessel, or if ground conditions permit, a porous geotextile to form a large soakaway system.”

5.66 The FRA also confirms that the site is mainly underlain by Ampthill Clay. The above SuDS systems will therefore be designed to attenuate runoff with controlled discharge to the local surface water ditch network as the use of infiltration methods will be unlikely to be effective.

5.67 The system will be designed to maintain the existing greenfield surface water run-off and ground water flows. It will be designed to not increase downstream flood risk and to include an allowance to cater for a 30% increase in rainfall intensities as a result of climate change in accordance with the NPPF.

5.68 The council’s drainage consultant has reviewed the application and has raised no objections to the proposed drainage strategy set out, subject to a condition

requiring full details of the strategy based on the FRA to be submitted prior to the development commencing (condition 8).

**5.69 Foul water**

Thames Water require further information to be submitted to be able to determine the waste water infrastructure needs of the development. They have requested that a 'grampian' style condition be attached to any consent granted asking for a drainage strategy detailing any on and off site drainage works is submitted and approved before any development commences on site (condition 9).

**5.70 Water supply**

Thames Water have identified a lack of capacity to supply the proposed development. Again, Thames Water have requested a 'grampian' condition requiring an impact study of the existing water supply infrastructure to determine the magnetite of any new additional capacity required in the system and a suitable connection point (condition 10). Again, this condition will need to be submitted and details approved before any commencement on site.

**5.71 Drainage conclusion**

Overall, officers are satisfied that with the recommended conditions there are no outstanding surface water, foul water or water supply concerns with this development.

**5.72 Residential amenity**

The closest existing dwellings to the site are those located to the east, along Westland Road and Coleshill Drive. A number of representations have been received from properties in Westland Road and Coleshill Drive which raise concerns regarding a loss of privacy, overlooking and disturbance which have been fully considered.

5.73 The illustrative masterplan submitted with this application indicates that the required back-to-back distance (21 metres) and back-to-side distance (12m) would be able to be achieved from the new dwellings to those existing properties adjoining the site. It also indicates additional landscaping along the eastern boundary.

5.74 This provides support to show that development can come forward at a satisfactory distance and with appropriate landscaping to ensure no harmful impact on amenity.

5.75 A detailed layout showing the exact locations of the proposed dwellings would be forthcoming to be assessed at any subsequent reserved matters stage. The layout would be expected to comply with all local plan policy and design guide requirements to ensure amenity of the properties is protected.

5.76 The application site is adjacent to the Youth Centre on Highworth Road; it effectively 'wraps-around' the youth centre site to the east, south and west. The environmental health officer would like information on the potential noise impacts from this adjacent use so that if any mitigation needs to be built into

the development site, this can be achieved. As such, a condition requiring this to be done before the submission of the reserved matters application is recommended (condition 17).

5.77 Due to the site being adjacent to existing residential development, it is considered reasonable and necessary to seek that construction work be kept to specific hours: (8am and 6pm on Mondays to Fridays and 8am to 1pm on Saturdays. No work on Sundays and Public Holidays). A condition to secure this (condition 25) is recommended.

5.78 Overall, officers are satisfied that the proposal is able to come forward without resulting in harm to existing neighbouring properties in terms of overlooking, dominance, loss of light, noise or disturbance and that adequate amenity standards could be achieved within the site.

5.79 **Affordable housing and housing mix**

Policy CP24 of the draft Local Plan 2031 requires that applications provide 35% affordable housing. If the full 190 units are achieved on this site, this would result in the provision of 67 units on site, on a 75% rent to 25% shared ownership basis. This complies with policy and is acceptable. The housing team have provided advice on the mix of affordable units and their required sizes, which will be secured as part of a S106 legal agreement.

5.80 The amended application for up to 190 houses has not stipulated any specific housing mix at this stage. Officers expect that it should closely reflect the SHMA.

5.81 The SHMA contains estimated figures. Paragraph 7.35 of the SHMA states: *“...we do not strongly believe that such prescriptive figures should be included in the plan making process and that the “market” is to some degree a better judge of what is the most appropriate profile of homes to deliver at any point in time.”*

5.82 Officers will therefore seek to secure an appropriate housing mix for the site which closely responds to the SHMA mix, with suitable justification provided by the applicant for any deviations. A condition requiring the housing mix to be secured prior to reserved matters is recommended (condition 16).

5.83 **Financial contribution requests**

The NPPF advises that planning obligations should only be sought where they meet all of the following tests in paragraph 204:

- I. Necessary to make the development acceptable in planning terms;
- II. Directly related to the development; and
- III. Fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind to the development.

Policy CP7 of the adopted Local Plan 2031 Part 1 provides that all new development will be required to provide for necessary on-site, and where appropriate, off-site infrastructure requirements arising from the proposal.



5.84 The following developer contributions are considered fair and proportionate, and allow the scheme to be viable for delivery. A realistic and flexible approach in accordance with national policy has been adopted. These should be secured through a section 106 agreement (subject to index linking):

<b>District Council</b>	<b>Amount (£)</b>
Faringdon Leisure Centre Gym*	£12,941
Faringdon Indoor Bowls Club*	£1,500
Faringdon Rugby Club*	£9,562
Faringdon Football Club*	£37,668
Tennis Courts in Faringdon*	£3,000
Upgrading of sports hall facilities at Pump House*	£62,000
Youth sport (e.g. Folly Park trim trail)*	£11,852
Biodiversity off-setting	£25,710
Waste/recycling bins	£32,300
Public art	£57,000
Street Naming	£2,546
GP/NHS facilities (clinical commissioning group)*	TBC
Faringdon TC – community bus*	TBC
Faringdon TC – sensory garden*	TBC
Faringdon TC – allotments*	TBC
Monitoring Fee	TBC
<b>Total</b>	<b>£256,079.00</b>

<b>Oxfordshire County Council</b>	<b>Amount (£)</b>
Bus service	£190,000
Travel plan monitoring (5 yrs)	£1,240
Cycle stands	£5,000
Bus shelter	£5,000
Maintenance of bus shelter	TBC
Capacity improvements Gravel Walk/Marlborough Road/Station Road/Coxwell Street	TBC
Primary School*	£1,020,000
Primary land*	£84,400
Nursery provision*	£208,000
Secondary school*	£774,210
Faringdon Library*	£51,842
Wantage Day Care Centre*	£5,280
Monitoring	£21,399.16
<b>Total</b>	<b>£2,366,371.16</b>
<b>Overall current total</b>	<b>£2,622,450.16</b>
<b>Total per unit</b>	<b>£13,802.40</b>

- 5.85 The local support for a contribution towards local GP/NHS services is fully acknowledged and a consultation response has been sent to the clinical commissioning group (CCG). Officers are currently awaiting a more detailed response from the CCG to provide a full justification and detailed costed scheme to be able to require a contribution in line with the policy requirements for seeking obligations, as set out above. Without this evidence, contributions are unable to be requested as they do not meet policy.
- 5.86 Faringdon Town Council have set out a clear justification for a contribution towards their sensory garden project, which is supported in the Faringdon Neighbourhood Plan. A specific sum related to this development is awaited and will be confirmed as part of the S106 process. Policy 4.10 of the Faringdon Neighbourhood Plan also requires either on-site provision of or a contribution towards off-site allotments. The illustrative masterplan does not cater for allotments and would potentially be unable to do in a number large enough for practical and viable use and maintenance, therefore a contribution is included although the precise sum will be confirmed as part of the S106 process.
- 5.87 OCC are yet to confirm the remaining items listed as TBC but will do so as part of the S106 process, alongside the timings for payments. They have also indicated that: “Unless the necessary financial contributions towards infrastructure and services are secured for payment prior to (or at) implementation of the development there is a need for a security (usually in the form of a bond) to ensure prompt payment of the contributions.”
- 5.88 **Community Infrastructure Levy**  
At the time of writing this report, it is anticipated that the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) charging schedule will be adopted and implemented by the council in early November.
- 5.89 CIL is a levy charged on new development in the district; the money raised will be used to fund infrastructure and support growth. The adoption of CIL would change some of the elements listed in the table above and instead of being a S106 contribution, would be part of CIL.
- 5.90 If this occurs, it is likely that the elements highlighted with an asterisk (\*) in the table above would no longer be secured by S106, they would be secured by a CIL charge. The remaining elements would still be in a S106 agreement, alongside securing affordable housing. This would be confirmed at that stage.
- 5.91 This site would fall within the ‘Zone 2’ charging schedule which would be £85 per square metre of residential development.
- 5.92 CIL cannot be calculated at this stage because the layout and scale are not fixed and therefore the final amount of floor space is unknown. The final amount would therefore be dependent on the actual amount of built development; depending on whether all 190 units came forward and how big they were. It would be calculated as part of any subsequent reserved matters.

- 5.93 The items indicated to be collected by way of CIL would then have to apply to be funded from the overall pool of CIL contributions.
- 5.94 A proportion of the CIL collected by the District Council goes to the Town Council. As Faringdon has a made Neighbourhood Plan, 25% of CIL receipts in relation to development permitted in the town would go to the Town Council.

## 6.0 **CONCLUSION**

- 6.1 The application has been assessed on its merits, against the requirements of the adopted Local Plan 2031 Part 1, saved policies of the adopted Local Plan 2011, the Faringdon Neighbourhood Plan and the National Planning Policy Framework. The application site is included as a strategic allocation in the council's adopted Local Plan 2031 Part 1 to contribute towards the sustainable planned growth of the district.
- 6.2 The application will provide an economic and social role through construction employment and with the retail element, increased investing in the local economy and providing additional market and affordable housing. The application will made contributions towards local infrastructure, whether via S106 or through CIL.
- 6.3 In terms of the environmental role, limited harm has been identified with respects to localised landscape impact, a loss of agricultural land and that the site itself cannot demonstrate a no net loss for biodiversity. Mitigation in terms of a landscape strategy, additional planting and green corridors, biodiversity mitigation and a contribution towards an offsetting scheme has been agreed to alleviate these impacts.
- 6.4 The application would also result in less than substantial harm to the setting of identified heritage assets. Mitigation in terms of a landscape strategy, detailed design and scaling of dwellings and location of green space has been proposed to alleviate this impact. Officers consider that the proposed benefits of the scheme as identified above outweigh the less than substantial harm in this case.
- 6.5 There are no technical objections to the proposal, subject to appropriate conditions.
- 6.6 Overall in the planning balance, the benefits of the scheme particularly in providing housing towards the District's plan-led sustainable growth and provision of contributions towards highways and local infrastructure which will have local and wider benefits, are considered to outweigh the limited harm that has been identified. As such, the application is recommended for approval.

The following planning policies have been taken into account:

### **Vale of White Horse Local Plan 2031 Core Policies**

- CP01 - Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development
- CP02 - Cooperation on Unmet Housing Need for Oxfordshire
- CP03 - Settlement Hierarchy

- CP04 - Meeting Our Housing Needs
- CP05 - Housing Supply Ring-Fence
- CP07 - Providing Supporting Infrastructure and Services
- CP20 - Spatial Strategy for Western Vale Sub-Area
- CP22 - Housing Mix
- CP23 - Housing Density
- CP24 - Affordable Housing
- CP33 - Promoting Sustainable Transport and Accessibility
- CP35 - Promoting Public Transport, Cycling and Walking
- CP36 - Electronic communications
- CP37 - Design and Local Distinctiveness
- CP38 - Design Strategies for Strategic and Major Development Sites
- CP39 - The Historic Environment
- CP42 - Flood Risk
- CP43 - Natural Resources
- CP44 - Landscape
- CP45 - Green Infrastructure
- CP46 - Conservation and Improvement of Biodiversity
- CP47 - Delivery and Contingency

#### **Saved Policies of the Vale of White Horse Local Plan 2011**

- DC3 - Design Against Crime
- DC5 - Access
- DC6 - Landscaping
- DC7 - Waste Collection and Recycling
- DC9 - The Impact of Development on Neighbouring Uses
- DC10 – The Effect of Neighbouring or Previous Uses on New Development
- DC12 - Water Quality and Resources
- H23 - Open Space in New Housing Development
- NE9 - The Lowland Vale
- NE12 – Great Western Community Forest

#### **Emerging Vale of White Horse Local Plan Part 2**

The draft local plan part 2 is not currently adopted policy. The plan has yet to proceed to examination and therefore at present it is officers' opinion that the emerging Local Plan carries very limited weight for decision making at this stage.

#### **Neighbourhood Plan**

The Faringdon Neighbourhood Plan is adopted and has full weight in the assessment of this proposal. The relevant policies are discussed where appropriate in this report.

#### **Supplementary Planning Guidance**

- Design Guide – March 2015
- Open space, sport and recreation future provision – July 2008
- Planning and Public Art – July 2006

#### **National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) – March 2012**

## **Planning Practice Guidance 2014 (PPG)**

### **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.

### **Equalities**

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

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