

APPLICATION NO.	P17/V1082/O
SITE	Land South of Park Road, Faringdon, SN7 7PL
PARISH	GREAT FARINGDON
PROPOSAL	Hybrid application for the demolition of existing building/structures and the comprehensive redevelopment of Land South of Park Road, Faringdon, comprising up to 380 residential dwellings (Use Class C3) including affordable homes, provision of an Extra Care facility (Use Class C2 or C3), the provision of land for a school (Use Class D1), vehicular, pedestrian and cycle access from Park Road and Sands Hill, parking, public open space, landscaping, sustainable drainage, and other associated works: 'Phase 1' (Full details): 103 residential dwellings (Use Class C3), access and parking, public open space, landscaping, sustainable drainage, parking and other associated works. Outline: up to 277 residential dwellings (Use Class C3), Extra Care Facility (Use Class C3 or C2), land for a school (Use Class D1), access and parking, public open space, landscaping, sustainable drainage, parking and other associated work with all matters reserved.
WARD MEMBER(S)	(As amended by plans and documents received on 11 October 2017 and 15 February 2018). Roger Cox Mohinder Kainth
APPLICANT OFFICER	Bloor Homes (South West) Ltd Holly Bates

RECOMMENDATION

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

1. A Section 106 legal agreement being entered into in order to ensure financial contributions towards local infrastructure and to secure affordable housing; and
2. Conditions (or provision in S106 as appropriate) as follows:

Full Application

Standard

1. Commencement three years.

2. Approved plans.

Pre-commencement

- 3. Material details to be agreed.**
- 4. Boundary treatment details to be agreed (incl. to substation and pumping station).**
- 5. Slab level details to be agreed.**
- 6. Landscaping details to be agreed (including additional tree planting, tree pit details, streetlighting details and a management and maintenance plan).**
- 7. Tree protection and method statement to be agreed.**
- 8. Construction environmental management plan for biodiversity(phased).**
- 9. Water supply infrastructure impact study and connection points to be agreed.**
- 10. Sustainable surface water drainage scheme to be agreed.**
- 11. Foul drainage details to be agreed.**
- 12. Piling method statement to be agreed.**
- 13. Construction traffic management plan (including dust management plan) to be agreed.**
- 14. Access and visibility splays details to be agreed.**
- 15. Field access to be closed details to be agreed.**
- 16. Cycle parking details to be agreed.**
- 17. Phased contaminated land risk assessment to be agreed.**
- 18. Scheme of noise mitigation to be agreed.**

Pre-occupation

- 19. Residential travel plan including residential travel packs to be agreed.**
- 20. Details of mitigation measures in air quality assessment to be agreed.**
- 21. Validation report of any previously approved remediation works to be agreed.**
- 22. Prior to 50th occupation – emergency access onto Sands Hill formed with details to be agreed.**
- 23. School parking and square details to be agreed.**

Compliance

- 24. Mitigation to be undertaken in accordance with the written scheme of investigation.**
- 25. Landscaping implementation.**
- 26. Hours of construction work.**
- 27. Turning and parking areas to be provided.**
- 28. Garages to be retained for parking purposes.**

Outline consent

Standard

- 1. Commencement two years after reserved matters approval.**
- 2. Reserved matters to be submitted.**

3. Approved plans list.

Pre-commencement

4. Construction environmental management plan for biodiversity (phased) to be agreed.
5. Phased contaminated land risk assessment to be agreed.
6. Foul water drainage details to be agreed.
7. Water supply infrastructure impact study and connection points to be agreed.
8. Foul drainage details to be agreed.
9. Sustainable surface water drainage scheme to be agreed.
10. Piling method statement to be agreed.
11. Tree protection and method statement to be agreed.
12. Construction traffic management plan (including dust management plan) to be submitted.

With reserved matters

13. Biodiversity enhancement plan to be agreed.
14. Slab level details to be agreed.

Pre-occupation

15. Details of mitigation measures in air quality assessment to be agreed.
16. Validation report of any previously approved remediation works to be agreed.
17. Scheme of noise mitigation to be agreed.
18. Travel plan prior to occupation of the extra care housing.

Compliance

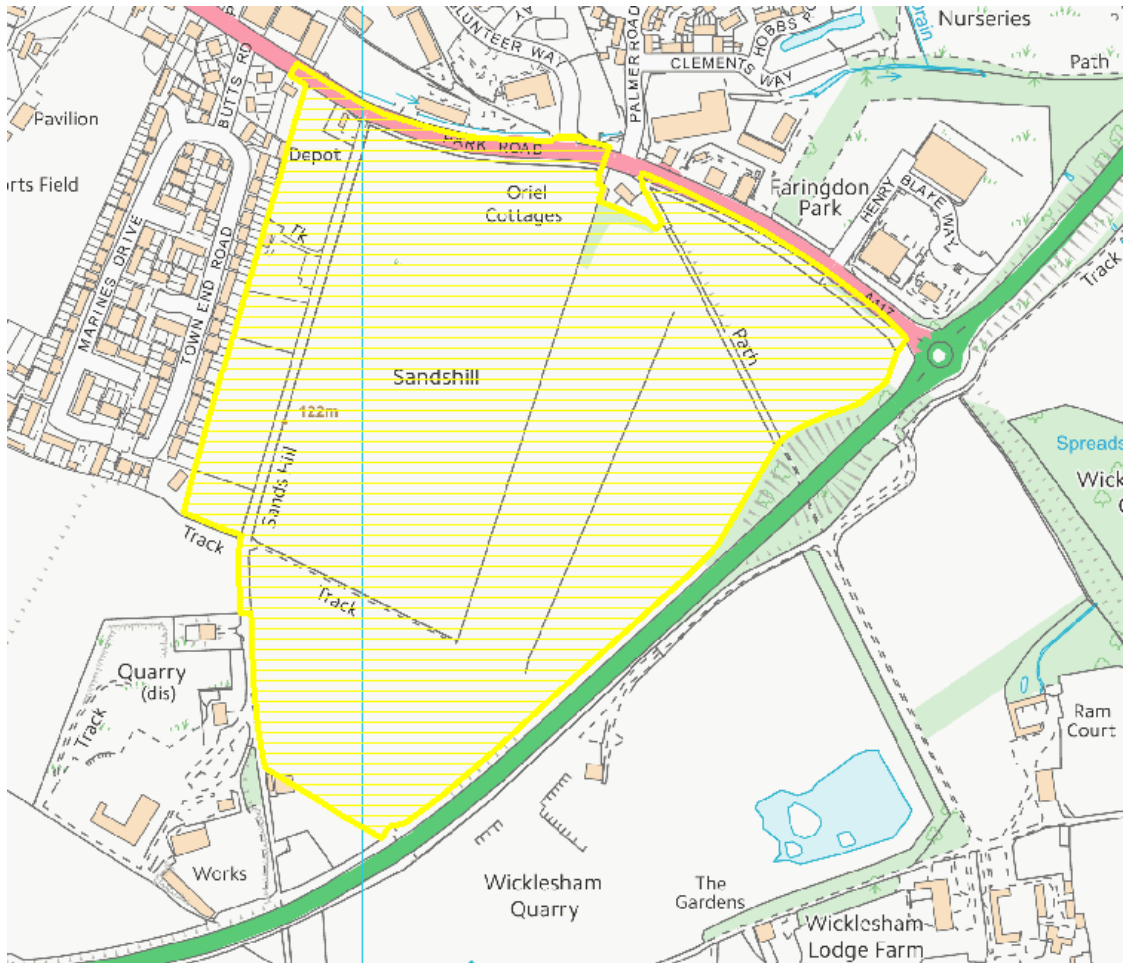
19. Hours of construction work.
20. Mitigation to be undertaken in accordance with the written scheme of investigation.

1.0 **INTRODUCTION AND PROPOSAL**

1.1 The application comes to committee because this is a large scale major application.

1.2 This application relates to land to the south of Faringdon extending to around 24.73 hectares of undeveloped arable land. It is 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 consent for a total of 380 dwellings on the site, along with land for a primary school, land for extra care housing and associated works. It has been submitted as a hybrid application in the following format:

Full planning permission

- First phase of 103 dwellings;
- 77 market and 26 affordable dwellings;
- Vehicular access from Park Road;
- Detailed plans submitted i.e. landscape, appearance, scale, layout;
- Public open space, parking, drainage relevant to the detailed phase;
- Internal access road to the primary school land;
- Demolition of existing derelict building on site and other minor structures;
- Approximately 5.74ha land.

Outline consent

- All matters reserved;
- Remaining 277 dwellings
- Land for an extra care facility of up to 60 units;
- Land for a primary school;
- Approximately 18.99ha land;
- Parameter and illustrative plans submitted.

- 1.5 Detailed plans for the full phase have been submitted. Parameter plans relating to land use, building heights, access and green infrastructure have been submitted for the outline element of the scheme, along with an illustrative masterplan to demonstrate that the full 380 dwellings could be delivered on the site. Extracts from the application plans are **attached** at appendix one.
- 1.6 The full Phase 1 element of the scheme includes the main vehicular access to the site, from Park Road to the north. It also details the upgrade works to the junction of Sands Hill to Park Road, which will form a secondary access to further phases of the development.
- 1.7 The total site would provide a mix of 1, 2, 3 and 4 bedroom dwellings and would have an approximate net density across the site of 36 dwellings per hectare.
- 1.8 The scheme has been viability tested by an independent viability consultant and the application has been found viable to provide 29% affordable housing (128 units). This is examined in further detail at paragraph 5.89.

2.0 **SUMMARY OF CONSULTATIONS & REPRESENTATIONS**

- 2.1 A summary of the responses received to the current amended proposal is below. A full copy of all the comments made can be seen online at www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk

2.2	Consultee	Response
	Faringdon Town Council	<p>No objections.</p> <p>The Town Council has noted that its concerns regarding S106 funding have been addressed, if not completely hoped for, namely the following contributions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Towards Clinical Commissioning Group to improve facilities at the medical centre; • Towards bus service improvements; • Leisure facilities at Folly Park. <p>The Town Council noted also that the relevant plans submitted for the application met the majority of concerns raised by the County Council.</p>
	Oxfordshire County Council Highways and Transport	<p>No objection, subject to contributions and conditions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Construction traffic management plan; • Access and visibility splays; • Travel plans; • Closure of field access;
	Oxfordshire County Council Education	<p>No objections, subject to contributions.</p>

Oxfordshire County Council Archaeology	No objections, subject to conditions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mitigation to be undertaken in accordance with the WSI
Landscape Officer – Vale	Request conditions relating to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hard and soft landscaping, including additional tree planting, tree pit details, correlation with street lighting, management and maintenance.
Forestry Officer – Vale	Request conditions relating to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tree protection and additional tree planting.
Waste Team – Vale	No objections.
Environmental Protection Team (Noise) – Vale	No objections, subject to conditions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Noise mitigation scheme
Environmental Protection Team (Air Quality) – Vale	No objections, subject to conditions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dust management plan • Air quality mitigation measures
Environmental Protection Team (Contaminated Land) – Vale	No objections, subject to conditions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Phased contaminated land risk assessment
Countryside Officer – Vale	No objections, subject to conditions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Construction Environment Management Plan; • Biodiversity Enhancement Plan
Drainage Engineer – Vale	No objections, subject to conditions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Surface water drainage • Foul water drainage
Thames Water Development Control	No objections, subject to conditions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Impact study and connection points; • Drainage strategy; • Piling method statement
Urban Design – Vale	Advice given on both the detailed element and the outline element. Comments relating to layout, scale, design, landscaping, levels, boundaries.
Leisure Team – Vale	Request contributions towards local leisure and recreation facilities.
Sport England	Support.
Housing Team – Vale	Comments on affordable housing mix and tenure.

Equalities Officer – Vale	Comments on space standards, allotments, accessible play and bound gravel paths in the community forest area.
Oxfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group	Request contributions towards local GP NHS facilities.
Neighbours – Object (8)	<p>Eight letters of objection were received to the original or amended proposal. The main areas of concern can be summarised as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased traffic flow along Park Road; • There should be another southern access onto A420; • There should be a roundabout onto Park Road from the development; • Will there be access from Townsend Road to the development? • Pedestrian access for children to the college; • Ecology and wildlife concerns; • Loss of trees and hedges; • Local GP surgery is full; • Should promote foot and cycle access to local town centre businesses; • Keen to ensure a soft boundary treatment to Oriol Cottages; • Safety concerns for using Sands Hill including visibility and passing places; • Welcome limitation of building heights near existing development in Townsend Road; • Sufficient space needs to be left to allow planting to grow; • Overlooking concerns; • Phase 1 should not be allowed without the school infrastructure in place; • Query if traffic survey data undertaken at peak times;

3.0 **RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY**

3.1 **P13/V0709/O** – Resolution to grant at committee; no decision issued
Outline application for residential development (up to 380 units including up to 64 extra care units), employment development, primary school, allotments, public open space and associated infrastructure with new access from Park Road. (Environmental Statement received 26 November 2014).

Officer note – this application received a committee resolution to approve in January 2015. Subsequent S106 legal agreement discussions found the scheme to be unviable. As such, a new application has been submitted. The applicants are yet to withdraw this application and Officers understand the intention to do so subject to the outcome of this application.

3.2 **Pre-application History**

P16/V2619/PEJ - Response (17/03/2017)

Outline application for up to 425 residential units, primary school, public open space, associated infrastructure and access from Park Road.

3.3 **Screening Opinion requests**

P16/V1691/SCR – EIA required 20/07/2016

P16/V1940/SCO – Scoping opinion issued on 02/09/2016

Information scoped in to ES: traffic/transport, noise and air quality.

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
- Traffic, parking and highway safety
- Landscape and visual impact
- Design and layout
- Biodiversity and ecology
- Archaeology
- Flood risk and drainage
- Residential amenity
- Financial contribution requests

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 Land South of Park Road Faringdon as suitable for new housing. This application site forms part of the site allocation template.

5.3 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.

5.4 **Traffic, parking and highway safety**

Access to the site forms part of the full phase 1 application. 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, particularly Park Road, 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.

5.5 Vehicular access – Park Road

The development is proposed to be served by a main vehicular access point off of Park Road to the north. It would be a primary ghost-island priority T-junction access road, opposite and approximately 60m east of Volunteer Way. It would also involve introducing new ghost island junctions to serve Sands Hill and Stickley Court each with short right hand turn lanes.

5.6 OCC officers have carefully reviewed this proposed junction access, and requested amendments as part of the application process. At the request of OCC, a traffic island would be provided as part of this access arrangement, in order to mitigate the close proximity of the number of right hand turn lanes in the vicinity.

5.7 This junction access arrangement would also involve:

- Relocation of westbound bus stop;
- Relocation of pedestrian refuge;
- Upgrade of existing eastbound cycle lane;
- New 3m wide footway/cycleway on south side of Park Road to connect to existing infrastructure network.

5.8 Officers acknowledge the comments received from local residents querying why a roundabout access to Park Road is not proposed. A roundabout was sought as part of the previous application (P13/V0709/O) because that scheme also included employment development, on a larger site also including the Rogers Concrete land to the south-west. This proposal does not propose employment development, has a smaller site area and therefore the reduced number of movements has lowered the demand on the junction and a roundabout is no longer necessary in terms of highway requirements.

5.9 The OCC highways engineer has reviewed the access proposal alongside colleagues in the road safety audit team and is satisfied that the access would be safe and convenient for use and would not result in any severe harm on the highway network in terms of traffic flows.

5.10 Vehicular access – Sands Hill

Sands Hill would be widened to 5.5m for the 40m from Park Road, and thereafter would become 4.8m. It would be improved with an emphasis on retaining the character of Sands Hill and would be designed for a 20mph speed limit with traffic calming features.

5.11 Two new accesses across Sands Hill to serve future phases of development under this application would also be provided, at 4.8m wide with 2m wide footway/cycleways on the southern side. Suitable visibility splays are able to be achieved for a 20mph road. Each section of Sands Hill past the new accesses crossing the route would also be widened to 5.5m to allow two vehicles to comfortably pass one another.

5.12 An emergency access point onto Sands Hill from within the development's internal road network would also be provided.

- 5.13 Officers acknowledge the comments received from neighbouring properties in terms of the increased traffic use off Sands Hill and safety concerns here. The road is being widened to allow traffic to pass and suitable visibility splays will be provided for the new accesses. These measures are proportionate for the amount of new development which would use the Sands Hill road for access. Sufficient drop-off and pick-up parking space is being provided for the proposed primary school, as discussed further below. The applicant would need to ensure that all other consents and notifications required to carry out the works to Sands Hill, including for those properties dependant on it for access, are obtained.
- 5.14 **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.
- 5.15 The access and movement parameter plan demonstrates a network of pedestrian and cycle routes throughout the development. The main looped road layout enables good movement through the site, and there are number of key pedestrian, cycle and shared routes to connect the development and its components, for example the development to the west of Sands Hill and to the primary school land.
- 5.16 Along the Park Road frontage, the existing eastbound cycle lane will be upgraded and a new 3m wide footway/cycleway on south side of Park Road to connect to existing infrastructure network will be provided.
- 5.17 The new footway/cycleway on the south side of Park Road would improve the public right of way which runs along this boundary (207/18) enhancing this route to the west into the town.
- 5.18 There is also a public right of way which runs through the site: 207/17. This will be retained through the site in its existing form, apart from one vehicle access crossing point designed to be sensitive to the public right of way; the details of this would be forthcoming in any subsequent reserved matters parcel. The trees and hedgerows which bound the public right of way (207/18) would be retained.
- 5.19 No contribution requests towards the public right of ways have been requested, given the upgrade works proposed by the development already. Informatives relating to the protection of the public right of way are recommended to be included on any consent granted.
- 5.20 Officers are therefore satisfied that safe and convenient pedestrian and cycle links would be provided internally and beyond the site, in terms of all pedestrian requirements including school children and the elderly as suitably wide and safe pavements and appropriately positioned links would be provided.

5.21 Off-site mitigation requirements

The application includes a Transport Assessment including an analysis of trip rates and junction capacities. OCC requested further detailed information be provided regarding these elements and upon receipt of this, OCC are satisfied with the modelling and assessment approach used.

5.22 To mitigate the additional traffic movements from the development, the following off-site works are required:

- Upgrade works to the A417 Station Road/B4019 Coxwell Street/A417 Gravel Walk/A4095 Marlborough Street mini-roundabout;
- Upgrade works to the A420/A417 Park Road roundabout.

5.23 The full details of these works would be agreed with OCC as highways authority and carried out under a s278 highways legal agreement. This agreement would also seek to secure:

- Site access works and visibility splays;
- Highway improvements along Park Road;
- Highway improvement works along Sands Hill;
- Closure of existing field access on A420.

5.24 Bus service and infrastructure

A proportionate contribution towards upgrading the Swindon-Faringdon-Oxford bus service to Premium Route status to meet the population growth from this development is required, and would be secured by way of a S106 legal agreement.

5.25 The application site is directly adjacent to existing bus stop infrastructure and is therefore highly sustainable in terms of access to public transport. The scheme includes the relocation of the westbound bus stop along Park Road to accommodate the new junction arrangement.

5.26 Parking provision

The phase 1 detailed application provides suitable off-street parking for residents and visitors, and OCC have raised no objections to this. The remaining outline element of the scheme will consider detailed proposals for parking provision at any subsequent reserved matters stage.

5.27 An area of particular concern has been ensuring that sufficient parking is provided for the primary school. Following detailed discussions with OCC education and highway teams, a suitable approach has been adopted.

5.28 Across the whole development (380 dwellings) 130 visitor parking spaces will be provided. 27 spaces would be delivered in the first phase of development under assessment here; 16 parallel on-street spaces within the road network and 11 perpendicular spaces directly in front of the school, alongside a coach/bus lay-by.

- 5.29 Given the proposed circular nature of the road network for this particular site, a circular loop to access to school can be utilised. In addition to the spaces directly in front of the school, there are other areas within the site which can offer unallocated visitor parking areas to cope with the temporary added capacity at the two peak times of the day when school drop-off and pick-up occurs.
- 5.30 Officers consider this to be a pragmatic approach. Walking and cycling to school should be encouraged in accordance with sustainable travel principles adopted in local and national policy. This scheme provides suitable safe and convenient pedestrian and cycle access routes as part of a network which connects to external foot/cycle ways.
- 5.31 However, consideration must be given that there will be parents that need to use the car to access the school. Capacity must be built into the scheme to cope with the additional demand at peak times of the day to ensure highway safety and movement and that other neighbouring properties are not unduly affected during these times.
- 5.32 The approach adopted here is to ensure sufficient pedestrian and cycle links are provided to encourage sustainable routes, but also to ensure that there will be sufficient unallocated visitor spaces provided within the site to offer safe areas for cars to park during drop-off and pick-up times.

This approach now has been agreed with the County Council.

5.33 **Traffic, parking and highway safety conclusion**

Overall, the development would 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.

5.34 **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.

- 5.35 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.
- 5.36 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 visual impacts arising from the scheme would generally be moderate adverse, becoming slight adverse with the establishment of the proposed landscape and mitigation planting.

5.37 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 and has recommended conditions to cover the elements contained within the phase 1 detailed proposals.

5.38 **Landscape assessment and mitigation**

The landscape impacts of this application mainly relate to the loss of the open fields, the extension of the town to the south and the visual impact of the built form specifically given the sloping land levels, predominantly when seen from the local footpath network and adjacent roads including the A420.

5.39 The overall scheme has been designed to direct the built form towards the north and west of the site, to correspond with existing development. A large area of open space and community forest planting is proposed along the entire eastern boundary, southern most point of the site and north-east corner of the site. This provides a significant landscape buffer in this area which will assist in assimilating the scheme into the landscape over time.

5.40 The green infrastructure parameter plan submitted for the outline element of the scheme sets appropriate principles for the reserved matters to follow. This includes areas of retained and new orchard planting, structural planting, a noise bund for the primary school, a locally equipped area of play, allotments, retained grassland and new tree planting and landscaping. This will help to break up the built mass of development on the slopes and will mitigate the development and over time reduce the moderate adverse impacts to slight adverse. The details of the wider landscape scheme, to be assessed at any future reserved matters stage, will be highly important to the development's successful integration.

5.41 Given the sloping nature of the site, slab levels will be very important to the successful integration of the development. Amended details have been provided during the course of the application which show a more graduated stepping of levels to allow a more sensitive approach. A condition relating to slab level details is recommended.

5.42 Both the landscape officer and tree officer require more tree planting within the detailed phase 1 development; specifically, to the northern edge of the SUDs basin to the north of the site adjacent to Park Road, along Sands Hill lane, along the roads and around the SUDs basin to the east. Landscaping details are able to be secured by way of condition, and these particular elements will be referred to within the condition in order to ensure their delivery.

5.43 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 development to the north and west of the site and would assimilate as a new settlement edge over time.

5.44 **Trees**

The council's forestry officer has been consulted on the development. Additional tree planting has been requested, particularly on the northern boundary of the SUDs features adjoining Park Road. This can be sought by condition, as can a tree protection and method statement. These conditions are included.

- 5.45 A number of trees will have to be removed in order to facilitate the development, however the majority are able to be mitigated with replacement planting. Some trees along the northern boundary of the site to Park Road are being retained, while some will be lost. The tree officer requires further replacement planting in this area in order to protect and enhance the special character which the tree planting contributes to in this area. This is to be secured by condition.
- 5.46 While one of the internal tree lined hedgerows within the site is being retained, the other would be removed to facilitate the development. The hedgerow contains some aged and veteran trees and the tree officer is of the opinion that the tree lined hedgerows contributes positively to the character of the area. The loss therefore must be weighed in the planning balance of the scheme.
- 5.47 **Landscape conclusion**
Officers acknowledge there will be some limited landscape harm as a result of the proposal and that an internal hedgerow will be removed. These factors weigh 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. The creation of areas of community forest planting is a positive element which complies with the local plan policy aims and strategic site template requirements. Officers are of the opinion that the benefits of the scheme are considered to outweigh the limited harm identified.
- 5.48 **Design and layout**
The application is a hybrid application – the first detailed phase has been submitted for 103 dwellings showing the detailed layout, scale and appearance. The remainder of the site is in outline form, with all matters reserved.
- 5.49 **Phase 1 detailed layout**
The proposed layout for phase one proposes a perimeter block structure and the first part of the central circular spine road. It is a legible layout with the majority of development providing active frontages to the street. A network of streets with pedestrian and cycle links creates permeability through the layout connecting the site to the rest of the development, and externally. These principles are identified within the design and new development sections of the adopted Faringdon Neighbourhood Plan.
- 5.50 Development is physically set back from the Park Road frontage, with SUDs basins and retained and additional tree planting along the northern boundary. The landscape officer is now satisfied with the principle of the SUDs basins but does require additional planting. Dwellings to the north of the site face Park Road which is a positive element, providing an active frontage while allowing

the tree planting to take the focus which is a strong characteristic of Park Road and important to retain.

- 5.51 A mixture of detached, semi-detached, terrace and flatted development is proposed, predominantly 2 storey in height with some 2 and a half storey to add variety. Tree planting is featured along the primary streets, along Sands Hill and to break up the car parking bays. As indicated above, the landscape officer and tree officer require further tree planting to be incorporated and this can be secured by condition.
- 5.52 The dwellings would be of a traditional design, adopting simple rectangular floor plans and pitched roofs, including subordinate extending elements to add variety. Dwellings located on corner plots provide active frontages to both aspects. These principles accord with the guidance set out in the council's adopted Design Guide 2015.
- 5.53 The material palette includes two types of red brick, reconstituted 'cotswold' stone, red/brown roof tiles and grey/black roof tiles and some use of render on feature elevations. The materials would be alternated to provide diversity and articulation to the dwellings. The material types would be suitable for the character of the properties in the locality.
- 5.54 The layout and design of the proposals reflect the policies of the local plan including the site template requirements, neighbourhood plan and the design guide 2015.
- 5.55 **Outline element**
The illustrative layout plan submitted with the application satisfactorily demonstrates that 380 dwellings, land for an extra care facility, land for a primary school, sufficient landscaping and required associated infrastructure can be accommodated on the site.
- 5.56 The illustrative masterplan demonstrates a perimeter block structure centred around a circular road arrangement. 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 eastern boundary of the site. These elements contribute towards a suitable approach to the layout and design of the site.
- 5.57 The building heights parameter plan indicates the site would predominantly be two storey, with some two and half a storey development. This area would be directed towards the centre of the site, with maximum two storey heights along the properties at Townsend Road proposed to minimise the impact of development here.
- 5.58 The parameter plan includes the possibility for the extra care housing element of the scheme to be up to three storeys in height. This allows the flexibility to ensure that 60 units, the County's requirement, would be able to be delivered. However, the details of the scale and appearance of this building will be important. It will have to be designed to work with the land levels to ensure it

assimilates with development around it. This would be assessed in any subsequent reserved matters application, along with sufficient landscaping, amenity and parking provision.

5.59 **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.

5.60 The average net density for the site would be approximately 36 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. For example, phase one has an approximate density of 40dph as it is located in close proximity to the north-east of the site adjacent to existing built form.

5.61 36dph is only marginally above the desired minimum 30dph as set out in policy CP23. However, this policy allows for consideration of site specific context. Officers consider that 36dph is acceptable for this edge of town site with its sensitive landscape effects and sloping nature of the site.

5.62 **Open space and landscaping**

Saved Local Plan 2011 Policy H23 requires that sites deliver 15% useable public open space. The application proposes a total of approximately 9.95ha of green infrastructure in the following forms: amenity space, parkland, sustainable urban drainage, woodland, existing vegetation and natural greenspace. This equates to around 40% of the site. While not all of this space would be utilised as 'useable' open space (for example the SUDS basins) this more than exceeds the policy requirement and Officers are satisfied with the amount and variety of green infrastructure proposed.

5.63 **Design conclusion**

Overall, with the additional information provided, Officers are satisfied that the development 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 remaining detailed elements regarding layout, scale, appearance and landscaping would be covered at a subsequent later reserved matters stage.

5.64 Appropriate design character is also a key headline issue in the Faringdon Neighbourhood Plan, policies 4.7A and 4.7C are particularly relevant. Officers are satisfied that the first detailed element of the scheme responds to the adopted policies and would expect any subsequent reserved matters applications to continue to adhere to the relevant policies of the Faringdon Neighbourhood Plan, as well as the Local Plan and the Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document.

5.65 **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.

- 5.66 The impact calculations have been reviewed by the council's ecologist who has determined that the proposals are capable of delivering a small net gain for biodiversity on the site, in accordance with adopted Local Plan Policy CP46.
- 5.67 Subject to conditions requiring a construction environmental management plan for biodiversity and a biodiversity enhancement plan to be submitted, the council's ecologist raises no objections to the scheme.
- 5.68 Officers acknowledge the concerns raised by local residents regarding the potential impact on protected species and wildlife within the site. Detailed ecology surveys were carried out in 2012 and were again updated in 2016.
- 5.69 Updated surveys in 2016 for common lizards present on the site did not detect the species and no other protected species were found to be present on the site. However, the council's ecologist has requested that a condition for a construction environmental management plan which includes the requirement for updated ecology surveys for relevant species to monitor the construction phase. A condition requiring a biodiversity enhancement plan is also requested, which includes details of habitat and species enhancements.
- 5.70 Officers therefore consider that the scheme complies with the requirements of Policy CP46 of the adopted Local Plan 2031 Part 1 because the site is able to deliver a small net gain for biodiversity and would not result in harmful effects on protected species.
- 5.71 **Archaeology**
Archaeological evaluation has identified an area of Romano British settlement within the application area. With the amended documentation, the applicant has submitted a written scheme of investigation (WSI) for a programme of archaeological mitigation. The County Archaeologist has reviewed the WSI and considers that the document is acceptable. Therefore, only one condition in relation to requiring the mitigation to be undertaken in accordance with the WSI is recommended.
- 5.72 With the inclusion of this condition, 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.
- 5.73 **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. Drainage and water pressure are known local concerns; each element is addressed here.
- 5.74 **Surface water drainage**
The applicants propose a sustainable urban drainage strategy for the entire site, which includes infiltration basins, permeable paving on private driveways and parking areas and plot soakaways. The infiltration basins have an overflow function as an additional measure of protection which allows runoff to cascade

down into the lower basins, with an outfall into the drainage ditch that runs parallel to Park Road. The outfall will be restricted to the existing 'Greenfield QBAR' rate, which presents an improvement on the existing situation.

5.75 Foul water

Foul water would drain via gravity to the low point of the site, located in the east near the community forest planting. From here the flows will be pumped to connect to the existing public foul sewer. 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.

5.76 Water supply

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

5.77 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. 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.

5.78 Residential amenity

The closest existing dwellings to the site are those to the west, in Townsend Road and Marine Bungalow and Grand View which are accessed via Sands Hill Lane. Two existing properties off Park Road, 1 and 2 Oriel Cottages are also immediately abutting the development site.

5.79 Townsend Road properties

The detailed phase 1 element of the application does not directly adjoin the properties in Townsend Road. Therefore, the detailed proposals for these dwellings are not for consideration at this stage.

5.80 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.

5.81 The parameter plan for building heights shows a lowering of height to a maximum of two storeys adjacent to Townsend Road, with no two and a half storeys proposed. Illustrative sections are also shown within the submitted

design and access statement to indicate an increased area of landscaping between the site and Townsend Road properties.

- 5.82 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.
- 5.83 A detailed layout showing the exact locations and slab levels 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.
- 5.84 **Oriel Cottages**
The detailed phase 1 application does directly adjoin the properties in Oriel Cottages. It wraps around the southern and western boundaries of the properties.
- 5.85 The detailed layout for the first phase has been designed to set new dwellings away from Oriel Cottages; the closest new dwellings to the properties in this phase would be approximately 27m from the boundary.
- 5.86 The cottages would be surrounded by open space. There are no specific proposals for any additional boundary treatments in this area. A footpath would also run along the western side of no. 2 Oriel Cottages, connecting to the wider footpath network. Therefore, while there would be some additional noise generated by the development given the careful design of the detailed layout, this would not be significantly harmful and would not warrant refusal of the application.
- 5.87 **Grand View**
Grand View is a dwelling located off of Sands Hill adjacent to the Rogers concrete site, set off of the south-western boundary of the site. The illustrative masterplan shows that the primary school playing pitch area, allotments and landscaping would be located in this area, not residential development. The details of these elements of the scheme would be forthcoming in any subsequent reserved matters application including details of layout, scale, appearance and landscaping.
- 5.88 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 is recommended.
- 5.89 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.

5.90 **Affordable Housing**

Policy CP24 of the draft Local Plan 2031 requires that applications provide 35% affordable housing. It states that in circumstances where it can be demonstrated that the level of affordable housing being sought would be unviable, alternative tenure mixes and levels of affordable housing provision may be considered. Any difference in tenure mix or percentage of affordable housing to be delivered will need to be supported by a viability assessment.

5.91 A viability assessment has been submitted with the application to demonstrate that providing 35% affordable housing would render the site unviable for delivery. This is an extensive package of mitigation in terms of financial contributions and off-site highway works required for this site – including the upgrade two of the key roundabouts in the town. It is also in part due to the abnormal costs involved with regards the levels on the site and requirements in terms of retaining walls and abnormal foundations.

5.92 The viability case put forward by the application suggested 25% affordable housing could be delivered. Following extensive negotiations and further review, the council's independent viability consultant has concluded that the scheme would be viable in providing 29% affordable housing (128 units). This has been accepted by the applicants.

5.93 A percentage of 29% affordable housing with a tenure split of 75% affordable rented and 25% shared equity has been determined to be the level of provision able to render the site viable, and therefore deliverable. The 60 extra care housing units would contribute towards the affordable housing provision. 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.

5.94 Officers are satisfied that the development will still be able to provide a relatively high proportion of affordable units when balancing the other infrastructure requirements also being delivered by the proposal. Officers consider that the limited harm in underproviding 6% affordable housing is outweighed by the benefits of providing a key strategic site allocation to deliver housing for the district together with the financial obligations and off site highway mitigation works.

5.95 **Housing Mix**

The viability report has also reviewed what housing mix would render the scheme viable. Core Policy 22 requires that developments comply with the requirements of the Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA).

5.96 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."*

5.97 CP22 also allows for a deviation if viability evidence is provided. Following the viability review, it is concluded the scheme would be viable in accordance with

the market mix set out below, which Officers accept in light of the examination of the independent viability consultant.

5.98 The proposed market housing mix for the site is:

	1 bedroom	2 bedrooms	3 bedrooms	4+ bedrooms
	0	64	145	103
% proposed	0	20.5%	46.5%	33%
% SHMA	5.9%	21.7%	42.6%	29.8%

5.99 The mix is not significantly different from the SHMA estimates. Officers consider that the proposed mix is a suitable approach to the site taking into account the specific site context and following the detailed viability work that has been undertaken.

5.100 The detailed Phase 1 element of the scheme would provide following housing mix:

	1 bedroom	2 bedrooms	3 bedrooms	4+ bedrooms
Market	0	12	40	25
Affordabl e	8	10	8	0

5.101 **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.

5.102 This site is £0 rated in terms of the Community Infrastructure Levy. This was again as a result of the viability implications of the site and was one of a list of sites £0 rated when the CIL charging schedule was examined and adopted.

5.103 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, taking into account the viability considerations of the scheme. These should be secured through a section 106 agreement (subject to index linking):

District Council	Amount (£)
Health and fitness (studio and gym space) at Faringdon Leisure Centre	£84,005
Artificial Grass Pitch at Faringdon Leisure Centre	£26,687
Faringdon Indoor Bowls Club – enhancements and improvements to buildings and car park	£5,000
Faringdon Rugby and Cricket Clubs – enhancements and improvements to car parking and floodlighting	£19,049
Faringdon Town Football Club facilities (at Tuckers Recreation Ground) – enhancements and improvements (extending clubhouse, floodlights, equipment etc).	£76,252
Tennis court adjacent to Faringdon Junior School – enhancements and improvements (e.g. resurfacing)	£5,000

Pump House improvements (community hall enhancements and improvements)	£62,000
Waste/recycle bins	£64,600
Street Naming and Numbering	£5,092
Community - GP/NHS facilities (clinical commissioning group) towards extension at Faringdon GP surgery	£79,350
Community – sensory garden project	£24,185.66
Monitoring fee	TBC
Total	£565,220.66

Oxfordshire County Council	Amount (£)
Bus service – improvements to Swindon to Oxford service	£428,503.30
Travel plan monitoring (5 yrs)	£2,040
Travel Plan monitoring Extra Care Facility (5yrs)	£1,240
Primary School and nursery provision in Faringdon	£2,509,951
Faringdon Community College phased expansion	£1,540,578
SEN capacity (Valley Park site)	£76,128
Monitoring	TBC
Total	£4,558,440.30
Overall total	£5,123,660.96
Total per dwelling	£13,483.32

5.104 **Community contributions**

The local support for a contribution towards local GP/NHS services is fully acknowledged and as such has been pursued, and secured by Officers. The community sensory garden project have also set out a clear justification and costings for their project which is supported in the Faringdon Neighbourhood Plan. Policy 4.10 of the Faringdon Neighbourhood Plan also requires either on-site provision of or a contribution towards off-site allotments. The application

proposes on-site allotments to come forward as part of any subsequent reserved matters applications.

5.105 A number of leisure and recreation contributions are also secured, and these have the support of Sport England.

5.106 **Education**

As part of the application, a 1.34ha site for a one-form entry primary school is being provided by the applicant. An additional 0.88ha of land is also safeguarded for the County Council to exercise an option to purchase this land to expand the primary school to become a two-form entry primary school. This will be secured within the S106 legal agreement.

5.107 Oxfordshire County Council 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.”

5.108 **Conditions**

The recommended conditions are considered to be reasonable, necessary and related to the development in all respects. Some condition requirements may more appropriate to be covered within the S106 legal agreement, but will be secured either by condition or legal agreement.

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, increased investing in the local economy and providing additional market and affordable housing, albeit with a reduced amount of affordable housing due to viability considerations. The application will make contributions towards local infrastructure and will upgrade off-site highway infrastructure.

6.3 In terms of the environmental role, limited harm has been identified with respects to landscape impact and the loss of a tree lined hedgerow within the site. Mitigation in terms of a landscape strategy demonstrating significant areas of green infrastructure including additional planting and community forest has been agreed to alleviate these impacts.

6.4 There are no technical objections to the proposal, subject to appropriate conditions.

6.5 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
- NE7 - The North Vale Corallian Ridge
- NE10 – Urban Fringes and Countryside Gaps
- NE12 – The 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 be examined 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

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

Planning Practice Guidance (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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