

APPLICATION NO.	P18/V2481/FUL
SITE	Abingdon School Faringdon Road Abingdon, OX14 1BQ
PARISH	Abingdon
PROPOSAL	Erection of a three-storey education building to accommodate a lodge, house rooms, computer science and economic teaching space. Corrected Ground Investigation Desk Study submitted 29 October 2018. Revised heritage statement and parking layout plan submitted 30 November 2018.
WARD MEMBER(S)	Monica Lovatt Chris Palmer
APPLICANT OFFICER	Abingdon School Penny Silverwood

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that planning permission is granted subject to the following planning conditions:

Standard

- 1. Commencement within three years.**
- 2. Approved plans.**

Prior to commencement

- 3. Submission of materials.**
- 4. Submission of window and door details.**
- 5. Submission of landscaping scheme.**
- 6. Construction traffic management plan to be submitted.**
- 7. Foul and surface water drainage details to be submitted.**
- 8. Tree protection plan to be submitted.**

Compliance

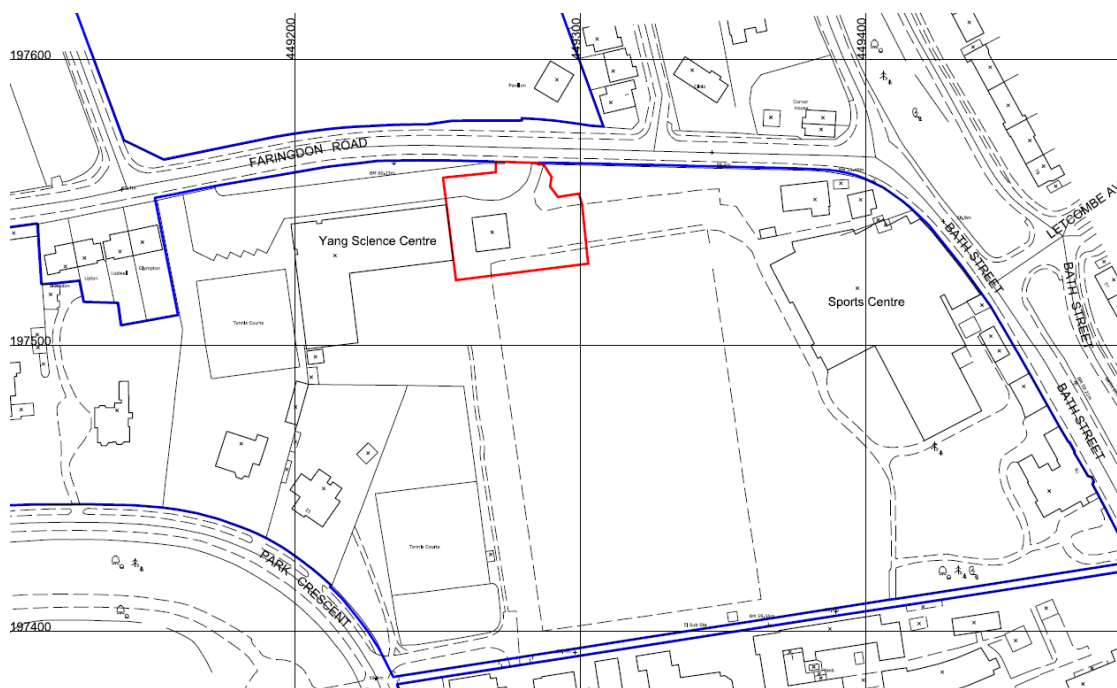
- 9. Implementation of landscaping scheme.**

1.0 INTRODUCTION AND PROPOSAL

1.1 This application is referred to committee as it is a major application and Abingdon Town Council have objected.

1.2 The application relates to part of the Abingdon School campus located to the north of the centre of Abingdon. The application site is an area of the campus to the south of Faringdon Road to the east of the Yang Science Centre. It is currently occupied by a temporary building known as Faringdon Lodge. This temporary building benefited from temporary permission until 19th August 2018. In the interest of expediency, the outcome of this current application is awaited before any enforcement action is considered.

- 1.3 Access to the site is obtained from Faringdon Road to the north which serves both the coach park and staff car park.
- 1.4 The site is located within the Albert Park Conservation Area.
- 1.5 This application seeks planning permission for a three-storey building to accommodate a school reception, porters lodge, house rooms and computer science and economics teaching rooms. The building is also proposed to link to the Yang Science Centre.
- 1.6 A site location plan is below:



- 1.7 Extracts of the application plans are **attached** at Appendix 1.

2.0 **SUMMARY OF CONSULTATIONS & REPRESENTATIONS**

- 2.1 Below is a summary of the responses received to the submission. A full copy of all comments made can be viewed online at www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk,

<p>Abingdon Town Council</p>	<p>Objection</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The design is unattractive and adversely affects the character of the local area • The scale, mass and height of the building represents an overdevelopment of the site • The proposed development does not preserve or enhance the conservation area and would be at the detriment of the conservation area • The proposals do not make adequate provision for parking and further development would exacerbate the problem
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The provision of a Masterplan by the school is very important to guide future developments in an appropriate manner.
Conservation Officer (Vale of White Horse DC)	<p>No objection</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> An up-to-date evidence base has been provided The proposed development can be achieved whilst respecting the heritage assets The proposal will bring enhancements and better reveal the setting of the Victorian villas on Park Crescent, the Conservation Area and the setting of Albert Park a Registered Park and Garden. The scale and massing of the proposed block is not overly dominant in views and incidental glimpsed views from Park Crescent Landscaping will soften and enhance the proposal site. Recommended conditions
Countryside Officer (Vale of White Horse DC)	No objection
Air Quality (Vale of White Horse DC)	No objection
Contaminated Land (Vale of White Horse DC)	No objection
Environmental Protection Team (Vale of White Horse DC)	No objection
Forestry Officer (Vale of White Horse DC)	<p>No objection</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The intended construction work will not have an adverse impact on the adjacent trees The protection of the trees will need to be safeguarded during the construction process, a tree protection plan will need to be submitted and agreed via condition.
Architects Panel (Vale of White Horse DC)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Follows design of existing fenestration and brickwork Some reservations of roof form and its relationship to the existing No major objections as it should be quality architecture
Oxfordshire County Council	Transport - No objection

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There will be no increase in the number of pupils or staff and therefore there is no requirement for additional transport infrastructure or parking spaces • There will be a revised internal gated access to the car park and a loss of existing parking • The existing spaces that would be impacted by the development would be satisfactorily relocated within the site so that there will be no loss in the number of spaces available. • It is not possible to assess or comment upon the cumulative impact of all the development proposals indicated on the masterplan however the potential cumulative impacts should be properly considered as further applications for development and expansion come forward. <p>Archaeology – No objection</p>
SGN Plant Protection	Assets identified within the vicinity, but outside the application site.
Gigaclear PLC	There are no assets within the immediate vicinity of the site.
Thames Water	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • With regards to surface water drainage, if the developer follows the sequential approach to the disposal of surface water there is no objection. If the developer proposes to discharge to a public sewer prior approval will be required.
Response from one local resident (46 Norman Avenue)	<p>Objection</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proposed building is oversized and will block the pleasant views of the school buildings and playing fields from Faringdon Road

3.0 **RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY**

3.1 [P15/V1502/FUL](#) - Approved (19/08/2015)

Temporary siting of Faringdon Lodge, a single storey modular building, to provide an estates management office for period of three years.

[P15/V1463/DIS](#) - Approved (11/08/2015)

Demolition of existing school building (Medical Centre). Erection of a three storey Science Centre and the reconfiguration of the existing coach park, including alterations to the points of ingress and egress. Discharge of conditions 3, 4, 5 and 7 of P12/V2373/FUL (as amended by additional information received on 21 July 2015).

[P15/V1247/DIS](#) - Approved (08/07/2015)

Discharge condition 10 (travel plan) of planning permission P12/V2373/FUL. Demolition of existing school building (Medical Centre). Erection of a three storey science centre and the reconfiguration of the existing coach park, including alterations to the points of ingress and egress.

[P14/V1704/DIS](#) - Approved (24/02/2015)

Discharge conditions 3 (internal and external boundaries), 8 (Construction Traffic Management Plan) and 11 (Surface water and foul water drainage) of planning permission P12/V2373/FUL.

Demolition of existing school building (Medical Centre). Erection of a three storey Science Centre and the reconfiguration of the existing coach park

[P14/V1022/NM](#) - Approved (11/06/2014)

Demolition of existing school building (Medical Centre). Erection of a three storey Science Centre and the reconfiguration of the existing coach park, including alterations to the points of ingress and egress. (Non-material amendment to P12/V2373/FUL)

[P13/V2326/FUL](#) - Approved (13/12/2013)

Application to vary condition 2 of planning application P13/V0878/FUL

[P13/V1663/DIS](#) - Approved (26/09/2013)

Discharge of conditions 3,4,6,8 and 9 of planning permission P13/V0878/FUL

[P13/V0878/FUL](#) - Approved (11/07/2013)

Reconfiguration and extension of the School's existing coach park, including alterations to the points of ingress and egress, on land within the School grounds.

[P12/V2374/CA](#) - Approved (24/01/2013)

Demolition of existing school building (Medical Centre).

[P12/V2373/FUL](#) - Approved (24/01/2013)

Demolition of existing school building (Medical Centre). Erection of a three storey Science Centre and the reconfiguration of the existing coach park, including alterations to the points of ingress and egress.

3.2 **Pre-application History**

There is no relevant pre-application history associated with this development.

3.3 **Screening Opinion requests**

None.

4.0 **ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

4.1 The proposal is not EIA development.

5.0 **MAIN ISSUES**

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

1. The principle of development

2. Design, local distinctiveness and the impact upon the Albert Park Conservation Area
3. Residential amenity
4. Traffic, parking and highway safety
5. Landscaping and trees
6. Flood risk and drainage

5.2 **The principle of development**

The site is located within the main town centre of Abingdon. Core Policy 3 of the adopted Local Plan 2031 Part 1 identifies Abingdon as a market town which has the greatest long-term potential for development to support viable and sustainable communities.

- 5.3 Paragraph 94 of the NPPF states that great weight should be given to the need to create, expand or alter schools to ensure that a sufficient choice of school places is available to meet the needs of existing and new communities.

- 5.4 The proposed development will appear as an extension to the Yang Science Centre within the confines of the existing school campus, replacing an existing temporary facility. It will provide a school reception, a porters lodge, house rooms and computer science and economics teaching rooms. Planning permission for the Yang Science Centre was granted in January 2013 under application ref. P12/V2373/FUL. This planning permission also provided consent for the erection of a two-storey lecture theatre joined to the science building in the location of the proposed development. Whilst this part of the development has never been constructed the permission remains extant.

- 5.5 Given that there is an extant permission on the site for a school building and the site is within the confines of the school campus within the main built area of Abingdon officers are satisfied that the principle of development is acceptable.

5.6 **Design, local distinctiveness and the impact upon the Albert Park Conservation Area**

CP37 of the adopted Local Plan 2031 Part 1 states that proposals for new development will be required to be of a high-quality design that responds positively to the site and its surroundings. CP44 states that measures should be sought to integrate development into the landscape character of the area and that development should preserve and promote local distinctiveness and diversity.

- 5.7 The site is located within the Albert Park Conservation Area. CP39 confirms that new development should conserve, and where possible enhance designated heritage assets and their setting in accordance with national legislation. Policy HE1 saved from Local Plan 2011 states that development within or affecting the setting of a Conservation Area will not be permitted unless it preserves or enhances the established character or appearance of the area. It continues that development will only be permitted on gaps between buildings and other open spaces where such areas do not make a positive contribution to the special interest of the Conservation Area or views within, into or out from the Conservation Area which would be lost or damaged.

- 5.8 The proposed development is a three-storey building designed as an extension to the Yang Science Centre with bridge connections at the first and second floor linking to the existing building. The building is of a similar scale and massing as the existing building, with the rhythm of large window openings repeated. The proposed extension is to be set back by approximately 8 metres from the front elevation of the existing building. The ridge of the hipped roof is set down from the ridge of the proposed building with a contemporary glazed central section. Officers consider the proposed building will appear as a subordinate extension to the existing building. The colonnade element at ground floor level provides an attractive entrance to the school when viewed from Faringdon Road.
- 5.9 Materials proposed include red facing brick to match the existing building and metal spandrel and louvre panels. Further details of materials can be required by condition to ensure that the contemporary design is articulated to the highest quality.
- 5.10 In considering the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the Conservation Area officers are mindful of both the existing situation on site and the extent of the extant permission granted in 2013 (ref. P12/V2373/FUL. Currently a temporary single-storey portacabin style building is located adjacent to the Yang Science Centre; albeit with a high-quality timber clad finish. The rest of the application site area is hard standing and car parking which can be viewed intermittently along Faringdon Road. The extant planning permission gives consent for a two-storey lecture theatre building to be sited in this location adjoining the science building.
- 5.11 The application is supported by a Heritage Statement which has been revised to give clarity and a robust assessment of the proposed development following concerns raised by the case officer. This Heritage Statement has been considered alongside a Conservation Appraisal of the whole school campus carried out in October 2011 to consider the significance of the school within the Albert Park Conservation Area.
- 5.12 The Conservation Officer has been consulted and has commented that the proposed development will bring enhancements to the Conservation Area and better reveal its setting as well as the setting of Albert Park a registered park and garden. The Conservation Officer has also commented that the scale and massing of the proposed block will not be overly dominant in views and incidental glimpsed views from Park Crescent to the rear.
- 5.13 The proposed development has been reviewed by the local authority's Architects design review panel. The panel concluded that the proposed development represented quality architecture that follows the design of the existing fenestration and brickwork.
- 5.14 Officers consider that the proposed development presents an attractive, high-quality addition to the street scene along Faringdon Road. It compliments recent development on this part of the campus and enhances the character

and appearance of the Conservation Area creating an attractive entrance to the school site. Whilst the proposed building is of a larger scale than the lecture theatre building previously consented in this location officers do not consider that it will be overly dominant in views into the site from Faringdon Road, in contrast to the existing building, or from incidental glimpsed views from within the Conservation Area from Park Crescent.

5.15 Residential Amenity

The nearest residential property is approximately 45 metres away on the north side of Faringdon Road to the east of the playing fields, offset significantly from the application site and set behind a very well-established hedge. The proposed development is not considered to have any significant adverse impact upon the amenity of residential properties in terms of dominance, overshadowing or loss of light.

5.16 Traffic, parking and highway impact

There will be no increase in the number of pupils or staff at the school as a result of the proposed development as it would provide supplementary teaching space and improved facilities. As a result, there are not proposed to be any additional traffic movements associated with the development. Oxfordshire County Council as the highways authority have been consulted on the application and have confirmed that there is no requirement for additional transport infrastructure.

5.17 Given that the proposed development will not generate any additional staff or pupils, there is also no requirement for any additional parking spaces to be provided within the site. Plans submitted indicate that three parking spaces within the minibus and staff car park at the east of the application site will be displaced as a result of the proposed development. Additional information submitted by the applicant indicates that the further extent of this car park to the east can be reconfigured to ensure that there is no overall loss of any parking spaces. Oxfordshire County Council have commented that the displaced spaces have been shown to be satisfactorily relocated so that there will be no loss of spaces available.

5.18 Landscape and Trees

Views into the site from Faringdon Rod are currently complimented and enhanced by some well-established trees and the low boundary stone wall which contributes positively to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.

5.19 The stone wall is to be retained with its current openings. The siting of the proposed building is proposed to be enhanced by the addition of landscaping beds at the front of the new building and at the access from Faringdon Road. Further details of the landscaping proposals are required by condition to ensure that they are appropriate to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area and to ensure that an appropriate balance is achieved between the proposed landscaping and the amount of reconfigured hardstanding proposed to realign the internal footpath and car park access to the north and east of the building.

5.20 The Forestry Officer has been consulted on the application and has confirmed that the proposed construction work will not have an adverse impact on the adjacent trees. No trees are proposed to be removed as a result of the proposed development.

5.21 **Flood Risk and drainage**

Drainage information submitted with the application confirms that the site is within an area at very low risk of fluvial or overland flooding. Officers are unaware of any significant flood risks in the vicinity. A proposed drainage scheme has been provided which indicates that both the surface and foul water will be drained into systems put in place when the Yang Science Centre was constructed. It is recommended that further information is required by condition to confirm that the existing surface and foul drainage systems have capacity to meet the demands of this development as well as the existing science building.

5.22 **Other considerations**

A comprehensive masterplan of future potential development sites across the School's campus dated October 2011 has been submitted. This is for information purposes only and has no weight in the planning process. Consideration of this application is solely for the erection of a three-storey education building adjacent to the Yang Science Centre as detailed in the application documents.

6.0 **CONCLUSION**

6.1 The proposed development will provide improved teaching facilities for the well-established school. The building is of a design, scale and massing that is subordinate to and compliments the existing built form along Faringdon Road within the school site. Through appropriate landscaping it will enhance the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. The proposed development will not generate any additional traffic movements at the site and the current level of parking provision will be retained. Officers are of the opinion that the application complies with the development plan and the provisions of the NPPF and should be supported.

The following planning policies have been taken into account:

Vale of White Horse Local Plan 2031 Part 1 policies

CP01 - Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development
CP03 - Settlement Hierarchy
CP37 - Design and Local Distinctiveness
CP39 - The Historic Environment
CP42 - Flood Risk
CP44 - Landscape

Vale of White Horse Local Plan 2011 saved policies

DC5 - Access
DC6 - Landscaping

HE1 - Preservation and Enhancement: Implications for Development

Emerging Local Plan 2031 Part 2

DP16 – Access

DP23 – Impact of development on amenity

DP36 – Heritage Assets

DP37 – Conservation Areas

Neighbourhood Plan

Abingdon does not currently have an adopted neighbourhood plan.

Supplementary Planning Guidance

- Design Guide (March 2015)

National Planning Policy Framework 2018 (NPPF)

Planning Practice Guidance

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