

**GFA/20534 – Balmoral Land (UK) Ltd**  
**Demolition of existing house 4a, and construction of 5 detached dwellings with new access from Coxwell Road**  
**4a and land to the rear of 6 Fernham Road, Faringdon**

**1.0 The Proposal**

1.1 The application is for outline planning permission, with access and layout to be considered at this stage. The proposal is for the erection of 5 detached dwellings and two double garages with a new access from Coxwell Road. The existing access from Fernham Road will not be used by the proposed houses. Indicative drawings showing the front elevations of the 5 dwellings have been submitted with the application.

1.2 Extracts from the application plans are at **Appendix 1**.

1.3 The application comes to Committee due to the number of objection letters received and the size of the development.

**2.0 Planning History**

2.1 Relevant sites within Coxwell Road:

- GFA/19649/2-D - Land Adjoining Coxwell House and Winslow House. Approval of reserved matters for residential development (23 houses and 13 flats) with new access. Permitted in April 2008.
- GFA/2796/2 – Estate opposite site. Erection of 41 dwellings and garages together with all ancillary works. Access to Coxwell Road and provision of woodland on southern section. Permitted in November 1999.
- GFA/803/9 - Demolition of existing building and erection of 22 no. residential units at former Eagle Filling Station. Permitted in August 1988.

**3.0 Planning Policies**

3.1 Policy DC1 of the adopted Local Plan requires development to be of a high design quality in terms of layout, scale, mass, height, detailing, materials to be used, and its relationship with adjoining buildings, and to take into account local distinctiveness. Policy DC5 of the adopted Local Plan requires safe and convenient access and parking.

3.2 Policy DC9 of the adopted Local Plan seeks to ensure development will not unacceptably harm the amenities of neighbouring properties and the wider environment.

3.3 Policy H10 of the adopted Local Plan allows for new housing developments within the 5 main settlements provided that it would make efficient use of land, and that the layout, mass and design of the dwellings would not be harmful to the character of the area.

3.4 Planning Policy Statement 1: Delivering Sustainable Development, and PPS3: Housing

**4.0 Consultations**

4.1 Faringdon Town Council – “Do not object but request that the County Engineer is consulted about extra traffic exiting onto Coxwell Road. In view of the Town Council’s

continued concern regarding the safety of the play area in Marlborough Gardens due to its proximity to a busy road it is requested that S106 contributions towards the installation of low fencing along the side of the play area in Marlborough Gardens fronting the main road, are provided.”

- 4.2 County Engineer – “No objections subject to the provision of vision splays of 2.4x90m. Car parking must accord with OCC standards, garaging retained as such, and sufficient turning space provided. Given the town location, and the public transport opportunity as an alternative to the private car, it is appropriate for the proposed access/footway to be linked into the existing infrastructure along the Coxwell Road. It is also likely that street lighting, a telegraph pole, and a traffic sign will need to be relocated.”
- 4.3 Principal Drainage Engineer – “Recommended that any approval should be conditional on the provision of drainage details including a sustainable surface water drainage system being approved for driveways, roads and parking areas.”
- 4.4 Arboricultural Officer – “The Arboricultural Implication Study and Tree Protection Strategy reports are excellent. The protection strategy must be implemented in accordance with the report. It is important to see that the protection is in place before work starts. This needs to be conditioned.”
- 4.5 Principal Waste Officer – “It is considered that a refuse lorry could enter and turn within the site; therefore no objections are raised in this regard.”
- 4.6 4 letters of objection have been received from neighbouring residents of the Catkins Estate, which is opposite the site. Their comments can be summarised as follows:
- There are highway safety implications and traffic/noise congestion concerns
  - The existing access onto Fernham Road should be used
  - The existing landscaping along this section of Coxwell Road provides privacy to the houses opposite. This will be lost
  - The loss of vegetation would be harmful to the character of the area
  - Other developments within Coxwell Road have used existing accesses
  - The development of this site would result in a over-dominating outlook when viewed from the properties within Catkins Close
  - Cramming in 5 houses would be in stark contract to the Catkins Estate
  - The loss of the vegetation would destroy habitats for wildlife
  - There is not considered to be sufficient parking within the site
  - Concerns are raised with regard to the drainage capacity of the area

## 5.0 **Officer Comments**

- 5.1 The main issues to be addressed in considering this application are impact on the character and appearance of the area, impact on neighbours and the amenity of future occupiers, the density, layout and design of the development, and parking and access issues. It is proposed that this development would exit onto a main through road in and out of Faringdon, and it is noted that this section/side of Coxwell Road is at present less urban in appearance due to the wide verge along the highway boundary, and the low density of the surrounding development. However it should be appreciated

that the site is within the built up area of Faringdon. The proposed development would result in a higher density development when compared to the surrounding properties. In this regard PPS3 states “the density of existing development should not dictate that of new housing by stifling change or requiring replication of existing style or form. If done well, imaginative design and layout of new development can lead to a more efficient use of land without compromising the quality of the local environment.” In any event it is noted that the density of the proposed development would only be 28 dwellings per hectare; which is below that recommended for Faringdon within Local Plan Policy H10. It is considered that given the constraints of the site including its shape and the proximity of neighbouring properties, it would be difficult to achieve a higher density without compromising other planning considerations, and therefore the proposed density is acceptable.

- 5.2 The concerns raised by neighbouring occupiers relating to the potential loss of vegetation along this section of Coxwell Road are noted, and Officers are aware of the stipulations on the planning permission for the adjacent estate to retain as much of the hedgerow as possible. Officers consider that the provision of an access in this location is acceptable in terms of the impact on the character and appearance of the area, providing the dwellings are carefully located, and that the existing vegetation along the highway boundary is retained as far as possible. As can be seen from the submitted site plan drawing No.02 G, no trees would be removed as a result of the insertion of the access. Whilst some low vegetation would be removed, the site plan indicates new hedging and planting. Initial concerns were raised with regard to the proximity of the dwellings in plots 1 and 5 to the front boundary. However amended plans have been received which have set the dwellings back within their plots by 2.4 metres and 0.65 metres for plots 1 and 5 respectively. It is considered that providing the dwellings to the front of the site are of a reasonable height (and this would be assessed as part of a detailed application), together with the considerations as stated above, the dwellings in plots 1 and 5 would not be overly obtrusive or prominent, and would therefore not have a harmful impact on the character and appearance of this section of Coxwell Road.
- 5.3 The layout of the proposed development shows an acceptable distance between the proposed properties, including the distance between the dwellings to the front of the site and those to the rear which should ensure that the amenities of future occupiers are safeguarded. It is also noted that the private gardens are all 10 metres or deeper. Given the rear garden depth of No.6 Fernham Road it is not considered that the development would result in a harmful impact on the occupiers of this property. Whilst it is appreciated the distance between the proposed dwelling on plot 2 and No.12 Carter Crescent is a minimum of 14 metres; given the orientation between the dwellings, and the fact that any windows within the facing side elevation of the dwelling on plot 2 could be obscure glazed, it is not considered the proposal would have a harmful impact on the amenities of the occupiers of No.12 Charter Crescent. The distance between the proposed dwelling on plot 4 and No.4 Fernham Road is a minimum of 19 metres. However the facing elevation of No.4 is its side elevation, and there is only one small secondary window at ground floor level within this elevation. It should also be noted that the area immediately to the north of No.4 does not appear to be used as its private amenity area. The front of this site appears more private with a dense front boundary screening. Furthermore the site of No.4 would become more private as there would no longer be a right of access through the site to ‘No.4

Fernham Road.' Whilst it is appreciated that the residents of Catkins Estate would inevitably see the development, given that it would be on the opposite side of Coxwell Road, it is not considered that the development would have a harmful impact on the amenities of the occupiers of these properties sufficient to warrant refusal of the application.

5.4 The site plan shows the provision of 2 car parking spaces per dwelling, which accords with the Council's Design Guide. The County Engineer has no objection to the proposal, and it is noted that the revised site plan submitted now shows the required visibility splays as requested by the County Engineer. The County Engineer also notes the opportunity to link the footpath to the east of the site along Coxwell Road with this new development. When looking at drawing No.04 A this would seem logical, and would provide an opportunity for any future residents of the proposed development to use more sustainable methods of transport.

## 6.0 **Recommendation**

6.1 *It is recommended that planning permission be granted, subject to the following conditions.*

1. *TL2 Time Limit – Outline Application*
2. *OL1 Standard Outline 'details'*
3. *RE7 Submission of Boundary Details*
4. *LS2 Landscaping*
5. *Tree Protection Strategy implemented*
6. *RE8 Submission of drainage details*
7. *HY2 Access in accordance with plan No.02 G*
8. *RE14 Garaging, parking and turning retained*
9. *Link development with the existing footpath*