

Community Governance Review – CGR_H – Great Coxwell and Great Faringdon

Response from Great Faringdon

Regarding the assessment criteria to be taken into account when making a draft proposal for further consultation:

- *natural or man-made boundaries that help to define clearly one community from another*

The current boundary between the parishes of Great Coxwell and Great Faringdon comprises field hedges along the Steeds and Fernham Fields developments, Fig 1.

It is less well defined for the proposed development P15/V2649/O to the west of Fernham Rd as it mainly follows the southern line of a driveway to houses that are in Great Faringdon with some out-buildings and garden/orchard in Great Coxwell.

The purple line on Fig 2 shows the boundary actually crossing the end of Fernham Gate, passing through some houses to the south of Fernham Gate when there is actually a hedge boundary between the former tip (now a site with permission for 10 houses P15/V0154/O known as 'land adjacent to Fernham Gate', which is in Great Coxwell) and the gardens of the first houses on Fernham Gate, which are in Great Faringdon. This boundary develops into a considerable height difference between the 'land adjacent to Fernham Gate' and the houses at the eastern end of Fernham Gate as the latter back on to the former quarry wall.

The boundary then follows the field hedges terminating at the northern edge of the A420.

Because Fernham Road is closed off, the only vehicular access to the exclave of Great Coxwell to the east of the Fernham Fields development is through Faringdon; there is no pedestrian footpath and the only access on foot wholly within the boundary of Great Coxwell is along the northern verge of the A420.

The southern boundary between Great Coxwell and Little Coxwell is defined by the A420.

The proposed boundary between Great Faringdon and Great Coxwell would be the limits of the developments at Fernham Fields and Steeds Farm and the boundary between Little Coxwell and Great Faringdon being defined by the A420 up to its intersection with the former Great Coxwell boundary.

One problem is that the limits of the Steeds Farm development may be extended farther into Great Coxwell if an application by Welbeck to add more houses to the site area defined in the Local Plan were to be successful.

- *housing developments that straddle parish boundaries, thereby resulting in people being in different parishes from their neighbours*

The original developers SGR (Fernham Fields) and Welbeck (Steeds Farm) for the sites along Coxwell Rd. objected to the boundary of the Faringdon Neighbourhood Plan, as defined by the parish boundary of Great Faringdon, because it did not include their sites situated in the parish of Great Coxwell, but contiguous with Great Faringdon. Fernham Fields has now be renamed Faringdon Fields and the Steeds, Fernhill Gardens.

All of the planning applications for dwellings in the area in question (P13/V0139/O (Fernham Fields, 200), P13/V1102/O (Steeds, 200), P15/V2649/O (Fernham Rd., 25), P15/0154/O (Fernham Gate, 10), P17/V1242/O (Fernham Rd., 5, refused) have stated the addresses of their sites as being in Faringdon. There was also a request for an Environmental Impact Assessment Screening Opinion on land east of Fernham Rd. for 90 houses submitted by Taylor Wimpey in 2016, part of which would have been in Great Coxwell. So far, planning

permission for 435 dwellings has been granted all of which are in Great Coxwell although marketed as being Faringdon.

The Officer's report to the VoWHDC Planning Committee, 27 November 2013 on planning application P13/V0139/O, Fernham Fields, paragraphs 6.10 to 6.13 stated:

6.10 *The Coalescence of Faringdon and Great Coxwell*

One of the key local objections to this proposal has been that this development will result in the coalescence of Faringdon with the village of Great Coxwell, particularly as the application site sits within the boundaries of Great Coxwell parish. Officers accept that it is entirely proper to resist proposals that would allow the urban sprawl of Faringdon into the countryside or significantly reduce the separation between these two settlements, which are of very different sizes and characters. However, officers do not consider this particular proposal would cause an undue amount of coalescence between the two settlements.

6.11 The scheme has been designed to appear and function as an urban extension to Faringdon. As outlined in Section 1, at the closest point, the site is over 1 kilometre from the Great Coxwell conservation area, which delineates the historic core of the village. It is also 0.8 kilometres from the eastern edge of the village itself. Thus, there will remain a good distance between the two settlements.

6.12 Crucially, the site will be physically contained by Coxwell Road and the A420 from the village of Great Coxwell. These roads in particular act as a strong barrier that separates the two settlements. Furthermore, the existing and future landscaping will visually contain the site in a manner that ensures it will appear as part of Faringdon, not part of Great Coxwell. Whilst views into Great Coxwell from the site will be possible, and the new development will be seen from Great Coxwell, against the backdrop of the rest of Faringdon, the two settlements will remain visually entirely separate and distinct.

6.13 The Parameter Plan also demonstrates how the proposal is designed as an extension to Faringdon. The pedestrian links are designed to allow easy access to Faringdon town centre. No footpaths are proposed that would enable direct access to Great Coxwell. Officers are satisfied that any resident of this development would consider themselves to be living in Faringdon, not Great Coxwell. Officers' assessment of this scheme leads from this basis.

The Officer's report to the VoWHDC Planning Committee, 9th December 2015 on planning application P15/V1934/O, Steeds, paragraph 6.1 stated:

6.11 The NPPF requires the need to travel to be minimised and the use of sustainable transport modes to be maximised (paragraph 34). The site is located immediately adjacent to the existing built up area of one of the five main settlements in the District with a good range of services and facilities. Therefore, although located within jurisdiction of Great Coxwell Parish, the site would form an extension of the town in terms of location.

The Officer's report to the VoWHDC Planning Committee, 17th August 2016 on planning application P15/V2649/O, Fernham Rd., paragraph 6.7 stated:

6.7 Core Policy 20 of the emerging local plan 2031 provides the spatial strategy for the Western Vale Sub-Area. The plan makes it clear that Faringdon is a strategic growth area. To calculate the impact of this development, it has been assumed to be part of Faringdon, despite falling within Great Coxwell parish boundary. It is noted that the council has either permitted or resolved to permit a number of large housing developments in Faringdon, which, if all implemented, would increase the population of Faringdon by approximately 20%. Based on the SHMA average household size of 2.52

for 2011, this development will increase the population of Faringdon by approximately 63 people.

The Officer's report to the VoWHDC Planning Committee, 10th March 2015 on planning application P15/0154/O (Land adjacent to Fernham Gate), paragraph 6.11 stated:

6.11 The NPPF requires the need to travel to be minimised and the use of sustainable transport modes to be maximised (paragraph 34). In terms of facilities, Faringdon is a large town which is well served in terms of services and public transport links. Therefore, the emerging local plan identifies Faringdon as a sustainable location for further development.

Other comments imply the suitability of Faringdon as place for development.

Hence, although these developments are located in the parish of Great Coxwell, there is an implicit assumption that they are only viable because of their proximity to Faringdon. They have been regarded by Planning Officers as extensions to Faringdon being, in all cases, contiguous with the current Great Faringdon parish boundary. They are all distinctly separate from Great Coxwell and in the case of the developments on Fernham Road even cut off from road access.

The consequence is that there would be some 435 new dwellings adjacent to Faringdon with, based on a SHMA average household size of 2.52 for 2011, a predicted 1,096 residents. These new residents would to all sense and purpose to be living in Faringdon and using the services provided by Faringdon Town Council although not paying any Council Tax to Faringdon Town Council.

- *effective and convenient representation of local residents at parish level*

The current population of Great Faringdon is about 8,100. There are ~1,130 houses with planning permission granted or pending including the 435 planned for this area of Great Coxwell, which take the population of Great Faringdon to about 11,000. There are 14 Town Councillors.

- *the wards of Vale of White Horse District Council for the purposes of district council elections*

Faringdon has two District Councillors.

- *the divisions of Oxfordshire County Council for the purposes of county council elections*

Faringdon has one County Councillor for a division that includes Faringdon and the surrounding villages.

- *views expressed in relation to any changes, particularly from those people directly affected*

At present only one of these developments (Fernham Fields now renamed Faringdon Fields) has any occupants. There is a concern that the Band D Council Tax for Faringdon for 2018/19 will be £133.52 whereas that for Great Coxwell will be ~£60; hence, residents would see an increase.

- *the extent to which proposals reflect the identities and interests of the affected community*

- *the size and population of the local community*

Given Great Faringdon's current population and housing stock of 8,100 and 3,438, respectively, the expected 435 houses in Great Coxwell will add ~1,100 to the current population with the remaining 695 houses to be built in Faringdon adding another 1,750.

There is, however, the threat of further development at Steeds Farm because the allocated site in the Local Plan Pt 1 2031 is larger than the Fernhill Gardens development currently under

construction. The original developer, Welbeck, have held a consultation on whether an additional 150 houses could be added to this site. If this were granted, it would require a further extension of the Great Faringdon parish boundary into Great Coxwell whereas the speculative Taylor Wimpey development of 90 dwellings between Fernham Rd and Rogers Concrete would be wholly accommodated in Great Faringdon under the current proposals.

Not transferring the land to Faringdon incurs a loss of about £60k in council tax to FTC ($435 \times £133.52 = £58,081$), possibly more since they'll be at least band D.



Fig 1

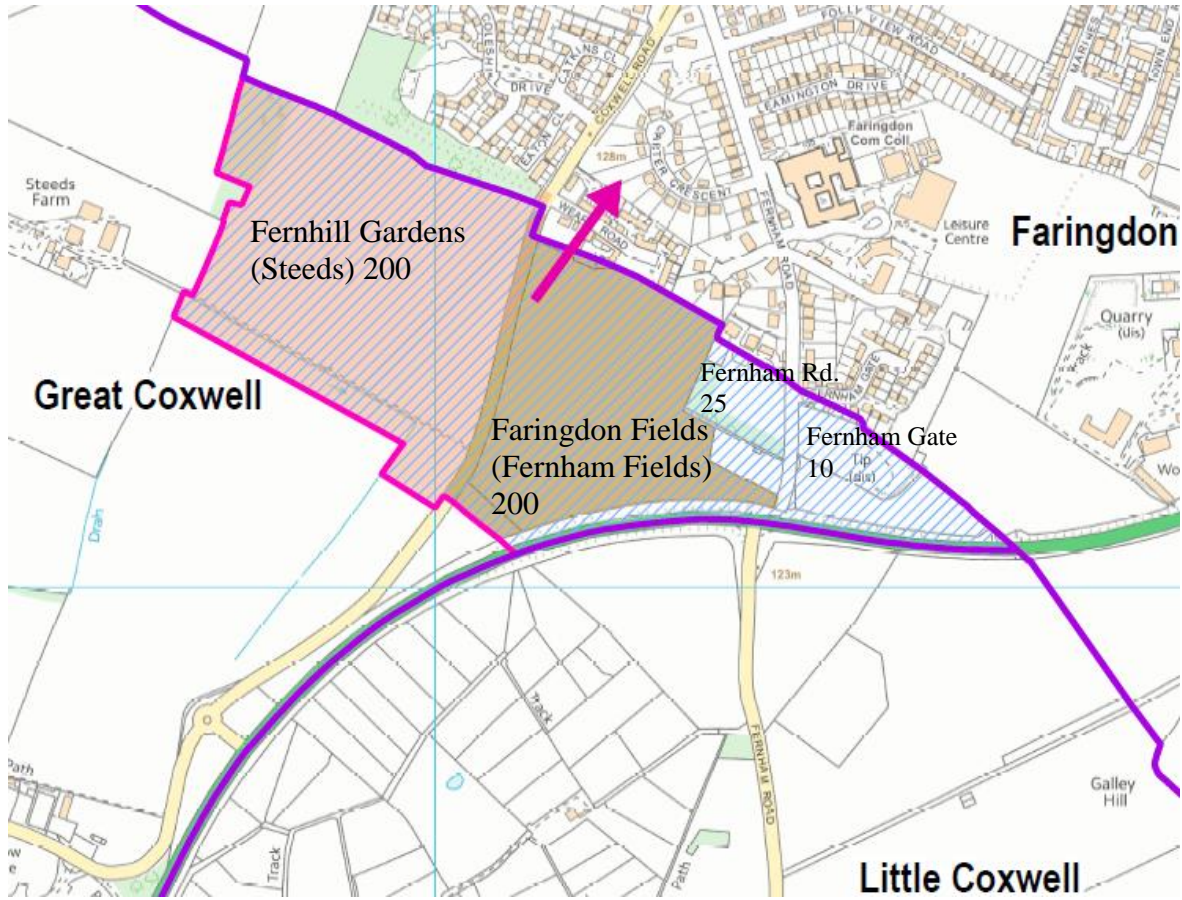


Fig 2