

APPLICATION NO.	P20/V0855/O
SITE	Rogers Concrete, Sandshill, Faringdon, SN7 7PQ
PARISH	GREAT FARINGDON
PROPOSAL	Outline planning application with all matters reserved (other than access into the site) for the proposed mixed use development of up to 95 residential dwellings and business space (Use Classes B1 and B8) (totalling 1,500 sqm), open space, landscaping, drainage measures and all other associated works.
WARD MEMBER(S)	David Grant Bethia Thomas
APPLICANT OFFICER	Obsidian Strategic RC Limited Hanna Zembrzycka-Kisiel

RECOMMENDATION

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

1. A section 106 legal agreement being entered into to secure financial contributions towards local infrastructure, 18% affordable housing and an affordable housing tenure mix of 35% affordable rented and 65% shared ownership, public open space and play areas to be transferred to a management company.
2. The following planning conditions:

Reserved matters and timings

1. Commencement - Outline Planning Permission
2. Commencement - Outline with Reserved Matters
3. Approved plans
4. Max. number of dwellings (no more than 95)
5. Quantum of employment floor space to be 1,500sqm
6. Employment use restricted to Class B1 / B8 use only

Concurrent with the submission of the reserved matters

7. Biodiversity Enhancement Plan
8. Landscaping (S38 and S278 works)
9. Landscape management

10. Landscaping – details
11. Market mix
12. Space Standards
13. Foul water network capacity
14. Water supply network capacity

Pre-commencement

15. Slab levels
16. Construction environmental management plan for Biodiversity
17. Contaminated Land
18. Construction Traffic Management Plan (CTMP)
19. Tree Protection (Detailed)
20. Surface Water Drainage
21. Foul water drainage
22. Env. Agency Condition – Contaminated land remediation strategy
23. Community Employment Plan
24. Piling method statement

Pre-occupation

25. Noise Mitigation
26. Env. Agency Condition – Contaminated land verification report
27. Env. Agency Condition- SuDS Infiltration of surface water into ground
28. Visibility splays
29. Travel Plan
30. Car parking spaces, turning spaces and roads
31. Cycle Parking

Informatives

1. Contaminated Land Informative
2. Highway Informatives
3. Superfast broadband - 30 plus dwellings
4. Illustrative Drawings
5. Planning Obligation

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 This application was considered by committee on 18 August 2021 where it was resolved to defer the decision for further information on the proposal. A copy of the original report is **attached** at Appendix 1.

1.2 The reasons for deferral related to the following:

1. Clarity on bus stop connections and highway links.

2. Review of maximising employment use on the site.
3. Clarity on viability and affordable housing provision.
4. Clarity on employment land availability in Faringdon.
5. Review of S106 matters and engagement with town council / local councillors.

1.3 In response the applicant has submitted information **attached** at Appendix 2. This includes an amendment to the proposal to increase the employment use floor space to 1500sqm.

2.0 **SUMMARY OF CONSULTATIONS & REPRESENTATIONS**

Responses received in relation to the submission of the additional information are summarised below. A full copy of all the comments made can be seen online at www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk.

Faringdon Town Council	<p>Objection:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Objection remains, Faringdon Town Council noted objection from the following responses: County Council regarding the access road width, Landscape Officer regarding inadequately sized public space/gardens, that the site cannot accommodate 95 dwellings and non-compliance with CP37, 38, CP44 and CP 33. Also Planning Policy response on non-compliance with policies CP24 and CP6. • Regarding Thames Water comments that they cannot supply drinking water or connect to the foul water system, Faringdon Town Council are aware that the major development of Highworth Road (190 houses) currently being built is using a standpipe to deliver water to the site and are concerned of the consequences of this to both the new occupiers and the construction phase (including maintaining the newly installed landscaping) and does not want to see another site/new residents facing the same issue.
Little Coxwell Parish Council	No further comment received.
Countryside Officer	Please refer to previous comments.
Contaminated Land	No further observations.
Environmental Protection (Noise)	No further comment.

Vale of White Horse District Council – Planning Committee – 20 October 2021

Environmental Protection (Air Quality)	No further comment.
Housing Development Team	No further comment received.
Oxfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group	No further comment received.
Oxfordshire County Council	Transport – No objection, subject to conditions and contributions.
Landscape Architect	No addition to previous comments.
Forestry Team	Please see previous comments.
Waste Management Team	No comment.
Drainage Engineer	No further comment received.
Urban Design Officer	No further comment received.
Thames Water	No further comment received.
Conservation Officer	Please refer to previous comments. No heritage observations.
Natural England	No objection. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The proposed amendments are unlikely to have significant different impacts on the natural environment than the original proposal.
Environment Agency	No additional comments. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Please refer to previous comments and suggested conditions.
Crime Prevention Design Adviser	No objection. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Please consider previous comments.
Arts Development Officer	No objection. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A scheme of this size would trigger the public art policy DP20 with a contribution secured via S106 for on or off-site art. If there is adopted public open space on the site, we can work to integrate features within the landscaping or work with the town council on art works that have greater public benefit.
Policy Team	Comments attached at Appendix 3.

<p>Economic Development Team</p>	<p>No objection (Full comments <u>attached</u> at Appendix 4).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Economic Development welcome the increase in commercial floorspace proposed by the applicant that would bring the total to 1500sq m from 1350sq m previously proposed. We anticipate that the increase in quantum of floorspace could lead to higher employment figures than proposed within previous documentation that is shown below: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 390 temporary jobs during the construction phase - 22 - 112 direct FTE jobs on-site during the operational phase - A further 28 - 145 FTE indirect jobs arising through multiplier effects in the operational phase. • Economic Development believe that the application has been supported by substantive marketing evidence and we do not challenge the employment land review reports (prepared by Savills and Chilmark Consulting respectively) that conclude that the provision of up to 3ha of employment land is not considered to be suitable nor economically viable. • We consider that the applicant has satisfied the requirements of Core Policy 29 from the Vale’s Adopted Local Plan, having compiled evidence that marketing of the site has been undertaken over a 12-month period and that the resulting evidence indicates commercial led development of the site is not viable. • Based on the above, Economic Development do not hold any objections to the proposal and believe that a mixed-use development at the site should be positively considered.
<p>County Councillor Judith Heathcoat</p>	<p>No further comment received.</p>
<p>County Councillor Bethia Thomas</p>	<p>No further comment received.</p>
<p>Ward Councillor David Grant</p>	<p>No further comment received.</p>
<p>Residents</p>	<p>One letter of objection has been received raising the following issues:</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Site should be safeguarded for employment use.
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3.0 PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

This update report should be read alongside the original report which is attached at Appendix 1.

3.1 The reasons for deferral related to the following:

1. Clarity on bus stop connections and highway links.
2. Review of maximising employment use on the site.
3. Clarity on viability and affordable housing provision.
4. Clarity on employment land availability in Faringdon.
5. Review of S106 matters and engagement with town council / local councillors.

3.2 Following the 18th August meeting, Councillor Grant has also requested additional information on policy interpretation. The planning policy team has provided a detailed response which is **attached** at Appendix 3.

3.3 *Clarity on bus stop connections, pedestrian, cycle, and highway links.*
The nearest bus stops to the site are located on Park Road. The highway link to Park Road is shown in the appendices of the Transport Assessment addendum (issue 2), which includes a footway along Sands Hill. The Highway Authority confirm no objection to the proposed link and advise the S106 contribution as a subsidy for public transport services is adequate to ensure that sustainable modes of transport are provided for the site. In addition, other routes to Park Road will also be available via the Bloor Homes development.

3.4 In respect of pedestrian / cycle links and access to the south, the Highway Authority advises “The site is essentially at a terminus of a proposed estate abutting a major thoroughfare, the A420. The proposed Roger’s Concrete site should be seen in the context of the wider proposals that include pedestrian and cycle infrastructure to access the likely desire lines, towards the main facilities of the Town. Beyond a very low number of leisure trips the access to the other side of the A420 is considered to have a very low footfall and not a sufficient draw that a pedestrian crossing or bridge is required.” The Highway Authority further advises a crossing would logically only be fulfilled by a bridge due to the nature of the road which would be an excessive imposition on the development.

3.5 Officers consider in the light of the Highway Authority’s advice that the provision of such facilities do not meet the statutory CIL tests. It is also noted in all probability third party land outside of the highway would be required which

is outside of the applicant's control. Officers therefore see no reason to withhold permission on this issue as there is no reasonable prospect of such a facility being justified or delivered.

- 3.6 *Review of maximising employment use on the site.*
The applicant has amended the application to fix the employment use provision at 1,500sqm. This floorspace can be secured by condition (conditions 5 & 6 at the start of this update report) and is supported by your officers and the Economic Development Team.
- 3.7 *Clarity on viability and affordable housing provision.*
The viability report shows the site could deliver 8 affordable units when benchmarked against an industry standard profit level of between 15% to 20% of Gross Development Value. The applicant in offering 18 dwellings is accepting a reduced profit below this expected return, which officers consider is fair and reasonable in trying to meet the affordable housing policy requirements of the site.
- 3.8 The 18 dwellings (which equates to 19% provision) can be secured through the legal agreement, but the exact amount delivered will depend on the quantum of dwellings achieved on site at Reserved Matters stage. Any reduction would be pro-rata at 19% of the total units achieved on site with a further financial contribution for any part unit.
- 3.9 *Clarity on employment land availability in Faringdon.*
The applicant has provided further information on employment land availability in Faringdon (see appendix 2). This has been assessed by the Economic Development Team who continue to raise no objection to the proposal. Their latest comments on land availability are **attached** at Appendix 4.
- 3.10 Officers have also been made aware of land being marketed for employment use at Wicklesham Quarry <https://marriotts.co.uk/property/employment-land-for-sale-wicklesham-faringdon/>. The sales particulars identify up to 8Ha is currently available for employment development.
- 3.11 Officers therefore consider the loss of the application site to a mixed-use scheme would not materially undermine local plan aspirations for employment uses in the town as other land is clearly available.
- 3.12 *Review of S106 matters and engagement with town council / local councillors*
The Town Council in their verbal representations raised concern that land was not available for leisure facilities to serve the development with specific mention of the MUGA.
- 3.13 Officers consider the S106 package negotiated with the applicant remains CIL test compliant, and notwithstanding the current absence of an identified site for a new MUGA in the town (or other facilities), officers are of the opinion there remains a justified need for contributions towards providing new or improving existing facilities.

- 3.14 Furthermore, a S106 agreement normally provides a spend period of 10 years from receipt of the contribution, specifically to allow time for projects to be designed and delivered on suitable land within the vicinity of a site (5 miles). This could include land outside Faringdon Town Council's administrative boundary. Officers therefore do not see the lack of land at the time of determining the application as a reason to refuse planning permission.
- 3.15 In respect of engagement with local councillors and the town council, the S106 package agreed is based on that secured via the Appeal at the Steeds, which has been accepted by a Planning Inspector as meeting the CIL tests and deemed as essential infrastructure to meet the needs of the development in response to the viability issues. Further engagement will take place when projects for spending the contributions locally are considered at a future point in time.

4.0 **CONCLUSION**

- 4.1 This is an outline application for the proposed mixed-use development of up to 95 residential dwellings and business space (Use Classes B1 and B8) (totalling up to 1,350 sqm) with access only to be considered at this stage. Appearance, layout, scale, and landscaping are all reserved for future consideration.
- 4.2 The Site forms part of a wider residential-led allocation known as 'Land South of Park Road, Faringdon' within the Local Plan Part 1: Strategic Sites and Policies.
- 4.3 The relevant evidence, along with the submitted viability report indicates that there is no reasonable prospect of the site coming forward in its entirety for employment use. Therefore, the proposed alternative use, a residential-led development with some element of employment, can be supported on this site.
- 4.4 It is considered that the proposed quantum of development of up to 95 dwellings can be achieved on site to comply with design policy requirements of the development plan, subject to detailed design at Reserved Matters stage. Furthermore, the approval of this site would make a small but important contribution to the Council's 5-year supply of housing land as the applicant has indicated that all homes will be delivered within the next five years
- 4.5 The means of access to the site is acceptable and there are no technical objections to the proposal, subject to appropriate conditions. As such, officers consider the proposal is sustainable development and the application is recommended for approval.

Author: Stuart Walker
Contact No: 01235 422600
Email: planning@whitehorsedc.gov.uk