

Consultee Comment for planning application MW.0151/23

Application number	MW.0151/23
Name	Mrs Thurston
Address	Faringdon Town Council The Pump House 5 Market Place SN7 7HL
Type of Comment	Objection
Comments	<p>MW.0151/23 Former Wicklesham Quarry Sandshill Faringdon SN7 7PQ Faringdon Town Council request that this application be judged against its conformity with the Faringdon Neighbourhood Plan, endorsed by over 90% of those who voted in the referendum, and that its policies be given due recognition in decision making. Faringdon Town Council Planning and Highways Committee resolved to OBJECT to the planning application MW.0151/23 on the grounds that it does not conform to the policies in the Faringdon Neighbourhood Plan as set out in detail below.</p> <p>Faringdon Neighbourhood Plan Policies Policy 4.5B Wicklesham Quarry will be safeguarded for employment uses (Classes B2 and B8) following the completion of quarrying and restoration activities on the site. Employment development will be supported on this site if no other suitable sites closer to the town centre are available, providing there is demonstrable need and subject to the following criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">i) appropriate transport mitigation is provided; andii) appropriate provision is made within the site for pedestrians and cyclists; andiii) the proposed employment development does not have a detrimental impact on the relationship between the site and the wider landscape in which it sits; andiv) appropriate ecological mitigation and enhancement measures are incorporated into the proposals; andv) any development would not result in demonstrable harm to the geological special interest of the site; andvi) employment proposals should incorporate measures to provide access to the protected site for the visiting public. <p>Policy 4.5B text Wicklesham Quarry will be safeguarded for employment uses (Classes B2 and B8) following the completion of quarrying and restoration activities on the site. Employment development will be supported on this site if no other suitable sites closer to the town centre are available, providing there is demonstrable need.</p> <p>There are no sites of this size closer to the town centre and need is for the opportunities for local employment without the need for commuting given a predicted population of over 11,000, if and when, all the applications with current planning permission are built. At the 2011 census 50% of the total population of Faringdon were in full or part-time employment. The 2011 census gave a population of 7,121 hence a potential increase in population of 4,000 would indicate a requirement of about 2,000 extra jobs for Faringdon residents. The VoWHDC did not, and has not, had a policy for developing employment for even a fraction of this job requirement resulting in excessive commuting and the lack of opportunity to be able to walk or cycle to work. The aim of the Faringdon Neighbourhood Plan was to stop Faringdon from becoming just a dormitory town. Today, we see aims for 15-minute neighbourhoods and this development could contribute to this aspiration.</p> <p>Policy 4.5B Criteria There are six criteria in Policy 4.5B that must be met before approval is granted:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1) Appropriate transport mitigation is provided; The Design and Access Statement says: The development of the site would need to also deliver a safe crossing over the A420 to serve pedestrians, cyclists and horse riders. There would be an expectation for a pedestrian crossing of the A420 and which would need to be controlled by traffic signals. Such a pedestrian crossing would be required pursuant to a S278 agreement upon a planning application. The proposed access with right turning into the site eastbound is unacceptable in mixing motorised and non-motorised traffic. Vehicles should enter via the Park Rd roundabout as now. Right turning egress could result in traffic jams as in Milton Park at peak periods. The proposed Toucan crossing may not be adequate for the current traffic volumes at peak periods. It was expected that pedestrian crossing to the site would be from the bridleway between Sands Hill and Quarry Hill, 207/22/10, but the application site does not have an entrance in the NW corner. The OCC Principal Officer - Countryside Access Strategy & Development has made observations on the lack of a safe

crossing from the Sands Hill to Galley Hill bridleway and on the main access to the site, which we support together with the comments in paragraphs 1-3 of his report.

Faringdon Town Council recommends that the only safe and acceptable access for non-motorised traffic is via a bridge from the Sands Hill bridleway.

We note that 23 parking spaces have been removed from the NW corner of the site to accommodate a 'Faringdon Quarry Restoration Plan' (as yet unspecified), but the number of parking spaces in the documentation provided by the applicant remains unchanged at 444.

Traffic management and safe access to this site has been a principal concern of residents in objecting to this application.

2) Appropriate provision is made within the site for pedestrians and cyclists:

The Vale Local Plan Core Policy 28 ii also requires safe site access to be provided for pedestrians and cyclists and for all types of vehicles likely to visit the sites and the proposals include measures to promote the use of sustainable modes of transport where possible.

The following Faringdon Neighbourhood Plan policies in section 4.3 refer to this criterion.

Policy 4.3A: Connections

New developments should create attractive street connections into the town centre that encourage walking and cycling. Opportunities to create or improve routes between existing parts of the town should be maximised.

Policy 4.3C: Shared Surfaces

Any shared surfaces in new developments must give priority to pedestrians and cyclists over motorised vehicles with that priority clearly indicated.

Policy 4.3E: Footpaths and Cycleways

New developments should contribute to the delivery of improvements to the quality and extent of the pedestrian and cycle network in and around Faringdon and connecting with the adjoining parishes (including those identified in the 2009 Farcycles' report). In addition, they should contribute towards the provision of new lockable cycle parking facilities close to local amenities. These will be sought through developer contributions.

All of these policies must be considered and adhered to with reference to Active Travel England.

3) The proposed employment development does not have a detrimental impact on the relationship between the site and the wider landscape in which it sits;

The 25 m high buildings are contrary to policies 4.7A and E

Extract from the supporting text in Section 7 Design of the Faringdon Neighbourhood Plan
Several of the key sites, including the Wicklesham Quarry site and the proposed Sandhill development to the north of the A420, are visible from elevated vantage points such as Folly Hill and the Folly Tower. Protecting views from these locations needs careful management. The integration of any development with the landscape and particularly the nature of the roof forms will play an important role in achieving successful development. Initiatives such as green roofs and photovoltaic arrays will also be encouraged where they do not conflict with key views of the town's roofscape or harm either the setting of listed buildings or the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.

Policy 4.7A: Materials and Roofscape

New buildings should be constructed using sympathetic building materials in keeping with the local character and styles in the town and parish. The roofscape should be designed with careful regard for the potential impacts on the townscape and the surrounding landscape. In the case of residential development, regard must be given to the up-to-date Residential Design Guide SPD produced by the Vale of White Horse District Council.

Policy 4.7B: Resource Consumption

All new buildings and major refurbishments should minimise their energy, water and resource consumption and, where possible, exceed the minimum standards set by legislation. District heating schemes will be strongly supported. New developments should provide sufficient space for recycling and composting containers in order to encourage recycling and composting through the District Council schemes or home composting for garden use.

Policy 4.7E: Visual Impact

All alterations or new build of commercial buildings, and especially those that are publicly visible or that form gateways to Faringdon, should be of a scale and form appropriate to their location and landscape setting and should create a high quality environment combining the best modern design with local influences.

25 m high buildings would be intrusive as viewed not only from Folly Hill, but from lower-lying sites nearby. Building heights should be no more than two storey or 15 m allowing for the depth of the quarry. A precedent was established by the Vale of White Horse District Council (VoWHDC) with Policy 4.7E, being used in the rejection of the proposed three-storey McCarthy & Stone development on Lechlade.

VoWHDC Local Plan Core Policy 28 iii requires that the scale nature and appearance of the employment development does not harm the character of the area and respects the local townscape and landscape character

The massing of the buildings on this site has been another principal concern of residents in objecting to this application.

The size of the buildings in this proposal are unacceptable and need to be reduced.

4) Appropriate ecological mitigation and enhancement measures are incorporated into the proposals;

Objectors have referred to the need for an Environmental Impact Analysis, but this has been rejected

by the OCC Office of Planning, Environment and Climate Change. Faringdon Town Council supports the OCC officers request further information on biodiversity and ecological impacts.

5) Any development would not result in demonstrable harm to the geological special interest of the site;

The development can only be approved provided it meets the conditions laid down by Natural England and the Oxford Geology Trust for arrangements for the protection of both the quarry walls and the heaps of excavated, fossil bearing material.

6) Employment proposals should incorporate measures to provide access to the protected site for the visiting public.

Access for researchers, students and the public must be permanent and not restricted by site security requirements. This will require adequate fencing, the indefinite maintenance of which by the development, should be a condition of approval with terms agreed with Natural England and the Oxford Geology Trust.

This development is the opportunity to create a permanent source of information about the Faringdon fossils and its dissemination through an educational facility established through a s106 agreement.

Faringdon has a significant deficit in recreational space and this development offers the opportunity for the inclusion of sports pitches for the health and well-being of both employees and local residents.

This site is the only piece of flat land left undeveloped in Faringdon.

Summary

Faringdon Town Council **OBJECTS** to this application unless the above conditions from the Faringdon Neighbourhood Plan are met.

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Attachments The following files have been uploaded:

[OCC comments 1-12-23.pdf](#)