

OXFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL'S RESPONSE TO CONSULTATION ON THE FOLLOWING DEVELOPMENT PROPOSAL

District: South Oxfordshire

Application no: P17/S3029/SCO

Proposal: Scoping opinion for proposed outline application for the development of land to the south of Great Western Park, for approximately 1,023 dwellings.

Location: Land South of Great Western Park, Didcot.

Purpose of document

This report sets out Oxfordshire County Council's view on the proposal.

This report contains officer advice in the form of a strategic localities response and technical team response(s). Where local member have responded these have been attached by OCCs Major Planning Applications Team (planningconsultations@oxfordshire.gov.uk).

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Strategic Comments

Comments:

This proposal for some 1,023 dwellings to the south of Great Western Park is of a strategic site scale.

The development on some 50ha is described as follows:

- Residential properties (approximately 1,023 dwellings);
- Landscape and green infrastructure enhancements;
- Public open space;
- Partial delivery of a southern perimeter road linking to Valley Park;
- Delivery of an interconnected green route linking to the proposed Garden Line; and
- Access and associated infrastructure

The site is not proposed to be allocated in the emerging South Oxfordshire Local Plan. It is also not identified as a possible location for growth in the Didcot Garden Town Proposed Delivery Plan which was consulted on until July 2017.

The current CIL Charging Schedule and Regulation 123 list indicate that this site would be subject to CIL. Some types of infrastructure can only be funded through the CIL pot, but there are exclusions identifying types of infrastructure which can be secured upon development through S106 or other statutory provisions.

The attached comments set out advice in relation to the scoping report. Given the scale of the proposal the County Council encourages pre-application discussion. The proposals relating to a perimeter road, or southern Didcot spine road, and delivery of a green route linking to the proposed Garden Line are of particular interest. Provision for education facilities is also expected.

Officer's Name: Lynette Hughes

Officer's Title: Senior Planning Officer

Date: 12 September 2017

District: South Oxfordshire

Application no: P17/S3029/SCO

Proposal: Scoping opinion for proposed outline application for the development of land to the south of Great Western Park, for approximately 1,023 dwellings.

Location: Land South of Great Western Park, Didcot.

Transport

A comprehensive Transport Assessment (TA) will be required to inform any Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA). Oxfordshire County Council has entered into some discussion with regard to the requirements of such a TA and welcomes further dialogue. This response refers to both the submission and previous correspondence with the County Council and whilst it is provided in response to the formal EIA scoping it also includes more general commentary with regard to the transport merits of the site and considerations for the potential development.

The addition of 1,023 new homes in this location is likely to have a significant impact on the transport network in Didcot as well as further afield. Detailed work will be needed to assess the impacts of these development proposals and put forward appropriate mitigation.

Oxfordshire County Council's 4th Local Transport Plan (LTP4) focuses on key growth areas, including Science Vale, which is located to the north west of the development site, as well as Oxford. It is anticipated that the proposed site will generate trips to Oxford and also to Science Vale as key centres for employment, as well as further afield. Given the scale of the development, the County Council expects any proposals and transport mitigation to meet with the objectives and aspirations set out in LTP4.

Science Vale transport proposals within LTP4 include a number of schemes such as Science Bridge, A4130 widening works, Clifton Hampden bypass, Culham to Didcot Thames crossing, as well as public transport improvements and cycle routes focused around Didcot and access to key employment areas at Milton Park, Culham Science Centre and Harwell Campus.

Oxford's Transport Strategy within LTP4 includes proposals for rapid transit, remote Park and Ride and a network of cycle super routes and premium cycle routes that connect different parts of the city and nearby settlements.

Paragraph 5.65 of the EIA scoping report confirms that a TA scoping note has been submitted to the County Council for consideration. This is correct and the scoping response from County Council officers has confirmed that any future TA for this development proposal will be expected to demonstrate the effect the development proposal will have upon the local and wider highway network by analysing:

- the site's access arrangements
- local road junctions
- all committed developments within the local area; and
- undertake appropriate junction sensitivity tests within the local area.

Junctions for assessment (with appropriate sensitivity tests) are listed below:

- Proposed vehicular accesses to serve the site;
- Milton Interchange (A4130/ A34)
- Station Road / Foxall Road roundabout;

- A4130 Abingdon Road / Hadden Hill roundabout;
- Broadway / Hitchcock Way roundabout;
- Park Close / Park Road / Queensway double mini-roundabout;
- Park Road / Edwin Road roundabout;
- Park Road / Brook Lane junction;
- London Road / Hagbourne Hill roundabout;
- Main Street / London Road junction;
- Chilton roundabout; and
- A417 Wantage Road / Newbury Road (Rostock) roundabout.

The TA should set out a clear role for public transport, expressed in terms of modal shares for different types of journey. Any expressed modal share should relate to a series of clearly stated assumptions. This Council will expect public transport to be directly available to residents via stops within suitable walking distances of the new residential units. The normal criteria for walking distance to bus stops should be a maximum of 400 metres. However, any bus route or routes through the residential areas should be as direct as possible, so as to be attractive to users.

Target modal shares for public transport use will differ, according to destination and the quality / frequency of the bus service. The baseline level of public transport use in this part of South Oxfordshire is currently very low, although it is relatively high for certain types of journey (for example to central Oxford and central London). Interchange represents a risk to public transport users, that connection times may on occasion be lengthy and unattractive. Generally speaking, this concept works well only for interchange from a very frequent service to another very frequent service. Thus modal share for any flow involving interchange should be adjusted to account for this deterrence.

Any proposed connection with rail passenger services should reflect the extended hours of operation required to cover the journey to work in Oxford, London and back, also the costs of such a service and the likely revenue attributable to a bus operator.

Financial support will be required to pump-prime the initial bus services to and from this development. It is currently envisaged that additional vehicles will be required in the local bus network, specifically providing a new bus service, which will require pump-priming towards commercial viability.

Further work is required with potential bus routeing and stops within the proposed site, including intensification of activity around bus stops and siting parks and green spaces away from public bus stops. Any future bus stops within the site will be expected to be provided with hard standing areas and ducting ready for real time information infrastructure to be installed. The delivery of bus stop flags, poles, bus shelters can be by either the developer or via a financial contribution to the County Council as part of a S106 Agreement.

Information around on-site infrastructure for pedestrians, cyclist and public transport should be provided, as well as how this new infrastructure will link with any existing infrastructure in the local area. The County's own design guidance should be considered along with national guidance such as Manual for Streets and Inclusive Mobility.

The County Council has an adopted Rights of Way Management Plan, see: www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/rowip , in particular the section on 'Countryside Access and the Development Planning Process'.

Officer's Name: Michael Deadman

Officer's Title: Principal Engineer

Date: 11 September 2017

District: South Oxfordshire

Application no: P17/S3029/SCO

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Location: Land South of Great Western Park, Didcot.

Education

Key issues:

- Oxfordshire County Council has a statutory duty under S14 of the *Education Act 1996* to secure sufficient school places to meet the needs of local population, including as a result of housing developments such as this proposal. Under Section 7 of the *Childcare Act 2006* and extended by the *Childcare Act 2016*, the Council has a responsibility to ensure that there is sufficient childcare and early education provision.
- The proposed development will have a significant impact on demand for pre-school, primary and secondary education – this includes on demand for special education places across all sectors.
- Primary and early years education provision needs would be expected to be met within a development of this size, through a new primary school. Paragraph 1.6 of the scoping report states that the proposed development will include approximately 1,023 Residential Units. The county council advises that for this scale of housing, in this location, a new primary school would be required. 1,023 homes would typically be expected to generate the need for one 1.5-form entry primary school, including a nursery. However, this would need to be fully assessed based on proposed housing mixes and timescales.
- Additional early years education and childcare provision could be through a mixed market of private and voluntary providers, including pre-schools, day nurseries and childminders. The inclusion of suitable accommodation within the development, for example within any neighbourhood centre / community hub, could be considered.
- Secondary and SEN education provision would be expected to be delivered off-site, and would need to take into account the wider picture of population growth in and around Didcot, where new schools are planned.
- The EIA needs to include consideration of travel patterns from the development to local schools. For primary education this includes to existing/already planned new schools during any period between occupations commencing and a new on-site school opening, and in the longer term to the proposed new on-site school. For secondary schools, the likely direction of travel would be towards The Aureus School and University Technical College within Great Western Park.
- It should be noted that demand and supply of school places in this area is going through a period of rapid change, and will continue to do so in response to planned

housing developments, including this one. The Education Sufficiency team at Oxfordshire County Council is able to advise as required on appropriate data regarding school place planning. In the first instance, the OCC Pupil Place Plan (available from www.oxfordshire.gov.uk) should be referred to. Data on the current situation and past trends needs to be supplemented with information about future plans and forecasts. The School Organisation team at Oxfordshire County Council will base its response to any future planning application on the latest available information.

Officer's Name: Barbara Chillman

Officer's Title: Pupil Place Planning Manager

Date: 29 August 2017

District: South Oxfordshire

Application no: P17/S3029/SCO

Proposal: Scoping opinion for proposed outline application for the development of land to the south of Great Western Park, for approximately 1,023 dwellings.

Location: Land South of Great Western Park, Didcot.

Archaeology

Recommendation:

Comments

Key issues:

- Chapter 7 of the EIA Scoping Report confirms that the applicant is preparing an archaeological desk based assessment (DBA) to be included in the EIA.
- The methodology and the proposed sources for the DBA are acceptable.
- We also concur with the inclusion of the results of a geophysical survey of the application area.

Detailed comments:

Chapter 7 of the EIA Scoping Report outlines a methodology along with source material to form the basis of a DBA to be included within an EIA. We can confirm that this proposal is acceptable.

We also concur with the geophysical survey results being included.

Officer's Name: Hugh Coddington

Officer's Title: Archaeology Team Leader

Date: 25 August 2017

District: South Oxfordshire

Application no: P17/S3029/SCO

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Waste Management

Recommendation:

No objection subject to conditions

Key issues:

Maintaining and increasing high rates of recycling and composting in Oxfordshire which are currently the best in the country and the impact of new development on waste management infrastructure.

There is no reference to the waste management implications of the proposed development in the scoping report and no evidence to support that it has been screened out. While the waste management impact in the operational phase is unlikely to be of such significance to require full consideration in the EIA, the development will increase domestic waste arisings and the demand for waste management services, including household waste recycling centres (HWRCs) which experience capacity issues. Evidence should be provided in the EIA to demonstrate that this has been considered including how impacts will be mitigated.

Detailed comments:

See above

Officer's Name: Frankie Upton

Officer's Title: Waste Project Manager

Date: 31 August 2017

District: South Oxfordshire

Application no: P17/S3029/SCO

Proposal: Scoping opinion for proposed outline application for the development of land to the south of Great Western Park, for approximately 1,023 dwellings.

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Economy and Skills

Key issues:

- Chapter 13 Community and Socio-economics will assess the potential socio-economic effects arising from the construction and operation of the proposed development
- This will involve the identification of existing socio-economic baseline conditions in terms of population change and employment structure and an assessment of the likely construction, operational and cumulative effects
- It would be useful to see an assessment of the employment and training opportunities, e.g. employment created and construction training opportunities, as well as apprenticeship opportunities
- OxLEP and partners are committed to delivering significant levels of economic growth
- As such, for a proposed development of this size a Community Employment Plan will be requested on an application submitted for this site.

Detailed comments:

See above

Officer's Name: Sarah Beal

Officer's Title: Economic Development Coordinator

Date: 30 August 2017
