

PLANNING DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE PRE-APPLICATION FORUM

ABERDEEN, 20 May 2021. Minute of Meeting of the PLANNING DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE PRE-APPLICATION FORUM.
Present:- Councillor Boulton, Convener; and Councillors Allan, Cooke, Copland, Cormie, Greig and MacKenzie.

The agenda and reports associated with this minute can be found [here](#).

Please note that if any changes are made to this minute at the point of approval, these will be outlined in the subsequent minute and this document will not be retrospectively altered.

INTRODUCTION AND PROCEDURE NOTE

1. The Forum had before it the procedure note and guidance for members on the operation of Forum meetings.

The Forum resolved:-

to note the procedure note and guidance for members.

MINUTE OF PREVIOUS MEETING OF 22 APRIL 2021

2. The Forum had before it the minute of its previous meeting of 22 April 2021, for approval.

The Forum resolved:-

to approve the minute as a correct record.

SITE AT QUATTRO HOUSE, WELLINGTON CIRCLE ABERDEEN - 210225

3. The Forum had before it a report by the Chief Officer – Strategic Place Planning, on a submission of a Proposal of Application Notice by Halliday Fraser Munro on behalf of their client Faro Properties VII Ltd, for a major development for a residential development comprising conversion and erection of approximately 90 units and associated infrastructure, at the site at Quattro House, Wellington Circle Aberdeen, reference number 210225.

The report advised that the application site comprised Quattro House and its curtilage, a cluster of three adjoining single and two-storey late 20th Century office buildings positioned on the north-eastern corner of Wellington Circle, within the Wellington Business Park. The site was approximately 1.3 hectares in size and lies immediately to the west of the A956 dual carriageway (Wellington Road). A vacant office building adjoins the site to the south, with general industrial uses to the west and the Royal Mail

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Altens Delivery Office on the opposite side of Wellington Circle to the south-west. The residential area of Redmoss lies to the north of the site, beyond a private access track. The site incorporated established soft landscaping and trees to some of its northern and eastern boundaries, including a tree belt along the northern boundary. A significant portion of the site to the front of the buildings comprises car parking. It was noted that the buildings had been vacant for approximately five years.

The Forum heard from Mr Alex Ferguson, Planner who addressed the Forum and provided details regarding the planning aspects of the application.

Mr Ferguson explained that the site lies within an area zoned as B1 (Business and Industrial Land) in the adopted Aberdeen Local Development Plan 2017 (ALDP). Policy B1 seeks that land zoned for business and industrial uses, including already developed land, shall be retained for Class 4 (Business), Class 5 (General Industrial) and Class 6 (Storage and Distribution) uses and safeguarded from other conflicting development types. It also further notes that where business and industrial areas are located beside residential areas that new planning permissions will be restricted to Class 4 (Business).

Mr Ferguson also noted that Policy B1 does not make any provision for residential uses in existing or zoned business and industrial areas, therefore the proposal would be contrary to Policy B1 and would constitute a departure from the adopted development plan strategy.

In terms of consultation, Mr Ferguson advised that the applicants undertook a Public Consultation Event via an online event on the 30th of March 2021, which provided an opportunity to join live chat sessions with the project team between 2pm and 8pm. Further information was also provided prior to and following this on a dedicated website. The proposal was advertised in the local press, with local Councillors, Community Councils and neighbouring properties, businesses and residents made aware of the event and invited to attend.

It was noted that as part of the application, the applicant had been advised that the following information would need to accompany the formal submission:-

- Location Plan, Site Plan, Elevations, Floor Plans, Building and Site Sections
- Supporting Statement – including justification for change of use / evidence of lack of demand for continued business & industry use
- Pre-Application Consultation Report
- Design & Access Statement
- Noise Impact Assessment
- Air Quality Desktop Survey
- Drainage Impact Assessment and SUDS details
- Photomontages from key views (Wellington Road & Wellington Circle) of any new buildings / increase in height of existing buildings
- Tree Survey, Arboricultural Impact Assessment & Tree Protection Plan
- Landscaping Plan, including Management Plan

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- Transport Statement
- Swept Path Analyses – Bin lorries and Emergency vehicles
- Details of Refuse Storage and Collection
- Preliminary Ecological Survey

The Forum then heard from the applicant/agent and the presenters were as follows:-

- Steve Crawford – Halliday Fraser Munro
- Neal Harvey – Faro Capital Ltd
- Yumming Thomson - HFM

Mr Crawford began the presentation by displaying photos of the site location and images of the existing site. By way of background, Mr Crawford advised that the site comprised vacant office buildings which had been marketed since 2016 with no interest in its current use.

In relation to the site context, Mr Crawford explained that the existing land use was zoned for business use and the surrounding land uses were utilised with residential, leisure, retail and commercial. In terms of accessibility, there was public transport to the site and walking and cycling routes were available.

In regard to the design considerations, Mr Crawford advised that there would be a sustainable reuse of the main building, with demolition and a new building to the south of the development. They would utilise the existing access point and car parking areas with high quality finishes to change the character from business to residential. There would also be attractive areas of amenity, green space and landscaping including existing opportunity to create a south facing private courtyard. The site would also promote safe pedestrian and cycle routes through the site with access to surrounding areas including public transport on Wellington Road, core path network to the north with links to the Community Woodland to the east. There would also be connections to leisure facilities and retail (with a proposed new Aldi only 600m walking distance), with community and employment nearby, which would create a sustainable mixed-use community.

Mr Crawford then went on to discuss the proposal for the site and noted they planned to remove and re-clad the existing main building and also increase the accommodation through additional levels which would be set back.

In terms of the indicative site layout, the existing main office building would be retained and redeveloped as apartments and the single storey additions removed. The new housing block would be to the south and would include 25% affordable housing and the parking and open space elements would be to the required standards.

Mr Crawford also provided an indicative early illustration of the site.

Members then asked a number of questions of both the applicant and the case officer and the following information was noted:-

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- The 25% affordable housing would be included in the second block;
- The zoned primary school for the proposed housing was Kirkhill Primary School and the academy was Lochside Academy;
- The existing car parking would stay in the same area but would be reduced in numbers. Electric charging points would also be included;
- The applicant had not yet considered providing fibre broadband to all of the premises but this could be investigated;
- General noise and traffic noise mitigations were important and would be looked at along with the use of buffers and would be included in the final application;
- The general breakdown of properties in the development would be 10% 3 bedroom flats with their own garden, 80% two bedroom flats and 10% one bedroom flats;
- Cycle sheds and refuse points would all be fitted as standard;
- COVID had changed the way developers looked at proposed flatted properties. With the change in people's circumstances and a lot of individuals homeworking, it highlighted that a lot of flatted properties did not have any outdoor space to enjoy and this had been important when developing this proposal, with as many properties as possible having balconies;
- The agent had an in house architect and they would utilise the architects services in order to help with the landscaping and to offer as much open space as possible as well as a possible play area and communal gardens.

The report recommended:-

That the Forum –

- (a) Note the key issues identified;
- (b) If necessary, seek clarification on any particular matters; and
- (c) Identify relevant issues which they would like the applicant to consider and address in any future application.

The Forum resolved:-

- (i) to request that the applicant consider the key points above; and
- (ii) to thank the presenters for their informative presentation.

- **Councillor Marie Boulton, Convener**