

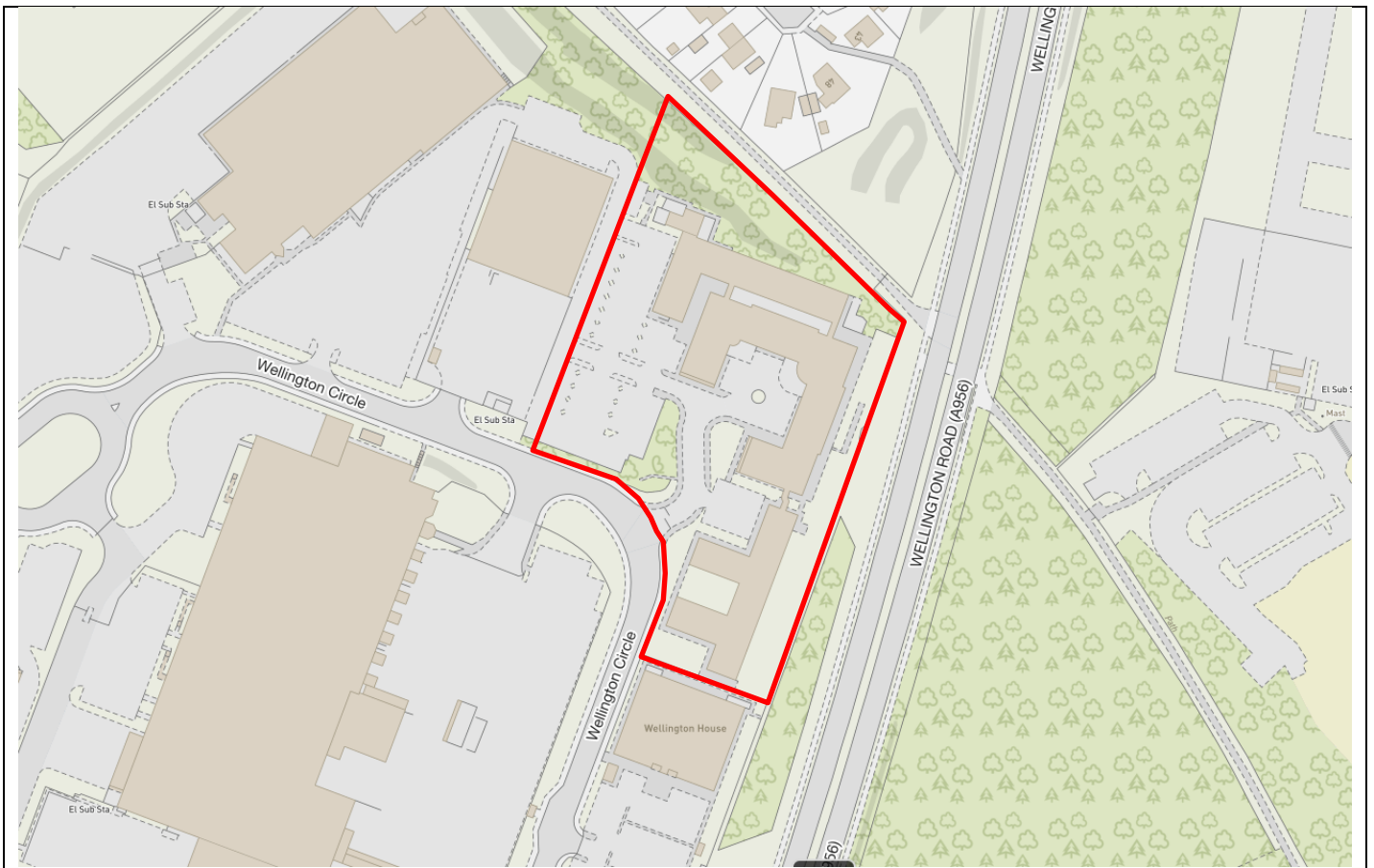


Pre-Application Forum

Report by Development Management Manager

Meeting Date: 20 May 2021

Site Address:	Site at Quattro House, Wellington Circle, Aberdeen, AB12 3JG
Description of Proposal:	Major residential development comprising conversion and erection (approximately 90 units) and associated infrastructure
Notice Ref:	210225/PAN
Notice Type:	Proposal of Application Notice
Notice Date:	22 February 2021
Applicant:	Faro Properties VII Ltd
Ward:	Kincorth/Nigg/Cove
Community Council:	Nigg
Case Officer:	Alex Ferguson



© Crown Copyright. Aberdeen City Council. Licence Number: 100023401 - 2018

RECOMMENDATION

It is 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 applicants to consider and address in any future application.

APPLICATION BACKGROUND

Site Description

The application site comprises '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 is 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 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 incorporates 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. The buildings have been vacant for approximately five years.

Relevant Planning History

210225/PAN – A Proposal of Application Notice was submitted for the proposed Major redevelopment of the site for residential use, comprising conversion and erection of buildings (approximately 90 units) in February 2021. The Planning Service responded on 12 March 2021 advising that further consultation was required.

APPLICATION DESCRIPTION

Description of Proposal

Major residential development comprising conversion and erection (approximately 90 units) and associated infrastructure.

Full details of the proposals are not yet known as the site layout and design are still being developed, although an indicative option for the site layout was recently consulted on via the applicant's dedicated website www.quattrohouse.com. This included the retention, conversion and upward extension of the main building, demolition of the southern and northern extensions and the erection of a new building in the southern part of the site.

MATERIAL CONSIDERATIONS

Legislative Requirements

Sections 25 and 37(2) of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997 require that where, in making any determination under the planning acts, regard is to be had to the provisions of the Development Plan and that determination shall be made in accordance with the plan, so far as material to the application unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

National Planning Policy and Guidance

- Scottish Planning Policy (SPP)

Aberdeen City and Shire Strategic Development Plan (2020) (SDP)

The Strategic Development Plan 2020 was published in August 2020. The purpose of this Plan is to set a clear direction for the future development of the City Region. It sets the strategic framework for investment in jobs, homes and infrastructure over the next 20 years and promotes a spatial strategy for the next 20 years. All parts of the Strategic Development Plan area will fall within either a Strategic Growth Area or a Local Growth and Diversification Area. Some areas are also identified as Regeneration Priority Areas. The following general targets are identified; promoting diversified economic growth, promoting sustainable economic development which will reduce carbon dioxide production, adapting to the effects of climate change and limiting the amount of non-renewable resources used, encouraging population growth, maintaining and improving the region's built, natural and cultural assets, promoting sustainable communities and improving accessibility in development

Aberdeen Local Development Plan 2017 (ALDP)

- B1: Business and Industrial Land
- C11: Digital Infrastructure
- D1: Quality Placemaking by Design
- D2: Landscape
- H3: Density
- H4: Housing Mix
- H5: Affordable Housing
- I1: Infrastructure Delivery & Planning Obligation
- NE4: Open Space Provision in New Development
- NE5: Trees and Woodland
- NE6: Flooding, Drainage & Water Quality
- NE8: Natural Heritage
- R2: Degraded & Contaminated Land
- R6: Waste Management Requirements for New Development
- R7: Low & Zero Carbon Build & Water Efficiency
- T2: Managing the Transport Impact of Development
- T3: Sustainable and Active Travel
- T4: Air Quality
- T5: Noise

Supplementary Guidance and Technical Advice Notes

- Affordable Housing
- Air Quality
- Flooding, Drainage and Water Quality
- Green Space Network and Open Space
- Harmony of Uses
- Landscape
- Materials TAN
- Natural Heritage
- Noise
- Planning Obligations
- Resources for New Development
- Transport and Accessibility

- Trees and Woodlands

Proposed Aberdeen Local Development Plan 2020 (PALDP)

- B1 (Business and Industrial)
- C11 (Digital Infrastructure)
- D1 (Quality Placemaking)
- D2 (Amenity)
- D4 (Landscape)
- D5 (Landscape Design)
- H3 (Density)
- H4 (Housing Mix and Need)
- H5 (Affordable Housing)
- I1 (Infrastructure Delivery & Planning Obligations)
- NE2 (Green and Blue Infrastructure)
- NE3 (Natural Heritage)
- NE4 (Water Infrastructure)
- NE5 (Trees and Woodland)
- R2 (Degraded and Contaminated Land)
- R5 (Waste Management Requirements in New Development)
- R6 (Low & Zero Carbon & Water Efficiency)
- R8 (Heat Networks)
- T2 (Sustainable Transport)
- T3 (Parking)
- WB2 (Air Quality)
- WB3 (Noise)

EVALUATION

Principle of Development

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 we will restrict new planning permissions to Class 4 (Business). Buffer zones, which are appropriately sized and landscaped, may be required to separate these uses and safeguard residential amenity.'

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

Layout, Scale and Design

Issues of layout, scale and design will need to be considered against Policies D1 (Quality Placemaking by Design) and D2 (Landscape). Policy D1 advises that all development must ensure high standards of design and have a strong and distinctive sense of place which takes into account the context of the surrounding area and will be required to offer opportunities for connectivity which take into account the character and scale of the development. Developments that contribute to placemaking will help sustain and enhance the social, economic, environmental,

and cultural attractiveness of the city. Proposals will be considered against six essential qualities: distinctive, welcoming, safe and pleasant, easy to move around, adaptable and resource efficient.

Landscape & Trees

Policy D2 outlines that new developments will have a strong landscape framework that improves and enhances the setting and visual impact of the development, unifies urban form, provides shelter, creates local identity, and promotes biodiversity. To secure high quality development, new development should include a landscape strategy and management plan incorporating soft and hard landscaping design specifications. The level of detail required will be appropriate to the scale of development.

Policy NE5 (Trees and Woodlands) states a presumption against all activities and development that will result in the loss of, or damage to, trees and woodlands that contribute to nature conservation, landscape character, local amenity or climate change adaptation and mitigation.

Given the development would be highly visible from Wellington Road and immediately adjoins an industrial use to the west, additional landscaping around the edges of the site is likely to be required, in addition to the retention of as much of the existing landscaping and trees as possible. Any application should be supported by a Tree Survey, Arboricultural Impact Assessment and Tree Protection Plan.

Density & Housing Mix

Policy H3 (Density) requires a minimum of 30 dwellings per hectare in new residential developments. The proposals would exceed the minimum density however Policy H3 also notes that all developments over one hectare must create an attractive residential environment and safeguard living conditions within the development. The Strategic Development Plan 2020 seeks the target density of new housing development in the Aberdeen City Strategic Growth Area should increase to generally no less than 50 dwellings per hectare.

Policy H4 (Housing Mix) states: 'Housing developments of larger than 50 units are required to achieve an appropriate mix of dwelling types and sizes, in line with a masterplan, reflecting the accommodation requirements of specific groups, in particular families, older people and people with particular needs. This mix should include smaller 1 and 2 bedroom units and should be reflected in both the market and affordable housing contributions.'

Affordable Housing

Policy H5 (Affordable Housing) requires 25% of the units in all residential developments of 5 or more units to be affordable. The expectation is that any affordable housing would be delivered on-site.

Developer Obligations

Development must be accompanied by the infrastructure, services and facilities required to support new or expanded communities and the scale and type of developments proposed. Where additional demands on community facilities or infrastructure that would necessitate new facilities or exacerbate deficiencies in existing provision, the Council will require the developer to meet or contribute to the cost of providing or improving such infrastructure or facilities. The level of infrastructure requirements and contributions will be outlined by the Council, through the Developer Obligations Assessment and will relate to the development, in line with Policy I1 (Infrastructure Delivery and Planning Obligations).

It is understood that in terms of Education, the site would fall within the catchment areas of Kirkhill

Primary School and Lochside Academy. Based on the 2018 school roll forecasts there is likely to be sufficient capacity at both schools for the proposed development however a review of the situation would take place upon the submission of a formal application.

The site's nearest healthcare facility is the Cove & Kincorth Medical Practice, which is understood to be operating over capacity, therefore it is likely that a contribution would be sought towards anticipated extension works to the practice.

Further contributions are likely to be sought towards the core path network, open space, sports & recreation and community facilities (Loirston Annexe Community Centre and/or Altens Community Centre).

Transport and Accessibility

With regards to sustainable and active travel, Policies T2 (Managing the Transport Impact of Development) and T3 (Sustainable and Active Travel) will be used to assess the development. Policy T2 requires all new developments to demonstrate that sufficient measures have been taken to minimise traffic generated and to maximise opportunities for sustainable and active travel. A Transport Statement would be required to support the proposal. Parking requirements are outlined in the Transport & Accessibility Supplementary Guidance and will depend on the total number of units proposed and the percentage of those units that would comprise affordable housing.

In terms of Policy T3, new developments must be accessible by a range of transport modes, with an emphasis on active and sustainable transport. In addition, links between residential, employment, recreation and other facilities must be protected or improved for non-motorised transport users, making it quick, convenient, and safe for people to travel by walking and cycling. Links to the site should be looked at from the surrounding path and road networks.

A Transport Statement will be required to accompany a formal application, which should include a Travel Plan and 'Safe Routes to School' assessment. Transport-related developer obligations may also be sought, dependent on the finalised details of the proposals.

Noise

It is anticipated that the proposed development would be subject to noise emissions from traffic on Wellington Road and from neighbouring industrial uses on Wellington Circle. A Noise Impact Assessment will be required to support the application to assess the impact of noise emissions on the future occupants of the proposed flats and to recommend mitigation measures, where necessary, in order to ensure that an adequate residential amenity could be created. It would also be necessary to ensure that the viability and operations of any neighbouring industrial uses would not be harmed by the redevelopment of the site for residential use.

Air Quality

Policy T4 (Air Quality) of the ALDP states: 'Development proposals which may have a detrimental impact on air quality will not be permitted unless measures to mitigate the impact of air pollutants are proposed and agreed with the Planning Authority. Planning applications for such proposals should be accompanied by an assessment of the likely impact of development on air quality and any mitigation measures proposed.' Although the site does not lie within an Air Quality Management Area, it is immediately adjacent to the heavily trafficked Wellington Road. As such, a desktop Air Quality screening assessment should be submitted as part of any application. This would determine whether there would be a full Air Quality Impact Assessment would be required.

Flooding & Drainage

As per the requirements of Policy NE6 (Flooding, Drainage and Water Quality), a Drainage Impact Assessment (DIA) will be required for new development proposals comprising 5 or more new homes. The assessment should detail how surface water and waste water will be managed. SEPA's Flood Maps indicate that an area to the west of the site, on Wellington Circle, is at risk of surface water flooding. However, given the large expanses of hard surfacing within the site at present, it is considered that the proposed redevelopment would be unlikely to exacerbate any existing flood risk. As such, a Flood Risk Assessment is not required, subject to details being provided within the DIA which demonstrate that the site would be adequately drained.

Natural Heritage

Policy NE8 (Natural Heritage) states that development should seek to avoid any detrimental impact on protected species through the carrying out of surveys and submission of protection plans describing appropriate mitigation where necessary. It is possible that bats and other protected species may be present within the existing trees and landscaping on the site, particularly within the tree belt along its northern edge. The applicant is advised to submit a Preliminary Ecological Assessment in support of any planning application. Further surveys may be required depending on the findings of this report.

Open Space

Policy NE4 (Open Space Provision in New Development) requires new developments to accommodate an area of open space within the development site. As per the policy the Council requires at least 2.8Ha per 1,000 people of meaningful and useful open space. The Supplementary Guidance on Open Space states that open space standards are based on the number of residents within a new development, which can be calculated using the average number of people who live in each dwelling. These figures are outlined in the Supplementary Guidance.

Waste/Refuse

The requirements of Policy R6 (Waste Management Requirements for New Development) advise that all new developments should have sufficient space for storage of general waste, recyclable materials, and compostable waste where appropriate. Details of storage facilities and means of collection will be required as part of any planning submission.

Sustainable Development

Policy R7 (Low and Zero Carbon Buildings, and Water Efficiency) advises that, in terms of low and zero carbon, buildings must meet at least 20% of the building regulations carbon dioxide emissions reduction target applicable at the time of the application through low and zero carbon generating technology. With regards to water efficiency, all new buildings are required to use water saving technologies and techniques. Policy R7 is not applicable to the conversion and extension of existing buildings.

Contaminated Land

Given the previous use of the site and the proximity of neighbouring industrial uses in the surrounding area there is potential for the application site to contain some contamination. As per the requirements of Policy R2 (Degraded and Contaminated Land), in the event that an application is submitted further information may be required in this regard, to be agreed prior to commencement of development, in order to ensure that the site has been appropriately remediated and is fit for human habitation. Where existing buildings are to be demolished, the

developer will need to ensure that they are free of asbestos through appropriate survey and removal, prior to demolition.

Digital Infrastructure

Policy CI1 (Digital Infrastructure) of the ALDP requires all new residential and commercial development will be expected to have access to modern, up-to-date high-speed communications infrastructure.

Proposed Aberdeen Local Development Plan 2020 (PALDP)

The development has been reviewed in relation to the relevant zoning and policies contained within the Proposed Aberdeen Local Development Plan and these substantively reiterate those addressed above in the adopted Local Development Plan.

PRE-APPLICATION CONSULTATION

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 is / was also provided prior to and following this on a dedicated website at: www.quattrohouse.com. 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.

NECESSARY INFORMATION TO SUPPORT ANY FUTURE APPLICATION

As part of any application, the applicant has 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
- Transport Statement
- Swept Path Analyses – Bin lorries and Emergency vehicles
- Details of Refuse Storage and Collection
- Preliminary Ecological Survey

RECOMMENDATION

It is 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 applicants to consider and address in any future application.