

# Planning Development Management Committee

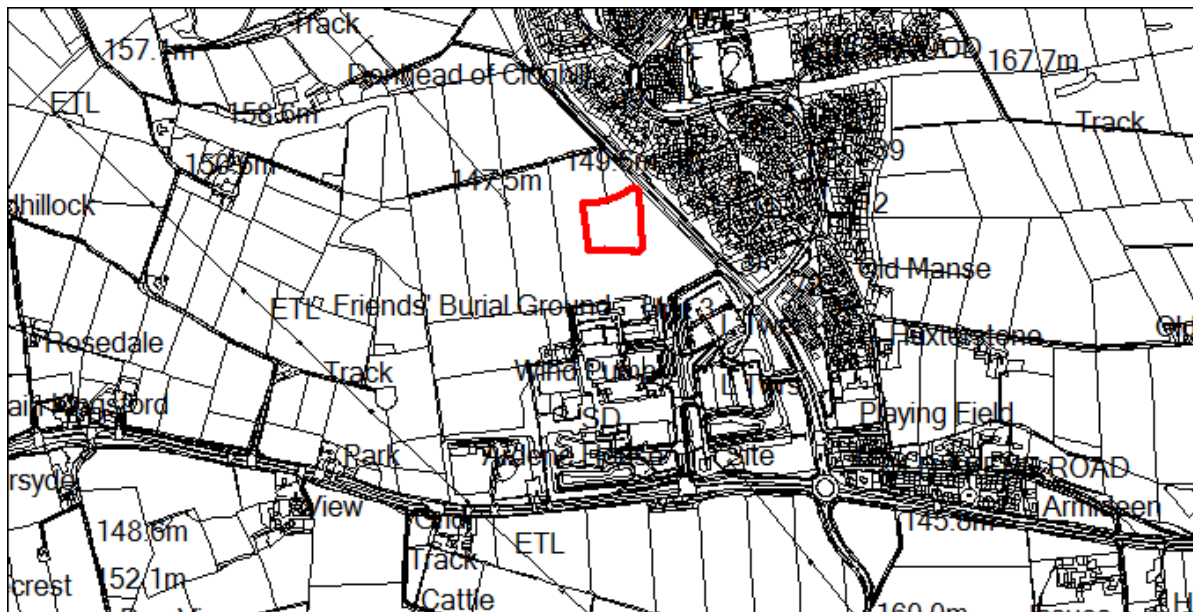
## PLOT 7 PRIME FOUR BUSINESS PARK, KINGSWELLS

APPROVAL OF MATTERS SPECIFIED IN CONDITIONS - PLOT 7, PHASE 2/3 IN RELATION TO CONDITIONS 3 PART I) ACCESS, II) SITING DESIGN AND LOCATION OF HARD SURFACES, III) DESIGN AND EXTERNAL APPEARANCE OF BUILDINGS, IV) WASTE MANAGEMENT, V) PLOT BOUNDARY TREATMENTS, VI) PARKING, VII) LOW AND ZERO CARBON EQUIPMENT, VIII) LANDSCAPING; 15 PLOT SPECIFIC LANDSCAPING TREATMENT OF PERMISSION IN PRINCIPLE P120649

For: Drum (Kingswells) Business Park Ltd and Statoil Production (UK) Ltd

Application Type : Approval of Conditions for Planning Permission in Principle  
Application Ref. : P141066  
Application Date: 14/07/2014  
Officer: Tommy Hart  
Ward : Kingswells/Sheddocksley/Summerhill (L Ironside/S Delaney/D Cameron)

Advert :  
Advertised on:  
Committee Date: 25 September 2014  
Community Council : Comments



**RECOMMENDATION: Approve subject to conditions**

## **DESCRIPTION**

The application site covers an area of approximately 1.49 acres and lies within Phases 2 & 3 of the Prime Four Business Park, which extends to approximately 20 hectares some four miles west of Aberdeen city centre and two miles east of Westhill. The settlement of Kingswells lies to the east of Prime Four, on the opposite side of the C89 Kingswells Bypass.

Phases 2 and 3 of Prime Four were formally rolling agricultural grazing land. The Prime Four Business Park is generally rectangular in shape and broadly bounded as follows: to the north by greenfield land beyond which is the Kingswells Consumption Dyke, a Scheduled Ancient Monument and Category B Listed Building; to the east by the C89 Kingswells Bypass, with Kingswells village beyond; to the south, beyond Phases 1 and 2 and existing properties / businesses is the A944 dual carriageway with agricultural land beyond; and, to the west by the West Hatton Woods (an Ancient and Semi-Natural Woodland) with agricultural land beyond.

Phase 1 of the business park is fully occupied, whilst within Phase 2; plots 5 (De Vere Hotel), 8 (Nursery) and 6 (Premier Oil office), as well as the 'Four Court' are at varying stages of construction.

## **RELEVANT HISTORY**

A number of planning applications have been submitted in respect to Phases 1, 2 and 3 of Prime Four. With specific reference to Phases 2 and 3, the following:

Planning Permission in Principle (PPP) (ref: 120649) for Phases 2 & 3 was granted under delegated powers in November 2012, subject to Conditions and a legal agreement.

Approval of Matters Specified in Conditions (MSC) (ref: 121756), relating to internal road layouts (Phase 2) was granted under delegated powers in April 2013, subject to conditions.

Approval of Matters Specified in Conditions (MSC) (refs: 121757, 121758, 121759) relating to the 'Four Court', plots 5 and 6 (design & appearance boundary treatment; parking and landscaping) were granted permission under delegated powers by the Planning Development Management Committee, subject to conditions, in April 2013.

Approval of Matters Specified in Conditions (MSC) (ref: 131501) for the formation of an access road onto the C89 'Kingswells Bypass' was granted permission, subject to conditions, by the Planning Development Management Committee in March 2014.

## **PROPOSAL**

This application seek permission to purify conditions which were attached to Planning Permission in Principle 120649, as they relate to 'Plot 7', namely: Condition 3, parts: I-access, II-siting and design of hard surfaces, III-design and external appearance of the buildings, IV- waste arrangements, V-plot boundary

treatment, VI-motor vehicle and cycle parking, VII-details of any low and zero carbon equipment, VIII-landscape; and in relation to condition 15 - plot specific landscaping treatment.

The proposals for Plot 7 relate to an office building for Stat Oil.

### **Supporting Documents**

All drawings and the supporting documents listed below relating to this application can be viewed on the Council's website at

<http://planning.aberdeencity.gov.uk/PlanningDetail.asp?ref=141066>

On accepting the disclaimer, enter the application reference quoted on the first page of this report.

Statement of conformity with Phase 2 and 3 Masterplan;  
McAlpine Management System Project Environmental Plan;  
Transport Statement (May 2014);  
Bird Management Plan;  
Planning Sustainability Statement; and  
Drainage Assessment – Plot 7.

### **REASON FOR REFERRAL TO COMMITTEE**

The application has been referred to the Planning Development Management Committee because Kingswells Community Council have objected. Accordingly, the application falls outwith the scope of the Council's Scheme of Delegation.

### **CONSULTATIONS**

**Roads Projects Team** – no objections so long as the access and car/cycle/motorbike parking provision is as per drawing no A5176 PL 02 Rev C.

**Environmental Health** – no observations.

**Enterprise, Planning & Infrastructure (Flooding)** – no comments received.

**Community Council** – Kingswells Community Council object as they consider that as the development is three-storeys high, plus a plant room, and is located on the northern and eastern boundaries of the site there are sensitivities due to the proximity to the consumption dyke, and nearby housing. As such the development does not respect its surroundings and would be more suitable for another location within the Prime Four site. This plot should be reserved for low rise buildings.

**Aberdeen International Airport** - no objections. The proposal does not impact on the safeguarding of the airport, based on the conditions included within the 'Informatives' section below.

## **REPRESENTATIONS**

No letters of representation/objection/support have been received other than that of the Kingswells Community Council.

## **PLANNING POLICY**

### **Aberdeen Local Development Plan (ALDP)**

#### **Policy LR1 - Land Release Policy**

The principle of development on greenfield allocations will be assessed against the land release policy in relation to the phases.

#### **Policy D1 – Architecture and Placemaking**

To ensure high standards of design, new development must be designed with due consideration to its context and make a positive contribution to its setting.

### **Supplementary Guidance**

A Development Framework establishing the principles for developing the overall business park and Masterplan for Phase 1 as well as a Masterplan for Phases 2 and 3 were adopted as Supplementary Guidance in January 2013 and these are relevant material considerations.

## **EVALUATION**

Sections 25 and 37(2) of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997 require that in determining a planning application, regard must be had to the Development Plan. Determination shall be made in accordance with the Plan unless material planning considerations indicate otherwise. The Development Plan consists of the Aberdeen City and Shire Structure Plan and the Aberdeen Local Development Plan.

### **Principle of Development**

In terms of Policy LR1 of the Aberdeen Local Development Plan (ALDP), the proposal is within opportunity site OP40 (West Hatton and Home Farm, Kingswells) which is a 2007-2023 release of employment land. Therefore the broad principle of employment related development has been established. Further to this PPP has been granted (ref: 120649) and the broad land uses were also identified within the Development Framework and Masterplan for Phases 2 & 3.

### **Condition 3, parts:**

#### **I - access, II - siting and design of hard surfaces**

The site would be accessed by vehicles and pedestrians from the recently approved C89 access road. Pedestrian access would also be available from the 'Four Court' to the south. The car park to the north and west of the building is the single biggest area of hardstanding within the application site. The access and internal road would be constructed of tarmac, whilst the car parking spaces would be porous pavements.

A Transport Statement has been submitted to establish the contribution of this proposal to traffic impact currently identified by the previous Phase 1 Transport Assessment. This proposed building represents 6,458m<sup>2</sup> GFA of Class 4 (Office) use, and this will be considered when reviewing other proposals within the PPIp site boundary. This level of development can be accommodated on the road network, through the mitigation requirements identified as part of the Phase 1 application require to be in place prior to any occupation. It should be noted that based on recent approvals for plots 8, 9, 10, 11a only around a further 1,089m<sup>2</sup> GFA of Class 4 equivalent, beyond that proposed in this application could proceed within Prime Four, prior to a further detailed Transport Assessment being approved.

The proposed development is around 250m from the existing bus services, currently terminating at Kingswells Park & Ride, to which there are pedestrian links, which conforms to policy requirements.

The access arrangements are in line with the approved Masterplan and Development Framework for the business park. Overall it is considered that the information provided is sufficient to purify this part of the condition.

### **III-design and external appearance of the buildings**

In design terms, the proposed office should be assessed in the context of the business park, rather than the general form or style of architecture, or height of buildings, of the wider Kingswells area. The business park is physically detached from the residential part of Kingswells to the east, by landscaping and the C89 Kingswells By-Pass. The immediate setting and context against which it will be read is that of the Prime Four business park and the Park and Ride site. Policy D1 seeks for development to be designed with due consideration for its context.

A glass corridor would give the impression that the building is split into two, both sides having a north-south emphasis, as per the approved Masterplan. The design and external finish of the eastern side of the building would be similar to existing approvals throughout Phases 1 and 2 of Prime Four, through the use of granite and vertical emphasis of the glazing. In respect to the western side of the building, an alternative contemporary approach has been taken to the external design and finish: a textured reddy/brown angled metal cladding, rather than granite, emphasising the prominence of the building at the head of the 'Four Court' (exact details are to be confirmed so a condition is attached). Overall it is considered that the building is of a high quality modern design with an appropriate choice of materials, all in keeping with the standard of the buildings as built and currently under construction within Phase 1 and 2.

It is considered that the information provided is sufficient to purify this part of the condition.

### Visual Impact

The building is to be set at the south east corner of the plot. It would have a footprint of around 6,750sqm (5,603sqm net internal floorspace in class 4 (Office) use) and be over 3 floors, with plant atop the flat roof. The main building

structure, to roof level, would be around 13.5m high, while the enclosed and recessed plant would extend up a further 2m, giving a maximum height of around 15.5m. The building lies on the edge of the Northern and Central Character Zones, and within the 'feature' zone, as identified within the approved Masterplan.

Generally, buildings within the Northern zone should be restricted to 2-storeys although at the southern edge slightly higher buildings will be permitted. Likewise, within the central and feature zone (around the 'Four Court') there is the potential for buildings to be 3-storeys or higher, in order to reflect their prominence as focal points at the heart of the Prime Four development and in that respect the building height is acceptable.

It is acknowledged that the building would be of a similar height to the approved hotel currently under construction. In terms of position on the brow of the hill, it is also acknowledged that the building would be visually prominent when viewed from the north - given the topography and fact that there are no other buildings in this direction. However, the Phase 2 & 3 Masterplan encourages greater height in the 'Hub' area, to create a focal point for the business park and the wider area. The building would be in an elevated position, around 10-15m above the road level of the A944 and around 600m away from the main entrance to the business park. If it was to sit in isolation, there would be an argument to say that it would have a significant impact on the surrounding area. However, when viewed within the context of the other development which is under construction in Phase 2, the height of the office is not considered to be excessive nor would it have a significant visual impact on the surrounding area. Consideration also has to be given to the position and scale of the hotel already approved and under construction on the eastern side of the 'Four Court'. A plan showing site sections indicates that, because of the proposed gradients of the land towards the south, the building would only be around 3m taller than the building on plot 3 (within Phase 1) in real terms. Likewise, the office would only be around 2-3m taller than plot 6 on the west side of the 'Four Court'. With that in mind, it is felt that this office building would be no more imposing when viewed from the east or north.

The nearest residential dwelling is around 200m to the east of the proposed office building, beyond a children's nursery under construction at plot 8 and the C89 Kingswells By-pass thereafter. When viewing the application site from the residential properties within Huxterstone Terrace and Drive specifically, the proposed office would not have any unacceptable negative impact on the residential character or amenity. Along the western edge of the residential area, there is a wide row of mature trees, which act as a visual buffer along the C89. These trees are around 12m in height and, particularly when in full foliage, act as a visual aid to enhance residential amenity within the rear gardens of the properties along this western edge of Kingswells. The likelihood is that there would be limited scope for viewing the office from the residential area of Kingswells and in that respect there is not considered to be any negative impact on the existing residential character or amenity afforded.

### Relationship with Consumption Dyke

An objection was received from Kingswells Community Council with respect to the potential impact on the nearby historic Consumption Dyke to the north, which is B-Listed and a scheduled ancient monument. Historic Scotland were consulted during the Planning Permission in Principle process for Phase 2 and 3. And although they did not object to the proposal, they did express some concerns about the spatial relationship between the wider business park development and the setting of the Consumption Dyke. It is also a material consideration that the Scottish Government Reporters, in their decision letter relating to the ALDP, which advised that, the overall development site should be contained within the line of the large 'Consumption' Dyke and both it and its immediate setting should be safeguarded. This was to be secured through the green space network designation which runs along either side of the dyke. The extent of the green space network shown on the ALDP proposals map is indicative, and its precise extent was to be confirmed through the subsequent master planning process. The connecting dykes extend southwards over a ridge were also noted. This approach was considered to be sufficient separation from the development so that the original agricultural function and setting of the dyke can be appreciated.

In relation to this application, it is not considered that impact on the consumption dyke is a particular issue, given that it lies around 175m to the north, in any case the approved Development Framework, Masterplan and strategic landscape proposals has taken account of the Consumption Dyke and will ensure that its setting is maintained. The proposals do not conflict with those documents.

### **IV- waste arrangements**

Bins are proposed to be stored in a free standing single-storey building to the immediate north of the building. The storage unit would be around 2.7m x 7.6m x 2.1m high in size and would be finished with vertical timber cladding.

It is considered that the information provided is sufficient enough to purify this part of the condition.

### **VI-motor vehicle and cycle parking**

The site layout plan shows there would be car parking provided for 217 cars (including 10 disabled), associated to this plot.

32 Long-term cycle parking spaces are proposed within an enclosed and covered unit (around 6m x 12m x 3m high and again finished externally with vertical timber cladding) within the car park to the immediate north of the building. Dedicated short-term cycle parking is proposed adjacent to the main entrance. This cycle parking provision is considered acceptable and in line with the supplementary guidance: *Transport and Accessibility*.

Ten motorcycle parking spaces would be provided which is considered acceptable.

It is considered that the information provided is sufficient to purify this part of the condition.

### **VII-details of any low and zero carbon equipment**

A sustainability statement was submitted in support of this part of condition 3. It has been found that significant energy and carbon savings are predicted for the development, in the form of an air source heat pump (around 16% reduction on 2007 regulations) and increased fabric 'U-Values' (around 25% reduction based on the 2010 regulations). These measures meet the intent of the condition, and thus it can be purified.

### **Landscaping**

Condition 3, parts: V-plot boundary treatment; & VIII-landscape; and Condition 15-plot specific landscaping treatment

The hard landscaping surrounding the building would be a mixture of grey coloured concrete feature paving, with the smaller path areas to be dark grey concrete pavers. The car park would be finished with tarmac and the parking spaces with grey coloured porous pavements.

In terms of soft landscaping, within the car park area, linear runs of tree planting on the north south axis would pick up elements from the landscaped 'Northern Park' and help 'bed' the development into the landscape setting in that direction. Hedging would also be introduced throughout the site and along the north, west and east boundaries.

The information provided in relation to the landscaping is considered to be in accordance with the general principles of the Development Framework, Masterplan and strategic landscaping plans and therefore the condition is considered purified.

### **Relevant Planning matters raised by the Community Council**

The points raised in objection by the Community Council in relation to height have been dealt with above.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

**Approve subject to conditions**

## **REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION**

The principle of development on the site has already been established through the approval of the Planning Permission in Principle for Phase 2 & 3 of the Prime Four business park and in that respect there is no conflict with Aberdeen Local Development Plan Policy LR1.

In terms of design, height and use of materials, the application is considered to conform to the defining principles of the overall Development Framework and Masterplan for Phases 2 and 3 of the Prime Four business park. The height of



the office is considered to fit in well with its context in the 'Four Court' area of the business park. Further, the high quality of design and materials proposed would fit in well into the setting of the business park when taking account of the other development which is underway and proposed.

The plans and information submitted in relation to this Approval of Matters Specified in Conditions application is sufficient to comply with conditions 3 parts I-access, II-siting and design of hard surfaces, III-design and external appearance of the buildings, IV- waste arrangements, V-plot boundary treatment, VI-motor vehicle and cycle parking, VII-details of any low and zero carbon equipment, VIII-landscape; and 15-plot specific landscaping treatment of planning permission in principle 120649 specific to plot 7.

**Subject to the following conditions;**

1. that no development shall take place unless samples of the aluminium cladding on the western part of the building hereby approved has been submitted to, and approved in writing by, the planning authority and thereafter the development shall be carried out in accordance with the details so agreed - in the interests of visual amenity.

**INFORMATIVES**

**Heights & Cranage**

The application has been assessed based on a maximum development height of 16.5m AGL. This application will need to be reassessed if the building height is above this maximum height. In the event that during construction, cranage or other tall construction equipment is required at a height above this, this will also require additional safeguarding.

We would draw the applicant's attention to the requirement within the British Standard Code of Practice for the safe use of Cranes, for crane operators to consult the aerodrome before erecting a crane in close proximity to an aerodrome.

**Landscaping Scheme**

All landscaping schemes should be considered in light of making them unattractive to wildlife and birds. Given the proximity of the site to the airport's flight path, any attraction of birds could result in a potential threat to flight safety.

**Lighting & Signage**

All lighting schemes and signage should be considered in light of not distracting air crew on approach or departure from the airfield. All lights should not spill above the horizontal, and be positioned so as not to cause glare to operating flight crew.

**Dr Margaret Bochel**

Head of Planning and Sustainable Development.