

GLOUCESTER CITY COUNCIL - DEVELOPMENT CONTROL

Committee:	Planning
Date:	5 th December 2023
Address/Location:	Great Western Road yard/sidings
Application No:	22/00770/FUL
Ward:	Kingsholm & Wotton
Expiry Date:	9 th November 2022
Applicant:	Eutopia Homes
Proposal:	Residential development of 315 dwellings (comprised of apartment blocks and houses) and formation of new accesses, with associated landscaping, parking, open space and ancillary works including demolition of existing buildings – UPDATE REPORT
Report by:	Adam Smith
Appendices:	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Site location plan (below)2. Previous and new proposed layout plans3. Committee report from February 20234. Late material from February 2023



1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This application was previously considered by the Planning Committee in February 2023 where the Committee resolved to grant planning permission. The previous officer report is appended to this report and sets out the site description, proposal, policy and consultation background and the Officer analysis and recommendation. Please refer to that report for all these matters. This new report is to provide an update on the application and, ultimately, recommend that some of the plans and conditions listed in that previous Committee resolution are updated.
- 1.2 The Planning Committee's resolution from February 2023 is: "planning permission is GRANTED subject to the completion of a legal agreement/s to secure the terms set out at Paragraph 6.158 in the Council report and delegated authority being given to the Planning Development Manager to negotiate the s106 terms to suit; and; the conditions outlined in the report as amended in the late material." This resolution therefore includes specific plans listed at Condition 2 of the recommendation. While the s106 agreement has been under negotiation and in advance of formally issuing the permission, the applicant has undertaken discussions with other parties about developing part of the site and has undertaken further detailed design assessment. Normally such tweaks to the plans would take place after the planning permission has been granted and would be submitted as new applications to vary the permission. In this case as the permission has not yet been issued the applicant has asked the Authority to consider changes to the plans as part of the current live application.
- 1.3 Members may recall the scheme was set out in two phases with most of the flats (c200) across Blocks A, B and C in the northern phase, and the 87 houses plus the 26 flats in Block D in the southern phase. The 26 flats in Block D are the developer contribution for affordable housing. Since the Committee resolution the applicant has been in discussions with a Housing Association about developing the southern phase, which would deliver c100 affordable homes on the southern phase in combination. Achieving this requires some modest alterations to the layout of the development and to the floorplans and elevations of the buildings in order to accommodate the modular form of construction used by this prospective partner developer. The modular construction that is now proposed works on the basis of specific 'off the shelf' units, so they cannot be made to exactly fit the architect's original design. At the same time the applicant has refined some other aspects of the design, notably the detailed highways arrangements with a view to avoiding later subsequent applications to do the same (in effect front-loading this work), and specifying two substations and a drainage pumping station within the site. As now conceived, the Authority's further approval of updated plans reflecting these changes would be needed.
- 1.4 The modular form of construction is described as speeding up delivery and reducing construction waste, as well as providing superior energy efficiency performance. The building components are constructed in a factory and delivered to site in a 'move in' state, requiring minimal on-site installation.
- 1.5 It is important to note that there are no changes proposed to the overall numbers of units for the southern phase from the previous version of the scheme (26 flats, 87 houses), no changes to parking space numbers (still 125) or cycle storage space (still 234), and the public open space (POS) play areas remain also (Local Equipped Area for Play (LEAP) still 400sqm, Local Area for Play (LAP) still 200sqm). The changes are to the southern phase only with the northern phase unaffected from the Committee's previous approval.
- 1.6 In detail the changes are as follows:

- Re-orientation of Block D to accommodate the modular construction units which are more linear in footprint. This makes the building slightly wider east-west but shallower north-south. It is also marginally lower in height by about 70cm (excepting the lift overrun).
- Updated internal plans to Block D and houses to reflect modular construction.
- Updated elevations to Block D and houses to reflect modular construction.
- Change to the mix and location of unit types due to the modular provider not having certain unit types and needing to site unit types together in terraces:
 - Houses = 2x 3bed 5person units in place of 2x 3b4p units
 - Flats = 15x 2b4p units in place of 15x 2b3p units

In addition the houses and flat units are now slightly bigger. The houses are slightly taller (they have slightly greater floor to ceiling heights).

- Re-siting of the main site entrance at Great Western Road to the west to accommodate the kerb radii.
- Highways arrangement updates within the site.
- Landscaping amendments to reflect highways updates.
- 2 substations; one at the southern public open space (POS), one at the north east POS.
- Pumping station at the north east POS, added following discussions and agreement with Severn Trent.

2.0 RE-ASSESSMENT

2.1 The issues this raises for re-assessment are considered to be:

- Design
- Highways
- Housing provision
- Residential amenity
- Sustainability

All other matters are considered to remain as previously reported to Committee.

2.2 Four representations were received previously (2 from the same party) to the original application and are set out in the appended report. Notification of the new changes has been undertaken with neighbours that are adjacent to the southern phase plus the previous contributors.

One further comment has been received, objecting to the application on the basis of increased traffic, citing cars backing up along Horton Road Wotton Pitch and Estcourt Road, and Great Western Road becoming gridlocked preventing access to residencies and the hospital.

The Committee has already concluded on the matter of traffic impact in the existing resolution to grant and there is no change to the number of units proposed in these latest changes.

The Civic Trust has also submitted comments. The Trust did not comment on the application previously. The Trust considers the terraced housing in the development left something to be desired. Some houses are not aligned to benefit from winter sunshine and no evidence that thought has been given to summer solar gain. The glazing on some designs is reasonable but others show no consistency of size and shape and therefore are ugly. Overall the Trust considers it could be better without much effort.

The Committee has already concluded on the layout and design in the existing resolution to grant. The alterations to the design and the repositioning of buildings in the layout are commented on in the subsequent sections.

2.3 **Design**

The layout remains the same in essence and it is considered that the changes cause no detriment to the underlying placemaking, permeability or massing concepts for the development. The elevational treatment is slightly altered in relation to the form and position of windows, and the brick detailing arrangements, while the balconies now have external supports. However it is considered that the underlying design strategy and aesthetic of the building facades overall remains the same and the previous assessment remains valid, that the layout and building design is acceptable for this site. I am advised that the modular form would utilise a 3d printed brick which to my knowledge has not been used in Gloucester before and would require consideration under the materials approval condition. The landscaping is also essentially the same as the approved, with minor tweaks and some street trees now having been reinstated in amended plans. Again, the landscaping design is still considered acceptable.

2.4 In terms of accessible and inclusive design, there is a slight change to Building Regulations M4(2) compliance, previously stated by the applicant to be met for all units. For complete step free access some units would require an engineering solution which would have had to remove green space and the cycle store on some units, however the applicant is still able to provide 48% as fully M4(2) compliant, which still exceeds the City Plan policy requirement of 25%.

Overall the proposals comply with the design policy context previously set out.

2.5 **Highways**

I understand that the change to the access point on Great Western Road was undertaken to meet highways standards and accommodate the kerb radii to either side of the access avoiding the dropped kerb access for adjacent houses' parking access. The applicant advised that the change does not lead to loss of on-street spaces. Similarly, internal layout tweaks were undertaken to meet highways standards, comprising of increasing road widths to cul de sacs to aid ease of reversing off drives, and parking bay re-orientation.

2.6 There is no change to the overall amount of parking, but it is re-arranged, with fewer immediately around Block D, but with more accessed off the turning heads at the north of the site. The applicant has confirmed that any allocation of the tandem spaces would be to a single unit given the possibilities for blocking in.

2.7 At the time of writing the Highway Authority has not commented on the revisions. My understanding is that the applicant is engaged in discussions with the Highway Authority about the changes and it appears likely that an update on the Highway Authority position will be available shortly.

2.8 **Housing provision**

There are changes to the mix of unit types that are relevant to the housing provision consideration. In terms of the houses the modular form now proposed means house types in a terrace need to be similar length; so they all need to be the same house type in a terrace (the current scheme has a mix of unit types in 4 of the terraces). The updated proposals to accommodate this only modestly changes the split by 2 units and this actually increases the number of 5 person units (substituting 3b4p units for 3b5p units) while increasing the size of units slightly. This change is considered a small net benefit. In terms of the flats I am advised that the modular construction does not come in a 2bed 3 person

unit. The updated proposal keeps the same split of 1 and 2 beds, but the 2bed unit is now a 4 person (not 3 person) property and is larger (minimum size 73sqm not 63). Again the net result is more bed space provision within the same basic mix of unit types and is considered a net betterment. The alteration to group the same unit types together (for reasons of the modular construction) makes little difference to the scheme as the actual change is modest and the units are close together anyway, so there is no harm to the creation of mixed and balanced communities.

- 2.9 The Housing Strategy Team considers the changes to be a marginal improvement in the offer of larger family homes. They note that the development would make a significant contribution to housing supply in the City, and this factor and the challenging brownfield nature of the site mitigates a less than ideal housing mix. The team raises no objection overall.

Overall it is considered that the changes to housing provision are minor and do not negatively affect the previous conclusions.

2.10 **Residential amenity**

The updated scheme retains essentially the same plot positions and building heights though there are some small changes as follows. The most relevant consideration for amenity impact on existing neighbours is the end terrace units that are closest to the existing Great Western Road properties. The following sets out the respective end terrace units, listed west to east, and how they have changed relative to the neighbouring existing property to north:

2b3p house still a 2b3p, but 20cm taller, and slightly further away from the neighbour c. 0.4m.

2b3p house still a 2b3p, but 20cm taller, and slightly further away c.0.2m.

3b5p house now a 3b4p, but 20cm taller, and c 2m further away.

3b5p house now a 3b4p, but 20cm taller and c 2m further away.

3b5p house still a 3b5p, but 30cm taller, and c0.8m further away.

3b5p house still a 3b5p, but 30cm taller, and not adjacent to an existing house.

So in summary the western two terraces would be a similar distance away (actually very slightly farther), and 20cm taller. The middle two terraces – which are in line with the neighbours with the shortest gardens – would be farther away (c 2m), and 20cm taller. The eastern terrace would also be slightly farther away (c 0.8m), with the units 30cm taller. As such, the overbearing impact and overshadowing effects of the houses on the neighbouring gardens to north are not considered to be materially worse than previously assessed. Given the hipped roof design for the end terrace units here this reduces the mass and impact of the flank wall, and all the end terraces have the first floor flank windows omitted so no direct overlooking harm would occur.

- 2.11 In terms of amenity for future residents of the development, the alteration to the shape of Block D means it would be closer to the proposed new houses to the west. The separation distance from the end terrace of houses to Block D was 20m in the earlier layout; it would now be 16m. In being closer this relationship is modestly worse. However any effect would be to the front of the terraced houses and would not cause any impact to the residents' private rear amenity space. While the change would lead to a slightly greater impact than previously assessed it is considered a minor change overall in this context and ultimately would retain suitable living conditions for residents of the terraced houses. The window arrangements to the side elevation of Block D would also change, but again given the relationship would be towards the front of the houses and the nature of the spaces the windows serve (shared access corridor and secondary windows to lounges), plus the

windows are smaller and fewer, again no significant detriment would occur for the amenity of future residents of the houses.

2.12 The updated houses and flats still meet nationally described space standards. The units would also need to still meet the noise mitigation measures set out previously and secured by condition and the applicant has confirmed so.

2.13 **Sustainability**

The modular construction appears to provide for superior energy efficiency performance for future residents so the changes would be more beneficial compared to the current scheme. The applicant has now submitted a Stage 3 energy strategy for the southern phase. The houses will meet carbon net zero. The Block D apartments are not able to meet carbon net zero but the southern phase will overall due to the houses exceeding standards, which is achieved by use of photo voltaics and air source heat pumps (providing heating and hot water).

3.0 **CONCLUSIONS**

3.1 Overall Officers consider the changes in the updated plans to be minor and the scheme remains effectively the same one approved by the Planning Committee, with no significant detriment in the planning considerations previously considered, and the same conclusions can apply. It is therefore recommended that the resolution remains the same but with the plan references at Condition 2 updated to suit. The following conditions also require updating to suit:

Condition 3 – Phasing plan (the phasing plan reference is to a now-superseded plan).

Condition 12 – Invasive species (it defines the southern phase by reference to a now-superseded plan).

Condition 18 – End terrace bespoke units (it defines the end terrace unit types by reference to a now-superseded plan).

Condition 23 – acoustic fence (it defines the southern phase by reference to a now-superseded plan).

Condition 48 – emergency access (can updated to define the southern phase by reference to a plan).

4.0 **RECOMMENDATION OF THE PLANNING DEVELOPMENT MANAGER**

That planning permission is **GRANTED** subject to;

the Highway Authority confirming that it has no objections to the amended plans and the imposition of any amended or additional conditions necessary to preserve highway safety in this respect;

the completion of a legal agreement/s to secure the terms set out at Paragraph 6.158 of the February 2023 Committee Report and delegated Authority being given to the Planning Development Manager to negotiate the s106 terms to suit;

and;

the conditions outlined in the February 2023 Committee Report as amended in the February 2023 late material and as further amended as follows:

Condition 2

The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the drawings on the following plans except where otherwise required by conditions of this permission:

Site plans

Existing site plan ref. 01-0-00 PL

Existing Demolition Plan ref. 01-0-02 PL

Proposed site plan ref. 03-0-00 PL3

Proposed Phasing Plan ref. 03-0-01 PL3

Proposed site plan Northern phase ref. N-03-0-00 PL2

Proposed site plan Southern phase ref. S-03-0-00 PL3

Side wide plans:

Proposed ground floor plan ref. SW-03-1-00 PL3

Proposed 1st floor plan ref. SW-03-1-01 PL3

Proposed 2nd floor plan ref. SW-03-1-02 PL3

Proposed 3rd floor plan ref. SW-03-1-03 PL3

Proposed 4th floor plan ref. SW-03-1-04 PL3

Proposed roof plan ref. SW-03-1-05 PL3

Apartments

Block A

Apartment elevations Block A ref. A-03-2-01 PL

Bay studies Block A ref. A-03-2-02 PL

Apartments sections Block A ref. A-03-3-01 PL

Block A proposed ground floor plan A-03-1-00 PL1

Block A Proposed 1st floor plan ref. A-03-1-01 PL1

Block A Proposed 2nd floor plan ref. A-03-1-02 PL1

Block A Proposed 3rd floor plan ref. A-03-1-03 PL1

Block A Proposed 4th floor plan ref. A-03-1-04 PL1

Block A Proposed roof plan ref. A-03-1-05 PL1

Block B

Block B elevations sheet 1 of 3 ref. B-03-2-01 PL1

Block B elevations sheet 2 of 3 ref. B-03-2-02 PL2

Apartment elevations – Block B sheet 3 of 3 ref. B-03-2-03 Rev. PL1

Apartments sections Block B ref. B-03-3-01 PL

Block B Bay studies ref. B-03-2-04 PL1

Block B Proposed ground floor plan ref. B-03-1-00 PL2

Block B Proposed 1st floor plan ref. B-03-1-01 PL2

Block B Proposed 2nd floor plan ref. B-03-1-02 PL2

Block B Proposed 3rd floor plan ref. B-03-1-03 PL2

Block B Proposed 4th floor plan ref. B-03-1-04 PL2

Block B Proposed roof plan ref. B-03-1-05 PL2

Block C

Block C elevations ref. C-03-2-01 PL2

Bay studies Block C ref. C-03-2-02 PL

Apartment sections Block C ref. C-03-3-01 PL

Block C Proposed ground floor plan ref. C-03-1-00 PL1

Block C Proposed 1st floor plan ref. C-03-1-01 PL1

Block C Proposed 2nd floor plan ref. C-03-1-02 PL1
Block C Proposed 3rd floor plan ref. C-03-1-03 PL1
Block C Proposed roof plan ref. C-03-1-05 PL1

Block D

Apartment elevations Block D ref. D-03-2-01 PL1
Bay studies Block D ref. D-03-2-02 PL1
Apartment sections Block D ref. D-03-3-01 PL1
Block D Proposed ground floor plan ref. D-03-1-00 PL3
Block D Proposed 1st floor plan ref. D-03-1-01 PL3
Block D Proposed 2nd floor plan ref. D-03-1-02 PL3
Block D Proposed 3rd floor plan ref. D-03-1-03 PL3
Block D Proposed roof plan ref. D-03-1-05 PL3

Apartment Type 0B01 ref. 05-4-00-0B01 PL (Blocks A and C)
Apartment Type 0B02 ref. 05-4-00-0B02 PL (Block B)
Apartment Type 1B03 ref. 05-4-00-1B03 PL (Block B)
Apartment Type 1B04 ref. 05-4-00-1B04 PL (Block B)
Apartment Type 1B05 ref. 05-4-00-1B05 PL (Block B)
Apartment Type 1B06 ref. 05-4-00-1B06 PL (Blocks A, B and C)
Apartment Type 2B01 ref. 05-4-00-2B01 PL (Blocks A, B and C)
Apartment Type 2B05 ref. 05-4-00-2B05 PL (Block B)
Apartment Type 2B08 ref. 05-4-00-2B08 PL (Block B)
Apartment Type 2B09 ref. 05-4-00-2B09 PL (Block B)
Apartment Type 2B10 ref. 05-4-00-2B10 PL (Block B)
Apartment Type 2B11 ref. 05-4-00-2B11 PL (Block B)
Apartment Type 2B12 ref. 05-4-00-2B12 PL (Block B)
Apartment 2b 03 ref. 05-4-00-2B03 PL (Block B)
Apartment 2b 04 ref. 05-4-00-2B04 PL (Block B)
Apartment 2b Type 9 – WCAf ref. 05-4-00-2B09 W PL (Block B)
Apartment Type 3B01 ref. 05-4-00-3B01 PL (Blocks A and C)
Apartment Type 3B02 ref. 05-4-00-3B02 PL (Block B)
Apartment Type 3B03 ref. 05-4-00-3B03 PL (Block B)

Apartment type – 1b-01 ref. 05-4-00-1B01 PL1 (Block D)
Apartment type – 2B-02 ref. 05-4-00-2B02 PL1 (Block D)

Typical external wall detail ref. 21-5-01 PL

Houses

House elevations 3b 5p type 1 ref. 03-2-01-3b5p PL2
House sections 3b5p Type 1 ref. 03-3-01-3b5p PL1
House plans 3b5p Type 1 ref. 05-4-00-3b5p PL2
House plans 3b5p Type 2 (End of Terrace) ref. 05-4-01-3b5p PL2
House elevations 3b5p Type 2 End of Terrace ref. 03-2-00-3b5p PL2

House elevations 3b4p Type 1 ref. 03-2-03-3b4p PL2
House elevations 3b4p Type 2 ref. 03-2-02-3b4p PL2
House elevations 3b4p Type 3 ref. 03-2-07-3b4p PL2
House sections 3b4p Type 1 and Type 2 ref. 03-3-02-3b4p PL1
House plans 3b4p Type 1 ref. 05-4-00-3b4p PL2
House plans 3b4p Type 2 ref. 05-4-01-3b4p PL2
House plans 3b4p Type 3 (end of terrace) ref. 05-4-02-3B4P PL2

House elevations 2b3p Type 1 ref. 03-2-05-2b3p PL2
House elevations 2b3p Type 2 ref. 03-2-04-2b3p PL2
House elevations 2b3p Type 3 End of Terrace ref. 03-2-06-2b3p PL2
House sections 2b3p Type 1 and Type 2 ref. 03-3-03-2b3p PL1
House plans 2b3p Types 1 ref. 05-4-00-2b3p PL2
House plans 2b3p Type 2 ref. 05-4-00-2b3p PL2
House type 2b3p Type 3 (End of Terrace) ref. 05-4-02-2B3P PL2

Landscaping plan ref. 7594-PHL-SW-XX-DR-L-1000 Rev. 05

Proposed Street elevations sheet 1 of 2 ref. 03-2-00 PL2

Reason

To ensure that the development is carried out in accordance with the approved plans.

Condition 3

The development shall be constructed in accordance with Proposed Phasing Plan **03-0-01 PL3** (or such other phasing plan as may be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority under this condition).

Reason

To ensure that all relevant planning considerations are addressed for each phase and provide the framework for subsequent conditions.

Condition 12

No development shall commence within the southern phase as defined on Proposed Phasing Plan ref. **03-0-01 PL3** (or such phases as may subsequently be approved on a revised phasing plan that relates to that same extent of the site) until a detailed method statement for the removal/eradication of invasive species on the site has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The method statement shall include proposed measures to prevent the spread of invasive species during any operations such as mowing, strimming or soil movement. It shall also contain measures to ensure that any soils brought to the site are free of the seeds / root / stem of any invasive plant covered under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981. The approved method statement shall be carried out in full and adhered to throughout the course of the development.

Reason

To protect the amenity of the local area by dealing with Japanese Knotweed and any other invasive species.

Condition 23

Prior to the occupation of any unit hereby permitted within the southern phase (as defined on the Proposed Phasing Plan ref. **03-0-01 PL3**) an acoustic fence or fences (as may be required) shall be installed in full, in accordance with a scheme to be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority and shall be maintained as such thereafter. The scheme shall include but is not limited to; the proposed siting, extent and height of the fence/s (shown on scaled plans), construction and surface density of the fence/s.

Reason

To safeguard the amenities of future occupants by creating acceptable noise conditions.

Condition 48

Notwithstanding that shown on the submitted plans, no development of the southern phase (as defined on the Proposed Phasing Plan ref. **03-0-01 PL3** or such other phase as may subsequently be shown on a phasing plan approved under condition that includes the public open space/play area at the eastern corner of the site) shall commence other than archaeological works, remediation works and/or site securing until details of the access restrictions (bollards, gates, etc) to the paths and emergency access through this part of the site, and the dimensions and make up of the emergency access, have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The approved details shall be implemented concurrently with the implementation of the public open space/play area.

Reason

To deal with public safety and promoting sustainable modes of transport.

APPENDIX 2 – PREVIOUS AND NEW LAYOUT PLANS

APPENDIX 3 – FEBRUARY 2023 COMMITTEE REPORT

APPENDIX 4 – FEBRUARY LATE MATERIAL