

Design and Access Statement Addendum

For a hybrid planning application for the development of a mix of employment uses
at Corinthian Park, Grovefield Way, Cheltenham, GL51 6RF

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1.0 Introduction

This addendum to the Design and Access Statement has been prepared by Design Development Partnership Ltd on behalf of Hinton Properties. The addendum provides details of the further design progression of the proposed mixed use development at Corinthian Park, Cheltenham.

From continued consultation with Officers and Consultees, it was apparent that the proposed design needed to address some principle concerns in terms of layout and design.

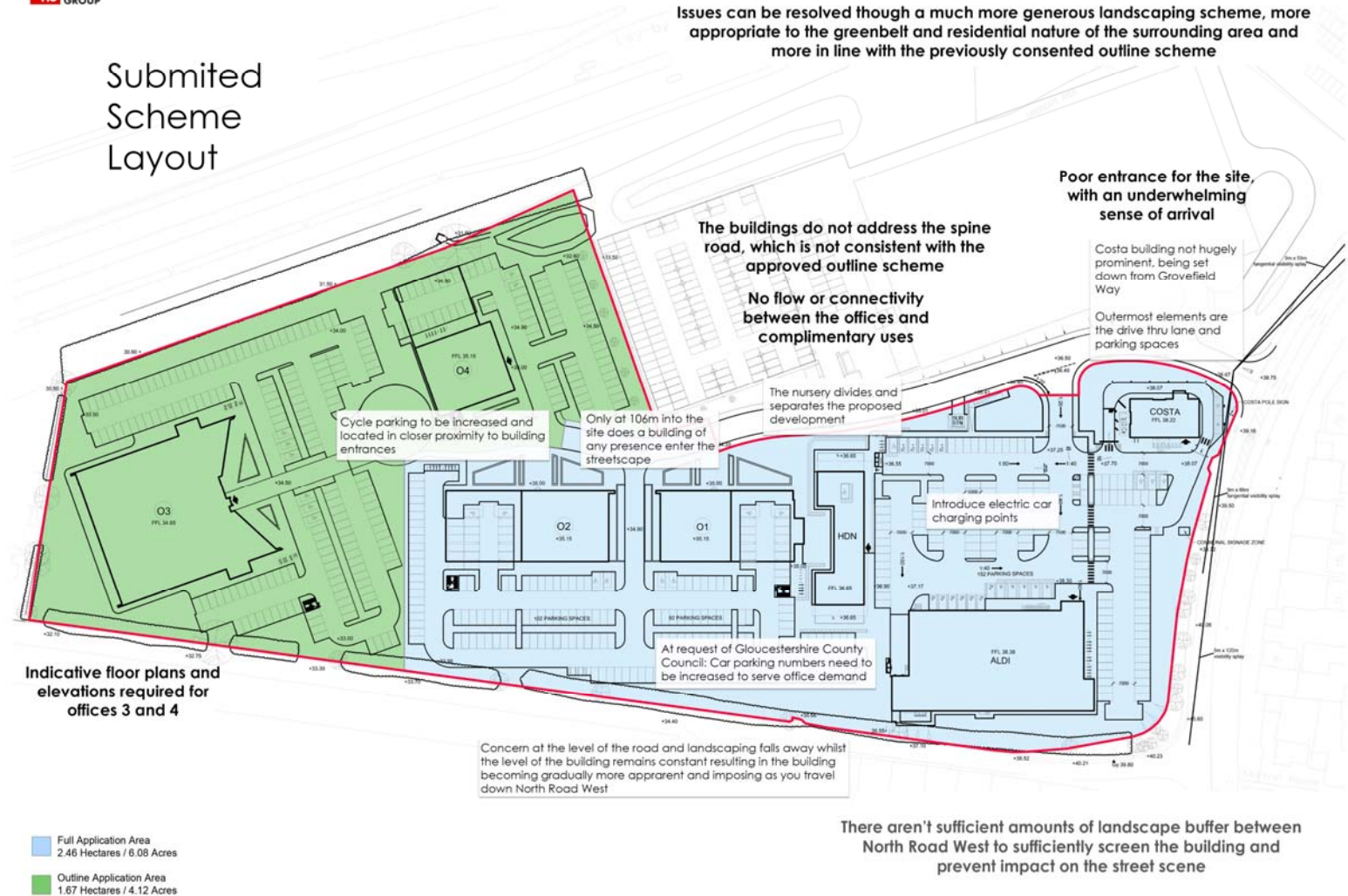
Through lengthy review between the applicant, proposed occupiers and consultees, we believe we have now reached a design solution that contributes positively to the surrounding area and street scene and is in accordance with the design ethos of the previously consented outline scheme. We also consider the design responds positively to the BMW Mini showroom adjacent to the site.

2.0 Scheme Evolution

The design of the proposed scheme has been developed to address the character and appearance of the local area and the opportunities and constraints detailed in the previously submitted Design and Access Statement.

A hybrid planning application was submitted in December 2016 for the scheme as shown in the plan below.

During initial consultation, fundamental issues were raised with the proposed layout. Comments and recommendations received during these initial consultations are detailed on the layout plan below.



Masterplan Layout as Submitted December 2016

Further amendments were made to the layout plans, as detailed below. This scheme was refused planning permission at committee in December 2017 and a second application was submitted in May 2018.



Masterplan Layout submitted November 2017 and considered by the planning committee December 2017

Consultation has taken place on the application submitted in 2018 and officers still had concerns regarding the prominence of hardstanding, the cramped layout and the poor appearance and streetscape this was creating. Following advise from officers, significant changes to the layout have been implemented, details of which are included below and discussed further in this addendum.



Revised Masterplan Layout submitted September 2018

5.0 Landscaping

Detailed hard and soft landscape proposals have been revised by Davies Landscape Architects in accordance with the amended layout.

The key landscape objectives are to integrate the proposed development into the landscape whilst enhancing the visual amenity of the area. The revisions to the layout offer a much more generous landscaping scheme which is more appropriate to the greenbelt and residential nature of the surrounding area and is more in line with the previously consented scheme.

The plant selection is robust and appropriate to the development. It is diverse with visual interest throughout the year, and will provide a long term sustainable setting for the proposed development. The materials for the Hard Landscape palette have been selected to realise the landscape strategy of the public and private realm, inform the movement of pedestrians and vehicles around the site and to be suitably robust for the proposed uses of the development and the technical requirements of the site and its construction.

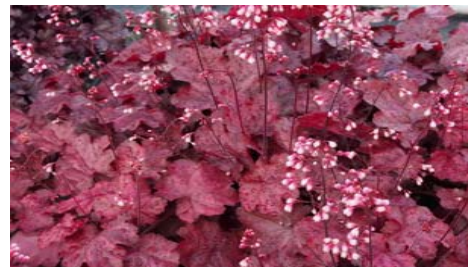
The replacement of Costa with an additional office building has increased and improved the landscaping at the site entrance, with additional planting providing structure and interest while maintaining visual connectivity to the rest of the development.

The reduction in car parking and hardstanding has not only offered the opportunity to reinforce and enhance existing boundary vegetation, but has also allowed an increase of planting islands and landscaping within the the car park, further reducing the visual mass of the hard standing with advanced nursery stock trees.

The landscape strategy balances functionality whilst integrating individual social spaces / nodes along the access route forming an active frontage to the development. The revisions to the masterplan, including the amendments to the office buildings maintain the landscaped frontage to the spine road, incorporating planted rills backed with natural stone dressed gabions allowing vistas through the development. The feature gabion walls act as seating plinths and promote social congregation points at footpath junctions.



S1



S2



S3



S4



S5



S6



S7



S8

Typical Shrubs and Grasses

S1	Ceanothus 'Blue Sapphire'	S5	Miscanthus 'Morning Light'
S2	Dryopteris Filix-Mas	S6	Pennisetum alopecuroides 'Hameln'
S3	Heuchera 'Fire Chief'	S7	Sasa veitchii
S4	Hosta 'Paradise Island'	S8	Skimmia japonica 'Rubella'

4.0 Proposed Office Design – Office 5

Concerns were raised by officers about the Costa Coffee Drive Thru proposals; the design quality of the building, the stark setting of hard landscaping and the entrance/impression this type of use would create.

In relation to the external layout, the outermost elements closest to the site boundary were the drive thru lane and parking spaces and there was concern raised that these elements were going to be the first features that greeted visitors on their approach and entry to the site.

Despite amendments made previously, following identification of an office occupier, it was decided that the scheme would benefit from the Costa Coffee being replaced by a more prominent office building. Situating this office at the entrance to the site reinforces the high quality business environment being delivered and provides a sense of arrival to the office park.

The orientation of the office and car parking has been carefully considered in relation to its context and surroundings. The office fronts and addresses Grovefield Way and the spine road, with parking being set behind the building and away from the site entrance, reducing the prominence of proposed hardstanding. The building is orientated so that the entrance is easily accessible from the car park, and principle elevations address the spine road and Grovefield Way junction. The office car park has a barrier controlled access, to prevent other users from parking in spaces allocated to the office.

The revised scheme has resulted in a much more spacious and less cramped layout, with an increased and improved landscape buffer at the site entrance and additional planting providing structure and interest while maintaining visual connectivity to the rest of the development.

The building has been designed for Ridge and Partners LLP and accommodates their operational requirements. The building follows the same design language as the other proposed offices, which are very simple, clean, modern buildings that draw inspiration from the BMW Mini dealership. The material palette has been purposely restricted to the three main materials, consisting of architectural stone, cladding and powder coated frames and facias. The choice of material clearly reflects the suite of buildings proposed.

The building height and elevations were carefully deliberated, with dual road frontage to both Grovefield Way and the spine road, it was decided that the north and east elevations should both be principle elevations, and the architectural stone has been used to create a focal corner feature. It is important that the building is a minimum of two storeys in height and that the finished floor level was set to a suitable level to ensure that the building was prominent and provided an attractive entrance to the business park.



5.0 Proposed Office Design – Offices 1 and 2

The original application sought detailed planning permission for offices 1 and 2 and outline planning permission for offices 3 and 4 as identified on the masterplan. Floor plans, elevations and sections were provided for all proposed office buildings.

The offices will be simple, clean and modern three storey buildings. Large amounts of linear glazing, ensure that the internal spaces receive the maximum amount of natural daylight, providing a pleasant atmosphere for office users, as well as creating active frontages to the spine road from all floors.

Bloor Homes have been identified as an occupier for office 1 and they are seeking a new regional headquarters office. Amendments to the plans have been a result of direct discussions with their architects to accommodate their operational requirements.

Undercroft car parking has been removed to provide a more regular and more adaptable ground floor plate, which will provide flexibility for the future development and growth of the business.

Office 2 has been amended in line with Office 1, to ensure these neighbouring buildings adopt a consistent design language.



6.0 Design Response

The revised layout seeks to address concerns raised by officers and comments detailed in reasons 1 and 3 of the previous refusal, which are;

'amount of the site given over to non-B1 uses and prominent siting of those uses'

The compatibility of different uses within the proposed development and how they interact with, and support one another has been carefully considered to find the most appropriate design solution.

To deliver a sustainable development it is important to consider mixed use development where different uses are developed alongside each other. Mixed use developments provide easy access to services and facilities that can help to create vibrant and diverse places to work. They offer the opportunity to have an improved quality of life with convenient access to facilities, resulting in reduced commuting and congestion, and greater opportunities for social interaction.

It was decided that the scheme would benefit from the removal of Costa Coffee from the masterplan and the introduction of an additional B1 office building. This office has been sited at the entrance to the development to underpin the high quality business environment being delivered and ensures prominence and presence of B1 uses to the main road frontage.

The Aldi supermarket and nursery provide convenient and accessible facilities required day to day by people working in the adjacent offices. Being situated in close proximity to the office buildings means immediate links, connectivity and access to childcare and shopping services for those that work in the offices.

Schedule of B1 and non-B1 floor space

Scheme	B1 use floor space	Non-B1 floor space
Submitted plan	12,764 sqm	2,448 sqm
Revised Layout	13,633 sqm	2,244 sqm

The above table demonstrates that of the total floorspace provided by the revised layout, 86% will be developed for B1 use class and just 14% will be for complimentary supermarket and nursery facilities.

'dilution of character and function of the site'

Each development presents a unique opportunity to design a scheme, which makes positive use of the sites characteristics and the local context. New development must relate well functionally and visually to the site and its setting. This relationship has been achieved by identifying valuable elements from the extant outline scheme and implementing those in this application as well as considering the adjacent BMW Mini Dealership.

When considering the character and function of the site, the site and approved outline layout must be analysed in terms of existing and proposed characteristics, position, accessibility, layout, streetscape and natural landscape;

Existing characteristics;

- The site access has now been constructed and the proposed scheme is well integrated with the existing road junction. The proposals are in line with the previous outline scheme in terms of vehicle, pedestrian and cycle access.
- The proposed layout safeguards the previously proposed route of the spine road and footpaths through the site and provides pedestrian links where desire lines are likely to occur, for example in between the Aldi and Nursery car park and offices 1 and 2.



Previously consented Masterplan, Outline Scheme 14/01323/OUT



Revised Masterplan Layout

- All boundary vegetation and trees are to be retained as existing, with the exception of the removal of 3 trees which have been identified in the submitted Arboricultural Impact Assessment. Two of these trees are 'U' category, which are unsuitable for retention due to their quality and the remaining tree is 'C' category, which is deemed low quality.

Position of the development site;

- The development will have a positive effect on the locality, bringing a key gateway location into use. The site is in a prominent location and has an extant outline consent or 16,800 sqm of B1 employment use. The revised layout will provide over 13,600 sqm of B1 use and Hinton Properties have been able to identify occupiers; Bloor Homes and Ridge and Partners LLP for just under 3150 sqm.

Accessibility

- The layout and hierarchy of proposed roads and footpaths in the outline scheme has been maintained; the primary spine road is an important focal feature, with secondary access roads leading from the road to dedicated parking spaces.
- Lengthy consultation has taken place with both Highways England and Gloucestershire County Council who have both confirmed that surrounding roads, footpaths and cycleways are suitable for the proposed development.
- The accessibility in terms of the location of services and facilities has been improved with the introduction of the complimentary supermarket and nursery, which will serve people working in the B1 office buildings as well as nearby residential areas.

Layout and Streetscape

- The outline scheme was characterised by a family of low rise, flat roofed contemporary buildings, the central feature being the meandering spine road that incorporated high quality landscaped borders and was free of parked vehicles.
- The proposed buildings addressed the spine road and were set behind a landscaped buffer. The detailed plans adopt the same principles and include a generous landscaped corridor through the centre of the site as well as accounting for existing topography and occupiers operational requirements.
- The surrounding area currently lacks any historical or distinctive built environmental context for the proposal to reflect; albeit that the new BMW Mini building has provided a high-quality precedent and building style. The design of the scheme is modern and contemporary throughout with variations in design driven by the end users. Where applicable the material palette remains similar and ties in with the precedent of the BMW Mini dealership.
- The extant permission described a family of buildings, and as such a common, limited material palette has been used for both the B1 and non-B1 uses, creating a simple design language and relationship between all the proposed buildings.

Natural Landscape

- The key landscape objectives are to integrate the proposed development into the landscape whilst enhancing the visual amenity of the area. The revised layout provides a much more generous landscaping scheme which is more appropriate to the greenbelt and residential nature of the surrounding area and is more in line with the previously consented scheme.
- In accordance with the extant permission, the landscape aims of the revised layout are;
 - a) Introduction of a high-quality landscape led road infrastructure corridor with active pedestrian frontage, incorporating planted rills backed with gabion walls and seating areas;
 - b) Enhancing the existing vegetation to the southern boundary adjoining North Road West with native buffer planting and advanced nursery stock trees
 - c) Provide Landscape enhancement to Grovefield Way;
 - d) Provide formal landscaped entrance points to parking areas;
 - e) Provide a landscape orientated pedestrian link to provide connectivity across the site;
 - f) Reduce the visual mass of the car park with trees and planting islands;
 - g) Introduce semi-ornamental shrubs to the active pedestrian frontage, including accent planting to provide additional structure;
 - h) Ensuring the plant selection is robust and appropriate to the development. It is diverse with visual interest throughout the year, and will provide a long term sustainable setting for the buildings.

'predominance of hardstanding and retaining structures'

The revised scheme shows a considerable reduction in car parking and hardstanding, while still ensuring adequate parking provision. This has not only offered the opportunity to reinforce and enhance existing boundary vegetation, but has also allowed an increase in planting islands and landscaping within the car park, further reducing the visual mass of the hard standing.

Scheme submitted May 2018



Revised Scheme



The images above show the previously submitted and revised schemes. Changes summarised as follows;

- Car parking to the east of Aldi has been reduced considerably, allowing increased boundary planting to Grovefield Way and North Road West.
- Car parking has been removed adjacent to Aldi delivery bay and the car park pedestrian ramp and replaced with shrub and tree planting.
- Island car parking has been reduced, allowing more planting within the car park, to visually reduce the prominence of hardstanding.
- Removal of Costa Coffee and the replacement with Office 5, makes the layout more spacious and introduces a significant landscape buffer between the proposed B1 car park and Aldi car parking, as well as enhancing the prominent boundary landscaping at the site entrance.

Proposed retaining structures with the exception of the retaining between the upper car park for the supermarket and nursery and lower car parks for the offices are decorative landscape features only. The high quality landscaped frontage to the spine road incorporates planted rills backed with natural stone dressed gabions allowing vistas through the development. The feature gabion walls also act as seating plinths and promote social congregation points at footpath junctions. Davies Landscape Architects have created this landscape scheme and included gabion features based on previously approved landscape design principals.

The Gabions and services between the rocks that fill them also add additional places for plants to grow and places for a variety of wildlife to take refuge. The use of gabions through the proposed landscaping scheme will serve a valuable habitat function for a variety of insects and small mammals that may visit it.

'position of the drive –thru and supermarket and its cramped and contrived nature – exacerbated by features such as the drive thru lane and external yard'

For new development it is important that consideration is given to the density of the proposal. Discussions with Officers and further context analysis has shown that the layout of proposed elements needed to be considered in more detail.

In relation to the external layout, the outermost elements at the site entrance, were the drive thru lane and parking spaces and there was concern raised that these elements were going to be the first features that greeted visitors on their approach and entry to the site.

Scheme submitted May 2018



Revised Scheme



With the replacement of the Costa Coffee and its associated drive thru lane, landscaping at the site entrance and the green corridor along the spine road has been widened and improved to provide a much more substantial buffer. The proposed landscaping here creates a high quality setting, helps integrate the new development into its surroundings and promotes biodiversity and wildlife habitat within the site.

Bin stores and plant yards are a standard requirement of modern commercial uses and need to be adjacent to buildings for ease of access and connection to internal plant installations.

The bin store for Office 5 is in a much more discreet position than the Costa yard was previously and is successfully screened by the building and landscaping.

The standard Aldi design requires the yard to be located to the rear of the store, which in this case would be adjacent to North Road West. Following careful consideration a bespoke design has been implemented here and the yard has now been moved to the west elevation of the building. This revised position increases the distance from residential properties on North Road West and also allows a substantial landscaping screen and buffer to surround the external yard.

7.0 Conclusion

Through continued consultation the proposed scheme has been amended and refined to create a development that respects and responds to its immediate context and adopts a similar design ethos to development previously consented on this site.

The proposed landscaping is fundamental to the success of the development and revisions to the layout offer a much more generous landscaping scheme which is more appropriate to the greenbelt and residential nature of the surrounding area. Landscape design plays an important role in creating an attractive environment that reinforces identity and enjoyment of a place.

The revised scheme shows a considerable reduction in car parking and hardstanding, while still ensuring adequate parking provision. This has not only offered the opportunity to reinforce and enhance existing boundary vegetation, but has also allowed an increase in planting islands and landscaping within the car park, further reducing the visual mass of the hard standing. The proposed landscaping creates a high quality setting, helps integrate the new development into its surroundings and promotes biodiversity and wildlife habitat within the site.

It was decided that the scheme would benefit from the removal of Costa Coffee from the masterplan and the introduction of an additional B1 office building for Ridge and Partners LLP. This office has been sited at the entrance to the development to underpin the high quality business environment being delivered and ensures prominence and presence of B1 uses to the main road frontage.

Bloor Homes have been identified as an occupier for Office 1 and they are seeking a new regional headquarters office. Amendments to the plans for this building have been a result of direct discussions with their architects to accommodate their operational requirements. Office 2 has been amended in line with Office 1, to ensure these neighbouring buildings adopt a consistent design language.

To deliver a sustainable development it is important to consider mixed use development where different uses are developed alongside each other. Mixed use developments provide easy access to services and facilities that can help to create vibrant and diverse places to work. They offer the opportunity to have an improved quality of life with convenient access to facilities, resulting in reduced commuting and congestion, and greater opportunities for social interaction.

The compatibility of different uses within the proposed development and how they interact with, and support one another has been carefully considered to find the most appropriate design solution.