

Application no: 21/02337/DISC

Location: Proposed Himley Village North West Bicester, Middleton Stoney Road, Bicester, Oxfordshire

Transport Development Control

Recommendation:

Condition 8 Masterplan and Design Code: Objection

Detailed comments:

General

Condition 8 of 14/02121/OUT states that “Prior to the submission of the first reserved matters application....., a site wide Masterplan and Design Code shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.” However, a Reserved Matters application has been submitted in advance of the approval of these documents.

An updated Design Code (Rev. C) has only been provided for review, but it will only be possible to recommend approval of the condition when the Design Code *and* an associated Masterplan are considered to be acceptable. The latest Masterplan submitted with this Discharge of Conditions application, P20-3215_014 Rev. E, is dated May 21 on the drawing and was uploaded to the planning portal in July.

These comments should be read in conjunction with the OCC response to the reserved matters application, 21/02339/REM.

Design Code

Design Guidance Context (sect. 3.8) refers to the OCC Residential Roads Design Guide. This document has been withdrawn and replaced by the Oxfordshire Street Design Guide, which may be found at:

<https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/sites/default/files/file/roads-and-transport-policies-and-plans/DesignGuidePublication.pdf>

It was highlighted in the pre-application enquiry response, 21/CH0004/PREAPP, that this development should be a good early example of what may be achieved by complying with the guidance in this document.

The Design Code must also make reference to LTN 1/20, Cycle Infrastructure Design, as the cycle facilities throughout the development must be designed in accordance with this Department for Transport guidance.

Para 4.17 refers to service 25A (now service 250) and states there are no bus stops in the vicinity of the site, which is not the case. The service does not currently operate at a half-hourly frequency.

Information given in the Walking and Cycling Connections section is inconsistent and does not tally with the Masterplan. Sections 6.87 and 6.88 say that the Green Infrastructure (GI) corridors will be 3m wide and will cater for both pedestrians and cyclists. They are illustrated as solid green lines on the small plan (Proposed eco-town green infrastructure network) on page 76. However, the larger plan on page 77 appears to show the same routes as for pedestrians only (green dots) while the cycle and pedestrian paths (red dots) are along streets only. The Masterplan also shows these GI routes as being for pedestrians only. There must be better connectivity for cyclists between the areas of the site, and a clear and consistent strategy must be available to inform the reserved matters layout.

The plans in the Walking and Cycling Connections section should also make it clear exactly what cycle infrastructure is being proposed (e.g. segregated, shared use, on carriageway) and on which side(s) of the street so that it may be assessed against LTN 1/20.

The typical Primary Street example (page 80) shows 3m wide shared-use cycle/footpaths on both sides but these need to be separate paths for pedestrians and cyclists to be in accordance with LTN 1/20. The Masterplan shows a "Pedestrian and cycle route" (red dots) on one side of the street only. Furthermore, the Primary Street cross-section gives a spacing between buildings as "Circa 30m" but the equivalent distance on the Masterplan is approximately 22m. It is a significant concern that this width will be insufficient to accommodate the necessary segregated cycling and walking facilities.

Ref. 6.109, it should be noted that 25% of unallocated (visitor) car parking spaces must be equipped with EV charging points in accordance with the Oxfordshire Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Strategy.

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