

OXFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL'S RESPONSE TO CONSULTATION ON THE FOLLOWING DEVELOPMENT PROPOSAL

District: Cherwell

Application no: 14/02121/OUT-3

Proposal: OUTLINE - Development to provide up to 1,700 residential dwellings (Class C3), a retirement village (Class C2), flexible commercial floorspace (Classes A1, A2, A3, A4, A5, B1 and C1), social and community facilities (Class D1), land to accommodate one energy centre and land to accommodate one new primary school (up to 2FE) (Class D1). Such development to include provision of strategic landscape, provision of new vehicular, cycle and pedestrian access routes, infrastructure and other operations (including demolition of farm buildings on Middleton Stoney Road)

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

Purpose of document

This report sets out Oxfordshire County Council's view on the proposal.

This report contains officer advice in the form of a strategic localities response and technical team response(s). Where local member have responded these have been attached by OCCs Major Planning Applications Team (planningconsultations@oxfordshire.gov.uk).

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

Strategic Comments

This consultation response addresses the additional information submitted in October 2016 which proposes interim junction works and to bring forward the Himley development ahead of the tunnel and realigned road. All points raised in OCCs previous consultation responses dated 16 October 2015 and 20th May 2015 still apply, other than those addressed in the individual team responses within this document.

OCC has a transport objection to the developer's proposal to bring forward the entire development ahead of delivery of the strategic road link (Howes Lane Realignment) and tunnels under the railway. On the basis of the information submitted and on further technical work commissioned by OCC, no development at Himley Village should take place until the tunnel and realigned road are in place.

Specific transport reasons for objection are:

- Because of the methodology used to take account of traffic using unsuitable routes in the model such as Shakespeare Drive, the TA Addendum does not demonstrate that the interim mitigation proposed at the junction of Howes Lane/Bucknell Road/Lords Lane will be sufficient to avoid a severe impact at the junction by 2024 if the strategic infrastructure has not been delivered by then. OCC is also concerned over the longer term ability of the interim scheme to mitigate the development if the strategic infrastructure does not come forward.
- Because of the level of detail of the design work carried out, the applicant has not fully demonstrated the feasibility of the scheme.

Further transport concerns are as follows:

- Potential impact on the delivery of the key strategic infrastructure for NW Bicester.
- The proposed interim scheme has weaknesses in terms of pedestrian/cycle provision which it may not be possible to overcome through further design; or, in addressing them, the capacity benefits may be eroded so that the scheme is ineffective.

- Vehicle tracking issues mean that at best, adjustments could be required that would erode the additional capacity provided by the scheme, or that the scheme could be deemed unsafe even after the next stage of design, fail a technical audit and not be granted a S278 agreement.
- Concern over deliverability of crucial key walking/cycling routes as they cross land outside the applicant's control
- Concern over walking distances to facilities in advance of key on-site facilities being delivered.
- Location of proposed bus turning area.
- Inconsistency with the North West Bicester masterplan/Supplementary Planning Document, Cherwell Local Plan (Policy Bicester 1), and with the basis of decisions on other planning applications, particularly in relation to the triggers and phasing for site-wide infrastructure.

If the Himley development were to go ahead early, additional Education requirements would be as follows:

- Earlier delivery of the primary school
- A financial contribution will be towards off-site temporary classrooms to provide early secondary school pupil places generated by the development (a temporary classroom for 30 pupils costs c. £0.25 million) would be required if this development is delivered ahead of the planned new secondary school within application 14/01641/OUT,
- Until it is confirmed that the planned secondary school within application 14/01641/OUT will be constructed, this development site will need to protect a fully serviced secondary school reserve site of 5 ha. The site must be free from encumbrances and delivered in accordance with Oxfordshire County Council requirements.
- If the planned secondary school within application 14/01641/OUT is not constructed, this development will need to provide funding for a 600 place zero carbon secondary school, which is approximately £15,931,575 (1Q14).

OCC Bicester Members also have the following concerns:

- Capacity issue with the use of existing Howes Lane: Members report that at times this road is already at capacity and would not be able to take additional traffic from the Himley development. If the Albion Land site were to come forward this would only exacerbate the capacity problem. The strategic infrastructure (tunnel and realigned road) should be in place before this development is allowed to proceed.
- There should be a restriction on HGVs turning right onto the B4030

Officer's Name: Lisa Michelson

Officer's Title: Locality Manager

Date: 08 November 2016

District: Cherwell

Application no: 14/02121/OUT-3

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Transport

Recommendation:

Objection

On Transport, OCC has previously responded with no objection subject to conditions and completion of satisfactory S106 agreement applicable to the application site and broader North West Bicester Site, and has maintained that no more than 900 residential occupations could take place across the NW Bicester site prior to the delivery of the strategic road link (Howes Lane Realignment) and tunnels under the railway. **Objection here is to the developer's proposal (the subject of this amendment) that the entire development should be permitted ahead of this key infrastructure. On the basis of the information submitted and on further technical work commissioned by OCC, no development at Himley Village should take place until the tunnel and realigned road is in place.**

Key issues:

- Traffic impact
 - The critical infrastructure that needs to be delivered by the North West Bicester developments is the new tunnel and realigned road, in order to mitigate the impact of the development, maintain this important strategic link road, provide a route to link the masterplan area across the railway barrier, and move the increased traffic flow away from the backs of gardens on Howes Lane. OCC are concerned about the potential impact of delivering this interim scheme, on delivery of the key strategic infrastructure for NW Bicester.
 - Because of the methodology used to take account of traffic using unsuitable routes in the model such as Shakespeare Drive, the TA Addendum does not demonstrate that the interim mitigation proposed at the junction of Howes Lane/Bucknell Road/Lords Lane will be sufficient to avoid a severe impact at the junction by 2024 if the strategic infrastructure

has not been delivered by then. OCC is also concerned over the longer term ability of the interim scheme to mitigate the development if the strategic infrastructure does not come forward. **Reason for objection.**

- Safety and feasibility of interim scheme
 - Notwithstanding concerns over whether the additional capacity is sufficient, the scheme has weaknesses in terms of pedestrian/cycle provision which it may not be possible to overcome through further design; or, in addressing them, the capacity benefits may be eroded so that the scheme is ineffective.
 - Vehicle tracking issues mean that at best, adjustments could be required that would erode the additional capacity provided by the scheme, or that the scheme could be deemed unsafe even after the next stage of design, fail a technical audit and not be granted a S278 agreement.
 - Because of the level of detail of the design work carried out, the applicant has not fully demonstrated the feasibility of the scheme. **Reason for objection**
- Effectiveness and deliverability of Interim Sustainable Movement Strategy
 - Concern over deliverability of crucial key walking/cycling routes as they cross land outside the applicant's control
 - Concern over walking distances to facilities in advance of key on-site facilities being delivered.
 - Location of proposed bus turning area.
- Inconsistency with the North West Bicester masterplan/Supplementary Planning Document, Cherwell Local Plan (Policy Bicester 1), and with the basis of decisions on other planning applications, particularly in relation to the triggers and phasing for site-wide infrastructure. OCC does not look to revisit previous decisions which were made on the basis of limited development resulting in some network problems but with certainty over the delivery of critical infrastructure. An exception was applied in these circumstances in order to assist with the delivery of the strategic infrastructure (tunnel and realigned road).

Legal agreement required to secure:

If the LPA are minded to allow the development to proceed on the basis of the proposals in this amendment (which we do not recommend):

In addition to the contributions and works to mitigate the development as part of the NW Bicester masterplan (as detailed in OCC's previous consultation responses), the S106 would need to secure the interim mitigation.

- We would expect the interim sustainable movement strategy (including cycle and pedestrian routes) and highway capacity improvements proposed in this application to be secured in the S106 to be delivered prior to first occupation, with S278 agreements to be completed prior to commencement. In the event that further design work reduces the capacity of the junction improvements, the planning application will need to be reassessed.

- A limit (which OCC recommend is no development) dwellings on the amount of development that can to be permitted to take place at Himley Village prior to the delivery of the strategic road link and tunnel should be imposed, with certainty of the timetable for delivery of the road link and tunnel required before commencement of development. This could be linked to confirmation that the tunnel under the railway and realigned road has entered stage 5 of the GRIP process (detailed design) would be required with a construction timescale within 2 years. Confirmation of funding would also be needed.
- Commuted sums for maintenance would be required for any new highway infrastructure, and terms for the decommissioning of interim mitigation at the end of the interim period would also need to be included.

Conditions:

Prior to the commencement of the development hereby approved, full details of the means of vehicular accesses between the land and the highway, including, position, layout, construction, drainage and vision splays shall be submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority. Thereafter, and prior to first occupation, the means of access shall be constructed and retained in accordance with the approved details. Reason - In the interests of highway safety and to comply with Government guidance contained within the National Planning Policy Framework.

Prior to the commencement of the development hereby approved, full details of the footway and cycleway links between the land and the residential development east of Howes lane, including, position, layout, construction, drainage and street lighting shall be submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority. Thereafter, and prior to first occupation, the footway and cycleway links shall be constructed and retained in accordance with the approved details. Reason - In the interests of highway safety and to comply with Government guidance contained within the National Planning Policy Framework.

No development shall commence on site for the development until a Construction Traffic Management Plan providing full details of the phasing of the development has been submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority prior to the commencement of development. This plan is to include wheel washing facilities, a restriction on construction & delivery traffic during the peak traffic periods and an agreed route for HGV traffic to the development site. The approved Plan shall be implemented in full during the entire construction phases and shall reflect the measures included in the Construction Method Statement received.

Reason – In the interests of highway safety and to safeguard the residential amenities of local residents in accordance with Government Guidance in the NPPF.

Drainage

No development shall begin until a surface water drainage scheme for the site, based on sustainable drainage principles and an assessment of the hydrological and hydro-geological context of the development, has been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The scheme shall subsequently be

implemented in accordance with the approved details before the development is completed. The scheme shall also include:

- Discharge Rates
- Discharge Volumes
- Maintenance and management of SUDS features (this may be secured by a Section 106 Agreement)
- Sizing of features – attenuation volume
- Infiltration tests to be undertaken in accordance with BRE365
- Detailed drainage layout with pipe numbers
- SUDS (list the suds features mentioned within the FRA to ensure they are carried forward into the detailed drainage strategy)
- Network drainage calculations
- Phasing plans
- Flood Risk Assessment

Reason - To ensure satisfactory drainage of the site in the interests of public health, to avoid flooding of adjacent land and property and to comply with Government guidance contained within the National Planning Policy Framework.

Travel Plan: Prior to first occupation, a Framework Travel Plan prepared in accordance with the Oxfordshire County Council Guidance document, *Transport for new developments; Transport Assessments and Travel Plans* (March 2014) shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Thereafter the Travel Plan shall be implemented in accordance with the approved document.

Informatives:

Please note the Advance Payments Code (APC), Sections 219 -225 of the Highways Act, is in force in the county to ensure financial security from the developer to off-set the frontage owners' liability for private street works, typically in the form of a cash deposit or bond. Should a developer wish for a street or estate to remain private then to secure exemption from the APC procedure a 'Private Road Agreement' must be entered into with the County Council to protect the interests of prospective frontage owners. For guidance and information on road adoptions etc. please contact the County's Road Agreements Team on 01865 815700 or email roadagreements@oxfordshire.gov.uk

Detailed comments:

Traffic impact:

Howes Lane/Bucknell Road/Lords Lane junction

The TA Addendum refers to the Technical Note produced in December 2014 and accepted by OCC, which identified the development trigger point by which the strategic road link and tunnel would be required – 900 homes and 4ha of employment land across NW Bicester as a whole. After this point, the impact at the Howes Lane/Bucknell Rd/Lords Lane would become severe.

The Addendum proposes an interim junction signalisation scheme at this critical junction, and, using flows derived from agreed trip generation estimates and the Bicester Transport Model, provides LinSig modelling which purports to demonstrate that the junction would operate with adequate capacity in 2024, with the interim development scenario as follows:

- 2600 homes including: Exemplar (393 homes), Application 1 (507 homes), and Himley Village (1700 homes), plus non-residential uses on these sites
- Albion Land – 10,079m² B1 use and 16,154m² B2 (no B8)

The files have been checked and this scenario does appear to provide sufficient capacity (albeit with no pedestrian phases and with maximum cycle times) for the flows used to model it. Whilst the modelling results suggest that this interim signalised arrangement offers a more balanced movement of trips through the two junctions compared with the existing situation (page 11 of the TA addendum), the fact that the model reassigns traffic away from the junction as queues develop (towards unsuitable routes) is not addressed. The North West Bicester masterplan proposes to reduce the inappropriate routeing of traffic, so in fact, flows would be greater at the junction than the model is showing.

To address this concern, the TA Addendum includes a sensitivity test, putting extra trips into the junction, but there is a weakness in the methodology. It is based on trip distribution using a 2007 household survey as evidence, when in fact travel patterns are likely to be very different now and even more so in future years. (This is apparent in the reversal of dominant flow through the junction compared with the modelled flows, as highlighted in the TA Addendum.) The Addendum claims that a further 16% of traffic on top of the interim development scenario can be accommodated, on the basis of this sensitivity test, but I do not accept that this is demonstrated, because of the concern with the methodology, and the fact that in the LinSig model one arm of the junction goes over 90% Degree of Saturation, which is considered to be over-capacity. Additionally the sensitivity test baseline traffic volumes are only factored up to 2021.

When a junction is designed to run at maximum cycle time, there is no margin to increase cycle time if the junction does not work exactly as modelled.

Overall, therefore, I do not believe it has been adequately demonstrated that the proposed interim junction scheme mitigates the traffic impact of the full development.

Even if the scheme did deliver adequate capacity in 2024 (which we believe it would not), there remains the possibility that the strategic road and tunnel would not have been delivered by then, in which case there would be no effective mitigation beyond 2024 for the development at Himley Village, let alone the additional background growth during the local plan period.

Risk to delivery of the tunnel and realigned Howes Lane

BIC1 in the Local Transport Plan aims to “improve access and connections between key employment and residential sites and the strategic transport system” and includes “delivering effective peripheral routes around the town”. This objective is to

be partly met by the provision of the “western peripheral corridor: realigning A4095 Howes Lane ... by the provision of a new tunnel under the railway and realignment of the connecting roads and junctions....”

From a transport strategy point of view it is essential that the sites that make up the North West Bicester masterplan area will deliver this scheme. Site wide triggers have been established for strategic infrastructure, including the tunnel and realigned road. Planning decisions have been taken based on the phasing of housing across the wider site that will prioritise the delivery of this infrastructure. Should the District be minded to approve further development ahead of the tunnels and realigned road (which OCC advise against), confirmation would be required that altering this phasing would not compromise the ability of others to deliver this infrastructure and would not delay its delivery.

Viability concerns

The opening sentence of this amendment states that, “a new strategic link road through the development is required in order to remove the traffic capacity problems on the Howes Lane / Lords Lane corridor” for the full masterplan. On page 2 it is stated that: *“It is not intended that the interim junction scheme replaces the strategic link road and P3Eco remain committed to supporting the delivery of the strategic link and the wider masterplan proposals.”*

Whilst it is encouraging to read these statements, it is critical that it is the tunnel and realigned road scheme that is delivered – “supporting the delivery” does not commit to funding their proportion of the scheme to ensure that it is delivered. Should the District be minded to approve further development ahead of the tunnels and realigned road (which OCC advise against), please note that:

- The County Council has strong concerns about the viability of this site to fund this interim scheme *and* pay its proportion of the tunnel and realigned road. It is the latter that must be secured from this development and this cannot be lost at the expense of an interim scheme that will not mitigate the masterplan proposals.
- Bringing forward further housing ahead of delivery of the tunnel and realigned road, over and above the 900, could only be considered acceptable if the funding and delivery of the infrastructure was committed prior to commencement of development.
- There is uncertainty over how long the interim period will be – if it is extended due to the strategic infrastructure being delayed, the interim scheme will not be sufficient.

Additional Capacity Offered by the Interim Scheme

In order to look in detail at whether any additional capacity is offered by the proposed interim scheme, OCC commissioned consultants White Young Green (WYG) to look in detail at the LinSig model for the this scheme (see Technical Note at Appendix 1). The aim was to test at what point past 2024 (the date that P3 Eco’s consultants have used) the network impact becomes unacceptable. Since the work carried out by Alan Baxters, up-to-date traffic count data has been collected for a different scheme within the town. This was not available to P3 Eco’s consultants but can be provided to them.

The work by WYG tested various levels of background growth and levels of development across North West Bicester. As would be expected the work confirmed that the proposed interim scheme would not be sufficient for the complete masterplan site, but also demonstrated that the scheme would not work in 2024 with background growth plus the phased development at NW Bicester (exemplar + 500 north of the railway + Albion employment and housing + 1700 at Himley).

Even if all the other issues with this scheme could be overcome (and we have serious doubts that they can) this work has suggested that:

“For the ‘most likely’ background development scenarios, the junction operates within acceptable capacity at 2019 but is over capacity after this. The 2019 assumption is equivalent to 485 dwellings at Himley Village” (para 3.1.16)

The report concludes that:

“...considering the short timescale that the Interim scheme would be on the ground before alternative highway improvements would be required it is therefore considered that the Interim scheme is unlikely to offer sufficient benefits to allow development to commence. Therefore, the full scheme of a new tunnel under the railway should be provided at the earliest opportunity” (para 3.1.18)

This piece of work has demonstrated the sensitivities of the network with the increasing strain that growth will place on the transport network. Whilst it is accepted that the methodology and evidence presented have demonstrated that the interim scheme would offer a *better* balance of flows across the two junctions, a quick check to look at trigger points quickly showed up the sensitivities in the network. If the intention remains to bring forward the full development on the back of this interim scheme, it would be essential to remove these concerns by using a detailed modelling assessment with current count data.

What is very clear from any of the assessment work carried out is the critical need for the fully mitigating scheme, i.e. the new tunnel and realigned road.

Middleton Stoney crossroads

The Addendum highlights that an additional 94 vehicles in the AM peak and 62 in the pm peak would travel through Middleton Stoney, heading south. However, no junction capacity assessment is provided. A traffic calming scheme is proposed, but OCC has concerns about the detail of the scheme, given the volume and nature of traffic at this junction. The impact on Middleton Stoney from this and local plan allocated development at Heyford is recognised as an issue in future years, and the applicant is proposing to make a financial contribution towards a traffic calming scheme here, which should be proportionate to the development impact.

A4095/Banbury Road Roundabout

The TA Addendum suggests that bringing forward the entire Himley Village development ahead of the strategic link road and tunnel would trigger the need for

the improvement scheme at this junction slightly earlier than would otherwise be required. However, we consider that the level of the impact and short term nature would be acceptable, so we would not require the scheme to be brought forward.

Safety and feasibility of interim scheme

The TA Addendum includes an independently produced Stage 1 Road Safety Audit of the interim junction scheme at Bucknell Rd/Howes Lane/Lords Lane. This raises a number of issues, some of which can be dealt with at the next design stage. However, some of the issues are likely to be difficult to solve. Comments on the safety audit, and the designer's response to the issues raised, are as follows.

3.1.1 – Surfacing. We agree this can be addressed and to note, OCC has a strong preference for use of surfacing incorporating high (68+) PSV stone rather than an applied high friction dressing.

3.1.5 – Risk of change of junction type. The designer argues that the scheme would be safer than the existing arrangement. OCC does not agree with this statement, but purely in terms of changing the existing roundabout/priority junction arrangement to a fully signalised arrangement, there are pro's and con's to both. The existing junctions (i.e. roundabout at Lords Lane and T junction at Howes Lane) have a good safety record (one slight accident in past five years) , and same is true for the nearby signals at the Howes Lane and Shakespeare Drive (zero accidents in this period). County-wide we don't have a huge number of examples of schemes where the junction type has been changed from roundabout to signals or the reverse, so it is difficult to be too definitive on the this, but the higher speeds that follow from the removal of the deflection created by a roundabout can lead to higher severity incidents, especially in accidents where a vehicle fails to comply with a red signal. Conversely, signals can help address problems with failure to give way at a roundabout (with two wheelers being particularly vulnerable).

3.2.1 – Lack of carriageway space could compromise road safety. The swept path drawings supplied show that articulated lorries would struggle to pass one another under the railway bridge, and large coaches are likely to over-run kerbs and refuges when turning right out of Howes Lane. In most parts of the junction the tracking only just about fits, if vehicles are driven expertly and with extreme caution – in practice this won't always happen.

It is true that the design provides refuges where presently there are none, but they are not wide enough to accommodate pushed bicycles and will not easily accommodate parents pushing prams, so there is still a risk to safety here, although this situation occurs at many other locations.

The designer's response to the lack of carriageway space is that on Lords Lane and Bucknell Road this can be addressed and that there is room to accommodate passing lorries and accommodate footways of at least 1.5m width. Having been to site I do not think this will be feasible as the footway on the east side of Bucknell Road is already less than this, down to 1m in places, and must not be reduced further.

In addition to lack of carriageway space being a safety hazard, it will slow down the operation of the junction so that it may not deliver the intended capacity, as vehicles negotiate past each other. If, during the design process, it was deemed necessary to move the stop line on Bucknell Rd back to allow large vehicles to make the left turn out of Howes Lane, this would reduce the capacity of the junction.

We are also concerned about narrow lane widths on the bend on the Howes Lane arm. There is a risk to cyclists, and the capacity of the junction will be affected by HGVs occupying both lanes (as they do at present).

3.3.1 – Operation of signals. We agree with the designer's response that having right turning traffic running at same time as oncoming traffic is routine at signals and in most cases works with acceptable safety. Whilst late start / early cut-off could be explored as possible measures, it would reduce the capacity of the junction.

The scheme does not include pedestrian only phases at the crossing points, and introducing these would reduce the capacity of the junction so that it could not provide adequate mitigation. Pedestrians would be able to cross at the signals, using the refuges, when traffic is stopped, which is better than the current situation. This system operates with acceptable safety at other urban locations but it does not provide a good level of pedestrian comfort/amenity.

It is true that there is limited pedestrian demand at this junction, but we disagree with the designer's statement that the development proposals will not increase this demand. Despite there being no obvious pedestrian desire lines to facilities via this route, the addition of 1700 homes is bound to create increased demand for walking journeys, for leisure purposes and to visit friends/businesses in existing residential areas. The sub-standard provision at this junction is not likely to encourage higher walking modal share for these trips.

3.3.2 – concern about approach speeds. We agree with the designer's response and, to note, OCC would require the scheme to incorporate MOVA control.

3.4.1 Lack of continuity of cycle facilities. The designer's response says that the existing arrangement will continue (but is inaccurate in the description of existing facilities on Bucknell Road). However, the limited carriageway width combined with the additional queuing traffic arising from the development will lead to uncomfortable and potentially hazardous conditions for cyclists especially at peak hours. The design needs to provide good levels of safety and amenity for cyclists especially as it is unclear how long the interim arrangements might in practice be in place, and it is hard to see how this will be achieved. The designer's response also says that 'very few, if any additional cyclists will use the junction'. While new cycle trips may well be concentrated along the Middleton Stoney Road corridor, the development will generate cycle trips to other parts of the town.

3.4.2 Lack of pedestrian provision. We agree with the auditor's comment about the lack of crossing facilities on a desire line north of Howes Lane towards Lords Lane. Whilst there is currently no formal crossing here, the safety risk could be made worse by the change to a signalised crossing arrangement. We disagree with the designer's response about there being no desire line – it links the northern part of

Bure Park with the employment sites and the bridleway on the NW side of Howes Lane.

In summary, it is the lack of carriageway and footway space which causes us most concern. There is a strong likelihood that it will not be feasible to deliver a scheme that provides sufficient traffic capacity and is safe for all road users. If the LPA is minded to permit development to proceed with this as an interim mitigation scheme, it will be subject to a S278 agreement with its own technical approval process, and there is a risk that the S278 could not be granted. There would also need to be provision with the S106 agreement to require the scheme to be modelled as part of the design process to demonstrate that the capacity can be provided in the finally approved scheme, and for the S278 to be agreed prior to commencement.

Interim Sustainable Movement Strategy

As part of NW Bicester masterplan the development must seek to achieve single occupancy car modal share of 50%. However, bringing forward the development in isolation would make this extremely challenging, as it would be detached from local facilities and employment other than those provided within the site itself, and could not be served by the proposed NW Bicester bus services looping either side of the railway. The TA Addendum includes an Interim Sustainable Movement Strategy which seeks to address this.

Walking and cycling: Two interim connections are proposed, which would link the development to residential area east of Howes Lane and onward into the town centre. Because the development would be completely separate from the existing built up area, with open fields in between, these routes are vital for connecting to employment, services and for integration with the existing Bicester community. However, both routes require access across third party land.

- Primary interim connection – runs across TVP land, and the TA Addendum says ‘Agreement will be required from the Thames Valley Policy Authority In order to deliver the new link earlier than proposed as part of the NW Bicester Masterplan.’ However, no evidence is provided regarding progress towards any agreement. There would need to be a corridor sufficiently wide for the pedestrian/cycle route itself plus a suitable margin and fencing either side, and would need to be lit. There is no guarantee that this would be achievable.
- Secondary interim connection – a footway/cycleway is proposed along Middleton Stoney Road, but there is insufficient highway land, so where it runs alongside the Albion Land site it would require the dedication of third party land. This is because the highway boundary is the carriageway side of the ditch, not the hedgeline, and this is only 2 to 2.5m back from the edge of the carriageway. Again, this means there is no guarantee it would be achievable. If the third party land could be obtained, a separate consent would be required to culvert the ditch, and OCC is likely to require a supporting embankment rather than a retaining wall, all to be dedicated as highway. A S278 agreement would be required to carry out the works. Middleton Stoney Road would need to be lit as far as and including the site access.

Both routes would cross Howes Lane with Toucan crossings, and the speed limit would need to be reduced to 40mph. Even at this lower speed, a significant amount of vegetation would need to be removed to provide forward visibility – possibly right back to the garden fences. The Addendum says that traffic would not back up to the roundabout when the Toucan crossing was on red to traffic. Given the time that the crossing could be red to traffic, a small queue may in fact back up to the roundabout for a short time, but this is not considered to be a significant safety risk or to significantly affect capacity.

Suitable pedestrian and cycle connection to Bicester would need to be provided prior to first occupation, and this should be secured through the S106 agreement.

Himley Village Facilities: The TA Addendum says that a wide range of services and employment as well as the primary school would be provided within Phase 1, with the pub and community centre coming in Phase 2. Phase 1 is proposed to be 290 homes and it is questionable whether the range of facilities could be provided in this time. There is no plan showing where Phase 1 occupations would be within the site – the TA Addendum says facilities in Shakespeare Drive would be within a 15 minute walk away, but no isochrones are provided showing how much of the site would be within this range.

Proposed bus services In advance of the NW Bicester bus services coming forward, the proposal is to provide bus stops and a refuge on Middleton Stoney Road to enable residents to access the existing 25A service, and to provide a dedicated bus service linking the site and the town centre. This would need to enter the development, turn round and exit the same way. The proposed turning area appears to be on the site of the village school which is clearly not acceptable – an alternative turning area would need to be provided, and would need to be secured through the S106 agreement.

Whilst all occupancies are only within a walk of 400m from the proposed stops on Middleton Stoney Road, it would be acceptable to rely on the 25A. The bus stops would need to be provided at the same time as the junction access works (prior to first occupation). Middleton Stoney Road would need to be lit as far as the site access junction.

OCC would also require funding to boost the 25A Upper Heyford-Bicester service along Middleton Stoney Road to 2 buses per hour (7-19 Monday to Saturday) unless this has been provided by another party (Upper Heyford or Albion Land), prior to first occupation.

Prior to any occupations further than a walk of 400m from these bus stops, the developer would need to provide a bespoke new service Himley to Bicester Town Centre via Middleton Stoney Road, 2 buses per hour (7-19 Monday to Saturday).

Once a route could be provided through Albion Land or Application 2 land, to serve dwellings in these areas, then this arrangement would cease and a new 'North West Bicester route 2' bus service would be procured from North West Bicester s106 funds (to which Himley Village would need to contribute). This new service would initially be only two buses per hour.

Framework travel plan

An updated draft Framework Travel Plan has been updated to reflect Himley Village coming forward in advance of wider NW Bicester developments. The plan reflects the NW Bicester target of 50% non-car modal share. However, it lacks detail on how sustainable travel patterns will be encouraged if Himley Village comes forward in isolation. This will need to be addressed.

Additionally:

- There is no transport data in the plan. It currently states that this is in the TA; however the travel plan should be a stand-alone document and have the relevant information in it.
- It is a framework travel plan so should have a commitment for the occupiers of the different elements to produce a travel plan or travel plan statement, depending on their size, and these should have objectives that link back to the targets in the framework travel plan.
- More details are required on the roles of the travel plan co-ordinator and how they will be recruited, including details of how they will work with the final occupiers of the site.

Inconsistency with the North West Bicester Masterplan/SPD and Cherwell Local Plan

The North West Bicester masterplan was adopted as a Supplementary Planning Document and is intended to guide developers in preparing planning applications and ensure that the principles on which the development was founded are not watered down. Development Principle 6 – Transport, Movement and Access states that “Cycling and walking will be encouraged and supported to be the first choice of transport in new development...” The proposed interim scheme is inconsistent with this approach as the proposals provide far from optimum conditions for pedestrians and cyclists which would not be acceptable as a long term scheme. As well as being contrary to the SPD/Masterplan, the proposals are contrary to the Cherwell Local Plan as they do not comply with a number of the key site specific design and place shaping principles (bullets 5-9) set out in Bicester Policy 1. This further suggests that there should be a cap on the amount of development that should be permitted before the fully mitigating scheme of the tunnel and realigned road is in place.

Bringing forward the Himley Village proposals ahead of other parts of the masterplan site would also mean that all vehicles have to access and egress the site from Middleton Stoney Road, the B4030, which would be less acceptable than when trips are balanced between this B road and the A4095 and have a greater environmental impact on properties backing onto Howes Lane

Officer's Name: Joy White

Officer's Title: Principal Transport Planner

Date: 08 November 2016

District: Cherwell

Application no: 14/02121/OUT-3

Proposal: OUTLINE - Development to provide up to 1,700 residential dwellings (Class C3), a retirement village (Class C2), flexible commercial floorspace (Classes A1, A2, A3, A4, A5, B1, C1 and D1), social and community facilities (Class D1), land to accommodate one energy centre and land to accommodate one new primary school (up to 2FE) (Class D1). Such development to include provision of strategic landscape, provision of new vehicular, cycle and pedestrian access routes, infrastructure and other operations (including demolition of farm buildings on Middleton Stoney Road)

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

Education

The proposed amendment makes it possible that delivery of this section of the NW Bicester development proceeds ahead of other sections. As the education provision of the different sections is interconnected, in addition to information already provided on the education infrastructure requirements of this development, the following requirements must also be met:

- The primary school should be delivered by the occupation of the 400 – 500th home.
- If this development is delivered ahead of the planned new secondary school within application 14/01641/OUT, a financial contribution will be required towards off-site temporary classrooms to provide early secondary school pupil places generated by the development (a temporary classroom for 30 pupils costs c. £0.25 million).
- Until it is confirmed that the planned secondary school within application 14/01641/OUT will be constructed, this development site will need to protect a fully serviced secondary school reserve site of 5 ha. The site must be free from encumbrances and delivered in accordance with Oxfordshire County Council requirements.
- If the planned secondary school within application 14/01641/OUT is not constructed, this development will need to provide funding for a 600 place zero carbon secondary school, which is approximately £15,931,575 (1Q14).

Officer's Name: Barbara Chillman

Officer's Title: Pupil Place Planning Manager

Date: 24 October 2016

District: Cherwell

Application no: 14/02121/OUT-3

Proposal: OUTLINE - Development to provide up to 1,700 residential dwellings (Class C3), a retirement village (Class C2), flexible commercial floorspace (Classes A1, A2, A3, A4, A5, B1, C1 and D1), social and community facilities (Class D1), land to accommodate one energy centre and land to accommodate one new primary school (up to 2FE) (Class D1). Such development to include provision of strategic landscape, provision of new vehicular, cycle and pedestrian access routes, infrastructure and other operations (including demolition of farm buildings on Middleton Stoney Road)

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

Archaeology

Recommendation:

No objection subject to conditions

Key issues:

The submitted amendments do not alter our original comments.

Legal agreement required to secure:

Conditions:

Informatives:

Detailed comments:

The submitted amendments do not alter our original comments.

Officer's Name: Richard Oram

Officer's Title: Planning Archaeologist

Date: 27 October 2016

District: Cherwell

Application no: 14/02121/OUT-3

Proposal: OUTLINE - Development to provide up to 1,700 residential dwellings (Class C3), a retirement village (Class C2), flexible commercial floorspace (Classes A1, A2, A3, A4, A5, B1, C1 and D1), social and community facilities (Class D1), land to accommodate one energy centre and land to accommodate one new primary school (up to 2FE) (Class D1). Such development to include provision of strategic landscape, provision of new vehicular, cycle and pedestrian access routes, infrastructure and other operations (including demolition of farm buildings on Middleton Stoney Road)

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

Minerals & Waste

Recommendation:

No comment

Key issues:

No significant issues

Legal agreement required to secure:

Conditions:

Informatives:

Detailed comments:

No comments

Officer's Name: Peter Day

Officer's Title: Minerals & Waste Policy Team Leader

Date: 21 October 2016
