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# Land at North West Bicester

## Planning Statement

Prepared by Barton Willmore LLP on behalf of Firethorn Developments Limited

April 2021

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## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This Planning Statement has been prepared by Barton Willmore LLP on behalf of Firethorn Developments Limited (the Applicant) in support of an outline planning application (OPA) for residential development on land at North West Bicester (see site location plan at **Appendix 1**), hereafter referred to as 'the Site'.
- 1.2 The OPA is made pursuant to the adoption by Cherwell District Council (CDC) of Policy Bicester 1 within their Cherwell Local Plan 2011-2031 Part 1, and the adoption of the North West Bicester Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) in February 2016. **Appendix 2** contains the adopted SPD, and Policy Bicester 1 forms Appendix 1 within that SPD. We will discuss the SPD in more detail in Section 5.0 below.
- 1.3 The OPA is submitted pursuant to pre-application discussions with CDC which have been ongoing since 2019, and a public engagement exercise which took place in March/April this year, as well as a series of meetings with relevant local interest groups. The public engagement process is documented in the Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) which also accompanies this OPA.
- 1.4 This OPA is accompanied by the plans and documents set out in the table at **Appendix 3** to this Statement.

### **Firethorn Trust – The Applicant**

- 1.5 Firethorn's aim is to create spaces that connect people, places, and business and which are delivered to the highest standards in design and quality. Reducing environmental impact and focus on sustainability are at the forefront of their vision, and they take a collaborative approach to engaging interested parties on their projects to ensure that their business objectives are aligned with local needs. Their aim is to create desirable developments which optimise lifestyle, wellbeing, and prosperity.

### **The Planning Statement**

- 1.6 This Statement provides information to support and justify the proposals, and is structured as follows:

- Section 2.0 – Application site, history, and background;
- Section 3.0 – Pre-application discussion and public engagement;
- Section 4.0 – The proposed development;
- Section 5.0 – Planning policy context;
- Section 6.0 – Assessment of the planning issues;
- Section 7.0 – Draft heads of terms and planning obligations; and
- Section 8.0 - Conclusions.

### **Summary**

- 1.7 Planning approval is sought for the outline planning application details submitted in respect of the new residential development on land at North West Bicester. A full package of plans and documents is submitted in support of these proposals, as set out at **Appendix 3**. The proposals are compliant with the provisions of the SPD.

## 2.0 THE APPLICATION SITE, HISTORY AND BACKGROUND

### Site Location

- 2.1 The Site is located, as the name suggests, to the north west of the centre of Bicester, and forms part of the strategic allocation for 6,000 dwellings at North West Bicester (which is referred to at **Appendix 2**). It is 2.5km to the north west of Bicester Town Centre, south east of the village of Bucknell and north west of Caversfield. The land and boundaries of the Site comprise Banbury Road (B4100) and the ongoing construction works associated with first phase of the North West Bicester allocation (the Exemplar site); completed housing associated with the same development; and fields, hedgerows, and trees to the north, north west, and west. Further to the south lie fields running up to Lords Lane (A4095) which is approximately 550m to the south and forms the northern edge of Bicester.
- 2.2 Beyond Banbury Road to the east is the Church of St Laurence Grade II\* Listed Building, Caversfield House, and a Public Right of Way (PRoW) beyond that. Home Farmhouse Grade II Listed Building is located approximately 85m to the south east at the closest point to the Site.
- 2.3 The land separating the two parcels of the Site comprising the first phase of the North West Bicester allocation is part complete and part under construction. The new development includes housing development and a primary school (Gagle Brook). An estate road, Charlotte Avenue, travels north of the new housing development, in between the two parcels of land comprising the Site becoming Braeburn Avenue before joining Banbury Road.

### Site Description

- 2.4 The Site comprises two parcels of land, with a total area of 23.97ha, made up of an eastern and Western Parcel. The land is predominantly grassland with fields bounded by hedges with some large trees, woodland, and plantation. The land is classified as good to moderate value (primarily Grade 3b) under the Agricultural Land Classification system.

2.5 The west of the Site contains two distinct areas of woodland, and the most northern area of woodland contains a dry pond. There is a historic hedgerow which runs along the north eastern border of the Site and is a drainage feature running through the south of the Site, which also comprises areas of Flood Zones 2 and 3. The Site is relatively flat rising gradually to the north west.

### **Planning History**

2.6 As referred to above, the site forms part of the wider North West Bicester SPD allocation, with up to 6,000 homes (along with employment uses, schools, green space, and strategic infrastructure) proposed across the 400 hectares identified. The site was allocated for development in 2016, and as the SPD sets out, the allocation was made against the backdrop of the identification in PPS1 of the potential for the wider North West Bicester area to be an eco-town location, which CDC then promoted (resulting in Policy Bicester 1 and the SPD adoption).

2.7 Bicester was awarded Garden Town status in 2014, and despite the Government announcing in a Ministerial Statement in March 2015 that the Eco Towns PPS was cancelled, based on the Government's commitment to localism and to supporting locally led development. North West Bicester retained its eco-town status until an up-to-date Local Plan was in place, as CDC Local Plan was going through examination at the time of the announcement (with the SPD site area identified as a proposed eco-town allocation).

2.8 The SPD took on board and enshrined within it the principles established through the PPS Supplement, and the document provides detailed guidance for the development of the site, including the vision and objectives, and the development principles and requirements.

2.9 As referred to above, development has already been approved within the wider SPD allocation area, with residential units already having been constructed and occupied on the Exemplar site adjacent to the Site. Across the SPD allocation, planning permission has also been granted for the following:

- Up to 1,700 homes at the Himley Village site;
- A new Local Centre and community uses at the Exemplar site;
- Delivery of new highway infrastructure (aligned with Howes Lane); and
- Over 500,000 sqft of employment uses.

2.10 Further details of the applications submitted in respect of the SPD site are shown in the table below:

Application Ref	Distance to Site	Description
14/01384/OUT <i>Not Determined</i>  Bicester Eco Town Exemplar Site Banbury Road B4100 Caversfield	Adjacent	Development comprising redevelopment to provide up to 2600 residential dwellings (Class C3), commercial floorspace (Class A1 - A5, B1 and B2), social and community facilities (Class D1), land to accommodate one energy centre, land to accommodate one new primary school (Up to 2FE) (Class D1) and land to accommodate the extension of the primary school permitted pursuant to application (reference 10/01780/HYBRID). Such development to include provision of strategic landscape, provision of new vehicular, cycle and pedestrian access routes, infrastructure, ancillary engineering, and other operations
10/01780/HYBRID <i>Permission granted July 2012</i>  Bicester Eco Town Exemplar Site Caversfield Oxfordshire	Adjacent	Development of Exemplar phase of NW Bicester Eco Town to secure full planning permission for 393 residential units and an energy centre (up to 400 square metres), means of access, car parking, landscape, amenity space and service infrastructure and outline permission for a nursery of up to 350 square metres (use class D2), a community centre of up to 350 square metres (sui generis), 3 retail units of up to 770 square metres (including but not exclusively a convenience store, a post office and a pharmacy (use class A1)), an Eco-Business Centre of up to 1,800 square metres (use class B1), office accommodation of up to 1,100 square metres (use class B1), an Eco-Pub of up to 190 square metres (use class A4), and a primary school site measuring up to 1.34 hectares with access and layout to be determined.
18/00484/OUT <i>Not Determined</i>  Land North and Adjoining Home Farm Banbury Road B4100 Caversfield	Adjacent	Outline planning permission for up to 75 homes, pedestrian and cycle routes, creation of new access point from Charlotte Avenue, provision of open space, play space, allotments, orchard, parking, and associated works.
14/02121/OUT <i>Permission granted January 2020</i>  Proposed Himley Village North West Bicester Middleton Stoney Road Bicester Oxfordshire	Approximately 2km to the south west of the site	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)
15/00760/F <i>Permitted</i>	Approximately 200m south at the closest	Development of a new Local Centre comprising a Convenience Store (use class A1), Retail Units (flexible use class A1/A3/A5), Pub (use



Application Ref	Distance to Site	Description
North and South Arcade At Bicester Eco Town Exemplar Site Charlotte Avenue Bicester	point to the site.	class A4), Community Hall (use class D1), Nursery (use class D1), Commercial Units (flexible use class A2/B1/D1) with associated Access, Servicing, Landscaping and Parking with a total GEA of 3,617 sqm
14/01675/OUT as varied by 19/00347/OUT <i>Permitted.</i>  Applications pursuant to this: Reserved matters 19/00349/REM (completed) and 20/02454/REM (approved December 2020).  S73 application 20/03199/F to vary 19/00347/OUT (under consultation).  OS Parcel 4200 Adjoining and North East of A4095 And Adjoining and South West of Howes Lane Bicester	Approximately 1.9km south east at the closest point to the site.	Minor material amendment to planning permission 14/01675/OUT to vary conditions 6, 7, 8, 9 and 10 to refer to updated parameter plans and temporary access plan; variation of condition 14 to enable delivery of employment development in full in advance of strategic link road; and deletion of condition 20 to reflect removal of temporary access onto Howes Lane (Outline reference number 14/01675/OUT, granted at Appeal - Ref: APP/C3105/W/16/3163551 for the erection of up to 53,000 sq m of floor space to be for B1, B2 and B8 (use classes) employment provision within two employment zones covering an area of 9.45 ha; parking and service areas to serve the employment zones; a new access off the Middleton Stoney Road (B4030); temporary access off Howes Lane pending the delivery of the realigned Howes Lane; 4.5 ha of residential land; internal roads, paths and cycleways; landscaping including strategic green infrastructure (GI); provision of sustainable urban systems (SUDS) incorporating landscaped areas with balancing ponds and swales; associated utilities and infrastructure).
19/01036/HYBRID Under Consultation <i>Validated</i> 04/06/2019  Bicester Eco Town Exemplar Site Phase 2 Charlotte Avenue Bicester	Approximately 200m south at the closest point to the site.	Full permission is sought for Local Centre Community Floorspace (Use Class D1 with ancillary A1/A3), with a total GIA of 552 sqm, and 16 residential units (Use Class C3) with associated access, servicing, landscaping, and parking. Outline consent is sought for Local Centre Retail, Community or Commercial Floorspace (flexible Use Class A1/A2/A3/A4/A5/B1/D1).
14/01641/OUT Under Consultation <i>Validated</i> 30/09/2014  Land Adj To Bicester Road and South West of Avonbury Business Park Howes Lane Bicester	Approximately 1.5km to the south west of the site	Outline Application - To provide up to 900 residential dwellings (Class C3), commercial floor space (Class A1-A5, B1 and B2), leisure facilities (Class D2), social and community facilities (Class D1), land to accommodate one energy centre and land to accommodate one new primary school (up to 2 FE) (Class D1), secondary school up to 8 FE (Class D1). Such development to include provision of strategic landscape, provision of new vehicular, cycle and pedestrian access routes, infrastructure, ancillary engineering, and other operations
14/01968/F <i>Permission granted in August 2019.</i>  Proposal for New Highway Aligned with Howes Lane Bicester	To the south of the site	Construction of new road from Middleton Stoney Road roundabout to join Lord's Lane, east of Purslane Drive, to include the construction of a new crossing under the existing railway line north of the existing Avonbury Business Park, a bus only link east of the railway line, a new road around Hawkwell Farm to join Bucknell Road, retention of part of Old Howes Lane and Lord's Lane to provide access to and from existing residential areas

Application Ref	Distance to Site	Description
		and Bucknell Road to the south and associated infrastructure.

- 2.11 Further information regarding these sites is set out within the documentation forming the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) which is submitted in support of this OPA.

### 3.0 PRE-APPLICATION DISCUSSIONS AND PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

#### Pre-Application Discussion

- 3.1 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) emphasises the importance of early engagement in bringing forward and securing development schemes, with paragraph 39 highlighting the potential of pre-application engagement to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the planning application system for all parties. The NPPF states that 'good quality pre-application discussion enables better coordination between public and private resources and improved outcomes for the community'.
- 3.2 The Applicant and their team have had pre-application discussions with CDC in respect of this OPA. The Applicant and their team met with CDC in November 2020, and again in February 2021, following initial pre-app discussions which started in late 2019. Further to these discussions, CDC has provided the Applicant with formal pre-application advice. This pre-application discussion included Oxfordshire County Council as Highways Authority.
- 3.3 In response to their review of the draft OPA plans and a presentation by the Applicants' team which included a considerable amount of the information now contained in the Design and Access Statement (DAS) submitted in support of this OPA, CDC concluded that the proposed development would be acceptable in principle but identified the following key matters for further consideration:
- i. Careful consideration to be given to the relationship of residential development in the Eastern Parcel to both Home Farm and to St Lawrence Church – particularly the views to the latter;
  - ii. In relation to the rural edge of the Western Parcel, to consider whether this could be a softer edge;
  - iii. Would like to understand more about the different character areas identified across the site within the planning submission;
  - iv. Where proposed links are identified between the Site and the Exemplar development, these should be explained, and shown on the relevant Parameter Plan – both vehicular and pedestrian;
  - v. Parking should be provided for any allotment plots;
  - vi. There should be greater clarity on the extent of the maximum building heights and footprint for development within the Parameters, and the view to the Church should be defined further;

- vii. There will be a requirement for a crossing on the B4100 to the Church, as was proposed through the Home Farm application;
- viii. The proposals for regional based SuDS on the edge of the development with minimal swales is not considered to be in line with current guidance and best practice, with the expectation being that surface water drainage would be managed in a number of small catchments attenuation features throughout the site. The proposed drainage scheme should mimic the existing drainage regime of the site;
- ix. Consideration should be given to how the edges of the site close to Home Farm and the Church are handled including with regard to materials;
- x. The site is not expected to provide employment opportunities, but should consider accessibility and home working opportunities;
- xi. A Health Impact Assessment should be submitted with the OPA;
- xii. A biodiversity impact assessment tool should be used, with CDC seeking a net gain of 10% for biodiversity as a minimum;
- xiii. The SPD identifies that if It is not possible to mitigate for farmland birds on-site then off-site mitigation is required via a financial contribution;
- xiv. 30% affordable housing must be provided with 70%/30% split (social rented/shared ownership) – with an indicative mix given, subject to confirmation during the application process;
- xv. We should refer to Policy BCS4 of the adopted Local Plan Part 1 (2011-2031) for the housing mix for market housing; and
- xvi. A CEMP, and a Noise Report demonstrating the habitable rooms within dwellings will achieve the noise levels specified in British Standards, will be required.

3.4 The full pre-application response from CDC can be found at **Appendix 4** to this Statement. In addition to the points above, the CDC pre-application also confirmed that:

- A condition to require the preparation of a Design Code to frame the submission of future reserved matters would be applied and recommended to Committee for their consideration, should an OPA be supported by Officers;
- CDC will apply the guidance in their Residential Design Guide in relation to car parking, which specifies one allocated space/dwelling. More parking would be acceptable, but the lower standard reflects the sustainable nature of the site and parking should not be over-provided. Visitor parking is also important and the lack of such on the Exemplar site has caused problems; and

- It is expected that the site would make significant steps to meet the true carbon requirement and that offsetting would be used only where absolutely necessary, and in the event that CDC are provided with the information to make clear how this would be achieved.

3.5 These points have all been noted. True zero carbon, is a key requirement within the SPD - one of a series of requirements/potential obligations on development within the North West Bicester site. The Applicant has undertaken a viability assessment (see Section 7.0 below) in respect of the obligations identified within the SPD and by CDC, and the requirement to achieve true zero carbon, along with the other planning benefits/obligations will have to be considered in the round. If it is not possible for the development to viably progress the delivery of housing on the site to meet CDC's housing needs and to deliver on all obligations, CDC will be invited to identify its priorities.

3.6 We have considered the points referred to above at Paragraph 3.2 above in respect of the emerging planning application and have responded to them where possible. Our responses are set out in the table below, and can be seen in the documentation which accompanies this OPA:

	<b>CDC Pre-App Comment</b>	<b>Applicant Team Response</b>
<b>i</b>	Consideration to be given to the relationship of residential development in the Eastern Parcel to Home Farm and to St Lawrence Church – particularly the views to the latter	The Parameter Plans and Illustrative Masterplan have been amended to include a Heritage Enhancement Zone to respect the Church views
<b>ii</b>	Consider whether the rural edge of the Western Parcel could be a softer edge	The Parameter Plans and Illustrative Masterplan have been amended to include a Landscape and Visual Mitigation Zone along the western edge to enable additional landscaping along this buffer area
<b>iii</b>	Would like to understand more about the different character areas identified across the site within the planning submission	The information in the DAS has been augmented to provide further information

	<b>CDC Pre-App Comment</b>	<b>Applicant Team Response</b>
<b>iv</b>	Where proposed vehicular and pedestrian links are identified between the Site and the Exemplar development, these should be explained, and shown on the relevant Parameter Plan	The zones in which vehicular and pedestrian access are proposed, as well as the location of the construction access, are all shown the amended Parameter Plans
<b>v</b>	Parking should be provided for any allotment plots	This is noted. The OPA does not provide this level of detail, but there is scope within the Parameters to allow this and the DAS acknowledges the need for such accessibility
<b>vi</b>	There should be greater clarity on the extent of the max building heights/footprint for development within the Parameters, and the view to the Church should be defined further	Taking on board the comments above in respect of 'i', we would add that since the pre-application meeting, we have further refined the Parameter Plans in respect of the height and footprint of development, and in addition we have drafted the text which accompanies the Plans which provides further guidance as to what can/cannot be developed within the relevant zones as shown on the Plans
<b>vii</b>	There will be a requirement for a crossing on the B4100 to the Church, as proposed through the Home Farm application	The request for a crossing is noted. Nothing within the OPA would preclude the provision of a crossing to the Church (subject to the extent of land ownerships etc), but it is our view that such requirements will need to be considered in the context of all of the potential planning benefits requested by CDC, and as part of the viability assessment. Ultimately the priorities for any S106 monies available will need to be identified, but the crossing could be one of those subject to discussion with CDC

	<b>CDC Pre-App Comment</b>	<b>Applicant Team Response</b>
<b>viii</b>	The proposals for regional based SuDS on the edge of the development with minimal swales is not considered to be in line with current guidance and best practice. A number of small catchments attenuation features throughout the site would be expected. The proposed drainage scheme should mimic the existing drainage regime of the site	The comments of CDC and the other relevant consultees on surface water drainage (including OCC and the EA) have been considered in coming up with the preferred options for the drainage of the parcels. This is reflected in the locations of the attenuation basins on the Parameter Plans
<b>ix</b>	Consideration should be given to how the edges of the site close to Home Farm and the Church are handled including with regard to materials	The DAS contains further information regarding the treatment of these edges. The detailed matter of materials will be dealt with at reserved matters stage
<b>x</b>	The site is not expected to provide employment opportunities, but should consider accessibility and home working opportunities	Both of these matters have been considered. More information in this respect can be found in the DAS
<b>xi</b>	A Health Impact Assessment should be submitted with the OPA	We can confirm that a Health Impact Assessment has been included within this package
<b>xii</b>	A biodiversity impact assessment tool should be used, with CDC seeking a net gain of 10% for biodiversity as a minimum	A biodiversity impact assessment has been undertaken and is submitted in support of the OPA with the EIA
<b>xiii</b>	The SPD identifies that if It is not possible to mitigate for farmland birds on-site then off-site mitigation is required via a financial contribution	This requirement is noted. In undertaking our ecological surveys of the site as part of the EIA preparation, no ground nesting farmland birds of conservation concern have been recorded on-site. We intend to share this evidence with CDC and discuss whether or not such a financial contribution is therefore required, in relation to the Site

	<b>CDC Pre-App Comment</b>	<b>Applicant Team Response</b>
<b>xiv</b>	30% affordable housing must be provided with 70%/30% split (social rented/shared ownership) – with an indicative mix given, subject to confirmation during the application process	Up to 30% affordable housing will be provided at the Site. However, such requirements will need to be considered in the context of all of the potential planning benefits requested by CDC, and as part of the viability assessment. Ultimately the priorities for any S106 obligations/monies will need to be identified, but the provision of affordable housing will be one of those subject to discussion with CDC, and one of the key priorities. This OPA is supported by the submission of a supporting Affordable Housing Statement
<b>xv</b>	We should refer to Policy BCS4 of the adopted Local Plan Part 1 (2011-2031) for the housing mix for market housing	This is noted and has been considered in the context of the preparation of the Illustrative Masterplan and the viability assessment
<b>xvi</b>	A CEMP, and a Noise Report demonstrating the habitable rooms within dwellings will achieve the noise levels specified in British Standards, will be required	We acknowledge that these items will be required, but it is our view that this could be required pursuant to a planning approval, and secured via an appropriately worded planning condition

3.7 The pre-application feedback from CDC included a separate response which focussed on planning obligations and the likely proposed Heads of Terms. This is discussed in more detail in Section 7.0 below.



## **Public Engagement**

- 3.8 Public engagement is an essential part of the planning process, not only in this case with the emerging community within the North West Bicester site, but with the surrounding community, and with key stakeholder groups. In advance of the submission of this OPA, the Applicant team has been engaging with the local community at and around the North West Bicester site, to explain the proposals for the Site, and to give the new and existing community an opportunity to ask questions of the team. Virtual meetings were held with Bicester Town Council, Caversfield Parish Council, and the Elmsbrook Community Association in the early part of 2021.
- 3.9 In March/April this year the Applicants' team engaged in a virtual public consultation exercise. The consultation exercise was advertised in the local press, online via social media, and the local stakeholder groups and CDC were also informed that it was taking place, and indeed some of the stakeholder groups assisted the Applicant team by publicising the event through their own channels. The consultation exercise included an interactive website which set out the details of the proposals for the site and enabled those viewing the information to provide feedback via the website. It also included context about the Site and a Site 'fly-through'. In addition to this a newsletter providing details of the proposals was circulated locally, and for those who do not have access to the internet, hard copies of the proposals for the Site were available, with the ability to provide feedback to the Applicant team by post.
- 3.10 Detail of this exercise, and the engagement with key stakeholders, is summarised in the Statement of Community Involvement which is submitted in support of this application.

## 4.0 THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

### Introduction

- 4.1 This section provides an overview of the proposed development, including the need for the development. The supporting DAS should be read in addition to this Statement as it provides a more detailed description of the scheme, the site's setting and how the scheme proposals have evolved through the design process. The Transport Assessment which forms part of the EIA sets out the access strategy for the site.
- 4.2 The application seeks outline planning approval for the construction of up to 530 dwellings, including details of the site access arrangements.

### The Need for the Proposed Development

- 4.3 As stated above, the Site is located within the North West Bicester SPD area, which is allocated to provide the following:
- Up to 6,000 'true' zero carbon homes;
  - Employment opportunities providing at least 4,600 jobs;
  - Up to 4 primary schools and one secondary school;
  - 40% green space – half of which is to be public;
  - Pedestrian and cycle routes;
  - New links under the railway line and to Bicester itself;
  - Local centres to serve the new community areas; and
  - Integration with existing communities.
- 4.4 Just over 3,000 of these homes are to be delivered within the plan period (by 2031), with the full development taking up to 30 years to deliver.
- 4.5 The proposed development is therefore brought forward in the context of the provisions of the SPD, the identified housing need, and the provisions of Policy Bicester 1.

## **The Disposition of Development**

- 4.6 This application is being made in outline, with all matters reserved with the exception of access. The OPA is based around a set of Parameter Plans and supporting text, which sets the 'rules' for the disposition of development. The Development Parameters document forms the core of the OPA. This sets out the quantum of development proposed, the location of that development and its height, and the green infrastructure provisions required, as well as the location of access points into the site.
- 4.7 The residential development will be split across the Site within two development parcels – east and west. The built footprint for residential development will be spread across the majority of the site, with the exception of areas of existing retained vegetation, including existing woodland. In addition, areas of multi-functional green space are identified on the Parameter Plans, along with hedgerow buffer areas. Up to 530 dwellings will be delivered within this built footprint area (up to 50,000 sq.m.).
- 4.8 The locations of the vehicular, pedestrian and cycle links, along with the temporary construction access are shown on the Parameter Plans. Access to the Western Parcel will be located both to the north and south of the existing bus gate on Charlotte Avenue. In addition, there will be an access point located along the northern boundary of the Western Parcel, linking into the Exemplar site. Access to the Eastern Parcel will also be from the south of the Charlotte Avenue bus gate and will be via an extended access route through the emerging Exemplar site development. There will be a further separate pedestrian and cycle connection into the Eastern Parcel.
- 4.9 There is a requirement for a separate temporary access to the Eastern Parcel in order to facilitate construction – for up to 5 years – during the construction phase only. This separate access will be directly from the B4100 and is identified on the Parameter Plans.
- 4.10 Within the Site, a minimum of 40% green space will be provided. The location of some of this green space is defined on the Parameter Plans. The remainder of this green space will be located within the Site so that, by completion, the 40% minimum has been delivered, with half of that space being public.

**Built Form**

- 4.11 As the application for a proposed development is being brought forward in outline form, there is no fixed design scheme for the Site – only an Illustrative Masterplan, which shows one but not the only way in which the Parameter Plans can be interpreted into a development scheme. What is fixed is the height of the proposed development across the Parcels, which is predominately up to 12m, with a small section of the Western Parcel close to Charlotte Avenue being for development of up to 16m.

## 5.0 PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

5.1 This section sets out the planning policies that are relevant in considering the residential development proposals for the Site.

5.2 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 states that applications must be determined in accordance with the relevant development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The planning application proposals will therefore need to be considered against the relevant development plan policy documents and other material considerations, including the adopted SPD.

### National Planning Policy

5.3 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) is a material consideration in the determination of planning applications. The publication of the latest version of the NPPF in February 2019 included minor clarifications to the previous version published in June 2018.

5.4 One of the main principles running through the NPPF is the 'presumption in favour of sustainable development' (paragraph 11). This means that development proposals which accord with an up-to-date development plan should be approved by the determining authority without delay unless any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits.

5.5 Paragraph 8 of the NPPF sets out the three core objectives, which are:

- Economic – to build a strong, responsive, and competitive economy by ensuring that the right land is available in the right places to support growth, innovation, and improved productivity;
- Social – to support strong, vibrant, and healthy communities by ensuring that sufficient homes are available to meet the needs of all; and
- Environmental – to protect and enhance our natural, built, and historic environment.

5.6 Part 8 of the NPPF sets out the role that planning policy can play in promoting healthy and safe communities. Paragraph 91 states that policies should aim to achieve healthy, inclusive, and safe places which promote social interaction, are safe and accessible, and enable and support healthy lifestyles – including through the provision of accessible green infrastructure, encouraging walking, and cycling and allotments. The importance of the provision of sufficient school places or new and existing communities is highlighted (Paragraph 94). Within the context of the wider SPD area, the proposed development will help to work towards these objectives, and more detail as to how that will be achieved is set out in the DAS which supports this submission.

### **Statutory Development Plan**

#### Cherwell Local Plan 2011-2031

5.7 Policy Bicester 1 of the adopted Local Plan sets out the strategic policy and development standards for the 390-hectare eco-town development site at North West Bicester, which includes the proposed development Site.

5.8 For residential development, 30% of homes are expected to be affordable, to be capable of achieving a minimum of Level 5 of the Code for Sustainable Homes, to deliver extra care homes<sup>1</sup>, and to real-time energy and public transport monitoring systems. There are further relevant provisions for the whole North West Bicester allocation as follows:

- School provision within 800m walking distance;
- Healthcare provision;
- 40% green infrastructure;
- Improvements to strategic infrastructure including crossing the railway line to provide access and integration and improvements to Howes Lane and Lords Lane;
- Provision of community facilities;
- A scheme for long-term ownership and management of facilities by the new community;
- Utilities and infrastructure which allow for zero carbon and water neutrality; and
- The provision of facilities to reduce waste.

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<sup>1</sup> No extra care provision is proposed within the proposals for the Site

5.9 The Policy includes a series of more detailed design considerations which relate to the layout and landscape design of any proposed development within the allocation area, as well as the sustainability targets for development.

#### North West Bicester SPD

5.10 A copy of the adopted SPD is contained at **Appendix 2**, and is a very thorough document, which incorporates both the provisions of the adopted Local Plan Policy Bicester 1 above, and the 2015 Eco Town Standards from the Planning Policy Statement (contained at Appendix II of the SPD). We do not therefore intend to repeat the content of the SPD here. The SPD includes a site-wide masterplan for the North West Bicester area which identifies the proposed land uses, green spaces, and infrastructure.

5.11 The Applicant is aware of the content of the SPD and the Development Requirements and Development Principles contained therein. These requirements have been conformed with as far as possible, albeit that some of the identified requirements, where these relate to detailed design, cannot be addressed until reserved matters stage. The DAS which has been submitted in support of this OPA contains more information regarding the design concept for the Site, and how that design has taken on board the requirements of the SPD. Where Heads of Terms and obligations are identified within the SPD, as set out above, these will be considered as part of the viability assessment process.

5.12 Paragraph 6.3 of the SPD sets out the key components which should be taken on board through the submission of planning applications for the site-wide masterplan area, all of which have been considered in respect of these OPA proposals:

- Achievement of zero carbon;
- The transport, access, and movement framework; infrastructure requirements, provision and delivery including highways, education, and community facilities;
- Resource efficiency and low carbon solutions for example energy and water;
- Sustainable and healthy lifestyles – to reduce the carbon footprint of development by ensuring that households and individuals in the eco-town are able to reduce their carbon footprint to a low level and achieve a more sustainable way of living;

- Employment opportunities and facilities to support job creation providing a mix of uses and access to job opportunities;
- The landscape framework provided by the site's existing natural features to provide and enhance green space including multi-use green infrastructure;
- A high-quality design and layout as part of a comprehensive masterplan setting out the distribution of land uses within an attractive landscape setting; and
- A long-term approach to community and governance to ensure that appropriate governance structures are in place to ensure that standards are met, maintained, and evolved to meet future needs and complements existing democratic arrangements for local governance.

5.13 Paragraphs 6.6 to 6.8 of the SPD set out what an OPA should include at North West Bicester. This OPA complies with this, and with the CDC Validation Checklist for OPA's of this scale. **Appendix 3** contains the list of the plans and documents which are submitted as part of, and in support of this OPA.

#### Other Guidance

5.14 Paragraph 1.20 of the SPD lists a series of other relevant guidance which should be considered alongside the policy documents referred to above when bringing forward development within the SPD site. This includes several design documents, which have been considered through the design evolution of the proposals, as set out in the DAS. Reference is also made to Manual for Streets, and other documents which deal with the provision of car parking within development schemes. This guidance has been considered and is referred to within the Transport Assessment that has been prepared in respect of these proposals.

5.15 In addition, the following SPD's are also considered to be relevant in respect of these proposals:

- Cherwell Residential Design Guide SPD, July 2018; and
- Developer Contributions SPD, February 2018.



### Summary

- 5.16 The Sections above set out the context in which this OPA is being brought forward in relation to the adopted SPD for development on the wider North West Bicester site. This is an important material consideration, alongside the planning policy context set out above.
- 5.17 The planning policy framework identified above provides the basis upon which to determine the acceptability of the OPA proposals for the Site. This proposal is compliant with both planning policy (at national and local level) as set out above, and with the adopted SPD.

## 6.0 ASSESSMENT OF THE PLANNING ISSUES

6.1 This section sets out how the proposed residential development complies with the relevant planning policies identified above, and other material considerations.

### Principle of Development

6.2 The principle for the development of the North West Bicester site was established initially through its strategic allocation in the CDC adopted Local Plan for up to 6,000 new homes – via Policy Bicester 1. Then followed its award of Garden Town status in 2014, followed by its retention as an Eco Town despite the cancellation of the Eco Towns PPS in 2015 (for the reasons given earlier in this Statement).

6.3 Pursuant to the award of Garden Town status, in Spring 2014 a masterplan and supporting vision documents were submitted to CDC for consideration. This ultimately shaped the content and vision of what is now the SPD for the North West Bicester site – as adopted in 2016.

6.4 The SPD, and the adopted Local Plan policy from which it was developed, set the principle for development at the Site, which is part of a strategic allocation for predominantly residential development.

6.5 In considering the principle of development, it is also worth setting the housing land supply context within CDC, and the role that the North West Bicester SPD site plays in that supply. Policy BSC1 of the adopted Local Plan requires the delivery of 22,480 homes across the District in the Plan period, with 1,142 homes required per annum (based on the Oxfordshire Strategic Housing Market Assessment, 2014). CDC's Annual Monitoring Report (AMR) for 2020 shows that across the Plan period there is an assumption that 3,142 homes will be delivered at the North West Bicester site (Appendix 2 of the AMR 2020). This equates to 14% of the homes required over the Plan period, and by the 2025/26 period, the site is predicted to be delivering 33% of the annual housing requirement for the CDC area, which increases moving forward through the Plan period. This represents a significant reliance on the North West Bicester site for housing delivery.

6.6 In housing land supply terms, the Ministerial Statement of March this year<sup>2</sup> makes clear that the previous agreement to the requirement for a demonstrated three-year housing land supply in Oxfordshire has now come to an end and whilst the timetable has been extended for the preparation of the Joint Statutory Spatial Plan, the flexibility applied in relation to land supply will no longer apply. Therefore, a five-year housing land supply will need to be maintained by CDC from now onwards. The AMR 2020 for CDC shows that for the period 2020-2025, there is a 4.8-year housing land supply, dropping slightly to 4.7 for the period 2021-2026. So, CDC are facing a small shortfall in housing land supply moving forward, which based on the reliance on North West Bicester for the delivery of a significant proportion of homes as highlighted above, makes delivery at the Application Site even more important to help to maintain the 5-year supply.

### **The Development Parameters**

6.7 As described above, the proposals are being submitted in outline form, with the detailed matters of layout, scale, appearance, and landscaping to be considered at reserved matters stage. Access is included in the OPA, with the key access points and junction arrangements forming part of this submission. The scope of the application in terms of the quantum of development proposed, and its location, is contained in the Development Parameters document which forms the core part of this application.

6.8 In relation to scale, the Parameter Plans identify both the maximum extent of the built footprint proposed on the Site, and the maximum heights proposed – with a range of development at between 12-16 metres – albeit with the predominant maximum height being at 12 metres. This is in keeping with the surrounding area, and the emerging development at the Exemplar site. The DAS sets out in more detail how the scale of the proposed development responds to its surroundings.

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<sup>2</sup> Land Supply Update, Statement made on 25 March 2021 by Christopher Pincher, Minister of State for Housing

- 6.9 The OPA nature of the proposals means that there are no details of design/appearance submitted for consideration and approval at this stage. The precise location of the residential development within the application site is also to be determined at reserved matters stage, but an Illustrative Masterplan has been included in support of the submission which shows one, but not the only way in which development could be delivered on the site. Ultimately the proposed development could be located anywhere within the built footprint extent identified on the Parameter Plans.
- 6.10 The proposed access points to the site, as shown on the Parameter Plans, and which are in-part the subject of this OPA, have been carefully considered in the context of the highways network that has already been established around the site in respect of the Exemplar development scheme. This includes the provision of a temporary construction access for the eastern parcel. The main vehicular access points to the parcels from Charlotte Avenue are for vehicular/pedestrian/cycle access and are located to avoid encroachment on the bus gate arrangement which is a central part of the public transport strategy for the wider SPD site. There are separate shared and pedestrian/cycle only access points to the eastern parcel. The construction access will be operational for a maximum period of 5 years.
- 6.11 Landscaping will also be part of a future reserved matters scheme for the Site. However, the key features of the landscape which should be protected and preserved have been captured within the Development Parameters. The Parameter Plans identify the areas of retained vegetation, plus the hedgerow and woodland buffers which will be respected. In addition to this a Landscape and Visual Mitigation Zone has been identified along the western boundary of the western parcel, in response to the feedback from CDC at pre-application stage, to provide a set-back from this boundary before the residential development envelope commences.
- 6.12 In landscape design terms, which this remains a reserved matter, a Landscape and Green Infrastructure Strategy has been prepared to support this OPA submission, and the approach to the provision of landscaping on this site is summarised within the DAS. This is supported by an illustrative Landscape Masterplan, and a series of landscape character areas.

- 6.13 Another central focus of policy, and in particular the SPD, is the need to achieve 'true' zero carbon, i.e.; that over a year, the net carbon dioxide emissions from all energy use within buildings across the whole of the eco-town development as a whole are zero or below. On this basis, whilst this cannot yet be assessed as the whole of the SPD scheme has not yet come forward, the proposed development needs to contribute to the overarching vision of the SPD and the provisions of Development Requirements 1 and 2 within that SPD.
- 6.14 To this end an Energy Strategy has been prepared in support of this OPA and is submitted as part of the application package. This includes a review of the existing energy centre and district heating network already established on the North West Bicester site, and also sets out the embedded social and economic strategies and benefits which support the site-wide sustainable development vision for the Site, and the additional elements of the scheme that will be 'designed in' to mitigate the effects of climate change arising from the proposed development.

### **Summary**

- 6.15 The principle of the development of the site passes the tests set by the relevant planning policy. This OPA has responded to the pre-application discussions and is supported by a range of documents which reflect that required in the SPD and by CDC's validation checklist and should be read in conjunction with this Planning Statement.

## 7.0 DRAFT HEADS OF TERMS AND PLANNING OBLIGATIONS

### Planning Obligations

7.1 The NPPF (paragraph 56) makes clear in reference to planning obligations that they must only be sought where they meet all of the following tests:

- a) They are necessary to make the development acceptable in planning terms;
- b) They are directly related to the development; and
- c) They are fairly and reasonably related in scale and in kind to the development.

7.2 Paragraph 6.17 of the SPD refers to the adopted Local Plan (Policy INF1) which advises that development contributions through legal agreements should include:

- Provision of affordable housing;
- Contributions to educational facilities;
- Community facilities;
- Sports facilities;
- Management and maintenance of open space;
- A burial ground;
- Governance;
- Sustainable lifestyles requirements;
- Local employment, training, and skills;
- Sustainable transport measures including the provision of bus services, off site highways schemes, pedestrian, and cycle routes; and
- Provision of SuDS.

7.3 in addition to this, the SPD identifies that the S106/planning conditions for any proposed development schemes within the North West Bicester site area may need to include provision of and/or contributions towards the following:

- Community facilities;
- Changing places;
- Adult learning;
- Social care for the elderly;
- Health facilities;
- Fire station;
- Early intervention centres;
- Community development workers and fund;

- Thames Valley Police – neighbourhood/community safety;
- Skills and training;
- Visitor facilities/environmental education centre;
- Places of worship;
- Schools;
- Sports pitches and associated buffers;
- Sports centre;
- Amenity space (parks and play areas);
- Burial ground;
- Biodiversity offset contribution;
- Museum Resource Centre contribution;
- Public art;
- Waste collection;
- Affordable housing;
- Sustainable transport; and
- Bus service.

7.4 This is noted by the Applicant and will be the subject of further discussion with CDC and Oxfordshire County Council (OCC), along with any other relevant consultees post-OPA submission. CDC has already indicated that, in several cases, physical provision of these obligations will not be appropriate or required on the Site but will instead be addressed through a financial obligation (as set out in **Appendix 5**).

### **Heads of Terms**

7.5 As referred to above in Section 3.0 regarding pre-application discussion, as well as providing feedback to the Applicant in respect of the proposed development scheme, CDC also set out what the proposed Heads of Terms could include and what might be sought in respect of the proposed development of the Site. This was set out in a letter from CDC dated 5<sup>th</sup> February 2021 (a copy of which is contained at **Appendix 5** of this Statement), as a basis for discussion at the formal stage – once the OPA is submitted.

- 7.6 It should be noted that the proposed Heads of Terms from CDC did not include any provisions for the contributions which would be overseen by OCC such as those for education provision <sup>3</sup>or highways infrastructure. The Applicant will engage further with OCC in this respect once this OPA has been submitted.
- 7.7 The Applicant has not engaged in any further discussion with CDC regarding the proposed Heads of Terms.

### **Summary**

- 7.8 Whilst the Applicant accepts that the proposed development will need to contribute to the costs of the wider delivery of the strategic allocation at North West Bicester, such contributions need to be proportionate. They also need to take into account the financial constraints that such contributions put on the ability to deliver development. Ultimately should CDC wish to deliver the housing required to facilitate their adopted Local Plan requirements for the plan period, they may need to identify from the proposed Heads of Terms set out, which are the key priorities and therefore required, and which contributions can be reduced or set aside in order to enable development to proceed. As set out at Paragraph 6.19 of the SPD, any developer contributions required should be supported by an evidence base to justify that requirement. In turn, where the Applicant may seek to challenge such requirements, such a challenge should be supported by a viability assessment of the proposed development – shared with CDC. Paragraph 57 of NPPF recognises the role and need for viability assessment in certain circumstances, for such assessments to reflect the recommended national approach, and for them to be shared with the LPA.

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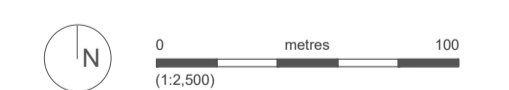
<sup>3</sup> It should be noted that a subsequent email was received from the OCC Education team via CDC which set out some initial feedback in respect of potential education contributions



## 8.0 CONCLUSIONS

- 8.1 This Planning Statement has been prepared in support of the proposed development of up to 530 residential dwellings at the Site shown at **Appendix 1** and forming part of the wider North West Bicester site allocation.
- 8.2 The proposed development is being brought forward pursuant to adopted Policy Bicester 1 of the Cherwell Local Plan, and the adopted SPD for the North West Bicester, which identify the wider site as strategic allocation for up to 6,000 new homes, just over half of which are to be delivered during the Plan period. The SPD is based around the Garden/Eco Town principle, which has been acknowledged in the design/landscape concept for the proposed development – as set out in the DAS which supports this submission.
- 8.3 The proposals for the Site are therefore in accordance with relevant planning policy as demonstrated above. It is our view that, subject to undertaking the appropriate consultations, the OPA proposals are compliant and should therefore be approved.

**APPENDIX 1  
SITE LOCATION PLAN**



- Application boundary 23.97 hectares
- Other land under the applicants ownership 0.02 hectares

Project  
Land at North West Bicester

Drawing Title  
Location Plan

Date	14/04/2021	Scale	1:2,500 at A1	Drawn by	ML	Checked by	LA
Project No	1192	Drawing No	001	Revision	I		

**APPENDIX 2**  
**NORTH WEST BICESTER SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING DOCUMENT -**  
**ADOPTED 2016**

# North West Bicester Supplementary Planning Document

February 2016





## Foreword

North West Bicester will be a neighbourhood unlike any other in Bicester - a development that demonstrates the highest levels of sustainability. Residents who move to North West Bicester will be making a lifestyle choice to live in efficient modern homes built to the highest environmental standards with excellent access to the town centre, public transport and adjoining countryside. The site offers a unique opportunity to bring about a sustainable large scale development as part of the extension of the existing town with a comprehensive mixed use scheme designed and constructed to the highest environmental standards, bringing a mix of homes, offices, shops and easily accessible open space.

The development at North West Bicester will make a significant contribution to meeting the District's need for more homes and jobs as set out in the Cherwell Local Plan, including the delivery of affordable housing. A series of new places will be created, adding to the quality of and integrating with the existing town. The layout of the development will be based on the landscape framework of existing field boundaries defined by hedgerows.

The proposals will take at least 20 years to complete and will help trigger the transition to a low carbon community across the town. They present an exciting opportunity to build a new form of sustainable community within Cherwell District and to extend the benefits of this community to the existing town of Bicester.

**Councillor Michael Gibbard**

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# 1. Introduction

- 1.1 **This Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) expands upon Policy Bicester 1 of the adopted Cherwell Local Plan 2011-2031 Part 1. A copy of Policy Bicester 1 is set out in full in Appendix I. The SPD provides further detail to the policy and a means of implementing the strategic allocation at North West Bicester.**
- 1.2 In summary, when fully delivered, North West Bicester will provide:
- Up to 6,000 “true” zero carbon homes;
  - Employment opportunities providing at least 4,600 new jobs;
  - Up to four primary schools and one secondary school;
  - Forty per cent green space, half of which will be public open space;
  - Pedestrian and cycle routes;
  - New links under the railway line and to the existing town;
  - Local centres to serve the new and existing communities; and
  - Integration with existing communities.
- Background**
- 1.3 In 2009, the site at North West Bicester was identified as having potential as an eco-town location in the Planning Policy Statement (PPS): Eco-towns a supplement to PPS1. The Eco-towns PPS set out a range of criteria to which eco-town developments should respond and which aim for eco-towns to be exemplars in good practice and provide a showcase for sustainable living. The Council promoted the site and was supportive of the principle of bringing forward an eco-town in this location. It has subsequently been included in the adopted Cherwell Local Plan 2011-2031 (Part 1) as Policy Bicester 1, a strategic allocation for up to 6,000 new homes.
- 1.4 In April 2014, the “Locally-led Garden City Prospectus” (Department of Communities and Local Government) led to Bicester being awarded Garden Town status. On 5th March 2015, the Minister for Housing and Planning announced in a ministerial written statement that the Eco-towns PPS was cancelled for all areas except North West Bicester. As it is expected that the PPS Supplement will in time be cancelled in its entirety, the Eco-town standards have now been brought into this SPD (Appendix II).
- 1.5 In March 2014, a masterplan and supporting vision documents was submitted to Cherwell District Council by developers A2Dominion setting out the spatial land uses for up to 6,000 homes on approximately 400 hectares of land at North West Bicester. The masterplan submission was supported by the following strategies, plans and documents:
- Access and Travel Strategy
  - Community Involvement and Governance Strategy
  - Energy Strategy
  - Flood Risk Assessment
  - Economic Strategy
  - Economic Baseline
  - North West Bicester Masterplan Framework (Drawing No. BIMP6 01 Rev. B)
  - North West Bicester Green Infrastructure Masterplan Framework (Drawing Number: BIMP6 02 Rev A)
  - North West Bicester Masterplan Movement and Access Framework (Drawing Number: BIMP6 03 Rev B)
  - Green Infrastructure and Landscape Strategy
  - Residential Strategy
  - Statement of Community Involvement
  - Strategic Environmental Report
  - Social and Community Facilities and Services Strategy
  - Transport Strategy

- Water Strategy
- Vision and Objectives Document

1.6 The documents are available as background information on the Cherwell District Council website at [www.cherwell.gov.uk](http://www.cherwell.gov.uk). A schedule of the documents used to support the SPD is contained in Appendix III.

### **Purpose of the SPD**

1.7 This SPD sets out the minimum standards to be achieved by the proposed development. Developers will be encouraged to exceed these standards where possible and will be expected to apply new higher standards that arise during the life of the document and reflect up to date best practice and design principles.

1.8 The key elements of the SPD are:

- The masterplan;
- Development and design principles aimed at delivering a high quality scheme;
- Requirements for addressing sustainable design;
- Requirements relating to the scheme's delivery and implementation; and
- Requirements which should be met at the detailed planning application stage and beyond to ensure adequate and consistent approaches to quality and delivery.

1.9 The SPD supports the implementation of Policy Bicester 1 of the Local Plan and will be a material consideration in determining planning applications on the North West Bicester site. In addition, it will aid the submission of successful planning applications and infrastructure delivery.

1.10 The SPD should be read in conjunction with the National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG) including the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), the adopted Cherwell Local Plan and other guidance relating to large-scale sustainable development. It is expected the Urban Design Framework currently being developed and design codes will be developed as part of the planning process to guide development proposals.

### **Strategic Environmental Assessment and Sustainability Appraisal**

1.11 The Cherwell Local Plan 2011-2031 Sustainability Appraisal (SA) and Strategic Environmental Appraisal (SEA) process was carried out in line with the requirements of European and national law and provides an assessment of its environmental effects of the policies and proposals.

1.12 The Final SA report sets out the results of the SA process, outlines why alternatives were selected, reports on the assessment of the Local Plan and outlines a programme for monitoring the environmental and sustainability effects of the plan. The full SA report, including the assessment of the North West Bicester site, is available on the council's website at: [www.cherwell.gov.uk](http://www.cherwell.gov.uk). Screening Statement to determine the need for a Strategic Environmental Assessment for the North West Bicester SPD concluded that an SEA was not required as it did not introduce new elements that would have significant environmental effects that had not been considered as part of the Local Plan SA. The Environment Agency, Natural England and Historic England as the three statutory consultation bodies on the Screening Statement did not raise any objections.

### **Planning Policy**

#### **National Planning Policy Framework March 2012**

1.13 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) sets out the Government's planning policies. It provides a framework within which local people and their accountable councils can produce their own distinctive local and neighbourhood plans. The NPPF must be taken into account in the preparation of such plans and is a material consideration in planning decisions.

1.14 At the heart of the NPPF is a presumption in favour of sustainable development which should be seen as a golden thread running through both plan-making and decision-making. The advice in the NPPF has been taken into account in the drafting of this SPD.



## National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG)

- 1.15 The NPPG provides Government guidance on a wide range of planning topics including on sustainability and design.

## Planning Policy Statement: eco-towns a supplement to Planning Policy Statement 1

- 1.16 The Eco-towns Planning Policy Statement (PPS) supplement sets out objectives for sustainable development in the form of large-scale development providing more homes while responding to the impact of climate change. It set out a wide range of standards for the delivery of zero carbon development, homes, transport, jobs, local services and other components of an eco-town. Relevant standards have been incorporated into this SPD.

## Cherwell Local Plan, 2011-2031 Part 1

- 1.17 The Cherwell Local Plan (CLP) 2011-2031 Part 1 sets out district-wide strategic objectives and policies. Proposals maps showing the strategic development sites are contained in the Local Plan. Policy Bicester 1 sets out the council's strategic policy and development standards for the eco-town development at North West Bicester. The Local Plan includes other relevant policies, for example those on sustainable development (PSD1, ESD1-13), open space and local standards (BSC10 and BSC11) and infrastructure (INF1). The SPD should be read in conjunction with the Local Plan policies.
- 1.18 The Local Plan sets out the housing trajectory up to 2031 including the projected delivery of new homes at North West Bicester. The delivery of the development will go beyond the plan period and is expected to take up to 30 years to complete. This is recognised in Policy Bicester 1.

## Oxfordshire Local Transport Plan 4 (LTP4)

- 1.19 Since Local Transport Plan 3 was adopted in 2011, much has changed, especially the way in which transport improvements can be funded. To ensure that the county's transport

systems are fit to support population and economic growth, Oxfordshire County Council has developed a new Local Transport Plan. Connecting Oxfordshire, the Local Transport Plan for Oxfordshire was adopted in September 2015. It sets out the transport vision, goals and objectives, to ensure that they support the Local Enterprise Partnership's Strategic Economic Plan as well as District Council Local Plans and other council strategies.

## Other relevant policy and guidance

- 1.20 The SPD should be read in conjunction with the Cherwell Local Plan 2011-2031 and other Government policy documents relating to large-scale development, sustainability and design, in particular:
- By Design: Urban Design in the Planning System - Towards Better Practice, (Department of Environment, Transport and Regions - DETR and Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment - CABE);
  - The Urban Design Compendium (editions 1 & 2) (Homes and Communities Agency);
  - Places Streets and Movement: Better Places to Live by Design (CABE);
  - Manual for Streets (2007) Department for Transport - (DfT)
  - Manual for Streets 2 (2010) Chartered Institution of Highways & Transportation;
  - Car parking: What works where (Design for Homes, English Partnerships);
  - Eco-towns worksheets – advice to promoters and planners (Town and Country Planning Association, DCLG)
  - Sustrans Design Manual, Sustrans (November 2014); and
  - What makes an eco-town? BioRegional and CABE
- 1.21 These documents collectively promote a consensus view of good design principles. The SPD should also be read in conjunction with the North West Bicester masterplan supporting documents and strategies dated March and May 2014 which have informed the preparation of the SPD and should be used in preparing planning applications.

## 2. Site context

- 2.1 This section provides a summary of the site location, local context, features and opportunities.

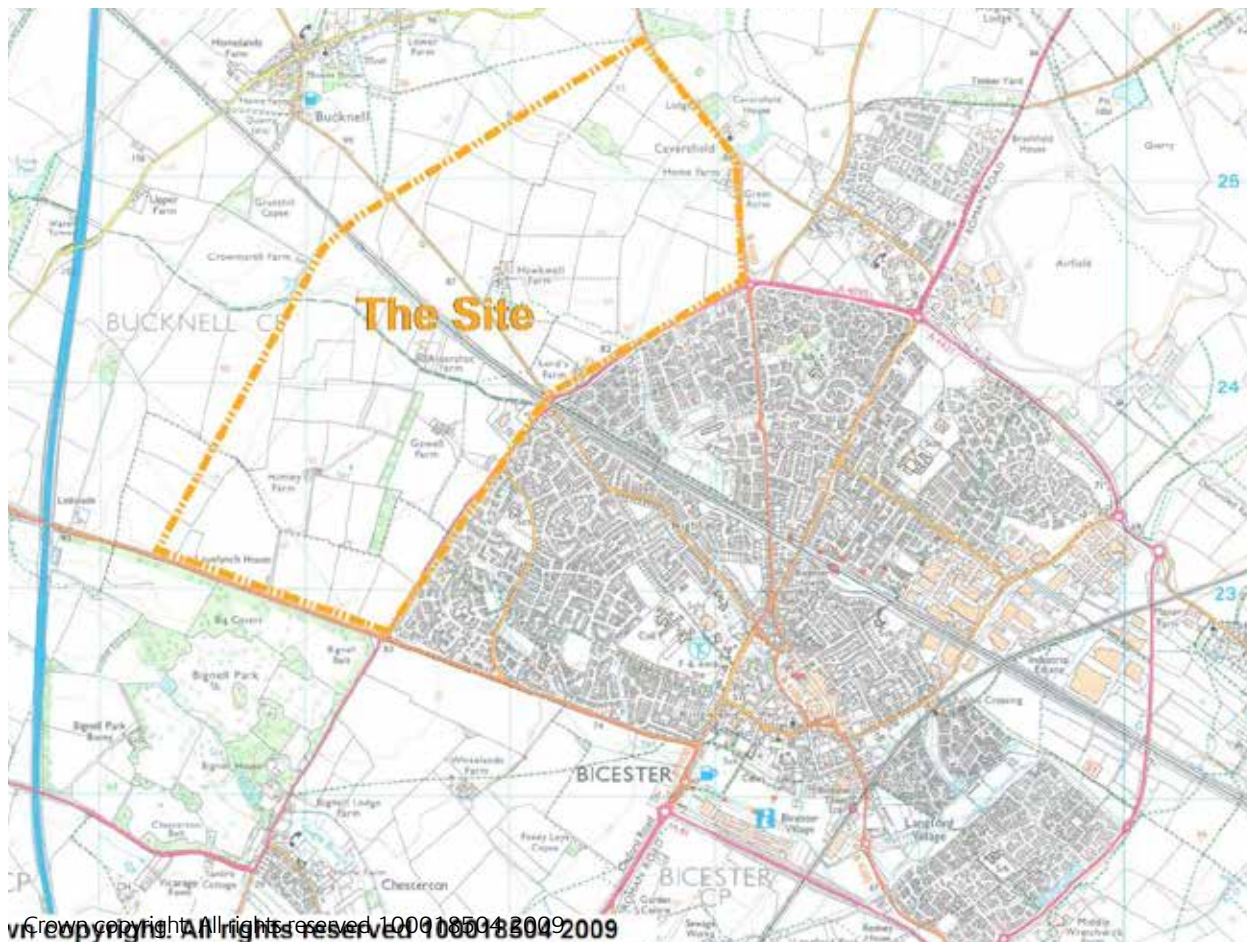
### Site location

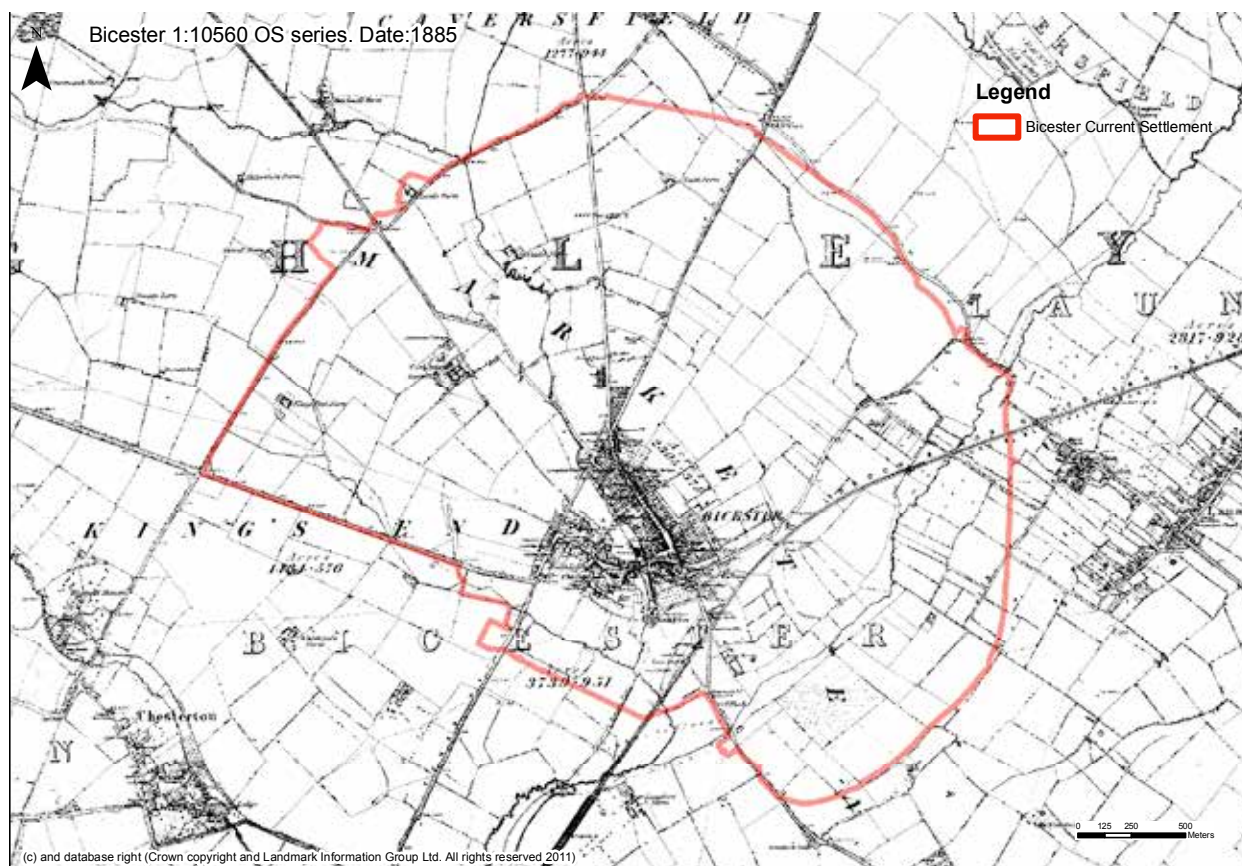
- 2.2 The site is located north of Howes Lane and Lords Lane (A4095) to the north west of the town of Bicester. Figure 1 shows the site location. It is approximately 1.5 kilometres from the town centre with the villages of Bucknell and Caversfield located to the north and east of the site respectively. To the south east, the area is predominantly residential and characterised by modern housing estates. The land to the south west is within the historic parkland of Bignell Park with land further to the south proposed

for development as part of the South West Bicester strategic development site identified in the Cherwell Local Plan and marketed as “Kingsmere”.

- 2.3 The three radial routes out of Bicester to the north west provide access to the site and links to Banbury, Bucknell and Middleton Stony. Banbury Road (B4100) provides access to the M40 motorway via junction 10 and the A43. Access to the first phase of the eco-town development is from the Banbury Road. Middleton Stony Road is a fast rural road linking Bicester and Middleton Stony. Bignell Park, a historic parkland landscape, lies to the south west of Middleton Stony Road. The Bucknell Road lies to the north of the railway line and divides the site.

**Fig. 1** Site location plan



**Fig. 2** Historical map of Bicester 1885

### Site boundary and site area

- 2.4 The site boundary is defined by Banbury Road (B4100) to the east, Howes Lane and Lords Lane (B4095) to the south, Middleton Stoney Road (B4030) to the west and open countryside to the north. The Local Plan Policies Map and the inset map for Bicester 1: North West Bicester Eco-Town identify the location and the area of the eco-town proposals. The site area is approximately 390 hectares (approximately 965 acres).

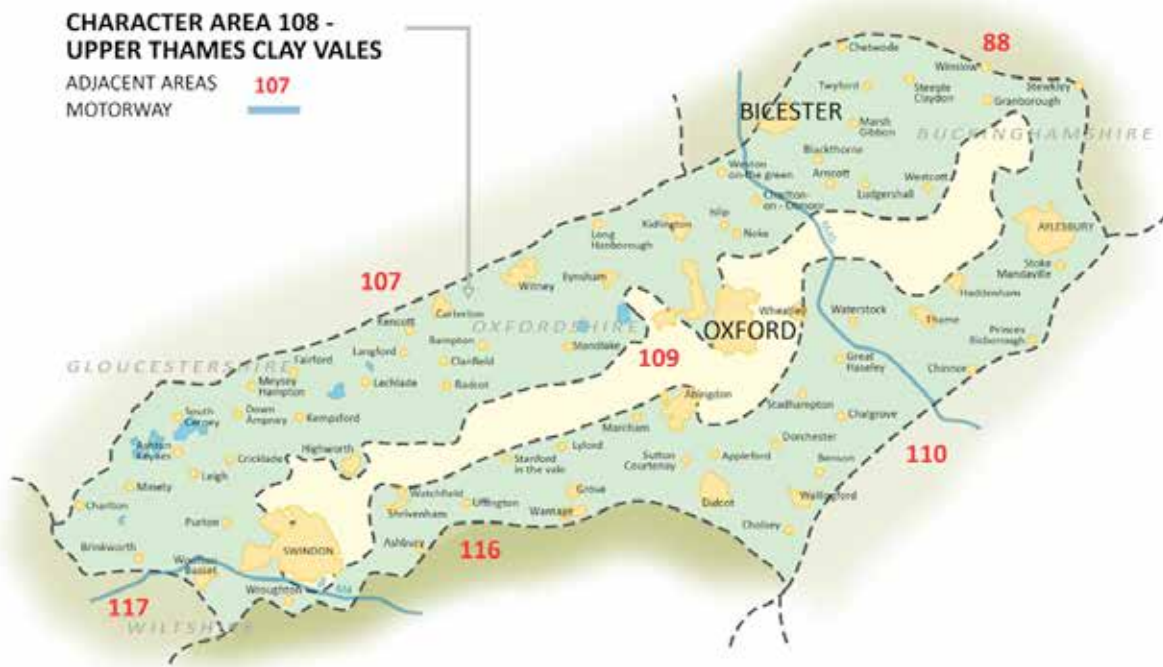
### Site history

- 2.5 Understanding the history of the site can help inform an understanding of some of the current site key site features. The Oxfordshire Historic Landscape Characterisation (HLC) project forms an important component of the evidence base for the masterplan. Until the late eighteenth century the land was likely to have been open fields. Historic maps show that the field patterns and boundaries have changed little since the mid 1800's. Figure 2, a map of the site in 1885, shows the field boundaries within the site have

achieved their present day layout. By 1885, Home Farm, Lords Farm, Himley Farm, Aldershot Farm, Gowell Farm and Hawkwell Farm are all shown on the map of the area and by 1910 the railway line is completed. By the 1950s Lovelynch House is shown on local maps.

- 2.6 The Thames Valley Police Headquarters and Avonbury Business Park were developed in the 1990s and the A4095 realigned. By 1999 two small strips of plantation were added. Land at Middleton Stoney Road and Howes Lane was identified in the Cherwell Non-Statutory Local Plan 2011 as suitable for playing fields but never used for such use.
- 2.7 Land north of Howes Lane and Lords Lane was considered as part of the Cherwell Local Plan Options for Growth consultation in 2008 and was subsequently extended to accommodate an eco-town proposal as part of the Government's programme. Following the announcement of North West Bicester as a potential eco-town location in 2009, a planning application for a first phase was

**Fig. 3** Landscape character area



submitted in November 2010. Adoption of the Cherwell Local Plan 2011-2031 in July 2015 resulted in North West Bicester being formally allocated for development as part of the statutory development plan.

### Site features

- 2.8 The predominant land use is agriculture with fields either bounded by post and wire fences or by hedges with some large trees, woodland and plantation. The agricultural land is classified as good to moderate value (primarily Grade 3) under the Agricultural Land Classification.
- 2.9 The site is relatively flat rising gradually to the North West. The London to Birmingham railway line runs through the site from south east to north west on an embankment before entering a cutting.
- 2.10 Bucknell Road also passes through the site to the north of the railway line and leads to the village of Bucknell approximately 300 metres from the site search area boundary.
- 2.11 Six farms, each with its own character, are located on the site, three north of the railway (Home Farm, Lords Farm and Hawkwell Farm), and three south of it (Himley Farm, Aldershot Farm, and Gowell Farm).

### Landscape character

- 2.12 The North West Bicester Masterplan Green Infrastructure and Landscape Report, March 2014 sets out an assessment of the landscape character and context. It cross refers to Volume 1 of the North West Bicester Strategic Environmental Report (SER) and considers the landscape and visual implications of the proposed development in Section 5. A copy of these documents is available online at: [www.cherwell.gov.uk](http://www.cherwell.gov.uk).
- 2.13 There are no major landscape constraints present on the site and no landscape designations within the area. North West Bicester is within National Character Areas 107, the “Cotwolds”.
- 2.14 The Oxfordshire Wildlife and Landscape Study defines the site as being within the Wooded Estates landscape type. The Cherwell District Landscape Assessment (CDLA) 1995 identifies the site as within the Oxfordshire Estate Farmlands character area.
- 2.15 As part of the local landscape impact assessment process for the North West Bicester development project, a landscape character assessment has been prepared based on the principles set out in “Landscape Character Assessment Guidance for England and Scotland”.

## Landscape framework

- 2.16 The existing landscape provides the framework for the masterplanning of the site. It is typical of rural agricultural land in this area of Oxfordshire and is characterised by a mix of pasture and arable fields. Existing field boundaries form a strong framework of hedgerows. The Masterplan Green Infrastructure and Landscape Strategy provides further Information.

## Ecology

- 2.17 Section 6 of the SER (Volume 1) refers to ecology. A copy is available on the Cherwell District Council website. Existing hedgerows and woodland, together with the streams crossing the site, are important habitats which form the basis of wildlife corridors in the North West Bicester masterplan. These features and habitats, together with ponds, farmland and grassland provide many benefits to foraging and commuting bats, butterflies, common species of reptile, protected species such as great crested newts and badgers and many important breeding farmland and woodland birds.

## Development edges

- 2.18 Howes Lane and Lords Lane form the urban edge to the site and the interface with the existing town.

**Figure 4** Homes South of Lords Lane



- 2.19 Middleton Stoney Road forms the western edge and the interface with Bignell Park, historic parkland in private ownership. Banbury Road forms the eastern edge to the proposed development with Caversfield House and the Church of St Lawrence beyond. The northern edge of the site area is rural and cuts through existing field boundaries. This edge requires sensitive treatment in order to lessen the impact on the surrounding countryside.

## Archaeology and heritage

- 2.20 An archaeological assessment concluded that the site is located within an area that has remained undeveloped since the nineteenth century and possibly before. The site has known potential for remains dating from the prehistoric period with records of a prehistoric ring ditch located approximately 350 metres to the north of Himley Farm, a possible curvilinear enclosure to the north west of Hawkwell Farm and other evidence of prehistoric activity suggesting a general potential for remains from this period to be present. The Oxfordshire Historic Environment Record provides a useful resource and reference to guide further development of the masterplan. The site is located in an area of archaeological interest identified by a desk based assessment, aerial photographic survey and a trenched evaluation. These are summarised in Chapter 10 of the Strategic Environmental Report (SER).
- 2.21 The archaeological evaluation recorded a number of archaeological features across the site including a Neolithic pit, a Bronze Age “Burnt Mound” as well as Iron Age and Roman settlement evidence. The archaeological features recorded during the evaluation are not considered to be of such significance to require physical preservation but will require further Investigation ahead of any development. There will be a need for a further scheme of investigation.
- 2.22 Three Grade II listed buildings are located within the site (Home Farm farmhouse and Himley Farm Barns). The farmhouse at Hawkwell Farm is a traditional building but not listed. In the surrounding area,

St Lawrence's Church in the grounds of Caversfield House is an important local landmark building (Grade 2\* listed). Its setting is important in the local landscape. Section 10 of the SER Volume 1 provides further detail.

### Visual context

2.23 The flat topography means that extensive views may be had into and out of the site. Views into the site from all directions are curtailed by the railway embankment meaning that the site as a whole can only be viewed from the embankment itself. A number of large trees and farm buildings are also visible on various parts of the site.

2.24 Views out from the site include those to existing dwellings and other buildings in Bucknell to the north, and to trees lining the B4100 to the east with Caversfield Church visible beyond these. To the east of the site, existing dwellings on the eastern side of Howes Lane/Lords Lane are visible. To the south a line of trees and parkland

along the B4030 is visible which screens views from Bignell Park.

2.25 The immediate surrounding area shows a strong contrast between town and country. To the east of the site the outer limits of Bicester built in the late twentieth century, end abruptly at the A4095. To the west is open countryside, containing the village of Bucknell. To the south is the B4030 and beyond it the Bignell Park historic parkland and privately owned estate.

### Topography and hydrology

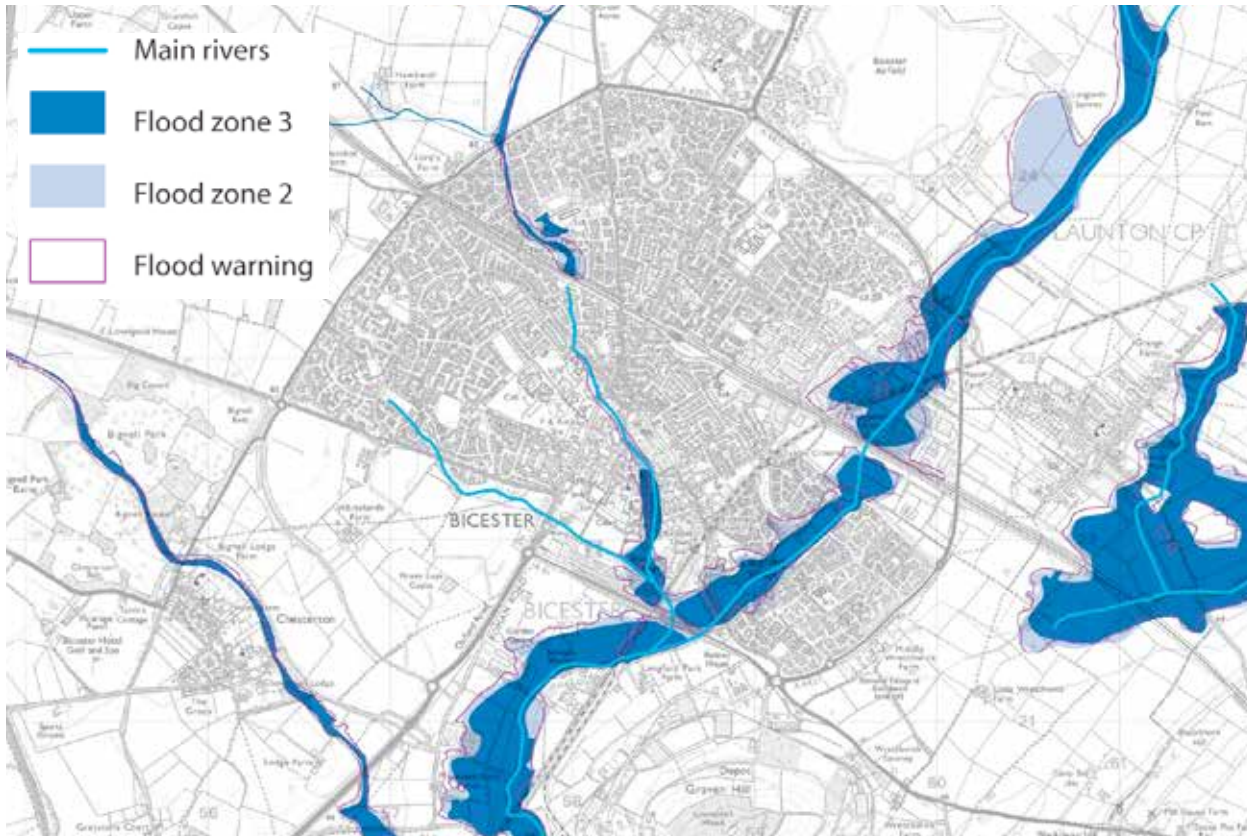
2.26 The topography of the site slopes gently upwards from south-east to north-west with elevations ranging from around 97mAOD to 80mAOD.

2.27 The main watercourses on site drain to the River Bure which leaves the site via a culvert under the A4095 flowing towards the town centre. Within the masterplan boundary there are several water features including the Bure and its tributaries, field drains,

**Fig. 5** Topography



**Fig. 6** Flood risk



**Fig. 7** Walking accessibility from Bicester town station

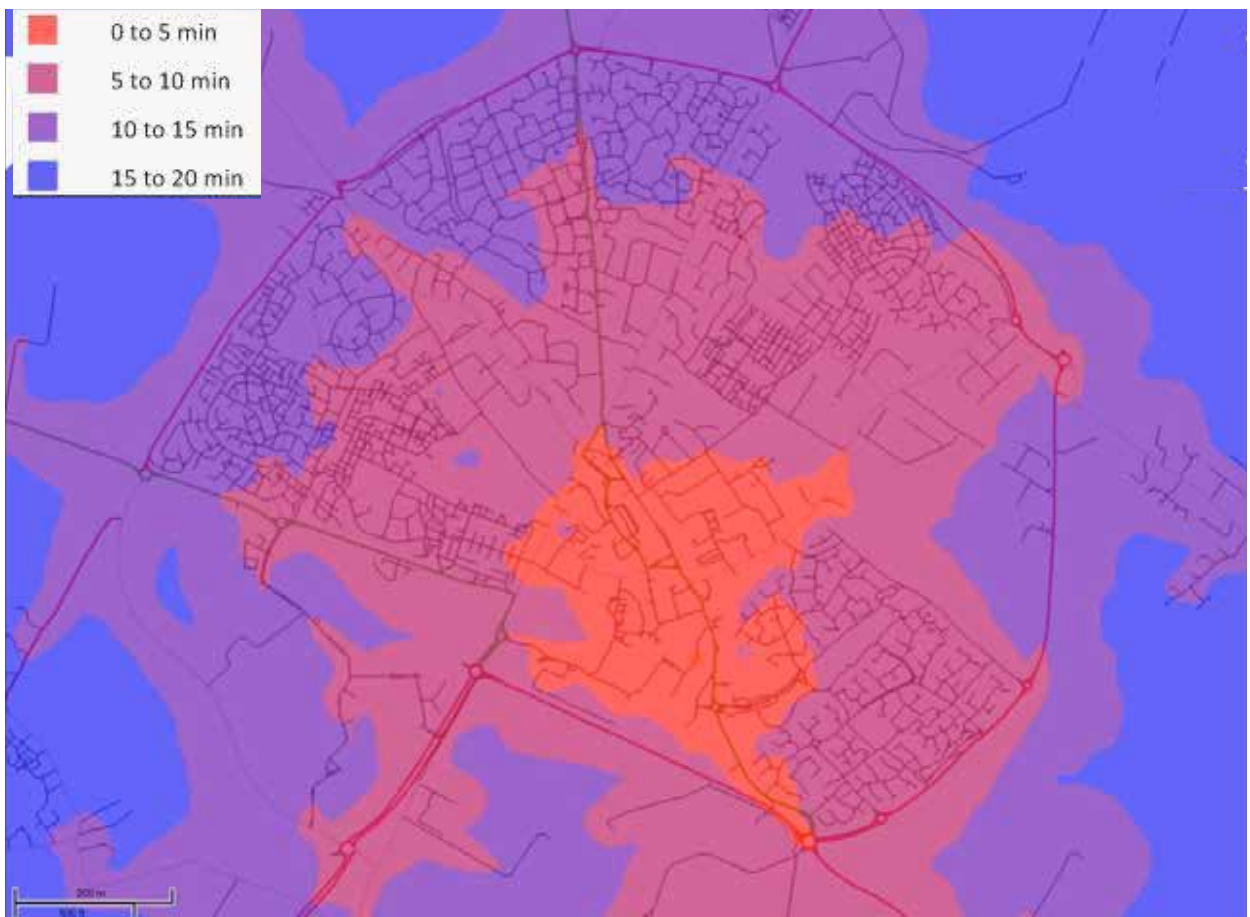
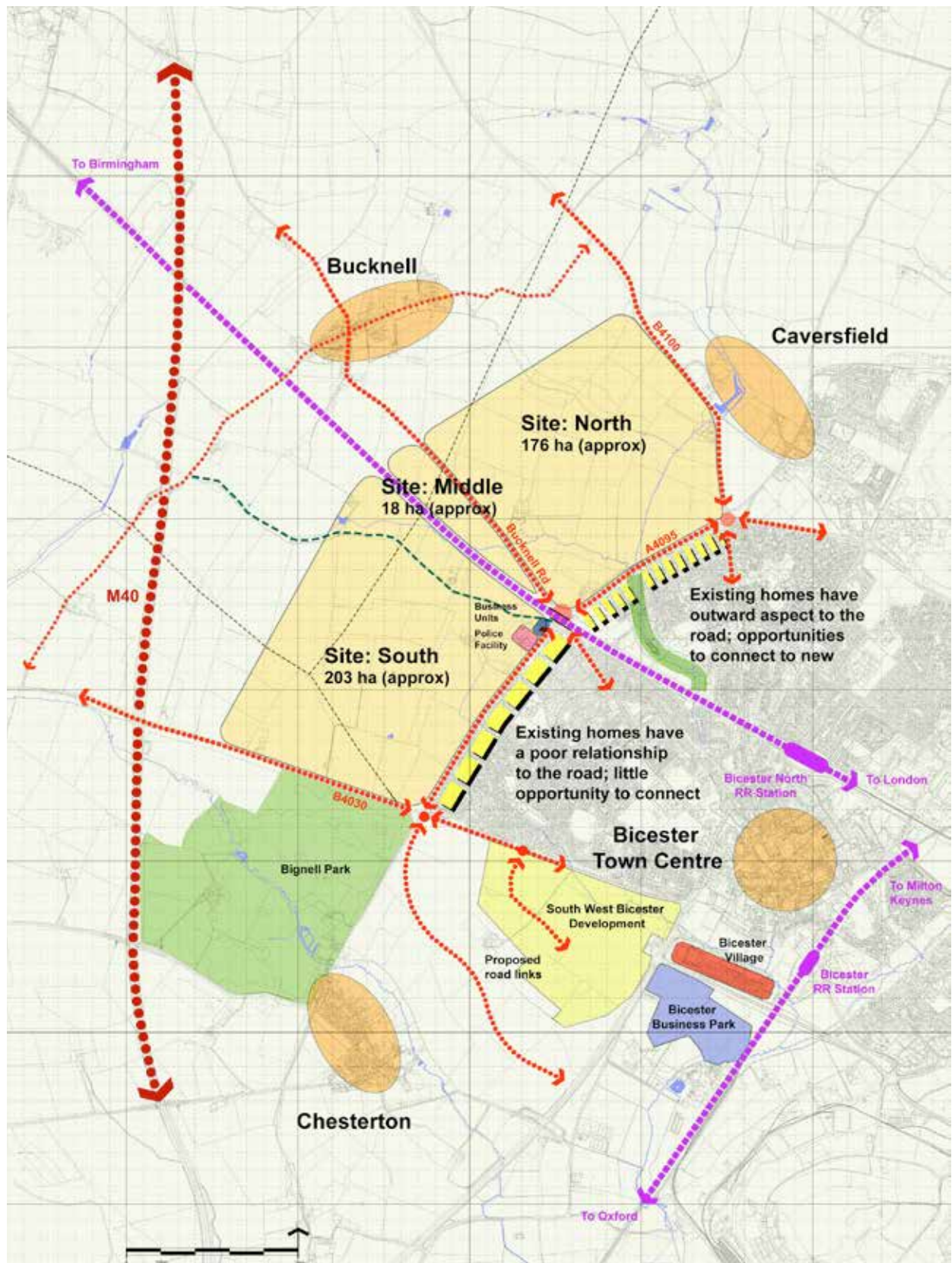


Fig. 8 Site analysis plan





ponds and springs. One of these streams passes below the railway line. In addition, five water wells and three groundwater abstraction sites have been identified within the site area and a minor aquifer with intermediate groundwater vulnerability is present beneath the site. Section 7 of the SER (Volume 1) refers to flood risk and hydrology.

2.33 The town centre is accessible on foot within 20 minutes from most areas in the town. Bicester is very accessible by bike with most places within 10 minutes of the town centre. Bicester Village and Bicester North Railway stations are also accessible by bike.

### Site constraints and opportunities

- 2.28 The site provides a unique opportunity for large-scale development in Bicester. It is in multiple ownerships and will require a comprehensive approach to land assembly and phasing of development. Existing landscape features such as the hedgerows and watercourse corridors provide the structure to the masterplan and will be retained. In terms of the capacity for residential development, the Bicester Landscape assessment states that consideration should be given to the landscape and visual separation between the site and satellite villages including Bucknell. It states that employment uses would be best located adjacent to the railway line.
- 2.29 The railway line divides the site into two distinct areas which will have to be connected.
- 2.30 The junction of the Howes Lane, Lords Lane and Bucknell Road will need to be reconfigured to improve the A4095 strategic route along Howes Lane and Lords Lane to accommodate the forecast growth in traffic arising from the proposed developments in the town.
- 2.31 The site's aspect provides the potential for large-scale renewable energy generation from roof-mounted solar photovoltaic panels with the option to use sustainable heat from the Ardley energy from recovery plant.
- 2.32 The site's proximity to the existing town centre and employment opportunities should also strengthen the local economy and integrate the development with the existing community.

## 3. Vision and objectives

- 3.1 **The vision for North West Bicester has been guided to a large extent by the Eco-towns Planning Policy Statement (PPS). It has been taken forward in the adopted Cherwell Local Plan and the Bicester Masterplan.**
- 3.2 The adopted Cherwell Local Plan 2011-2031 Part 1 sets out the vision for Bicester in 2031 and the council's strategy for delivering Bicester's vision. It includes bringing about a pioneering eco-development which will establish a new sustainable community, integrated with, and for the benefit of, the whole of Bicester.
- 3.3 The SPD vision reflects the council's vision for Bicester and the Eco Bicester One Shared Vision of the Bicester Strategic Delivery Board which sets out to create a place where people choose to live, work and spend their leisure time in sustainable ways.
- 3.4 The Eco Bicester One Shared Vision is for the whole town and North West Bicester will act as the trigger for the transition to a more sustainable community. By ensuring that households and individuals are able to reduce their carbon footprint to a low level and achieve a more sustainable way of living the proposals for North West Bicester will deliver the One Shared Vision.
- Figure 9** Eco Bicester Vision
- 3.5 In this SPD, the vision for North West Bicester is for a high quality development, well integrated with the existing town, which provides homes, jobs and local services in an attractive landscape setting, conserves and enhances heritage assets including historic landscape features, increases biodiversity and addresses the impact of climate change. It is based on the principles of sustainable zero carbon development designed to meet the effects of future climate change including extreme weather events and reduced energy and water use.
- 
- 3.6 The SPD will ensure that the vision for the site will be delivered successfully. It includes the major components that make up an eco-town meeting the challenges that such development poses.
- 3.7 The SPD has taken key elements from the North West Bicester masterplan and vision documents submitted by developers, A2Dominion in 2014. The vision documents supporting the masterplan are available on the Cherwell District Council website. The masterplan was prepared in collaboration with officers of the Eco Bicester Project team comprising representatives from Cherwell District Council, Bicester Town Council and Oxfordshire County Council together government bodies including the Environment Agency, Natural England, Highways Agency and Homes and Communities Agency. Local organisations such as the Berkshire, Buckinghamshire and Oxfordshire Wildlife Trust (BBOWT), Bicester Vision and the Chamber of Commerce were also involved as stakeholders informing the masterplan workstreams.
- 3.8 The masterplan illustrates the key components of the development strategy for the site. It includes the landscape framework that underpins the masterplanning providing connectivity and structure to the site.
- 3.9 The eco-town development will utilise the site's natural features and opportunities to provide a place that encourages a more sustainable way of living in homes that are well designed, energy efficient, accessible to jobs, local facilities and within easy reach of the town centre and countryside. In doing so, it will meet, and wherever possible exceed, Eco-town standards and Local Plan policies, creating an exemplar of truly sustainable development.
- 3.10 Infrastructure requirements will be future-proofed so that the development can adapt to change. Renewable energy generation from on-site sources will be the key to delivering zero carbon emissions from energy used in buildings on the site. The provision of utilities' infrastructure should be coordinated and support the overarching objective for zero carbon development.

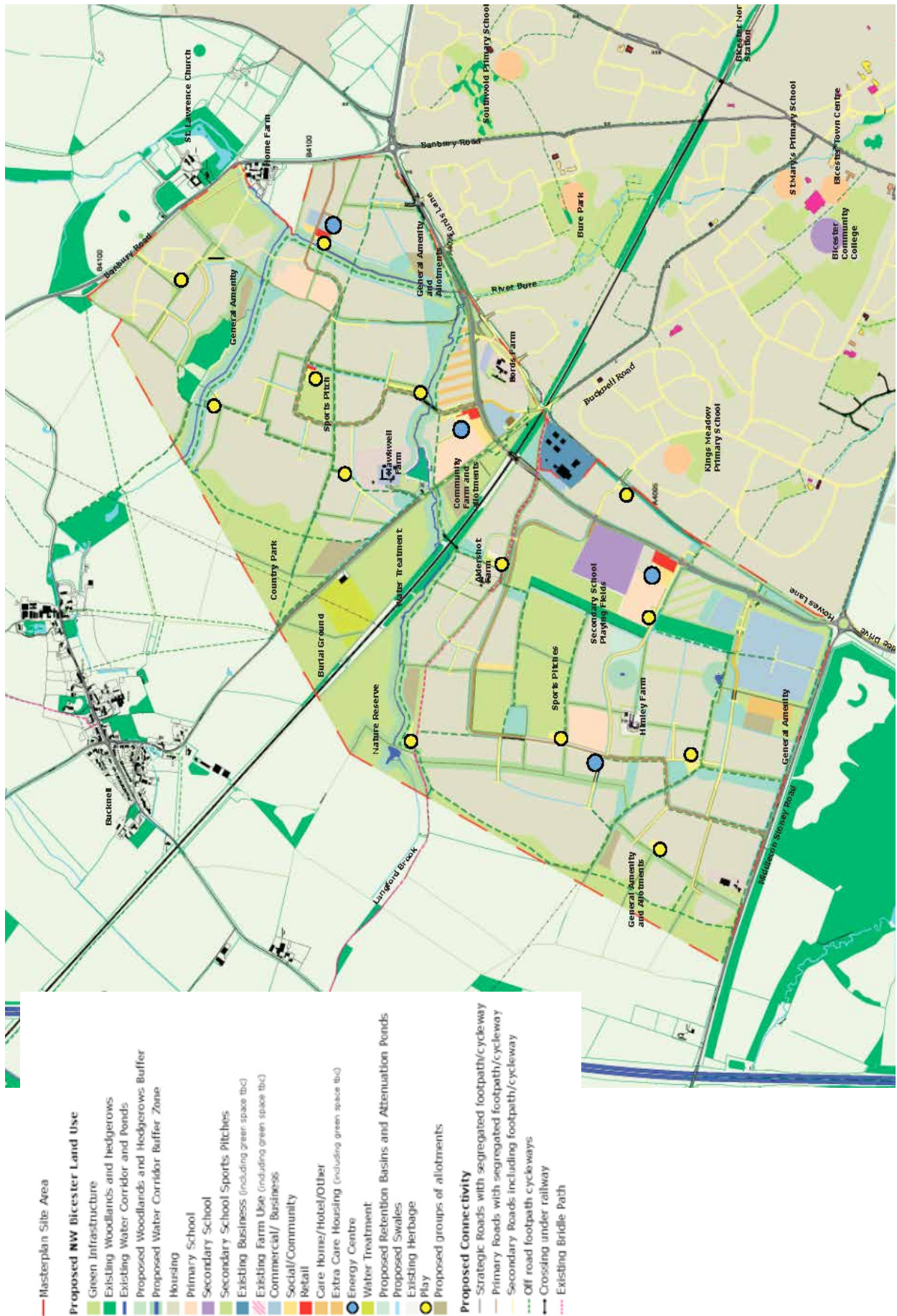
# 4. Development principles and requirements

- 4.1 This section sets out the key development principles and requirements for the site. It considers the Eco-town standards, the principles set out in Policy Bicester 1 and North West Bicester Masterplan exploring them further and breaking them down into component parts each of which is used to inform the principles that will be used to guide developers, landowners and applicants when preparing development proposals.
- 4.2 As such it provides an understanding of how masterplanning principles should be incorporated into the preparation of planning applications.
- 4.3 Applicants are expected to consider the principles and parameters set out in this section in the preparation of planning applications (in outline and detail) and Design and Access Statements. The principles should be applied to the development as a whole, as well as individual sites.
- 4.4 In delivering the vision for North West Bicester, applicants are required to respond directly to these principles in Design and Access Statements and demonstrate how they have been taken into account.

## Development Principle 1 - Masterplanning and comprehensive development

- 4.5 Cherwell District Council is committed to ensuring comprehensive development through masterplanning. In order to ensure a comprehensive development, all planning applications will be required to be in accordance with the SPD masterplan shown in Figure 10.
- 4.6 The masterplan indicates the key development components of the masterplan. It will be used to guide the preparation of development proposals and deliver key components of the masterplan. The masterplan is supported by surveys and technical information and shows:
- The site boundary;
  - Proposed land uses;
  - Existing woodlands and hedgerows, watercourses and ponds;
  - Proposed woodlands and hedgerow buffers;
  - Water corridor buffer zones;
  - A nature reserve and country park;
  - A burial ground;
  - Site access points from the highway network; indicative primary and secondary routes (roads and street layout); and
  - The proposed realignment of Howes Lane.
- ### BREEAM Communities
- 4.7 The BREEAM Communities assessment methodology will be used to assess the sustainability of the proposals. CEEQUAL assessment methodology will also be used to deliver improved project specification, design and construction of civil engineering works.
- ### CABE Design Review
- 4.8 CABE Design Review will be encouraged of all schemes to ensure high quality design. Design Review has been used in preparing the masterplan and Phase 1 exemplar proposals. Design Review will be continued throughout the preparation of detailed development proposals.

Figure 10: North West Bicester Masterplan – Masterplan Framework



## Development Requirement 1 - Delivering the masterplan

- 4.9 The masterplan should achieve BREEAM Communities “Excellent”. For more information go to [www.breeam.org](http://www.breeam.org)
- 4.10 In order to ensure comprehensive development, planning applications should be consistent with, and mindful of, the masterplan requirements set out below.
- 4.11 Planning applications will be:
- Determined in accordance with the masterplan framework in Figure 10 of the SPD;
  - Supported by a masterplan to show the “fit” with the overarching masterplan;
  - Required to demonstrate the principles and vision set out in the site wide masterplan, and the SPD;
  - Required to progress design work (see design principles in section 5) in the preparation of detailed proposals. For example, details to the level of the block and the street should be provided to explore issues related to building typologies and solar orientation.
  - Required to meet the requirements as set out in the Local Validation Checklist and advice on making an application (for more information go to: [www.cherwell.gov.uk/planning](http://www.cherwell.gov.uk/planning))

## “True” zero carbon development



- 4.12 The concept of zero carbon development has been embedded into council strategies and policy since it appeared in the eco-town standards. Local Plan Policy Bicester 1 requires the provision of infrastructure to allow for zero carbon development on the site.
- 4.13 The 2008 Climate Change Act established the world’s first legally binding climate change target with the aim to reduce the UK’s greenhouse gas emissions by at least 80% (from the 1990 baseline) by 2050. Reduction in the use of fossil fuels will not only contribute to reaching this target but also help protect against fuel price rises.
- 4.14 Work to date indicates a mixture of low carbon district heating and photovoltaic energy would achieve zero carbon. The site’s orientation and aspect creates the opportunity for roof mounted solar panels to generate renewable energy and will go a significant way to achieving the zero carbon targets.
- 4.15 The approach to energy and carbon dioxide reduction is set out in the masterplan Energy Strategy and summarised below:
- A large scale solar array on all roofs;
  - Energy efficient buildings; and
  - A network of energy centres providing gas and biomass combined heat and power (CHP) which will require a district heating network.

## Zero carbon energy

- 4.16 Renewable energy generation from on-site sources will be the key to delivering zero carbon emissions from energy used in buildings. Photovoltaic panels currently appear to provide the most viable solution as set out in the Energy Strategy supporting the masterplan.
- 4.17 Orientation and design of buildings will be expected to take account of the potential to install solar panels.
- 4.18 The council will encourage:
- Roof mounted arrays to avoid use of large tracts of land for a single purpose.
  - Exploration of technologies that will assist building occupiers in maximising the use of any renewable energy generated on the site.
  - Design of the proposed development should enable solar power generation by supporting:
  - Orientation - For pitched roofs, all roofs should have at least one pitch facing within 45 degrees of due south. Mono-pitch or flat roofs should be used to increase PV provision. A mix of orientations ranging from +45 degrees to -45 degrees of south will reduce the peak export and contribute to meeting peak demands.
  - Avoiding overshading/overshadowing - Buildings should avoid or at least minimise shading to roofs. Shading of south facing roofs by trees or other buildings should be avoided.
  - Built form, density and massing that optimises the potential for solar gain to generate energy.
- 4.19 Solar masterplanning software use at early design stages (e.g. using SketchUp design software [www.sketchup.com](http://www.sketchup.com)) to check for best use of solar resources on a site.

## Energy Centres – Combined Heat and Power

- 4.20 Low carbon energy centres, providing combined heat and power to the development are proposed within the

site boundary as part of the masterplan Energy Strategy. Energy centres are shown on the masterplan and have been located to maximise the potential for combined heat and power while also allowing the potential for the site to fit a future heat network for Bicester. The design and siting of energy centres should allow for the space requirements including the need for biomass deliveries and ensure that there is no nuisance to adjoining uses.

## Local Heat Network

- 4.21 The feasibility of a local heat network for Bicester as a whole is being investigated by the council and BioRegional supported by the Department for Energy and Climate Change (DECC) Heat Network Delivery Unit (HNDU) funding. The importance of a heat network should be recognised and opportunities included in proposals for the eco-town. The aspiration is for waste heat from the energy recovery facility at Ardley to connect to proposed developments, if feasible.

## Smartgrids

- 4.22 The use of smartgrids and low carbon energy storage solutions provide an opportunity to manage demand and supply of renewable and zero carbon energy technologies. Such solutions should be explored further in the energy strategies to support planning applications and masterplanning delivery.

## Development Principle 2 – “True” zero carbon development

- 4.23 In accordance with the Local Plan the definition of true zero carbon is that over a year the net carbon dioxide emissions from all energy use within buildings on the eco-town development as a whole are zero or below. It excludes embodied carbon and emissions from transport but includes all buildings – not just houses but also commercial and public sector buildings.

## Development Requirement 2 – True zero carbon development

- 4.24 Development at North West Bicester must achieve zero carbon emissions as defined in this SPD.
- 4.25 Each full and outline application will need to be supported by an energy strategy and comply with the definition of true zero carbon development.
- 4.26 Energy strategies should identify how the proposed development will achieve the zero carbon targets and set out the phasing.
- 4.27 Use of heat and low carbon energy from the energy recovery facility at Ardley should be explored in the energy strategy. Smartgrid and storage technology should also be investigated.
- 4.28 Applicants will be encouraged to maximise the fabric energy efficiency of buildings.
- 4.29 Provision of utilities' infrastructure should be coordinated and support the overarching objective of true zero carbon development.
- 4.30 Where an approach is proposed that does not include a heat network it will have to be demonstrated that it is a robust long term solution and that connection to any heat network should be explored.

## Climate Change Adaptation



- 4.31 There is increasing recognition that reducing carbon emissions is important in reducing and adapting to the impacts of climate change.
- 4.32 It is anticipated that overheating in buildings will be an issue in future climate change scenarios requiring an innovative approach in the design of new buildings. At present there is no rigorous definition of what constitutes overheating in dwellings. However there is documented evidence that temperatures being reached in some existing dwellings are harmful to occupant health and well-being.
- 4.33 The factors that contribute to overheating in dwellings include:
- Urbanisation;
  - Occupant behaviour and interventions;
  - Orientation;
  - Aspect;
  - Glazing;
  - Internal gains;
  - Thermal mass;
  - Changes in building design (including the drive for energy efficiency, leading to highly insulated and airtight dwellings);
  - Pollution;
  - Noise; and
  - Security.
- 4.34 The council requires development to be designed to take account of future climate scenarios. The 2009 UK Climate Projections (UKCP09) set out the key projections of climate change across the UK over the 21st century. Projected changes by the 2080s

based on a 50% probability level include increases in summer mean temperatures of 3.9 degrees in southern England and 23% decrease in summer precipitation.

- 4.35 Local Plan Policy ESD1 provides more detail on the anticipated effect of climate change in the District.
- 4.36 A Local Climate Impacts Profile (LCIP) has been undertaken as part of the Local Plan preparation to better understand the impact of extreme weather in Cherwell. The LCIP reviewed extreme weather events over the period 2003 to 2008. If heatwaves were to recur on the scale of 2003 it would have a significant impact on health, biodiversity and infrastructure (including damage to buildings by tree and drought related subsidence, roads, drainage systems and business closures).
- 4.37 The Local Plan refers to climate change adaptation and mitigation measures and sets out clear requirements to be met by proposals for development in planning applications. The SPD masterplan sets out the framework for implementing the climate change measures required to deliver the eco-town objectives. A comprehensive approach to climate change adaptation will be required with every planning application.
- 4.38 Research with Oxford Brookes University has modelled the climate Bicester is likely to experience. It shows the biggest risks are overheating and water stress. The worst case scenarios for overheating in homes occur in terraces or detached properties with both east and west facing glazing. These homes get morning and evening sunshine when the sun is lower in the sky whereas south facing glazing can be shaded easily from midday summer sun.

### **Development Principle 3 - Climate Change Adaptation**

- 4.39 Green space and green infrastructure will contribute to an urban cooling effect and Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDS) will be designed to respond to future extreme weather events including water neutrality measures as set out in a Water

Cycle Study and SUDS as part of a Water Cycle Strategy. Buildings will be designed to be warm in winter and cool in summer employing sustainable construction techniques and passive management systems wherever possible to avoid the use of air conditioning plant and machinery.

- 4.40 The principles of sustainable development should contribute to the character of the area by influencing form of development for example, to maximise passive energy gain, support PhotoVoltaics, wind power and grey water.

### **Development Requirement 3 - Climate Change Adaptation**

- 4.41 Planning applications will be required to incorporate best practice on tackling overheating.
- 4.42 Planning applications will also be required to incorporate best practice on:
  - tackling the impacts of climate change on the built and natural environment including:
  - Urban cooling through Green Infrastructure (for example, the use of green space and the incorporation of green streets);
  - Orientation and passive design principles;
  - Include water neutrality measures as set out in a Water Cycle Study;
  - Meet Minimum Fabric Energy Efficiency Standards (FEES)
  - Achieve Code for Sustainable Homes Level 5 (CSH5).
- 4.43 Planning applications should include designs and layouts that run east-west to avoid worst case overheating. Layouts and designs that run north-south should pay extra attention to risk of overheating.
- 4.44 Planning applications should:
  - Provide evidence to show consideration of climate change adaptation.
  - Demonstrate how risks will be reduced through win-win situations (BREEAM Communities SE10) - such as:
  - Reducing more than one impact of climate



change (for example reduce effect of urban heat island whilst also reducing flood risk);

- Reducing the contribution of the development to climate change (e.g. reducing the need for electric cooling and therefore reducing carbon emissions)
- Providing additional sustainability, economic or wellbeing benefits (e.g. rainwater harvesting using drainage techniques that increase biodiversity or improve water quality)
- Design and Access Statements should address the issue of climate change adaptation. Detailed designs will be required to demonstrate they are resilient to the impacts of climate change with reference to the work carried out by Oxford Brookes University (OBU), Hyder and BioRegional<sup>1</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> Design for Future Climate Change – Adapting Buildings Programme – North West Bicester Eco development (Hyder Consulting Limited).

## Homes



- 4.45 As part of the zero carbon performance, new homes will need to meet high standards of fabric energy efficiency, (see section on zero carbon). The proposed development includes up to 6,000 new homes of which at least 30 per cent will be affordable.
- 4.46 Homes will be designed to high environmental and space standards using sustainable methods of construction to maximise energy efficiency, reduce carbon emissions and achieve zero carbon development targets across the site.
- 4.47 Homes are a fundamental element of the walkable neighbourhoods principle and delivery of the masterplan will need to ensure that local facilities, services including schools and jobs are easily accessible on foot and bicycle.
- 4.48 The density of residential development will reflect its location within the site with higher density residential development along public transport corridors and adjacent to local centres.
- 4.49 The development will provide a range of house types and sizes to meet local needs and create a sustainable community.
- 4.50 As well as providing attractive places for people to live, the new homes will also be adaptable and provide flexibility for residents to work from home. This will allow the need to travel to be reduced leading to a reduction in carbon emissions from transport and require local services and facilities to support homeworkers.

- 4.51 Neighbourhood water recycling should be implemented as a means to deliver reduced water consumption requirements, rather than house by house scale water recycling which may be expensive.
- 4.52 The masterplan identifies the areas of residential development within the site and sets out to create sustainable neighbourhoods.
- 4.53 Housing areas are in accessible locations in terms of local services and jobs.

### **Development Principle 4 – Homes**

- 4.54 Detailed layouts should ensure homes are located within 800 metres along the shortest walking route of primary schools.
- 4.55 Homes should be set in a strong landscape framework.
- 4.56 Proposals should develop the work carried out by Oxford Brookes University, Hyder, BioRegional and A2Dominion on designing homes for future climate change.
- 4.57 The concept of community streets (also referred to as “homezones”) has been established by the exemplar. The concept should be carried through into subsequent phases of development. Implementation of the concept should create safe, accessible neighbourhood streets and facilitate the creation of a successful community.
- 4.58 Home designs will encourage more sustainable ways of living for example through:
  - Space for recycling facilities and composting facilities;
  - Gardens and food production and biodiversity (for example, fruit trees, wildflower meadows and log piles);
  - Easily accessible cycle storage areas;
  - Connectivity of rainwater harvesting systems to residential gardens and adjacent green street features;
  - Greywater use,
  - Passive heating and cooling;
  - Provision for electric vehicle charging points; and

- Provision for electric Smart home design that uses technology to manage appliances and energy use.

### **Development Requirement 4 – Homes**

- 4.59 Proposals will include details of 30% affordable housing of a type and tenure to meet local housing needs. Assistance in identifying needs will be provided by the council’s Strategic Housing Officer.
- 4.60 The council would welcome proposals for self-build, co-housing, or other innovative forms of residential development that meet local housing needs.
- 4.61 Proposals for new residential development will be expected to incorporate sustainable design and construction technology to achieve zero carbon development through a combination of fabric energy efficiency, carbon compliance and local renewable energy generation.
- 4.62 Design principles will be set out and include the use of local materials, flexibility in house design and size including the potential for additions to the building to adapt to changing circumstances.
- 4.63 Design and Access Statements should respond to the eco-town principles and set out how homes will contribute to meet design criteria for the development.
- 4.64 In summary, all homes should:
  - Achieve Building for Life 12 ([www.designcouncil.org.uk](http://www.designcouncil.org.uk));
  - Use energy efficient materials as part of the building fabric and innovative approaches to sustainable construction;
  - Optimise the site’s potential for solar energy gain and passive house techniques for ventilation and cooling;
  - Address the issue of overheating and respond to the orientation of the site;
  - Meet a minimum of Level 5 of the Code for Sustainable Homes;
  - Meet lifetime homes minimum space standards ([www.lifetimehomes.org.uk](http://www.lifetimehomes.org.uk));

- Provide flexible space to facilitate homeworking and be “smart” - incorporating real time energy monitoring systems, technology that provides up to date real time community information including travel, superfast broadband (speeds in excess of 100 MBps) to facilitate use of homes as offices and small businesses;
- Provide gardens for food production and biodiversity; and
- Be designed to achieve good daylighting.

### **Development Principle 4(a) – Homes – Homeworking**

- 4.65 Homeworking will play an important role in creating employment opportunities on the site. It will be encouraged and facilitated by the design of the new homes and superfast broadband provision.
- 4.66 The ability of homes to provide flexible space for residents to work from home is a requirement of the phase 1 exemplar development. This will reduce the need to travel allowing residents who work elsewhere to spend time doing their job at home. It will also provide the opportunity to facilitate the provision of small businesses, sole traders and local businesses to use their homes for work and employment. Within homes there should be space provided to allow use as an office or small scale ancillary business use.
- 4.67 The masterplan Economic Strategy is expected to deliver homeworking targets for the site. The Economic Strategy will require further detailed work in terms of developing the proposals for homeworking to ensure the creation of the jobs indicated on the site.

### **Development Requirement 4(a) - Homes – Homeworking**

- 4.68 Detailed planning applications and Design and Access Statements should set out how the design of new homes will provide for homeworking. They should also refer to the economic strategy for employment opportunities provided by homeworking and the contribution to reducing unsustainable commuter trips set out in accompanying Transport Assessments and Travel Plans.

## **Employment**



- 4.69 The vision for employment is to deliver a mixed use development and ensure that unsustainable commuter trips are kept to a minimum. An Economic Strategy based on baseline information and evidence to identify target sectors for economic growth and linkages with other economies in the area should be produced to accompany planning applications.
- 4.70 Other employment opportunities and facilities should be provided with links to the wider economy. These include service jobs, growth of the low carbon environmental goods and services sector (including energy, management, retail, community development role) and greener business such as the commercial uses in the local centres that choose sustainability practices. The end result should be to provide at least as many jobs as new dwellings on the site (within walking or cycling distance) or accessible by public transport within Bicester.
- 4.71 It is recognised that the proposed development will create demand for local services and facilities in the local area which will provide opportunities for some of the future residents of North West Bicester. However, the challenge will be to provide the estimated 4,600 jobs identified in the Masterplan Economic Strategy.
- 4.72 Larger scale commercial development within the employment land shown on the masterplan provides business space for offices, workshops factories and warehousing (B1, B2 and B8 uses).

4.73 It is estimated in the North West Bicester masterplan Economic Strategy that over 2,000 jobs could be provided in the business park with the Local Plan policy anticipating the business park generating between 700 and 1,000 jobs early in the plan period. The development is expected to come forward in the early phases and its location reflects the accessibility of the site to the strategic highway network.

### Development Principle 5 – Employment

4.74 The masterplan identifies land for employment uses to facilitate the creation of on-site jobs. In addition, the masterplan Economic Strategy sets out the scale, type and location of jobs related to North West Bicester and an action plan. Employment opportunities should be provided on-site and meet the skills of local residents.

4.75 Employment uses include a proposed business park on land at Middleton Stoney Road and Howes Lane. Larger scale commercial development in this area was identified in the masterplan economic strategy to provide employment space for target sectors including the high value logistics, manufacturing (including performance engineering) and low carbon companies. The buildings will be in a high quality landscape setting with high quality offices providing research and development facilities. Other business and financial services will be located in the town centre.

4.76 An estimated 1,000 jobs will be provided in the local centres comprising offices, retail/leisure, health facilities, community halls and community facilities possibly nurseries, care and extra care homes and a hotel. The local centres should also support the growth of the low carbon environmental goods and services sector and encourage sustainable lifestyles through commercial uses such as bike shops and organic cafes.

4.77 The existing Avonbury Business Park could be extended to create commercial use and frontage along the realigned Howes Lane.

4.78 Land between the realigned Bucknell Road and Lords Lane adjacent to the local centre is identified for commercial uses.

4.79 The existing farmsteads are identified in the masterplan for mixed use development including some commercial uses. Proposals for mixed use development at the existing farmsteads should retain and respect the listed barns at Himley Farm and the listed farmhouse at Home Farm. Landscape proposals including open spaces should be used to retain the setting of the listed buildings on the site. The masterplan identifies mixed use employment to the north east of Lords Farm and at Hawkwell Farm. The Economic Strategy does not include an indicative number of jobs created in this area.

4.80 Other employment opportunities will be created through the provision of facilities for homeworking in the design of new homes. Homeworking will play an important role in creating employment opportunities on the site and will be encouraged, facilitated by the design of the new homes (Please refer to Development Principle 4(a)).

### Development Requirement 5 – Employment

4.81 Employment proposals will be required to address:

- Accessibility to homes and sustainable transport;
- Mixed use development;
- The capability of the building to achieve BREEAM Excellent on occupation of 50% of the development;
- Relationship to neighbouring uses so that they do not have an adverse impact on adjacent properties and
- The vitality of local centres

4.82 Planning applications should:

- be supported by an economic strategy;
- demonstrate access to at least one new opportunity per new home on-site and within Bicester;
- present an up to date summary of economic baseline information;
- set out the local economic context and economic links (with a specific focus on jobs and employment land);
- pursue target sectors including high value logistics, manufacturing (including

performance engineering) and low carbon environmental goods and services;

- refer to the Cherwell Local Plan evidence base;
- include an action plan to deliver jobs and homeworking, skills and training objectives; and
- support local apprenticeship and training initiatives.



### Transport, Movement and Access

- 4.83 The Eco Bicester One Shared Vision encourages “walking and cycling as the first choice of travel within the town to improve health, reduce carbon emissions, and improve the quality of the environment”. The Sustainable Transport Strategy for Bicester sets out the transport ambition and vision for sustainable transport in the town. It will inform the preparation of transport policies and proposals for the existing town and new development proposals.
- 4.84 The Government has set out its ambition for cycling, for example in announcements made by the Prime Minister and the Cycling Delivery Plan published for consultation in November 2014. The development at Bicester should reflect this ambition. Targets have been set for trips originating from North West Bicester together with aims to tackle the carbon impact of transport from day one through the provision of transport choice messages, infrastructure and services. A key transport objective is to make it easy to get around on foot and/or cycle. Strategic accesses and primary streets are shown on the masterplan.

### Development Principle 6 – Transport, Movement and Access

- 4.85 Travel and mobility are part of our everyday lives and proposals should support people’s desire for mobility whilst achieving the goal of low carbon living. Cycling and walking will be encouraged and supported to be the first choice of transport in new development and the wider town of Bicester. Improved linkages to the town’s stations must be provided and further linkages to Bicester Village Station should be investigated to provide improved connectivity to a wider range of destinations.
- 4.86 The principles in this SPD set out to demonstrate and achieve the benefits that flow from good design and assign a higher priority to pedestrians and cyclists, setting out an approach to residential streets that recognises their role in creating places that work for all members of the community.
- 4.87 Development should have a robust urban structure, with a network of well-designed, connected spaces and routes that prioritise the movement of pedestrians, cyclists and public transport. It is critical that these spaces form well connected places which draw the existing and new communities together. Streets will form a major element of the public realm which will “stitch” the site together.
- 4.88 Principles of “walkable neighbourhoods” and “filtered permeability” have been applied in the masterplanning to determine the mix of uses and connections to predominantly daily facilities within the new community. These principles should continue to be used in the preparation of planning applications. Figure 11 shows the key connections within the site and surrounding area.
- 4.89 Development proposals must show an understanding of existing routes and provide a considered response that enhances existing access and connections and seeks to improve/ remove barriers to movement on and off-site.
- 4.90 It is essential that the accessibility of the overall development internally and externally is designed to a high standard

with attractive, direct and overlooked routes. Such routes will be expected to be designed to an adoptable standard.

- 4.91 It is crucial proposed developments integrate fully with existing developments and communities in Bicester by making new connections, while improving existing ones.
- 4.92 Rights of Way should be recognised as important links to the countryside, enhanced and reinforced through the implementation of the masterplan supported by individual planning applications.
- 4.93 The North West Bicester masterplan sets out a framework for movement and access within the site (Figure 11). It includes a street hierarchy and indicative layout of primary streets. This requires further work to ensure the street design and layout is legible.
- 4.94 The primary road layout within the site provides access to the strategic road network. The detailed layout should be designed to keep vehicle speeds low and discourage unnecessary journeys by private motor car.
- 4.95 The SPD masterplan seeks to employ principles of filtered permeability and walkable neighbourhoods. These principles should be developed further in detailed planning proposals.
- 4.96 The masterplan provides the opportunity to address the aspect of existing properties along Howes Lane and the potential for the new development to enhance the existing properties through good urban design and integration with the proposed development. The masterplan is based on the following movement hierarchy:
- A strong green space structure providing a network of footpaths and cycleways;
  - Provision of a strategic route through the site, to realign Howes Lane, cross the railway line and allow integration and connectivity between the new and existing community;
  - Primary access roads into the site link employment, schools and community facilities;
  - Controlled access roads through residential areas provide a route for public transport

and maximise the public transport catchment; and

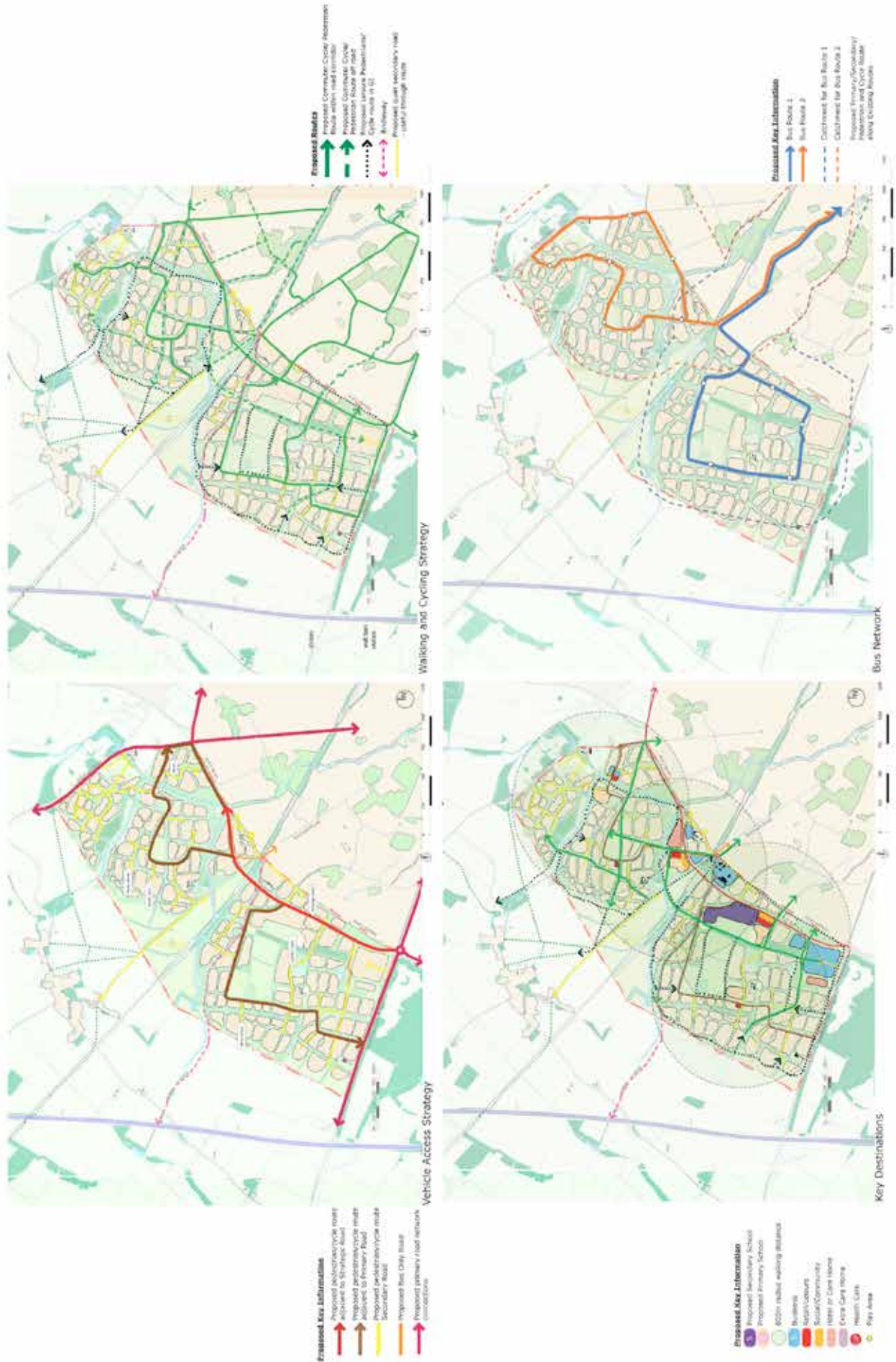
- Minor roads and home zones/community streets to serve residential areas.

## Development Requirement 6 - Transport, Movement and Access

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- 4.97 Key considerations for movement to be addressed in planning applications are as follows:
- Reducing car dependency;
  - Prioritising walking and cycling;
  - Generating activity and connectivity;
  - Highway and transport improvements including Howes Lane and Bucknell Road; and
  - Bus priority and links and infrastructure including RTI
- 4.98 At the outline planning applications stage it will be necessary to set out the indicative layout of lower hierarchy streets as part of a future design code. The secondary road network will provide other routes through the site. Below this level, further work in preparing planning applications is required to show how the routes will connect and illustrate the permeability of the site.
- 4.99 There is scope for planning applications to reconsider key elements and provide further detail to explain how the movement principles will be realised in spatial and public realm terms.
- 4.100 Planning applications and proposals should:
- Demonstrate how Manual for Streets 1 and 2 have been incorporated into the design of roads and streets;
  - Demonstrate how Sustrans design manual guidance has been incorporated;
  - Address and ensure connectivity along the major routes;
  - Include a Movement Strategy and designs to promote sustainable transport ensuring that all residential areas enjoy easy access to open space and are connected by a range of modes of transport to schools, community facilities and leisure/employment opportunities.

Figure 11: North West Bicester Masterplan – Access and Movement Framework



- Demonstrate that homes are within 5 minutes' walk (approximately 400 metres) of frequent public transport and 10 minutes' (approximately 800 metres) of neighbourhood services;

### Sustainable Transport – Modal Share and Containment



4.102 Baseline information on mode share of trips is available from the Bicester Household Travel Diary Data (2010). The results of the Travel Behaviour Survey carried out by Oxfordshire County Council (OCC) in late 2010 showed 69% of total trips in Bicester were made by car and 31% by non-car modes.

4.103 Mode share varies by distance with many of the shortest journeys in Bicester already made by non-car modes (78%) whereas longer journey (more than three kilometres) are mostly by car (86% including car passengers)

4.104 Containment refers to the number of trips generated by a development and the travel patterns within that development. A high rate of containment indicates a land use and transport conditions that enable residents to travel without the need for complex external journeys.

4.105 The SPD masterplan includes land use mixes that maximise the containment of trips within the North West Bicester development and limit the need for vehicular travel.

### Development Principle 6(a) – Sustainable Transport - Modal Share and Containment

4.106 Attractive routes and connections through the development should make the cycling and walking objective achievable. In order to achieve the amount of trips by walking and cycling, proposals in planning applications should be developed with strong connections to on and off-site destinations.

4.107 Walking routes should be designed to integrate with the existing public rights of way network. Opportunities for walking and cycling should be developed and enhanced through a network of sustainable, attractive and direct routes linking green spaces.

4.108 Primary routes for vehicles should allow access to the development but not dominate the layout or design of the scheme. This should be a place where people provide the vitality and vibrancy and walking and cycling become the first choice of travel.

4.109 The transport system should be planned to ensure that all homes and key services have access to non-car modes of transport.

4.110 Car sharing and car clubs should be an important element in supporting reduced car ownership and use.

4.111 Streets and spaces should not be dominated by parking and innovative layouts and management should be used where appropriate.

4.112 Parking requirements will need to be sensitively addressed.

4.113 Masterplanning has sought to achieve an increased level of containment of trips within the development and in Bicester. Residential areas in the draft masterplan have been located so that they are within walking distance of schools and local facilities and accessible to the bus route through the site. Detailed proposals and further masterplanning should be designed in a way that supports children walking and cycling safely and easily to schools from homes.

4.114 Walking distances to schools should be measured by the shortest route along which a child may walk reasonably safely.



For children under 11 there should be a maximum walking distance of 800 metres from homes to the nearest school.

- 4.115 The target level of containment is for at least 35% of trips to be within North West Bicester and 60% to be within Bicester as a whole, that is, 40% or less travelling outside of Bicester. This compares to an estimated 25% at present within neighbourhoods and 56% within Bicester as a whole. It aims at some increase in containment, recognising the complexities and limited influence over people's choices about where they live, work, shop and send their children to school.
- 4.116 The masterplan incorporates the following sustainable transport principles:
- Comprehensive direct networks for walking, cycling and public transport;
  - Limited or less convenient private vehicle access for homes and services;
  - Good accessibility by sustainable modes to key services such as schools and local centres;
  - Provision of bus infrastructure;
  - A compact layout – with medium densities, a mix of uses and a range of facilities within 10 minutes walking distance (around 800 metres);
  - Community Streets (Home zones) – residential areas where streets design encourages drivers to travel at very low speeds;
  - Shared space streets and squares – these are intended to reduce the dominance of motor vehicles and to improve the conditions for walkers, cyclists and pedestrians.
- 4.117 The masterplan will facilitate the overall modal share by non-car modes. This varies by the length of trip. The aim is to achieve an overall modal share of not more than 50% by car. The targets suggest an overall increase in walking trips from 22% at present to 30% for North West Bicester; increasing cycling trips from 4% to 10% and bus trips from 5% to 10%. Walking, cycling and bus trips also include journeys to the railway stations as part of longer journeys by public transport.

## **Development Requirement 6(a) – Sustainable Transport - Modal Share and Containment**

- 4.118 The SPD masterplan includes land use mixes that maximise the containment of trips within the North West Bicester development and limit the need for vehicular travel.
- 4.119 Planning applications should include Travel Plans which demonstrate how the design will enable at least 50% of trips originating in the development to be made by non-car means with the potential to increase to 60% by 2020.
- 4.120 Planning applications should set out how they will deliver:
- High containment of trips within the town;
  - Enhanced bus services from North West Bicester into and around Bicester;
  - Additional bus priority measures;
  - Street plans to discourage car movement;
  - Travel awareness plans (personalised travel plans etc.);
  - Real time travel information including access to train and train services;
  - High quality walking and cycling links to and from the town and waymarking;
  - Cycle storage within new homes;
  - Be supported by a Walking and Cycling Strategy; and
  - Transport Assessments addressing the guidance in this SPD.
- 4.121 Planning applications should also:
- Demonstrate options for ensuring key connections around the town do not become congested as a result of the development, for example, by extending some aspects of the Travel Plan beyond the immediate boundaries of the North West Bicester site;
  - Significantly more ambitious targets for modal share than the 50% and for the use of sustainable transport; and
  - Demonstrate how the principles of filtered permeability have been employed in designing the layout of schemes.

### **Development Principle 6(b) – Electric and low emission vehicles**

4.122 To reduce carbon emissions from transport as part of a sustainable transport system, electric and low emission vehicles will be encouraged. Proposals should include ultra-low carbon vehicle options including electric vehicles, car share schemes and low emission public transport. The implications on energy demand should be considered. Proposals should not add so many additional private vehicles to the local road network that they cause congestion.

### **Development Requirement 6(b) – Electric and low emission vehicles**

4.123 Proposals should make provision for electric and low emission vehicles through infrastructure provision and support in Travel Plans.

### **Proposed Highways Infrastructure - Strategic Link Road and Proposed Highway Realignment.**



#### **Howes Lane realignment**

4.124 The vision is to maintain the strategic route to accommodate the predicted volumes of traffic while providing an environment that is safe and attractive to pedestrians, cyclists and any person that is using the services and facilities proposed. The requirement to upgrade the existing Howes Lane and Lords Lane corridor has long been a priority scheme in the local authorities' infrastructure delivery plans and programmes. It includes a scheme to improve the Bucknell Road Howes Lane and Lords Lane junction. Similarly the crossing of the railway line was seen as a

potential constraint in masterplanning the site; particularly its impact on connectivity between the land uses on either side of the railway embankment.

4.125 A number of options have been considered for the strategic road network in this area and are set out in the various planning documents and evidence in the form of transport studies/ modelling to support the Local Plan.

4.126 Howes Lane is characterised by dense planting, fencing and rear elevations. This results in limited opportunities to link with the eco-town site with the exception of a single greenway.

4.127 Lords Lane presents a more positive aspect to the proposed development in terms of the orientation of new development (housing facing outwards towards the road from Bure Park). The Bure Stream and local nature reserve forms an important green link into the town from the site.

#### **Bucknell Road**

4.128 To reduce the attractiveness of the existing Bucknell Road route for through traffic, other road users, including vehicular traffic travelling along Bucknell Road to and from the town centre, will be diverted to along the route of the existing Lords Lane. The proposed realigned route will enter the masterplan site approximately 100 metres east of the existing Lords Farm. It will then cross the extended boulevard.

4.129 Access to Bucknell from the south and town centre will use the primary street through the northern part of the site before rejoining Bucknell Road on its current alignment. Bucknell Road will be truncated from the north just before crossing the stream continuing as a walking and cycle route towards the southern boundary of the site and the Bucknell Road beyond to the town centre.

4.130 The masterplanning of the site provides an opportunity to improve Bucknell Road and address issues of road safety and local access to Bucknell village by realigning the section of highway immediately to the north of the junction with Lords Lane. The road currently has the character of a rural lane with tall hedges on either side and vehicles travelling fast (the national speed limit is 60 mph).

## **Development Principle 6 (c) – Proposed highways infrastructure - Strategic link road and proposed highway realignments**

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- 4.131 The proposals for improvement of Howes Lane should integrate the existing and new development. To provide this, the existing road is moved further from the existing properties to a new alignment. Development should provide an appropriate interface with Howes Lane by sensitively responding to the scale, massing and height of existing development.
- 4.132 The SPD masterplan shows the A4095 diverted through the site to provide a strategic route for the town and create an urban boulevard for the new development. This road will have the character of a bustling street and be a place of pedestrian activity and the focal point of the new community. The speed of vehicles will be reduced to allow movement between the existing and new development. The creation of a tree lined boulevard will be an attractive feature of the development.
- 4.133 The Howes Lane/ Bucknell Road/ Lords Lane junction arrangement will be replaced by an underpass under the railway line to ease the movement of traffic along the east-west route. Commercial uses will be concentrated in this area providing activity as the main street through the development. The Boulevard will be the primary access into the development connecting the initial phases of housing, community facilities and business park. The carriageway width should be restricted to ensure it does not present a barrier to crossing and movement. The character of the Boulevard should be developed further based on the character areas set out in this document.
- 4.134 The proposed strategic link will be designed as a tree lined street or boulevard. It provides the opportunity to enter the site by a series of “gateways” providing a sense of arrival into the eco-town development at the edges of the masterplan boundary.
- 4.135 This area should accommodate not only the highway but also trees, green space, segregated footways and cycleways with building fronting the new road. It should result in a vibrant area at all times of day for the community as well as people passing through.
- 4.136 The secondary school could provide activity and a focal point for the development in the southern area of the site. It could be flanked by mixed uses development comprising commercial uses, residential and new green infrastructure.
- 4.137 Vehicles should move through this area along the attractive street, perhaps stopping to use the local facilities or to allow school children or shoppers to cross. Crossing points should allow permeability for pedestrians and cyclists to conveniently access facilities on and off site.
- 4.138 The new route will be a highly accessible street in the new development with excellent links to the rest of the development and town. It will provide commercial opportunities, creating a viable and sustainable mix of uses serving local needs. In this location, and along the public transport corridors, higher density development will be encouraged.
- 4.139 Changes to the character and function of Bucknell Road are also required to allow connectivity between the proposed uses in the southern part of the masterplan areas. It will also have the benefit of discouraging through traffic from using the Bucknell Road to gain access to the M40 at Junction 10 and access other roads north of Bicester. It aims to discourage vehicular movement (“rat-running”) through the villages.
- 4.140 Bucknell Road should provide a strong connection through the site and not be a barrier to movement. The existing highway arrangements along the Bucknell Road should be improved to allow a rapid bus-only link direct into the eco-town site via Bucknell Road with associated walking and cycling infrastructure along it.

## **Development Requirement 6(c) – Proposed highways infrastructure - Strategic link road and proposed highway realignments**

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- 4.141 Planning applications should demonstrate options for ensuring that key connections around the eco-town do not become congested as a result of the development.

- Highway requirements should not lead to a route which will in itself form a new barrier - albeit relocated within the site boundaries.
- Good permeability, frontage and crossing points combined by a reduced speed limit should deliver the vision for an urban boulevard.
- In terms of the design of this new section of road, the local highway authority (OCC) recognises the continued strategic importance, nature and level and types of traffic carried on a daily basis by Howes Lane as part of the Bicester perimeter road network. OCC has provided an indicative Howes Lane carriageway dimension requirement of 7.3 metres. It has also indicated a requirement for off road footways and cycleways, verges (with trees) and two swales and a speed limit of 30 mph.
- Joint cycleway/footways should be at least four metres wide and segregated routes to provide attractive routes for pedestrian and cyclists.
- Applicants will need to work with OCC and CDC to find an acceptable design solution appropriate to the uses along the route. The existing Howes Lane will be the subject of a Stopping Up Order to allow potential alternative uses ranging from open space to foot/cycle ways.

## Public transport



4.142 The vision is to create a rapid and regular bus service from the site to key destinations in and around the town in order to be attractive to residents. The public transport service needs to be fast reliable, affordable and direct.

- 4.143 The masterplan proposes a bus network through the site designed to transport passengers directly and efficiently to their destination and give the bus priority over other road vehicles. Bucknell Road is the preferred route for a bus link to the town centre and this will require some infrastructure to support the increased use by buses from the North West Bicester site. The bus route will use the primary street network for the most part.
- 4.144 The masterplan includes three bus-only links (central, western and eastern). The delivery of bus-only links requires further investigation, for example, from the Bucknell Road to the north side of the development and from the new link to the west side of the development needs further consideration to ensure it can be delivered to achieve the goal of providing an efficient bus service.

## Development Principle 6(d) – Public Transport

- 4.145 North West Bicester should be an exemplar in the design and operation of its transport systems. The challenge this presents is significant and means that “business as usual” is not an option. Street and place design should give pedestrians and cyclists priority with limited and managed car access.
- 4.146 An indicative bus route has been submitted with the Draft masterplan. It includes bus only routes and bus priority measures. The final public transport solution must be attractive to all future residents and provide a viable and efficient alternative to car travel.

## Development Requirement 6(d) – Public transport

- 4.147 The location of the internal bus stops should be within 400 metres (walking distance) of homes and located in the site’s local centres where possible. Bus stops should be designed to provide Real Time Information infrastructure, shelters and cycle parking.

## Healthy Lifestyles



4.148 The built and natural environments are an important component in improving the health and wellbeing of people. Well-designed development and good urban planning can also contribute to promoting healthier and more active living and reduce health inequalities. It is vital that the eco-towns work well as places. This means in social and economic terms as well as environmental. Healthy lifestyles are a key component of the development principles and proposals will need to address this issue.

### Development Principle 7 - Healthy lifestyles

- 4.149 Development proposals should be designed and planned to support healthy and sustainable environments and enable residents to make healthy choices easily. Development proposals should focus on social factors such as benefits of personal health and wellbeing as part of environmental and economic sustainability. Healthy lifestyles are a key component of the development principles and proposals will need to address this issue. Often these factors are interwoven.
- 4.150 For example, sustainable transport options such as cycling and walking reduce environmental impact but also bring benefits for personal health and wellbeing; walkable communities encourage social connection; car clubs are a new service industry that create sustainable jobs and reduce transport impacts.
- 4.151 Healthy lifestyles will also have the benefit of reducing demand on local health facilities

and increased economic productivity with less absence from work due to health issues. Locally grown food can reduce carbon emissions from transport and storage and involves some physical activity in its production. Residents should be encouraged and supported in growing their own fruit and vegetables and the green spaces used to provide sources of food including fruit trees.

- 4.152 Replacing car journeys with walking and cycling trips can have many benefits in terms of health from reducing air pollution, encouraging exercise through active travel and increased interaction with friends and neighbours.

### Development Requirements 7 - Healthy lifestyles

- 4.153 The health and wellbeing benefits from the development principles set out in this SPD should be considered in the design of proposals.
- 4.154 Proposals should provide facilities which contribute to the wellbeing, enjoyment and health of people.
- 4.155 Planning applications should set out how the design of development will deliver healthy neighbourhoods and promote healthy lifestyles through active travel (walking and cycling) and sustainability.
- 4.156 The green spaces within the development should also provide the opportunity for healthy lifestyles including attractive areas for sport and recreation as well as local food production.

#### Allotments

- 4.157 Allotments and play areas have similar functions for health and community cohesion. Some further benefits of healthy lifestyles are set out below:
- Exercise – just 30 minutes of gardening can burn around 150 calories;
  - Home grown produce – If managed properly an allotment can produce enough food to supplement a family's weekly shop, with fresh fruit and vegetables over the year. This could be quite a substantial cost saving;

- Healthy lifestyles – spending as little as 15 minutes a day in the summer sunshine can build up vitamin D levels – this can help the body ward off some illnesses and raise serotonin levels, making plot holders happier and healthier;
  - Reducing obesity levels – reducing cholesterol – through healthier foods, cooking workshops, eating together and discussing food choices;
  - Reducing stress levels;
  - Access to fresh air;
  - Mental illness – promoting interaction with the environment helps to build confidence and skill levels. The integration of allotments with communities means they have a great potential for occupational therapy and as mechanisms of social inclusion;
  - Spending time with like-minded people – allotments are places to socialise and for the camaraderie. Allotments are now used by people of all ages, genders and ethnic backgrounds – this aids community cohesion and helps to limit isolation;
- 4.158 The masterplan and in particular design of the neighbourhoods will be key to the delivery of the healthy lifestyles principle.
- 4.159 Allotments are seen as an opportunity to learn from experienced gardeners as well as share knowledge with newcomers. Allotments can be seen as a social leveller – individuals are valued independently of their social – economic status – it is valued upon gardening skills and knowledge.
- 4.160 Being a plot holder provides a sense of being part of a community.
- 4.161 The National Allotment Society provides further information on allotments ([www.nsalg.org.uk/allotment-info/benefits-of-allotment-gardening](http://www.nsalg.org.uk/allotment-info/benefits-of-allotment-gardening))

## Local Services



4.62 Community facilities and local services are important in providing attractive places where people will want to meet and spend time providing a destination for local residents to visit with a strong community focus. Small scale retail serving the daily needs of local residents will be supported as part of the mix use local centres which should also include employment opportunities and commercial use of first floors. The council will seek to ensure facilities are provided to meet the needs of local residents.

### Development Principle 8 - Local services

- 4.163 Planning applications should include a good level of provision of services within the North West Bicester eco-town site that is proportionate to the size of the development. This should include leisure, health and social care, education, retail, arts and culture
- 4.164 Local centres are proposed as part of the mixed use development including small retail units, offices, and community facilities including a nursery, primary school, and public house. The energy centres and other infrastructure and facilities on the site will generate and support jobs within the site. It is important employment areas are easily accessible and well connected to other uses. The location of complementary uses such as cafes, bars and hotels should be convenient to employment facilities on the site to create a vibrant local economy as set out in the economic strategies.

- 4.165 The success of the commercial uses will be influenced by the mix of uses and quality of the built and natural environment in the masterplan and spatial framework plan. By locating commercial uses in close proximity to community and educational facilities it is envisaged the masterplan will promote viability and support local services. Community facilities and social infrastructure including schools will be provided in locations accessible to the new communities and sports and recreational facilities located in close proximity.
- 4.166 The distribution of community halls will be spread across the site and perform a different function to help build the new community. Schools shall provide high quality educational facilities with a strong community and sustainability emphasis to embrace the whole community, with facilities for the benefit of the whole community. It is important that the mix of uses does not undermine the role of the town centre.

### Development Requirement 8 - Local services

- 4.167 Planning applications should include a good level of provision of services within the North West Bicester eco-town site that is proportionate to the size of the development. This should include leisure, health and social care, education, retail, arts and culture while recognising that the existing town centre will continue to perform an important role as the service centre for the town and surrounding area including major large scale retail and community services such as the new library.
- 4.168 Local services should be located in accessible locations within walking distances (defined in this SPD) to homes and employment.
- 4.169 Following on from the “walkable neighbourhoods” principle the schools should be easily accessible on foot and other non-car sustainable modes. They should be set in an attractive landscape and where parents need to access the school by car, should be carefully considered in order to avoid congestion and conflict with pedestrians and cyclists.
- 4.170 To encourage sustainable travel initiatives, schools should be accessible from at least two sides of the site see “typical example” from the educational requirement document. The local education authority’s preference is for three vehicular entrances located strategically around the perimeter. Noise generation around schools should be minimal. School dropping off/picking up points should be agreed with OCC and CDC. Oxfordshire County Council’s detailed design principles for primary and secondary school sites are contained in Appendix IV. Applicants will be required to liaise with OCC in submitting proposals for school developments and should refer to the OCC guidance, “Drop-off standards for new primary schools built as part of a larger development.”

### Green infrastructure



- 4.171 Green space and green infrastructure will be a distinguishing feature of the site making it an attractive place to live. It provides the landscape setting to the development and a range of opportunities for formal sports, play and informal recreation and the creation of a distinctive development. The eco-town presents an opportunity to create a distinctive and imaginative landscape and green infrastructure (SUDS, pedestrian routes, recreation space, habitat and bio fuel) focussed around existing watercourses and the stream corridors. These features are important and will influence the design of the development.
- 4.172 The majority of green space in the masterplan is focussed on natural corridors

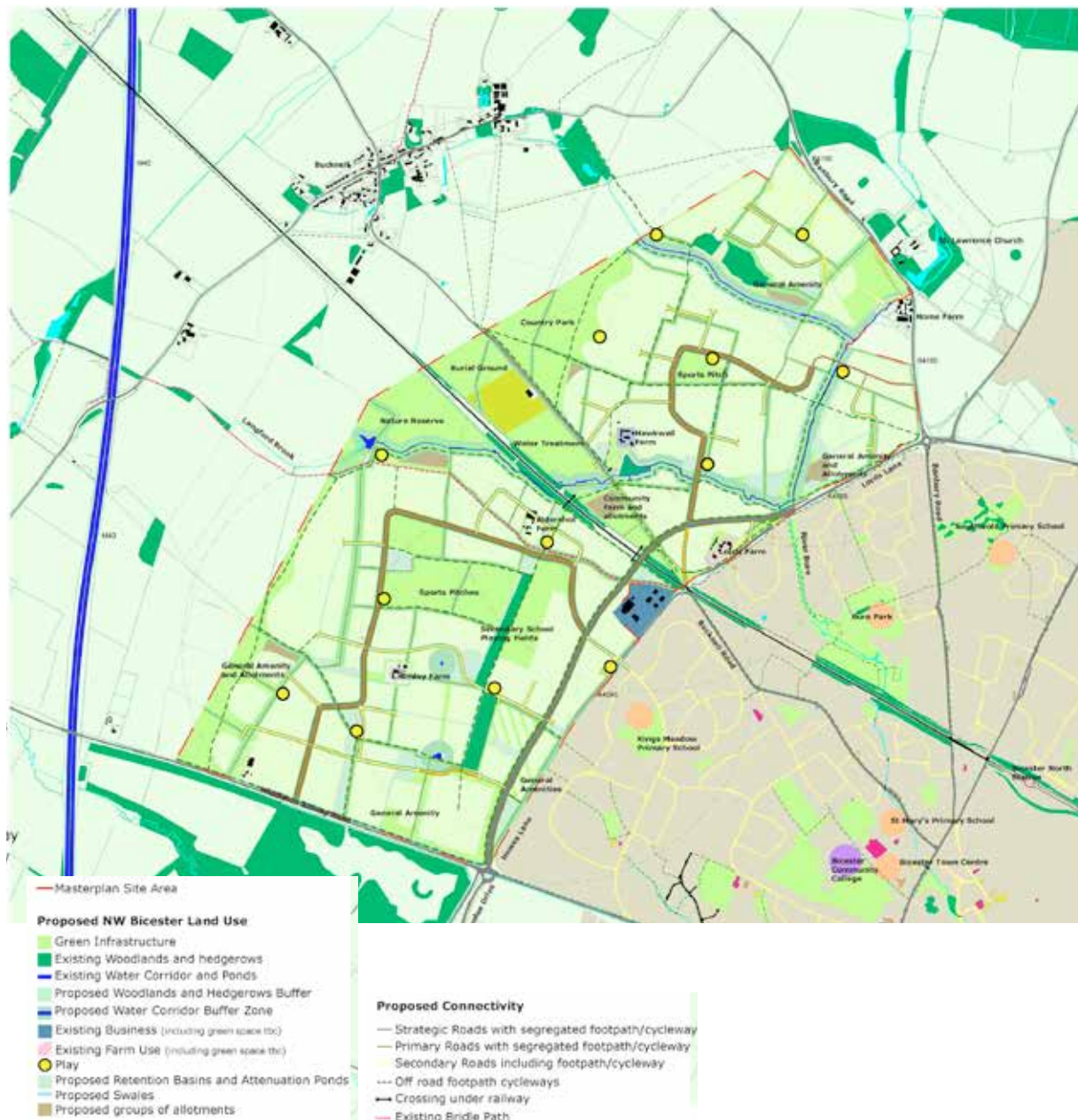
and integrated with the existing hedgerows. The green space to the south of the railway line provides general amenity, sports and a nature reserve. To the north of the railway line the green space provides general amenity, a country park, water treatment facility, burial ground and community farm.

4.173 Other areas of green space provide the landscape framework for the masterplan and opportunities to deliver green infrastructure. The masterplan proposes a green infrastructure framework retaining existing landscape features such as trees, hedgerows and woodland as shown below in Figure 12.

### Development Principle 9 - Green infrastructure and landscape

4.174 Proposals at North West Bicester should create new urban places connected by green space and green corridors utilising the existing landscape framework. A network of interconnected green cycle and walking routes should be created with a combination of direct links between green areas and key destinations allowing residents and local people to explore the wider landscape. The design and layout should provide short direct sustainable connections to the town centre, countryside and key destinations.

**Figure 12:** North West Bicester – Green Infrastructure Framework





The proposed developments should support cultural activity through the provision of high quality public open space.

- 4.175 The impact of development on the site should be minimised to avoid disturbance of existing natural features such as trees and hedges and retaining the links to the landscape and countryside beyond the masterplanning boundaries. Planting of trees should be used to reinforce existing trees and hedges and integrate development with the landscape. The interface with Bignell Park for example needs to be handled with sensitivity as does the relationship to the settlements of Bucknell and Caversfield including important views of buildings such as St Lawrence's Church in Caversfield. The setting of listed buildings within the site should be considered carefully when preparing planning applications. Landscape proposals including open spaces should be used to retain the setting of listed buildings on the site.
- 4.176 Open space should be fronted to secure attractiveness. Green infrastructure should enhance and complement the structure of the urban form and the hierarchy between the two elements needs to be understood in order to understand how these areas might be developed in subsequent applications.
- 4.177 Other areas of green space provide the landscape framework for the masterplan and opportunities to deliver green infrastructure. The masterplan proposes a green infrastructure framework retaining existing landscape features such as trees, hedgerows and woodland.
- 4.178 The space should be multi-functional, for example, accessible for play and recreation, walking or cycling safely, and support wildlife, urban cooling and flood management. Particular attention should be given to land to allow the production of food from community, allotment and/or commercial gardens. Proposed landscape schemes and green infrastructure design should be used to provide external cooling and reduce heat islands.
- 4.179 The bridleway leading from the eastern end of Howes Lane past Aldershot Farm

is an important link between the town and countryside for walkers, cyclists and equestrians and is identified as a green corridor in the masterplan.

## **Development Requirement 9 - Green infrastructure and landscape**

- 4.180 Planning applications should demonstrate a range of types of green space, for example wetland areas and public space.
- 4.181 Development must meet the requirements of the adopted Cherwell Local Plan 2011-2031 (Part 1) Policy BSC11.
- 4.182 Green spaces should be multi-functional, for example accessible for play and recreation, local food production (important due to the high carbon footprint of food), walking or cycling safely and support wildlife, urban cooling and flood management, providing the policy principle is not compromised.
- 4.183 The expectation is for frontages to be designed onto the green spaces with design consideration towards natural surveillance and ensuring landscaping schemes are not compromised. The existing Howes Lane has the potential to be integrated into the green infrastructure and landscape setting of the masterplan.
- 4.184 All planning applications should demonstrate the provision of 40% green space and a range of types of green space. Particular attention should be given to land to allow the production of food from community, allotment and/or commercial gardens.
- 4.185 Proposed landscape schemes and green infrastructure design should be used to provide external cooling and reduce heat islands.
- 4.186 Green roofs should be used to assist with neighbourhood cooling but will not be included in the requirement for 40% green space.
- 4.187 Development should have a clear system of safe, accessible and attractive open and green spaces that respond to and enhance natural features across the site, and integrate with the existing settlement.
- 4.188 Play areas should be located where they are accessible to children and overlooked.

- 4.189 There should be areas where biodiversity is the principal outcome, such as the nature reserve, parts of the country park, and wildlife corridors and buffers. In addition, opportunities to maximise biodiversity in other green spaces should be taken.
- 4.190 All development should be consistent with the Green Infrastructure and Landscape Strategy May 2014.

### **Development Principle 9 (a) – Tree planting**

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- 4.191 To reflect the Biodiversity Strategy, native trees and shrubs should be planted on the site particularly within woodland, the country park, the nature reserve, and ecological buffers and corridors but also as a proportion of other plantings.
- 4.192 Sufficient space should be allocated for tree planting in the planning applications to integrate with the streetscene and adjacent street furniture / highways infrastructure / buildings. Emphasis should be placed upon the planting of larger tree species (oak, plane, lime, hornbeam etc.) within the streetscene to ensure greater benefits are returned to the environment and community. Big trees provide big benefits, small trees provide small benefits.
- 4.193 Good communications and better understanding of all above/below ground requirements within the streetscene at the earliest stage by the design team should ensure the appropriate integration of all streetscene features including trees, SUDs, swales, rainwater harvesting, service routes (above and below) and CCTV.
- 4.194 Ensuring planting is in the correct locations and allows for the integration of the trees into water sensitive urban design avoids conflicts with adjacent features and services as the trees mature. It also allows for the trees to function efficiently and to their maximum capability within the streetscene whilst contributing to installed environmental, ecological and engineered features.

### **Development Requirements 9 (a) - Tree planting**

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- 4.195 Planning applications should allocate appropriate space for the root and crown development of trees.
- 4.196 Where planning applications include proposals for tree planting in or adjacent to hard surface areas the provision of engineered planting pits should be installed with either structured cells, raft system or structured soil. Engineered planting pits in hard surface areas are to be integrated within rainwater harvesting systems in order to assist with stormwater management, reduce maintenance costs and improve water efficiency.
- 4.197 Tree pits must be of the size and specification to support and allow for the individual tree to reach and maintain its mature, natural form and characteristics without the associated and predictable conflicts with urban features and residents.
- 4.198 The design and installation of all hard surface tree pits should be in accordance with BS8545:2014 'Trees from nursery to independence in the Landscape', 'Trees in Hard Landscapes - A guide for Delivery' - Tree Design & Action Group.
- 4.199 Planting pits within hard surface areas must be fit for purpose and capable of providing an aerated, uncompacted medium capable of containing an appropriate volume of soil which can support the tree through maturity. The planting pits must have appropriate engineering solutions installed to ensure that the maturing roots do not present any foreseeable level of risk to property and adjacent hard surfaces. Each hard-surface planting pit specification to be designed to suit the individual tree and its situation.
- 4.200 Tree planting should be considered in masterplanning the site with discussions with the relevant officers from the earliest stage in the design phase.
- 4.201 To improve the integration and practical installation of trees within hard surface areas, developers should adopt a standard practice whereby all engineering drawings include

and identify the location and dimensions of all planting pits within the street scene.

### **Development Principle 9 (b) – Development edges**

- 4.202 Development edges made up of soft landscape proposals and sensitively designed built form have the potential to conserve and enhance the current setting of historic features. Development edges should respond well to the existing tree and woodland cover. Development should be accommodated without resulting in disruption to the local landscape pattern.
- 4.203 The strong landscape structure and general sense of enclosure across the landscape are such that with careful consideration for retention and enhancement of local features they could provide the framework for green infrastructure. Development should give consideration to the setting of listed buildings.

### **Development Requirement 9 (b) – Development edges**

- 4.204 Development on the edge of the site is likely to be more informal and rural in character and this will be reflected in the nature of the green spaces to be provided whereas the formal open space and sports pitches will have a different character. The western edge should be defined by woodland areas and support the existing landscape character of the area.

#### **Hedgerows and Stream corridors**

- 4.205 The alignment of some hedgerows also provides linkages / connections within the site and between the existing town and surrounding countryside for people and wildlife. A block of broadleaved semi-natural woodland west of Home Farm will be retained within a buffer zone of semi-natural habitat linked to the green space along the water courses. Key strategic hedges are identified on the green infrastructure framework (figure 12).
- 4.206 The Bure and its tributaries are important local watercourses. The stream corridors and field boundaries provide further structure and detail to the masterplan having multi-functional

roles in the provision of green space, habitat, biodiversity gain, sustainable drainage, recreation and health, movement and access. They are intrinsic to the site as a whole.

- 4.207 In order to strengthen and enhance the value of the landscape, natural buffer zones will be created. Within these buffers a network of paths and cycleways will provide links between the various areas of the site providing safe and attractive routes to schools, shops and places of work as well as a link to the town and country beyond the natural site boundaries.
- 4.208 The masterplan uses the existing field boundaries and hedgerows to give the layout of the proposed development structure. Hedgerows define the site layout recognising their landscape importance and contribution to biodiversity and habitat. They provide natural corridors throughout the site for wildlife but also for residents as part of the comprehensive cycling and walking network. The Landscape Strategy that supports the masterplan includes the following key landscape elements:
- Green loops as part of a linear park;
  - Retained and reinforced hedgerows with a 20 metre buffer;
  - Riparian zones along the stream corridors;
  - Woodland copses; and
  - Green “fingers” integrating green infrastructure into the development.
- 4.209 The hedgerows would be managed in accordance with a Local Management and Habitats Plan (LMHP) to ensure that they provide habitat suitable for the fauna that were recorded on the site prior to development, in particular, nesting birds (non-farmland specialists), mammals and invertebrates, including the hair streak butterfly and other notable invertebrates. They would also provide wildlife corridors.

### **Development Principle 9 (c) – Hedgerows and Stream corridors**

- 4.210 Retaining and reinforcing the existing hedgerows, trees and woodland on the site is a key development principle. The field

boundaries and hedgerows divide the site into parcels. The hedges are to be largely retained in the masterplan proposals and provide both a constraint and opportunity for development proposals. They are an important feature in the local landscape and form the basis of the site's green infrastructure.

### **Development Requirement 9 (c) – Hedgerows, dark buffers and stream corridors**

- 4.211 Planning applications need to explain green infrastructure in relation to the way that it fits with the housing and commercial developments as these are critical to the success of the scheme. For instance, simple considerations such as whether development fronts onto landscape will make a huge difference in the way the area is perceived and functions.
- 4.212 Hedgerow loss should be minimised and mitigated for and existing hedges retained as part of the landscape framework and breaches of the hedges minimised in designing the layout of development. Retained hedgerows identified on the masterplan will be enriched by semi-natural vegetation in buffer zones, a minimum of 10 metres either side of the hedgerow in accordance with the Green Infrastructure and Landscape Strategy.
- 4.213 The establishment of a minimum 60 metre corridor to the watercourses (30 metres each side of the centre line) shall be provided to create a strong landscape feature in the scheme and secure the opportunity for biodiversity gain from the development. The corridors will also have other purposes and capacity for other functions. For example, they will provide the interface with development and may also provide opportunities for recreational routes and play. As such long term management proposals will be required as part of any planning application.
- 4.214 Connectivity between habitats and ecosystems must be planned and protected. The resilience of the ecosystems in and around North West Bicester depends on

maintaining connectivity for the full range of wildlife and plants. All planning applications should provide plans showing how wildlife corridors of all sorts will be maintained within the site and also connect with neighbouring sites in accordance with the North West Bicester masterplan and Biodiversity Strategy. A plan showing protected dark corridors across the site must be included.

- 4.215 A 20 metre buffer along either side of designated hedgerows recognised for their ecological value will be provided to create a “dark corridor” for nocturnal species such as bats. The hedgerow buffers should be provided in accordance with the Green Infrastructure and Landscape Strategy. The lighting scheme for the development will avoid disturbance to these dark areas.

### **Sports Pitches**



- 4.216 The SPD masterplan includes sports pitches and secondary school playing fields in a central position on the land to the south of the railway, and in proximity of each other where it may be possible to create a sports hub. Also a site for outdoor sport has been identified in a central position on the land to the north of the railway shown on the masterplan as a “Sports Pitch”.

### **Development Principle 9 (d) - Sports pitches**

- 4.217 40% of the total gross site area will comprise green space and this should include sports pitches.

4.218 The council will encourage partnership working to ensure that sufficient quantity and quality of, and convenient access to open space, sport and recreation provision is secured through ensuring that proposals for new development contribute to open space, outdoor sport and recreation provision commensurate to the need generated by the proposals.

### **Development Requirement 9(d) - Sports pitches**

4.219 The layout, design and type of provision requires further consideration to ensure that it provides a sustainable solution in the longer term. The suitable phasing of sports pitches will be secured through Section 106 Agreements and/or conditions as appropriate.

4.220 Any new facilities should be built in accordance with Sport England's design guidance notes, copies of which can be found at: [www.sportengland.org/facilities-planning/tools-guidance/design-and-cost-guidance](http://www.sportengland.org/facilities-planning/tools-guidance/design-and-cost-guidance)

4.221 Sport England along with Public Health England launched 'Active Design Guidance' in October 2015 ([www.sportengland.org/activedesign](http://www.sportengland.org/activedesign)). Sport England believes that being active should be an intrinsic part of everyone's life pattern.

### **Biodiversity**



4.222 Green space is critical to ensuring a net gain in biodiversity. The aim is to ensure greater biodiversity across the site once the development is complete. Bat activity and badger corridors have also been

incorporated into the masterplan landscape framework.

4.223 The draft masterplan proposals shall retain the most valuable habitats and ecological features on the site including protecting the majority of hedgerows and watercourses.

4.224 Policy ESD10 of the Local Plan requires preservation and enhancement of habitats and species.

4.225 On site. The council requires proposals to demonstrate a net gain in local biodiversity and a strategy for conserving and enhancing local biodiversity for planning applications.

### **Development Principle 9 (e) – Biodiversity**

4.226 This development principle refers to the preservation and enhancement of habitats and species on site, particularly protected species and habitats. It also includes the creation and management of new habitats to achieve an overall net gain in biodiversity. The creation of a local nature reserve and linkages with existing Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) habitats is fundamental to this principle. The biodiversity strategy identifies the need for woodlands and ponds to have a minimum buffer width of 10m with a 50m buffer around ponds supporting great crested newts. Other elements of this development principle include:

- ○ Sensitive management of open space provision to secure recreation and health benefits alongside biodiversity gains; and
- ○ A landscape and Habitats Management Plan to be provided to manage habitats on site and to ensure this is integral to wider landscape management.

### **Development Requirement 9 (e) – Biodiversity**

4.227 Biodiversity mitigation and enhancement shall be incorporated into development proposals to provide a net biodiversity gain. As it is not possible to mitigate for the Impact of farmland birds on the site, off site mitigation measures should be provided and all applications within the masterplan area should contribute to the provision of off-site mitigation.

- 4.228 Proposals must demonstrate inclusion of biodiversity gains within the built environment for example through planting, bird, bat and insect boxes and the inclusion of green roofs
- 4.229 A biodiversity strategy which is part of an approved biodiversity strategy for the whole masterplan area, shall accompany all planning applications. It should include an accepted numerical metric to show that a net gain in biodiversity will be achieved.
- 4.230 All new development within the North West Bicester site must be in line with the North West Bicester Masterplan Green Infrastructure and Landscape Strategy, May 2014 which forms part of the masterplan SPD.
- 4.231 A Biodiversity Strategy which builds on a Biodiversity Strategy for the masterplan shall accompany all planning applications.
- 4.232 A detailed Landscape and Habitats Management Plan including a comprehensive ecological monitoring programme will be required for all reserved matters and full planning applications.

## Water



- 4.233 Water neutrality is the concept where the total water used after a new development is no more than the total water used before the new development. This requires meeting the new demand through improving the efficiency of uses of the existing water resources. Water neutrality needs to be assessed within a defined area, normally the water company's water resource zone. Water neutrality is a demanding level of ambition which is only likely to be achieved through a combination of measures. A key component is to make the new development water efficient, through using the most efficient water products and where appropriate looking at water use options.
- 4.234 As Bicester is in an area of serious water stress, with Thames Water (the statutory water undertaker for the area) predicting supply demand deficits, proposals should aspire to water neutrality as achieving development without increasing overall water use across a wider area. Policy Bicester 1 sets out the infrastructure needs for North West Bicester and requires utilities and infrastructure which allow for zero carbon (see Development Principle 2) and water neutrality on the site.
- 4.235 The masterplan is supported by a Water Cycle Strategy (WCS) confirming the proposed development shall incorporate a water efficiency design standard to limit average per capita consumption (PCC) to 105 litres per person per day (l/p/d) in all new homes. For residential properties, at least 25 l/p/d of potable water demand must be replaced with non-potable water to

allow the target of 80 l/p/d to be achieved. Options for providing a non-potable supply to the dwellings on the North West Bicester development include:

- Rainwater harvesting at a property level;
- Rainwater harvesting at a wider neighbourhood level;
- Greywater recycling (GWR) at a property/ neighbourhood level; and
- Local reclamation of treated wastewater.

4.236 Other options may exist and should also be explored. In terms of on-site sewerage network capacity it is suggested in the WCS that gravity sewers are employed to collect the majority of the waste water to avoid the need for a multitude of on-site sewage pumping stations. The design standard shall also require that water recycling technologies are used locally to supplement domestic supplies. It sets out options for the proposed development. It explores the proposed new potable demand from the development and the alternative methods to reduce the demand on the existing Thames Water Utilities network. In this way it seeks to move the development towards water neutrality to avoid the above mentioned supply demand deficits.

4.237 Reducing potable water demand also allows more water to be retained in the environment, which can have benefits for biodiversity, amenity and both the flow (additional dilution) and physiochemical elements of the Water Framework Directive (WFD). Water efficiency measures in residential and non-residential buildings are explored in the WCS and will need to be developed further in the implementation of the masterplan. They include variable flush toilet devices, reduced flow showers and taps and metering retrofits. Local reclamation of surface water may be required to increase water neutrality further. It is unlikely that local groundwater or surface water abstractions would be suitable substitutes to the utility company network.

## Development Principle 10 – Water

4.238 The council requires development proposals to be ambitious in terms of water efficiency across the whole development and demonstrate efficient use and recycling of water to minimise additional water demand from new housing and new non-domestic buildings. In order to meet zero carbon targets for the development, proposals will be required to meet the water efficiency target. The Water Cycle Strategy (WCS) sets out details of how this may be achieved as the design standard for all new development. The development should not make it more difficult for the water company to achieve its demand management strategy and ensure a supply demand surplus is maintained.

## Development Requirement 10 – Water

4.239 Planning applications should be accompanied by a water cycle strategy (WCS) that provides a plan for the necessary water services infrastructure improvements. The WCS should be prepared and developed in partnership with interested parties, including the local planning authority, the Environmental Agency (EA) and the relevant water and sewerage companies through a water cycle study. The strategy should:

- Assess the impact the proposed development will have on the water demand within the framework of the water company's water resource management plans and set out the proposed measures which will limit additional water demand from both new housing and new non-domestic buildings and show how the scheme can address the aim of water neutrality;
- Demonstrate that the development will not result in any deterioration in the status of any surface waters or ground-waters affected by it; and
- Set out proposed measures for improving water quality and avoiding surface water flooding from surface water, groundwater or local water courses.

- Demonstrate that adequate sewerage Infrastructure capacity exists on and/or off the site to serve the development that would not lead to problems for existing users.

4.240 Development proposals shall incorporate:

- Measures in the Water Cycle Strategy for improving water quality and managing surface water, ground water and local watercourses to prevent surface water flooding from those sources and
- Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDS) designed to maximise the opportunities for biodiversity.



### Flood Risk Management

- 4.241 To minimise the impact of new development on flood risk the NPPF requires that the surface water drainage arrangements for any development site are such that volumes and peak flow rates leaving the site post-development are no greater than those under existing conditions. As the North West Bicester site is predominantly greenfield in its predevelopment state, the drainage strategy should be based on the principle of attenuating any additional post development runoff to equivalent greenfield rates.
- 4.242 The aim is to provide a site-wide Sustainable Urban Drainage System (SUDS) as part of the approach to flood risk management and climate change adaptation. In terms of design, the SUDS should not be treated simply as a drainage feature, but integrated into the wider landscape and ecology strategy. SUDS are a fundamental component of the proposed green infrastructure.

### Development Principle 11 - Flood risk management

- 4.243 Development proposals should demonstrate how Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDS) and other appropriate measures will be used to manage surface water, groundwater and local watercourses to prevent surface water flooding.
- 4.244 Natural drainage systems and runoff rates no higher than greenfield rates will be required to reduce the risk of flooding and maintain groundwater levels.
- 4.245 Maintenance of the surface water features on the site is critically important to maintain their long term functionality. Without maintenance in perpetuity, drainage features will not be able to provide the required surface water attenuation and restrict surface water runoff to the Greenfield runoff rate. This will increase the risk of flooding on and offsite.

### Development Requirement 11 - Flood risk management

- 4.246 Planning applications should demonstrate that the proposed development will not increase flood risk on and off the site.
- 4.247 They should demonstrate that the peak discharge rate for all events up to and including the 1 in 100 chance in any year critical storm event, including an appropriate allowance for climate change will not exceed that of the existing site.
- 4.248 As the development includes proposed residential development with an assumed lifetime of 100 years, the surface water drainage strategy should include a 30% allowance for climate change in accordance with guidance in the NPPF.
- 4.249 Planning applications must demonstrate in a surface water drainage strategy that the proposed development will not increase the risk of flooding from surface water on or off the site.
- 4.250 In preparing planning applications, the following guidance should be referred to:
- “Preliminary rainfall runoff management for developments”, DEFRA, Environment Agency providing guidance on the preparation of surface water strategies;



- NPPF National Planning Guidance on Climate Change allowances
- “C635 Designing for exceedance in urban drainage – Good Practice”, CIRIA”
- “Sustainable Drainage Systems – design manual for England and Wales CIRIA C522
- SUDS manual, CIRIA C753

## Waste



4.251 Waste can cause harm to the environment through its treatment and disposal. The Waste Management Plan for England was published by the Department for Environment, Fisheries and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) in 2013 and sets out the Government’s waste policies. The Government’s aim is to reduce the amount of waste produced across the economy whilst promoting economic growth and prosperity.

4.252 In terms of recycling, the EU target is for 50% of waste to be recycled by 2020. Landfill or incineration without energy recovery should be the last resort. In 2012/13 22.6 million tonnes of household waste was generated in England but has been falling on average by 2% per year since 2007. More recently there has been a growth in waste in Oxfordshire which could be up to 2% in 2015.

### Bin Storage in Residential Development

4.253 Cherwell District Council has produced guidance on bin storage in residential developments. The Government’s review of Housing Standards includes changes to guidance on external waste storage to ensure it is properly considered in new housing development.

## Development Principle 12 – Waste

4.254 Planning applications should include a sustainable waste and resources plan (SWRP) covering domestic and commercial waste and setting targets for residual waste, recycling and landfill diversion. A site waste management plan (SWMP) for North West Bicester supports the masterplanning of the site. The implementation of such plans remains best practice despite the Site Waste Management Plans Regulations 2008 being repealed in December 2013.

4.255 Between 2007 and 2014 the Oxfordshire Waste Partnership’s (OWP) increased recycling and composting rates from 33% to 60% in Oxfordshire. In April 2014 OWP was replaced by an informal partnership, “Recycle for Oxfordshire” working to continuously improve waste management services for residents. OWP agreed the Oxfordshire Joint Municipal Waste Management Strategy (OJMWMS) in 2007 which was reviewed and updated in 2013. It sets out plans for dealing with municipal waste up to 2030. The main themes of the strategy are:

- Reduce and reuse - provide advice, services and information to help householders, businesses and the community reduce and reuse materials and avoid waste. Also to set a good example by reducing its own waste.
- Recycling and composting - as a minimum, Oxfordshire will achieve a combined recycling and composting rate for household waste of at least 65% by 2020 and 70% of household waste by 2025.

4.256 The OJMWMS Policy 3 aims to help households and individuals reduce and manage their waste in order to ensure zero waste growth or better of municipal waste per person per annum. Applicants should be aware of this in developing their Sustainable Waste and Resources Plans and consider how they could help achieve the waste target reduction. Bicester already has a good basis for this that could be built on in the existing sustainability and reuse centre at Bicester Green. Proposals should achieve at least 70% reuse and recycling.

## Development Requirement 12 – Waste

- 4.257 Planning applications should include a sustainable waste and resources plan covering both domestic and non-domestic waste which:
- sets targets for residual waste levels and landfill diversion
  - Establishes how all development will be designed so as to facilitate the achievement of the targets
  - Provides evidence that consideration has been given to the use of locally generated waste as a fuel source for CHP generation and
  - Sets out how developers will ensure that no construction, demolition and excavation waste will be sent to landfill.
- 4.258 The Sustainable Waste and Resources Plan (SWRP) should demonstrate that targets for residual waste levels and landfill diversion can be met.
- 4.259 Proposals should incorporate the Cherwell District Council (CDC) Planning and Waste Management Design Advice on waste management in establishing how the development will be designed to facilitate the achievement of the targets set in the SWRP.
- 4.260 The SWRP should also achieve zero waste to landfill from construction, demolition and excavation.

## Community and Governance



- 4.261 The creation of a balanced and mixed community is a fundamental requirement of eco-towns and sustainable development. The development of approaches to community governance and decisions on them will involve Bicester Town Council

## Development Principle 13 – Community and governance

- 4.262 A long term approach is necessary to ensure the new development retains its integrity and is able to manage change in a planned way.
- 4.263 Developers should seek to achieve a seamless approach across the site in terms of community led activities and facilities.
- 4.264 To promote integration with the existing community, planning applications should include:
- Governance proposals appropriate to the scale and complexity of the development and complementing existing demographic arrangements for parish and local governance;
  - Provision of a range of house types and tenures, potentially linked to incentives to local first time buyers and older households;
  - Sensitive allocation and management policies for affordable housing which enable extended families and friendship networks (co-housing) to move together and help create a more diversified tenure mix;
  - Provision of a range of community and leisure facilities which cater not just for

North West Bicester but also give people from the existing community reasons to go there;

- Revenue support for provision of appropriate staffing and early staffing of community facilities;
- Good public transport links between North West Bicester and the wider town.

4.265 Delivering a high quality scheme is only part of creating a successful place. Suitable management of the different elements of the masterplan will be required to ensure facilities are maintained over the long term and to help to build social cohesion.

### Development Requirement 13 - Community and governance

- 4.266 Planning applications should be accompanied by long term governance structures for the development to ensure that:
- Appropriate governance structures are in place to ensure that standards are met and maintained;
  - There is continued community involvement and engagement to develop social capital;
  - Sustainability metrics including those on zero carbon, water, transport and waste are agreed and monitored;
  - Future development continues to meet eco-town standards, and
  - Community assets are maintained.
- 4.267 Planning applications should be accompanied by long term governance structures that complements the existing democratic arrangements (see Appendix II paragraph ET22.1) and seek to achieve a seamless approach across the site in terms of community led activities and facilities.

## Cultural Wellbeing



4.268 The NPPF recognises that cultural wellbeing is part of achieving sustainable development and includes cultural wellbeing within the twelve core planning principles which underpin both plan-making and decision-taking. The NPPF states that the planning system should, 'take account of and support local strategies to improve...cultural wellbeing for all...' The Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) complements the NPPF and provides advice on how to deliver its policies. The PPG states that, 'public art and sculpture can play an important role in making interesting and exciting places that people enjoy using.'

4.269 The implementation of community facilities is linked to the policy objective of creating a culturally vibrant place, combining both artworks and appropriate community facilities which may include theatre/cultural uses. These community facilities would fit, harmoniously, with the objectives for mixed use development set out earlier in this document. The link between objectives and implementation is therefore reinforced and serves to further deliver the NPPF Core Principles on cultural wellbeing.

4.270 Policy Bicester 1 within the adopted Cherwell Local Plan 2011-2031 Part 1 provides the local planning policy context for the North West Bicester site and sets out key site specific design and place shaping principles. These include the provision of public art to enhance the quality of the place, legibility and identity. In terms of the infrastructure needs of the site, the Policy requires community facilities including those for arts and culture.

## Development Principle 14 - cultural wellbeing

4.271 A Cultural Wellbeing Strategy has been prepared that focusses on making North West Bicester a culturally vibrant place through high quality design and community engagement. This includes the provision of public art across the site. Planning applications will be required to demonstrate in a Cultural Wellbeing Strategy how proposals to support cultural wellbeing will be incorporated into detailed development plans. A copy of the North West Bicester Cultural Wellbeing Strategy is included in Appendix V.

## Development Requirement 14 - cultural wellbeing

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4.272 Cultural wellbeing projects should complement and support the vision and aims of the North West Bicester Eco Town development by:

- Exploring the use of sustainable materials – using recycled materials or locally sourced materials to reduce the carbon footprint and inventive ways to offset other resources used;
  - Celebrating nature and the natural environment, by reflecting on natural and environmental issues;
  - Interpreting nature, projects to inform people and raise awareness about nature and its processes, and/or about environmental issues;
  - Encouraging environmentally sustainable behaviour – projects to encourage recycling, using sustainable routes through the development – artwork projects to encourage cycle and walking routes – and help with wayfinding and directing the flow of people through public areas;
  - Encouraging local residents and visitors to think about and become environmentally aware in their everyday living;
  - Create an identity for the development (as the first Eco-Town in the UK), to both the residents and outside world;
- To use projects and provision of community and cultural facilities to assist in the creation of a distinctive, safe, vibrant, cohesive and socially sustainable community; and
  - Conservation and enhancement of the historic environment.

## 5. Design and character areas

5.1 This section relates to the specific design and place shaping principles. The Local Plan Policy Bicester 1 includes key site specific design and place shaping principles. The design of streets, green infrastructure, and public realm should follow these principles as the basis of further work in the preparation and submission of planning applications on the site. They are therefore the starting point for planning applications and should be used in developing proposals in accordance with the spatial framework. The masterplan sets out the land uses across the site and demonstrates the design principles to be used in guiding subsequent planning applications.

5.2 The following design principles should guide the preparation of proposals on the site:

- Sustainability – a key driver in the design of the eco-town and a fundamental principle in achieving a zero carbon development - the layout of the site and individual buildings should reduce the use of resources and carbon dioxide emissions;
- Character – somewhere with a sense of place that responds positively to the area as a whole;
- Integration – within the site but also with the surrounding town and countryside;
- Legibility – a place which is easy to understand and navigate;
- Filtered Permeability – achieving a form of layout which makes for efficient movement for pedestrians, cyclists and public transport provision while accommodating vehicles, and ensuring good connections with its surroundings;
- Townscape – utilising building height, scale and massing, and design detail and
- Landscape and green infrastructure including green space – a place which responds to its landscape setting,

historic landscape and field boundaries incorporates buildings in a quality landscape setting. The Oxfordshire Historic Landscape Characterisation (HLC) should inform each stage of the design process, from setting the site boundaries through to the masterplan and onto the detailed design ideally through an iterative process between masterplanners/designers and those with understanding of the site's past history.

### Design principles

5.3 The following design principles should be incorporated into proposals submitted as planning applications:

### Continuity and enclosure

- Buildings should relate to a common building line that defines the street and public spaces and establishes a clear hierarchy of streets and spaces.
- Development should provide active frontages to all public spaces.
- Private spaces should be clearly defined and enclosed at the rear of buildings.
- Streets and spaces including green infrastructure should be well-designed and demonstrate the use of high quality materials. They should be appropriately detailed with street furniture, lighting, trees and public art. Such details should be comprehensively designed into the public realm to give the proposals an identity and enhance the sense of place.

### Legibility

5.4 Development form should establish a street and/or space hierarchy that is focussed on important routes, landmarks and landscape features so as to enhance existing views and vistas, and create new ones to help people find their way around.

5.5 The design, location and function of buildings, along with the use of materials and

landscape treatment, should reinforce the identity and character of routes and spaces they serve.

- 5.6 The gateways to the site and the local centres should be designed to create a sense of arrival within the development and improve legibility.

### Adaptability

- 5.7 Development and buildings should:

- Ensure flexibility and adaptability of all buildings including provision for homeworking in homes;
- Achieve the principles set out by Lifetime homes and Lifetime neighbourhoods;
- Allow buildings to change use, or serve a different function; and
- Be brought forward with a mind to “future proofing” emerging sustainable technologies and infrastructure

- 5.8 All buildings should be fitted with Automatic Water Suppression Systems.

### Diversity

- 5.9 Development should:

- Provide a mix of compatible uses;
- Create vibrant local centres and communities;
- Allow people to live work and play in the same area;
- Establish a visual variety through a townscape-led approach; and
- Respond to the key conditions and character cues across the site.

### Climate change adaptation

- 5.10 Development should:

- Be designed in response to the latest predictions of future climate change with reference to UKCIP and the North West Bicester specific climate predictions prepared by Oxford Brookes University; and
- Show consideration of topography, water environment and water use, street layout, landscape, building mass and choice of materials to help avoid heat islands, modify

summer peak temperatures and reduce energy load on buildings

- 5.11 Architectural responses across the development should demonstrate consideration of passive solar gain, risks of overheating thermal mass, albedo (materials) etc. whilst still engaging with the street and enhancing the public realm.

### Building Heights

- 5.12 Generally the development proposals will be suburban in scale reflecting the location of the site and the Bicester context with two-storey buildings with pitch roofs up to a height of 12 metres. In the local centres and along the strategic route through the site, taller buildings with up to four storeys (heights up to 20 metres) will be considered in the context of the masterplan to increase density and meet the requirements of occupiers in these locations.

- 5.13 The height of the proposed business park in the south western part of the site should recognise the prominence of the location on the edge of the site and should relate to the residential neighbourhood to the south of Howes Lane. The masterplan sets out the separation between the existing development and proposed commercial buildings.

- 5.14 The realignment of Howes Lane sets back the proposed business park and separates it from the existing housing development to the south. Given the separation, planning applications and design of employment proposals should take account of the existing housing and ensure new buildings have a suitable relationship in terms of height, distancing, separation and landscape schemes.

- 5.15 Planning applications will need to consider heights and how these vary across different site conditions.

### Character and setting

- 5.16 Proposed development should be sensitive to the existing landscape and townscape character whilst creating a unique image for the eco-town. Development proposals should demonstrate a morphology and

urban form that responds to the site's topography, ecology, natural features and landscape character as well as responding to local patterns of development.

- 5.17 Heritage assets and any identified or potential non-designated heritage assets will be retained and their settings respected and any other historic landscape features (such as may be identified by the HLC) also retained and ideally their significance better revealed. Careful thought about the way the farms related to the agricultural land around them may point towards ways in which the retained buildings can be integrated into the new surroundings in a way that retains a degree of historical sense. Public open space could be used to retain the setting of the farm complexes.

### Design and layout

- 5.18 Development should be outward facing, with attractive edges and perimeter blocks; and take advantage of passive overlooking

### Building design and streetscene

- 5.19 Buildings should be designed to enliven the street scene through the creation of street frontages and entrances.
- 5.20 Ground floor windows fronting onto the street should be employed to provide activity, at regular intervals.

### Commercial development

- 5.21 Non-residential buildings should be designed to be BREEAM very good with the capability of meeting BREEAM Excellent on occupation of 50% of the development.
- 5.22 Further parameters including scale and massing, building heights and frontages and maximum floorspace areas will be required to define the nature of commercial development and how it is integrated within the masterplan.
- 5.23 The form and nature of commercial development in the proposed business park should create a gateway with landmark buildings along Howes Lane as a prominent location within the development.
- 5.24 The BREEAM Technical Manual SD5073 - 4.0: 2011 for new construction - non-domestic

buildings, 2011 sets out Building Design Daylighting parameters for all non-residential buildings to achieve BREEAM HEA 1 - Visual Comfort which states:

- All fluorescent and CFL lamps to be fitted with high frequency ballasts
- Relevant building area meets good practice

### Character areas

- 5.25 The natural features of the site combined with the proposed pattern and density of development suggest the site can be broken into distinct zones or character areas: proposed neighbourhoods north of the railway line bisected by watercourses; neighbourhoods bisected by the green network; the employment areas; higher density uses and other town-wide facilities such as a hotel or community facilities.
- 5.26 Within these character areas there are a number of more localised character types as follows:
- Strategic road (the Boulevard);
  - Strong landscape edge;
  - Green space frontage overlooking development set within the green space network;
  - Education and employment zone – secondary school, business and general industrial located within strong landscape structure;
  - Informal residential layout responding to alignment of watercourse and other landscape elements;
  - Semi-formal residential development based on more formal layout of sports pitches/ playing fields, parkland, civic squares and amenity public space.
- 5.27 Character Areas set out in more detail the key components of the neighbourhoods that have been identified and provide an indication of the likely activity that each area will provide. For example, all buildings should be accessed from the street to maximise on-street activity.

5.28 The setting of St Lawrence's Church, Himley Farm Barns and Home Farm are key considerations for any development in this area. This setting is currently defined by underdeveloped agricultural land with associated rural qualities, in turn allowing views from these areas to the Church tower such that built development without adequate buffers would be incongruous. Careful thought about the way the farms related to the agricultural land around them may point towards ways in which the retained buildings can be integrated into the new surroundings in a way that retains a degree of historical sense. Public open space could be used to retain the setting of the farm complexes.



# 6. Delivery

- 6.1 **This section sets out the key requirements relating to the scheme's delivery and the requirements which should be met at the detailed planning application stage and beyond. The aim is to ensure a comprehensive scheme and consistent approaches to quality and delivery.**
- 6.2 The masterplan will be delivered through the preparation, submission and implementation of planning applications. The approach to developer contributions, infrastructure requirements, monitoring and review mechanisms and transition should follow the guidance in this section.
- 6.3 The following components should be taken into account in delivering the vision and when preparing proposals to deliver the masterplan through the submission of planning applications:
- Achievement of zero carbon;
  - The transport, access and movement framework; infrastructure requirements, provision and delivery including highways, education and community facilities;
  - Resource efficiency and low carbon solutions for example energy and water;
  - Sustainable and healthy lifestyles – to reduce the carbon footprint of development by ensuring that households and individuals in the eco-town are able to reduce their carbon footprint to a low level and achieve a more sustainable way of living;
  - Employment opportunities and facilities to support job creation providing a mix of uses and access to job opportunities;
  - The landscape framework provided by the site's existing natural features to provide and enhance green space including multi-use green infrastructure;
  - A high quality design and layout as part of a comprehensive masterplan setting

out the distribution of land uses within an attractive landscape setting; and

- A long term approach to community and governance to ensure that appropriate governance structures are in place to ensure that standards are met, maintained and evolved to meet future needs and complements existing democratic arrangements for local governance (see Appendix II paragraph ET22.1).

## Infrastructure provision

- 6.4 The Infrastructure Delivery Plan in the Cherwell Local Plan identifies infrastructure required to deliver the eco-town proposals. Infrastructure (transport, energy, water, waste and communications but also community infrastructure in education and health) requirements essential to meet the needs of residents and compliant with CIL Regulation 122 include:

- School provision;
- District Energy Network;
- Green infrastructure as part of the 40% green space;
- Local services and facilities;
- Community facilities;
- Railway crossing(s);
- Strategic highway improvements; and
- Sustainable transport provision.

## Outline planning stage

- 6.5 Outline planning applications represent the first stage in the delivery of the masterplan. Outline planning applications can be made with some or all matters reserved for future determination. Guidance on the local requirements for outline planning applications is set out on the council's website [www.cherwell.gov.uk](http://www.cherwell.gov.uk)

## Outline Planning Applications

6.6 Outline planning applications represent the first stage in the delivery of the masterplan. Outline planning applications should be prepared in accordance with the Principles and Requirements set out in this Supplementary Planning Document (prepared in accordance with the PPS1 Supplement Eco-towns July 2009) and North West Bicester Masterplan documents as set out in Principle / Requirement 1.

6.7 Outline planning applications can be made with some or all reserved matters reserved for future determination. Guidance on the local requirements for planning applications is set out on the council's website [www.cherwell.gov.uk](http://www.cherwell.gov.uk).

6.8 Each outline planning application must include:

- Outline Application Forms, landownership certificates and agricultural holding certificate;
- Planning application drawings (for approval and in support);
- Description of development and parameters document;
- Design and Access Statement;
- Landscape Strategy;
- Landscape and Habitats Management Plan;
- Environmental Statement or for subsequent applications a statement identifying where impacts have been previously assessed;
- Sustainability Framework;
- Transport Assessment;
- Framework Travel Plan;
- Energy Strategy;
- Water Cycle Strategy;
- Utilities assessment;
- Planning statement;
- Draft Heads of Terms;
- Statement of Community Involvement;
- Affordable housing statement;
- Economic Strategy;
- Arboricultural report
- Cultural Wellbeing Strategy;
- Monitoring Plan;
- Indicative masterplan in accordance with the North West Bicester masterplan; and
- Information to assess site specific matters.

## Pre-application Consultation

6.9 During the preparation of outline planning applications, applicants should partake in pre-application consultation with statutory consultees, including Cherwell District Council and Oxfordshire County Council. In addition, genuine public consultation should take place. This should include planning for real exercises and best practice from community engagement techniques.

## Consultation and engagement

6.10 Planning applications should include a Statement of Community Involvement to show the genuine engagement of the public in preparing the proposals. This should include planning for real exercises and best practice from community engagement techniques. Previously stakeholder workshops have taken place and these should be developed as the basis of future consultation exercises.

## Planning Performance Agreements

6.11 Planning Performance Agreements will be sought. In order to facilitate effective processing of applications the council will encourage pre-application engagement and the agreement of a Planning Performance Agreement with agreed timescales.

6.12 Planning applications will be required to include the following:

- Environmental statement or for subsequent applications a statement identifying where impacts have previously been assessed
- Description of development, parameter plans and environmental statement
- Supporting information including an illustrative masterplan, Design and Access Statement

- A strategy demonstrating how the proposals will meet the requirement for Zero Carbon buildings across the development
- Draft Heads of Terms setting out the developer contributions (See section on infrastructure delivery)
- Economic Strategy
- Transport Assessment
- Design and Access Statement
- Parameter plans for illustrative purposes only
- Cultural Strategy
- Landscape Strategy
- Biodiversity Strategy
- Green Infrastructure framework plan
- An indicative masterplan in accordance with the Draft masterplan and SPD spatial framework
- Information to address site specific requirements

### Reserved Matters applications

- 6.13 Reserved Matter applications should set out in detail the proposed development in the context of the wider masterplan in order to ensure a comprehensive development and compatibility with adjacent uses. Reserved matters should include the phasing and sequencing of development as set out in the masterplan.
- 6.14 Reserved matters may include:
- Layout
  - Scale
  - Appearance
  - Access and
  - Landscaping
- 6.15 Design and Access Statements and Design Codes should be used to deliver the development principles.

### Planning Obligations and Developer Contributions

- 6.16 Cherwell Local Plan Policy INF1 is the basis for providing new infrastructure and facilities through new development. It is intended to reduce the time taken to negotiate individual planning obligations associated with development proposals.
- 6.17 It is anticipated that the developer contributions through legal agreements will include:
- Provision of affordable housing
  - Contributions to educational facilities
  - Community facilities
  - Sports facilities
  - Management and maintenance of open space
  - A burial ground
  - Governance
  - Sustainable lifestyles requirements and
  - Local employment, training and skills
  - Sustainable transport measures including the provision of bus services, off site highway schemes, pedestrian and cycle routes and
  - Provision of SUDs
- 6.18 This list is not exhaustive and early discussion of requirements is encouraged.

### Draft Heads of Terms

- 6.19 Cherwell District Council continues to prepare evidence base for developer contributions. Applicants should agree the requirements of any section 106 and conditions with the local planning authority and County Council. The requirements of the planning obligations include the provision and/or contributions for the following:
- Community facilities (Libraries - Bicester Library and Library Link in the proposed large community Hall;
  - Changing places toilet; Education - adult learning; social care - day care/resource centre for older persons;

- Health facilities - GPs surgery, neighbourhood police;
- Fire station;
- Early intervention centres;
- Community Halls – including management and maintenance;
- Community Development workers and fund;
- Thames Valley Police - Neighbourhood policing and community safety;
- Skill and training;
- Visitor facilities/ environmental education centre;
- Places of worship;
- Primary schools, Secondary school, Special Education Needs, Extended school, Early years;
- Sports Pitches and associated buffers;
- Sports centre;
- Amenity space (parks, gardens, natural/ semi natural green space, allotments, LAPs, LEAPS and NEAPs);
- Burial ground;
- Biodiversity offset contribution;
- Museum Resource Centre contribution;
- Public art through cultural enrichment;
- Waste collection;
- Affordable Housing;
- Sustainable transport;
- Bus service

### Monitoring and Review

- 6.20 Planning submissions should set out a strategy and programme for monitoring and reviewing the proposals once implemented. This will ensure that the eco-town principles and standards are measured and the performance of the development can be managed effectively to provide feedback and potential improvements to later phases

of the scheme. A monitoring plan should be prepared to support the planning applications.

### Delivery – schools

- 6.21 Development proposals will require:
- School site boundary plans with outline of surrounding roads and housing;
  - Topographical surveys across the school site and adjacent development; and
  - Acoustic survey (existing and anticipated) across the development area should be provided to the local education authority.

### Developer contributions

- 6.22 Developers will be expected to work collaboratively to deliver the infrastructure.

### Engagement

- 6.23 Planning proposals should provide opportunities for the community to engage and participate in their environment, using temporary artist led interventions to assist in achieving high quality design and also as a catalyst for community growth.

# Appendix I: Cherwell Local Plan Policy Bicester 1

**Policy Bicester 1:** North West Bicester Eco-Town

**Development Area:** 390 hectares

**Development Description:** A new zero carbon(i) mixed use development including 6,000 homes will be developed on land identified at North West Bicester.

Planning permission will only be granted for development at North West Bicester in accordance with a comprehensive masterplan for the whole area to be approved by the council as part of a North West Bicester Supplementary Planning Document.

The council will expect the masterplan and applications for planning permission to meet the following requirements:

## Employment

- Land Area – a minimum of 10 ha, comprising business premises focussed at Howes Lane and Middleton Stoney Road, employment space in the local centre hubs and as part of mixed used development.
- Jobs created – At least 3,000 jobs (approximately 1,000 jobs on B use class land on the site) within the plan period.
- Use classes – B1, with limited B2 and B8 uses.
- It is anticipated that the business park at the south east corner of the allocation will generate between 700 and 1,000 jobs in use classes B1, B2 and B8 early in the plan period.
- A Carbon Management Plan shall be produced to support all applications for employment developments.
- An Economic Strategy to be produced to support the planning applications for eco-town proposals demonstrating how access to work will be achieved and to deliver a

minimum of one employment opportunity per new dwelling that is easily reached by walking, cycling and/or public transport.

- Mixed use local centre hubs to include employment (B1(a), A1, A2, A3, A4, A5, C1, D1 and D2 ).
- New non-residential buildings will be BREEAM Very Good with the capability of achieving BREEAM Excellent.

## Housing

- Number of homes – Up to 6,000 (3,293 to be delivered within the plan period)
- Affordable Housing – 30%.
- Layout to achieve Building for Life 12 and Lifetime Homes standards.
- Homes to be constructed to be capable of achieving a minimum of Level 5 of the Code for Sustainable Homes on completion of each phase of development, including being equipped to meet the water consumption requirement of Code Level 5.
- The provision of extra care housing.
- Have real time energy monitoring systems, real time public transport information and Superfast Broadband access, including next generation broadband where possible. Consideration should also be given to digital access to support assisted living and smart energy management systems.

## Infrastructure Needs

- Education – Sufficient secondary, primary and nursery school provision on site to meet projected needs. It is expected that four 2 forms of entry primary schools and one secondary school will be required. There should be a maximum walking distance of 800 metres from homes to the nearest primary school.

- Health – to provide for a 7 GP surgery to the south of the site and a dental surgery
- Burial Ground – to provide a site of a minimum of 4 ha for a burial ground which does not pose risks to water quality (this may contribute to the green infrastructure requirements)
- Green infrastructure – 40% of the total gross site area will comprise green space of which at least half will be publicly accessible and consist of a network of well managed, high quality green/open spaces which are linked to the open countryside. This should include sports pitches, parks and recreation areas, play spaces, allotments, the required burial ground (possibly a woodland cemetery) and SUDS.
- Planning applications shall include a range of types of green space and meet the requirements of Policy BSC11
- Access and Movement – proposals to include appropriate crossings of the railway line to provide access and integration across the North West Bicester site. Changes and improvements to Howes Lane and Lords Lane to facilitate integration of new development with the town.
- Community Facilities – to include facilities for leisure, health, social care, education, retail, arts, culture, library services, indoor and outdoor sport, play and voluntary services. The local centre hubs shall provide for a mix of uses that will include retail, employment, community and residential provision. Education, health care, community and indoor sports facilities will be encouraged to locate in local centres and opportunities for co-location will be welcomed. Provision will be proportionate to the size of the community they serve. Each neighbourhood of approximately 1,000 houses to include provision for community meeting space suitable for a range of community activities including provision for older people and young people. A site of 0.5 ha for a place of worship to be reserved for future use.
- The submission of proposals to support the setting up and operation of a financially viable Local Management Organisation by

the new community to allow locally based long term ownership and management of facilities in perpetuity

- Utilities – Utilities and infrastructure which allow for zero carbon and water neutrality on the site and the consideration of sourcing waste heat from the Ardley energy recovery facility. The approach shall be set out in an Energy Strategy and a Water Cycle Study. The Water Cycle Study shall cover water efficiency and demand management, water quality and how it will be protected and improved, WFD compliance, surface water management to avoid increasing flood risk and water services infrastructure improvement requirements and their delivery, having regard to the Environment Agency's guidance on Water Cycle Studies. Zero Carbon (see PPS definition) water neutral development is sought. Development proposals will demonstrate how these requirements will be met.
- Waste Infrastructure – The provision of facilities to reduce waste to include at least 1 bring site per 1,000 dwellings positioned in accessible locations. Provision for sustainable management of waste both during construction and in occupation shall be provided. A Waste Strategy with targets above national standards and which facilitates waste reduction shall accompany planning applications.

### Monitoring

- Embodied impacts of construction to be monitored, managed and minimised (ET21)
- Sustainability metrics, including those on Zero Carbon, transport, water and waste to be agreed and monitored for learning, good governance and dissemination (ET22).

### Key site specific design and place shaping principles

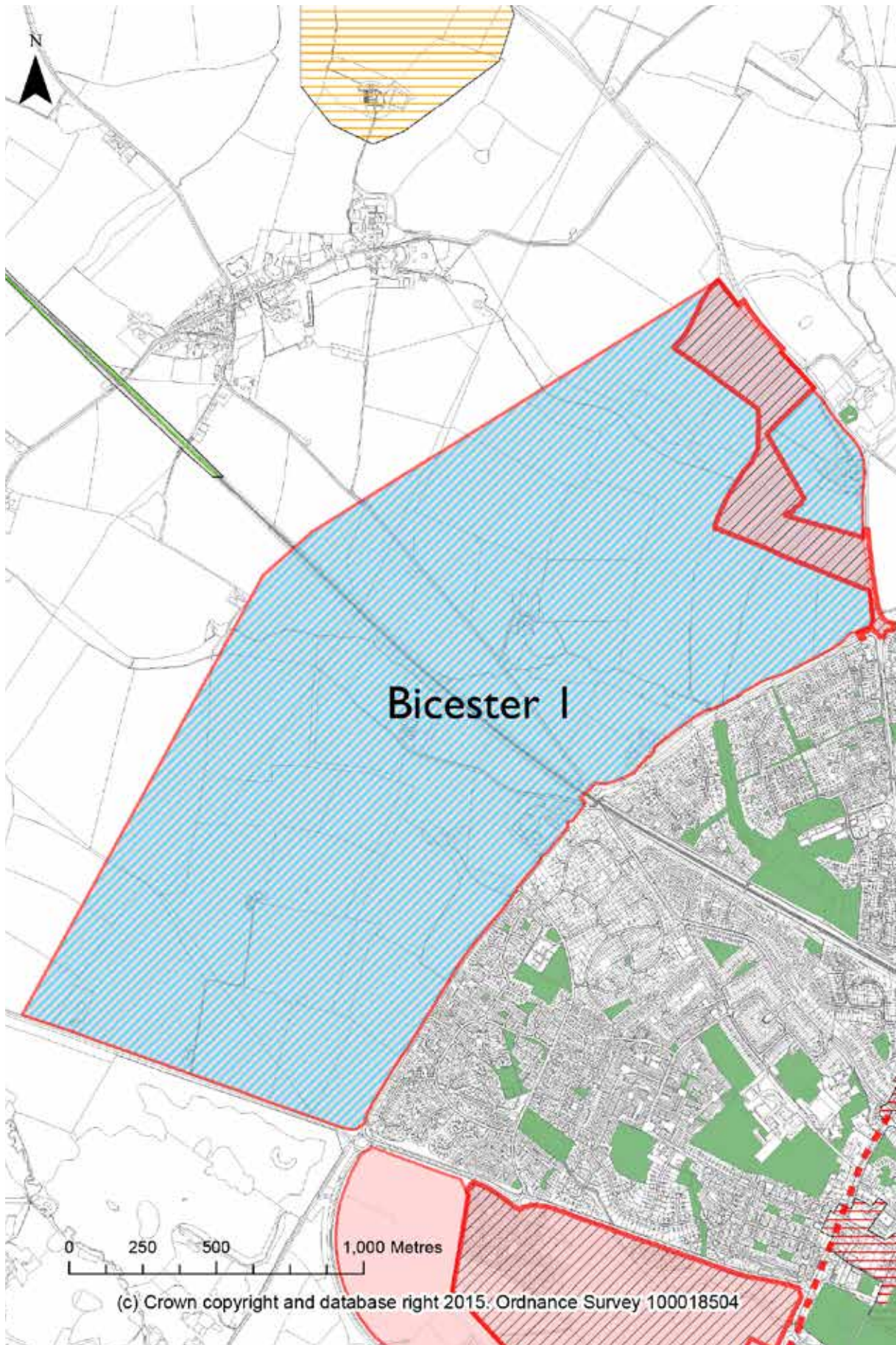
- Proposals should comply with Policy ESD15.
- High quality exemplary development and design standards including zero carbon development, Code Level 5 for dwellings at a minimum and the use of low embodied carbon in construction materials, as well as promoting the use of locally sourced materials.

- All new buildings designed to incorporate best practice on tackling overheating, taking account of the latest UKCIP climate predictions.
- Proposals should enable residents to easily reduce their carbon footprint to a low level and live low carbon lifestyles.
- Layout of development that enables a high degree of integration and connectivity between new and existing communities.
- A layout that maximises the potential for walkable neighbourhoods.
- New footpaths and cycleways should be provided that link with existing networks, the wider urban area and community facilities with a legible hierarchy of routes to encourage sustainable modes of travel.
- A layout which makes provision for and prioritises non-car modes and encourages a modal shift from car use to other forms of travel.
- Infrastructure to support sustainable modes of transport will be required including enhancement of footpath and cyclepath connectivity with the town centre, employment and rail stations. Measures to ensure the integration of the development with the remainder of the town including measures to address movement across Howes Lane and Lords Lane.
- A well designed approach to the urban edge, which relates development at the periphery to its rural setting and affords good access to the countryside, minimising the impact of development when viewed from the surrounding countryside.
- Development that respects the landscape setting and that demonstrates enhancement, restoration or creation of wildlife corridors to achieve a net gain in biodiversity.
- Consideration should be given to maintaining visual separation with outlying settlements. Connections with the wider landscape should be reinforced and opportunities for recreational use of the open countryside identified. Development proposals to be accompanied and influenced by a landscape / visual and heritage impact assessment.
- Careful consideration of open space and structural planting around the site to achieve an overall improvement in the landscape and visual impact of the site.
- No development in areas of flood risk and development set back from watercourses which would provide opportunity for green buffers. Proposals should include a Flood Risk Assessment.
- Maximisation of the sustainable transport connectivity in and around the site.
- Consideration and mitigation of any noise impacts of the railway line.
- Good accessibility to public transport services should be provided for, including the provision of a bus route through the site with buses stopping at the railway stations and at new bus stops on the site.
- Contributions to improvements to the surrounding road networks, including mitigation measures for the local and strategic highway network, consistent with the requirement of the Eco-Towns PPS to reduce reliance on the private car, and to achieve a high level of accessibility to public transport services, improvements to facilities for pedestrians and cyclists and the provision and implementation of a Travel Plan to maximise connectivity with existing development.
- Provision of a Transport Assessment.
- Measures to prevent vehicular traffic adversely affecting surrounding communities.
- Significant green infrastructure provision, including new footpaths and cycleways, enhancing green modal accessibility beyond the site to the town centre and Bicester Village Railway Station, and adjoining developments. Public open space to form a well connected network of green areas suitable for formal and informal recreation.
- Preservation and enhancement of habitats and species on site, particularly protected species and habitats and creation and management of new habitats to achieve an overall net gain in biodiversity including the creation of a local nature reserve and linkages with existing BAP habitats.

- Sensitive management of open space provision to secure recreation and health benefits alongside biodiversity gains.
  - A Landscape and Habitats Management Plan to be provided to manage habitats on site and to ensure this is integral to wider landscape management.
  - Careful design of employment units on site to limit adverse visual impact and ensure compatibility with surrounding development.
  - The provision of public art to enhance the quality of the place, legibility and identity.
  - The retention and respect for important existing buildings and heritage assets with a layout to incorporate these and consideration of Grade II listed buildings outside the site.
  - Take account of the council's Strategic Flood Risk Assessment for the site.
  - Provision of sustainable drainage in accordance with Policy ESD 7: Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS), taking account of the recommendations of the council's Strategic Flood Risk Assessment.
  - Demonstration of climate change mitigation and adaptation measures including exemplary demonstration of compliance with the requirements of policies ESD 1 – 5.
  - An assessment of whether the site contains best and most versatile agricultural land, including a detailed survey where necessary.
  - A soil management plan may be required to be submitted with planning applications.
  - Undertake a staged programme of archaeological investigation.
- \*The definition of zero carbon in eco-towns is that over a year the net carbon dioxide emissions from all energy use within the buildings on the eco-town development as a whole are zero or below.*



**Figure 13:** Policy Bicester 1: North West Bicester Eco-town from Cherwell Local Plan (Part 1)



# Appendix II: Eco town standards

## ET 1 Principles

ET 1.1 Eco-towns should develop unique characteristics by responding to the opportunities and challenges of their location and community aspirations. Eco town proposals should meet the standards as set out in this PPS or any standards in the development plan which are of a higher standard. Developers and local planning authorities will need to consider how they should be applied in practice, recognising the unique nature of each site.

ET 1.2 Developers and local planning authorities developing proposals for eco-towns should take into consideration the Sustainability Appraisal and the Habitats Regulation Assessment undertaken for this PPS. See the provisions set out at ET 16.2. Proposals for new eco-towns should demonstrate evidence of sustainability and deliverability, including infrastructure.

## ET 2 Locational criteria

ET 2.1 Eco-towns should have the functional characteristics of a new settlement; that is to be of sufficient size and have the necessary services to establish their own character and identity and so have the critical mass necessary to be capable of self containment whilst delivering much higher standards of sustainability.

ET 2.2 In identifying suitable locations for eco-towns, consideration should be given to:

- (a) the area for development needed which should be able to make provision for a minimum of 5,000 homes. Planning on this scale allows the development to exploit a number of opportunities and benefits as set out in the Government's objectives for eco-towns. See paragraph 7 of this PPS
- (b) the proximity of the proposed eco-town to a higher order centre(s) where there is clear capacity for public transport links and other sustainable access to that centre
- (c) the proximity of the eco-town to existing and planned employment opportunities

(d) whether the eco-town can play an important role in delivering other planning, development and regeneration objectives, and

(e) the eco-towns locations set out in Annex A.

## ET 3 Regional Spatial Strategies (RSS)

ET 3.1 Eco-towns are one of a range of options regions should consider when determining the overall level and distribution of housing in future RSS reviews (see paragraph 37, PPS3). They will be particularly useful in areas experiencing high levels of need and demand for housing. Regions should consider how eco-towns can help deliver housing within the region and in particular housing market areas.

## ET 4 Local Development Frameworks (LDF)

ET 4.1 Eco-towns are one of a range of options local planning authorities should consider when determining how to meet their current or emerging housing requirements set out in the RSS. Eco-towns should be allocated as a strategic development option within the Core Strategy, but may also be considered as part of an Area Action Plan or Allocations DPD where the Core Strategy has already been adopted.

ET 4.2 Local planning authorities who have within their area an eco-town location in Annex A should consider the eco-town as an option for the distribution of housing. There is no requirement to allocate an eco-town if a better way of meeting future needs exists. The Adopted Plan should set out the most appropriate strategy when considered against reasonable alternatives.

## ET 5 Determining planning applications

ET 5.1 Local planning authorities must determine planning applications in accordance with the Statutory Development Plan<sup>3</sup>, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. This PPS including the list of locations set out

in Annex A will be material considerations that should be given weight in determining planning applications for eco-towns.

ET 5.2 Where the development plan is up-to-date<sup>4</sup> (but has not allocated an eco-town) the Local Planning Authority may refuse the application on the grounds that it had already provided for all the housing that is needed and that the plan was found 'sound' by an Inspector from the Planning Inspectorate. However, there are circumstances where local planning authorities can justify going against the plan, for example, where an emerging RSS indicates that the local planning authority would need to deliver higher levels of growth. Where this is the case, or where the plan is out of date<sup>5</sup>, an application for an eco-town should be considered on its merits, taking into account material considerations.

## ET 6 Monitoring

ET 6.1 Eco-towns will need to be monitored through regional and local monitoring frameworks. Regional Planning Bodies and Local Planning Authorities will be required to monitor the implementation of their spatial policies as set out in the RSS and in development plan documents at the local level. Regional Planning Bodies and Local Planning Authorities should set out in their Annual Monitoring Reports indicators for monitoring the sustainability of eco-towns in their region/district. Arrangements should be put in place for the long-term monitoring of the standards set out for eco-towns as part of the requirements for community governance.

ET 6.2 Where an eco-town is brought forward through a planning application, the monitoring requirements should be undertaken as if the proposal was brought forward through the plan making system, and subject to the monitoring of sustainability and any necessary mitigation.

## ET 7 Zero carbon in eco-towns

ET 7.1 The definition of zero carbon in eco-towns is that over a year the net carbon dioxide emissions from all energy use within the buildings on the eco-town development as a whole are zero or below<sup>6</sup>. The initial planning application and all subsequent planning applications for the development of the eco-

town should demonstrate how this will be achieved.

ET 7.2 The health and social care needs of residents, and the resulting energy demand, should be taken into account when demonstrating how this standard will be met.

ET 7.3 This standard will take effect in accordance with a phased programme to be submitted with the planning application. It excludes embodied carbon<sup>7</sup> and emissions from transport but includes all buildings – not just houses but also commercial and public sector buildings which are built as part of the eco-town development. The calculation of net emissions will take account of:

- (a) emissions associated with the use of locally produced energy;
- (b) emissions associated with production of energy imported from centralized energy networks, taking account of the carbon intensity of those imports as set out in the Government's Standard Assessment Procedure; and
- (c) emissions displaced by exports of locally produced energy to centralized energy networks where that energy is produced from a plant (1) whose primary purpose is to support the needs of the eco town and (2) has a production capacity reasonably related to the overall energy requirement of the eco-town.

ET 7.4 This standard attempts to ensure that energy emissions related to the built environment in eco-towns are zero or below. Standards applicable to individual homes are set out in policy ET 9.

## ET 8 Climate change adaptation

ET 8.1 Eco-towns should be sustainable communities that are resilient to and appropriate for the climate change now accepted as inevitable. They should be planned to minimise future vulnerability in a changing climate, and with both mitigation and adaptation in mind<sup>8</sup>.

### Eco-town standards

ET 8.2 Developments should be designed to take account of the climate they are likely to experience, using, for example, the most

recent climate change scenarios available from the UK Climate Change Impacts Programme. Eco-towns should deliver a high quality local environment and meet the standards on water, flooding, green infrastructure and biodiversity set out in this PPS, taking into account a changing climate for these, as well as incorporating wider best practice on tackling overheating and impacts of a changing climate for the natural and built environment.

## ET 9 Homes

ET 9.1 As well as being zero carbon as part of the whole built environment, homes in eco-towns should:

- (a) achieve Building for Life Silver Standard<sup>9</sup> and Level 4 of the Code for Sustainable Homes<sup>10</sup> at a minimum (unless higher standards are set elsewhere in this Planning Policy Statement)
- (b) meet Lifetime Homes Standards and space standards<sup>11</sup>
- (c) have real time energy monitoring systems; real time public transport information and high speed broadband access, including next generation broadband where possible. Consideration should also be given to the potential use of digital access to support assisted living and smart energy management systems
- (d) provide for at least 30 per cent affordable housing (which includes social rented and intermediate housing)<sup>12</sup>
- (e) demonstrate high levels of energy efficiency in the fabric of the building, having regard to proposals for standards to be incorporated into changes to the Building Regulations between now and 2016 (including the consultation on planned changes for 2010 issued in June 2009 and future announcements on the definition of zero carbon homes), and
- (f) achieve, through a combination of energy efficiency and low and zero carbon energy generation on the site of the housing development and any heat supplied from low and zero carbon heat systems directly connected to the development, carbon reductions (from space heating, ventilation,

hot water and fixed lighting) of at least 70 per cent relative to current Building Regulations (Part L 2006).

ET 9.2 The intent of the energy efficiency and on-site carbon reduction standards is to ensure that, without being too prescriptive as to the means employed to achieve the overall zero carbon standard, reasonable opportunities for energy efficiency and on-site carbon mitigation (including directly connected heat systems) are utilised.

## ET 10 Employment

ET 10.1 It is important to ensure that eco-towns are genuine mixed-use communities and that unsustainable commuter trips are kept to a minimum. An economic strategy should be produced to accompany planning applications for eco-towns that demonstrate how access to work will be achieved. The strategy should also set out facilities to support job creation in the town and as a minimum there should be access to one employment opportunity per new dwelling that is easily reached by walking, cycling and/or public transport.

## ET 11 Transport

ET 11.1 Travel in eco-towns should support people's desire for mobility whilst achieving the goal of low carbon living. The town should be designed so that access to it and through it gives priority to options such as walking, cycling, public transport and other sustainable options, thereby reducing residents' reliance on private cars, including techniques such as filtered permeability. To achieve this, homes should be within ten minutes walk of (a) frequent public transport and (b) neighbourhood services<sup>13</sup>. The provision of services within the eco-town may be co-located to reduce the need for individuals to travel by private car and encourage the efficient use of the sustainable transport options available.

ET 11.2 Planning applications should include travel plans which demonstrate:

- (a) how the town's design will enable at least 50% of trips originating in eco-towns to be made by non-car means, with the potential for this to increase over time to at least 60%
- (b) good design principles, drawing from

Manual for Streets<sup>14</sup>, Building for Life<sup>15</sup>, and community travel planning principles<sup>16</sup>

- (b) how transport choice messages, infrastructure and services will be provided from 'day one' of residential occupation, and be made following discussions with the Primary Care Trust.
- (d) how the carbon impact of transport in the eco-town will be monitored, as part of embedding a long term low-carbon approach to travel within plans for community governance.

ET 11.3 Where an eco-town is close to an existing higher order settlement, planning applications should also demonstrate:

- (a) options for ensuring that key connections around the eco-town do not become congested as a result of the development, for example by extending some aspects of the travel plan beyond the immediate boundaries of the town, and
- (b) significantly more ambitious targets for modal share than the 50% (increasing to 60% over time) mentioned above and for the use of sustainable transport.

ET 11.4 Where eco-town plans intend to incorporate ultra low carbon vehicle options, including electric car schemes to help achieve a sustainable transport system, planning applications should demonstrate that:

- (a) there will be sufficient energy headroom to meet the higher demand for electricity, and
- (b) the scheme will not add so many additional private vehicles to the local road network that these will cause congestion.

ET 11.5 Eco-towns should be designed in a way that supports children walking or cycling to school safely and easily. There should be a maximum walking distance of 800m<sup>17</sup> from homes to the nearest school for children aged under 11, except where this is not a viable option due to natural water features or other physical landscape restrictions.

## ET 12 Healthy lifestyles

ET 12.1 The built and natural environments are an important component in improving the health and wellbeing of people. Well designed

development and good urban planning can also contribute to promoting and supporting healthier and more active living and reduce health inequalities<sup>18</sup>. Eco-towns should be designed and planned to support healthy and sustainable environments and enable residents to make healthy choices easily.

## ET 13 Local services

ET 13.1 Building sustainable communities is about providing facilities which contribute to the wellbeing, enjoyment and health of people. Planning applications should include a good level of provision of services within the eco-town that is proportionate to the size of the development. This should include leisure, health and social care, education, retail, arts and culture, library services, sport and play facilities and community and voluntary sector facilities.

## ET 14 Green infrastructure

ET 14.1 Forty per cent of the eco-town's total area should be allocated to green space, of which at least half should be public and consist of a network of well managed, high quality green/open spaces which are linked to the wider countryside. Planning applications should demonstrate a range of types of green space, for example community forests, wetland areas and public parks. The space should be multifunctional, e.g. accessible for play and recreation, walking or cycling safely, and support wildlife, urban cooling and flood management.

ET 14.2 Particular attention should be given to land to allow the local production of food from community, allotment and/or commercial gardens.

## ET 15 Landscape and historic environment

ET 15.1 Planning applications for eco-towns should demonstrate that they have adequately considered the implications for the local landscape and historic environment. This evidence, in particular that gained from landscape character assessments and historic landscape characterisation should be used to ensure that development complements and enhances the existing landscape character. Furthermore, evidence contained in relevant

Historic Environment Records, should be used to assess the extent, significance and condition of known heritage assets (and the potential for the discovery of unknown heritage assets) and the contribution that they may make to the eco-town and surrounding area. Eco-town proposals should set out measures to conserve and, where appropriate, enhance heritage both assets and their settings through the proposed development.

## ET 16 Biodiversity

ET 16.1 Eco-towns should demonstrate a net gain in local biodiversity and planning permission may not be granted for eco-town proposals which have a significant adverse effect on internationally designated nature conservation sites<sup>19</sup> or Sites of Special Scientific Interest.

ET 16.2 If after completing an appropriate assessment of a plan or project local planning authorities are unable to conclude that there will be no adverse effects on the integrity of any European sites, the plan or project will not be approved, irrespective of conformity with other policies. It is unlikely that proposals for Eco towns will meet the requirements of Article 6(4) of the Habitats Directive. In appropriate cases, local planning authorities may consider the scale and mass of the eco-town necessary to avoid adversely affecting the integrity of European sites. In the event that the authority concludes that it cannot allocate an eco-town of the minimum 5,000 dwellings or otherwise avoid or adequately mitigate any adverse effect, it should make provision up to the closest to the minimum size for which it can be concluded that it does not affect the integrity of any European sites.

ET 16.3 A strategy for conserving and enhancing local biodiversity should be produced to accompany planning applications for eco-towns. This should be based on up-to date information about the biodiversity of the area including proposals for the management of local ecosystems and where appropriate, the restoration of degraded habitats or the creation of replacement habitats. It should set out priority actions in line with the England Biodiversity Strategy and Local Biodiversity Action Plans, including appropriate mitigation

and/or compensation measures, required to minimise adverse effects on individual species and habitats of principal importance and to enhance local biodiversity overall. Developers should seek the advice of Natural England and other relevant statutory advisers when developing their strategies and decision making authorities should also consult those bodies as to the adequacy of such strategies. Delivery bodies should be identified in the strategy and its implementation should proceed in parallel with the development.

## ET 17 Water

ET 17.1 Eco-towns should be ambitious in terms of water efficiency across the whole development, particularly in areas of serious water stress<sup>20</sup>, and should contribute, where existing water quality leaves scope for further improvement, towards improving water quality in their localities.

ET 17.2 Planning applications for all eco-towns should be accompanied by a water cycle strategy that provides a plan for the necessary water services infrastructure improvements. The water cycle strategy should have been developed in partnership with interested parties, including the local planning authority, the Environment Agency<sup>21</sup>, and the relevant water and sewerage companies through a water cycle study. The strategy should:

- (a) assess the impact that the proposed development will have on water demand within the framework of the water companies' water resource management plans and set out the proposed measures which will limit additional water demand from both new housing and new non-domestic buildings
- (b) demonstrate that the development will not result in a deterioration in the status<sup>22</sup> of any surface waters or ground-waters affected by the eco-town; and
- (c) set out proposed measures for improving water quality and avoiding surface water flooding from surface water, groundwater and local watercourses.

ET 17.3 Eco-towns should:

- (a) incorporate measures in the water cycle strategy for improving water quality and managing surface water, groundwater and local watercourses to prevent surface water flooding from those sources; and
- (b) incorporate sustainable drainage systems (SUDS) and, except where this is not feasible, as identified within a relevant Surface Water Management Plan<sup>23</sup>, avoid connection of surface water run-off into sewers.

ET 17.4 Planning applications for all eco-towns should include a strategy for the long term maintenance, management and adoption of the SUDS.

ET 17.5 Eco-towns in areas of serious water stress should aspire to water neutrality, i.e. achieving development without increasing overall water use across a wider area and this is further explained in Annex B of this PPS. In particular, the Water Cycle Strategy<sup>24</sup> should set out how:

- (a) the development would be designed and delivered to limit the impact of the new development on water use, and any plans for additional measures, e.g. within the existing building stock of the wider designated area, that would contribute towards water neutrality
- (b) new homes will be equipped to meet the water consumption requirement of Level 5 of the Code for Sustainable Homes; and
- (c) new non-domestic buildings will be equipped to meet similar high standards of water efficiency with respect to their domestic water use.

## ET 18 Flood risk management

ET 18.1 The location, layout and construction of eco-towns should reduce and avoid flood risk wherever practicable. Eco-towns should not increase the risk of flooding elsewhere and should use opportunities to address and reduce existing flooding problems.

ET 18.2 There is a strong expectation that all of the built-up areas of an eco-town (including housing, other public buildings and infrastructure) will be fully within Flood Zone

1 – the lowest risk<sup>25</sup>. Flood Zone 2 (medium risk) should, as far as possible, be used for open spaces and informal recreational areas that can serve as multi-functional spaces, for example, those used for flood storage. There should be no built-up development in Flood Zone 3, with the exception of water-compatible development and, where absolutely necessary, essential infrastructure as defined in Table D.2 of PPS25: Development and Flood Risk.

## ET 19 Waste

ET 19.1 Eco-town planning applications should include a sustainable waste and resources plan, covering both domestic and non-domestic waste<sup>26</sup>, which:

- (a) sets targets for residual waste levels, recycling levels and landfill diversion, all of which should be substantially more ambitious than the 2020 national Waste Strategy targets<sup>27</sup>; it should be demonstrated how these targets will be achieved, monitored and maintained
- (b) establishes how all development will be designed so as to facilitate the achievement of these targets, including the provision of waste storage arrangements which allow for the separate collection of each of the seven priority waste materials as identified in the Waste Strategy for England 2007
- (c) provides evidence that consideration has been given to the use of locally generated waste as a fuel source for combined heat and power (CHP) generation for the eco-town, and
- (d) sets out how developers will ensure that no construction, demolition and excavation waste is sent to landfill, except for those types of waste where landfill is the least environmentally damaging option.

## ET 20 Masterplanning

ET 20.1 All eco-town planning applications should include an overall masterplan and supporting documentation to demonstrate how the eco-town standards set out above will be achieved and it is vital to the long-term success of eco-towns that the standards are sustained. local authorities should consider the use of design codes<sup>28</sup> to facilitate efficient delivery

of high quality development. In developing the masterplan, there should be a high level of engagement and consultation with prospective and neighbouring communities.

ET 20.2 There should be a presumption in favour of the original; that is the first permitted masterplan. Any subsequent planning applications that would materially alter and negatively impact on the integrity of the original master-plan should be refused consent.

- Residual waste reduction per person (amount left after reuse, recycling and composting) – from 370 kg in 2005 to 225 kg in 2020
- Household re-use, recycling and composting – from 27% in 2005 to 50% in 2020
- Residual waste recovery (recycling, composting and energy recovery) from 38% in 2005 to 75% in 2020.

## ET 21 Transition

ET 21.1 To support the transition process, planning applications should set out:

(a) the detailed timetable of delivery of neighbourhoods, employment and community facilities and services – such as public transport, schools, health and social care services, community centres, public spaces, parks and green spaces including biodiversity etc.

(b) plans for operational delivery of priority core services to underpin the low level of carbon emissions, such as public transport infrastructure and services, for when the first residents move in

(c) progress in and plans for working with Primary Care Trusts and local authorities to address the provision of health and social care

(d) how developers will support the initial formation and growth of communities, through investment in community development and third-sector support, which enhance well-being and provide social structures through which issues can be addressed

(e) how developers will provide information and resources to encourage environmentally responsible behaviour, especially as new residents move in

(f) the specific metrics which will be collected and summarised annually to monitor, support

and evaluate progress in low carbon living, including those on zero carbon, transport and waste

(g) a governance transition plan from developer to community, and

(h) how carbon emissions resulting from the construction of the development will be limited, managed and monitored.

## ET 22 Community and governance

ET 22.1 A long term approach is necessary to ensure a new town retains its integrity as an eco-town, and is able to manage change in a planned way. Planning applications should be accompanied by long term governance structures for the development to ensure that:

(a) appropriate governance structures are in place to ensure that standards are met, maintained and evolved to meet future needs

(b) there is continued community involvement and engagement, to develop social capital

(c) sustainability metrics, including those on zero carbon, transport, water and waste are agreed and monitored

(d) future development continues to meet the eco-town standards, and

(e) community assets are maintained.

ET 22.2 The governance proposals should be appropriate to the scale and complexity of the development, and should complement existing democratic arrangements for parish and local governance. They should set out the proposed financial, management and legal structures (including arrangements for the transfer of land, buildings or endowment funds to resident-led community organisations for community use and development, including cultural, worship and income-generating purposes). Where appropriate, proposals for establishing new parish arrangements should be considered as part of the longer term governance arrangements for the eco-town. Governance structures will need to be designed so that they can reflect the composition and unique needs of the local community, so that they have potential to bring different groups together to resolve any differences and avoid tensions, and to create a sense of belonging for residents.



<sup>3</sup> The development plan includes the Regional Spatial Strategy and Adopted Development Plan Documents (or any saved policies pursuant to section 38 and schedule 8 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004). Where there is a conflict between these documents, the most recent document takes precedence.

<sup>4</sup> An up-to-date plan is one that complies with PPS3 and the relevant RSS. For example, this means that 5 years of deliverable land has been allocated and a further 10 years of broad locations has been identified.

<sup>5</sup> An out-of-date plan is one that does not comply with PPS3 and the relevant RSS. For example it does not allocate enough land to meet RSS housing numbers.

<sup>6</sup> This definition of zero carbon applies solely in the context of eco-towns, and applies to the whole development rather than to individual buildings.

<sup>7</sup> i.e. carbon emissions resulting from the construction process – see ET19.1.

<sup>8</sup> In line with Planning Policy Statement: Planning and Climate Change (supplement to PPS 1) and supporting practice guidance.

<sup>9</sup> Building for Life – [www.buildingforlife.org/](http://www.buildingforlife.org/)

<sup>10</sup> Code Level 4 contains within it standards to be achieved for: household waste recycling, construction waste, composting facilities, water efficiency measures, surface water management, use of materials, energy & CO<sub>2</sub>, pollution, health & wellbeing, ecology & ongoing management of the development.

<sup>11</sup> Space standards refer to the Space Standards published by English Partnerships which are now encapsulated in the HCA's

### **Design Quality Standards.**

<sup>12</sup> See PPS3 for definition and policy approach.

<sup>13</sup> Specific proposals for the location of health and social care services should reflect the particular local circumstances and

<sup>14</sup> Manual for Streets – Department of Transport – <http://www.dft.gov.uk/pgr/sustainable/manforstreets/>

<sup>15</sup> Building for Life – <http://www.buildingforlife.org/>

<sup>16</sup> See Building Sustainable Transport into New Developments (DfT 2008) and Good Practice Guidelines: Delivering Travel Plans through the Planning Process (DfT/CLG 2009)

<sup>17</sup> The distance should be measured by the shortest route along which a child may walk in reasonable safety.

<sup>18</sup> See also – Promoting and creating built or natural environments that encourage and support physical activity. – National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence – Nice Public Health Guidance 8

<sup>19</sup> These sites, which in Great Britain, are also referred to as European sites consist of Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) and European Offshore Marine Sites (EOMS) designated under the EC Habitats Directive and Special Protection Areas (SPAs) classified under the Birds Directive. The Government expects public authorities to treat all Ramsar sites as if they are fully designated European Sites, for the purpose of considering development proposals that may affect them.

<sup>20</sup> As designated by the Water Industry (Prescribed Conditions) Amendment Regulations 2007 (S.I. 2007/2457) – map to illustrate extent of water stress can be obtained from the Environment Agency.

<sup>21</sup> See also Environment Agency guidance (January 09) on water cycle studies <http://publications.environment-agency.gov.uk/pdf/GEH00109BPFF-e-e.pdf>

<sup>22</sup> Information on status can be obtained from the Environment Agency – in the case of water bodies, this information will be reported in the River Basin Management Plan.

<sup>23</sup> All eco-towns must be covered by a Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA), as defined in PPS25, Development and Flood Risk, and the PPS25 Practice Guide. A Surface Water Management Plan for the eco-town should form part of the SFRA.

<sup>24</sup> Wider area to be determined by water cycle study normally by reference to the water company water resource zone in which the development is to be located

<sup>25</sup> Flood Zones as described in PPS25, Development and Flood Risk

<sup>26</sup> This standard does not apply to health and social care services' medium and high risk waste, such as clinical and hazardous waste; these are covered by national regulations.

<sup>27</sup> The Waste Strategy 2007 proposes national targets for waste for 2020 as follows:

- Residual waste reduction per person ( amount left after, reuse, recycling and composting) from 370kg in 2005 to 225kg in 2020
- Household re-use, recycling and composting - from 27% in 2005 to 50% in 2020
- Residual waste recovery (recycling, composting and energy recovery) from 38% in 2005 to 75% in 2020

<sup>28</sup> Preparing Design Codes: A Practice Manual; DCLG/CABE (2006).

# Appendix III: Schedule of documents supporting the North West Bicester SPD

## **Masterplan Vision and Objectives**

**Masterplan Framework (Drawing No. BIMP6  
01 Rev B)**

**Green Infrastructure and Landscape  
Strategy**

**Economic Strategy and Baseline**

**Energy Strategy**

**Water Cycle Study**

**Flood Risk Assessment**

**Residential Strategy**

**Surface Water Drainage Strategy**

**Statement of Community Involvement**

**Strategic Environmental Report**

**Social and Community Infrastructure  
Strategy**

**Community Involvement and Governance**

Copies of the above documents can be found  
at: [www.cherwell.gov.uk](http://www.cherwell.gov.uk)

# Appendix IV: Design principles for primary and secondary school sites

## Primary School sites.

No dead end roads should be situated adjacent to schools and the road layout should allow for circular routes to prevent the need to reverse in the road.

To encourage sustainable travel initiatives, schools should be accessible from at least two sides of the school site. See the “Typical Example” at the end of the Educational Requirements doc.

Ideally there will be 3 vehicular entrances located strategically around the perimeter

Noise generation around school sites should be minimal. The noise level on the boundary of the school playing field should not exceed 50 dB LAeq, 30 min

Sites should be generally rectangular with the minimum site frontage being 110m. This may need to be increased, as might the site area, if the site is irregular in shape.

The design of school sites is bespoke such that the location of the buildings or proximity of buildings to the boundary cannot be unreasonably constrained.

Hedgerows/ditches across sites should be avoided as they have the potential to compromise the economical layout of the school site, restrict supervision, restrict long term site flexibility etc. Again, site area may need to be increased.

All existing buildings, foundations and underground obstructions are to be removed

No services are to cross the site and for overhead high voltage power lines [i.e. greater than 1000V they are not to be within 200 metres of any school site.

School sites should be as level as possible to limit the need for abnormal cost.

## Secondary school sites

No dead end roads should be situated adjacent to schools and the road layout should allow for circular routes to prevent the need to reverse in the road.

To encourage sustainable travel initiatives, schools should be accessible from at least two sides of the school site. See the “Typical Example” at the end of the Educational Requirements doc.

Ideally there will be up to 6 vehicular entrances located strategically around the perimeter.

The road layout and the school site should allow for entrances that can facilitate an on-site coach drop off area. This will need to be strategically situated to enable the areas to double up for other functions once the school day commences. So it cannot be situated at the front of the school. NB this facility will not be used for parent drop off

Noise generation around school sites should be minimal. The noise level on the boundary of the school playing field should not exceed 50 dB LAeq, 30 min

Sites should be generally rectangular with the minimum site frontage being 110m. This may need to be increased, as might the site area, if the site is irregular in shape.

The design of school sites is bespoke such that the location of the buildings or proximity of buildings to the boundary cannot be unreasonably constrained.

Hedgerows/ditches across sites should be avoided as they have the potential to compromise the economical layout of the school site, restrict supervision, restrict long term site flexibility etc. Again, site area may need to be increased.

All existing buildings, foundations and underground obstructions are to be removed

No services are to cross the site and for overhead high voltage power lines [i.e. greater than 1000V they are not to be within 200 metres of any school site.

School sites should be as level as possible to limit the need for abnormal cost.

# Appendix V: The North West Bicester Cultural Wellbeing Strategy

## Planning Policy Context:

### National Planning Policy

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) recognises that cultural wellbeing is part of achieving sustainable development and includes cultural wellbeing within the twelve core planning principles which underpin both plan-making and decision-taking. The NPPF states that the planning system should:

- ‘take account of and support local strategies to improve...cultural wellbeing for all...’

The Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) complements the NPPF and provides advice on how to deliver its policies. The PPG states that:

- ‘Public art and sculpture can play an important role in making interesting and exciting places that people enjoy using.’

### Local Planning Policy

#### The adopted Cherwell Local Plan 2011-2031 Part 1

Policy Bicester 1 which provides the local planning policy context for the North West Bicester site sets out key site specific design and place shaping principles for the site. These include:

“The provision of public art to enhance the quality of the place, legibility and identity”.

In terms of the infrastructure needs of the site, the Policy requires community facilities including those for arts and culture.

#### The Approach:

Cherwell District Council (CDC) will require all outline and full applications on the North West Bicester site to demonstrate how proposals to support cultural wellbeing will be incorporated into detailed development plans.

This Strategy sets out what applications should include by way of such proposals and how this

will be secured by CDC through the planning process.

This Strategy’s focus is on making North West Bicester a culturally vibrant place through high quality design and community engagement. This includes the provision of public art across the site.

As such cultural wellbeing initiatives should cover 2 main areas of activity and focus:

- 1) Activities where artists positively influence physical form and function to secure high quality design - i.e. projects that have a physical, permanent outcome integrated into form, function, style or content of a place, space or building. These could range from projects where an artist has participated in the design or masterplanning of buildings, townscapes, or landscapes, to the design and making of individual physical elements within them.
- 2) Activities where artists engage with the emerging community - i.e. potentially a programme of projects that could range from creative consultation to festivals, ephemeral structures, film, web, recording the oral history of the emerging new community or other virtual projects that promote a clear sense of identity to those within the settlement and external to it, to regular activities like community choirs etc.

#### Objectives:

Cultural wellbeing projects should complement and support the vision and aims of the North West Bicester Eco Town development by:

- Exploring the use of sustainable materials – using recycled materials or locally sourced materials to reduce the carbon footprint and inventive ways to offset other resources used;
- Celebrating nature and the natural environment, by reflecting on natural and environmental issues; interpreting nature,

projects to inform people and raise awareness about nature and its processes, and/or about environmental issues;

- Encouraging environmentally friendly behaviour – artwork as bins to encourage recycling, using sustainable routes through the development – artwork to encourage cycle and walking routes – and help with wayfinding and directing the flow of people through public areas;
- Encouraging local residents and visitors to think about and become environmentally aware in their everyday living;
- Create an identity for the development (as the first eco town in the UK), to both the residents and outside world;
- To use projects to assist in the creation of a distinctive, safe, vibrant, cohesive and socially sustainable community.

CDC is seeking developers to provide opportunities for the community to engage and participate in their environment, using temporary artist led interventions to assist in achieving high quality design and also as a catalyst for community growth.

### **Implementation:**

In general terms, CDC will require each outline or full planning application on the site to include a Cultural Wellbeing Statement covering the area coterminous to that of the application. Upon approval by CDC, the development and implementation of the projects described within the Statement will be secured within the application's S106 agreement.

A Cultural Wellbeing Statement should be prepared and implemented by a public art consultant/curator or artist and should contain detailed proposals to support the cultural enrichment of the site. Ideally, a Statement should include a mixture of projects where cultural elements are integrated into the form and function of the site to achieve high quality, distinctive design and projects where the focus is on community engagement - of course some projects will include both elements. A Statement should set out a clear route to how its proposals can be implemented throughout the site, and CDC will expect to see realistic

and achievable proposals that can be funded as a necessary part of the site development costs. However in the case of particularly ambitious and / or innovative ideas being put forward, some funding could come from private sponsorship and some from public arts funding streams. CDC will be happy to support any necessary bids and help seek out funding sources where they consider proposals are particularly innovative.

### **Further advice:**

For further information and advice on the Cultural Wellbeing Strategy and the development and implementation of a Cultural Wellbeing Statement, please contact Nicola Riley (Shared Interim Community Partnerships and Recreation Manager, Cherwell District Council) as follows:

Nicola.Riley@cherwell-dc.gov.uk  
Direct Line: 01295 221724







**Eco Bicester**  
be part of it

The information in this document can be made available in other languages, large print braille, audio tape or electronic format on request. Please contact 01295 227001

Jeżeli chcieliby Państwo uzyskać informacje w innym języku lub w innym formacie, prosimy dać nam znać. 01295 227001

ਜੇ ਇਹ ਜਾਣਕਾਰੀ ਤੁਹਾਨੂੰ ਕਿਸੇ ਹੋਰ ਭਾਸ਼ਾ ਵਿਚ ਜਾਂ ਕਿਸੇ ਹੋਰ ਰੂਪ ਵਿਚ ਚਾਹੀਦੀ, ਤਾਂ ਇਹ ਸਾਥੋਂ ਮੰਗ ਲਓ। 01295 227001

如欲索取以另一語文印製或另一格式製作的資料，請與我們聯絡。01295 227001

اگر آپ کو معلومات کسی دیگر زبان یا دیگر شکل میں درکار ہوں تو براے مہربانی ہم سے پوچھئے۔  
01295 227001



**APPENDIX 3**  
**TABLE OF PLANS AND DOCUMENTS SUBMITTED**

## SCHEDULE 1: APPLICATION DRAWINGS AND DOCUMENTS

### Documents Submitted for Approval:

Title
Outline application forms, landownership certificates/agricultural holding certificate, and CIL form 1
Planning Application Drawings (see separate schedule below)
Development Parameters Schedule and Plans

### Drawings Submitted for Approval:

Drawing Number	Title
Drawing Ref. 1192-001 Rev.I	Site Location Plan
Drawing Ref. 1192-003C Rev.H	Maximum Building Heights and Footprint
Drawing Ref. 1192-003A Rev. H	Multi-Functional Green Space
Drawing Ref. 1192-003D Rev.H	Access and Movement
Drawing ref. 4600-1100-T-009 Rev.A	Site Accesses A-C
Drawing ref. 4600-1100-T-010 Rev.A	Site Access D
Drawing ref. 4600-1100-T-011 Rev.A	Site Access E
Drawing ref. 4600-1100-T-016 Rev.A	Potential B4100/Charlotte Avenue Traffic Signals

## SCHEDULE 2: DRAWINGS AND DOCUMENTS SUBMITTED IN SUPPORT OF THE APPLICATION

### Drawings Submitted in Support:

Drawing Number	Title
Drawing Ref. 1192-SK004 Rev.C	Illustrative Masterplan

### Documents Submitted in Support<sup>1</sup>:

Title
Design and Access Statement (DAS)
Landscape Strategy (covered within the DAS)
Environmental Statement – Non-Technical Summary
Environmental Statement (inc. statement of conformity, alternatives, and cumulative effects) and covering: transport, air quality, noise and vibration, landscape and visual appraisal, ecological and biodiversity assessment, built heritage, human health, flood risk and drainage, and climate change
Environmental Statement Technical Appendices
Contamination and Ground Conditions Statement
Sustainability Framework (covered within the DAS)
Energy Strategy and Addendum
Water Cycle Strategy
Utilities Assessment
Planning Statement (Including Draft Heads of Terms)
Statement of Community Involvement
Affordable Housing Statement
Arboriculture Survey
Health Impact Assessment
Cultural Wellbeing Strategy (covered within the DAS)
Monitoring Plan (covered within the EIA)

<sup>1</sup> It should be noted that the Viability Assessment will be discussed with CDC first before the initial appraisal is provided to CDC for full review. It is also worth noting that a Landscape and Habitats Management Plan is being prepared for discussion with CDC and other relevant consultees, and this will be shared as soon as it is available

**APPENDIX 4**  
**APPLICATION REF. 20/03150/PREAPP – RESPONSE FROM CDC,**  
**DATED 2<sup>ND</sup> FEBRUARY 2021**

# Planning and Development

David Peckford, Assistant Director – Planning and Development



## Cherwell

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Please ask for: **Caroline Ford**

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Your Ref:

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02 February 2021

Dear Hannah

## TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1990

**Application No.:** 20/03150/PREAPP  
**Applicant's Name:** Firethorn Developments Limited  
**Proposal:** Residential development  
**Location:** Land at North West Bicester  
Home Farm, Lower Farm and SGR2  
Caversfield  
**Parish(es):** Bicester

Thank you for your pre-application submission requesting advice for a residential led scheme to the North West of Bicester. I have now had the opportunity to consider the proposed information submitted following our pre-application meeting held on the 13 November 2020 (as well as the separate Transport and Landscape/ Ecology meetings) and write to provide you with the Council's response.

The main issues relating to your enquiry are:

- Principle of the development
- Landscape
- Design
- Transport
- Drainage
- Heritage
- Eco Town Standards
- Planning Obligations
- Other site constraints

### Principle of the development

The application site relates to land included within the site allocated by Policy Bicester 1 of the Cherwell Local Plan Part 1 2011-2031 (CLP Part 1 2011-2031). Policy Bicester 1 allocates a 390ha site to the

North West of Bicester for a new zero carbon mixed use development including 6000 homes. The Policy is comprehensive in its requirements and sets those out under broad headings relating to employment, housing, infrastructure needs, monitoring and then key site-specific design and place shaping principles.

The Policy sets out that planning permission will only be granted for development at North West Bicester in accordance with a comprehensive masterplan for the whole area to be approved by the Council as part of a North West Bicester Supplementary Planning Document. In February 2016, the Council adopted an SPD for NW Bicester, which includes a Masterplan for the site and provides further detail relating to the key policy requirements including the standards required at the site. These standards and policy requirements are how the site will be assessed to ensure it meets the Eco Town standards, which were first set out in the supplement to PPS1: Eco Towns where the site was first identified for an Eco Town. The aim for eco towns is to be exemplars in good practice and provide a showcase for sustainable living.

The CLP Part 1 2011-2031 includes a raft of other relevant policy which will be referred to as necessary through this letter.

Your pre-app seeks advice on a residential led scheme on land at the north of the site on broadly two parcels of land to the east and west of Elmsbrook – the Exemplar phase at NW Bicester. The broad distribution of residential development complies with the Masterplan in terms of land uses although it is noted that the extent of residential development on the eastern parcel extends beyond that identified on the Masterplan. Notwithstanding this last point, which I will discuss below in terms of overall impact, my view is that the principle of the development as identified in terms of land uses is acceptable and can be concluded to accord with the Masterplan and Policy Bicester 1.

It is however necessary to consider the impact of the development and you have posed a number of specific questions that advice is sought on. I will now deal with those matters.

#### Content of the pre-application document

I have reviewed the content of the pre-application document and I am generally supportive of the content and consider it contains the necessary information. I am pleased to see the Development Principles from the SPD identified and each will need to be referred to and compliance demonstrated against. I do have the following broad points at this stage:

- The density of the site as proposed will need to be understood. I have compared the information submitted for Application 1, which suggested a density of 20-30dph on the most western parcel and 30-40dph on the eastern parcels, which, when compared to what I believe is the residential hectareage, would have given a maximum of approximately 330 dwellings (14/01384/OUT). 75 dwellings were proposed on the Home Farm site (your eastern parcel – 18/00484/OUT) giving a total of just over 400 dwellings. Your proposal for up to 550 dwellings will create a more dense proposal on this land and this will need careful consideration taking into account the site constraints.
- In respect to the above, the two key areas that I have some concern relates to the Home Farm eastern parcel and the most western parcel. Whilst I am not averse to this matter being looked at and it may be demonstrated that these areas can be handled acceptably, further consideration should be given to these areas.
- With respect to the western parcel (rural edge), the information contained within the previous outline application that covered this area identified examples of how this edge could be dealt with – with housing set back from the landscape in this area and with a more informal building line that would give a soft edge to the landscape.
- With respect to the Home Farm eastern parcel, the Masterplan identifies a smaller built form area in this location, with a larger green buffer. The SPD identifies the setting of St Lawrence's Church and Home Farm as being currently defined by underdeveloped agricultural land with associated rural qualities. It identifies that built development in this area without adequate buffers would be incongruous in terms of setting. I am concerned regarding this development parcel and the buffers that remain and the impact upon the church. Your submission should adequately assess this point.
- Reference should also be made to the Cherwell Residential Design Guide SPD (July 2018).
- Building heights at 12m across the site should, in my view be defined further – for example, I would expect that there would be parts of the site where building heights should be lower, for example on the western edge against the rural edge and on the Home Farm parcel with reference to the setting of the listed buildings. Equally, heights increased in some key areas, may also be acceptable but this will need careful consideration as this site is more peripheral and does not include key strategic routes or service provision where increased heights would normally be seen.

- On page 54, where the existing landscape features with buffers are shown, it appears that the hedgerow which runs partway between the middle of the largest block (continuing the hedgerow that separates Phases 3 and 4 on Elmsbrook to the south) is not identified. This should be shown. The retention of trees and hedgerows and buffers provided to them is a key principle of the Masterplan as they are an important feature in the local landscape and form the basis of the sites green infrastructure.
- Development Principle 14 is referred to on page 56 with reference to historic significance. This is important and is a site constraint needing consideration but please also refer to Appendix 5 of the NW Bicester SPD for further guidance on the requirements around Cultural Wellbeing. The aim is that the development will be a culturally vibrant place, that includes the provision of public art and other activities to engage the community and support the vision and aims of the NW Bicester development.
- On page 57, the design of streets as social spaces is identified. I would suggest that further information is provided to understand what this means for assessment. The SPD encourages Community Streets.
- I support the three character areas you have identified as this relates well to the areas of the site.
- I think some further studies of these character areas and particular parts of the site would be beneficial to be added. For example, additional detail on the character of the western rural edge, the character of the street that provides the view to the church and the edge of the eastern parcel as well as the relationship between the residential development to the woodland and SUDs areas.
- Page 66 describes the area of multi-functional parkland to the eastern edge of the site – I would question how this will be achieved in this area given the size and narrowness of the area. This links to my comment above regarding the green buffers in this area and setting of the listed buildings.
- Where links are proposed between these sites and the Exemplar phase, these should be explained – whilst the sites are separate development sites, they will need to connect together to create a cohesive place for the long term in terms of how residents use the spaces – I identify a couple of areas where I think additional pedestrian/ cycle connections would be beneficial below for example. The issue of cohesiveness is also relevant to design.
- The document will need to be updated to reflect where matters change on particular topic areas – such as drainage to reflect OCC comments.

### Landscape

Policy Bicester 1 of the CLP Part 1 2011-2031 identifies the need for 40% of the site to comprise Green Infrastructure of which at least half should be publicly accessible. A network of well managed green/open spaces connected to the countryside is identified. Planning applications should include a range of types of green spaces to meet this overarching target. The Policy identifies that a well-designed approach to the urban edge is required which relates development at the periphery to the rural setting and which should minimise the impact of the development when viewed from the surrounding countryside. Careful consideration of open space and landscaping is required to achieve an overall improvement in the landscape and visual impact of the site. Policy ESD13 of the CLP Part 1 2011-2031 sets out that development is expected to respect and enhance local landscape character securing appropriate mitigation where damage to local landscape character cannot be avoided. Policy BSC11 of the CLP Part 1 2011-2031 sets out local standards of provision for general green space, play space (including types of play spaces and accessibility standards), outdoor sports and allotments.

The NW Bicester SPD, identifies further requirements including that the development should create new urban places connected utilising the existing landscape framework and in this respect, it identifies the retention of existing landscape features with these important corridors protected by buffers (including a 10m buffer to either side of hedgerows, 30m either side of the watercourses and a 20m buffer either side of designated hedgerows recognised for their ecological value to create a dark corridor for nocturnal species). The SPD also includes guidance on tree planting, development edges (for example a more informal, rural character on the edge of the site).

With regard to the LVIA, comments on the proposed viewpoints were provided in the Council Scoping Opinion response. At our later meeting, confirmation was provided on the extra viewpoints added albeit the Church and views to/ from it was raised as being important to be considered in the LVIA as well as construction and operational impacts.

With regard to the landscape strategy, I am supportive of the approach which has ensured the landscape has a key role in the development as is clear within the development principles provided. Green links and corridors are supported building on retained existing landscape features. The buffers as set out in the SPD should be clarified and I have commented on the approach to the western rural boundary earlier but I would add that the landscape space in this area feels narrow and a greater offset to the rural edge

could be beneficial here. Consideration of the landscape proposals will also be required as to the impact on longer distance views and containment of the site. The landscape strategy would also need to respond to the drainage arrangements (see comments later) but overall drainage features should be designed to sit comfortably in the landscape.

The landscape plan demonstrates a central green corridor to St Lawrence Church and whilst this is supported, trees will need to be considered in terms of their species, size and management so as not to obscure views given this is a constraint. Sufficient space for street trees must be provided to avoid conflict between them and services and street lighting.

The provision of leisure and other connection routes through open spaces is supported as is integrated natural play of a range of play types although the Landscape team would require RoSPA reports to ensure that natural play features are safe. I have some concern regarding a play area positioned at the end of the view point towards the church and the impact on setting here. I would suggest this particular play area may need reconsideration depending on what is proposed in that location.

The incorporation of edible landscape opportunities throughout is supported providing there are management proposals albeit managed allotment plots should also be provided in accordance with Policy BSC11. Allotment plots normally require access for vehicles as well as fencing and secure cycle parking.

### Design

As mentioned previously, Policy Bicester 1 of the CLP Part 1 2011-2031 contains a number of criteria relating to key site-specific design and place shaping principles. In addition, the requirements of the NW Bicester SPD contain further guidance regarding how development on the site should be approached. The SPD includes a section relating to design and character areas and this should be referred to, however it is worth highlighting that a key driver in the design of the eco town and a fundamental principle to achieving the zero carbon development is sustainability and therefore I would expect to see that the approach to these standards is contributing to the design of the site. Reference should be made to the local context and setting to ensure the development responds to the town and the landscape and historic setting with appropriate design principles set. However, innovation in the approach is expected to respond to the high sustainability standards.

Policy ESD15 of the CLP Part 1 2011-2031 contains further guidance on achieving successful and high quality design and the Council has also adopted a Residential Design Guide SPD, which provides clarity and advice on the design standards expected from residential development in Cherwell.

I can confirm that a condition to require the preparation of a Design Code to frame the submission of future reserved matters would be recommended to Committee for their consideration in the event that an application for outline planning permission is supported by Officers. Alternatively, the outline application could provide sufficient detail through the submission documents for consideration which could avoid the need for such a condition.

The provision of a set of parameter plans to control the development at the later stages will be acceptable rather than fixing the masterplan. The Council will need to be provided with sufficient comfort that an acceptable scheme can be achieved within those parameters. This can be demonstrated through an indicative masterplan and the content of a design and access statement.

- I think that a land use parameter plan will be required to demonstrate where housing parcels are proposed – I am unclear if this is covered by the Maximum Building Heights and Footprint Plan but if so, this area needs to be defined further particularly on the eastern Home Farm Parcel where footprint is shown to a far larger degree than on the Framework Plan and where built development would not all be acceptable – for example extending to the boundary with the Banbury Road. The land use parameter should also define the view line to the Church of St Lawrence to ensure that this is a clear parameter that this corridor must be kept free from development.
- All parameter plans (including a land use parameter) should reflect each other – for example, the footprint plan currently doesn't allow for the areas of green space shown on the multi-functional green space plan.
- Please refer to my comments above regarding the building heights.
- Access and Movement Parameter – I think this should also show pedestrian and cycle access opportunities between the site and Elmsbrook and not be restricted only to the connections for vehicular traffic. I also think that the broad primary routes through the site should be shown so that the implications of those (for example how many breaches of a hedgerow are required) can be understood. The note referring to the means of preventing vehicular connections from the



southern side to the northern side of the western parcel to be defined so as not to undermine the bus only link is an important point.

- I am unclear on the finished ground levels plan, particularly on the eastern parcel where two 90m points are shown but the topography indicates this is incorrect.
- I am pleased to see the landscape routes through the development site and the way that this links with the main areas of open space. This will be important to create a softer landscape rather than those areas being separated.

### Transport

Policy Bicester 1 of the CLP Part 1 2011-2031 sets out that with regard to access and movement, a key transport requirement is the realignment of Howes Lane and Lords Lane with appropriate crossings of the railway line to provide access and integration across the NW Bicester site. This site does not include land required to facilitate this key infrastructure requirement but it will be expected to proportionately contribute to this infrastructure. There is also likely to be other offsite transport contributions requested to contribute towards mitigating the transport impact of the development in accordance with Policy SLE 4 of Policy Bicester 1 of the CLP Part 1 2011-2031 as well as site wide infrastructure such as public transport. The Exemplar Southern access junction may also require signalisation by this proposed development.

More generally, Policy SLE 4 of the CLP Part 1 2011-2031 sets out that new development should facilitate the use of sustainable modes of transport to make the fullest possible use of public transport, walking and cycling and this is emphasised for NW Bicester in Policy Bicester 1 which mentions the modal shift requirements as well as requirements to facilitate the provision of walking and cycling routes to create sustainable links within the development (to create walkable neighbourhoods) and between it and the wider urban and rural area. The NW Bicester SPD amplifies these requirements still further including further detail around modal shift and detail as to what planning applications should consider and demonstrate.

With regard to the approach to the matters to be considered at the outline application stage, I can confirm that I am comfortable with the detail of the location and design of the means of access being dealt with at the outline stage with the design of the internal roads left for later consideration but in accordance with the agreed access and movement parameters plan.

The OCC response is attached and provides answers to your specific questions relating to Transport matters so I would refer you to those comments, however I would highlight the following points:

- I have referred above to the parameter plans but would also emphasise the point here that pedestrian as well as vehicular access points will need to be secured through the outline application.
- In reviewing the plans, I would highlight that pedestrian and cycle links would be beneficial at the southern corner or along the eastern boundary with Elmsbrook and to the north of the western parcel to connect to Elmsbrook especially to the area of open space to the west of Braeburn Avenue. It would also be beneficial for links to be provided through the open spaces into the river corridor on Elmsbrook.
- Relating to car parking standards, CDC would apply the guidance in the Residential Design Guide which provides for one allocated space per dwelling. More parking would be acceptable, but the lower standards is reflective of the sustainable nature of the site and so parking should not be 'over' provided for individual dwellings. This should be assessed alongside the requirement for visitor parking which is extremely important for visitors to the site. The lack of visitor parking on Elmsbrook has caused problems and so this should be avoided on this site.
- OCC are broadly supportive of the Transport Assessment Scoping Note, which makes appropriate reference to previous documents but specific comments are made on connectivity, the proposed access points and their suitability taking into account visibility, access to bus routes, the need to make reference to LTN 1/20, the need for early consideration on the construction access strategy (including to assess the safety of such an arrangement), the need for designed in visitor parking, the need for covered cycle parking for all properties (particularly where no garage is provided), detail on the TA and S106 Highway matters (S106 is covered separately).
- There will be a requirement for this site to provide a crossing of the B4100 to St Lawrence Church as was proposed to be secured from the Home Farm application.
- There may need to be a Grampian restriction on occupations on the site prior to the opening of the NW Bicester Strategic Link Road (realignment of the A4095).
- OCC provide some advice on layout with reference to the OCC Residential Road Design Guide (currently being updated).
- A Travel Plan will be required and I note that OCC have been approached for advice in this regard.

- With regard to Waste Collection, CDC has a Planning and Waste Management Design Guide available via the website: <https://www.cherwell.gov.uk/directory-record/1662/planning-and-waste-management-design-guide> this explains that the Council will not collect waste or recycling if it involves driving over a private road. In this scenario, bin collection points should be provided at the closest point on the public highway for collection. Tracking should be provided to demonstrate for large vehicles including the refuse lorries.

The above points as expanded further in the OCC response should be addressed in your submission.

### Drainage

Policies ESD6 and ESD7 of the CLP Part 1 2011-2031 relate to the sustainable management of flood risk, requiring the submission of flood risk assessments and the sequential approach to the location of development. The use of sustainable drainage systems is required to manage surface water run off and SUDs also have a key role in providing landscape and wildlife benefits. Policy Bicester 1 of the CLP Part 1 2011-2031 and the NW Bicester SPD also refer to sustainable flood risk management. Oxfordshire County Council also have guidance called 'Local Standards and Guidance for Surface Water Drainage on Major Development in Oxfordshire' (this is linked in the OCC response).

Oxfordshire County Council's comments are provided alongside this report, however it is important to emphasise at this point that based on the information provided and the discussion at the pre-application meeting, that the proposals for regional based SuDs on the edge of the development with minimal swales proposed, is not considered to be in line with current local and national best practice guidance. Further source control techniques should be integrated into the scheme including swales and permeable paving where possible. Surface water will be expected to be managed in a number of small catchments with attenuation features provided throughout the site close to source with residual flows then conveyed downstream to further storage or treatment components where required. It has also been confirmed that attenuation basins adjacent to the flood plain and existing watercourses will not be acceptable unless these are proposed as final non attenuation features such as wetland areas to provide water quality and biodiversity benefits. The proposed drainage should mimic the existing drainage regime of the site to ensure flood risk is managed appropriately. Drainage should be a key early consideration to influence the site layout and design and should not be limited by other factors being fixed first. Rainwater harvesting should be provided but this cannot be used to reduce storage requirements.

It is noted that additional ground investigation is being undertaken to better understand the extent of the site that could be managed through shallow infiltration systems to reduce the reliance on larger SUDs attenuation basins.

### Heritage

Policy Bicester 1 of the CLP Part 1 2011-2031 refers to the need for layouts to retain and respect important existing buildings and heritage assets as well as the consideration of Grade II listed buildings outside the site. Policy ESD15 CLP Part 1 2011-2031 also identifies criteria for considering the setting of heritage assets (in accordance with the guidance contained within the NPPF) and it is clear that high quality design that complements assets will be essential. The statutory duty at S.66 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 will of course also be relevant to ensure that any development which affects a listed building or its setting should preserve the building or its setting.

The NW Bicester SPD identifies that sensitivity is needed when considering the relationship of the site to nearby settlements, including important views of buildings such as St Lawrence's Church. The setting of the heritage assets on site is currently defined by underdeveloped agricultural rural qualities. It identifies that allowing views from these areas to the Church tower such that built development without adequate buffers would be incongruous. I have referred to the scale of development on the eastern parcel above and would re-emphasise this here in terms of how this impacts upon the setting of the listed building if adequate buffers are not allowed for.

Otherwise, I consider that the provision of a view line through to the Church will be beneficial, which, as referred to above, should be shown on the parameter plans as it is a clear parameter that will need to be taken into account for future detailed applications in the event that outline permission is granted. The character of this route should be considered in terms of how the route is sensitively handled in terms of setting as well as landscaping along this route and within the green buffer. I would also advise that consideration relating to how the edges of the site close to the farm and church are handled including with regard to materials. The Strategic Environmental Report identified that for the Exemplar site, the buildings close to St Lawrence's Church and Caversfield House would be constructed in styles to blend in well with the local buildings and to be finished in either brick or stone. In my view, stone on the edges close to listed buildings (including at Home Farm) would help to connect the new development to the existing historic buildings and allow for a coherent sense of place to be established.

I have not received comments from the OCC Archaeologist but in reviewing the submitted information related to the Home Farm application, it is noted that initially an objection was raised which required a programme of archaeological investigation ahead of the determination of the application. You may wish to liaise with the OCC Archaeologist on this matter ahead of the submission of an application.

### Eco Town Standards

With regard to those Eco Town Standards which are not covered above, I can advise as follows:

#### **True zero carbon**

Policy Bicester 1 of the CLP Part 1 2011-2031 sets out that the allocation at NW Bicester is for a new zero carbon mixed use development. The definition of zero carbon in eco towns is that over a year, the net carbon dioxide emissions from all energy use within the buildings on the eco town development as a whole are zero or below. The NW Bicester SPD provides further guidance on this requirement. It is also relevant to mention that the Council has declared a Climate Emergency and therefore the importance of achieving the standards is important in this context.

You have specifically asked whether the Council will now be adopting the proposals of the new Future Homes Standard and I can confirm that the Council's position for NW Bicester is as per the Policy and SPD requirement to meet true zero carbon which requires regulated and unregulated energy use to be dealt with. With regard to carbon offsetting, this should be as a last resort, but the S106 drafting to secure this standard that has been used on other sites does allow for local offsetting where the requirement cannot be met on site. However, it is expected that the site itself would make significant steps to meet the true zero carbon requirement on site and that offsetting would be used only where absolutely necessary and if this is relied upon, the Council would expect to understand what this offset could look like and how this would be achieved.

As part of the outline application submission, information must be provided to ensure that there is sufficient certainty that the true zero carbon standard can be met with clarity as to the approach provided to demonstrate policy compliance in this regard.

#### **Climate change adaptation**

The NW Bicester SPD sets out there is increasing recognition that reducing carbon emissions is important to reduce and adapt to the impacts of climate change. Local modelling for Bicester has identified that the biggest risks relate to overheating and water stress. The SPD includes detail as to what should be considered through a planning application to demonstrate how the site will adapt to future climate scenarios, including overheating. This should provide sufficient certainty for later stages.

#### **Homes**

The NW Bicester SPD provides guidance on what is expected from new homes at NW Bicester. This includes being adaptable and providing flexibility for residents to work from home and they should also encourage more sustainable ways of living. Homes should meet lifetime home standards, achieve Building for Life standards, be designed to achieve good daylighting whilst avoiding overheating and be 'smart' including real time energy, community and travel information and provide superfast broadband to facilitate the use of homes for working.

#### **Employment**

Policy Bicester 1 of the CLP Part 1 2011-2031 sets out that economic strategies should be produced to support planning applications to demonstrate how access to work will be achieved and to deliver a minimum of one employment opportunity per new dwelling that is easily reached by walking, cycling and/or public transport. Further detail is included within the NW Bicester SPD. This matter should be assessed within any future submission and whilst the site is not expected to provide employment opportunities directly in accordance with the Masterplan, it should consider opportunities including accessibility and home working. The Council would also look to secure construction apprenticeships via an Employment and Training Plan.

#### **Healthy lifestyles**

The NW Bicester SPD includes guidance on this development principle. The health and wellbeing benefits of the development should be considered and should influence the design of the proposals to enable residents to make healthy choices easily and planning applications should consider and address this matter. The Oxfordshire Growth Board recently approved the Oxfordshire Health Impact Toolkit for use across the County. This is available here:

<https://www.oxfordshiregrowthboard.org/projects/oxfordshire-health-impact-assessment-toolkit/> The toolkit aims to positively impact on existing health inequalities and to create healthy, more resilient and sustainable communities. A Health Impact Assessment should be submitted with the application.

## **Local services**

The NW Bicester SPD also includes guidance on this development principle and reference should be made to this. Whilst the site itself is not expected to provide local facilities (such as community space or local centre facilities for example) directly, it should demonstrate how the site can access such facilities to ensure it is well linked by sustainable modes. Links to St Lawrence Church across the B4100 will be sought to enable this to become more accessible. Contributions will also be sought towards local service provision across the Masterplan site that will benefit the residents of this development.

## **Biodiversity**

Policy ESD11 of the CLP Part 1 2011-2031 requires the protection and enhancement of biodiversity and the natural environment and it sets out a number of requirements in this regard. Biodiversity surveys will be required to identify any potential impacts to existing ecology and what mitigation may be required to deal with such impacts. The creation and management of new habitats will be required as well as features and landscaping within the built environment. A key requirement of Policy ESD11, Policy Bicester 1 and as set out in the NW Bicester SPD is for a net biodiversity gain to be achieved. This should be demonstrated by the use of a biodiversity impact assessment tool such as the DEFRA metric or equivalent. The Council seek a 10% net gain for biodiversity as a minimum. The buffers to natural features on site and the provision of SUDs would all contribute to gains for biodiversity. The woodland area has some good opportunities but the balance between public access and biodiversity will need to be considered. It is understood that the proposal is to secure net gain on site and this is supported.

The SPD identifies that it is not possible to mitigate for farmland birds on site and so offsite mitigation is required. Contributions have been secured through other development sites towards this matter. This would be expected on this site.

## **Water**

At NW Bicester there is an aspiration towards the achievement of water neutrality as set out within the within the NW Bicester SPD given it is known that Bicester is within an area of water stress. In accordance with the SPD and Policy Bicester 1 of the CLP Part 1 2011-2031, planning applications should be accompanied by a Water Cycle Study to cover water efficiency and demand management, water quality and how it will be protected and improved, WFD compliance, surface water management to avoid increasing flood risk and water services infrastructure improvement requirements and their delivery, having regard to the Environment Agency's guidance on Water Cycle Strategies. The development should be ambitious around water efficiency. Development Principle 10 in the SPD should also be referred to. As referred to above, rainwater harvesting would be encouraged in accordance with the SPD.

## **Waste**

In respect of waste, the SPD identifies that planning applications should be accompanied by a sustainable waste and resources plan to cover a number of matters including setting targets for residual waste levels and landfill diversion and which demonstrates how the target of zero waste should be sent to landfill from construction, demolition and excavation. I would encourage you to review Development Principle 12 within the SPD with targets set to exceed national standards and which facilitates waste reduction as required.

## **Community Governance**

Policy Bicester 1 of the CLP Part 1 2011-2031 refers to proposals to support the setting up and operation of a financially viable local management organisation by the new community to allow locally based long term ownership and management of facilities in perpetuity. Development Principle 13 of the NW Bicester SPD provides further detail. In order to meet the Community and Governance requirements, the Council propose to seek contributions through the S106 towards a Community Management Organisation which is in its early stages at Elmsbrook with this CMO rolled out across the whole site to allow this to meet the requirements around long term governance structures.

## **Cultural Wellbeing**

The NPPF recognises that cultural wellbeing is part of achieving sustainable development and Policy Bicester 1 of the CLP Part 1 2011-2031 requires the provision of public art to enhance the quality of the place, legibility and identify. A Cultural Wellbeing Strategy is appended to the NW Bicester SPD (and Development Principle 14 is also relevant) and this seeks an approach to ensure the site is a culturally vibrant place through high quality design and community engagement. It would be the Council's intention to secure the approach to cultural wellbeing through the S106 for the site.

### Planning Obligations

I will provide you with the details of the likely content of the Heads of Terms requirements under separate cover. This will provide guidance on how these will be calculated based upon site wide requirements.

I have provided the Council's Housing Teams comments with regard to affordable housing to you separately and would highlight the following key points here:

- 30% affordable housing must be provided with the split 70% social rent and 30% intermediate (shared ownership) in accordance with Policy BSC3 of the CLP Part 1 2011-2031. The split across the land areas should be proportionate.
- Indicatively, the Council would seek 30% 1 bed units, 45% 2 bed units, 20% 3 bed units and 5% 4 bed units. Albeit an exact mix would be presented at the application stage. At least 2 3 bed 5/6 person bungalows would be sought to meet an identified need.
- I would draw your attention to the required standards for the units including the need for accessible and adaptable units, wheelchair user housing standards and the need to meet Nationally Described Space Standards.
- Affordable housing should be tenure blind and be constructed to the same level of sustainability, design and variety of materials as market units.
- Affordable housing should be fully integrated and in clusters of no more than 15 dwellings of which no more than 10 should be rented units.
- Please note the comments regarding parking spaces.

With regard to the housing mix for market units, I would refer you to the requirements of Policy BSC4 of the CLP Part 1 2011-2031.

You have asked who the Council would use in respect of discussions around emerging viability matters and on sustainability/ zero carbon strategies. With regard to viability, the Council will need to consider procurement requirements but would intend to appoint an external consultant on this matter. In accordance with the Council's Developer Contributions SPD, all costs incurred by the Council in financial appraisal and viability assessment are to be met by the applicant. Once you are ready to commence discussions in this regard, please advise me and we will seek to make arrangements to appoint a consultant, with your agreement to cover the costs. With regard to sustainability/ zero carbon, at the moment, we do not have a retained consultant and so all discussions on that matter should be directed to me for further consideration. If specialist input is needed, then this will be considered internally at the time.

### Political and Public Engagement

I have provided advice by email of the 15 January 2021 regarding your questions posed on this matter.

### Other site constraints

The Council's Environmental Protection team have provided some comments on the pre-application submission at this stage as follows:

#### Noise:

- A CEMP will be required to consider the potential for noise, dust and other nuisance from the preparation and construction of the site.
- A noise report will be required to show that all habitable rooms within dwellings will achieve the noise levels specified in BS8233:2014 (Guidance on sound insulation and noise reduction for buildings) for indoor ambient noise levels.
- There should also be consideration of the external noise levels specified in BS8233:2014.
- Whilst carrying out the above noise report, consideration should also be given to BS4142:2014.

#### Contamination:

- Information should be provided at the application stage which demonstrates the development proposal is not adversely affected by land contamination or can be made suitable for use through remedial works.

#### Air Quality:

- The application should demonstrate that the development will not be impacted by poor air quality. We need to understand the impacts of this development on local air quality and

where mitigation will be required. This should be submitted with the application and should take note of Cherwell District Council's Air Quality Action Plan.

- Measures should be in place to encourage the uptake of low emission transport including the provision of EV charging infrastructure. EV charge points should be provided to each residential unit to maximise opportunities for sustainable transport.

Odour:

- No comments are made

Lighting:

- Full details of the lighting scheme should be made available.

There will also be requirements for long term monitoring of development to maintain standards and evaluate progress in low carbon living, for particular build standards to be met and for community development to support the initial formation and growth of communities. This will be expanded upon through the required Heads of Terms.

Your willingness to enter into a PPA is noted with regard to the formal application stage. I will pick this up internally and contact you separately on that. In this respect it is noted that you are targeting the submission of an outline application before Easter 2021.

If you have any questions or queries regarding the above please contact me using the details provided above. Please accept that this is Officer advice and is provided without prejudice to the ultimate determination of any future planning application.

Yours sincerely

Caroline Ford

Principal Planning Officer

**APPENDIX 5**  
**APPLICATION REF. 20/03150/PREAPP – RESPONSE FROM CDC,**  
**DATED 5<sup>TH</sup> FEBRUARY 2021**

# Planning and Development

David Peckford, Assistant Director – Planning and Development



## Cherwell

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Your Ref:

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5th February 2021

Dear Hannah

## TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1990

**Application No.:** 20/03150/PREAPP  
**Applicant's Name:** Barton Willmore  
**Proposal:** Residential development  
**Location:** Land at North West Bicester  
Home Farm, Lower Farm and SGR2  
Caversfield  
**Parish(es):** Bicester

Further to my letter of the 2<sup>nd</sup> February 2021, I write to provide guidance on the likely Heads of Terms that would be sought via this development. I would stress that this will need to be defined through the outline planning application stage and this cannot be taken to be a final Heads of Terms list or final figures but I consider that this would be the basis for that work at the formal stage.

### Health

A Contribution would be sought towards health infrastructure to meet the needs of the additional population arising from the development. This would most likely be based upon £259.46 per dwelling index linked from 2Q17. This cost is based upon the provision of a health facility elsewhere on the NW Bicester site with the cost for the facility proportionately shared across the site.

### Neighbourhood Police

A contribution would be sought towards additional policing infrastructure at a rate of £151.30 per dwelling index linked from 2Q17.

### Community Buildings

The site would be expected to contribute towards the capital cost of new community building provision across the masterplan site. Beyond the Exemplar community centre, two further community buildings and a sports pavilion are proposed. This development would be expected to contribute towards the proposed community building to the north of the site, which, for a 1200sqm building including fit out costs



has been costed at £2,732,450.04 at 2Q17 costs. The cost per dwelling would be £1050.94 index linked from 2Q17. There could be a proportionate reduction of the figure sought from this site to mitigate for the proposed crossing of the B4100 to the Caversfield Church.

#### Community Building crossing to facilitate access to Caversfield Church

The application should provide for a scheme to deliver a crossing and footway links to and from the site to Caversfield Church across the B4100 which should be a S278 scheme. The previous scheme on the Home Farm site also proposed a car parking area which would also be beneficial. This would enable the church to be accessed more easily which has the potential to be used as a community space.

#### Community Development Worker

The application would be expected to contribute £347.46 per dwelling index linked from 2Q17 towards Community Development Workers on site. This is based upon two Community Development Workers being on site for the first 20 years of the build out of the whole of the NW Bicester development plus two part time posts to be funded for 4 years following.

#### Community Development Fund

The application would be expected to contribute £45.29 per dwelling index linked from 2Q17 towards a fund to be used by the Community Development Workers to support community development on site.

#### Skills and Training

It would be intended to include a S106 schedule to require the provision of a Training and Employment Plan to secure the provision of a target number of apprenticeship starts (approximately 30 in accordance with our Developer Contributions SPD).

#### Indoor Sport

The application would be expected to contribute £493.00 per dwelling index linked from 2Q17 towards the enhancement of sports facilities at Bicester Leisure Centre.

#### Outdoor Sport

The application would be expected to contribute towards sports pitch provision required across the NW Bicester site. A 13.9ha site to the south of the railway line and a 1.4ha site to the north of the railway line are identified as site wide infrastructure rather than lots of separate areas for sports pitch provision. A capital and revenue cost would be sought based £227.68 per dwelling index linked from 2Q17 towards the capital cost of providing the permanent sports pitches and £250.35 per dwelling index linked from 2Q17 towards the revenue costs of maintaining the sports pitches.

#### Burial Ground

The application would be expected to contribute £10.06 per dwelling index linked from 2Q17 towards the laying out of a new burial ground elsewhere on the NW Bicester site.

#### Play areas, allotments, open space

The S106 will need to include clauses to secure the provision of allotments, play areas and open space in accordance with the requirements of Policy BSC11 of the Cherwell Local Plan Part 1 2011-2031. The applicant would be required to lay out and provide these areas and then the S106 would also need to secure the long-term management and maintenance arrangements with appropriate commuted sums where transfer to the District Council is proposed (allotments would be expected to be transferred to the District Council).

#### Biodiversity offset

The Masterplan work identified that the development of the land at NW Bicester would impact farmland birds and that those impacts could not be mitigated on site. The Council are therefore seeking a financial contribution to mitigate for the loss of habitats for farmland birds and brown hares. The contribution is based upon the site area, with the contribution per hectare being £1333.04 index linked from 2Q17.

#### Cultural wellbeing

It would be proposed to include a schedule in the S106 to secure the provision of a Cultural Wellbeing statement the requirement for which is included within Appendix V of the NW Bicester SPD.

#### Community Management Organisation

In my letter of the 02 February 2021, I explained that in accordance with Policy Bicester 1 and the NW Bicester SPD (Development Principle 13), a contribution towards a site wide Community Management Organisation to meet the community and Governance policy requirements would be sought. The contribution would be £1,417.91 per dwelling index linked from 2Q17.

### Community Facility Maintenance

A contribution towards the ongoing management and maintenance of community buildings and allotments and the community farm (to be provided as part of the development in accordance with the SPD) will be sought. This would be based upon a contribution of £144.83 per dwelling towards the allotments and community farm and £249.24 per dwelling towards community buildings, both figures index linked from 2Q17.

### Affordable Housing

The S106 will need to secure the provision of the Policy required level of affordable housing (as explained within my letter of the 02/02/2021). The S106 will need to secure affordable housing so that arrangements are in place for the provision and retention of the affordable housing, to ensure affordability and to ensure the Council can nominate to the units to meet its housing need. The S106 would also need to secure the required affordable housing standards and to ensure clustering requirements are met.

### Waste collection

The application would be expected to contribute £111 per dwelling index linked from 2Q17 towards the cost of providing refuse and recycling containers for each dwelling, towards collection vehicle provision and towards recycling banks.

### Construction Standards

It would be intended to include a schedule to require the achievement of particular construction standards such as CEEQUAL Excellent for any infrastructure works and to ensure that a materials scheme is submitted to describe how local sourcing has been taken into account and details of embodied carbon.

### Monitoring of PPS1 standards

It would be intended to include a schedule to require the ongoing monitoring of the Eco Town standards at the construction and operational phases.

### Zero carbon strategy

It would be intended to include a schedule to secure the provision of a zero-carbon strategy to demonstrate how the proposal will achieve policy compliance in this regard. This would provide details of a site wide strategy and then an implementation strategy to ensure the delivery of the development to the required standards.

With regard to the following OCC matters, it has been confirmed that a similar approach to that set out for 18/00484/OUT would be taken.

### Bus provision

Two bus service loops are planned for the NW Bicester site, one either side of the railway line. OCC will seek a contribution from this site towards the cost of the bus service serving the development north of the railway line. This application would pay a proportion of the total cost of the bus service for the northern land based upon the number of dwellings proposed.

### Pedestrian/ Cycle provision

High quality pedestrian and cycle routes are identified across the Masterplan area to connect the site to key town and village destinations. Contributions will be requested towards improvements to the route which runs along the northern side of the railway line between the NW Bicester site towards the town centre and towards cycle improvements along the Banbury Road as a proportion of the cost of the upgrades based upon the number of dwellings proposed.

### Rights of way contribution

The application would be expected to contribute towards the improvement of offsite local public rights of way towards Bucknell and the footpath leading to the B4100. This would provide opportunities for leisure/ health walking and connect the NW Bicester site to the wider area through public rights of way. The cost would be a proportion of the costs of the improvements based upon the number of dwellings proposed.

### Exemplar southern access contribution

The application would be required to contribute towards the works to improve the southern access to the Exemplar site to increase capacity by signalling the junction. This application may trigger the need for the signalisation of the junction directly therefore this may be requested to be delivered under S278 and the cost offset from other proportionate contributions.

#### Strategic Highway contribution

A contribution towards capacity improvements at the Banbury Road roundabout would be required as a proportionate contribution of the cost of the works based upon the number of dwellings proposed.

Additionally, a contribution towards the costs of the major infrastructure (the realigned Howes Lane and tunnel) will be required and this will be based upon a formula approach. This will seek a proportionate contribution towards the works themselves including the railway bridge and the realigned road, towards a new pedestrian/ cycle tunnel beneath the railway, towards strategic bus routes, towards a payment to Network Rail for the rights to construct the new railway bridge and underpass and all other associated costs relating to the provision of this infrastructure. The contribution will be based upon the residential hectareage of the site as a percentage of the site to give a proportion of the Major Infrastructure Costs and the Network Rail Payment. I would direct you to the drafting for the Himley Village site S106 (14/02121/OUT) which would also apply to this site.

As per my letter of the 02 February 2021, it is likely that there will need to be a Grampian restriction on occupations at the site prior to the opening of the NW Bicester Strategic Link Road (realignment of the A4095).

#### Village traffic calming contribution

A contribution towards village traffic calming in Bucknell Village would be required to mitigate the impact of the development. The contribution would be a proportion of the cost of the works based upon the number of dwellings proposed.

#### Caversfield junction contribution

A contribution towards improvements to the existing Caversfield junction on the B4100 would be required. The contribution would be a proportion of the cost of the improvements based upon the number of dwellings proposed.

#### Offsite highway works to facilitate the development

The S106 would secure the requirement for a S278 for any off-site highway works proposed through the application. OCC will confirm if any other highway works required by the application itself will need to be covered by the S106.

#### Travel Plan Monitoring

A contribution towards the cost of monitoring the travel plan will be sought by OCC.

#### Education

OCC have not provided me with an update to their position of the 04/02/2020, which set out that contributions towards nursery and primary, secondary and special education needs education would be required. This also identified that the development would trigger the need to expand Gagle Brook Primary School and that the development would therefore need to provide the land to enable the school to expand. OCC also identified that there could be a Grampian condition needed to restrict the number of dwellings that could be occupied until such time as the County Council has taken a freehold site for a 1,200 place secondary school at NW Bicester and planning permission has been granted for at least a 600 place secondary school. As far as I am aware, this position has not changed.

#### Property

OCC may make a request for a contribution towards library services.

#### S106 monitoring fee

Both Cherwell District Council and Oxfordshire County Council would seek a monitoring fee to administer and monitor the S106 agreement. The financial contribution will be confirmed later.

If you have any questions or queries regarding the above please contact me using the details provided above. Please accept that this is Officer advice and is provided without prejudice to the ultimate determination of any future planning application. This information must be treated as draft and final confirmation of S106 heads of terms will be provided through the planning application process.

Yours sincerely

Caroline Ford

Principal Planning Officer