

5 Description of Development

5.1 Introduction

5.1.1 This chapter provides a description of the Development which forms the basis of the EIA. It was prepared by Quod and based on information provided by the project architects, Cornish Architects, Hadfield Cawkwell Davidson and other members of the project team. A description of the anticipated construction activities / works is provided within Chapter 6: Construction.

5.1.2 Planning permission is sought via two planning applications (i.e. Application 1 and Application 2) for the Development, with the application boundaries shown in Figure 5.1. The definitive planning application boundaries for Application 1 and Application 2 are attached within Appendix 1.1.

Figure 5.1: Application boundaries



5.1.3 One Design and Access Statements accompanies the two planning applications and provides a detailed description of the Development with illustrations.

Application 1

5.1.4 Application 1 comprises the following:

- Outline planning permission (all matters reserved except for access) is sought for up to 23,400sqm of employment floorspace (Use Classes B1a and/or B1b and/or B1c) across the whole Application 1 site; and,
- Detailed planning permission is sought for a health and racquet club (Use Class D2) on approximately 1.66ha of land in the northern corner of the Application 1 site (which is intended to be operated by David Lloyd Leisure).

5.1.5 The outline and detailed elements of the Application 1 planning application are subsequently referred to as the 'Outline Component' and 'Detailed Component', respectively.

5.1.6 The Application 1 planning application effectively “layers” the Detailed Component on top of an Outline Component, i.e. outline planning permission for employment floorspace is sought across the whole of the Application 1 site, with the health and racquet club presented as an alternative use for part of the Application 1 site.

Application 2

5.1.7 Application 2 is submitted in outline and seeks permission for up to 10,200 sqm of employment floorspace (Use Classes B1a and/or B1b and/or B1c) across the Application 2 site. Accessed via the Application 1 site.

5.1.8 The Application 2 development will not come forward unless the Application 1 development is delivered. It is envisaged that this will be controlled by either a planning condition or obligation attached to any planning permission granted for Application 2.

5.1.9 This chapter is supported by the following:

- Appendix 5.1: Parameter Plans for the Outline Component of Application 1 and Detailed Access Drawings;
- Appendix 5.2: Parameter Plans for the Application 2; and,
- Appendix 5.3: Development Specification document that was prepared to support both applications.

5.1.10 The full list of application drawings for the Detailed Component of the Application 1, upon which the EIA was based, was provided with the Application 1 planning application and prepared by Hadfield Cawkwell Davidson. A selection of application drawings is provided within Appendix 5.4.

5.2 Application 1

Detailed Component

5.2.1 The Applicant is seeking planning permission for the following:

“Erection of health and racquet club (Use Class D2), incorporating 3 no. weather protected tennis courts, 2 no. outdoor tennis courts, indoor and outdoor swimming pools, car parking, landscaping and associated works.”

5.2.2 The health and racquet club, which is intended to be operated by David Lloyd Leisure, extends over an approximate 1.66ha area in the northern corner of the Site (Figure 5.2). The layout of the health and racquet club is shown in Figure 5.4. The key elements of the health and racquet club include:

- Clubhouse building, incorporating (*inter alia*):
 - A Sports hall, providing three indoor tennis courts;
 - Four fitness studios;
 - A fully equipped gym;
 - An indoor swimming pool;
 - A café/restaurant and member lounge areas;
 - Changing facilities;
 - A Spa; and
 - Ancillary offices and staff facilities.
- Two outdoor tennis courts and a further three tennis courts within a permanent airdome;
- Outdoor swimming pool; and,
- Car parking (246 spaces), external plant and servicing areas.

Figure 5.2: Health and racquet club location plan



Figure 5.3: Site Photography.



PHOTOGRAPH 1 - VIEW OF SITE FROM WENDLEBURY ROAD WITH ACCESS ROAD TO THAMES WATER FACILITY



PHOTOGRAPH 2 - VIEW OF SITE ENTRANCE FROM WENDLEBURY ROAD



PHOTOGRAPH 3 - VIEW OF SITE FROM WENDLEBURY ROAD FIELD GATE

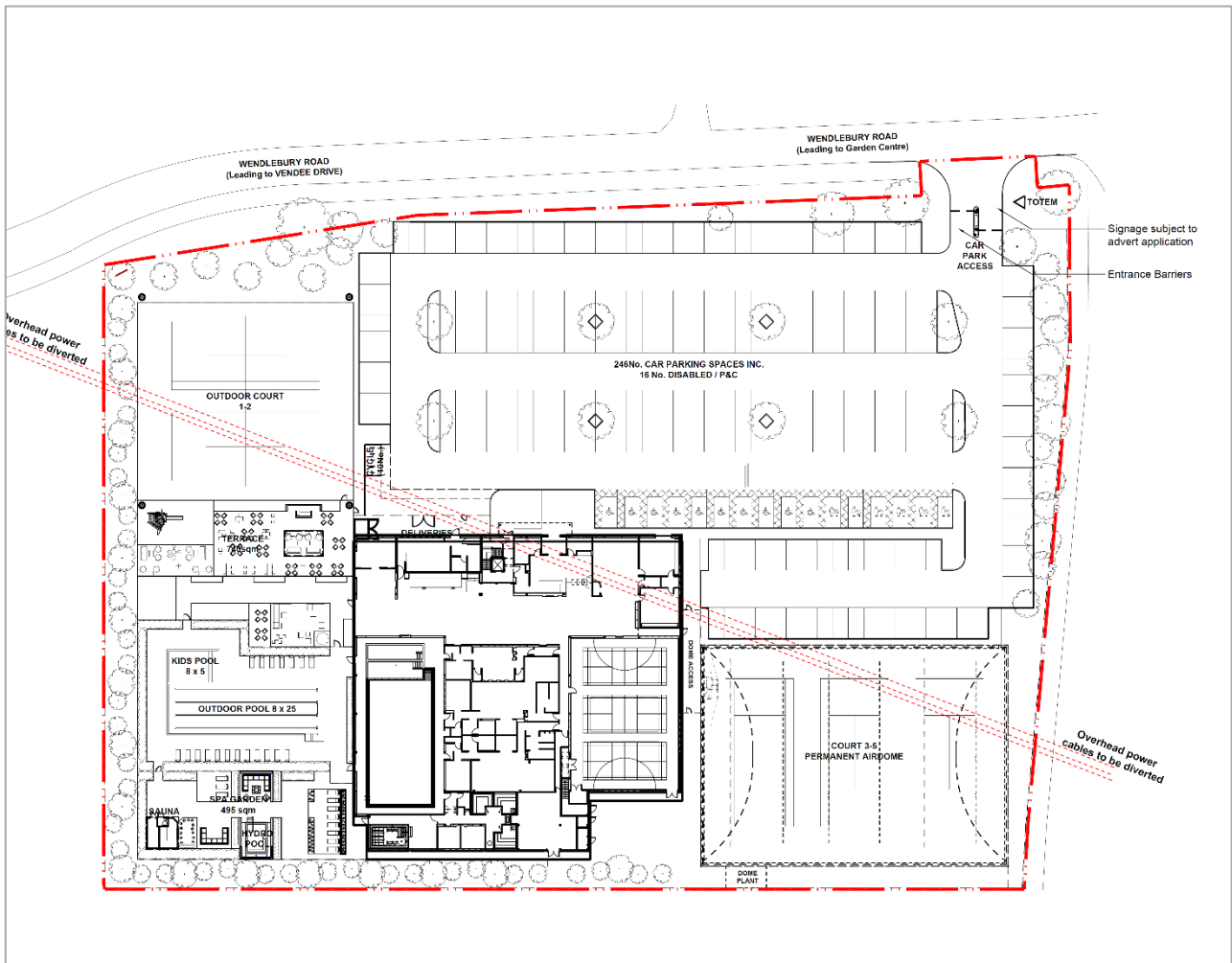


PHOTOGRAPH 4 - SITE ACCESS VIA FIELD GATE

Use, Layout, Building Heights, Access and Movement

- 5.2.3 The proposed layout of the health and racquet club is shown in Figure 5.4. The health and racquet club will comprise a clubhouse, full-service gym and fitness studios, tennis courts, tennis court enclosure, external pool, terrace areas and associated parking and landscaping. The airdome is 9.1m and the Clubhouse building is 7.780m in height from ground level to the top of the roof ridge.
- 5.2.4 The car parking area is located north of the outdoor tennis courts and to the west of the Clubhouse building and airdome, with Wendlebury Road running the length of the car park along its western boundary. Access and egress from the car park is off Wendlebury Road. The car park contains 246 parking spaces, of which 10 are disabled and 6 parent and child parking spaces.

Figure 5.4: Health and racquet club layout plan (Drawing No. A-PL-09-010)



Landscaping

- 5.2.5 Existing trees and other habitat / landscape features will be retained where possible and have been incorporated into the overall structural landscaping strategy proposed on boundaries of the Detailed Component site. However, a section hedgerow and a number of trees would be lost to facilitate construction of the health and racquet club and access from Wendlebury Road.

Appearance

5.2.6 Figures 5.5 shows the elevations of clubhouse. The building materials for the clubhouse have been selected to help break up its massing, as a result the façade is donated by four materials: Contemporary Cladding; Glazing; Cladding and, Staffordshire Blue Brindle Brick.

Figure 5.5: Clubhouse Elevations



ELEVATION A - NORTH WEST "FRONT" ELEVATION



ELEVATION B - SOUTH WEST "POOL SIDE" ELEVATION



ELEVATION D - SOUTH EAST "REAR" ELEVATION



ELEVATION D - NORTH EAST "TENNIS DOME SIDE" ELEVATION

Lighting

- 5.2.7 Due to the transparent membrane of the airdome, lights are not required during daylight hours. During hours of dark or poor weather, permanent LED fittings which are suspended internally beneath the dome structure provide lighting.
- 5.2.8 For external lighting of the outdoor tennis courts and car parking area, four permanent external lighting structures will be located around the perimeter of the courts and four permanent external lighting structures within the car park. External lighting will be designed in compliance with the Institute of Light Pollution guidance¹.

Outline Component

- 5.2.9 The Applicant is seeking planning permission for the following:

“Erection of up to 23,400 sqm of B1 employment; and creation of an ecological wetland; a new access off the Wendlebury Road; ; provision of sustainable urban systems (suds) incorporating landscaped areas with balancing ponds, swales and flood compensation works; and provision of associated utilities and infrastructure.”

- 5.2.10 Parameter Plans have been prepared to define the parameters within which the Outline Component will come forward and form the basis of the EIA. The Parameter Plans and detailed access drawings are included at Appendix 5.1 and are listed in Table 5.1.

Table 5.1: Application 1 Parameter Plans and access drawings

Plan Title	Drawing Number
Parameter Plan	
Parameter Plan 1 - Land Use Plan	18022/TP/102
Parameter Plan 2 - Building Heights Plan	18022/TP/103
Parameter Plan 3 – Vegetation Retention and Removal Plan	18022/TP/104
Parameter Plan 4 – Site Access Plan	18022/TP/105
Access drawings	
Foot/Cyclepath Enhancement with Health and Racquets Club	19539-12-01
Site Access Roundabout	19539-12-02
Site Access Roundabout Vehicle Tracking	19539-12-03
Foot/Cyclepath Enhancement Employment Only Scenarios	19539-13-01

Land Use

- 5.2.11 Parameter Plan 1 – Land Use Plan defines the maximum extent of developable area proposed for employment buildings across the Application 1 site (‘Development Zone’). Parameter Plan 1 also defines the strategic green infrastructure areas within the site (‘No Build Zone’). The No Build Zone identifies locations for natural and semi-natural space, green corridors, buffer zones and structural edge planting. Open space will be provided for a variety of functions including informal and formal recreation, strategic landscaping, surface water drainage features and biodiversity enhancements.

- 5.2.12 The approximate area of the Development Zone is 6.02ha, with the No Build Zone totalling approximately 9.74ha.
- 5.2.13 Approximately 5.4ha of grassland/wet meadow is proposed to be created as part of the works required for flood compensation and water storage which is situated within the No Build Zone. This area will be re-profiled, providing a mosaic of wet and dry areas of grassland which will be seeded with native species of local provenance to increase the diversity of the species composition creating an area of higher value than that being lost. This area will also be adjacent (via the Langford Brook) to a parcel of 'costal and floodplain grazing marsh', which is a habitat of principal importance², located within Bicester Wetland Reserve LWS to the east of the Site. The detail of the landscaping approach to the No Build Zone will be confirmed via reserved matters and expected to be secured by condition(s).
- 5.2.14 It should be noted that there will be additional green infrastructure situated within the Development Zone, and these areas are included as part of the Development Zone area total of 6.02ha. Therefore, the total area of strategic green infrastructure for the Site will be higher than 9.74ha, with the exact area being confirmed at reserved matters stage.
- 5.2.15 In addition, the Development Zone will not only accommodate buildings, there will also be external yards for servicing and deliveries/distributions, internal access roads and car parking.

Building Heights

- 5.2.16 Maximum building heights are defined by Parameter Plan 2 - Building Heights Plan and fix the maximum height of the employment development across the Application 1 site to between 76.25m Above Ordnance Datum (AOD) and 76.5m AOD. This would equate to a maximum ridge height of circa 11-12m from development platform level. The maximum building heights were established in response to a combination of factors including landscape and visual effects and building heights in the surrounding area, specifically the relationship with the built-up area to the north, Bicester Avenue Retail Park, and west, Bicester Gateway.
- 5.2.17 The height of individual buildings will vary depending on (*inter alia*) the footprint of the building, the intended occupier and the approach to its design. Not all the buildings will be constructed at the maximum permissible height.
- 5.2.18 Development platforms will be created at the site, with the exact level of these confirmed at reserve matters stage. However, it is anticipated that platforms would range from 64.45m AOD and 65.5m AOD, the latter of which is the approximate level of Wendlebury Road.

Landscape and Open Space

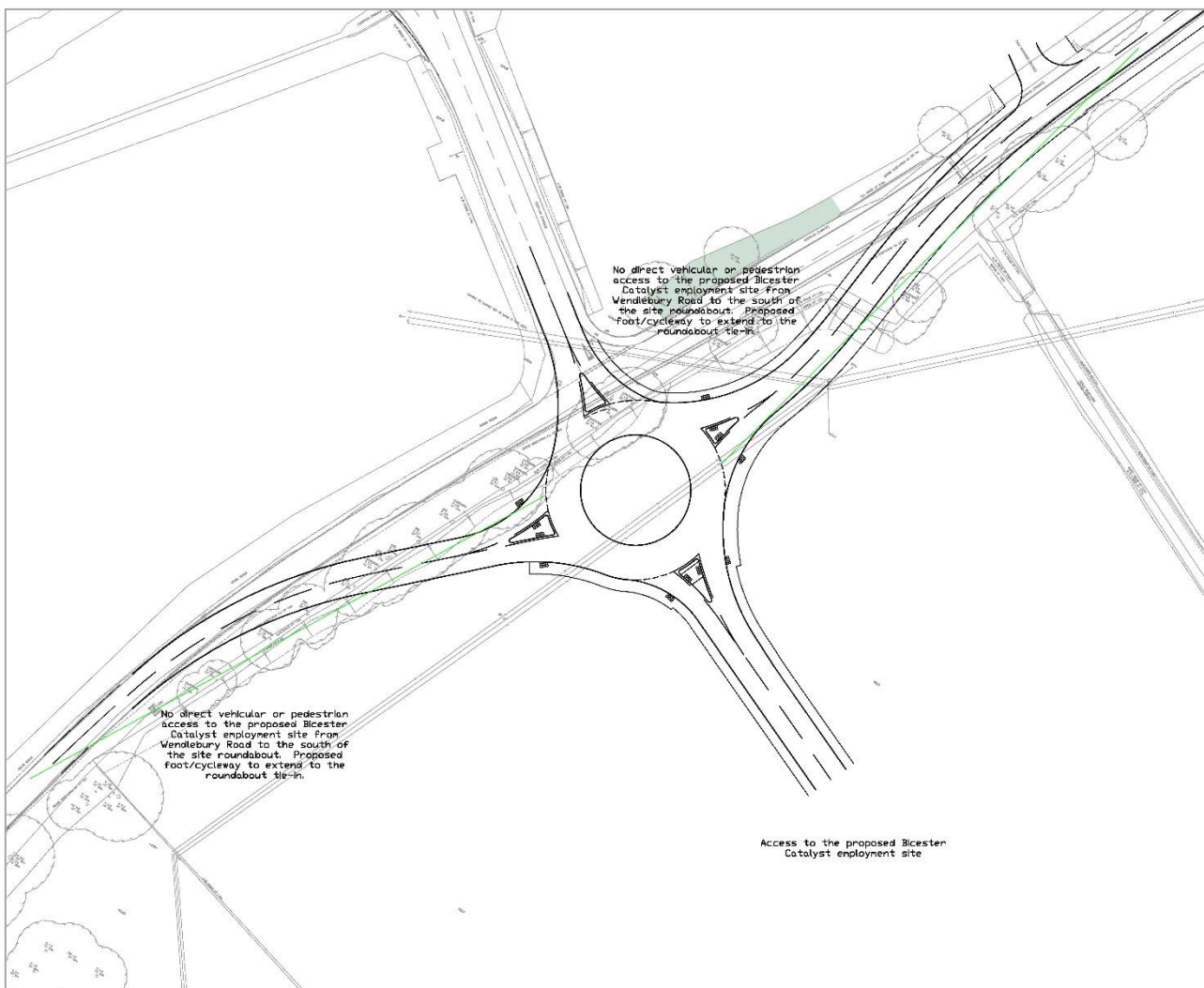
- 5.2.19 Parameter Plan 3 - Vegetation Retention and Removal Plan defines the vegetation to be retained and removed as part of the Application 1 development. Where possible, existing trees, planting and level changes will be incorporated into the overall landscaping strategy for the Development. Existing hedgerows and field boundaries will be retained and, where possible, enhanced to maintain these ecological features.

- 5.2.20 Two existing hedgerows currently divide the site into three fields. To facilitate construction of the Application 1 development and vehicle access from Wendlebury Road, a section of hedgerow, approximately 200m in length, and a number of trees will be removed.
- 5.2.21 The No Build Zone (see Parameter Plan 1 – Land Use) provides an area for green amenity space consisting of natural and semi-natural space, green corridors, buffer zones and structural edge planting and would contain a mixture of trees, grass and shrubs, as well as other biodiversity enhancements.
- 5.2.22 The precise scale and delivery of the open and green space requirements, to be detailed at the reserved matters stage, will be controlled through a planning condition.

Access and Movement

- 5.2.23 Parameter Plan 4 – Site Access Plan identifies the pedestrian, cycle, and vehicular access zone delivered as part of the Outline Component of Application 1.
- 5.2.24 Vehicular and principal pedestrian/cycle access to the Outline Component is proposed to come off Wendlebury Road with a formation of a new 4-arm roundabout. The new roundabout would serve the Wendlebury Road (north and south arms), the Application 1 and Application 2 site access (east arms) and the Vendee Drive roundabout link (west arm) (Figure 5.6). Further information on this can be found in the Transport Assessment (Appendix 8.1).

Figure 5.6: Site Access Drawing (Drawing No. 19539-12-02)



- 5.2.25 Locations for road links between future buildings within the Development Zone are not shown on the Parameter Plans, as the exact location and number of these will be confirmed at reserved matters stage. As outlined in paragraph 5.2.14, internal access roads will be included within the Development Zone.
- 5.2.26 Although the use of sustainable transport modes is an integral aspect of the Development, car parking will be provided as part of the Outline Component in line with OCC standards³. OCC standards for B1 uses require maximum parking provision of 1 space per 30sqm.
- 5.2.27 Cycle parking would be provided in accordance with OCC Walking and Cycling Design Standards⁴ for the Development Zone. OCC Standards for B1 uses require parking provision of 1 space per 150sqm. In addition, there will be provision for visitor cycle parking, at 1 space per 500sqm.
- 5.2.28 In terms of bus access, the Site is a 4 minute walk from the Bicester Park and Ride site, with services to and from Oxford City Centre, Launton, Bicester Town Centre, Langford Village, St Georges Barracks and Glory Farm.

5.3 Application 2

- 5.3.1 The Applicant is seeking planning permission for the following:

“Erection of up to 10,200 sqm of B1 employment provision and associated utilities and infrastructure.”

- 5.3.2 Parameter Plans are provided to define the parameters within which Application 2 will come forward. These form the basis of the EIA. The Parameter Plans are included at Appendix 5.2 and are listed in Table 5.2.

Table 5.2: Application 2 Parameter Plans

Plan Title	Drawing Number
Parameter Plan 1 - Land Use Plan	18022/TP/112
Parameter Plan 2 - Building Heights Plan	18022/TP/113
Parameter Plan 3 – Vegetation Retention and Removal Plan	18022/TP/114
Parameter Plan 4 – Site Access Plan	18022/TP/115

Land Use

- 5.3.3 Parameter Plan 1 – Land Use Plan defines the maximum extent of developable area proposed for employment buildings across the Application 2 site (‘Development Zone’). Parameter Plan 1 also defines the strategic green infrastructure areas within the site (‘No Build Zone’). The No Build Zone identifies locations for natural and semi-natural space, green corridors, buffer zones and structural edge planting.
- 5.3.4 The approximate area of the Development Zone is 2.49ha, with the No Build Zone totalling approximately 1.5ha. It should be noted that there is additional green infrastructure situated within the Development Zone, and these areas are included as part of the Development Zone area total of 2.49ha, the exact area being confirmed at reserved matters stage.
- 5.3.5 In addition, the Development Zone will not only accommodate buildings, there will also be external yards for servicing and deliveries/distributions, internal access roads and car parking.

Building Heights

- 5.3.6 Maximum building heights are defined by Parameter Plan 2 - Building Heights Plan and fix the maximum height of the employment development across the Application 2 site to between 76.25m AOD and 76.5m AOD. This would equate to a maximum ridge height of circa 11-12m from development platform level. The proposed building heights reflect the relationship with the built-up area to the north, Bicester Avenue Retail Park, and west, Bicester Gateway.
- 5.3.7 The height of individual buildings will vary depending on (*inter alia*) the footprint of the building, the intended occupier and the approach to its design. Not all the buildings will be constructed at the maximum permissible height.
- 5.3.8 Development platforms will be created at the Site, with the exact level of these confirmed at reserve matters stage. However, it is anticipated that platforms would range from 64.45m AOD and 65.5m AOD, the latter of which is the approximate level of Wendlebury Road.

Landscape and Open Space

- 5.3.9 Parameter Plan 3 - Vegetation Retention and Removal Plan defines the vegetation to be retained and removed as part of the Application 2 development. Where possible, existing trees, planting and level changes will be incorporated into the overall landscaping strategy for the Development. Existing hedgerows and field boundaries will be retained and where possible, enhanced to maintain these ecological features.
- 5.3.10 The existing pond and a number of trees within the Application 2 site will be removed in order to facilitate construction of the Application 2 development. However, the existing trees along Wendlebury Road that border the western boundary of the site will be protected and new lines of vegetation will be introduced on the western and southern site boundaries within the vegetation buffers provided by the development.
- 5.3.11 The No Build Zone (see Parameter Plan 1 – Land Use) provides an area for green amenity space consisting of natural and semi-natural space, green corridors, buffer zones and structural edge planting and would contain a mixture of trees, grass and shrubs, as well as other biodiversity enhancements. These vegetation buffers will help screen the Application 2 development from the surrounding fields and Wendlebury Road.
- 5.3.12 The precise scale and delivery of the open and green space requirements, to be detailed at the reserved matters stage, will be controlled through a planning condition.

Access and Movement

- 5.3.13 Parameter Plan 4 – Site Access identifies the pedestrian, cycle, and vehicular Access Zone for Application 2.
- 5.3.14 Access to Application 2 will be via a new 4-arm roundabout on Wendlebury Road constructed as part of Application 1 (see paragraph 5.2.24) (there would be no intention to bring Application 2 forward in isolation). Further information on this can be found in the Transport Assessment (Appendix 8.1).
- 5.3.15 Locations for road links between future buildings within the Development Zone are not shown on the Parameter Plans, as the exact location and number of these will be confirmed at reserved matters stage. As outlined in paragraph 5.3.5, internal access roads will be included within the Development.

5.3.16 Although the use of sustainable transport modes is an integral aspect of the Development, car parking will be provided as part of the Development in line with CDC standards (see paragraph 5.2.25). Cycle parking would be provided in accordance with OCC standards for the development Zone (see paragraph 5.2.26), in addition, there will be the provision for visitor cycle parking.

5.3.17 In terms of bus access, the Site is a 4 minute walk from the Bicester Park and Ride site, with services to and from Oxford City Centre, Launton, Bicester Town Centre, Langford Village, St Georges Barracks, and Glory Farm.

5.4 Appearance

5.4.1 The building materials will be determined at the Reserved Matters stage for both Application 1 and Application 2 but would be consistent with achieving high sustainability performance and a low embodied energy. Where possible, local materials would be used to enhance the local Oxfordshire vernacular.

5.5 Waste and Servicing

5.5.1 Waste and recycling storage for the Development will be designed in line with the CDC Planning and Waste Management Design Advice (2009)⁵. It is anticipated that the operational waste from the Development will be dealt with within the County, with the nearest transfer station located in Ardley, approximately 6km to the north west of the Site.

5.5.2 It is proposed that spoil from excavation and construction works can, where suitable, be re-used on the Site for platform and bund construction and landscaping.

5.6 Drainage

5.6.1 The Application is accompanied by a Flood Risk and Drainage Assessment ('FRA'), prepared by Bailey Johnson Hayes, which demonstrates that the Development would not be at risk of flooding, nor would it increase the risk of flooding elsewhere. Where ground levels are elevated to raise the Development out of the floodplain, compensatory floodplain storage within areas that currently lie outside the floodplain will be provided to ensure that the total volume of the floodplain storage is not reduced. An outline Flood Compensation Scheme is provided within the FRA and details would be developed as part of reserved matters.

5.6.2 The FRA includes proposals for a side-wide approach to drainage of the Site (See Appendix F of the FRA), which has had due regard to the requirements of Bicester 10 to provide sustainable drainage systems (SuDS). The Development will use a combination of attenuation swales and below ground drainage networks with flow controls to drain surface water to the Langford Brook. Infiltration is not considered appropriate for the Development due to the dense clay type ground conditions. Greenfield run off rates have been calculated at 20.43 l/sec for the Site, and as a result the preliminary attenuation storage requirement for the Site is calculated at 7,500 cubic metres (m³).

5.6.3 The current surface drainage proposals allow for the following surface water storage volumes:

- Swale 1 – Approximately 2,000m³;
- Swale 2 – Approximately 4,500m³; and,
- Subgrade Attenuation – Approximately 1,200m³.

5.6.4 In addition, all car parks, where feasible, will be designed with pervious paving and open graded stone to retain surface water at source.

5.7 Sustainability, Energy Strategy and Lighting

5.7.1 The Applicant recognises the context of this Site and it is intended to deliver a high quality and sustainable development. Carbon emissions will be reduced by minimising energy demand through appropriate orientation, passive solar design and a fabric first approach that maximises the performance of the building and its method of construction. Passive design measures will maintain a low energy demand for the buildings. In addition to high levels of insulation and low air permeability, it is likely that the buildings will be constructed with photovoltaic panels, although details will be confirmed at reserved matters.

5.7.2 Lighting will be designed to be sensitive to the surrounding area and its users. Light spill and glare will be minimised to avoid impacts on local sensitive receptors. External lighting will be designed in compliance with the Institute of Light Pollution guidance⁶. The following principles will be incorporated into a site-wide strategy:

- Lighting will be directed away from potential biodiverse habitats;
- Light Emitting Diode (LED) luminaires with replaceable light source modules will be used where possible to minimise reduce light spill on habitat during construction and operation; and,
- Suitable measures will be implemented to prevent light spill effects on potential bat habitats and foraging areas.

5.7.3 A lighting strategy will be developed through reserved matters application(s) as the configuration of units, parking and access is developed.

REFERENCES

¹ The Institute of Lighting Engineers, 2005. Guidance Notes on the Reduction of Obtrusive Light

²<https://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20140605093420/http://www.naturalengland.org.uk/ourwork/conservation/biodiversity/protectandmanage/habsandspeciesimportance.aspx>

³ <http://nonstatlocalplan.cherwell.gov.uk/written/cpt14.htm>

⁴ Oxfordshire County Council, 2017. Oxfordshire Walking and Cycling Design Standards, September 2017.

⁵ Cherwell District Council, 2009, Planning and waste management design guide, October 2009

⁶ The Institute of Lighting Engineers, 2005. Guidance Notes on the Reduction of Obtrusive Light