



Historic England

Ms Clare O'Hanlon
Cherwell District Council
Bodicote House
Bodicote
Banbury
Oxfordshire
OX15 4AA

Direct Dial: 0207 973 3644

Our ref: P01106445

7 April 2020

Dear Ms O'Hanlon

**T&CP (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015
& Planning (Listed Buildings & Conservation Areas) Regulations 1990**

**LAND ADJ TO PROMISED LAND FARM, WENDLEBURY ROAD, CHESTERTON,
OXFORDSHIRE
Application No. 19/01746/OUT**

Thank you for your letter of 31 March 2020 regarding further information on the above application for planning permission. On the basis of this information, we offer the following advice to assist your authority in determining the application.

Historic England Advice

Thank you for consulting Historic England on the submitted documents: Calayst Bicester, Bicester, Oxfordshire, Heritage Desk-based Assessment, Cotswold Archaeology (for Quod), March 2020, CA Report: MK0187_1. (Hereinafter DBA.)

We have provided several previous advice letters on this development and it is disappointing to see that most of our advice has been ignored. Section 1.7 of the DBA mentions an arrangement for me to provide further detail to the planning officer - this may refer to my most recent advice letter dated 27/2/20 which has not been published on the planning website.

The DBA concludes that the proposed development will cause no harm to the significance of the scheduled monument as contributed to by its setting. I advise that this is wrong, for the following reasons.

It is incorrect that the only place the Roman town can be experienced is further to the south, where the walled town lies (DBAS 5.26). For example, visitors can follow the line of the Roman Road (along the modern Wendlebury Road) into the northern part of the monument and towards the development site. The DBA is thus in error when it states: *(and the scheduled areas to its south) possess no features to signify the presence of what is buried below ground, aside from the specific location of the former*



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defended area of the town.

It is therefore not true either that the visibility of the new structures from the scheduled monument is irrelevant (DBA 5.26). The intrusion of modern built structures, 12 metres high, and set close to the scheduled monument boundary is a relevant consideration. This is why we previously advised that visualisations of the development as seen from the scheduled monument should be prepared. It is disappointing that this advice has been ignored.

Without the benefit of visualisations, but using my own knowledge of the scheduled monument, I advise that the new buildings will bring urban-type fabric closer to the scheduled monument, adding to the modern structures which already exist, such as the railway line. The buildings are longer and higher than the existing chicken farm structures. For visitors experiencing an abandoned Roman town, consisting of agricultural fields, the modern structures will detract from the experience and are therefore harmful. This harm will be less than substantial. There is no formal scale of less than substantial harm but in this case the harm would undoubtedly be at the minor end of the spectrum. NPPF paragraph 196 requires that less than substantial harm should be balanced against public benefit, in determining the planning application.

Historic England has concerns about this development because the assessment submitted underestimates the harm to the significance of the scheduled monument. Also, the assessment does not set out how the development will comply with Policy Bicester 10 of the Cherwell Local Plan which sets out *Conservation and enhancement of the setting of Alchester Roman Town Scheduled Ancient Monument and the setting out of opportunities to better reveal its significance*, as a key principle. The Cherwell Local plan is referenced in general within the DBA, but there is no mention of Policy Bicester 10.

I support the advice provided by the Oxfordshire County Council archaeological service.

Your authority should take these representations into account and seek amendments, safeguards or further information as set out in our advice. If there are any material changes to the proposals, or you would like further advice, please contact us.

Yours sincerely



David Wilkinson

Inspector of Ancient Monuments

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cc: Richard Oram, Planning Archaeologist, Oxfordshire County Council



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