

## **Great Wolf Resort Proposal – 19/02550/F**

### **Bicester Delivery Team, Cherwell District Council – Comments on the Travel Plan/Transport Assessment**

#### **Walking and Cycling Connectivity**

Bicester Town Centre is within a comfortable cycling distance (approx. 5km) from the proposed development. The proposals include the provision of a 2.5m off-road shared cycling facility on the southern side of the A4095 beginning to the west of the main access and finishing at the edge of the village of Chesterton. As such the proposed level of improved provision is for access to Chesterton only with the route between Chesterton and Bicester necessitating the cycling on carriageway with high traffic speeds (unrestricted speed limit and unlit) and in the case of the route north to Vendee Drive, high traffic volumes which will be further exacerbated by the proposals. Furthermore, the 2.5m width of the proposed shared use facility is defined as the minimum provision as opposed to what is recommended within the Oxfordshire County Council Cycling Design Standards.

Further enhancements would be required to provide a safe cycle route to connect with the network of cycle routes on the periphery of Bicester (Vendee Drive and the A41).

#### **Shuttle Bus Provision**

The TA sets out that the Guest Shuttle Bus will be available free of charge for use by guests and Chesterton residents, operating between 0900 and 1700. The service will separately serve Bicester North and Bicester Village stations on a once every two-hour basis and will be advertised to guests at the time of booking. A separate shuttle bus is proposed for staff travel from Bicester. This will also be available for use by Chesterton residents and will operate to coincide with shift start and finish times only.

The operation of the shuttle bus needs to be developed further to ensure that non-car travel is maximised amongst both guests and staff. Targets for non-car use need to be provided with a robust monitoring strategy and penalties in place where targets are not met to ensure that the shuttle bus represents a central component of the access strategy.

To meet such targets the service is likely to need to operate more frequently for guests and detailed consideration should be given to on-demand services/the use of technology to increase efficiency and capacity and improve the users experience. The shuttle bus should be marketed in such a way that it represents a more attractive transport choice than the private car, offering reassurance that the guests can seamlessly access the site. Rail travel should be packaged with the purchase of passes for the resort with costs comparable to travelling by private car allowing for the whole group costs. Discussions should be undertaken with Chiltern Railways to explore options and develop a ticketing strategy.

On-demand and flexible routing should be considered for the staff shuttle bus to maximise coverage and minimise wasted mileage.

The compact route requirements provide opportunities to employ electric vehicle technology to minimise negative impacts on air quality.

As the shuttle services will be open for use by Chesterton residents it is necessary to confirm where in the village the service will pick up. Stopping points will need to have adequate shelter provision and should an on-demand/flexible service be developed residents will need to be given access to the booking system.

## **Car Parking Provision**

The car parking accumulation analysis attached as Appendix E which in turn refers to the trip generation analysis within Appendix H. This trip generation analysis is based upon three existing Great Wolf resorts in the USA. The sites used are not identified and the data referred to is not verified as such there is no understanding of the comparability of the selected survey sites with that which is proposed in Bicester. The proposed parking provision therefore does not have a clear evidence basis. Furthermore, the accumulation analysis which has been provided does not give any detail about the underlying assumptions used. More detail is required with appropriate reductions in the proposed parking provision made with respect to a more robust sustainable transport access strategy.

Angela Smith

Active and Sustainable Travel Advisor

[angela.smith@cherwell-dc.gov.uk](mailto:angela.smith@cherwell-dc.gov.uk)