



Mike Pollard
Conservation Officer
Banbury Ornithological Society

Planning Dept.
Cherwell District Council
Bodicote House
Bodicote
Banbury
Oxfordshire
OX15 4AA

23 February 2020

Dear Sirs

20/00293/OUT - Bicester Gateway Business Park, Wendlebury Road, Chesterton

I am writing on behalf of the Banbury Ornithological Society (BOS) in my role of Conservation Officer.

BOS has been working with the applicant and Cherwell District Council to design a biodiversity scheme at our Bicester Wetland Reserve to offset the loss of habitat associated with the original plans for Phase 1 and 2. This scheme would be delivered by BOS in collaboration with Thames Water (who own the site).

We have estimated the cost of delivering this scheme to be £36,000 and therefore welcome the applicant's proposal to provide an additional £6,000 to enable full funding.

We are also supportive of the applicant's proposal to install at least 20 integral Swift bricks in clusters at suitable elevations. In combination with Swift brick installation in the Phase 1 Hotel, this will make a significant contribution to Swift conservation in Bicester. We would advise prioritising Swift brick provision over boxes for other species as the construction of new buildings is a unique opportunity to provide Swift nest sites for many decades to come, whereas other nest boxes are generally short-lived.

The planting scheme set out in the Landscape Strategy includes provision of small areas of wildflower meadow and native tree planting, which we support. In the more formal areas where non-native trees and shrubs are planned, we would like to request that berry-bearing Rowan species are planted. These are very attractive to wintering thrushes and, in some years, Waxwings. There are two species especially favoured - the yellow-berried e.g. Sorbus "sunshine" and the pink-berried e.g. *Sorbus pseudohupehensis*. They are both very attractive small trees and if planted in groups they would provide an excellent sustainable supply of food for birds during the winter months.

Yours sincerely

Mike Pollard

Conservation Officer