

BICESTER GATEWAY PHASE 1B: JOB CREATION CALCULATION

15 APRIL 2020

The Case Officer has requested clarification of the job numbers being generated at Bicester Gateway compared with the 3,500 set out in Policy 10; being a figure that Bloombridge gave to the Policy Team at Cherwell in support of the allocation during the examination in 2014 (relating to discussions around the SOCG). It was a generic calculation, in 2014, which went something like this for Phase 1 and Phase 2 combined, based on the information then available:

- 50 acres at 20,000 sq ft B1 to the acre = 1,000,000 sq ft (95,000 sq m)
- 95,000 sq m at 1 job per 30 sq m = 3,200 jobs

The 1:30 ratio is something applied all the time as a ‘rule of thumb’ for technology parks, including by market leaders such as Arlington, a leading business space, logistics developer and asset manager. However, our economist, Dr Rob Harris of Ramidus Consulting, always states that the ratio varies greatly according to the precise use and mix, notably the office content, whether the efficiencies of a pre-let are available, and whether the site is in town or out of town. The ratio has also sharpened significantly for B1(a) in the last 5 years for now familiar reasons relating to occupancy costs, technology, and the efficiencies achieved from a wide range of work place initiatives. The table below gives the spread, and you can see (allowing for GIA, NIA, GEA issues) that 1:30 is still a reasonable benchmark.

| Use Class | Sub-Category | Sub-Sector | Density (sqm) | Notes |
|-------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------------|---------------|---|
| B1a Offices | General Office | Corporate | 13 | NIA |
| | | Professional Services | 12 | NIA |
| | | Public Sector | 12 | NIA |
| | | TMT | 11 | NIA |
| | Finance & Insurance | 10 | NIA | |
| | Call Centres | | 8 | NIA |
| B1b | R&D Space | | 40-60 | NIA lower densities will be achieved in units with higher provision of shared or communal spaces |
| B1c | Light Industrial | | 47 | NIA |
| B2 | Industrial & Manufacturing | | 36 | GIA |
| B8 | Storage & Distribution | National Distribution Centre | 95 | GEA |
| | | Regional Distribution Centre | 77 | GEA |
| | | 'Final Mile' Distribution Centre | 70 | GEA |
| Mixed B Class | Small Business Workspace | Incubator | 30-60 | B1a, B1b – the density will relate to balance between spaces, as the share of B1a increases so too will employment densities. |
| | | Maker Spaces | 15-40 | B1c, B2, B8 - Difference between 'planned space' density and utilisation due to membership model |
| | | Studio | 20-40 | B1c, B8 |
| | | Co-Working | 10-15 | B1a - Difference between 'planned space' density and utilisation due to membership model |
| | | Managed Workspace | 12-47 | B1a, b, c |
| B8 / Sui Generis | Data Centres | Wholesale | 200-950 | |
| | | Wholesale Dark Site | 440-1,400 | |
| | | Co-location Facility | 180-540 | |

It is also vital to consider the quality and mix of jobs, as well as the quantity, which was one of the points we put in favour of the Phase 1A hotel on job generation grounds. Our Planning Statement for the Phase 1 extant permission referred to 500 jobs on the 14,972 sq m of B1(a) and B1(b) with an additional 50 jobs allocated to the hotel, generating a total of 550 jobs.

So far as where we stand on job generation now, we have:

- Phase 1A, The hotel – 50 jobs
- Phase 1B, 4,413 sq m of B1(a) at say 1:12 so 367 jobs
- Phase 1B, Hub and concierge at say 8 jobs (just to help with rounding)
- At 425 jobs, this compares with the consented 14,972 sq m at 1:30, giving 500 jobs (a reduction of 75 jobs from the extant scheme)

- Phase 2, 23,400 sq m of B1(a)-(c) at 1:30 so 780 jobs
- Phase 2, 10,200 sq m of B1(a)-(c) at 1.30 so 340 jobs (Chicken Farm)
- David Lloyd Leisure (DLL) – maybe 50 jobs

- This gives a grand total of $50 + 367 + 8 + 780 + 340 + 50 = 1,595$ jobs

Policy Bicester 10 refers to 18 hectares (44 acres) and notes that land will be lost to the floodplain and that there may also be an adjustment to the 3,500 job numbers. We measure the total site allocation as 21 hectares (52 acres). There is then the closed chicken farm in addition, c4.5 hectares (11 acres), so 25.5 hectares (63 acres) in total.

In terms of developable area for Phase 2, the main part (Site A) is recorded in the Parameters Plans as 6.02 hectares developable (out of 15.76 hectares) and the chicken farm (Site B) as 2.49 hectares (from 4.58 hectares). This is a significant reduction in the quantum of land available for employment development in Phase 2.

Using the methodology above, we would expect the 8.51 hectares (21 acres) to generate 420,000 sq ft (39,018 sq m), the difference from the application figures being accounted for by the DLL.

In conclusion, the reduction to 1,595 jobs from 3,500 is not due to a loss of employment land per se (given the addition of the chicken farm) nor can it be pinned on Phase 1 as our deficit is just 75 jobs. The key differences comprise:

- The proposal to limit the B1(a) content of Phase 2
- Loss of more developable land than expected to the flood plain
- Loss of B Class land to the DLL (which we support)

We note that the B1(a) content of Phase 2 is being limited by Albion on transportation impact grounds, notably peak hour flow rates along Vendee Drive. In addition, it may be possible to squeeze a better jobs yield for Phase 2 by master planning car parking on part of the flood plain (generally considered acceptable practice).

