

From: Richard Cutler [REDACTED]
Sent: 10 November 2020 11:50
To: Bernadette Owens <Bernadette.Owens@Cherwell-DC.gov.uk>
Cc: Bruce Usher [REDACTED]
Subject: Re: 20/02779/REM - Land adj Promised Land Farm

Dear Bernadette,

Thank you very much for sending this through. We hadn't received notification as a neighbour via the system so it was good of you to let me know. Accordingly, I have read the information on the planning application portal.

As you know, we feel Phase 2 has been a lost opportunity in place-making, but planning permission was issued over the summer and there comes a point where objections need to cease. So we will not be objecting to this reserved matters application and we will leave you to process this submission in line with the expectations set by the outline. In this regard, I would be grateful if you could consider the following points:

1. As expected, the proposal is for an industrial estate. The applicant made the case for 'knowledge sheds', which we accept, but the distinction between knowledge and industrial is a fine line. In simple terms, it is down to the quality of the environment/place created. I am not convinced, therefore, that the current details are sufficient. For example, more could be made of the boulevard (central axis) that starts with Charles Shouler Way, and there is an opportunity to bring the landscape design and ecology of the 'wetlands' and buffer into the built area. This, and layout generally, would help differentiate Catalyst as 'knowledge sheds'.
2. Linking to Point 1, our preference would be for the buildings to address Wendlebury Road in 'active frontage' fashion. This was the intention of the Parameters Plans, but the current plans shows Unit 1 as side on. More generally the offices (as is typical of this sort of development) are shown at first floor level, which means the architecture of the buildings will need to work hard to achieve the activity envisaged by the Parameters Plans. It would be good to see more detail.
3. I am not convinced that sufficient emphasis has been given in the submission to pedestrian and cycle accessibility. This is especially important given that the internal road layout has been designed for HGVs, giving rise to the potential for severe conflicts. There are three particular points:
 - a. It doesn't look like the application includes the combined footway and cycleway on the east side of Wendlebury Road, that runs alongside the garden centre to join with the existing route northwards, as required by the Phase 2 s106, 24 September 2020 (Appendix 4). The short link from the A41 in this location is also not shown. Currently this is infrastructure for Phase 1B to deliver (only) if Phase 2 doesn't, hence it should be shown as being delivered as part of this reserved matters application for Phase 2. **Could you please confirm the position with regard to this aspect of the Phase 2 s106? Paragraph 5, page 13, defines these Works as pre-occupation.** Hence they need to be consented.
 - b. There appears to be no direct foot or cycle access from the east side of Wendlebury Road and the new roundabout to the business space, eg Unit 1. There is also a

footpath from Chesterton that currently crosses Phase 1B which will need to be picked up (as an opportunity for accessibility) in due course.

- c. It would be good to see clearly how Phase 2 provides for pedestrian access to the hotel on Phase 1A. Accessibility to the DLL is also unclear, including from Phase 2 (eg for lunchtime exercise), where it seems that the only access is from Wendlebury Road. See the Development Framework Plan and External Works Layout. In short, the plans cannot be described as permeable.
4. This reserved matters application does not provide a case for removing so many trees along Wendlebury Road (Parameters Plan 3).
5. Paragraph 1.3 of the parking note refers to 25% offices (on the first floor) and this same document also refers to B2. This is consistent with the industrial nature of the master plan and a lower employment yield.
6. Overall, it feels like the place-making potential of the new roundabout has not been optimised. This is key to the relationship with Phase 1, as well as people travelling up and down Wendlebury Road. It is a major new feature and a very major change to Wendlebury Road. The massing sketches shown as Figs 7 – 8 in the DAS are difficult to read and seem to downplay car parking and the set back of the buildings. The area around the roundabout could usefully be the subject of a separate and specific plan to highlight the place-making potential of this feature. It is an important interface with Phase 1.

I trust the above comments are useful. We support the need for Phase 2 to get on and start attracting economic development to Bicester, so the above comments are submitted with the objective of achieving this, whilst also raising/improving the place-making and economic potential of Phase 2.

Best wishes,

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