

# Experience Quarter (EQ)

## Bicester Motion

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Client:	Bicester Motion	Job No	J323684
Date:	03 September 2021	Approved by:	BDF/DJF
Prepared by:	ALF		

## Walking & Cycling Infrastructure – Response to OCC

### 1.1 Introduction

1.1.1 Bicester Motion Ltd has appointed mode transport planning (mode) to provide highways and transportation advice in relation to a planning application for an Automotive Experience Quarter (EQ) on land at the former RAF Bicester, Bicester, Oxfordshire.

1.1.2 The application has been submitted in outline (ref: 21/01224/OUT) to Cherwell District Council (CDC) as planning authority. Oxfordshire County Council (OCC) has been consulted in their capacity as Highway Authority, subsequently providing an officer response dated 24 May 2021.

1.1.3 OCC's response is currently a recommendation for objection, for the following reason:

- The application fails to demonstrate that safe and suitable access will be provided for all users as required under the NPPF.
  - Vehicle tracking is required to demonstrate the safety and suitability of the proposed access arrangements.
  - Further information is required of the nature of the proposed use of the secondary Experience Centre access from Bicester Road to demonstrate the arrangements are suitable.
  - The proposed facilities for pedestrian and cycle access to the Brand Experience Centre are substandard and are lacking entirely for access to the lake.
- OCC Public Rights of Way raise an objection on the basis that the proposals do not make provision for improved public rights of way or public access within the site.

1.1.4 Although the primary focus of this Technical Note (TN) response is to address the sustainable cycling and walking concerns and queries raised by OCC, subsequent Sections (1.3 & 1.4) also cover the remaining elements, including, access vehicle tracking, further information/clarification on the secondary accesses from Bicester Road and Public Rights of Way.

- 1.1.5 Furthermore, the Bicester Bicycle User Group (BUG) has also submitted an objection (25 May 2021) raising a number of detailed considerations in terms of the cycle infrastructure provision. Many of these point relate to the application of LTN1/20 and have parallels with comments raised by OCC.
- 1.1.6 It is considered that the EQ development can and will be suitably accessible by walking and cycling, and that internally linking the connections with the proposed 3m wide shared footway/cycleways to be delivered as part of the Hotel and Command Works (approved application refs: 18/01253/F & 18/01333/F, respectively) is appropriate and applicable.
- 1.1.7 The overall proposed access to the development is considered to be in accordance with NPPF and also local & national design guidance for pedestrian and cycle infrastructure provision (considering the local area/context and forecast level of development trip generation).
- 1.1.8 Currently, the request for S106 contributions for pedestrian and cycle infrastructure is not considered to be reasonable. It is considered that this does not satisfy the CIL tests (Regulation 122) for planning obligations, namely:
- necessary to make the development acceptable in planning terms;
  - directly related to the development; and,
  - fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind to the development.
- 1.1.9 The salient items pertaining to OCC's formal objection response and comments are cited within this TN (in *italics*), in the following Sections; mode's responses, justification and clarifications to address these, are subsequently provided in the following paragraphs.

## 1.2 Pedestrian & Cycle Accessibility

### 1.2.1 OCC Comments:

*"The proposals for pedestrian and cycle access to the site are inadequate, do not meet standards of the LTN 1/20 and would not serve to encourage sustainable travel to the development..."*

*Pedestrian and cycle infrastructure must be direct and continuous in order to increase walking and cycling mode shares and infrastructure requirements must be provided in line with latest standards set out in the OCC walking and cycling design guides and the LTN 1/20.*

*Recently permitted developments on the wider Bicester Motion site are to provide sections of footway / cycleway on the eastern side of Skimmingdish Lane, up to the Bicester Motion Hotel site access.*

*However, this proposal does not propose a continuation of that footway / cycleway up to the new access. The only pedestrian connection proposed for this development is a short section of footway to the north of the access junction and a tactile crossing to take visitors to the western side of Skimmingdish Lane.”*

- 1.2.2 The proposed 3m shared-use footway/cycleway to the north of the access (Inc. crossing point with refuge), as illustrated on mode drawing J32-3684-PS-201, is intended to facilitate and link with residential area and local connections to the west and north (in particular, Thompson Drive and the connecting route across to Fringford Road).
- 1.2.3 As referenced above (& by OCC), there are extents of 3m wide shared footway/cycleway proposed as part of recently permitted developments on the wider Bicester Motion site (i.e., and in particular, the Hotel and Command Works applications, refs: 18/01253/F & 18/01333/F, respectively); the proposals are for the EQ development to provide an internal pedestrian/cycle route and connection towards the hotel access (within Bicester Motion’s land boundary) which will link in with the proposed footway/cycleway on the eastern side of Buckingham Road. This is indicatively illustrated on the mode Walking/Cycling Movement Strategy Plan, attached to this note **Appendix A**, for reference.
- 1.2.4 The final alignment and specification of these internal routes will be undertaken during the detailed design and Reserved Matters application stages; however, it is intended that these will seek to be provided at a similar 3m width for shared footway/cycleways (as per the previously approved application’s off-site provision).
- 1.2.5 Ultimately, by internally connecting with the prior approved (Hotel & Command Works) application’s proposals, as above, will therefore provide suitable and convenient access for pedestrians and cyclists to access the EQ development site.
- 1.2.6 Whilst it is appreciated and acknowledged that the Department for Transport’s (2020) Local Transport Note (LTN) 1/20 on Cycle Infrastructure Design provides high-quality design principles/standards for dedicated & strategic cycle routes (with a primary focus and emphasis for when a Local Authority is designing new major (inter-urban) cycle schemes, and especially, when applying for Government funding for new cycle infrastructure); it is not considered, in this instance, to be wholly necessary and appropriate for the Bicester Motion EQ development to specifically provide fully segregated cycle lanes (3m) and adjacent footways (2m) along the northern sections of Buckingham Road, in the vicinity of the site and access.

- 1.2.7 It is considered that this is currently out of context and character of the local surrounding area and existing infrastructure that is currently in place, and/or proposed as part of future development proposals. The EQ development, as aforementioned proposes to (internally) tie in with the approved 3m wide shared footway/cycleways (and various crossings, Inc. a toucan south of Skimmingdish Lane) promoted as part of the Hotel and Command Works applications – this will provide suitable and safe access for future development users of the EQ to travel north and south towards Bicester Town Centre.
- 1.2.8 It is noted that both LTN 1/20 and OCC's Cycling Design Standards (2017) do reference and support the use of shared footway/cycleways (where it is not appropriate, possible or necessary to provide fully segregated off-carriageway paths), and in which it is considered that these (shared footway/cycleways) are appropriate and suitable for promotion as part of this development application; particularly in this vicinity and location of the site, along the northern section of Buckingham Road (north of the Skimmingdish Lane roundabout). It is considered that the provision of 3m wide shared footway/cycleways along the northern extent of Buckingham Road is in-line with and in accordance with OCC's guidance (as previously agreed and approved for previous recent planning applications).
- 1.2.9 LTN 1/20 advises that a 3m wide shared footway/cycleway is capable of accommodating up to 300 cyclists and 300 pedestrians, per hour (i.e., a total of 600). Considering the development proposals trip generation (as forecast within the Transport Assessment (TA)), this level of pedestrian and cycling activity across the entire day could accommodate 100% of the EQ's daily visitors and employees travelling to and from the site sustainably (i.e. walking and cycling). More realistically, and as per the National Travel Statistics (NTS) modal share for leisure and tourism (also cited within the TA), the development may generate c.85 combined walking and cycling trips (even including those coming to the site by train and bus – total mode share total of c.20%), during the peak hours. Therefore, shared footway/cycleways are considered most appropriate and acceptable for the future development proposals along Buckingham Road.
- 1.2.10 CDC's 2020 Local Cycling & Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) highlights and defines the northern extent of Buckingham Road (north of Skimmingdish Lane) as a "Quiet Route Off-Road", which emphasises and advocates that the full implementation of dedicated and segregated cycle lanes (as specified within LTN1/20) would not be promoted along this section of carriageway – giving consideration to the actual level of existing demand and also even now when considering the proposed development's level of walking and cycling trips (as referenced above).
- 1.2.11 Buckingham Road, south of the Skimmingdish Lane roundabout, towards Bicester Town Centre, is specified within the LCWIP as a "High Traffic Route", which is classified as one of the key corridors (BCR10) into Bicester Town Centre, and earmarked for future improvements by OCC, as per the subsequent paragraphs and contribution request.

## Contributions

- 1.2.12 OCC within their response has requested contributions from the EQ development, towards cycling and walking infrastructure connection improvements between the site, Bicester's railway stations and the town centre. This is presumed to be related and intertwined with the LCWIP (although not explicitly referenced), for future infrastructure along the southern sections of Buckingham Road (south of Skimmingdish Lane roundabout) towards the town centre.
- 1.2.13 OCC's LTP4 refers to the development of a preferred option for a pedestrian/cycle shared use facility along Buckingham Road between its junctions with Field Street and Churchill Road.
- 1.2.14 OCC has requested a sum of £386,098; this contribution has currently been based upon a feasibility study and concept designs prepared in 2015 (pre-dating LTN 1/20).
- 1.2.15 OCC are requesting that the EQ development provides the contribution costs associated with the entire section of improvements along Buckingham Road, from Churchill Road to Field Street / Banbury Road – this equates to a significant c.64% proportion of the entire scheme costs contained within the feasibility study referenced within OCC's highways response.
- 1.2.16 mode consider that this is not fair and reasonably proportionate in scale and kind to the development proposals; in addition, given that the proposed scheme only provides infrastructure up to Churchill Road, this is also not considered necessary and appropriate to make the proposed development acceptable in planning terms; with specific reference to the CIL test criteria (Regulation 122).
- 1.2.17 Furthermore, and as aforementioned, the EQ development is currently forecast to generate up to 85 two-way walking/cycling trips during the peak hours (even inc. those visitors potentially utilising rail and bus services), therefore, this impact is not significant and the demand is not considered commensurate with the proposed contribution request.
- 1.2.18 OCC state within their response, in relation to the pedestrian/cycle connections, the following:

*“The proposed leisure-based development is expected to attract significant numbers of new visitors every year. In order to accommodate this level of development and mitigate the development's traffic and transport impacts, improved sustainable transport connections between the site, town centre and train stations are required so that suitable and attractive alternatives to car travel are readily available.*”

- 1.2.19 Whilst it is agreed with the above statement; it should be noted that, in addition to the sustainable contributions requested, BM are also expected to provide S106 contributions and S278 off-site highways mitigation improvements to the Banbury Road / Buckingham Road Roundabouts, respectively; and also propose to upgrade/mitigate the Buckingham Road/Bicester Road priority junction, whilst contributing to the proposed dualling of Skimmingdish Lane (strategic highways improvements).
- 1.2.20 All of the above mitigates the development's highways impacts, prior to any proposed shift in sustainable travel and transport use (i.e. a robust highways assessment); therefore, the sustainable travel and strategic highways contribution requests, should be reconsidered with a more balanced / aligned approach, in order to offset the impacts against one another more efficiently and effectively – i.e., either provide increased highway mitigation / capacity infrastructure contributions or provide sustainable infrastructure measures/contributions (to encourage and stimulate more walking/cycling), and as a result naturally shifting away from the highway capacity elements being required. Ultimately, by providing both significant strategic highways and sustainable travel measures, through related contributions, is by virtue, a contradiction of trying to achieve a sustainable modal shift, as both are still being accommodated.
- 1.2.21 The LCWIP highlights the allocated development throughout Bicester that would also benefit and utilise this infrastructure along Buckingham Road, and therefore, further development should also be required to contribute towards such schemes (Inc. the section along Buckingham Road that the EQ is currently solely being asked to contribute towards); as such, again, it is considered that the pedestrian and cycling improvement scheme contribution costs are not fair and proportionate to the EQ development proposals.
- 1.2.22 **OCC comment:**
- “The development is likely to lead to an increase in visitors to the lake area, however there are no pedestrian facilities along Bicester Road where access to the lake is to be taken. This could potentially be overcome through improved public access route(s) through the site.”*
- 1.2.23 Similarly to the proposed sustainable access to the EQ (from Hotel), as above, the intention is to provide internal footway/cycle connection routes from the EQ toward the lake area and future wider-masterplan development to the northwest; negating the need to provide infrastructure specifically adjacent to the Bicester Road carriageway. This again is indicatively illustrated on the Walking/Cycling Movement Strategy Plan, appended to this note, for reference.
- 1.2.24 However, although it is appreciated that the lake area was included within the redline/ownership boundaries of the application, and that the existing access was referenced within the TA, it should be noted that this is solely a retained access and does not form a part of the planning application proposals to access the development.

## 1.3 Access, Vehicle Tracking & Secondary Access Junction Usage

### 1.3.1 OCC Comments:

*“ Vehicle tracking is required at all junctions to demonstrate that the largest vehicles anticipated to require access to the site can safely and easily enter and exit.*

*It is unclear exactly what level of usage of the secondary ‘servicing and emergency’ access from Bicester Road is expected. Should this access be the primary servicing access and / or used for larger vehicles, it is likely that further improvements to the access junction would be required.*

*It is not clear what the servicing requirement for the site is to be, how frequently the access from Bicester Road is going to be used, or whether all servicing vehicles will be required to use that access. However, should this access be used for significant servicing requirements and for larger vehicles, a full bellmouth junction may be required. These details should be provided.*

*The main site access junction is again proposed to accommodate all movements in, but only left-turners out. This means that those leaving the site wishing to head north on the A4421 would need to turn at the Skimmingdish Lane roundabout, c.675m to the south. It is unclear whether a junction allowing all movements has been considered and if so, why this has been discounted.”*

- 1.3.2 An all movements access junction was considered and modelled as part of the earlier feasibility analysis for the EQ development – allowing the right turn movement out from the site (travelling north along Buckingham Road) resulted in excessive queuing and delay within the site’s access arm. By restricting the right turn and forcing all egressing vehicles to turn left out of the site reduced this queuing and delay. As aforementioned and discussed with OCC previously through scoping, the Buckingham Road / Skimmingdish Lane Roundabout has been fully assessed and mitigated with consideration for the u-turning movements from the development site traffic. Although there is a longer route of c.650m needing to be traversed for vehicles travelling north to go around the roundabout, this is considered to be a safer option than to have vehicles attempting to egress the site in a smaller gap in free-flowing traffic along Buckingham Road.
- 1.3.3 Vehicle tracking has been undertaken at the main site access on Buckingham Road and is shown on mode drawing **J32-3684-PS-202**, appended to this note, for reference (**Appendix B**). This demonstrates that a 12m rigid truck is able to safely and suitably access and egress the site’s main access in a forward gear.

- 1.3.4 The secondary ‘servicing and emergency’ access from Bicester Road is intended to be utilised as a service entrance for back of house deliveries, waste management and as an emergency access – it is anticipated that the frequency of use for this access by service vehicles will be relatively low, forecast to only experience up to c.8 – 10 two-way service vehicles per day. Subsequently, it is proposed to reinstate the existing dropped kerb crossover, without any significant modification works (Inc. upgrading to a formal bellmouth junction), except for necessary surfacing and drainage works, in order to safeguard the adjoining local highway network. Appropriate signage and security fencing will also be considered and incorporated within the design (as appropriate), to be confirmed and included at the detailed design stage.
- 1.3.5 The largest servicing vehicle anticipated to access the development site via the secondary access is a 12m rigid truck. The associated swept path analysis demonstrating that a 12m rigid truck will be able to suitably access and egress in a forward gear is attached to this note, for reference (mode drawing **J32-3684-PS-012**), **Appendix B**.

## 1.4 Public Rights of Way

### 1.4.1 OCC Comments:

*“The proposal provides no assessment or provision for public rights of way and public access in a way that helps deliver public access benefit to address the impacts of the cross-site public rights of way stopped up pre-war. The site should be made part permeable by reconnecting Public Rights of Way.*

*OCC Public Rights of Way request that the site be made part-permeable through the reinstatement of Public Rights of Way connection that was cut off pre-war.”*

- 1.4.2 Connectivity across the wider Bicester Motion site is something that has been considered as part of the previous and current planning applications, in order to ensure that the development parcels are interconnected and link up efficiently to both the existing and proposed infrastructure along the local highway network.
- 1.4.3 The opportunity for this wider connectivity is ultimately dependent upon the cumulative delivery of the Innovation Quarter, Experience Quarter, Wilderness Quarter and other projects associated with the masterplan. As this is a strategic opportunity more appropriate with the wider cumulative delivery of additional Bicester Motion Masterplan developments, this may therefore be better addressed and considered as part of the final phase of development and planning application.



1.4.4 Connectivity across the wider site is clearly in the interest of Bicester Motion, due to the different functions and inter-relationship between the various phases of development; it is intended that the Experience Quarter will enable controlled public access throughout the site – although, this must be ‘controlled’ in certain areas/elements, due to the active airfield. However, it is also noted that this PRoW request is an aspiration on the part of OCC, and not necessarily required in order to make the development ‘acceptable’ on its planning merits – therefore, not CIL compliant.

## 1.5 Summary & Conclusion

1.5.1 It is considered that the EQ development will be suitably accessible by walking and cycling, and that internally linking the connections with the proposed 3m wide shared footway/cycleways to be delivered as part of the Hotel and Command Works (approved application refs: 18/01253/F & 18/01333/F, respectively) is appropriate and applicable.

1.5.2 The overall proposed access to the development is considered to be in accordance with NPPF and also local & national design guidance for pedestrian and cycle infrastructure provision (considering the local area/context and forecast level of development trip generation).

1.5.3 In terms of the proposed strategic walking and cycle improvement contributions requested by OCC, further information, justification and discussion in relation to this is required, in order to ensure that this is compliant with and satisfies the appropriate CIL testing criteria (Regulation 122) – i.e. is this:

- necessary to make the development acceptable in planning terms;
- directly related to the development; and,
- fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind to the development.

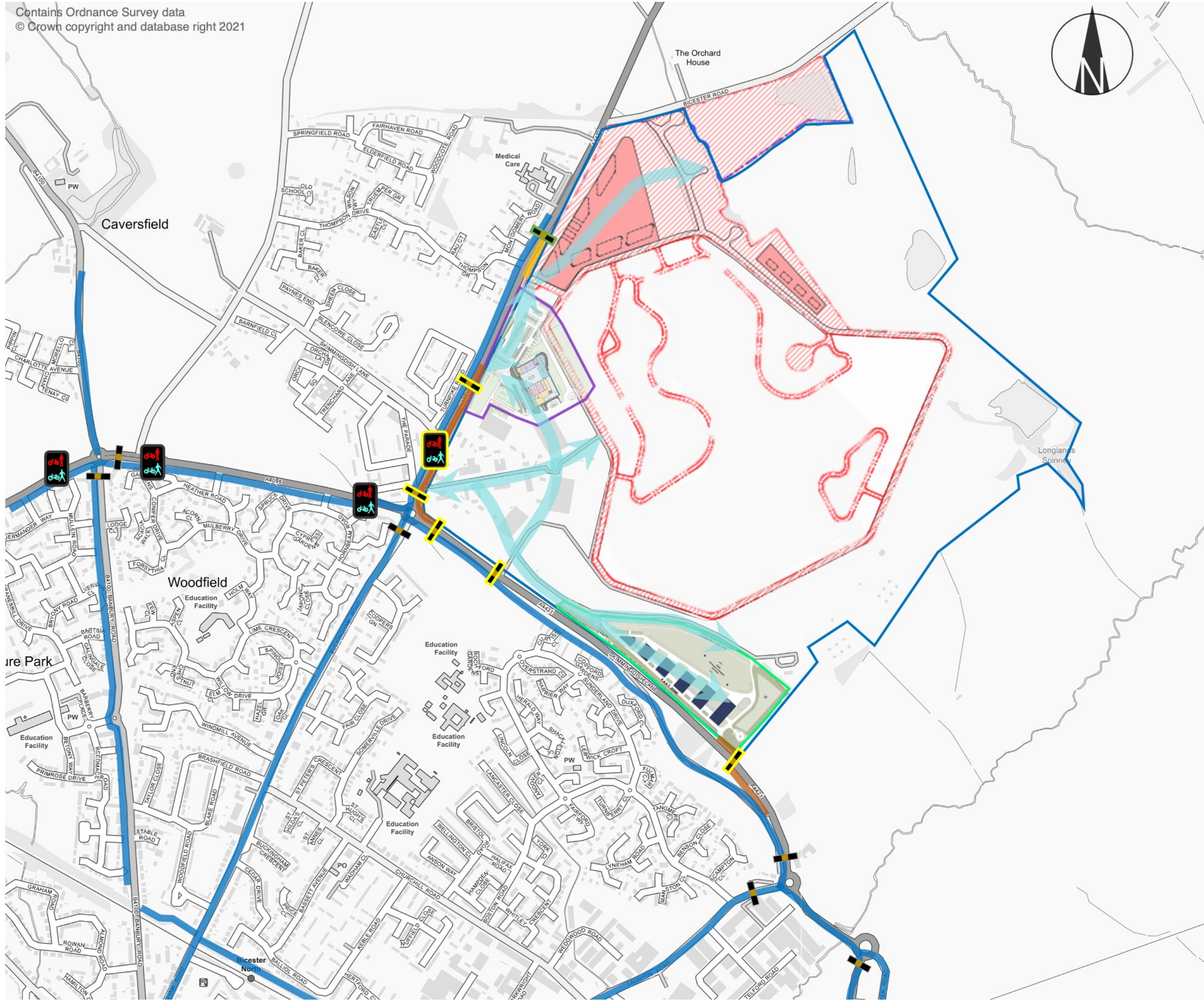
1.5.4 Currently, the request for S106 contributions for pedestrian and cycle infrastructure is not considered to be reasonable. It is considered that this does not satisfy the CIL tests (Regulation 122) for planning obligations, in particular, ‘fair and reasonably related in scale and kind to the development’.

1.5.5 In addition to the above, vehicle tracking has been undertaken at the main site access on Buckingham Road and the proposed secondary access on Bicester Road, which demonstrates that the appropriate servicing vehicles are able to safely and suitably access and egress the development in a forward gear.

1.5.6 It is ultimately concluded that the EQ development site can be accommodated on the local highway network (considering the current proposals, in association with the previous BM approved planning application's infrastructure) as demonstrated in a robust and worst-case scenario (undertaken in the TA); however, the applicant is committed to the enhancement of public transport, walking and cycling infrastructure through the promotional Travel Planning measures, to help further reduce potential impacts and improve accessibility for all.

## Appendix A

### Indicative Walking & Cycling Movement Strategy Plan



- Key**
- Experience Quarter/Mixed Use
  - Experience Quarter Leisure, Track, Ancillary
  - EQ Application Boundary
  - Hotel Application Boundary
  - IQ Application Boundary
  - Ownership Boundary
  - Existing Footpath/Cycleway
  - Proposed Foot/Cycleway (Previous Hotel / NTS / IQ Applications)
  - Proposed Foot/Cycleway (EQ Application)
  - Existing Ped/Cycle Crossing
  - P Existing Toucan Crossing
  - P Proposed Ped/Cycle Crossing (EQ Application)
  - P Proposed Ped/Cycle Crossing (Previous Hotel / NTS / IQ Applications)
  - P Proposed Toucan Crossing (Previous NTS Application)
  - Internal Site/Masterplan Indicative Foot/Cycleway Provision

**Figure Title**  
 Walking & Cycling Movement Strategy Plan

**Figure Number**  
 EQ1

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**Project Title**  
 Bicester Heritage EQ

**Project Number**  
 J323684



## Appendix B

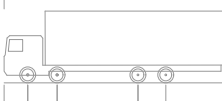
### Access Swept Path Analysis Drawings



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 Dimensions shown are in metres unless stated otherwise.  
 Road markings & traffic signs are to be in accordance with 'The Traffic Signs Regulations and General Directions 2016'.  
 Tactile paving is to be in accordance with 'Guidance on the use of tactile paving surfaces 2007'.  
 Visibility Splays shown are taken from 'DMRB'.



Red Line Boundary   
 Extent of Adopted Highway 

	Rigid Truck	12,000m
	Overall Length	2,500m
	Overall Width	3,928m
	Min Body Ground Clearance	0.412m
	Track Width	2.471m
	Lock-to-Lock time	6.00s
	Curb to Curb Turning Radius	11,900m

A	05-11-19	Issued
rev	date	remarks
client		

Bicester Motion

job title  
 Bicester Motion  
 Brand Experience Application

drawing title  
 Swept Path Analysis -  
 Proposed Access (12m Rigid)

drawing no.  
 J32-3684-PS-202

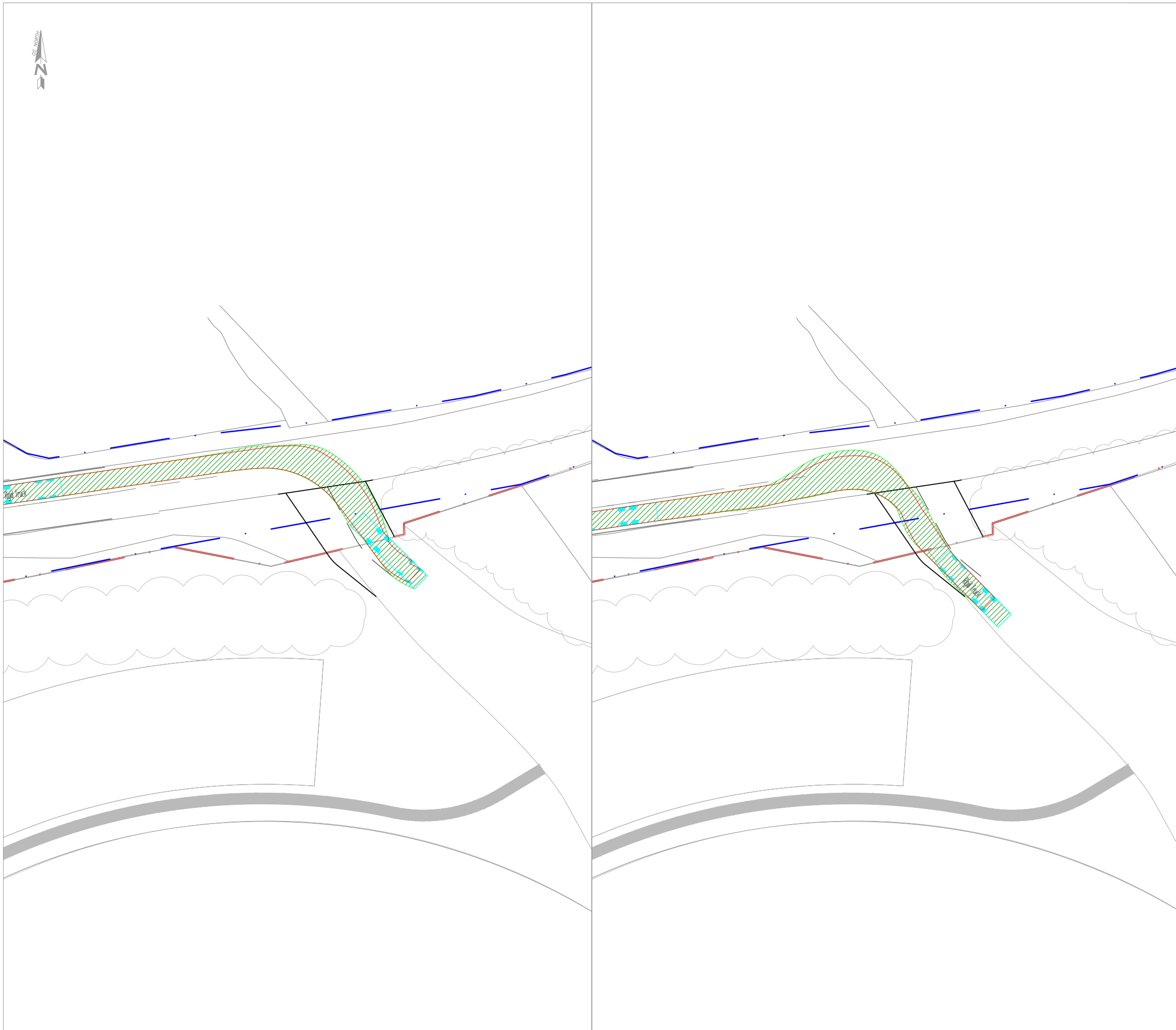
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File: C:\Users\james\OneDrive\OneDrive\Projects\Birmingham2\Project\J323684\_Bicester Heritage Heritage Masterplan16\_Graphics2\_CAD2\_Sheets\191105\_J32-3684-PS-202.dwg



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A	25-08-21	Initial Issue
rev	date	remarks

client

Bicester Motion

job title  
 Bicester Motion  
 Brand Experience Application

drawing title  
 Bicester Road - Secondary Access  
 Swept Path Analysis

drawing no.  
 J32-3684-PS-012

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