

## Rebekah Morgan

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**From:** Charlotte Watkins  
**Sent:** 01 November 2021 10:19  
**To:** Rebekah Morgan  
**Cc:** Andy Bateson  
**Subject:** RE: Bicester Motion - Experience quarter

Rebekah

The ecologists for Bicester Motion have sent on a Biodiversity Impact Assessment as requested. This does estimate that an acceptable overall net gain for biodiversity is achievable on site using the figures they have calculated. CDC has approved and suggested use of the WCC metric in the past despite it not being of direct local relevance to Cherwell DC, because this is the metric that was first introduced here when WCC covered my post. We have for a few years however accepted the DEFRA metric. I understand the viewpoint put forward by CPRE therefore that ideally the metric would now be rerun with the latest DEFRA calculator to ensure we are using the most up to date tool available in our assessment. There is no reason why this cannot be done for this application and the masterplan site as a whole.

I am of the opinion that we should request the applicant's ecologists to respond to the points raised in the recent comments that have resulted from CPRE commissioning additional ecological resource to assess the application. The document makes sound points throughout and clearly outlines where this application may struggle to protect the interest of the LWS and to achieve the net gain that is required.

Whilst the application is at outline stage, it directly impacts a Local Wildlife Site so it is important that we ensure there is confidence that the overall ecological value of the site will be enhanced and a net gain will be achieved that can be maintained throughout the operation of the site.

The current proposals entail loss of parts of the LWS habitats and therefore alternative options to this loss should be considered (for example outlining why at least some of the building footprint cannot be largely outside the LWS boundary). Where there is no alternative however, mitigation needs to be proven to be achievable. Mitigation here and net biodiversity gain depends largely on the applicants ability to create and maintain areas of Open Mosaic Habitat on site – at the side of the 4 x 4 track for example. It is not clear to me if all of these areas will be suitable for achieving OMH (in good condition) when operational given their proximity to vehicle movement and the likely kick up of sediment, footfall and exhaust pollution around the track? What is the 'battle' track to be made of? Will drivers stay on this track or will there be some off road driving?

I have some concern about the reliance on 'ecology car parks' for some of the habitat creation. I cannot tell from the plans the extent of areas to be used in this way (or why, if they are ecologically valuable, it is only a proportion of car parks that are proposed to be designed this way). This is a relatively novel interpretation of this type of car parking surface as far as I can tell, that I have not seen before and I have been unable to find any examples of this leading to achievement of habitats of value to invertebrates or Priority Habitats of LWS status. It would be useful if the applicants could send on evidence of the efficacy of using operational car parks to achieve good condition Open Mosaic Habitat and give a clearer idea of how large these car parking areas would need to be.

The ecological appraisal and enhancement plans suggest that green roofs will be 'sought' as additional enhancements however there is no indication of whether this will actually happen. I would like to see a commitment to include them (not just stating 'where viable') on a percentage of roofs.

Kind regards  
Charlotte

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My usual working hours are: Monday and Wednesday mornings.

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