

Our ref: Q100411 rf/eb
Your ref: 2021/2286/F
Email: emma.bilton@quod.com
Date: 03 December 2021



Rebekah Morgan
Development Management
Cherwell District Council
Bodicote House
Banbury
OX15 4AA

By Email

Dear Rebekah,

Proposed Greggs Drive-Thru Land adjoining Skimmingdish Lane, Bicester (Application Reference 2021/2286/F)

An updated Drainage Strategy was submitted to you on 18th November which responds to the LLFA's comments (dated 2nd September). It includes significant upgrades to the sustainable drainage solution for the site to ensure it is better adapted to the predicted impacts of climate change, in accordance with Policy ESD7 (SuDS). The new strategy sees surface water discharged to the ditch to the south east of the site via a detention basin and swale.

These sustainable drainages features have been incorporated within the undeveloped part of the application site. An updated Landscape Plan (ref 15987-VL-L01C) and Site Masterplan (ref 15987-109B) are now enclosed which regularises the updates to the draining solution with the planning drawings.

The Biodiversity Assessment (BA) has also been updated to reflect the landscaping changes, and the corresponding commitments to managing this soft landscaped area. The findings are summarised in the enclosed Technical Note.

This completes the suite of updates to the scheme to fully address consultation feedback to the application.

Biodiversity and Landscape

The original submitted scheme resulted in a change of + 0.46 biodiversity units (i.e. a net gain). The BA has been reviewed following changes to the original landscape design including the sustainable drainage features. As well as alleviating flood risk by contributing to the sustainable drainage solution, the detention basin to the south provides an important wetland habitat on site for birds and reptiles.

The management of onsite existing habitats has also been reviewed and a low-maintenance approach focussing on improving these habitats is proposed by the Applicants.





The scheme changes, in addition to effective management (including proper control of invasive species; e.g. Variegated Yellow Archangel) of the space, results in a gain of 1.23 biodiversity units (or a 18% net gain achieved at the site).

This significantly exceeds the requirements (10%) of the Environment Act which will come into force following the passing of secondary legislation.

A formal response to the Ecology Officer's comments (dated 13th September), regarding the existing biodiversity and future management of the site, has been prepared by RSK in the form of the aforementioned Technical Note.

The Ecology Officer raised concerns about mitigation strategies for birds and reptiles. These strategies are encapsulated within the scheme changes and management regime.

The measures set out within the Technical Note include annual mowing of the wildflower area, maintenance of the pond area and swale and controlling invasive species. It is anticipated these management measures will be controlled via condition.

The enhancement to site drainage, soft landscaping and biodiversity each represent significant planning benefits in their own right, and contribute to the overall climate change and sustainability merits of the scheme.

Climate Change and Sustainability

Policy Bicester 11 requires consideration of climate change mitigation and adaption measures, including demonstration of compliance with Policies ESD 1 – 5, where feasible.

As previously noted, Policy Bicester 11 is founded on the expectation of a comprehensive large scale employment scheme being delivered across an area of 15ha. However, the proposals only occupy a residual developable area of 0.28ha. Nevertheless, the Applicant and operator are alive to the local and national policy emphasis on mitigating the climate change impacts of development.

It is helpful, within the context of the final set of scheme changes, to summarise the extent to which the proposal addresses the respective policies.

We have attached a summary matrix which outlines how the proposed development responds in a positive manner to each of the relevant criteria of Policies ESD1-5. Further commentary on Policies ESD1 and ESD2 has been prepared by Thornley & Lumb Partnership which sets out how the scheme addresses the three hierarchies of energy: be lean, Be Clean and Be Green.

This demonstrates accordance with the development plan, and that the proposals truly represent a sustainable form of development, meaning that the presumption in favour of granting planning permission should be applied.



We trust that this is helpful, and look forward to receiving confirmation that the application will be reported favourably to the January meeting of Planning Committee. In the meantime, should you have any queries then please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely

EBilton

Emma Bilton
Planner

enc. As noted