

Our ref: Q210286/JW/EL
Your ref: 21/03177/F
Email: johnathan.welton@quod.com
Date: 21 February 2022



Caroline Ford
Cherwell District Council
Development Management
Bodicote House
Bodicote
Banbury
OX15 4AA

By Email

Dear Caroline

Axis J9, Bicester

I write in connection with the above planning application for employment development at Axis J9.

OCC Highways Response

Following receipt of the consultation response from OCC Highways and subsequent meetings with Officers at both CDC and OCC, please find the following enclosed:

- Axis J9 Phase 3 Technical Note: Response to OCC Highways Consultation Response
- Proposed Site Finishes Plan 20019-TP-003-G
- Proposed Site Plan 20019-TP-002-L
- Site Location Plan 20019-TP-001-C
- Green Infrastructure Plan 20019-TP-004-K

This letter should be read alongside these plans and documents.

Pedestrian and Cyclist Connectivity

- A footpath between units 10 & 11 (see amended Site Plan ref: 20019-TP-002-J), now provides pedestrian access to Howes Lane and the residential area to the east.
- The footpath will link to the existing Public Right of Way (no. 129/15/10) which leads to Wansbeck Drive.
- A signalised crossing on Howes Lane is now provided in the same location and to the same specification as previously approved in connection with residential development at the Site.

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- Amended plans provide a segregated 2.5m cycleway and 2m footway on the west side of the SLR, instead of a shared facility. This is compliant with national guidance LTN 1/20.
- The location of cycle parking facilities serving Unit 1 has been amended.

Rebuttal

There are several issues raised by OCC which are rebutted via this submission, notably:

- Provision of pedestrian refuges within the site access junctions was discussed during pre-application engagement with OCC. It was demonstrated that refuges would be impractical due to the swept path tracking of larger commercial/refuse vehicles, which OCC and their advisors accepted during the discussions. There has been no material change in circumstances that would warrant objections now being raised on this matter.
- OCC refer to the protected route for a pedestrian-cycle link to Howes Lane in the vicinity of the junction to the south of Phase 3. The safeguarding of the land was requested by OCC and agreed during the pre-application. During this time, it was agreed the pedestrian-cycle link would only be implemented after the SLR and would be for OCC to deliver.
- OCC refer to the potential for bus stops being accommodated on the road between the SLR and Axis J9 Phases 1 and 2. However, the NWB bus strategy did not show bus stops on this section. Nearby stops were indicated on the SLR and these locations are not prejudiced by the current design proposals. The onus is on the wider Eco Town to secure the locations suitable to serve the full development.

Proposed Use of Buildings

The Applicant has sought to demonstrate via the application that the proposed development would not have a severe impact on the local highway network (even in advance of the SLR being delivered) and it can therefore be delivered and fully occupied now. This conclusion is now also supported by up-to-date traffic count data, rather than just historical modelling data consistently referred to and relied upon by OCC until this Application.

Notwithstanding the above, in recognition that there is already concern amongst local residents and Members about the capacity of the local network, the Applicant has sought to engage positively with CDC and OCC about relatively minor interventions / short term solutions that could provide some additional capacity on the local network.

The Applicant had hoped that this would give all parties additional comfort that some further development (even beyond that proposed by this Application) could come forward at the Eco Town in the short term without unacceptable impacts arising on the local highway network. In doing so, this would provide CDC and OCC with an opportunity to collect additional Section 106 monies from other developers to help fund the delivery of SLR and/or consider alternative funding options prior to the delivery of the Eco Town being forced to come to a complete halt.



The Applicant has, however, now been advised that OCC do not wish to engage further with their proposals for off-site junction improvements but that concerns regarding impacts on the local highway network remain.

In light of this, the Applicant is asking that CDC and OCC consider the use of the following Grampian condition, which mirrors that attached to earlier phases of development at the Axis J9 Business Park:

“No more than 14,188 square metres of Class E(g)(iii)/B2 floor space may be occupied until the development work to realign Howes Lane and Lords Lane approved under application 14/01968/F (or any other such planning permission which may be granted for the Strategic Link Road / realignment of Howes Lane) has been completed and the road is open to vehicular traffic.”

The effect of the suggested condition would be to restrict occupation of part of the proposed development (equivalent to the floorspace within the larger units to the west of the SLR) to Use Class B8 until such time as the SLR is complete and open to traffic. The trips associated with the pattern of occupation that would be possible with this condition in operation would be very limited indeed.

Upon the completion of the SLR, the development would no longer be bound by such a condition and the development could be occupied for the full range of E(g)(iii)/B2/B8 uses, as originally proposed at the time the application was submitted.

It is noted that BTM modelling is currently being undertaken and is expected to be available by the end of February 2022. If the results are available prior to determination of the Application and support the Applicant’s view that that fully flexible occupation of the buildings can be accepted pre-SLR, there would be no need for the proposed Grampian condition.

Summary

This correspondence and its enclosures update and amend the planning application and should be consulted upon as appropriate and necessary. The matters raised in this letter and the enclosed documents clearly address the comments made by OCC Highways and provide pragmatic, sustainable solutions. The Applicant trusts that the Application can now be positively progressed without further delay.

Yours sincerely



Johnathan Welton
Assistant Planner



enc. As noted
cc. Kelvin Pearce, Albion Land