

Our ref: Q210286
Your ref: 21/03177/F
Email: emma.lancaster@quod.com
Date: 18 March 2022



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

By Email

Dear Caroline

Axis J9, Phase 3

I write in response to your email dated 18 February 2022, which set out Officers' views on the proposals.

The Applicant and their team have considered your comments, together with those from key consultees, and a series of amendments have been made to the proposals in response. The nature of these changes is described below. Additional information in support of the proposals is also submitted (see below and enclosed).

BRITA

I am delighted to confirm that the Applicant has agreed letting terms Brita Water Filter Systems Ltd in respect of Unit 4. Accordingly, I enclose correspondence from the occupier which details their support for the scheme.

BRITA's occupation of the building represents an expansion of their existing operations in Bicester and the proposed operations at the site will enable the establishment of new lines of production, complementing their existing business operations at another site in Bicester (which will continue to operate).

Securing a "pre-let" for the site is a clear indication of the level of demand for flexible employment floorspace in Bicester, further supporting the Applicant's submitted planning case.

Design and Layout

Units 6-11

You expressed concerns about the design and layout of the part of the development which was located to the east of the strategic link road ("SLR") (i.e. Units 6-11).



This element of the proposals has now been removed from the application. Accordingly, several of the plans which support the application have been updated to reflect the change, this includes the planning application boundary plan (please see enclosed Drawings and Documents Schedule for details).

For avoidance of doubt this does not mean that the Applicant accepts or agrees with the views that were expressed by Officers in relation to this part of the scheme, however it is essential that planning permission is secured without further delay to meet BRITA's needs (as detailed in their letter of support, the development needs to be ready for occupation by mid-2023).

Units 1-3

You requested that the rainscreen feature cladding and projecting fins along the southwestern elevation of Unit 1-3 be extended and the proposals have been updated in accordance with this suggestion (see Figure 1.1 and 1.2 for comparison).

Figure 1.1 – South West Elevation of Unit 1 to 3 as submitted

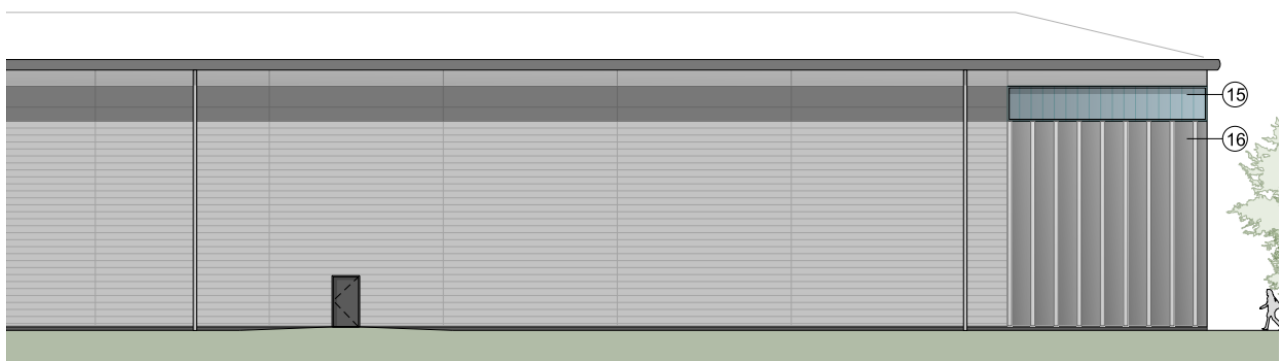
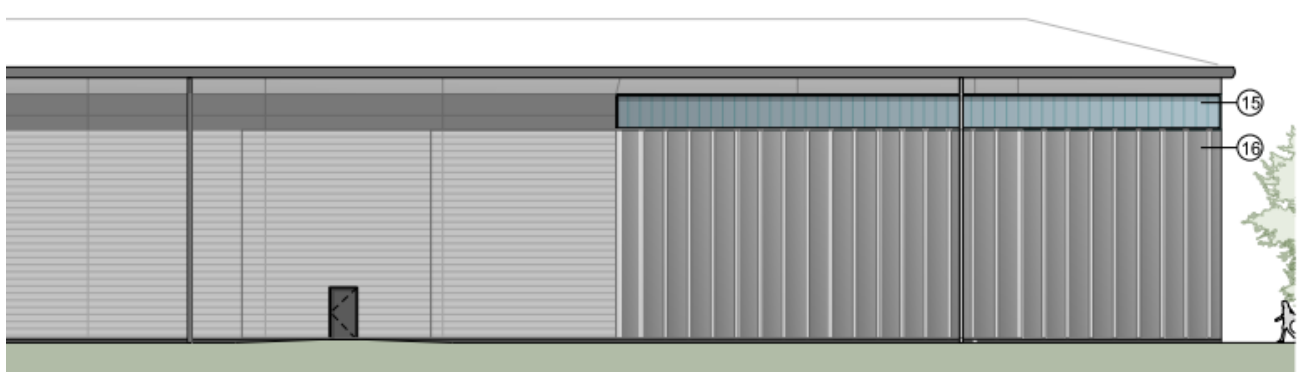


Figure 1.2 – South West Elevation of Unit 1 to 3 as amended





The PV panels are located on the south-facing roof slopes of these units, as per the previously submitted roof plan (ref 20019 - TP – 006).

The location of refuse storage enclosures for these units has also been reconsidered; the enclosures have been relocated within the car park / service yard areas such that they are closer to the buildings and are read alongside cycle storage areas rather than being closer to the internal access road/access into the car parks.

Unit 4

You also requested that the north-eastern elevation of Unit 4 was activated further. Accordingly, the north-eastern elevation of the unit has been updated to incorporate additional feature rainscreen cladding with projecting fins, with glazed panels above (see Figures 1.3 and 1.4 for comparison). This adds substantial additional visual interest to this elevation, in a manner which is wholly consistent with other units within the scheme.

Figure 1.3 – North Eastern Elevation of Unit 4 as submitted

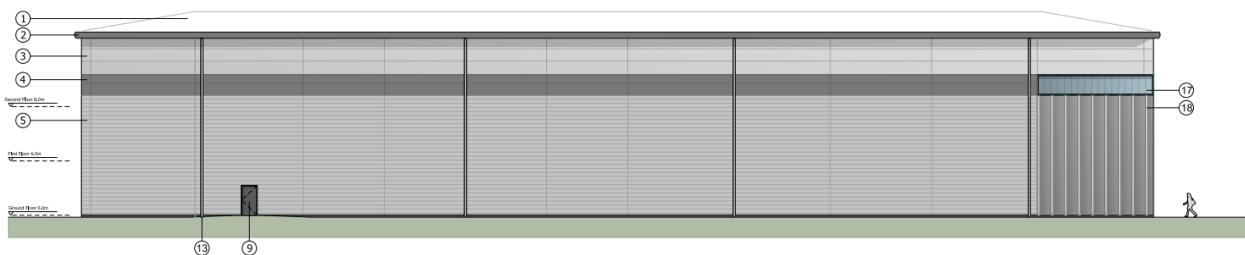
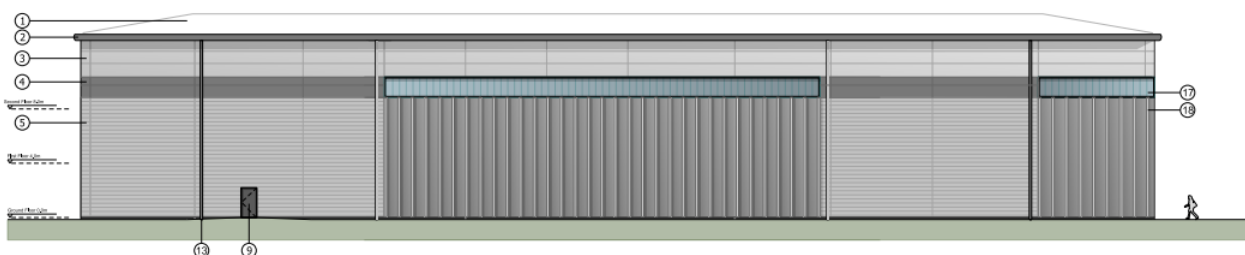


Figure 1.4 – North Eastern Elevation of Unit 4 as amended



Zero Carbon

You attached the advice to Officers from Bioregional to your email. I note that the comments and queries raised generally align with those associated with proposals for earlier phases of development at the Axis J9 business park, all of which were approved subject to planning conditions.

This application is supported by a Sustainability Statement prepared by ESC. This addresses all the requirements of the planning conditions which have been attached to earlier phases of development



at Axis J9 and is consistent in its approach to the key matters of (inter alia) energy use, zero carbon, embodied carbon, sustainable construction, monitoring and water consumption.

Green Infrastructure

Policy Bicester 1 requires development at North West Bicester to provide at least 40% green infrastructure.

In your email you queried the inclusion of land in our calculation which will (in due course) be taken up by the SLR. This approach is, however, entirely consistent with that which has been taken in the context of earlier planning applications for the Axis J9 business park (see, for example, drawing ref 20012-TP-016 that was submitted with application ref 20/02454/REM) and remains acceptable by virtue of the fact that the loss of this area of green infrastructure will be fully compensated by the “greening” of Howes Lane following the opening of the SLR to traffic.

The green infrastructure plan and accompanying calculation has been updated to reflect the amended extent of the planning application but the area to the north of the site in question is still included. The development achieves 44.86% green infrastructure provision, which is well in excess of the 40% target.

Landscaping

I note the comments from your Landscape Officer in relation to buffering of the northern site boundary hedgerow. The proposed development does not extend any further northwards than the previously consented residential development zone and, as such, the proposed separation distance has already been established via the extant planning consent for the site.

Biodiversity Net Gain

The biodiversity net gain calculation has been updated to reflect the amended proposals for the site, which have included reconsideration of the landscape proposals to maximise their biodiversity benefits. Opportunities for additional planting were limited without adversely affecting the viability of the scheme but a net gain of 5.5% is, however, now achieved. A significant degree of confidence in the achievement of this gain can be had within the management proposed in the Landscape and Ecological Management Plan.

Transport

A Technical Note is enclosed which considers the impacts of the proposed development on the local highway network. Its conclusions are supported by the outputs of the Bicester Traffic Model (as well as the traffic counts undertaken last year by the Applicant) and it demonstrates that the development can come forward in full in advance of the strategic link road being open to traffic.



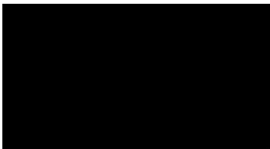
Paras 10 and 11 of the Note refer to the refinement of the design of a proposed signalised crossing on Howes Lane. An independent Stage 1 Road Safety Audit of the crossing and the approaches to it has been commissioned and undertaken by Mott MacDonald; this is enclosed.

The audit report raises no concerns or recommendations regarding the cyclist detailing. The only comments made relate to possible future lighting and additional guardrailing on the approach to the crossing from within the site. Both of these matters were raised previously during auditing of a very similar crossing proposed in connection with an earlier application for the site and in each case were accepted by all parties as being capable of being dealt with at detailed design stage. As such, also enclosed is the DTA Designers' Response (14042-47A) confirming consideration of the points raised at the detailed design stage; and the Mott MacDonald Audit Response Report confirming that the Designers' Response appropriately responded to the recommendations made in the audit.

Section 106 Agreement

A range of contributions have been requested. I note that the Heads of Terms are generally aligned with the obligations associated with earlier phases of development, but the requested contribution figures will need to be updated to reflect the amended development proposals and I will provide the Applicant's response under separate cover once this update has been undertaken.

Yours sincerely



Emma Lancaster
Director