

Land North of Gavray Drive, Bicester

Technical Note: Response to Post Application Comments – Landscape edp0124_r056a

1. Introduction

1.1 This Technical Note has been prepared by The Environmental Dimension Partnership Ltd (EDP) on behalf of L&Q Estates Ltd (hereafter referred to as ‘the Applicant’) in response to post-application comments re: Land North of Gavray Drive, Bicester regarding landscape and visual matters.

1.2 The planning application details are:

- Application No: 21/03558/OUT;
- Location: Land North of Gavray Drive, Bicester; and
- Proposal: Residential development for up to 250 dwellings including affordable housing and ancillary uses including retained Local Wildlife Site, Public Open Space, Play Areas, Localised Land Remodelling, Compensatory Flood Storage, Structural Planting and Access.

1.3 The post application comments responded to are attached to this note and comprise:

- Tim Screen Landscape Architect, Cherwell District Council, 18 November 2021.

1.4 Each of the main landscape and visual matters raised within these comments are addressed below, with the following plans and appendices attached to the rear of this note providing additional information/context:

- **Plan EDP 1:** Additional Photoviewpoint and Photomontage Location Plan (edp0124_d182a);
- **Appendix EDP 1:** 1no Photomontage at Years 1 and 15 (edp0124_d181a);
- **Appendix EDP 2:** Illustrative Masterplan (dwg no: Edge Urban Design 239_P15); and
- **Appendix EDP 3:** 2no Additional Photoviewpoints (edp0124_d180a).

2. Response to Local Planning Authority (LPA) Comments

Building Heights Parameters

2.1 LPA comment:

“The ES introduction indicates the proposed roof heights of the 2 and 3 story dwellings and apartments. However, this information does not appear to have been mentioned in the landscape and visual receptor analysis and weighting (the building heights are not mentioned in the visual receptor narrative or description of the development).”

2.2 EDP response – The building heights parameter has formed a key component of the landscape and visual receptor narrative, including the Zone of Theoretical Visibility modelling as part of the initial studies and Photoviewpoint selection. As such, the building heights have also formed a key part of the assessment of effects within the submitted landscape chapter.

2.3 Further information has been provided below in terms of anticipated ridge heights for the built form, which has been identified to ensure development is of a similar scale to the surrounding residential development, most notably to the south-west. It is important to note that the building heights parameter plan remains the same as submitted:

- Up to 2 storey (10 metres to ridge);
- Up to 2.5 storey (11.5 metres to ridge); and
- Up to 3 storey (12 metres to ridge).

2.4 All measurements are above ground level, excluding any point features.

Wireframe Images

2.5 LPA comment:

“The inclusion of a wireframe representations, when the housing layout has been agreed, would be very useful for considering the implication on the final conclusion of the LVIA. EPD viewpoint 5 will be appropriate given that receptor sensitivity will be high at this location. There are no existing hedgerow (or trees). This is approx. 82 m (from Google Earth). The illustrated masterplan indicates that this boundary remains open, and we should therefore further judge the effects on the visual receptor/walker or order to decide on the degree if visual mitigation required.”

2.6 EDP Response – A photomontage has been included from the location of **Photoviewpoint EDP 5** as suggested (**Appendix EDP 1**) to show the proposed development in its proposed form. This has been based on the current illustrative masterplan

(**Appendix EDP 2**), indicating locations of buildings and landscape elements, albeit the application is in outline form only at this stage. The photomontages are shown with vegetation at ‘Year 1’ post-implementation and at ‘Year 15’, which in effect reflects the residual level of impact.

- 2.7 Although the boundary does indeed remain open at this location looking north towards the built form, the landscape structure within the proposed open space helps to filter the available views, with existing built form along Gavray Drive and at Bicester Park Industrial Estate identifiable in the panorama. Following the production of this illustrative representation, it is considered that the change of view is consistent with those identified within the original assessment for **Photoviewpoint EDP 5** (ES Technical Appendix 8.2 – edp0124_r050a), as follows:

“Operation (Year 1):

In the short-term, although the Proposed Development has been set back from Gavray Drive and seen in the context of a large area of open space, built form will be clearly noticeable in short-distance views. Although the planting of new hedgerows, hedgerow trees and other associated landscaping will provide some softening to the view, it is unlikely that the landscape scheme will have matured sufficiently to provide a visual screen. The Proposed Development will be noticeable, and despite the presence of urbanising elements (SCR road), the view would be fundamentally altered, giving rise to a high magnitude of change.

Operation (Year 15):

In the longer term as materials within the proposals have become weathered and the landscape strategy has matured, the completed development becomes assimilated into its context and is likely to become a generally accepted feature in the view. As such, the magnitude of change is expected to reduce to medium by year 15.”

- 2.8 The photomontage itself has been produced to align with ‘Type 3’ Visualisations within the latest guidance set out by the Landscape Institute¹; defined as “intended to represent design, form and context to a reasonable degree of objectivity and accuracy, one which can be understood and relied on by competent authorities and others.” It is considered that this level of photomontage is appropriate, given the application is at outline stage and the masterplan remains illustrative.

Additional Photoviewpoints

- 2.9 LPA comment:

“The eastern residential development proposed along Gavray Drive does not have any EDP viewpoint records of that fields that are proposed to be developed. Viewpoints should be

¹ https://landscapewpstorage01.blob.core.windows.net/www-landscapeinstitute-org/2019/09/LI_TGN-06-19_Visual_Representation.pdf - Accessed 13.04.22

recorded from the east from the PROW where visual receptor/walkers will experience harm – refer to two recommended viewpoints enclosed.”

- 2.10 EDP Response – Both additional Photoviewpoints have been included at **Appendix EDP 3**. The locations of the 16 Photoviewpoints included within the landscape chapter had previously been agreed with Cherwell District Council Landscape Officer Tim Screen on 09 July 2020.
- 2.11 In relation to construction effects, the ES Landscape Chapter states that (emphasis added): *“The construction effects experienced on Bicester Footpath 3 running through the north-western parcels and the **section of Bicester Footpath 4 running through the south-eastern parcel of the site would be major, adverse and significant.**”*
- 2.12 In relation to operational effects, the ES Landscape Chapter states:
- “Bicester Footpath 3 which crosses the north-western parcel and Bicester Footpath 4 to the south would be integrated within the proposed development from Year 1 permanently. These PROW would experience moderate, adverse and significant effects permanently over the lifetime of the development. The impact of new built form with an immature/almost bare landscape within the existing mature setting would appear incongruous at Year 1, leading to major adverse and significant effects. However, by Year 15 mitigation planting and ancillary landscaping would establish a more beneficial situation and effects would be reduced to major/moderate adverse (significant).”*
- 2.13 It is considered that, following review of the two additional Photoviewpoints, the above conclusions at both the construction and operational phases remains accurate and does not alter the findings of the landscape assessment.

Landscape Character

- 2.14 LPA comment:
- “There are two distinct areas of landscape character each with residential developments within the application site which I think should be judged separately as the overall judgement of combining both areas my devalue the score of the more sensitive area. The areas are the western field adjacent to the railway are less sensitive and the middle to eastern fields abounded by mature hedgerows, scrub and trees and grassland more sensitive. The Landscape Sensitivity of each of the aforementioned areas is determined by their Susceptibility and Landscape Value.”*
- 2.15 EDP response – It is agreed that the character of the site varies across the field parcels, however the LVA concludes that the sites overall sensitivity is low/medium, this has taken into account *“a combination of its simplicity of landscape structure to the west, its urban fringe location adjacent to existing development and railway lines and the mosaic of habitats found within the eastern parcels of the site, including the Local Wildlife Designation.”*



Residential Areas to the South of Gavray Drive

2.16 LPA comment:

“It is essential to retain the hedgerows at mature height and reinforce with trees where necessary along the southern boundary to Northern western and south-eastern fields and to mitigate views of the development for the benefit of residential receptors south of Gavray Drive. I would not wish to see the height of this hedgerow reduced. The hedgerow will cast dense due to its aspect which necessitates a shadow analysis of the sun’s highest and lowest levels in the sky and adjustment to the position of access road and the dwellings of both development parcels may be required. I would hope that the development’s residents do not complain about the height of the hedgerow and overshadowing and ask for a reduction in its height. However, hedgerow may require essential maintenance for its long term survival which may reduce its viability as a screen in which case additional trees will need to be planted for visual mitigation.”

2.17 EDP response – The illustrative masterplan shows the retention of all boundary vegetation where possible. The proposed road and built form have been set back from this boundary to the north-east, but the long-term management and maintenance of the vegetation can be secured through conditions, with the specification of any replacement stock that is required to ensure screening is maintained.

Proposed Tree Strategy

2.18 LPA comment:

“The proposed trees for open space and street should be appropriate in terms of ‘Right Tree Right Place’ and I therefore recommend that the landscape consultant to consider TDAG’s tree species selection for green infrastructure at the earliest opportunity. Are revised layout should accommodate more street trees to be adopted and maintained by OCC.”

2.19 EDP response – This is an appropriate strategy and can be picked up at the Reserved Matters stage.

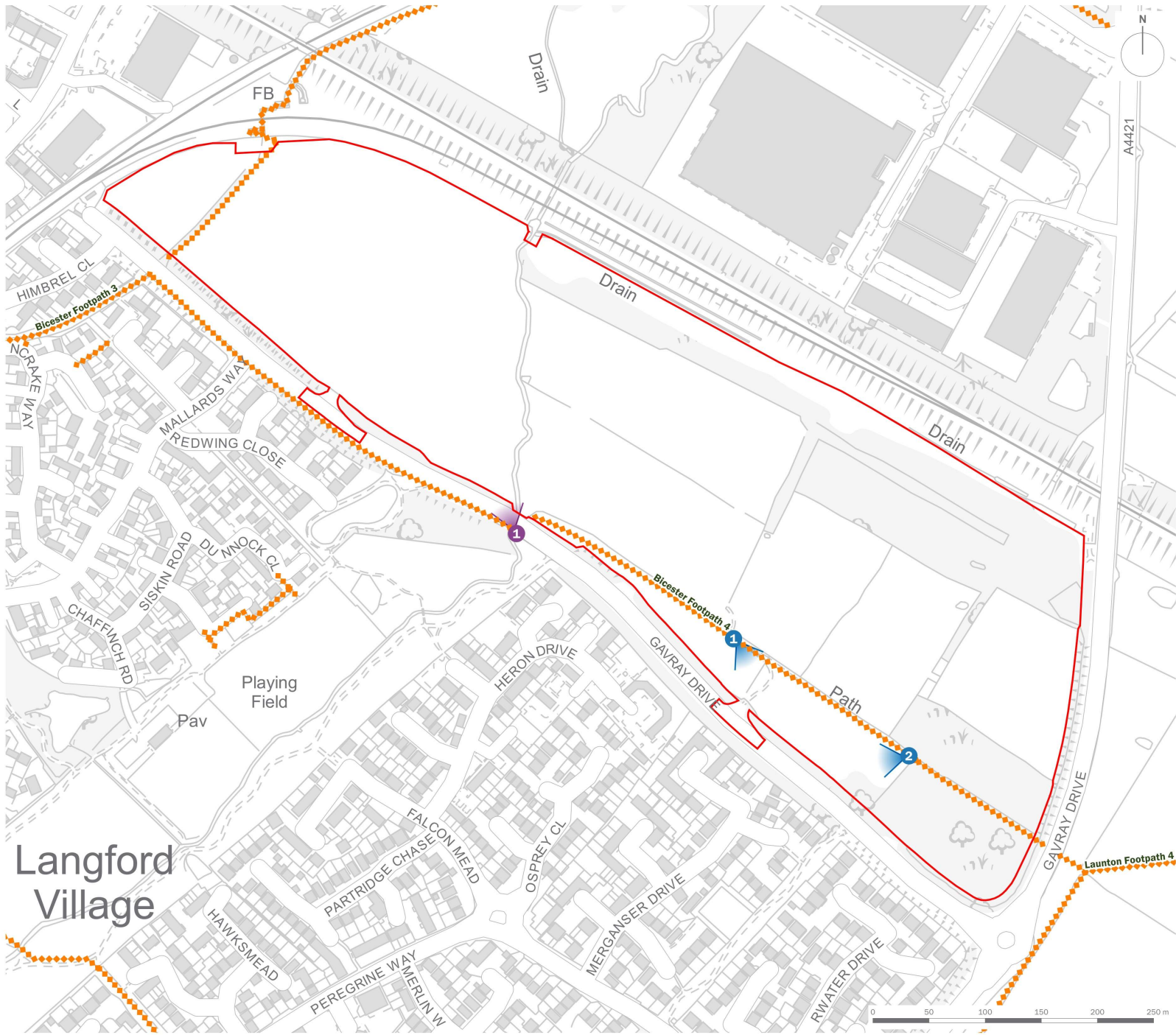
3. Additional Comments

3.1 Also included within the LPA response are the following matters, which have been responded to by the relevant consultant, included below:

- The Play Areas – David Lock Associates; and
- Commuted Sums – David Lock Associates.



Plan EDP 1
Additional Photoviewpoint and Photomontage Location Plan
(edp0124_d182a 04 May 2022 AH/CJM)



- Site Boundary
- Public Rights of Way
- 1 Additional Photoviewpoint Locations
- 1 Photomontage Location

Langford Village

| | | | |
|----------------|---|----------|-----|
| client | L&Q Estates Ltd | | |
| project title | Land North of Gavray Drive, Bicester | | |
| drawing title | Plan EDP 1: Additional Photoviewpoint and Photomontage Location Plan | | |
| date | 04 May 2022 | drawn by | AH |
| drawing number | edp0124_d182a | checked | CJM |
| scale | Refer to Scalebar @ A3 | QA | JTF |



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Appendix EDP 1
Photomontage
(edp0124_d181a 16 May 2022 AH/CJM)

Photomontage EDP 1: View from PRow 130/17/1 (Ox Drove) looking north towards the site (Existing)



To be viewed at comfortable arm's length



Extent of site

To be viewed at comfortable arm's length

Photomontage EDP 1: View from PRow 130/17/1 (Ox Drove) looking north towards the site (Year 15)



To be viewed at comfortable arm's length



Appendix EDP 2
Illustrative Masterplan
(Edge Urban Design - 239_P15, September 2021)



Do not scale from this drawing.

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PLANNING

— Site boundary (22.49ha)

| Rev. | Date | Description |
|--------------|-----------------|--|
| | | Land north of Gavray Drive BICESTER |
| | | Illustrative Masterplan |
| Job ref: | Drawing number: | Revision: |
| 239 | P15 | - |
| Scale: | Date: | |
| 1:3,500 @ A3 | September 2021 | |



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Appendix EDP 3
Additional Photoviewpoints
(edp0124_d180a 16 May 2022 AH/CJM)



To be viewed at comfortable arm's length



To be viewed at comfortable arm's length