



HAWKWELL VILLAGE

New Community at North West Bicester

Health Impact Assessment

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**Hallam Land
Management**

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1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 This Health Impact Assessment (HIA) has been prepared by David Lock Associates (DLA) on behalf of Hallam Land Management (HLM) in support of an outline planning application (OPA) submitted to Cherwell District Council (CDC). In brief, the application seeks outline planning permission for a sustainable development of up to 3,100 dwellings, mixed use local centre and employment area, education uses, community and leisure facilities referred to as Hawkwell Village, on some 177 hectares of land to the north west of Lords Lane and north east of the railway line, and forms part of the North West Bicester Eco-Town allocation. Means of access is a matter to be considered as part of the application with all other matters reserved for subsequent approval.
- 1.2 The development is considered to constitute development which requires an Environmental Impact Assessment and a Scoping Opinion was sought from Cherwell District Council (CDC) in accordance with Regulation 15 of the Town and Country Planning (Environment Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017, (as amended) and having regard to the criteria for determining the potential for significant environmental effects as set out in Schedules 3 and 4 of those Regulations. The Scoping Report is dated August 2021 and was submitted to the Council on 02 September 2021.
- 1.3 The formal Scoping Opinion under the EIA Regulations 2017 was received from the Council dated 7 October 2021 (21/03040/SCOP) and this submission takes into account its contents.
- 1.4 Engagement has taken place over a long period regarding development at North West Bicester. This OPA is submitted pursuant to that consultation and a further public engagement exercise which took place in October/November 2021 and which is documented further within a Statement of Community Involvement. Hallam Land Management anticipates an ongoing programme of engagement with stakeholders.
- 1.5 The HIA report is appended to section 4 of the ES that accompanies the planning application and should be read in conjunction with all other elements of the Environmental Statement and the application submission.
- 1.6 The HIA details the positive, negative and neutral health impacts of the proposed development in relation to the following topic areas:
- Community Inclusion;
 - Healthy Neighbourhoods;
 - Active Lifestyles;
 - Protecting the Environment;
 - Safety and Wellbeing; and
 - New and Converted Housing Provision.

2.0 The Proposed Site

- 2.1 The Site is located on the north-western edge of Bicester. Bicester is a town and civil parish in the Cherwell district of north-eastern Oxfordshire. It was awarded Garden Town status in 2014 with North-West Bicester area also identified as a potential eco-town location in accordance with the then extant supplement to what was then Planning Policy Statement 1. The Site is some 2.5km to the north west of Bicester Town Centre which includes a full range of facilities including supermarkets, a doctor's surgery, independent High Street shops, a post office, pubs, restaurants as well as Bicester Retail Outlet Village. To the northwest is the village of Bucknell. The site is well situated in relation to Bicester North Railway Station, which lies broadly 2.3km approximately 10-minute cycle from the centre of the site to the south. Approximately 3.4km or 15-minute cycle south of the site lies Bicester Village Railway Station. Bicester North Railway Station is on the Chiltern Main Line and services are operated by Chiltern Railways. The station also offers sheltered, secure bicycling parking facilities by way of cycle stands which are monitored by CCTV; there is capacity for 65 bicycles. As such, there is the opportunity for journeys to the station to be made by bicycle for onwards travel by rail.
- 2.2 The Site includes Bucknell Road/Bicester Road and is bordered, to the south-west, by the London to Birmingham Railway, and to the south-east by the town ring road A4095 (Lords Lane). Land immediately to the north-east of the site is the subject of an outline application submitted for Firethorn Developments Ltd for up to 530 dwellings, open space, infrastructure and engineering works (21/01630/OUT).
- 2.3 To the north-east of the adjacent application lies Elmsbrook, the first phase of the North West Bicester development which is being built out and is well advanced with Primary school, Play, community and employment facilities operational. Beyond is the B4100 Banbury Road which links Bicester with Junction 10 of the M40 and the villages between including Caversfield and Bainton.
- 2.4 To the south, the Site abuts Bicester itself.

3.0 The Proposed Development

The Proposed Development

- 3.1 The Proposed Development incorporates residential, employment, health, community, education, local retail, commercial and leisure uses, set within a framework of green infrastructure.
- 3.2 Residential development would comprise up to 3100 dwellings, of a broad range of types and sizes including extra care/assisted living/C2, including up to 30% affordable housing. This would extend to some 74 hectares of the site. Density varies across the site with higher densities possible in the centre of the site and in the mixed use centre. The densities

proposed enable housing to be provided in a variety of forms, from detached houses through to terraced housing, townhouses and apartments.

- 3.3 A site totalling 2.22 hectares is identified to accommodate a new 2FE primary school and a site of 0.88ha is shown as primary school playing field to serve as a future expansion for Gagle Brook primary school at Elmsbrook. Land for a secondary school is set aside within application 14/01641/OUT to serve the wider NE Bicester development. The secondary school is understood to be intended to deliver 8 forms of entry.
- 3.4 A mixed use local centre is identified to the south of the site extending to 1.49 hectares accommodating commercial, business and service uses, within Classes E (a) retail; E (b) food and drink; E (c) services, the following sui generis uses; hot food takeaways, public house, wine bar, and local community uses (F2 (a) and F2 (b). An employment area of 0.70 hectares accommodating use classes E (g), B2 and B8 is also proposed.
- 3.5 Green infrastructure would comprise retained and new woodland, village green, open green space, sports, recreation and play areas including LEAPS, NEAPS and a MUGA, community park, burial ground and allotments/community farm which would equate to in excess of 40% of the Site. At least half of the green space will be publicly accessible.
- 3.6 The northern part of the site accommodates a site (of some 10 hectares) to accommodate ground mounted photovoltaic arrays.

4.0 Regulatory and Policy Context

National Policy

Health and Social Care Act

- 4.1 Health and Social Care Act (2012) introduced a duty upon local authorities to “take such steps as it considers appropriate for improving the health of the people in its area”. This can include the requirement for consideration to the benefits and implications of a development on health and wellbeing.

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2021

- 4.2 The recently revised NPPF, published in July 2021, identifies key principles in relation to health that local planning authorities should consider. Chapter 8 ‘Promoting health and safe communities’ states that decisions should aim to achieve healthy, inclusive and safe places which:

“(a) promote social interaction, including opportunities for meetings between people who might not otherwise come into contact with each other – for example through mixed-use developments, strong neighbourhood centres, street layouts that allow for easy pedestrian and cycle connections within and between neighbourhoods, and active street frontages;

(b) are safe and accessible, so that crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine the quality of life or community cohesion – for example through the use of attractive, well-designed, clear and legible pedestrian and cycle routes, and high quality public space, which encourage the active and continual use of public areas; and

(c) enable and support healthy lifestyles, especially where this would address identified local health and well-being needs – for example through the provision of safe and accessible green infrastructure, sports facilities, local shops, access to healthier food, allotments and layouts that encourage walking and cycling”

4.3 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), revised on 20 July 2021, sets out a presumption in favour of sustainable development (Paragraph 11). Sustainable development is defined with reference to environmental, social and economic dimensions. Paragraph 81 confirms that local authorities should support economic growth through the planning system.

4.4 According to Paragraph 8, pursuing sustainable development involves the planning system holding three overarching objectives:

- a) an economic objective – to help build a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right types is available in the right places and at the right time to support growth, innovation and improved productivity; and by identifying and coordinating the provision of infrastructure;
- b) a social objective – to support strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by ensuring that a sufficient number and range of homes can be provided to meet the needs of present and future generations; and by fostering well-designed, beautiful and safe places, with accessible services and open spaces that reflect current and future needs and support communities’ health, social and cultural well-being; and
- c) an environmental objective – to protect and enhance our natural, built and historic environment; including making effective use of land, improving biodiversity, using natural resources prudently, minimising waste and pollution, and mitigating and adapting to climate change, including moving to a low carbon economy.

Local Policy

Cherwell Local Plan Part 1 2011-2031 (Adopted 2015)

4.5 The Cherwell Local Plan Part 1 2011 – 2031, adopted in 2015, is the development plan for Bicester.

4.6 There are several policies within the Local Plan which are pertinent to human health, and have been used in the development of the proposal.

4.7 Policy BSC 1: District Wide Housing Distribution, requires 22,840 additional dwellings to be provided in the CDC area between 2011 and 2031, which is equivalent to 1,142 net additional dwellings per annum.

4.8 Policy BSC 3: Affordable Housing, requires 30% of new housing on sites of 11 or more dwellings in Bicester to be provided as affordable homes.

- 4.9 Policy BSC 4: Housing Mix, requires all new residential development to provide a mix of homes to meet current and expected future requirements.
- 4.10 Policy BSC 8: Securing Health and Well-Being, states that: "Planning decisions can have an effect on travel to work, schools, noise and air quality, access to services, climate change and social networks which can all contribute to health and well-being. The local environment has a fundamental impact on the health and well-being of local people. By providing facilities such as local open space this allows for activities such as walking and cycling, promoting healthy lifestyles. The Council will work with the local community to provide safe and accessible environments and to identify the need for and provide local facilities..."
- 4.11 Policy BSC 10: Open Space, Outdoor Sport and Recreation Provision, encourages partnership working to ensure that sufficient quantity and quality of, and convenient access to open space, sport and recreation provision is secured.
- 4.12 Policy BSC 11: Local Standards of Provision – Outdoor Recreation, requires development proposals to contribute to the provision of open space, sport and recreation, alongside secure arrangements for its management and maintenance. The amount, type and form of open space will be determined in relation to the nature and size of development proposed as well as the community needs generated by it. Provision should be made in accordance with the Council's minimum standards (detailed in Table 1).

Table 1: CDC Open Space Standards (Policy BSC 11)

Type of Provision	Qualitative Standard	Accessibility Standard
Play space (combining provision for younger and older children including MUGAs)	0.78 ha per 1,000 people	400m 1,200m (NEAPS)
Outdoor sports provision (combining tennis courts, bowling greens, golf courses and playing pitches - to be accompanied by changing facilities where appropriate)	1.13 ha per 1,000 people	800m (football, rugby, cricket) 1,200m (tennis) 12,000m (bowling greens and golf courses)
Allotments	0.37 ha per 1,000 people	800m
General green space (parks and gardens / semi-natural green space / amenity green space)	2.74 ha per 1,000 rural/urban edge dwellers	400m (amenity space) 1,200m (other green space)

- 4.13 Policy Bicester 1: North West Bicester Eco-Town, a new mixed used development including:
- Homes - 6000 new homes
 - Education – it is expected that four 2 Forms of Entry (FE) primary schools and one secondary school will be required;

- Employment - At least 3,000 jobs (approximately 1,000 jobs on B use class land on the site) within the plan period;
- Pedestrian and cycle routes;
- Good accessibility to public transport services should be provided for, including the provision of a bus route through the site with buses stopping at the railway stations and at new bus stops on the site
- Local Centres to serve the new and existing communities; and
- Health – to provide for a 7th GP surgery to the south of the site and a dental surgery;
- Green infrastructure – 40% of the gross site area will comprise green space meeting the requirements of Policy BSC 11; and
- Community facilities.

North West Bicester Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) 2016

- 4.14 Development Principle 7: Healthy Lifestyles: states that “Development proposals should be designed and planned to support healthy and sustainable environments and enable residents to make healthy choices easily”. The SPD highlights the importance of ensuring sustainable transport options, including cycling and walking, are accessible, so as to improve air quality and encourage social interaction and exercise through active travel.
- 4.15 The SPD also outlines that development proposals should include green spaces that provide the opportunity for healthy lifestyles, including attractive areas for sport and recreation and food production. Access to green spaces and nature such as these can help to improve both physical and mental health and wellbeing.

Technical Standards and Guidance

NHS England Healthy New Towns

- 4.16 In 2015 the Health New Towns programme was launched by NHS England, aiming to explore the opportunity for new developments to create healthier and better-connected communities with integrated and high-quality services. This concluded with the adoption of the below 10 principles for healthier places:
- 1) Plan Ahead Collectively;
 - 2) Assess Local Health and Care Needs and Assets;
 - 3) Connect, Involve and Empower People and Communities;
 - 4) Create Compact Neighbourhoods;
 - 5) Maximise Active Travel;
 - 6) Inspire and Enable Healthy Eating;

- 7) Foster Health in Homes and Buildings;
- 8) Enable Healthy Play and Leisure;
- 9) Develop Health Services That Help People Stay Well; and
- 10) Create Integrated Health.

National Design Guide

- 4.17 The National Design Guide (2019) emphasises the importance of considering both physical and mental wellbeing to achieve a well-designed development. The National Design Guide makes reference to “health, comfortable and safe internal and external environment” to promote quality of life for a development’s occupants and users, as well as to the benefits of walkable neighbourhoods on health and wellbeing.

5.0 Community Inclusion

- 5.1 This section describes how the proposals will impact on the interaction between different member of the community, particularly vulnerable and hard to reach groups.
- 5.2 The proposals for Hawkwell Village have been part of a long running engagement process including a wide section of the community and of stakeholders through plan formulation and successive applications for development at North West Bicester. Previous consultations were undertaken in relation to the wider development of North West Bicester for which planning applications have been submitted in 2014 and 2021, as well as the development of the exemplar scheme 'Elmsbrook'.
- 5.3 An earlier consultation - which was undertaken by A2Dominion - culminated in the allocation of the North West Bicester proposal in the Cherwell Local Plan (2015) (Policy Bicester 1: North West Bicester Eco-Town). This was further supported and expanded through the adoption of the North West Bicester Supplementary Planning Document (2016).
- 5.4 The most recent round of consultation (22 October 2021 - 12 November 2021) was advertised to surrounding residents through press release, online and hard-copy advertisements in the Bicester advertiser as well as posters provided to Bicester Library, Bicester Town Council and Sainsbury's in Bicester Town Centre. The applicant also wrote local councils (to include both Parish and Town) and residents' groups to alert them to consultation as well as its extension. Contact information was provided in all correspondence and on the virtual exhibition so that any comments and queries could be responded to. Further information is contained in the Statement of Community Involvement that supports this Application.
- 5.5 Throughout the entire consultation period, a high proportion of respondents considered that the more favourable of the key principles was the promotion of the green credentials of the development. This was particularly the case when it came to working towards a 'zero carbon development' as well as ensuring the provision of pedestrian and cycle links throughout the development, and access to multi-functional greenspace.
- 5.6 The proposals for the development of Hawkwell Village have been developed in response to the community priorities identified through local engagement. The access and movement proposals will provide for a network of links to existing routes promoting walking and cycling connections to the established settlement and the existing and planned facilities including local centres. The development will incorporate scope for new community and retail uses, a new primary school (plus and extension to the current Gaggle Brook School), children's play facilities and will support existing and planned local centre provision within the town. A significant area of green infrastructure within the site which will provide for an interconnected network of Green Infrastructure Corridors, a community park, garden squares/village parks and allotments. The site will also include watercourse corridors, which will be integrated into the development as focal points within the open space network. These elements will promote

the interaction between different members of the existing and expanded community and provide extensive opportunities for exercise and walking.

- 5.7 The health impacts of the development are judged to be **positive** in relation to planning for community inclusion.

6.0 Healthy Neighbourhoods

- 6.1 This section describes how the proposals may affect access to amenities such as open space, employment and services.
- 6.2 The Application Site is located north-west of Bicester town, within the south east of Cherwell District Council authority area, Oxfordshire.
- 6.3 As outlined above, the development will incorporate scope for new housing, new employment land opportunities, new community and retail uses, a new primary school, children's play facilities, a significant area of green infrastructure of various types and photovoltaic arrays.
- 6.4 The Design and Access Statement describes a potential street network and including cycle and pedestrian connections providing safe and convenient access to amenities. These routes, sometimes embedded into the green infrastructure across the site, will further encourage residents to utilise cycle and pedestrian connections.
- 6.5 In line with the North-West Bicester Eco-Town SPD, it is assumed that subsequent reserved matters applications will include the provision for electric vehicle charging points. With the use of electric vehicles, and thus reduced emissions, will work towards achieving a healthy neighbourhood.
- 6.6 The potential for health facilities brought forward within the Mixed-Use Land Use and or within the wider North West Bicester Development will improve the residents' accessibility to high quality healthcare.
- 6.7 In addition, the Application Site proposes to bring forward some 3.7ha of allotment/community farm, which is likely to encourage the growing of fruit and vegetables for local consumption.
- 6.8 The health impacts of the development are judged to be **positive** in relation to planning for healthy neighbourhoods.

7.0 Active Lifestyles

- 7.1 This section describes how the proposals may provide open and natural spaces for exercise such as sport and how it will promote active play and travel.
- 7.2 In excess of 40% of the site is to be established as green infrastructure through the provision of a range of green spaces including open green space, SuDS and drainage, country park, village green, existing woodland, burial ground, sports, recreation and play areas including LEAP, NEAP, community farm and allotments. New footpaths and cycleways will be integrated throughout using circular loops and linear parks allowing easy access to the green spaces and countryside promoting opportunities for healthy lifestyles. This provision meets policy BSC11 of the Local Plan, policy Bicester 1 and the specific design requirements outlined in the SPD (3, 9).
- 7.3 Further landscape details will be provided as part of a future reserved matters scheme for this Site although a Green Infrastructure and Landscape Masterplan is submitted in support of this outline submission and discussed further within the DAS, which benefit people, wildlife and the environment.
- 7.4 The health impacts of the development are judged to be **positive** in relation to planning for active lifestyles.

8.0 Protecting the Environment

- 8.1 This section describes how the development in the context of an outline proposal, including its construction, could impact upon the environment.
- 8.2 The Environmental Statement prepared in relation to this application provides individual assessment of individual topics and considers harm to the environment and appropriate mitigation: Chapter 6 Air Quality, Chapter 7 Noise and Vibration, Chapter 11 Water Resources, and Chapter 12 Ground Conditions
- 8.3 The nature of this Outline Application aligns with the North West Bicester 1 policies and SPD, which sets out the aspirations in relation to environmental goals, in terms of the construction, and the management of North West Bicester. Targets relating to electrical vehicle charging points and green energy generation will successfully protect and enhance the local environment with further benefits on a sub-regional and national level.
- 8.4 It is anticipated that relevant mitigation strategies such as a CEMP will be submitted in subsequent Reserved Matter Applications to mitigate construction effects on the environment.
- 8.5 Overall, the health impacts of the development are judged to be **positive** in relation to protecting the environment.

9.0 Safety and Wellbeing

- 9.1 This section describes the effect on road safety, congestion, participation in active travel, discouraging crime and anti-social behaviour and healthy wellbeing.
- 9.2 The development has been designed in accordance with the overall NWB access and movement strategy. The aspiration of the NWB is to encourage non-car use by the delivery of suitable and appropriate walking, cycling and public transport infrastructure which enables journeys to be undertaken sustainably and through the promotion of sustainable transport initiatives, ensuring also that the highway network and access arrangements are fit for purpose.
- 9.3 The development will deliver a broad range of the future community's day-to-day requirements minimising its impact on the external highway network. Recreational and commuter active travel corridors through and around the development and external links have been considered at the earliest stage and provide the opportunity for the future community to undertake a large proportion of both internal and external trips by means other than the private car.
- 9.4 The proposed development will deliver a new community that has sustainability at the heart of its design. In addition, a combination of lighting and natural surveillance will be expected to come forward and discourage crime and anti-social behaviour, with high consideration to designing out crime.
- 9.5 Due to the nature of this outline application, it is unknown which precise uses will occupy the mixed-use land within the site. As a result, uses such as take ways and eateries could be brought forward, balanced alongside general food stores. Despite the potential presence of takeaway units, it is considered that within the context of the Hawkwell Farm proposals, the high level of leisure routes and open space will, on balance, bring overall health benefits to local residents.
- 9.6 The health impacts of the development are judged to be **positive** in relation to planning for safety and wellbeing.

10.0 New Homes

- 10.1 This section describes how the proposals may affect affordability, safety and accessibility, energy efficiency and the standard of accommodation.
- 10.2 The primary role of the Hawkwell Farm proposal is to provide a wide range of housing opportunities to meet the needs of Cherwell District Council, and provide mixed use development to sustainable aid the expansion of North West Bicester.
- 10.3 This application seeks to deliver up to 3,100 homes which will include a range of sizes and the provision of a percentage, to be negotiated with the Local Planning Authority, that is affordable to the local community. The development will include provision of a proportion of affordable homes thereby having a direct impact on the housing market by an increase in the current affordable housing stock.
- 10.4 The scheme will be designed to be inclusive of disabled users consistent with existing national requirements and can bring forward residential health-care provisions across the site.
- 10.5 The streets and spaces will become the natural place for interaction and activity supporting the natural surveillance of the street. The development proposals have been developed to incorporate a designed approach to crime prevention measures reflecting Secured by Design principles, including measures related to natural surveillance, footpath design, lighting, communal and open space provision, public and private space demarcation. The proposed development will be subject to consultation with the local Police Architectural Liaison Officer.
- 10.6 Building in sustainability will be an integral part of the development proposals.
- 10.7 The health impacts of the development are judged to **be positive** in relation to planning for housing provision.

11.0 CONCLUSION

11.1 This Health Impact Statement reflects and draws together relevant information across the various technical and associated documents prepared in support of the planning applications providing an assessment in relation to the following topic areas;

- Community Inclusion;
- Healthy Neighbourhoods;
- Active Lifestyles;
- Protecting the Environment;
- Safety and Wellbeing; and
- New Housing Provision.

11.2 The proposed development has been designed to offer positive health impacts of the development, minimise, and mitigate any negative health impacts. The Hawkwell Village proposals would give rise to significant positive health impacts in all topic areas. The proposals reflect the local circumstances of the site and its environmental conditions and respond to the outcomes of local engagement exercises. This applications directly aligns with the North West Bicester Policy 1 of the Cherwell Local Plan and North West Bicester SPD.

