



Quod

Reserved Matters Compliance Report

Unit 7B, Phase 2,
Catalyst Bicester

MARCH 2022

Q200424

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1 Introduction

- 1.1 Albion Land is delivering Catalyst Bicester, a high-quality business park aimed at meeting the needs of high-technology, knowledge-based businesses in Bicester. Located to the south of the town, at Bicester Gateway, the first phase of Catalyst Bicester is complete and due to be occupied imminently.
- 1.2 This Reserved Matters Compliance Report ('Report') has been prepared by Quod on behalf of Albion Land ('the applicant') in support of a reserved matters submission ('RMA') for 1 no. flexible commercial building (Unit 7B as shown at **Figure 1**) pursuant to outline planning permission 19/01746/OUT.

Figure 1: Proposed Site Plan



- 1.3 This submission is made in concurrence with several others (1no. reserved matters and 1 no. full planning application), which collectively propose a second and final phase of development at Catalyst Bicester.
- 1.4 All three applications made are in direct response to the needs of a major prospective occupier, Yasa Motors. Yasa Motors is a British manufacturer of electric motors in the automotive industry. The company develops and builds efficient electric motors, which are contributing towards the objective of reducing carbon emissions from motor vehicles. They are precisely the type of occupier that Cherwell District Council ('CDC') has sought to attract to Bicester via

the Local Plan's allocation for B1 employment uses at Bicester Gateway (Bicester 10), which looks to capitalise on the town's unique position in the Oxford-Cambridge Arc.

- 1.5 As demonstrated via this Report, the proposals brought forward via this RMA are fully compliant with the terms of the outline planning permission (LPA ref 19/01746/OUT); consistent with the first phase of development that has taken place at Catalyst Bicester, in terms of scale, design and appearance; and will allow for Yasa Motors to relocate their headquarters here, alongside other business-critical operations. They should be approved without delay.
- 1.6 In addition to this Report, the RMA is supported by the following documents and drawings:
 - Design and Access Statement
 - Drawings Package
 - Parking Note
 - Landscape and Ecology Management and Maintenance Plan
- 1.7 This Report sets out the key matters that are material to the consideration of reserved matters and is structured as follows:
 - Section 2 outlines the factual background, including a Site description and relevant planning history;
 - Section 3 sets out the planning policy context;
 - Section 4 provides details of the reserved matters for which approval is sought, pursuant to the extant outline planning permission;
 - Section 5 demonstrates the RMA's compliance with the consent; and
 - Section 6 concludes the Report.

2 Factual Background

Site Description

- 2.1 The Site is shown in **Figure 1** in relation to the wider Catalyst Bicester proposals.
- 2.2 The Site is approximately 2.32ha in size, is relatively flat and low-lying. It is situated to the southwest of Bicester, east of Wendlebury Road.
- 2.3 The Site is bound by the following:
- Immediately to the north of the Site is land with outline planning permission for employment uses, forming part of the Catalyst Bicester business park.
 - A wetland area will lie to the east of the Site in accordance with the wider proposals for Catalyst Bicester, with a railway line beyond it.
 - West of the Site is land which also benefits from outline planning permission for employment development and will form part of the Catalyst Bicester business park. This land is subject to a full planning application for an office building which will be functionally and physically linked to the building proposed via this RMA.
 - To the south of the Site is open countryside, currently used for agricultural purposes.

Site Designation

- 2.4 Much of the Catalyst Bicester business park is allocated as a New Employment Site by Policy Bicester 10 of the Cherwell Local Plan 2011-2031.
- 2.5 The Site itself lies beyond the boundary of the Bicester 10 allocation, but the principle of development has been established via the granting of the outline planning permission referred to above.
- 2.6 The Site spans over all three flood zones despite being relatively modest in size, most of it is within flood zone 2.
- 2.7 Adjacent to the Site's southern boundary is the Alchester Roman Town Scheduled Ancient Monument (the 'Alchester SAM').
- 2.8 There are no further ecological, environmental or heritage designations on the Site.

Planning History

- 2.9 There is no relevant planning history for the Site other than the outline planning permission which this RMA is pursuant to.

- 2.10 There are several allocations and permissions nearby, ranging from residential, to employment, and mixed use.
- 2.11 To the northwest of the Site beyond the A41 is a site with permission to develop up to 1,585 residential dwellings in addition to schools, hotel, employment and retail uses. (planning permission reference 06/00967/OUT). Delivery is underway with many of the residential units occupied.
- 2.12 To the west of the Site, between Wendlebury Road and the A41, is an area comprising of Phase 1 of Bicester Gateway (being delivered by others). Outline planning permission (ref. 16/02586/OUT) was granted in July 2018 for 14,971sqm of B1 employment floorspace plus a hotel. The hotel construction has now been completed. The southern parcel of land now also has planning permission (ref. 20/00293/OUT) for up to 4,413sqm B1 office space GIA, 273 residential units (C3), mixed-use co-working hub, café, multi-storey car park and associated infrastructure.
- 2.13 Beyond the railway line to the east of the Site, the former Ministry of Defence Site (Graven Hill) is allocated for mixed employment and residential uses. An outline application (ref. 11/01494/OUT) was approved in August 2014 for up to 1,900 dwellings, along with a primary school and community, retail and employment uses. Development is underway.
- 2.14 North of the Home and Garden Centre which bounds the Site to the north, lies land allocated as policy Bicester 4. This site is for B1a Use Class employment development which will provide up to 6,000 jobs. Extant planning permission (17/02534/OUT) was permitted in May 2020 and proposes up to 60,000 sqm of B1 development across primarily office floorspace (Use Class B1a) and up to 15,000sqm of research and development floorspace (Use Class B1b).

3 Policy Context

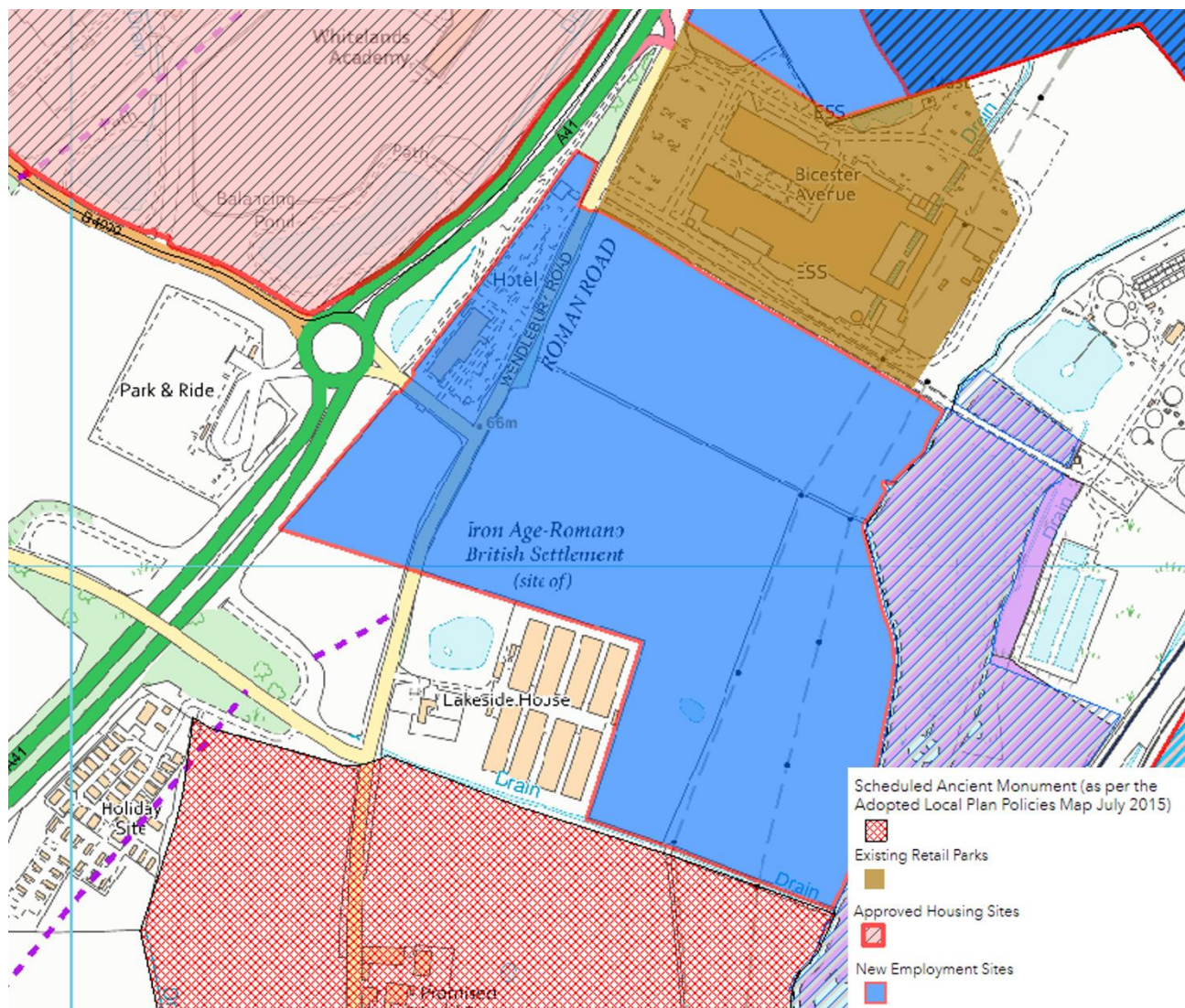
Cherwell Local Plan

Site Allocations

3.1 The Site falls within or nearby to the following policy designations, as defined by the Policies Map (an extract of which is shown in **Figure 2**) which supports the adopted Local Plan:

- Adjacent to a New Employment Site
- Nearby an Existing Retail Park to the north
- Adjacent to a Scheduled Ancient Monument to the south

Figure 2: Cherwell Local Plan Policies Map



Policy Bicester 10

- 3.2 CLP 2015 Policy Bicester 10 relates to the New Employment Site defined in **Figure 2**.
- 3.3 Policy 10 allocates land for employment development in Use Class B1, specifically high-tech knowledge industries. It identifies an aspiration for 3,500 jobs to be created on the allocated site and sets out several site-specific design and place shaping principles.
- 3.4 The policy is relevant to this application in so far as the Site is intended to operate as an extension to the allocation, as part of the wider Catalyst Bicester business park, and because the proposed development contributes to achieving the objectives of the policy.

Other Relevant Planning Policies

- 3.5 Policy SLE 1 states policy on Employment Development. Employment proposals at Bicester will be supported when they meet a range of criteria. The criteria includes making use of previously developed land, have good access, do not have an adverse impact on surroundings and are outside the Green Belt.
- 3.6 Policy ESD 1 – ESD 5 relate to energy and sustainability and in summary require new developments to:
- Include measures to mitigate against the impact of climate change
 - Achieve carbon emission reductions
 - Achieve ‘very good’ BREEAM for non-residential development
 - Be encouraged to use decentralised energy systems; and
 - Be encouraged to use renewable energy provision
- 3.7 Policies ES6 and ES7 relate to flood management and drainage. Flood risk assessments are required for development proposals in flood zones 2 or 3. These risk assessments should demonstrate there is no increase in surface water discharge rates or volumes with an allowance for climate change. All development will be required to use sustainable drainage systems (SuDS) for the management of surface water run-off.
- 3.8 Policy ESD 10 focuses on the protection and enhancement of biodiversity and the natural environment.
- 3.9 Policy ESD 15 relate to the character of the built and historic environment. It requires new building development complement and enhance the character of its context through sensitive siting, layout, and high-quality design. New development is required to conserve, sustain and enhance designated heritage assets and their settings.

Emerging Planning Policy

- 3.10 At a regional level, the Oxfordshire authorities are preparing a Joint Statutory Spatial Plan: The Oxfordshire Plan 2050.
- 3.11 It is intended this will reflect the policies of currently adopted Local Plans but going forwards it will be used to shape new Local Plans. The Plan will create an integrated strategic planning

framework evidence base to support sustainable growth until 2050 including new homes, economic development and supporting infrastructure.

- 3.12 The Oxfordshire Plan is currently at an early stage of preparation and carries no weight in decision-making.

4 Developments Proposals

- 4.1 The outline planning permission is governed by a series of parameter plans which fix and control key characteristics of the development. These (inter alia) define a built development zone and areas set aside for strategic landscaping, an access corridor and the maximum height of development.
- 4.2 A Development Framework Plan ('DFP') was also approved at the outline stage, which sets a range of design criteria to inform reserved matters, including key routes through the business park and the location of active frontages.

Quantum of Development and Proposed Use

- 4.3 This RMA is pursuant to an outline consent (LPA ref: 19/01746/OUT) for up to 10,200sqm of B1¹ floorspace (of which up 35% could be used for offices).
- 4.4 The proposal is for a single building (see **Figure 3**) on the eastern part of the Site benefitting from outline planning permission, providing a total of 5,161sqm flexible B1 floorspace.

Figure 3: Proposed Site Plan



¹ Whilst Use Class B1 has now become part of a new Use Class E, the planning permission was granted prior to this change taking effect. Use Class B1 is therefore referred to throughout this submission rather than Use Class E(g).

- 4.5 This floorspace is generally provided on one level, though a 516sqm mezzanine is also proposed, which is anticipated to be best suited for use as offices ancillary to the main use of the building.
- 4.6 As noted earlier, the proposal is being brought forward alongside a full planning application for an office building to the west and other flexible buildings to the north.
- 4.7 The unit which is the subject of this RMA is intended to be functionally and physically linked to the proposed office building to the west and will also have functional links with other units being proposed as part of this second phase of development at Catalyst Bicester.

Layout

- 4.8 The building is set within the wider Catalyst Bicester business park and will benefit from its landscaped setting; to the east land is set aside for flood alleviation and an ecological wetland area.
- 4.9 The proposals continue the 'campus style' delivered in the first phase of the development to the north such that the development proposed via this RMA and other concurrent submissions will deliver a cohesive, single business park.
- 4.10 Provision is made for servicing/deliveries and staff and visitor parking at appropriate ratios for the intended knowledge-based business use: 134 car parking spaces are proposed, together with an additional 8 disabled spaces; 40 secure cycle parking spaces are also provided.
- 4.11 Vehicle, cycle and pedestrian access to the Site is clearly defined by the landscape-led approach to the layout.
- 4.12 The unit has an attractive and easy to identify level entrance including an entrance lobby at ground level with toilet facilities.

Scale

- 4.13 The height of the proposed building (76.25m AOD) has been designed in accordance with parameter plan Ref: 18022_TP_113.
- 4.14 The footprint of the building is generally aligned with what was envisaged and shown on the illustrative masterplan for the Site at the outline application stage.

Appearance

- 4.15 The proposed building (**Figure 4**) will adhere to the design and place shaping principles expressed in the Development Framework Plan.
- 4.16 Further, the building's external appearance follows the design concept and language adopted for Phase 1 of the Catalyst Bicester business park and the other development within Phase 2. It has been designed to a high standard and to suit the tenants' needs for a contemporary building.

Figure 4: External Appearance



The building's entrance has a striking wrap-around canopy, full height glazed screen, free-standing canopies and feature rainscreen cladding. The enhanced treatment of the building's corner creates an active frontage and provides visual interest.

Landscaping

- 4.17 The proposals aim to sensitively integrate the proposed development into the receiving landscape context, whilst improving biodiversity.
- 4.18 New trees and hedgerows are proposed in order to augment existing hedgerows and also create new blocks of trees, vegetation and hedgerows consistent with the character of the surrounding landscape.
- 4.19 New planting will screen and soften the view of the proposed development and connect with existing and proposed Green Infrastructure across the business park.

Summary

- 4.20 The proposals reflect the specific needs of the intended occupier, whilst according with the requirements of the outline planning permission and relevant policies of the Local Plan.
- 4.21 They comprise high quality development that is appropriate to attract and retain high-quality, knowledge-based occupiers to Catalyst Bicester and deliver the local planning authority's aspirations for Bicester Gateway.

5 Reserved Matters Compliance

- 5.1 The proposals comprise high quality employment space to suit the full range of needs of B1 businesses², including those of the proposed occupier (Yasa Motors).
- 5.2 The development will therefore enable the delivery of CDC's longstanding aspirations to develop the knowledge economy in this location.

Outline Consent

- 5.3 The following planning conditions control Reserved Matters:
- Condition 1: Development shall comprise a maximum floorspace of 10,200 sqm and shall be used only for purposes falling within Class B1, of which no more than 35% shall be utilised for purposes falling within Class B1 (a) (including ancillary uses).
 - Condition 3: No development shall commence until full details of the layout, scale, appearance and landscaping of the development proposed have been submitted and approved to the LPA.
 - Condition 4: All reserved matters shall accord with the design principles of the approved Development Framework Plan 18022-TP121D.
 - Condition 6: Development shall be carried out in complete accordance with the Site Location Plan and Parameters Plans.
 - Condition 8: The development shall be implemented to at least a BREEAM 'Very Good' standard.
- 5.4 Compliance with conditions 1, 4 and 8 of the development will be maintained throughout the implementation of the development.
- 5.5 The outline consent is conditional upon development being brought forward in accordance with the conditions outlined, the DFP and the planning parameters referred to in condition 4.
- 5.6 These drawings established the overarching scheme design and landscaping principles, and the locations and extent of development zones, building heights, access, and tree/hedge retention. As noted in **Section 4** of this Report, these considerations / controls have been satisfied.
- 5.7 Conditions managing the pre-commencement and pre-occupation matters will be addressed through separate discharge of conditions submissions.

² Now Use Class E(g), i.e. offices, research and development, light industry

Scheme Compliance

- 5.8 The scheme's compliance with the outline permission for the Site and relevant planning policy objectives is addressed below:

Landscaping

- 5.9 The landscaping proposals provide a strong landscape setting for the development which follows the principles of the initial masterplan for Catalyst Bicester.
- 5.10 They are sensitive to the setting of the adjacent Alchester SAM, with a green buffer located to the south of the proposed development, and the landscape led approach will soften the visual appearance of the building and associated areas of hardstanding.
- 5.11 The applications adhere to the tree retention requirements of the outline permission.
- 5.12 In the face of climate change, and adverse weather events, the landscaping will safeguard the Site's microclimate by creating a cooler environment through shading, to the benefit of occupiers and wildlife using the Site.
- 5.13 The landscaping proposals also have important benefits for local wildlife connectivity and habitats, particularly to the substantial SuDS and wetland area (to the east). The species chosen will be particularly beneficial for small wildlife / insects.
- 5.14 The open space and planting will also be of significant benefit to occupiers and employees' health and wellbeing.

Layout

- 5.15 The proposed layout will provide a safe, legible and engaging environment.
- 5.16 The public realm and links to open space across the wider business park will encourage social inclusion and integration.
- 5.17 The layout enables visual permeability, ensuring it is accessible to all users. The car park area will be overlooked by unit 7A, providing natural surveillance.
- 5.18 Pedestrian and cycle infrastructure is provided at policy compliant levels to ensure it is safe and accessible, in addition to promoting active lifestyles.
- 5.19 The layout is efficiently designed and corresponds the requirements of the Development Framework Plan.
- 5.20 The Site has a clear functional and physical relationship with the adjacent unit 7A. Unit 7B will be accessible from unit 7A via two glass walkways from unit 7A at ground floor level which provide easy and safe access to unit 7B. This allows easy access between the units which will be pivotal in enabling the headquarters to operate sustainably and efficiently.

Appearance

- 5.21 The proposed building is contemporary and attractive, whilst meeting the needs of Yasa Motors and also maintaining functionality and flexibility for future occupiers to adapt the space to their needs (if necessary).
- 5.22 The colour palette and treatment of elevations accord with the approach to the rest of the business park and which will create a distinct, attractive and safe environment.
- 5.23 The proposals create a strong, prestige character befitting of their headquarters status and which will contribute to CDC's ambitions for Bicester Gateway.

Scale

- 5.24 The proposed scale aligns with the parameters agreed with CDC at the outline stage to ensure sensitive integration with the surrounding context and character, reflective of local topography.
- 5.25 Scale, layout, appearance and landscaping have been considered holistically from the master-planning stage, and provide high quality, sustainable development.

Summary

- 5.26 In light of the above, the proposals demonstrably comply with Policy Bicester 10 and Policy ESD 15 of the Local Plan and relevant policies in the NPPF, providing sustainable development and achieving well-designed places.
- 5.27 The proposals also fully accord the conditions and controls of the outline planning consent for the Site.
- 5.28 Given the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, this opportunity represents a remarkable opportunity to reap the benefits of a high-tech, knowledge-based business relocating their headquarters to Bicester. Development will contribute to environmental, economic and social sustainability.
- 5.29 Development should therefore be approved without delay.

6 Conclusion

- 6.1 This RMA is submitted on behalf of Albion Land, for a building which will form part of a second and final phase of development at Catalyst Bicester.
- 6.2 The Catalyst Bicester business park is a critical component of CDC's vision for a knowledge economy gateway to the south of the town and Albion Land has a strong track record of successfully delivering such development.
- 6.3 The proposals are brought forward in response to the specific needs of Yasa Motors, an established high-technology business which is seeking to relocate its headquarters and related business operations to the Site.
- 6.4 The proposals fully accord with the requirements of the outline planning permission for the Site and the design of the building is such that it is suitable to meet the needs of the tenant whilst simultaneously remaining flexible to enable occupation by an alternative end user in the future.
- 6.5 Reserved matters should therefore be approved without delay.



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