



Quod

Reserved Matters Compliance Report

Units 5a, 5b & 6

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 has been prepared by Quod on behalf of Albion Land ('the applicant') in support of reserved matters submitted pursuant to an outline planning permission (forming part of 19/01740/HYBRID) for up to 23,400sq.m of B1 development, access and associated landscaping and infrastructure works on development land at Promised Land Farm.
- 1.3 Reserved matters for the first phase of development (LPA ref 20/02779/REM) at Catalyst Bicester ('the Wider Site') were approved in December 2020. That phase of the business park is now complete and provides 5,490 sqm of flexible B1 floorspace¹, along with associated landscaping, utilities and access.
- 1.4 This Report supports the reserved matters ('RMA') for units 5a, 5b and 6, and the wetland area to the east, as shown in **Figure 1**. Separate submissions relating to Units 7a and 7b have been made concurrently.

Figure 1: Proposed Site Plan



¹ 20/02779/REM was varied via 21/03217/NMA to enable this quantum of floorspace to be delivered.

- 1.5 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 (Policy Bicester 10).
- 1.6 As demonstrated via this Report, proposals brought forward via this RMA are fully compliant with the terms of the hybrid permission (LPA ref. 19/01740/HYBRID); 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 and other business-critical operations here. They should be approved without delay.
- 1.7 Cherwell District Council ('CDC')'s approval of the following reserved matters is sought:
- Layout;
 - Scale;
 - Appearance; and
 - Landscaping.
- 1.8 In addition to this Reserved Matters Compliance Report, the RMA is supported by the following documents and drawings:
- Design and Access Statement
 - Plans Package
 - Parking Note
 - Landscape and Ecological Management and Maintenance Plan
- 1.9 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 planning 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 Application Site ('the Site') is shown in **Figure 1** in relation to the wider Catalyst Bicester proposals.
- 2.2 It is approximately 11.9ha 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 Bicester Avenue Home and Garden Centre constructed in 2007. There are several retail stores and a large car park.
 - A stream forms the eastern boundary of the Site, with open space lying before a railway line beyond it.
 - To the west of the Site is development coming forward as the first phase of the Hybrid permission of Catalyst Bicester. .
 - To the south of the Site is open countryside, currently used for agricultural purposes.

Site Designations

- 2.4 The Site (and Wider Site) is part of a wider allocation for new employment in the Cherwell Local Plan 2011-2031, allocated via Policy Bicester 10.
- 2.5 Part of the eastern side of the Site is within flood zone 3, with a smaller section within flood zone 2.
- 2.6 Adjacent to the Site's southern boundary is the Alchester Roman Town Scheduled Ancient Monument (the 'Alchester SAM').
- 2.7 There are no further ecological, environmental or heritage designations on the Site.

Planning History

- 2.8 There is no planning history on the Site of this reserved matters application other than the hybrid permission to which it is directly pursuant to.
- 2.9 There are a number of different allocations and permissions nearby, ranging from residential, to employment, and mixed use.

3 Policy Context

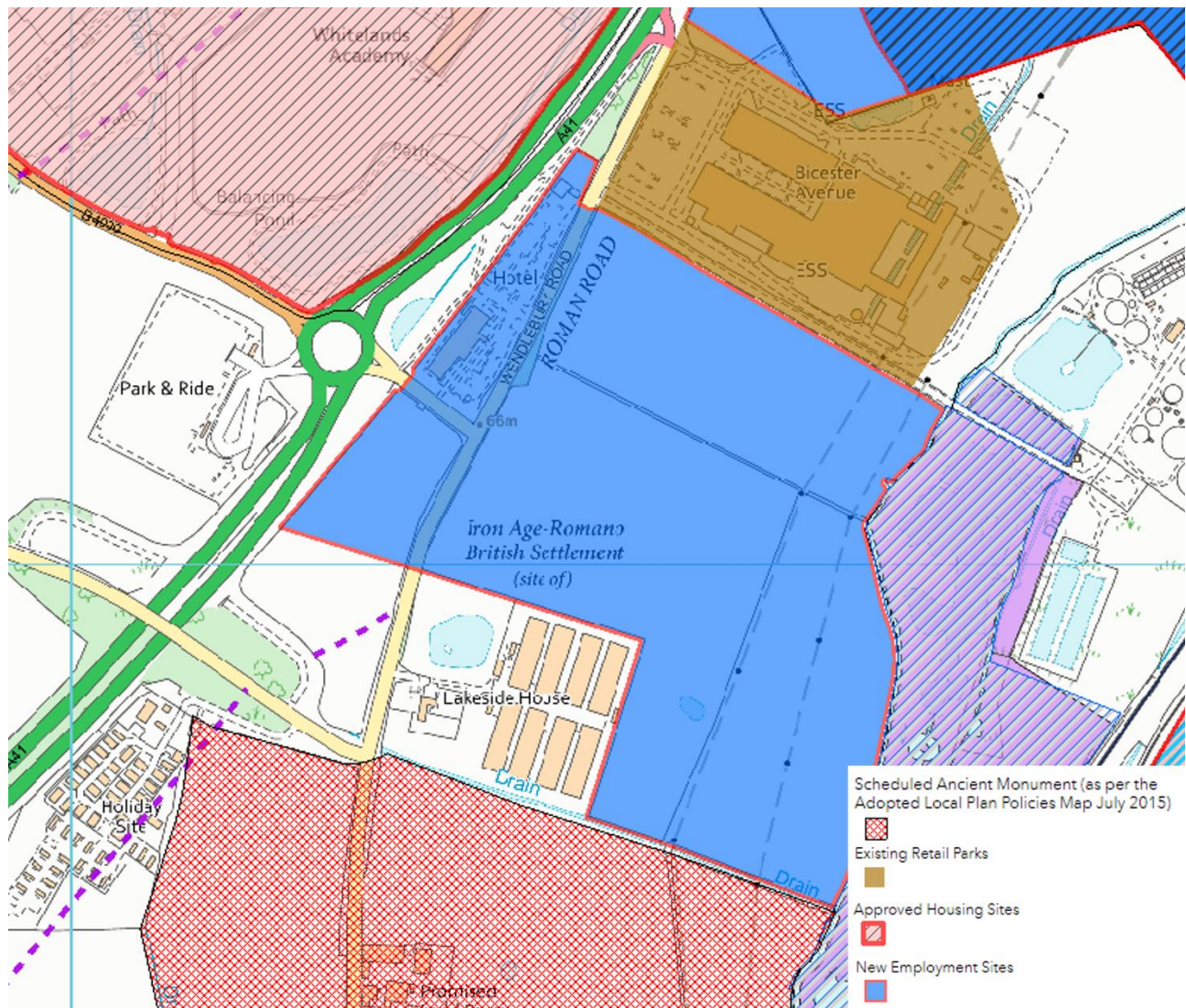
Local Planning Policy

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**):

- Within a New Employment Site.
- Adjacent to 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** within which the Site lies.
- 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 design and place shaping principles.

Other Relevant Planning Policies

- 3.4 Policy SLE 1 states economic development will be supported on sites allocated within the local plan. The policy supports employment proposals for allocated sites at Bicester provided they meet the requirements of other policies set out within the Local Plan.
- 3.5 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
- 3.6 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.
- 3.7 Policy ESD 10 focuses on the protection and enhancement of biodiversity and the natural environment.
- 3.8 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

- 3.9 At a regional level, the Oxfordshire authorities are preparing a Joint Statutory Spatial Plan: The Oxfordshire Plan 2050.
- 3.10 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.

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

4 Development Proposals

- 4.1 The outline part of the hybrid planning permission is governed by a series of parameter plans which fix and control key characteristics of the development. These 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 hybrid consent (LPA ref: 19/01740/HYBRID) for up to 16,800sqm of B1² floorspace (of which up to 35% could be used for offices).
- 4.4 The proposal is for three buildings (see **Figure 3**) providing a total of 11,310sqm GIA, of which up to 2,131sqm would be for office space.

Figure 3: Proposed Site



² 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 A reserved matters pursuant to the hybrid permission were approved (LPA ref: 20/02779/REM, later varied via non-material amendment), enabling a first phase comprising 5,490sqm of employment development to come forward at Catalyst Bicester earlier this year.
- 4.6 Simultaneously to this submission, reserved matters (for Unit 7b) are also submitted pursuant to outline permission (LPA ref. 19/01740/OUT) for land immediately to the south-west and a full application is being made for unit 7a which is adjacent and attached to unit 7b. Delivery of all five of these units is intended to take place at the same time, with them forming a second and final phase of development at the business park.

Layout

- 4.7 The buildings are set within the wider Catalyst Bicester business park and will benefit from its landscape setting; at the eastern part of the Site land is set aside for flood alleviation and an ecological wetland area. These features will be delivered as part of this second phase of development and, accordingly, details are provided.
- 4.8 The building development proposals continue the ‘campus style’ delivered in the first phase of the development to the west such that the development proposed via this RMA and other concurrent submissions will deliver a cohesive, single business park.
- 4.9 Provision is made for servicing/deliveries and staff and visitor parking at appropriate ratios for the intended knowledge-based business use. The following breakdown of parking is proposed:
- Unit 5a: 63 car parking spaces, 4 additional disabled spaces and 30 cycle parking spaces.
 - Unit 5b: 120 car parking spaces, 8 additional disabled spaces and 40 cycle spaces.
 - Unit 6: 122 car parking spaces, 9 additional disabled spaces and 40 cycle spaces.
- 4.10 Vehicle, cycle, and pedestrian access to the Site is clearly defined by the landscape-led approach to the layout. The units also each have an attractive and easy to identify entrance at ground level with toilet facilities and lift access to the first-floor office spaces.

Scale

- 4.11 The height of the proposed buildings (76.5m and 76.25m AOD) have been designed in accordance with parameter plan Ref: 18022_TP_103 C.
- 4.12 The floorspace provided in each of the units is as follows:

Unit	GIA (sqm)	Ground Floor (sqm)	Mezzanine (sqm)
5a	2,220	1,665.3	555.1
5b	4,444.5	3,333.4	1,111.1
6	4,645.1	4,180.6	464.5

Appearance

4.13 The proposed buildings (**Figure 4**) will adhere to the design and place shaping principles expressed in the DFP. Further, the external appearance of the buildings will follow the design concept and language adopted for Phase 1 of the Catalyst Bicester business park and the other development within Phase 2. Buildings have been designed to a high standard and to suit the tenants' needs for flexible spaces within contemporary buildings.

Figure 4: Proposed Building Designs



Landscaping

- 4.14 The proposals aim to sensitively integrate the proposed development into receiving landscape context, whilst improving biodiversity.
- 4.15 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.
- 4.16 New planting will screen and soften the view of the proposed development and connect existing and proposed Green Infrastructure across the business park.
- 4.17 Detailed proposals for the wetland are also submitted, with the objective of ecological enhancement and habitat creation at their heart.

Summary

4.18 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.

4.19 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 B1 business³, including those of the proposed occupier.
- 5.2 The development will therefore enable the delivery of CDC's longstanding aspirations to deliver knowledge economy investment and jobs in this location.

Outline Consent

- 5.3 The following planning conditions control Reserved Matters:
- Condition 24: Development shall comprise a maximum floorspace of 16,800sqm and shall be used only for purposes falling within Class B1, of which no more than 35% (5,880sqm) shall be developed for purposes falling within Class B1(a) (office).
 - Condition 26: 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 27: Development shall accord with the design principles of the approved Development Framework Plan 18022-TP121D.
 - Condition 29: Development shall be carried out in accordance with the Site Location Plan and Parameters Plans.
 - Condition 31: The development shall be constructed to at least a BREEAM 'Very Good' standard.
- 5.4 Compliance with conditions 24, 27 and 31 will be maintained throughout the implementation of the development.
- 5.5 The hybrid consent is conditional upon development being brought forward in accordance with the conditions outlined, the DFP and the planning parameters referred to in condition 29.
- 5.6 These drawings established the overarching scheme design and landscape 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.

³ Now Use Class E(g), i.e. offices, research and development, light industry

Scheme Compliance

5.8 The scheme's compliance with the outline component of the extant hybrid 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 The applications adhere to the tree retention requirements of the outline permission.

5.11 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.

5.12 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, which will in turn support larger populations of other wildlife.

5.13 The open space and planting will also be of a significant benefit to occupiers and employees' health and wellbeing.

Layout

5.14 The proposed layout will provide a safe, legible and engaging environment.

5.15 The public realm and links to open space across the wider business park will encourage social inclusion and integration.

5.16 The layout enables visual permeability, ensuring all buildings are accessible to all users.

5.17 The layout is efficiently designed and corresponds with the requirements of the Development Framework Plan.

5.18 The layout allows units for to be spaced in a complementary way to each other with green buffers acting in between.

Appearance

5.19 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).

5.20 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.

5.21 The proposals create a strong, prestigious character befitting of their headquarters status.

Scale

- 5.22 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.
- 5.23 Scale, layout, appearance and landscaping have been considered holistically from the master-planning stage and provide a high quality, sustainable development.

Summary

- 5.24 In light of the above, the proposals demonstrable 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.
- 5.25 The proposals also fully accord with the conditions of the outline planning consent for the Site.
- 5.26 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.
- 5.27 Development should therefore be approved without delay.

6 Conclusion

- 6.1 This RMA is submitted on behalf of Albion Land, it seeks approval of the details for three employment buildings and a wetland area, 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 built development proposals are brought forward (in part) in response to the specific needs of Yasa Motors, an established high-technology business which is seeking to relocate their headquarters and related business operations to the Site.
- 6.4 The proposals fully accord with the requirements of the outline component of the extant planning permission for the Site and the design of the buildings is such that it is suitable to meet the needs of the prospective tenant whilst simultaneously being flexible to enable occupation by an alternative end user in the future.



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