



National Highways Planning Response (NHPR 21-09) Formal Recommendation to an Application for Planning Permission

From: Nicola Bell (Regional Director)
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To: Cherwell District Council FAO Robin Forrester

CC: transportplanning@dft.gov.uk
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Council's Reference: 22/01144/F

Location: OS Parcel 5700 South West of Grange Farm Street Through Little Chesterton, Chesterton

Proposal: Full planning application for the erection of a new high quality combined research, development and production facility comprising of Class B2 floorspace and ancillary office floorspace with associated infrastructure including: formation of signal-controlled vehicular access to the A41 and repositioning of existing bus stops; ancillary workshops; staff gym and canteen; security gate house; a building for use as an energy centre (details of the energy generation reserved for future approval); loading bays; service yard; waste management area; external plant; vehicle parking; landscaping including permanent landscaped mounds; sustainable drainage details; together with the demolition of existing agricultural buildings within the red line boundary; and the realignment of an existing watercourse.

National Highways Ref: 94812

Referring to the consultation on the planning application referenced above, in the vicinity of the M40 and A34 that forms part of the Strategic Road Network, notice is hereby given that National Highways' formal recommendation is that we:

- ~~a) offer no objection (see reasons at Annex A);~~
- ~~b) recommend that conditions should be attached to any planning permission that may be granted (see Annex A – National Highways recommended Planning Conditions & reasons);~~

c) recommend that planning permission not be granted for a specified period (see reasons at Annex A);

~~d) recommend that the application be refused (see reasons at Annex A)~~

Highways Act 1980 Section 175B is not relevant to this application.¹

This represents National Highways' formal recommendation and is copied to the Department for Transport as per the terms of our Licence.

Should the Local Planning Authority not propose to determine the application in accordance with this recommendation they are required to consult the Secretary of State for Transport, as set out in the [Town and Country Planning \(Development Affecting Trunk Roads\) Direction 2018](#), via transportplanning@dft.gov.uk and may not determine the application until the consultation process is complete.

Signature: 	Date: 20/05/2022
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¹ Where relevant, further information will be provided within Annex A.

Annex A **National Highway's assessment of the proposed development**

National Highways has been appointed by the Secretary of State for Transport as a strategic highway company under the provisions of the Infrastructure Act 2015 and is the highway authority, traffic authority and street authority for the Strategic Road Network (SRN). The SRN is a critical national asset and as such we work to ensure that it operates and is managed in the public interest, both in respect of current activities and needs as well as in providing effective stewardship of its long-term operation and integrity.

Development Site Context

This application is for a large research, development and production facility combining B2 General Industrial and B1 Office uses. The site is located just north of the A41 with a new signalised junction access from the A41 proposed as the main access point. In the case of this development proposal, our interests relate to the M40 and A34, in particular M40 J9.

Trip Generation and Trip Distribution

A first principles approach has been taken to derive the development trips. This is acceptable given the identified end-user and the bespoke operation of the site. The supporting traffic modelling reflects the assumptions made for the site operation.

Off-site Vehicle Impacts and Sustainable Transport Mitigation

We have reviewed the available information regarding the impacts of development at M40 J9 and the emerging package of proposed mitigation put forward by the Applicant, the latter of which we note is still being developed by the Applicant in consultation with Oxfordshire County Council as Local Highway Authority (LHA). We note from the supporting Transport Assessment (TA) that discussions remain on-going regarding the details of the overall transport package required to mitigate the residual cumulative impacts of development.

The Applicant has undertaken junction impact assessment at M40 J9 in compliance with DfT Circular 02/2013 as presented in Table 7.3 and Table 7.5 of supporting Transport Assessment *Tritax Symmetry and Siemens Healthineers, Symmetry Park, Oxford North* [VECTOS. March 2022]. The analysis presented does demonstrate that in a worst-case scenario (without any mitigation on the local road network) that there is sufficient stacking space on the M40 slip-roads to accommodate forecast queue, meaning these queues are not predicted to extend back to the M40 mainline. As a result, the residual cumulative impacts of development are not considered severe nor considered to have an unacceptable impact upon highway safety in accordance with paragraphs 110 and 111 of the National Planning Policy Framework (July 2021).

From the information reviewed to date which includes traffic modelling at M40 Junction 9, we have no objection in principle to proposals set out in 22/01144/F subject to a suite of planning conditions to be agreed with the applicant.

We are currently in dialogue with the applicant to agree the suite of planning conditions necessary to ensure that proposals can progress without an adverse impact to the safe and efficient operation of the strategic road network which includes M40 Junction 9.

Recommended Non-Approval

It is recommended that the application (Ref: 22/01144/F) should not be approved for a period of 56 days (until 12th July 2022) from the date of this recommendation to enable dialog with the Applicant regarding a suite of planning conditions.

Reason: To allow National Highways to understand the impact of the development on the safe and efficient operation of the Strategic Road Network and provide the Local Planning Authority with fully informed advice.