

Robin Forrester, Senior Planning Officer
Cherwell District Council
Bodicote House, Bodicote
Banbury
Oxon
OX15 4AA

01 June 2022

Dear Mr Forrester

Ref : 22/01144/F Development of Employment Use South West of Grange Farm Little Chesterton

CPRE has some observations in relation to the above development, as it is currently constituted which are outlined below.

The proposed development is on land that has not been allocated in the local development plan. CPRE believes that a plan of this type and size should be considered within the development plan. As this is a new employment proposal, that lies within a rural area on a non - allocated site, then the development should be assessed against the criteria in Cherwell District Local Plan Policy SLE1. CPRE believes that it is questionable as to whether the applicant's development proposal has met some of this criteria.

SLE1 states the developments should be small scale unless it can be demonstrated that there will be no impacts on the character and villages of the surrounding environment. This is a major industrial development in open countryside which is largely undeveloped save for a small development of industrial units located adjacent to the proposed development site. The proposed development will require major infrastructure works, which in itself will change the character of the immediate area. This includes the re-routing of an existing stream which lies within the boundary of the site. The immediate area is likely to witness a significant amount of development in the immediate future. Within the environs of Chesterton, this development along with the Great Wolf and Chesterton Sports Ground developments have car park proposals which are proposed to accommodate as a minimum 1,500 parking places. CPRE believes that it is difficult to argue that this development will not individually and cumulatively impact on the character of the area.

The developer needs to demonstrate that the development can be carried out without undue detriment to residential amenity, the highway network, landscape and its setting and the appearance and character of the landscape and the environment generally as required by SLE1. This multi storey building will potentially dominate the surrounding landscape and is out of keeping with the size of any other buildings within the immediate vicinity. The existing road structure at junction 9 of the M40 and the A41 will come under considerable strain with the potential that some of this pressure will be borne by local village roads which are not constructed to meet residue surplus traffic from this type of development. Any issues on the A41 or motorway will inevitably force traffic on to local village roads.

The proposal should not give rise to excessive or inappropriate traffic and will wherever possible contribute to the general aim of the reducing the needs for travel by private car as per SLE1. The aim of reducing car journeys is further articulated in strategic objective 13 of the Local Plan, which has as its aim to reduce the dependency on the private car as a mode of travel. It is difficult to see how a new development, adjacent to a motorway junction, will meet the criteria and objectives outlined in SLE1 or SO13. CPRE are concerned at the number of proposed developments being proposed around Cherwell's motorway junctions as this facilitates private car travel. Similarly the construction of car parks has the same affect. CDC has a net zero carbon aspiration by 2030, and reduction in use of the private car is key in achieving this aim. Whilst the applicant's travel plan has set out some modest aims to reduce private car travel, this development is new and will introduce new journeys to the area. CPRE questions whether the active travel plan considerations should be broadened to include travel from other settlements, in addition to Bicester, and whether the applicant could consider the use of a shuttle bus that could assist in taking some commuting traffic away from the immediate area of the development.

The developer needs to provide a net gain assessment that meets a 10% gain in biodiversity and provide a land management plan to support their proposal in accordance with ESD13 The developer's biodiversity net gain (bng) assessment for both linear and non linear habitat falls below the 10% net gain required by CDC being 4.1% and 6.71% respectively. Furthermore the scores recorded for some habitat seem optimistic and require a properly construed land management plan to justify why these scores have been given that is open to scrutiny by consultees. We support the arguments made by the Berkshire, Buckinghamshire and Oxfordshire Wildlife Trust (BBOWT) that the stipulated gain should be in perpetuity as built up development of some sort is likely to exist on this site permanently.

CPRE believes the development proposal as it stands requires further work and in particular around biodiversity and reducing the development's dependence on the private car.

Yours sincerely,

Nick Dolden



N Dolden
CPRE, Cherwell District

Copies to: Robin Oliver, Chairman Cherwell District CPRE
Helen Marshall, CPRE Director