

**SYMMETRY PARK, ARDLEY**  
**DESIGN & ACCESS STATEMENT**

May 2022



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FIG.1.GOOGLE IMAGE WITH THE SITE OUTLINE UK





# 1. INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

This Design & Access Statement has been produced for an outline planning application for Symmetry Park, Ardley. The proposal for which planning permission is sought comprises:

*“Application for outline planning permission (all matters reserved except means of access (not internal roads) from B4100) for the erection of buildings comprising logistics (Use Class B8) and ancillary offices (Use Class E(g)(i)) floorspace; Energy Centre, HGV parking, construction of new site access from the B4100; creation of internal roads and access routes; hard and soft landscaping; the construction of parking and servicing areas; substations and other associated infrastructure.”*

The outline application is accompanied by a Parameters Plan (Fig 10), setting out the maximum extents (including height) of the proposed development for which planning permission is sought. The parameters of the development ensured a robust EIA was undertaken and that the EIA responds to the flexibility in design embedded within the application.

The Parameters Plan describes the proposed Site being divided into two main development zones, Zones A and B. Both zones promote the use of B8, Storage and Distribution (with ancillary offices) with allowance for an energy centre and HGV parking. The proposed development will include associated landscaping, access and infrastructure works, including the provision of a significant landscape buffers to the east to mitigate the visual impact.

The outline application is submitted with all matters reserved. An illustrative masterplan has also been provided to show how the Site could be developed, albeit approval is not sought for this plan.

## 1.2 PURPOSE OF THE DOCUMENT

This document has been prepared as a means to present and explain the development issues and the evolution of the design process for the employment land at Symmetry Park, Ardley.

The document draws together a range of relevant considerations in order to present a comprehensive case for the grant of planning permission for this outline application. It has the potential to inform a number of interested parties but is focused principally upon the merits of the Site's development and the contribution it can make to the future economic growth needs of the wider Oxfordshire, regional and national economy. Its suitability to accommodate large-scale logistics buildings is also in response to the current needs and demands of the logistics sector.

It provides information about the proposals that will be of use and assistance to the local community, interested groups, statutory undertakers and other generally interested parties and therefore seeks to demonstrate a thorough understanding of the Site's development constraints and opportunities.

In so doing, it explains the value and benefits the Site's development can bring. The proposals advocated within

this application grasp the opportunity to achieve this with the creation of a high quality logistics park, through a comprehensive masterplan that sets out a vision of a first class development in an extensively landscaped setting. Symmetry Park will deliver a new logistics location to attract regionally and nationally significant businesses that will raise the quality of economic and employment opportunities for the area.

## 1.3 STRUCTURE OF THE DOCUMENT

In accordance with advice published by the Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment (CABE) in connection with Design and Access Statements, the design process has been fully informed by a consideration of issues, including:

### DESIGN

- Use: What buildings and spaces will be used for;
- Amount: How much would be built on the Site;
- Layout: How the buildings and public and private spaces will be arranged on the Site and the relationship between them and the buildings and spaces around the Site;
- Scale: How big the buildings and spaces would be;
- Landscaping: How open spaces will be treated to enhance and protect the character of the place;
- Appearance: What the buildings and spaces will look like.

### ACCESS

- Vehicular and Transport Links: Why the access



points and routes have been chosen and how the Site responds to road layout and public transport provision;

- Inclusive Access: How everyone can get to and move through the place on equal terms regardless of age, disability, ethnicity or social grouping.

#### 1.4 CONTEXT

The Site is located adjacent to the B4100 and the A43 and immediately to the north and south of the M40 J10. The A43 is a major road and an important route in terms of connectivity between Oxford and Northampton, and linking to the M40 which connects to Birmingham to the north and London to the South.

The Site has the potential to become a regionally significant logistics and distribution warehouse location due to its strategic position on the road network.

Symmetry Park is capable of delivering up to 300,000 sq.m GEA (3,228,170 sq.ft); of new logistics and employment space and has the potential to deliver many additional jobs.

Tritax Symmetry has undertaken consultation regarding the deliverability of the scheme, which have informed the emerging design. Consultation has also established that the Site has no significant development constraints and can be brought forward in a short timescale to address the acknowledged market shortfall in large footprint logistics warehousing in the Oxfordshire area and region generally.

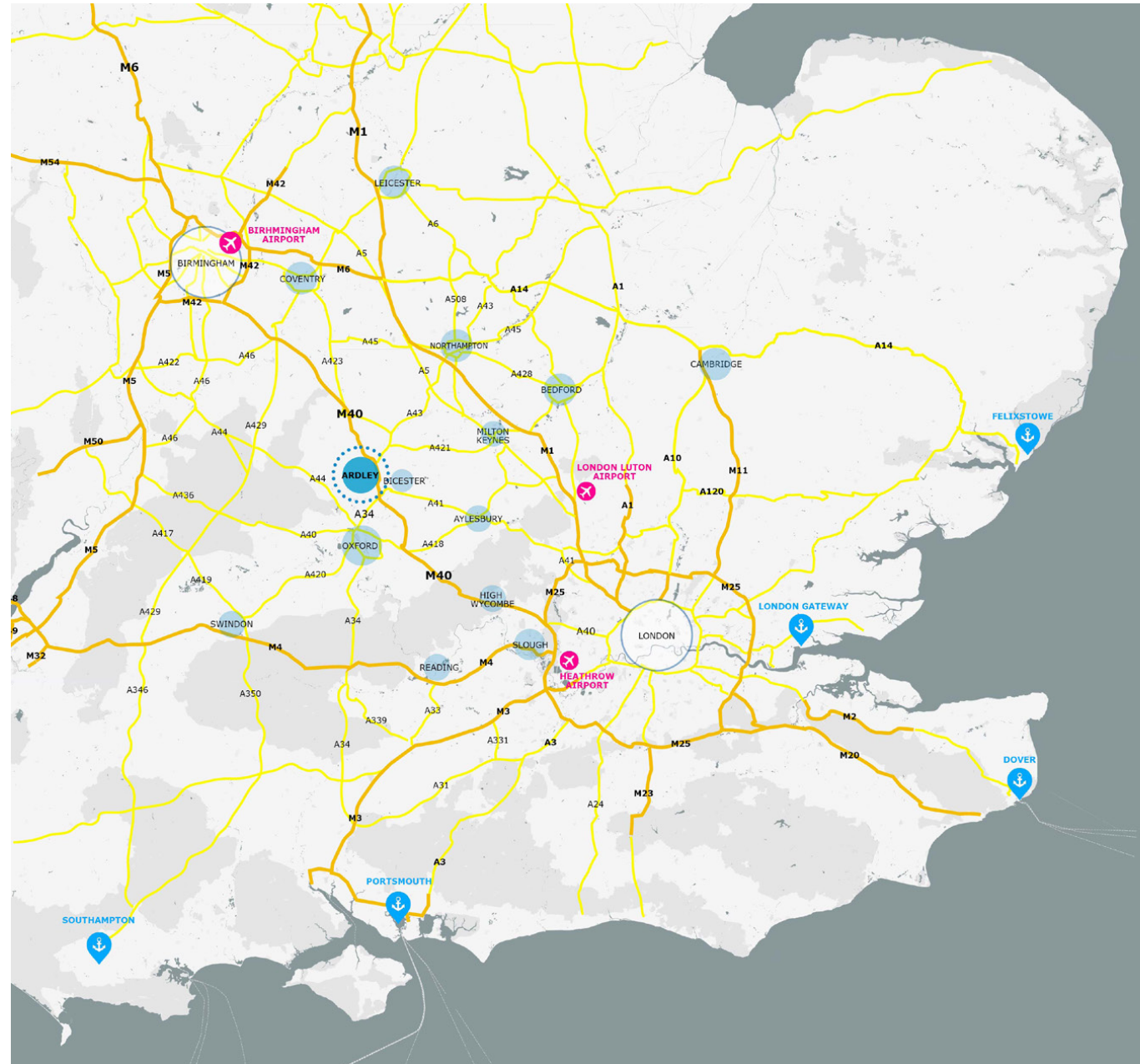


FIG.2.WIDER CONNECTIVITY



## 2. BACKGROUND

### 2.1 THE UK LOGISTICS SECTOR

The supply chain logistics industry in Europe has undertaken a wholesale change in the past 18 months, in part driven by the dramatic increase of online sales, resulting in retailers and logistics providers continually reviewing the efficiency of their supply chains. The requirements of modern logistics facilities have changed to include larger buildings for economies of scale; larger yards to cater for point of time delivery by suppliers; proximity to customers for next day delivery and the need to cater for a broad spectrum of employee skills. This is because modern warehouses require a large number of highly skilled IT technicians on top of traditional blue collar jobs. New logistics facilities also need to accommodate high tech racking/picking systems which cannot be accommodated in second hand buildings.

The need for logistics floorspace is embedded throughout the supply chain of goods - and is no longer to be regarded as a place of storage for final products, with few job opportunities. The UK's manufacturing industry requires efficient logistics facilities to serve the manufacturing process.

Recent trends in 'reshoring'-the return of component suppliers back to the UK particularly from the Far East, has accentuated the need for efficient logistics buildings to be developed as a matter of urgency.

For many, the trend towards very large-scale logistics buildings is perhaps best appreciated from the phenomenal growth in online retailing, triggered by recent global events. The sophistication of the supply chain, and the efficiency in delivery of goods to customers is only

achievable by the location of logistics buildings close to the strategic highway network and close to the customer. The requirement for logistics facilities to serve on a regional and national basis is significant, with these large scale facilities required to contribute to continued economic growth within both the local and wider UK economy.

The importance of the logistics sector to the local economy has been accommodated in the scheme for Ardley. Logistics occupiers require highly accessible locations to the strategic highway network – Symmetry Park, Ardley is well located in this respect with direct access to the A43 major road and M40 Motorway, which provides direct connections to the wider strategic road network.

### 2.2 JOB CREATION

Over the past decade the nature of employment within the logistics sector has changed considerably, with a significant increase in both the quantum and quality of jobs created.

The UK Logistics Sector employs 2.3 m people in the UK and contributes £74.45bn per annum to the UK Economy. One in 12 people are employed in the logistics sector. The majority of logistics employees live within 15 miles of their work. 88% of logistic jobs are full time.

Research by Prologis in 2019 (Technical Insight from Prologis UK (September 2019) Distribution Warehouses Deliver More Jobs) identified that on average, its customers employed one person for every 95 sq.m of floor space. It also showed the nature of the employment to be:

• People who work on warehouse floor	49%
• HGV drivers	8%
• Office	25%
• Managerial role	12%
• Other	6% *

\*Predominantly made up of IT, customer service, sales and engineers.

Modern logistics warehouses now employ a wide and far reaching cross section of employees with IT and engineers being a major part of the employee base. Forecasters believe employee make up will continue to grow towards larger numbers of support, IT and engineers as online retailing increases and logistics solutions evolve to meet the demands of the customer base, for example next day delivery.



## 2.3 BENEFITS

Symmetry Park will bring significant economic benefits to Cherwell District Council and the wider Oxfordshire area, providing a substantial number of new employment opportunities, major inward investment to the surrounding area, and provision of a sustainable source of revenue to the Local Authority through new business rates receipts.

In summary the development will:

- Create a first class regionally significant logistics hub on the important A43 and M40 arterial distribution links from Northampton to the wider UK motorway network;
- Meet occupier demand for up to 300,000 sq.m GEA (3,228,170 sq.ft); of new logistics warehousing within Cherwell and the wider Oxfordshire area;
- Maintain and enhance the existing ecological value of the Site with a comprehensive landscape and biodiversity strategy, incorporating flood mitigation proposals, and connecting into wider green Infrastructure corridor proposals;
- Potential to create 1000s of new jobs within Cherwell and the wider Oxfordshire area;
- Provide inward investment to the local economy.



FIG.3.ARDLEY LOCATION WITHIN UK



## 3. CONTEXT ANALYSIS

### 3.1 LOCATION

The Site comprises two parcels, including highways land, the total Site area is 83.279 Hectares (205.786 Acres) of land currently in predominantly agricultural use. The Site is located adjacent to the A43, accessed from the B4100, with direct access to the M40 at Junction 10. The M40 provides access to Bicester and then to London to the south-east and Birmingham to the north-west. The Site itself lies approximately 5 miles from Bicester town centre, and is centred approximately on 51°57'28.4"N 1°11'41.9"W.

### 3.2 CONTEXT AND EXISTING SITE FEATURES

The Site is located in an area which is dominated by agricultural land, with sparsely located residential and commercial development. The surrounding landscape is generally low-lying agricultural land.

The nearest settlement is Stoke Lyne, approximately 800 m east of the Site(s). Ardley/Fewcott is located about 1.2km south-west and Fritwell is located circa 2km to the west, both of which are beyond the M40.

The Moto Cherwell Valley motorway services and the Travelodge Bicester Cherwell Valley within the service station are located within 100m of the southern boundary of the southern Site, and an Esso service station (Baynards Green Service Station) is located approximately 50m west of the northern Sites' western boundary on the A43/B4100 roundabout junction. Baynards Green Farm, to the west now converted to a commercial estate, is located immediately beyond the Esso service station; this contains a Grade II listed barn.

#### **The Southern Site (South of the B4011)**

The southern parcel of the Site is located to the south of the B4100. The southern parcel is the smaller piece of land.

The Site is bound by the B4100 (a single carriageway road) to the north, agricultural land to the west (which is currently subject to a number of planning applications (refs. 21/03266/F, 21/03267/OUT and 21/03268/OUT, please see below for further details). Vehicular and pedestrian access is currently gained via the B4100 on the northern Site boundary. The B4100 connects to the A43 at a roundabout adjacent to the south eastern corner of the northern parcel's Site boundary.

To the east is agricultural land. To the south is agricultural land and a wooded area beyond which is the Moto Cherwell service station and Travelodge.

The Site comprises an agricultural field which is defined by field boundaries and hedgerows. The arable use offers negligible ecological value. A Site survey has found the agricultural land to be moderate quality (Grade 3b), which is not categorised as the best and most versatile.

There is a bridleway (ref. 367/21/10) which runs close to the south west boundary of the Site the path is on the adjoining land to the south of the Site.

There are no designated heritage assets (world heritage Sites, scheduled monuments, listed buildings, conservation areas, registered parks and gardens or

registered battlefields) located within the Site. There are no World Heritage Sites, Scheduled Monuments, Registered Parks and Gardens or Registered Battlefields within the Site or within 500m of the Site boundary.

The Site is not located near to a 'sensitive area' (as defined in Part 1 of the EIA Regulations) (i.e. a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), National Park, Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, World Heritage Site (WHS), Scheduled Monument or European Site) and is not subject to any statutory or non-statutory designations for nature conservation or heritage.

The northern parcel, the larger Site, is bounded by the B4100 to the south, the A43 dual carriageway, beyond the A43 there is a fast-food takeaway and service station, a small business park, and agricultural land. To the north is a gated single carriageway road (gated road) beyond which there is agricultural land, crossed by footpaths and bridleways. To the east is a single carriage road, beyond which is agricultural land and a farm (Lone Barn).

**To the south west corner of the Site is the A43 and B4100 Baynards Green roundabout.**

To the south of the B4100 is agricultural land (which is subject to a number planning applications, refs. 21/03266/F, 21/03267/OUT and 21/03268/OUT, please see below for further details).

Vehicular and pedestrian access is currently gained via the B4100 on the southern Site boundary.

The Site comprises agricultural fields which are defined by field boundaries and hedgerows.

Fields within the Site are enclosed by hedgerows having few associated mature trees. The arable use offers negligible ecological value. A Site survey has found the agricultural land to be of moderate quality (Grade 3b), which is not categorised as the best and most versatile.

The Site itself is generally flat with levels falling gently to the east.

There is a bridleway (ref. 367/24/10) off-site, which runs parallel along the northern boundary of the Site.

The northern parcel Site is not located within or near to a 'sensitive area' (as defined in Part 1 of the EIA Regulations) (i.e. a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), National Park, Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, World Heritage Site (WHS), Scheduled Monument or European Site) and is not subject to any statutory or non-statutory designations for nature conservation or heritage. There are no World Heritage Sites, Scheduled Monuments, Registered Parks and Gardens or Registered Battlefields within the Site or within 500m of the Site boundary.

### 3.3 EXISTING SITE USE

The Site consists predominantly of arable fields interspersed with managed hedgerows and drainage ditches.

### 3.4 AMENITIES

Site is located nearby to Travelodge Bicester Cherwell Valley M40 (including HGV parking) to the south and services including petrol station and fast food restaurant to the west. Symmetry Park, Ardley is located approximately 5m north-west of Bicester town centre where a number of amenities are available. There are a number of shopping areas in the town including Bicester Village as well as restaurants, and a cinema.

### 3.5 VIEWS & VISTAS

A full Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) has been carried out as part of this application. This document considers the effects on local landscape character and the visual effects upon established visual receptors. The LVIA identified that :

- Views from close quarters are generally only available from very small sections of busy road corridors, and from very short sections of the local PRoW network immediately surrounding the Site;
- From most roads and footpaths beyond the immediate context of the Site, views towards the Site are filtered by intervening vegetation within a gently undulating landscape;
- Views from residential properties are generally limited to a single property immediately adjacent to the Site's eastern boundary, although with some potential views also being obtained from properties within Stoke Lyne. Beyond this, any middle distance to distant views of the Site are gained across gently undulating agricultural landscape and tend to be heavily filtered or fragmented by intervening vegetation; and

- Much of the wider study lies outside the visual envelope from where no views of the entire Site are possible.

### 3.6 HYDROLOGY, FLOOD RISK AND DRAINAGE

The Environment Agency's flood map indicates that the Site is located within Flood Zone 1. It therefore has a 'low probability' of river flooding, with less than a 1 in 1,000 annual probability (<0.1%).

### 3.7 HERITAGE

There are no designated heritage assets (world heritage Sites, scheduled monuments, listed buildings, conservation areas, registered parks and gardens or registered battlefields) located within the Site.

### 3.8 SERVICES & EASEMENTS

There are no significant underground or above ground services (or associated easements) within the boundary of the Site that cannot either be diverted or accommodated at the detailed layout stage.

### 3.9 PUBLIC ACCESS

There are no PROW within the Site. There is a bridleway (ref. 367/21/10) which runs along the south west boundary of the Site on the adjoining land to the south of the Site.

There is a bridleway (ref. 367/24/10) which runs along the northern boundary of the Site.



### 3.10 ARCHAEOLOGY

Archaeological investigations to date (including geophysical surveys) indicate that there are archaeological features on the Site of moderate significance. Following appropriate mitigation through archaeological recording, none of the predicted, residual adverse effects on archaeology and cultural heritage assets, either during the construction or occupation phases of the proposed development, are deemed to be significant and, therefore, are unlikely to be a barrier to the proposed development.

### 3.11 STATUTORY DESIGNATIONS

The Site does not lie within, or contain, any nationally or locally designated landscapes, nor does it contain any designated heritage assets, such as World Heritage Sites, scheduled monuments, RPGs, registered battlefields or listed buildings, where there would be a presumption in favour of their physical preservation in situ and against development.

### 3.12 TREE PRESERVATION ORDERS (TPO)

An online search of the Cherwell District Council interactive map has shown that there are no Tree Preservation Orders registered on, or adjacent to the Site.

### 3.13 ECOLOGY

The baseline ecological investigations undertaken across the Site as part of the appraisal included a desk study, Extended Phase 1 survey and detailed (Phase 2) surveys relating to breeding birds, roosting and foraging/commuting bats, badger (*Meles meles*), reptiles, and hairstreak butterflies. All surveys were undertaken with reference to best practice guidance.

There are no internationally designated Sites within 10km. There is one biological statutory designated Sites within 5km of the Site, Ardley Cutting and Quarry SSSI, although given the distances involved, it is not considered there would be any negative impacts on this SSSI as a result of the Proposed Development.

There are four non-statutory designated Local Wildlife Sites (LWS) within 2km of the Site: Stoke Bushes LWS, Stoke Wood LWS and Stoke Little Wood LWS and Tusmore and Shellswell Park Biodiversity Opportunity Area (BOA). Of these, only Stoke Bushes LWS and the BOA is considered, in the absence of appropriate mitigation, to be at risk of adverse effects as a result of the proposed development.

The majority of the Site comprises large, intensive arable fields sown with commercial cereal crops that are of negligible ecological importance. The arable fields are enclosed by a network of native hedgerows with a number of associated mature trees that are part of the local ecological importance.





### 3.14 PLANNING HISTORY

There is no relevant planning history for the Sites. The Sites are currently and historically have been in agricultural use. No previous development or other uses are known to have occurred on the Sites.

Current Planning Application and Planning Permissions on sites nearby are summarised below:

- **Albion Land Schemes:** Three planning applications have been submitted by Albion Land. These Sites are immediately adjacent to the application Site (to the south of the northern parcel and to the west of the southern parcel). The applications have not yet been determined. The applications comprise:
  - Site clearance, construction of new Site access from the B4100, permanent and temporary internal roads, an internal roundabout and a foul drainage station, diversion of an existing overhead power cable and public right of way, and soft landscaping (application ref. 21/03266/F).
  - Outline planning permission (all matters reserved except for access) for the erection of buildings comprising logistics (Use Class B8) and ancillary Office (Use Class E(g)(i)) floorspace and associated infrastructure; construction of new Site access from the B4100; creation of internal roads and access routes; and hard and soft landscaping (application ref. 21/03267/OUT (Eastern Parcel)).
  - Outline planning permission (all matters reserved except for access) for the erection of buildings comprising logistics (Use Class B8) and ancillary Office (Use Class E(g)(i)) floorspace; construction of new Site access from the B4100; creation of internal roads and access routes; hard and soft landscaping including noise attenuation measures; and other associated infrastructure (Application ref. 21/03268/OUT (Western Parcel)).
- **Heyford Park.** A hybrid planning application for the mixed-use development of the 'Heyford Park' Site was approved subject to the completion of a Section 106 Agreement in November 2020. The approved development comprises the construction of up to 1,175 new residential dwellings and a range of other uses. Off-Site mitigation to be secured as part of the Section 106 Agreement include 'M40 Junction 10 improvements' as well as improvements to the A43 Baynards roundabout (which will include the amendments and extension of the existing roundabout to the west, upgrade of the A43 in both directions and minor capacity improvements for local approaches) (application ref. 18/00825/HYBRID).
- **Land to the east of M40 and south of A4095, Chesterton, Bicester (Great Wolf).** Planning permission (LPA reference 19/02550/F) was granted at appeal in May 2021 for the "redevelopment of part of golf course to provide new leisure resort (sui generis) incorporating waterpark, family entertainment centre, hotel, conferencing facilities and restaurants with associated access, parking and landscaping".



## 4. PLANNING POLICY

Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (as amended) requires the determination of planning applications to be made in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

### 4.1 THE DEVELOPMENT PLAN

The Development Plan comprises the:

- Adopted Cherwell Local Plan 2011-2031 (Part 1);
- 'Saved' policies Local Plan 1996 (November 1996);
- Cherwell Local Plan 2011 - 2031 (Part 1) Partial Review – Oxford's Unmet Housing Need September 2020; and
- Oxfordshire Minerals and Waste Plan (Part 1- Core Strategy) September 2017.

### 4.2 THE RELEVANT PLANNING POLICIES OF CHERWELL DISTRICTS DEVELOPMENT PLAN

The relevant planning policies of Cherwell Districts development plan are set out below:

- Adopted Cherwell Local Plan 2011-2031 (Part 1) (CLP)
- Policy PSD1 – Presumption in favour of sustainable development
- Policy SLE1 – Employment development
- Policy SLE4 – Improved transport and connections

- Policy BSC2 – Effective and efficient use of land
- Policy ESD1 – Mitigating and adapting to climate change
- Policy ESD2 – Energy hierarchy and allowable solutions
- Policy ESD3 – Sustainable construction
- Policy ESD4 – Decentralised energy systems
- Policy ESD5 – Renewable energy
- Policy ESD6 – Sustainable flood risk management
- Policy ESD7 – Sustainable drainage systems
- Policy ESD8 – Water resources
- Policy ESD10 – Biodiversity and the natural environment
- Policy ESD13 – Local landscape protection and enhancement
- Policy ESD15 – Character of the built environment
- Policy ESD17 – Green infrastructure
- Policy INF1 - Infrastructure

'Saved' policies from the adopted Local Plan 1996 (November 1996) (LP) :

- Policy C28 – Layout, design, and external appearance of new development
- Policy TR10 – Heavy goods vehicle
- Policy ENV1 – Development likely to cause detrimental levels of pollution

There are no planning policies in the Cherwell Local Plan Review (Part 2) or the Minerals and Waste Plan relevant to this planning application.

### 4.3 THE CHERWELL LOCAL PLAN

Development plans contain broad statements of policy, many of which may be mutually unreconcilable. It is hence important when considering the merits of a particular planning application to establish whether there is 'dominant' policy whose provisions are most relevant to the proposals. Policy SLE1 Employment Development is the most relevant policy consideration.

Policy SLE1 comprises two parts, namely;

- (i) the protection of existing employment Sites and the focus of employment development within the built-up areas of Bicester, Banbury and Kidlington and on strategic allocations included within the CLP; and
- (ii) the circumstances where 'new employment proposals' on non-allocated rural Sites will be supported.

As the application Site is not allocated in the CLP and is located within the countryside, the proposed development falls within the second part of the Policy. Fundamental to the support for employment developments on non-allocated rural Sites are the following:

- i. The need to demonstrate 'exceptional' circumstances.
- ii. The requirement to demonstrate through a robust Site assessment that the proposed development cannot be accommodated on land:



- committed for employment development,
- allocated for employment development,
- within or adjoining Category A Villages.

Thereafter Policy SLE1 sets out Criteria for assessing employment proposals on unallocated Sites in the rural area, as follows:

- They will be outside the Green Belt, unless very special circumstances can be demonstrated; (Bullet Point 1)
- Sufficient justification is provided to demonstrate why the development should be allocated in the rural area on a non-allocated Site; (Bullet Point 2)
- They will be designed to a very high-quality standards using sustainable construction, and be of an appropriate scale and respect the character of the villages and the surroundings; (Bullet Point 3)
- They will be small scale unless it can be demonstrated that there will be no significant adverse impact on the character of a village or surrounding environment. (Bullet Point 4)
- The proposal and any associated employment activities can be carried out without undue detriment to residential amenity, the highway network, village character and its setting, the appearance and character of the landscape and the environment generally including on any designated buildings or features (or on non-designated building or features of local importance; (Bullet Point 5)

- The proposal will not give rise to excessive or inappropriate traffic and will wherever possible contribute to the general aim of reducing the need to travel by car; (Bullet Point 6)
- There are no suitable available plots or premises within existing nearby employment Sites in the rural area. (Bullet Point 7)

A new Oxfordshire Plan (2050) and a new Cherwell Local Plan Review (2040) are also currently being prepared and once adopted will form part of the Development Plan for the Site. The new Cherwell Local Plan Review (2040) will replace the adopted Cherwell Local Plan 2015 and 'saved' policies in the Cherwell Local Plan (1996). However, the document is not expected to be adopted until July 2023 at the earliest.

#### 4.4 OTHER MATERIAL CONSIDERATIONS

Other material considerations include:

- Planning Practice Guidance;
- National Planning Policy Framework;
- National Design Guide;
- Oxford Cambridge Arc;
- Mid Cherwell Neighborhood Plan 2018-2031 (Made May 2019).

#### 4.5 NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY FRAMEWORK 'THE FRAMEWORK'

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2021) sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how they should be applied.

Paragraph 10 identifies a presumption in favour of sustainable development. For decision taking this means:

"c) approving development proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan without delay; or  
d) where there are no relevant development plan policies, or the policies which are most important for determining the application are out-of-date, granting permissions unless:  
i) the application of policies in this Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a clear reason for refusing the proposed development; or  
ii) any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole".

Paragraph 38 requires Local Planning Authorities (LPAs) to approach decisions on proposed development in a positive and creative way. Decision makers should seek to approve applications for sustainable development where possible.

Paragraph 55 explains that LPAs should consider whether otherwise unacceptable development could be made acceptable through the use of conditions or planning obligations.





Paragraphs 81, 82 and 83 (Section 6 Building a strong, competitive economy) are the most significant in the determination of this planning application. Paragraph 81 states that ‘Planning policies and decisions should help create the conditions in which business can invest, expand and adapt’ and further states that ‘Significant weight should be placed on the need to support economic growth and productivity, taking into account both local business needs and wider opportunities for development’.

Paragraphs 82 goes on to state that local planning policies are required to:

- Set out a clear economic vision and strategy which positively and proactively encourages sustainable economic growth;
- Set criteria, or identify strategic Sites, for local and inward investment;
- Seek to address potential barriers to investment, such as inadequate infrastructure, services, or housing; and
- Be flexible enough to accommodate needs not anticipated in the plan.

Planning policies and decisions should recognise and address the specific locational requirements of different sectors. This includes making provision for storage and distribution operations at a variety of scales and in suitably accessible locations (paragraph 83).

Chapter 6 (paragraph 84) goes on to state that planning policies and decisions should enable the sustainable

growth and expansions of all types of business in rural areas, including through well-designed new buildings.

Planning policies and decisions should recognise that Sites to meet local business needs in rural areas may have to be found adjacent to or beyond existing settlements and in locations that are not well served by public transport (para 85).

Paragraph 7 of the NPPF states that the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. Paragraph 8 explains that there are three objectives associated with sustainable development; economic, social and environmental. These three objectives are ‘interdependent’ and to be pursued in ‘mutually supportive ways.

Paragraph 8 of the Framework states that to ensure that the economic objective of sustainable development is achieved and to build a strong, responsive and competitive economy, a sufficient land of the right type needs to be made available in the right place and at the right time to support growth, innovation and improve productivity.

The NPPF introduces the presumption in favour of sustainable development and at Paragraph 10, states that this is “at the heart of the Framework”. For decision-taking, Paragraph 11 explains that this means approving proposals, without delay, that accord with the Development Plan. The following sections of the Framework contain policy guidance that is relevant to this proposal.

- Section 6: Building a strong, competitive economy
- Section 9: Promoting sustainable transport
- Section 12: Achieving well-designed places
- Section 14: Meeting the challenge of climate change, flooding and coastal change
- Section 15: Conserving and enhancing the natural environment
- Section 16: Conserving and enhancing the historic environment

#### 4.6 THE NATIONAL PLANNING PRACTICE GUIDANCE (NPPG)

The National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG) is online based government guidance. The NPPG provides supplementary and supporting context for the NPPF and should therefore be read in conjunction with the NPPF.

The NPPG provides general procedural guidance on matters including the use of planning conditions and obligations as well as on planning appeals. The document provides guidance on issues of prejudice and prematurity alongside providing detailed technical guidance for both authorities and applicants on the production of planning studies, such as housing and economic land availability assessments.

The NPPG includes guidance across a range of planning issues which are referred to in the NPPF. This includes the importance of good design, general guidance regarding the ‘natural environment’, and further information about issues such as flood-risk and transport, and refers to issues

on which local planning policies are usually expected to provide more specific guidance where relevant to the location and/or Site involved.

#### 4.7 NATIONAL DESIGN GUIDE

The National Design Guide (NDG) (2021) is a material consideration in the decision-making process. The document identifies ten characteristics of well-designed places:

- Context – enhances the surroundings
- Identity – attractive and distinctive
- Built form – a coherent pattern of development
- Movement – accessible and easy to move around
- Nature – enhanced and optimised
- Public spaces – safe, social and inclusive
- Uses – mixed and integrated
- Homes and buildings – functional, healthy and sustainable
- Resources – efficient and resilient
- Lifespan – made to last.

The NDG states that development should understand and relate well to the Site, its local and wider context (C1); respond to existing local character and amenity (I1); comprise well-designed, high quality and attractive buildings (I2); create character and identity (I3); and promote a compact form of development and utilise appropriate building types and form (B1 and B2). All modes of transport should be positively designed into the built form and public rights of way protected, enhanced

and well-linked into the wider network of pedestrian and cycle routes. Parking and servicing should be well-considered. Development should also include a network of high quality green open spaces; improve and enhance water management; support rich and varied biodiversity; follow the energy hierarchy; maximise resilience and be adaptable to changing needs and evolving technologies.

The National Model Design Code (NMDC) provides guidance on the production of design codes, guides and policies to promote successful design. The document expands on the ten characteristics of good design set out in the NDG and sets a baseline standard of quality and practice which LPAs are expected to take into account when determining planning applications.

#### 4.8 THE OXFORDSHIRE-CAMBRIDGE ARC

The Oxford-Cambridge Arc is a national economic priority area set by the Government and covers an area between Oxford, Milton Keynes and Cambridge. The Arc is formed of five administrative counties: Oxfordshire, Bedfordshire, Buckinghamshire, Northamptonshire and Cambridgeshire, and already support over two million jobs, adds over £110 billion to the economy every year and houses one of the fastest growing economies in England.

The Oxford-Cambridge Arc creates a transformational opportunity, that would see economic output growing by between £80.4 billion and £163 billion per annum, with between 476,500 and 1.1 million additional jobs by 2050.

The objectives of the arc are three-fold:

- support long-run sustainable economic growth across the area;
- help to make the area a brilliant place to live, work and travel in – for existing residents and future communities alike; and
- support lasting improvements to the environment, green infrastructure and biodiversity.

#### 4.9 EMERGING DEVELOPMENT PLAN

The emerging Oxfordshire Plan 2050 states that the creation of jobs across a range of sectors and in various locations will be supported. Objective five of the emerging plan is to: “To sustain and strengthen Oxfordshire’s economic role and reputation by building on our key strengths and relationship”.

The supporting evidence base (Oxfordshire Council’s Growth Needs Assessment (July 2021)) explains that the scale of employment land needed across Oxfordshire could be up to 807 hectares.

#### 4.10 PUBLIC CONSULTATION

In light of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Applicant considered the most appropriate manner in which to engage with the local community, the public engagement strategy therefore included a virtual exhibition. The consultation material was uploaded onto Frampton Town Planning’s website to allow online access for the community.



Invitations were sent to members of the Parish Councils below, for a virtual presentations:

- Stoke Lyne Parish Council
- Ardley and Fewcott Parish Council

The following local Ward Councillors (Fringford and Heyfords Ward) were also sent invitations for a virtual presentation. No responses were received from the Parish Council or Ward Councillors.

A Statement of Community Involvement is submitted as part of the planning application this summarises responses received to the consultation and the Applicant's response to the comments raised. In summary, the comments raised related to:

- Traffic impact;
- Impacts on noise and air quality;
- The need for the development;
- Design and Scale of Development (including visual impact);
- Loss of Agricultural Land;
- Loss of Wildlife Habitats;
- Flood Risk; and
- Water and Electricity Supply and Sewage Capacity.

The planning application is supported by an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA). The preparation of the EIA has

included consultation with, among others, Oxfordshire County Council transport and archaeology officers, Cherwell's heritage officer and Historic England.

Furthermore, the team have reviewed consultation responses (and neighbour responses) to the application on the adjoining Site and these have been taken into account in the formulation of the planning application, including responses from: the Environment Agency; Historic England; National Highways; the Council's Economic Growth officer; Mid Cherwell Neighbourhood Plan Forum (albeit the Site sits outside of this area); Oxfordshire County Council (Archaeology, Transport and Local Lead Flood Authority); Fire Service, Anglian Water, Cherwell District Council Land Drainage Officers, Cherwell District Council Environmental Health Officer, Building Control and the Wildlife Trust."





## 5. ACCESS & CONNECTIVITY

### 5.1 TRANSPORT ASSESSMENT

A Transport Assessment has been prepared in support of the outline planning application. This sets out the likely construction and operational trip generation, distribution and traffic impacts, and has been assessed within the context of other committed developments in the area.

### 5.2 EXISTING LOCAL HIGHWAY NETWORK

The local highway network is focused around the B4100, which provides connections to/from the centre of Bicester and also the A43, which links Baynards Green with Brackley, Towcester and Northampton to the north east as well as the M40 Motorway to the south west. It is therefore evident that the Site is well located with respect to key local centres and the wider region and is thus ideally suited to meet the needs of the proposed development. Opportunities to travel by sustainable transport.

### 5.3 SITE ACCESS ARRANGEMENTS

The proposed Site will be accessed via a proposed roundabout off of the B4100. The access off the roundabout will be designed to provide access to both portions of the Site.

### 5.4 PEDESTRIANS AND CYCLISTS

A new 3m wide footway/cycleway will be provided throughout Symmetry Park along the proposed estate road, with on-site crossings available for those crossing the roads. Connectivity from estate roads through to the main access will be provided with level approaches provided for pedestrians. On-site facilities for cyclists will be provided with sheltered secure storage facilities being provided for each occupier.

### 5.5 PUBLIC TRANSPORT AND CAR SHARING

#### Baseline Situation

The NPPF is predicated on the assumption that new developments are located in areas that provide people with a choice of travel modes but recognising that there will be differences between urban and rural locations. When considered against this background it is evident that the Lady Grove Site is well placed to accord with these principles. A summary of the existing transport infrastructure is provided below.

The Site is well connected to an existing bus route that has the potential to encourage future employees to make use of this important mode of transport in isolation and as part of a wider combined rail-bus trip given it has links to Bicester North Railway Station.

Whilst there is not currently any pedestrian and cycle infrastructure, it is noted that the recently submitted Albion Land commercial schemes on land adjacent to the Site proposes to deliver a new pedestrian/cycle route to Bicester. It is understood that the final form of this link will be confirmed following the outcome of further detailed discussions with OCC that will take into account the usual technical and viability assessments associated with any new piece of significant infrastructure.

#### Current Travel Behaviour

A review of the 2011 Census indicates that the sustainable the predominant mode of transport for travelling to work in this area of Cherwell is the private car. However, it is noteworthy that approximately 20% of people travel

to work via sustainable modes of transport (i.e. public transport, walking and cycling).

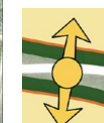
It is therefore considered that the sustainable transportation options have the potential to provide future employees to access the Site by modes other than the private car. It is however recognised that there will likely be a need to provide improvements to the existing infrastructure as is normal for development of this nature. The applicant will work with Oxfordshire County Council to identify a package of measures that are proportionate to the proposed development.

### 5.6 WIDER CONTEXT CONNECTIVITY

This proposed development is capable of being a 'standalone' employment Site in its own right in the early years of its development, in terms of delivery of necessary infrastructure and public transport provision etc. Cycle, car and HGV parking will be provided in accordance with Local Authority standards. Parking for mobility impaired will be provided in accordance with the local standards. The cycle parking will be secure, under cover, and conveniently located at entrances to buildings. For the mobility impaired, 10% of all car parking spaces will be provided specifically for disabled use.

### 5.7 SERVICE YARDS

Control of accesses to service yard areas by a gatehouse or remotely controlled gates will help to ensure that unauthorised access is not permitted. Public access should be actively discouraged from service



Proposed Site Access



Existing A43/B4100  
Junction



Existing Junctions between  
B4100 and local roads



Existing Access to the  
Farm Road



Existing Farm Road

FIG.4.SITE CONNECTIVITY

## 5.8 ACCESS POLICY

This proposals will comply with the Building Regulations part M 'Access To and Use of Buildings', and recommendations found within BS 8300:2009 'Design of Buildings & Their Approaches to Meet The Needs Of Disabled People'.

## 5.9 ACCESS AND MOVEMENT

The NPPF is predicated on the assumption that new developments are able to provide safe and suitable access for all. It also considered that new developments will be acceptable in highways and transportation terms provided that the residual impacts are not severe, and that there would not be an unacceptable safety impact. The Transport Assessment provides a detailed overview of the access strategy and potential impact of the proposed development. In summary it shows:

### Vehicular Access Strategy

The Site access, which has been designed having regard to guidance contained within the Design Manual for Roads and Bridges, will connect the existing local highway network with the main spine roads of the development. It therefore benefits from visibility splays that are appropriate for the prevailing speeds of the local highway network and incorporates radii that accommodate the largest vehicles that are anticipated to access the development on a regular basis. Accordingly, the introduction of the proposed Site access roundabout shown opposite will not introduce a safety issue on the B4100.

### Sustainable Transport Access Strategy

The vehicular access incorporates pedestrian footways on either side of the proposed internal spine roads. These footways will connect the Site with two new bus stops on the B4100, which are shown on the opposite plan located adjacent to the Site access.

In addition to this, the access strategy incorporates the provision of a pedestrian crossing on the A43 that is designed to cater for incidental pedestrian trips to and from the food outlets that are provided at the Baynards Green service area. For the purposes of this application, it has been assumed that the Baynards Green upgrade

will be in place by the time the Proposed Development is operational. The location of the crossing is shown opposite.

The use of more sustainable modes of transport amongst future employees has therefore been taken into account when designing the Site layout having regard to the Site's location. As such the use of alternatives to the private car amongst employees will be actively encouraged. A fact that will be reinforced through the Workplace Travel Plan that will be operated to inform future employees about the range of travel modes that can be used when travelling for a range of purposes.

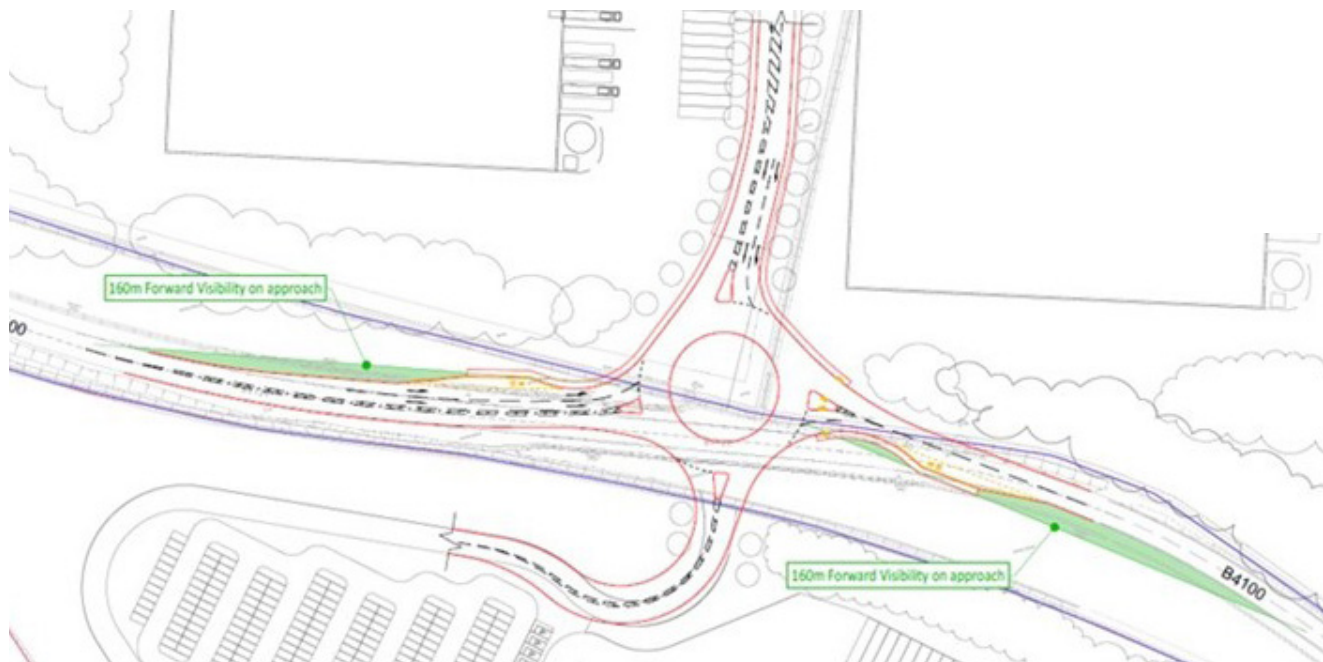


FIG.5.PROPOSED SITE ACCESS





## 5.10 PARKING STRATEGY

At the Reserved Matters stage, the level of parking will be confirmed having regard to individual operator requirements and the adopted parking standards. However, it is important to note that the illustrative layout provides sufficient space to meet the emerging parking standards that Oxfordshire County Council are currently referring to for commercial schemes such as this. In this regard, it is clear that parking can be provided at a level that ensures vehicles can all be accommodated safely on-site in designated areas.

Electric charging spaces are subject to particular Local Authority provisions. EV As per number of active EVC determined, each active vehicle charging by is served by a 7.2KW Type 2 Mode 3 socket providing fast charging. 120 EV charging spaces provided, and additional ducting to future proof the remainder of the car park.

## 5.11 DEVELOPMENT IMPACT

The proposed development is anticipated to generate approximately 470 additional vehicle trips in the weekday morning and evening peaks. Of these, approximately 20% are expected to be attributed to HGVs.

The analyses that are contained within the Transport Assessment demonstrate that increases of this magnitude will not lead to the severe impact that is referred to within the NPPF as being a legitimate reason to resist a proposed development on highways and transportation grounds. This is the case for the scheme in isolation and in conjunction with the recently submitted Albion Land proposals on land located adjacent to the Site.

Notwithstanding this, a Travel Plan will be operated to reduce reliance upon the private car and a Delivery and Service Plan will be operated to manage deliveries in a sustainable manner. The exact details of these will be agreed with Oxfordshire County Council and National Highways through the determination period of the application.

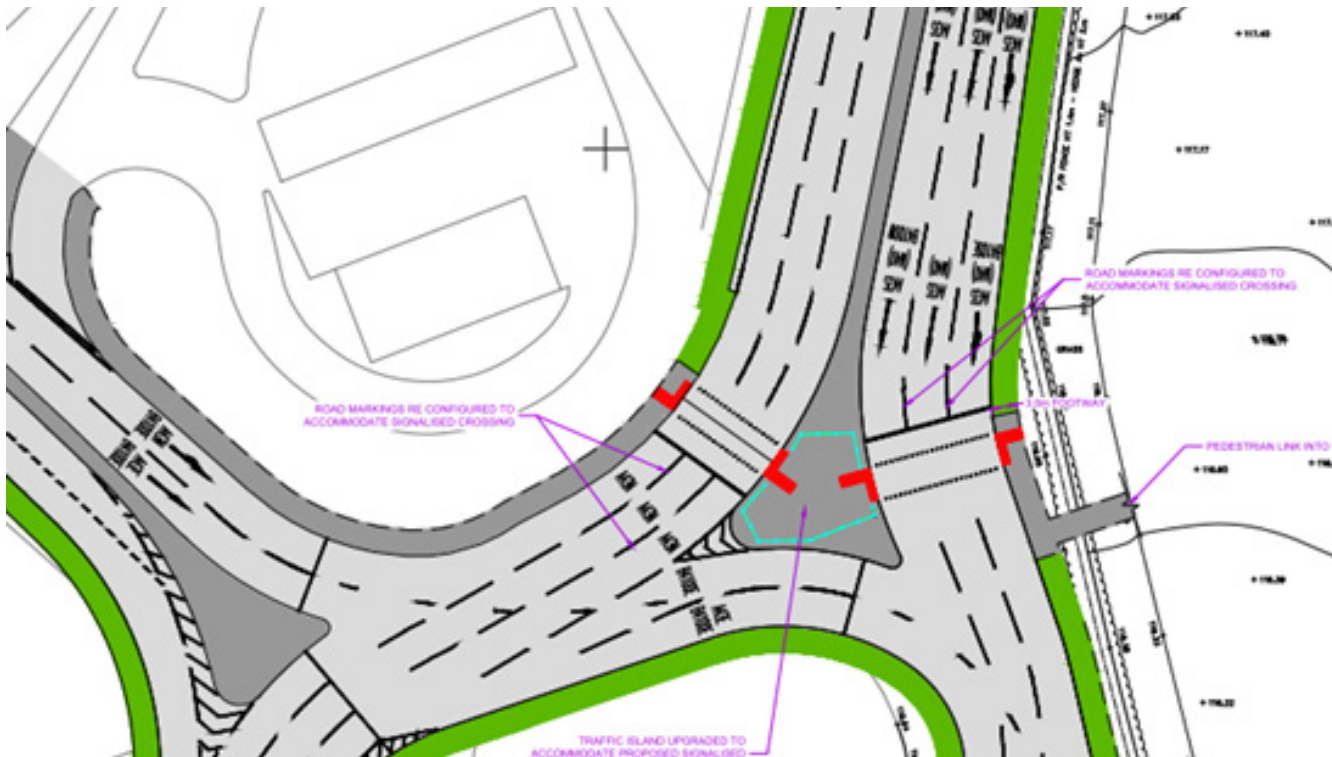


FIG.6.BAYNARD GREEN ROUNDABOUT





## 6. CONSTRAINTS & OPPORTUNITIES

### 6.1 SUMMARY

Based on the Site analysis carried out by the professional team there are no major constraints to development on the Site.

As part of the detailed design process careful consideration has been given to:

- Creating a comprehensive flood management and surface water drainage strategy to maximise the development potential of the Site.
- Site levels to respond to the Site's existing topography, and to ensure that development plateaus are efficient and flexible to suit occupier requirements and that these tie into the overall surface water drainage strategy.
- External and internal landscape treatment to minimise the impact of the development on the surrounding area in visual terms.
- Integration of landscape and drainage features to create a sustainable and robust strategy that also enhances biodiversity.
- A robust and deliverable access strategy to ensure that the development does not impact on the surrounding network.
- Consideration of the potential impacts of the development and how to mitigate any associated effects on existing residential properties.
- In recognition of the potential visual impact of the building's detailed design, form and overall height will seek to reduce the visual impact of the scheme.

- These key design issues have fed into the Site development parameters plan which is contained in the following chapter.

Given the nature of the application being in outline form, a number of detailed mitigation points necessarily cannot be addressed until the detailed design and layout of the scheme is fixed.

The applicant has therefore prepared a 'worst case' assessment based on the Parameters Plan accompanying the application, but it should be understood that changes to the illustrative masterplan layout can be made at future stages of the design process to address some of the concerns raised during community consultation.

The applicant is committed to continuing to engage with the local community and those most affected by the proposals at future stages of the project, and detailed matters can nonetheless be controlled via standard planning conditions attached to the grant of any planning permission.

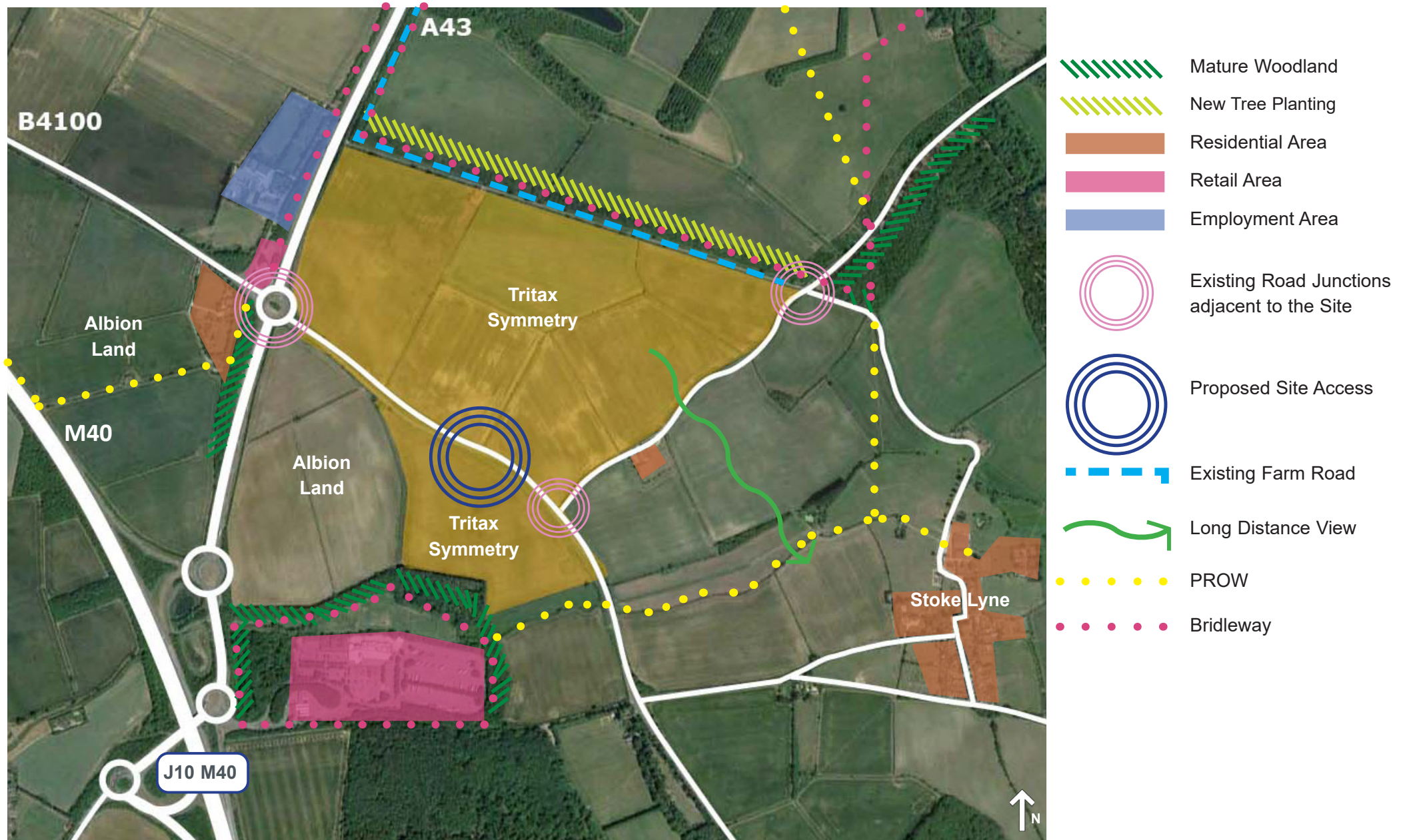


FIG.7.CONSTRAINTS PLAN



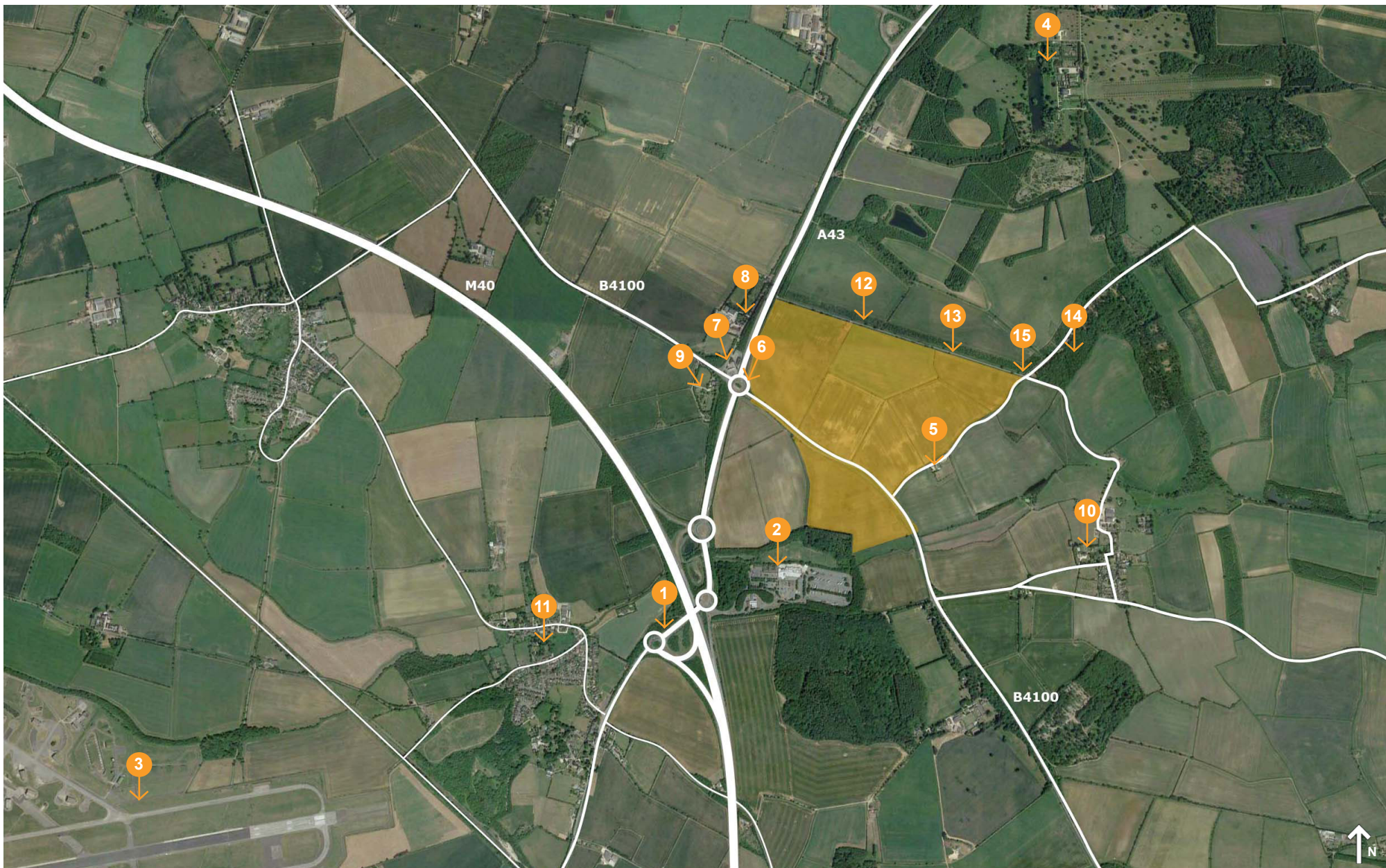


FIG.8.SITE CONTEXT





**01.** Junction 10 M40



**02.** Services to Junction 10



**03.** Employment Area / Old RAF base



**04.** Tusmore Park/ Tusmore Farm



**05.** Residential building adjacent to the Site



**06.** A43/B4100 Junction



**07.** Services to A43/ B4100 Junction



**08.** Employment Area to the A43/B4100 Junction



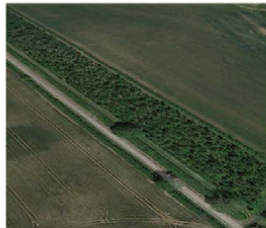
**09.** Residential Area adjacent to the A43/ B4100 Junction



**10.** Stoke Lyne



**11.** Ardley village centre and residential area



**12.** New Trees planting adjacent to the Site north boundary



**13.** Farm Road adjacent to the Site north boundary



**14.** Mature Woodland adjacent to the north east Site corner



**15.** Junction adjacent to the north east Site corner

FIG.9.SITE CONTEXT AERIAL IMAGES





## 7. PARAMETERS

### 7.1 OVERVIEW

Whilst flexibility is key, the Parameters Plan sets out the maximum development parameters in terms of use, floor area, height and maximum floor plate and finished floor levels. This establishes a framework within which a range of masterplan options can be accommodated.

### 7.2 AREA SUMMARY

#### AREA SUMMARY

##### Redline Area:

83.279Ha/205.786Ac

##### Total Developable Area:

66.04Ha/163.18Ac

##### Proposed Use:

B8 with ancillary E(g)(i) and Energy Centre

##### Maximum Floorspace

300,000sq.m (3,229,173sq.ft) GEA  
(Excluding Energy Centre/s)

##### Proposed Maximum finished Unit Height

Zone A - Max. Building Height up to 139.3m AOD  
(refer to legend below)

Zone B - Max. Building Height up to 135.85m AOD







## 8. DESIGN PRINCIPLES

### 8.1 THE VISION

Symmetry Park, Ardley represents an opportunity for consistent, coherent and high quality development with flexibility to accommodate a range of logistics and industrial occupiers in varying size units.

Specifically the illustrative masterplan demonstrates:

- A layout that is flexible enough to accommodate a wide range of unit sizes with market focus, integrated into an extensively landscaped setting.
- An access strategy that is sympathetic to the existing highway layout.
- The use of appropriate building design striking a balance between expressions of individual identity and providing an overall harmonious built form.

- The employment uses are located as close as possible to the M40 to reduce HGV movements on the local road network. The employment is located away from existing residential areas at Stoke Lyne to lessen the impact of these large units.
- Appropriate spatial separation from nearby residential properties, with appropriate mitigation where necessary.

The principle at Symmetry Park is to establish a flexible framework capable of accommodating a wide range of occupiers in a coherent and cohesive development. The following section indicates how the Site could be developed in accordance with the principles set out in the Parameters Plan.

Within the overall 'landscape grid' a series of development plateaus will be formed capable of accommodating a range of units. The buildings are orientated, where practical, to present the short gable ends to the more visually sensitive receptors.

Where practical, the buildings will have offices and car parking fronting the key estate roads with service yards set to the rear and screened where possible with landscape belts. The building design will seek to create a new identity for the park with consistency in quality, scale and colour. Detailing and material selection will be carefully coordinated to provide an attractive cohesive park, thus realising a contemporary and innovative architectural solution.

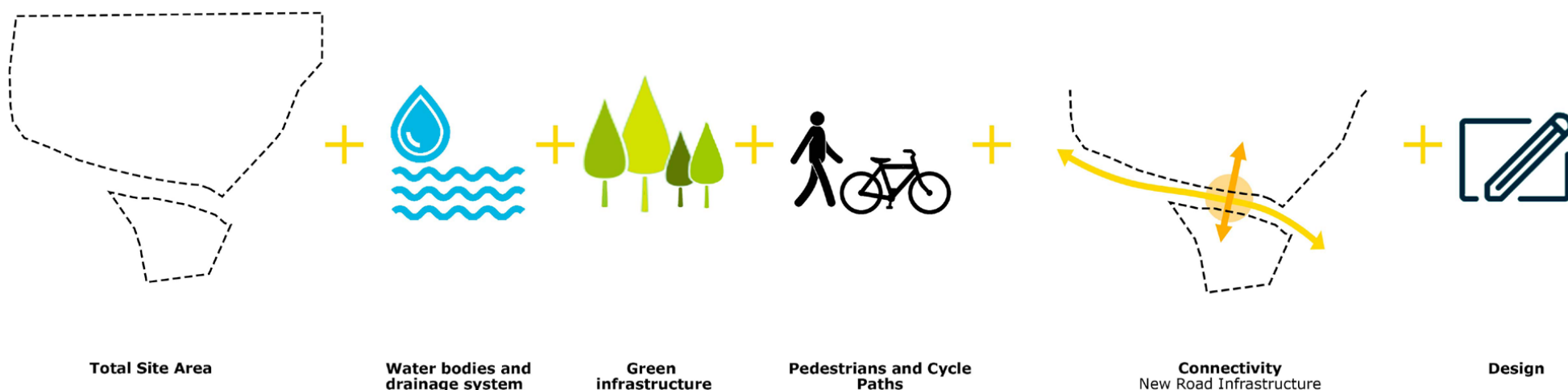


FIG.11.DESIGN PRINCIPLES



Innovative and high quality design will attract major regional and national employers to the Site. Initial occupiers will 'buy into' the long-term vision. High quality businesses employ high quality staff by definition. This shows that occupiers creating the right environment in which to work and the ability of their staff to enjoy work can be more creative, more productive and stimulated. It helps to attract and retain the best people in the future. A sense of community created by building design, landscape and the public realm, with active management, will ensure an environment which is a relaxing atmosphere with a bustle and energy through interaction which is attractive to occupiers. The ability to provide a diverse range of accommodation, in size, specification and tenure will also be important to ensure that the development appeals to the widest possible occupier market. In this way, the scheme will respond and accommodate requirements from a wide range of occupiers, with flexibility to facilitate growth over time.

## 8.2 LAND USE

The proposals can provide a range of sizes, with an overall total developable area of 66.04Ha/163.18 Ac B8 (storage and distribution) floorspace including ancillary office space, servicing, parking and landscaping.

## 8.3 HEIGHT

The maximum height the proposed buildings will be 23m to ridge. This enables the accommodation of modern racking systems, product handling equipment and high level sprinklers.

The offices will be typically 2 to 3 storeys high and located on the gable ends facing the estate road where possible. This will create a sense of activity along the estate road, create a strong frontage and will help to break down the scale of the warehouse behind to limit the visual impact. They will typically have internal floor to ceiling dimensions of at least 2.7 metres. The height of this element, positioned here possibly on the main access, helps to break up the mass of the building when viewed upon arrival.

The Energy Centre will form part of the development with maximum height 4m to the ridge.

## 8.4 ENERGY CENTRE

The parameters plan allows for the provision of an Energy Centre as part of the on-Site infrastructure, to potentially provide power and heat to businesses on the park. This delivers resilient and low carbon power, meeting occupier needs now and in the future.

The Energy Centre will combine multiple power sources to enhance grid supplies. Electricity from the Energy Centre will contribute to the needs of the users of the Site, and the heat will be captured in the form of hot water which in turn will be distributed over a heat network and utilised across the Site.

Rooftop solar PV generation will be built, with surplus generation potentially being stored in Energy Centre batteries. Any shortfall in supply will be made up using local embedded combined heat and power/fuel cell mix units in the Energy Centre.

The whole of the usable roof area is constructed to accept PV panels, however the percentage of roof coverage of PVs will depend on the final operator's energy usage.

## 8.5 DENSITY AND MASSING

Uses of the nature proposed inevitably require buildings of a significant scale. The layout and treatment of building elevations will be used to break down the scale of the building. The use of colour and changes in texture will be used to break down the overall mass of the building. The use of barrel roof forms will also create an attractive roof line.

Horizontally spanning panels may be used on the elevations to reduce the perceived height, and these could be broken up with contrasting vertically spanning materials in panelled areas, in order to punctuate the length of the façades. At low level, dock doors add interest and definition to the ground level loading and servicing area.

The landscape strategy proposes the introduction of significant new areas of planting across the development. This will act further in breaking up and softening large building elevations and will limit the visual impact of the scheme.

## 8.6 LANDSCAPE AND ECOLOGY

The scheme seeks to retain many of the existing mature landscape features as well as significant new provision and enhancement. Existing perimeter planting will be enhanced with new planting within the development to





minimise the impact of the development on the wider landscape, including views from Stoke Lyne to the east. The illustrative context landscape layout also shows how it is envisaged that the landscaping of the Site can be provided to ensure that the buildings will sit within a high quality landscaped setting.

### 8.7 FLOOD MITIGATION

To enable development of the Site, options for the management of flood water must ensure no detrimental impact elsewhere that could increase flooding off-site.

In accordance with the requirements of NPPF, PPG, EA and LLFA guidance, a surface water strategy based on the principle of Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) is required as part of the development of the Site. Surface water runoff from the development will be restricted to existing Greenfield (pre-development) runoff rates therefore ensuring that the development has no adverse impact on flood risk elsewhere.

### 8.8 SURFACE WATER DRAINAGE STRATEGY

All surface water generated by the buildings and service yards shall be collected into pipework and discharged to infiltration basins. Where the basins cannot accommodate the 24 hour drain down time in 1:100 year + 40% climate change, the basin will overflow into the perimeter ditches through existing network of pipes/culverts that currently serve the fields. All car park areas will drain through infiltration using a combination of both permeable bitumen macadam and pavers.

### 8.9 FOUL WATER DRAINAGE STRATEGY

There is no available connection to the public sewer, the nearest being at Fewcott Treatment works located 3.24km from the site to the west. The rising main would have to be installed within the A43 and cross the M40 within the over highway bridge structure. National Highways are unlikely to accept this proposal.

Accordingly, foul water generated from the buildings shall be collected within individual treatment units and discharged into infiltration basins sized accordingly.

### 8.10 FORM

The positions of the proposed logistics buildings have been informed by the Site context of the agricultural surroundings.

The proposal generally locates offices on the end elevations of the warehouses. This forms a focal point for views from the estate road, provides natural surveillance into the car park and also provides a visual connection from the offices across the yard area.

### 8.11 ACCESS, CIRCULATION AND PARKING

Access to and egress from the development Site is via the proposed roundabout entrance gateway from the B4100

Minimisation of individual car travel to work will be encouraged and the occupation of buildings will be subject to the approval of a Travel Plan.

Inclusive access within each plot is achieved with paths leading pedestrians from the car parks to the main office

entrance. A link to the cycle lanes will be provided to cycle shelters located near to the office main entrance. As far as possible, pedestrian and cycle routes will be segregated from routes used by motorised vehicles.

The position of secure, covered cycle parking areas within each plot will be located in close proximity to the office accommodation entrances to encourage use as well as enhance security. Shower/changing facilities will be provided within all development plots to encourage non-car travel.

Car park areas will be screened through the use of mounding, fencing and planting, as necessary. Soft landscaping will be integrated into the car parking areas to enhance the visual appearance as well as blend the Site into its context. Pedestrian linkages should be designed and specified to create 'pedestrian friendly' areas through car parks. The provision of disabled parking bays will be provided to a minimum of 10% of the total car parking number and be positioned in close proximity to the office entrance. Car, cycle and HGV parking and motorcycle parking provision will be in accordance with Local Authority standards.

#### HGV Parking

The parameters plan allows for the provision of HGV parking, this responds to the Government's recent reforms for lorry parking which emphasises the critical importance of the freight and logistics sector to shops, households, assembly lines and other public services across the country.. This responds to the Government's recent



FIG.12.ILLUSTRATIVE MASTERPLAN



reforms for lorry parking which emphasises the critical importance of the freight and logistics sector to shops, households, assembly lines and other public services across the country.

### 8.12 SAFETY

The Proposed Development has been carefully laid out to create a working environment that is not only practical and fit for purpose, but is first and foremost a safe place. Pedestrians are restricted from service yard areas, except for where their job specifically requires them to be there. However, because the units may be cross-docked and require 100% circulation around the building for HGVs, pedestrians and trucks may be required to interface at the entrance to the offices.

Fencing is anticipated around the perimeter of the units that will create a secure environment. The presence of a security gate house would further enhance control of the restricted area.

Personal security is aided through the layout of the car parking areas through the avoidance of creating hiding places. All areas of the car parks are visible from both the office and from the road.

### 8.13 IMPLEMENTATION

The impact of construction on the environment, nearby residents and villages and upon existing occupiers nearby the development will be minimised. To achieve this, strict control of construction works is therefore necessary, and

discussions with adjoining parties and those potentially most affected by the proposed development have already commenced.

It is anticipated that the outline planning permission is likely to be subject to a Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP), to be secured by condition attached to the planning permission. A Framework CEMP is submitted as part of the application. Additionally, construction Sites must be secured in accordance with current legislation and construction traffic must be adequately managed.



## 9. DESIGN APPEARANCE

### 9.1 MATERIALS

The details of the proposed materials and building design will ultimately be controlled via planning conditions and at reserved matters stage. However, below is an example of what the units and development could be.

Form, sizes and heights of the buildings are informed by the functional parameters of the nature of the proposed usage. Therefore, the warehouse design will reflect a functional design aesthetic, with the design of the offices providing an opportunity for innovation.

The selection, detailing and maintenance of all external materials will be considered at the outset of the design process and only products with proven lifespan and quality will be specified. Particular attention will be given to detailing to ensure continued performance especially at joints and abutments.

The selection of materials must have due regard to the embodied energy for construction, environmental impact and ongoing maintenance. The use of recyclable materials, where appropriate, will be considered.

Contractors will be required to work directly with manufacturers to ensure supplied materials are pre-cut to size to minimise wastage wherever possible. This will also ensure a higher standard of construction which will help to improve detailing. Materials should also be sourced locally, recycled and/or recyclable where practicable.

### 9.2 BUILDING MATERIALS

The logistics units will include elements of ribbed and flat composite cladding panels and built up profiled cladding systems laid both horizontally and vertically. This will provide variety to the elevation by producing a change in texture.

To reduce the impact of the warehouse building upon the surrounding environment, a selection of recessive and neutral colours will be used. The potential for the controlled use of stronger colours in feature bands, flashings, fascias and glazing at lower levels then becomes acceptable in order to offer contrast and relief, and to create some individuality for occupiers.

The warehouse roof will be a colour coated profiled steel. A light colour will be used to reduce the effect of the mass of the building. Offices will use high quality materials. Curtain walling entrance features and aluminium framed glazing/window systems would enhance the pedestrian interface with the building. The final design will be agreed by conditions and at reserved matters stage.

### 9.3 EXTERNAL WORKS

Car parking access roads will be surfaced with block paving with parking bays surfaced in a flexible bituminous material. These measures will avoid large unsightly areas of “black-top” and also help to control surface water run-off rates. Parking bays will not be surfaced with any material that may be adversely affected by spills from standing vehicles.

Pedestrian links through car park areas will also be picked out in a contrasting material and rumble strips should be introduced at transition points.

The planting proposals in and around areas of car parking is critical, in order to avoid large areas of hard-standing. The runs of parking bays will be broken up with tree and shrub planting at regular intervals.

In the interests of safety, the design of car parking areas and other pedestrian areas will ensure that soft landscaping in these areas does not obscure visibility and that there are no hiding places.

Visual cohesion will be enhanced not only by the careful integration of the buildings and planting but also by use of a furniture palette that provides a consistency throughout the Site. The selection of bollards, litter bins and external seating etc. will seek to achieve a high quality development.

Security/boundary fencing will be incorporated into the soft landscape boundary treatment and restrict access to warehouse service areas.

All light fittings will be ‘Dark Skies’ compliant as described in CIBSE Lighting Guide LG6:1992. The proposed lighting equipment will comply with current standards and to the greatest extent possible, the luminaries and their settings will be optically set to direct light only to where it is required and to minimise obtrusive effects and if necessary, additional shielding will be considered. The fittings will be chosen from a range offering an appropriate





degree of design consistency and quality. The car parks and principal pedestrian areas will be well lit to ensure the safety and convenience of users. Service yard lighting will be designed so as to minimise light pollution.

Lighting levels should be as follows:

All luminaries will be selected from those with precise optical control of output and distribution and with consisted zero light output ratio.

#### 9.4 BOUNDARY TREATMENT

Security/boundary fencing will be incorporated into the soft landscape boundary treatment and therefore will be set back from the public side of the landscaping belt.

To ensure Site security around the yard area, a 2.4m high security fence will be provided. In exposed areas, Dirickx Axis C welded mesh will be used and galvanised steel palisade fencing will be used for concealed/screened areas. Additionally, security/demise fencing will be provided around the car park area.

This is a detail that will be agreed at reserved matters stage.



## 10. LANDSCAPE STRATEGY

### 10.1 ECOLOGY

The landscape strategy prepared for the development proposes to add to the existing ecological resource through the creation of new habitats interconnected with the existing, retained habitats, namely mature trees and hedgerows. The eastern boundary of the Site will be strengthened through new tree/ scrub planting, of benefit to the local bird/ bat population. Remaining areas of landscaping are to include species-rich wildflower meadow within open areas of benefit to nectar- and pollen- feeding insects, supplemented in their creation by the provision of landscaping bunds.

Additional species-specific measures proposed to minimise post-development effects, and provide enhanced opportunities for species breeding, forage and refuge, are detailed below.

- Birds: Landscape planting to include a range of fruit and seed-bearing plants to enhance foraging resource for birds, and bird nesting features (bird boxes or bricks) to be installed on retained trees and/or incorporated into selected new buildings in the development;
- Bats: Bat roosting features (bat boxes or bricks) to be installed on retained trees and/or incorporated into selected new buildings in the development, and sensitive design of lighting on buildings and roads to avoid impacts on bats where in close proximity to retained habitats;
- Badger: Landscape planting to include a range of fruit bearing shrubs and trees to enhance foraging resource for badgers, and sensitive design of lighting to avoid impacts on badgers where in close proximity to retained habitats;

- Butterflies: Landscape planting to include a high proportion of blackthorn to provide additional breeding habitat for brown hair streak.

### 10.2 MANAGEMENT AND MAINTENANCE

A Landscape and Ecological Management Plan (LEMP) will be prepared. This will set out in detail the measures to be implemented to ensure the successful establishment/ installation of new habitats/features and the long-term maintenance and management of both existing and new habitats/features proposed as part of the soft landscape scheme.

The LEMP can be secured by way of a suitably worded pre-commencement planning condition attached to the planning permission.

### 10.3 LANDSCAPE COMPONENTS

The landscape strategy aims to soften and filter views of the development and enhance biodiversity through the creation of new habitats connected to the existing landscape features on-site. Proposed tree planting, in line with local guidance and policy, will reinforce the existing trees found within the local context, and would be strategically placed to enhance views into and out from the Site. The scheme includes strategic landscape buffers around the boundaries of the Site, particularly at the eastern boundary. Structural tree planting and landscape bunds within the Site boundaries will buffer the proposed development and assist in assimilating it into the existing landscape, and will include a suitable

palette of locally native trees that are found across the surrounding landscape. In the wider context, these buffers are provided to filter views of the development, to enhance the existing landscape features that are primarily located around the boundaries of the Site and provide a transition to the open countryside beyond the Site.

Native heavy standard tree planting is proposed to fragment views of the warehouse buildings, particularly for receptors in close proximity to the Site. At the eastern boundary of the Site, the use of structural tree planting and landscape bunds help to screen views for receptors in and around Stoke Lyne to the east. A gentle transition between wooded areas and meadow will be created by the addition of scrub vegetation, offering habitat and a food source for mammals and birds. To bring the maximum biodiversity benefits to the Site, the strategy includes enclosed sheltered spaces as well as clear spaces forming a rich tapestry landscape within which the development will sit.



In relation to both landscape and ecology, the landscape design principles include:

- Existing boundary hedgerows and trees would be retained where possible (with buffers to the proposed development), reinforced and brought into regular, long-term management. This would protect visual amenity and landscape character as well as continuing to offer commuting and foraging opportunities for protected species;
- Creation of a landscaped buffer from proposed development zones to protect and enhance retained boundary features of landscape and ecological interest;
- Provision of structural landscaping, native trees and shrubs that reflect the local context throughout the scheme to maintain a buffer to the wider setting. Particularly within the eastern areas of the Site, existing landscape features would be reinforced with additional planting measures in order to maintain the 'green' setting to the wider rural setting;
- Provision of landscape screening, in the form of landscaped bunds and native tree planting, to properties and PRow in close proximity to the Site;
- Native heavy standard tree planting is proposed within landscape buffers to fragment views of the proposed development, particularly for receptors in relatively close proximity to the east of the Site;
- Additional structural landscaping proposed to the eastern boundary would provide a new landscape corridor that would provide a connection between existing woodland blocks within the local landscape context;
- Species-rich wildflower grassland to be created within areas of green open space to provide nectar-rich habitats for pollinating insects such as bees, butterflies and moths;
- The proposals should complement the existing landscape features of the Site and character of adjacent uses and rural areas; and
- The landscape strategy should take into consideration the long-term vision for the Site, using tree planting to filter into the proposed development from adjacent green corridors and to frame and buffer the proposed built form.





## 11. SUSTAINABILITY

### 11.1 CONSTRUCTION

Tritax Symmetry has made a commitment that all their new commercial buildings will be 'Net Zero Carbon in Construction'. A Life Cycle Assessment will be undertaken to inform material selection to reduce the carbon footprint as far as possible at the detailed design stage. A Whole Life Carbon Assessment will then be undertaken of the final design to calculate the embodied carbon footprint (kgCO<sub>2</sub>eq) of the development. Any residual embodied carbon emissions will then be offset through the funding of verified and accredited offset schemes, in line with principals set out in UKGBC's net zero framework (UKGBC, 2019).

Management of construction effects will form part of a comprehensive and auditable Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP). The building will also be assessed under BREEAM and a minimum 'Very Good' rating targeted. As part of the CEMP and BREEAM assessment, the Contractor will be required to monitor material and waste transport to and from the site and record the total carbon emissions associated with this to help identify where savings can be made. The Contractor will also be required to monitor the site energy usage by all construction plant, equipment (mobile and fixed) and site accommodation to help identify where savings can be made.

### 11.2 OPERATION

#### Transport Related Carbon

The Travel Plan (Vectos, 2021) contains details of the measures incorporated to reduce the impact of transport associated with the development. This will assist in reducing carbon emissions associated with operational transport.

These measures include:

- On site covered cycle parking.
- Shared pedestrian/cycle routes
- 25% of spaces to be electric vehicle recharging facilities.

#### Energy Related Carbon

To mitigate for the anticipated operational energy related emissions, the Proposed Development will use the 'energy hierarchy' to reduce carbon emissions.

**Lean** - Use advanced building modelling and passive construction techniques as far as is cost effective.

**Mean** - Incorporate high efficiency systems and effective controls throughout the design.

**Green** - Incorporate renewable energy sources where necessary and economically viable to achieve targets or provide desirable benefits.

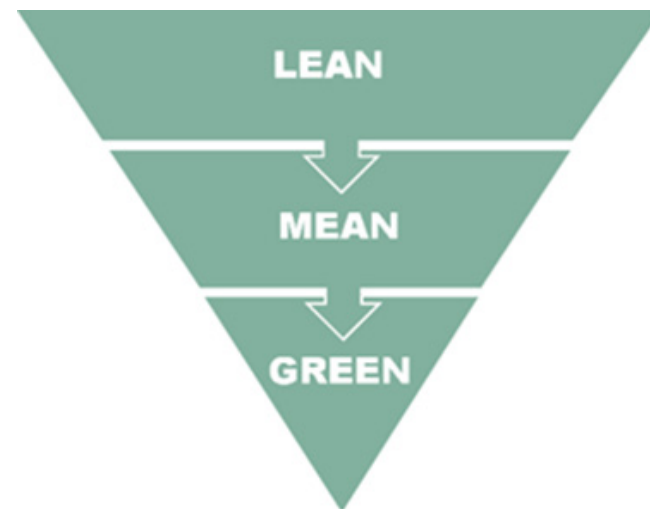


FIG.13.THE ENERGY HIERARCHY

### 11.3 REDUCE DEMAND (PASSIVE MEASURES)

The first level in the hierarchy is to reduce operational energy usage using passive measures included within the design of the development. These will reduce energy use and the associated CO2 emissions and include:

- U values which exceed Building Regulation requirements; Engineered facade design; Reduced air permeability.
- U Values: Limiting heat losses across the entire building envelope will future proof the energy efficiency of the development over its whole life. To achieve this, the fabric thermal U-Value requirements as detailed within Approved Document L2A 2013 of the Building Regulations will be improved upon.

The targeted values will be confirmed during the detailed design stage of the buildings in conjunction with finalisation of the energy efficiency measures included.

**Engineered Facade Design:** Wall glazing and rooflights will maximise the use of natural daylight to offset demand for artificial lighting. This will maximise passive solar gains, and the façade will also be designed to minimise thermal losses through the use of high performance glazing and enhanced insulation levels above the minimum set down by Building Regulations.

**Reduced Air Permeability:** A significant percentage of heat loss from buildings is due to air infiltration associated with poor air tightness. By improving on the air tightness of the building it is possible to reduce infiltrations rates and thus

reduce the heat losses, energy use and the associated CO2 emissions. The development will be constructed to improved building air tightness criteria beyond the level required to comply with the Building Regulations.

### 11.4 ENERGY EFFICIENCY

The next level in the energy hierarchy is to maximise energy efficiency. High efficiency systems, plant, controls and equipment will be incorporated into the development as follows:

- Energy efficient LED lighting - Internal lighting within the process and office areas will incorporate energy efficient LED lighting where practicable.
- Enhanced lighting controls - Automatic presence detection will be included in appropriate areas of the building. This form of control will ensure lights are automatically switched off during periods of non-occupancy. External lighting will be designed to incorporate energy efficient luminaires and an automatic lighting control system utilising daylight sensors and time clock control to ensure energy-efficient operation of the lighting.
- Optimised plant controls - Control of heating plant will be optimised, and weather compensated to ensure plant operates as close to demand as possible and not a full capacity.
- Variable speed drives - Variable speed drives will be installed on circulation pumps and ventilation fans to allow the speed of the respective motors to be amended by the automatic controls to suit changing load of the building. This will ensure energy usage matches demand requirements

thus reducing the carbon emissions to a minimum based on end user occupation.

- Inclusion of heat recovery on ventilation systems The ventilation systems installed within the development will incorporate heat recovery within the air handling plant to recover heat from the air exhausted to heat the incoming fresh air and therefore reduce energy usage. The air handling plant will have a low specific fan power to minimise the energy used by the fans.

### 11.5 RENEWABLE / LOW CARBON TECHNOLOGY

The final level in the energy hierarchy is to incorporate renewable / low carbon technology. It is anticipated that the following will be incorporated:

- Photovoltaics (PVs) - Planning permission is sought for a PV array extending to 100% of the usable roof area (i.e. the omission of space taken by roof lights; man-safe working and the roof signage). The level of PVs installed will be subject to individual occupier requirements or a technical ability and viability in the exportation of electricity generated by the PV array into the National Grid. This is to prevent installation and manufacture of unused PV panels and allows the most up to date technology to be fitted when required. A minimum of 18% of PV of the array will be installed prior to the use commencing. This will provide the normal base load of electricity to the unit prior to occupier specific requirements.



- Air source heat pumps - These technologies provide the most suitable renewable technology for use to heat and cool the office areas. They are highly energy efficient, do not use fossil fuel and are low carbon emission.

### 11.6 CLIMATE CHANGE RESILIENCE ASSESSMENT

The following measures should be incorporated into the design of the development to ensure it is climate change resilient:

- The flood risk at the site is to be managed and mitigated by using a number of risk management techniques, and mitigation strategies to manage and reduce the overall flood risk at the site. With regards to pluvial flood risk, the site to be designed with a 40% climate change allowance for rainfall.
- Design of building and roof mitigated against the risk of high winds and all doors to be on restrictive stays to prevent them slamming shut unintentionally from wind.
- Cooling plant selection to be based on projected future temperatures. Facility for cooling capacity increase to be included in infrastructure.
- Heating plant selection to be based on projected temperatures. Adequate preheating to limit thermal lag on occupation
- Include use of waste heat on air-based equipment to raise operating temperatures.
- The whole external fabric to be designed as a weather-tight structure. Roof and external wall materials to be guaranteed to perform for a minimum of 25 years.
- Low flush volume WCs and low flow rate taps to be specified to minimise water demand.
- A major leak detection system to be installed to identify leaks.
- Shut off valves to be installed on the water supply to WC areas which will stop the water supply to these areas when they are not in use, thereby minimising the impact of any minor water leaks in these areas.
- Pulsed output water meters to be installed on the water supply to each building so that occupants can monitor their water usage.
- The roofs to be fully designed for snow loads.
- Selection of hardy plants for the landscaping scheme.
- Fully investigate ground conditions and ensure the structure and main slab components are designed to accommodate ground conditions.



FIG.14.PHOTOVOLTAIC PANELS



## 12. CONCLUSION

This Design and Access Statement (DAS) explains the design proposals for Symmetry Park, Ardley.

The proposals respond to the unmet demands from the logistics sector for the provision of a Site that is well located to the strategic highway network and can accommodate large footprint buildings.

Symmetry Park, Ardley meets these operational requirements, and offers the opportunity to create a first class regionally significant logistics hub on the important A43/M40 strategic highway corridor.

The need for logistics floorspace is embedded throughout the supply chain of goods - and is no longer to be regarded as a place of storage for final products, with few job opportunities. The UK's manufacturing industry requires efficient logistics facilities to serve the manufacturing process.

Recent trends in 'reshoring' - the return of component suppliers back to the UK particularly from the Far East - has accentuated the need for efficient logistics buildings to be developed as a matter of urgency.

For many the trend towards very large-scale logistics buildings is perhaps best appreciated from the phenomenal growth in online retailing. The sophistication of the supply chain, and the efficiency in delivery of goods to customers is only achievable by the location of logistics buildings close to the strategic highway network and close to the customer.

The DAS has explained the constraints and opportunities presented by Symmetry Park to meet this development need which is of significance to the local, regional and national economy. The Site is highly suitable to accommodate this form and scale of built development with minimal environmental and technical impacts as demonstrated through the submitted Environmental Statement.

When complete Symmetry Park may provide 1000s of new jobs with apprenticeships and skill training opportunities. A very significant contribution will be made to the local economy particularly for local businesses.

A very significant planning advantage of Symmetry Park is that the development can be brought forward promptly in response to the granting of outline planning permission. Setting this advantage into context with the fact that the development can be achieved on a Site with minimal environmental constraints, enhances the benefits that Symmetry Park will achieve to serve the overall public interest. In consequence, planning permission is requested on this Site.







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