

I object to this application and have outlined my rationale below. However, I want to emphasise the importance of not viewing this application in isolation. The cumulative effect of the Tritax site, Albion land site, Strategic railway freight proposal, 'Hawkwell', Great Wolf, Siemen's factory and multiple other applications will bring the Cherwell Valley area and road network to its knees. Enough is enough, Bicester has played its part with housing and warehouse development in recent months and years. These proposals will bring hundreds of thousands of additional vehicles to our area; the 'already-at-capacity' Junctions 9 and 10 of the M40 (and connecting roads such as the A43, B430, B4100, A41 etc). will come to a standstill, meaning a potential threat to life with emergency vehicles not being able to access surrounding villages or traffic accidents on roads that are already classed as dangerous.

Rationale for Objections:

- The site is not allocated as employment land in the Local Plan and has not been identified for development or any use other than open farmland and countryside. All land under this application is currently producing excellent wheat yields and with a food crisis looming we need to become more self-sufficient, not lose this land to concrete and warehouses: see photo below taken on May 22<sup>nd</sup> 2022 of the proposed site:



- Research conducted in April 2022 shows there are **c.7 million square feet** of recently developed warehouses within 40 miles of the application site **currently lying unoccupied**. Despite the protestations from developers suggesting there is a warehouse shortage, the truth is that these same developers are struggling to sell warehouse space at the rate they claim is needed. We now have too much warehouse space, and even Amazon recently admitted that they expanded too quickly over the pandemic and as a result are trying to sell off their warehouses, prompting a significant drop in share price.  
<https://www.reuters.com/technology/amazons-net-loss-prompts-query-has-it-built-too-many-warehouses-2022-04-29/>
- The Local Plan sets out the need to supply jobs close to where they are needed; there are no employment needs identified in this location, indeed, local employers closer to Bicester are struggling to recruit. Current job vacancies for recently built warehouses in this area such as Tritax Symmetry etc are just not being filled – which is no surprise as our unemployment rates are some of the lowest in the country. The applicants should therefore look to develop in other regions with a greater need for employment.
- Local Plan Para B.39 (page 43) clearly states 'Where existing employment sites have good transport links for commercial vehicles and the proposed use of these sites accords with the Local Plan we will encourage new development here to ensure the efficient use of land on these sites and in our towns, avoiding the need to use valuable countryside.' The existing road network is unsuitable for the inevitable massive increases in HGV use which will cause major hardship to local residents, as well as increased risk of serious accidents. The huge numbers of trucks and HGVs accessing this site through 24 hours will inhibit traffic flow and potentially risk delaying emergency vehicles needing to travel to local villages and to the M40. This site is not accessible by public transport and would rely on the use of the private car, further increasing the traffic load on a road network that already fails to cope.
- Cherwell valley sits on large areas of aquifers, and the scale of development proposed would put excessive pressure on the run-off water system, increasing the risk of flooding in the surrounding areas and villages. Close to the site are water courses taking field drainage and feeding into the Great Ouse and that are already known to cause flood problems downstream.

- The Application contravenes the Cherwell Local Plan's Policies for Building Sustainable communities as outlined in section B.87: "Cherwell's countryside, landscape and green spaces are important natural resources. They form the setting of our towns and villages, contribute to their identity and the well-being of Cherwell's communities, and provide recreation opportunities. The countryside's intrinsic character and beauty is important to the quality of life in Cherwell..." Warehouse development on productive farmland is not sustainable or environmentally friendly.
- Policy ESD 13 (Page 109) of the Local Plan states: "Proposals will not be permitted if they would: Cause undue visual intrusion into the open countryside; Cause undue harm to important natural landscape features and topography; Be inconsistent with local character; Impact on areas judged to have a high level of tranquillity." The Application directly contravenes all the above points. On a site that is essentially flat, light pollution, air pollution and noise pollution would have a major detrimental effect on both the local population and wildlife. With security lights 24/7 the site will be visible from afar and seriously and negatively impact the surrounding area. Noise from vehicles working – including reversing into bays with requisite alarms sounding - throughout the day and night will cause immense stress and constant disruption to the local residents and banish any wildlife. The flat topography of the land would mean that visual and audible nuisance would be unacceptable; bunding with tree planting is unlikely to effectively screen for very many years, if ever. The height of warehousing would create a wall of industrial buildings visible from each direction but particularly those dwellings around Baynards Green and from many of the houses in Stoke Lyne village and Swifts House.
- Sustaining biodiversity was a key issue in the COP26 agreement; this proposal runs contrary to this. The area is populated by various wildlife species, many of which are already under threat - particularly owls, bats, hare, skylarks, sparrow hawks and deer. Pathways and bridle tracks that presently are enjoyed by many will become unusable and characterless. This development, should it proceed, would destroy what is currently an unspoilt rural/agricultural area which, despite relative proximity to the M40 and A43, retains the character and appearance of natural countryside/farmland.
- Local villages would be deserted, with residents leaving the area as who wants to live alongside a huge and urbanised lorry park, operating 24 hours per day. This proposal forms part of a set of applications that together represent a future for this area that would soon resemble the conglomerate of warehousing and distribution centres like that of DRFT on the A5 or the warehouse 'city' between Milton Keynes and the M1.
- Historic England website has registered at least 12 grade-2 listed buildings or structures within proximity to the proposed sites which will have an adverse impact on and harm the historic nature of the landscape.