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# Reserved Matters Compliance Report

Units 5-9

Phase 2, Catalyst  
Bicester

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MAY 2022

Q200424

# Contents

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1	Introduction	2
2	Factual Background	5
3	Policy Context	6
4	Development Proposals	9
5	Reserved Matters Compliance	12
6	Conclusion	15

# 1 Introduction

- 1.1 Albion Land is delivering Catalyst Bicester, a high-quality business park aimed at meeting the needs of high-technology, knowledge-based businesses in Bicester. Located to the south of the town, at Bicester Gateway, the first phase of Catalyst Bicester is complete and units 1-3 are already occupied.
- 1.2 This Reserved Matters Compliance Report has been prepared by Quod on behalf of Albion Land ('the applicant') in support of reserved matters submitted pursuant to an outline permission (forming part of 19/01740/HYBRID) for up to 23,400sqm of B1 development, access and associated landscaping and infrastructure works on development land at Promised Land Farm.
- 1.3 The proposals comprise a second phase of development at Catalyst Bicester following the successful completion of the first phase of the business park, which provides 5,490sqm of flexible B1 floorspace, along with associated landscaping, utilities and access.
- 1.4 The submission of these Reserved Matters follows the recent withdrawal of an earlier Reserved Matters submission for the Site. It is now proposed to deliver the second phase of the business park on a speculative basis; the earlier Reserved Matters had been tailored to suit the needs of a specific occupier and the proposals have since been amended to enable the business park to meet the wider needs of the market.
- 1.5 The context for this submission is, however, unchanged and (as such) some of the content in this Report mirrors that of the earlier (now withdrawn) submission.

Figure 1: Proposed Site Plan



- 1.6 This Reserved Matters ('RMA') proposes 11,309sqm of flexible B1<sup>1</sup> floorspace across 5 units. It also provides the details of the wetland area to the east, as shown in **Figure 1**.
- 1.7 A further reserved matters submission will soon be submitted for consideration for an additional 4 units (shown as Units 10-13 at Figure 1) on the southern part of the land benefitting from planning permission to form the Catalyst Bicester business park.
- 1.8 The two reserved matters applications will allow comprehensive development of the business park to come forward quickly, as a forward funding arrangement has been agreed. There is strong market interest in the proposals from several high-technology / knowledge based occupiers on the basis of the latest proposals for the business park.
- 1.9 This report demonstrates that proposals brought forward via this RMA are fully compliant with the terms of the hybrid permission (LPA ref. 19/01740/HYBRID), consistent with the first phase of development that has taken place at Catalyst Bicester in terms of scale, design and appearance, and are flexible to meet the needs of future occupiers. The application should therefore be approved without delay.
- 1.10 Cherwell District Council's (CDC) approval of the following reserved matters is sought:
- Layout;
  - Scale;
  - Appearance; and
  - Landscaping.
- 1.11 In addition to this Reserved Matters Compliance Report, the RMA is supported by the following documents and drawings:
- Plans Package
  - Design Statement
  - Parking Note
  - Landscaping Details
  - Landscape and Ecological Management and Maintenance Plan

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<sup>1</sup> Whist Use Class B1 has now become part of a new Use Class E, the planning permission was granted prior to this change taking effect. Use Class B1 is therefore referred to throughout this submission rather than Use Class E(g).

1.12 This Report sets out the key matters that are material to the consideration of reserved matters and is structured as follows:

- Section 2 outlines the planning background, including a site description and relevant planning history;
- Section 3 sets out the planning policy context;
- Section 4 provides details of the reserved matters for which approval is sought, pursuant to the extant outline planning permission;
- Section 5 demonstrates the RMA's compliance with the consent; and
- Section 6 concludes the Report.

## 2 Factual Background

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### Site Description

- 2.1 The Application Site ('the Site') is shown in **Figure 1** in relation to the wider Catalyst Bicester proposals.
- 2.2 It is approximately 11.9ha in size, is relatively flat and low-lying. It is situated to the southwest of Bicester, east of Wendlebury Road.
- 2.3 The Site is bound by the following:
- North of the Site is Bicester Avenue Home and Garden Centre constructed in 2007. There are several retail stores and a large car park.
  - A stream forms the eastern boundary of the Site, with a railway line lying beyond open space east of the stream.
  - To the west of the Site is the first phase of development of the Hybrid permission.
  - To the south of the Site is open countryside, currently used for agricultural purposes.

### Site Designations

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

### Planning History

- 2.8 The only planning history on the Site is the hybrid permission to which this RMA is directly pursuant to.
- 2.9 There are a number of different allocations nearby, ranging from residential, to employment and mixed use.

## 3 Policy Context

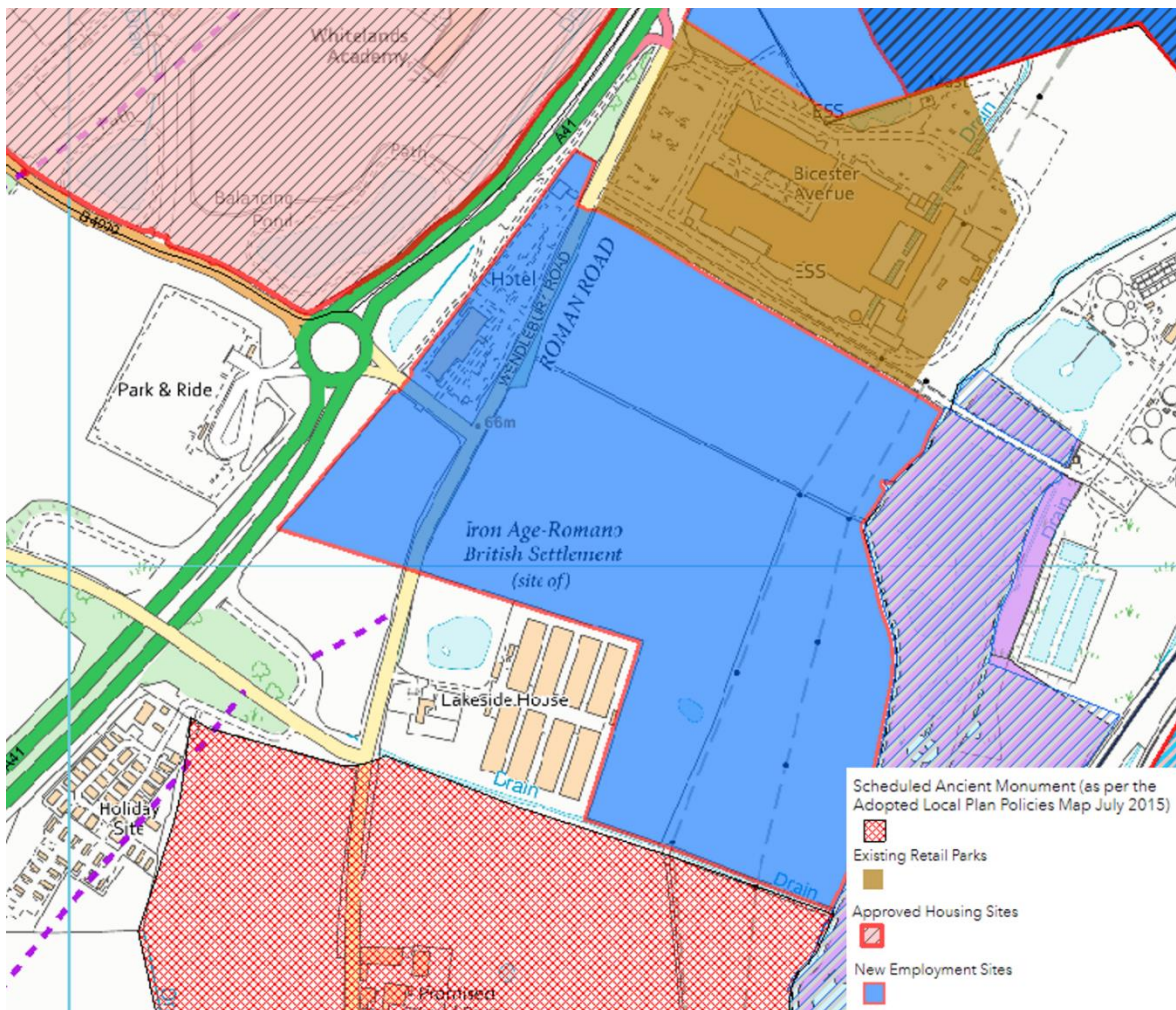
### Local Planning Policy

#### Site Allocations

3.1 The Site falls within or nearby to the following policy designations, as defined by the Policies Map (an extract of which is shown in **Figure 2**):

- Within a New Employment Site.
- Adjacent to an Existing Retail Park to the north.
- Adjacent to a Schedule Ancient Monument to the south.

Figure 2: Cherwell Local Plan Policies Map



#### Policy Bicester 10



- 3.2 Policy Bicester 10 related to the New Employment Site defined in **Figure 2** within which the Site lies.
- 3.3 Policy 10 allocates land for employment development in Use Class B1, specifically high-tech knowledge industries. It identifies an aspiration for 3,500 jobs to be created on the allocated site and sets out design and place shaping principles.

#### Other Relevant Planning Policies

- 3.4 Policy SLE 1 states economic development will be supported on sites allocated within the local plan. The policy supports employment proposals for allocated sites at Bicester provided they meet the requirements of other policies set out within the Local Plan.
- 3.5 Policy ESD 1 – ESD 5 relate to energy and sustainability and in summary require new developments to:
- Include measures to mitigate against the impact of climate change
  - Achieve carbon emission reductions
  - Achieve ‘very good’ BREEAM for non-residential development
  - Be encouraged to use decentralised energy systems; and
  - Be encouraged to use renewable energy provision
- 3.6 Policies ES6 and ES7 relate to flood management and drainage. Flood risk assessments are required for development proposals in flood zones 2 or 3. These risk assessments should demonstrate there is no increase in surface water discharge rates or volumes with an allowance for climate change. All development will be required to use sustainable drainage systems (SuDS) for the management of surface water run-off.
- 3.7 Policy ESD 10 focuses on the protection and enhancement of biodiversity and the natural environment.
- 3.8 Policy ESD 15 relate to the character of the built and historic environment. It requires new building development complement and enhance the character of its context through sensitive siting, layout, and high-quality design. New development is required to conserve, sustain and enhance designated heritage assets and their settings.

#### Emerging Planning Policy

- 3.9 At a regional level, the Oxfordshire authorities are preparing a Joint Statutory Spatial Plan: The Oxfordshire Plan 2050.
- 3.10 It is intended this will reflect the policies of currently adopted Local Plans but going forwards it will be used to shape new Local Plans. The Plan will create an integrated strategic planning framework evidence base to support sustainable growth until 2050 including new homes, economic development and supporting infrastructure.



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

## 4 Development Proposals

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- 4.1 The outline part of the planning permission is controlled by a series of parameter plans which fix key characteristics of the development. These define a built development zone and areas set aside for strategic landscaping, an access corridor, and the maximum height of development.
- 4.2 A Development Framework Plan ('DFP') was also approved at the outline stage, which sets a range of design criteria to inform reserved matters, including key routes through the business park and the location of active frontages.
- 4.3 This section of the Report is to be read alongside the Design Statement submitted in support of this application.

### Quantum of Development and Proposed Use

- 4.4 This RMA is pursuant to hybrid consent (LPA ref 19/01740/HYBRID) for up to 16,800sqm of B1 floorspace (of which up to 35% could be used for offices).
- 4.5 The proposal is for five buildings (see **Figure 1**) providing a total of 11,310sqm GIA, of which 1,930.7sqm is anticipated to be used for office space.
- 4.6 Reserved matters pursuant to the hybrid permission were approved (LPA ref: 20/02779/REM, later varied via non-material amendment LPA ref: 21/03217/NMA), enabling the first phase comprising 5,490sqm of employment development to come forward.
- 4.7 A reserved matters application (for units 10-13) is set to be submitted pursuant to outline permission (LPA ref: 19/01740/OUT) for land immediately to the south-west. Delivery of all nine of these units is intended to take place as a second, and final, phase of development.

### Layout

- 4.8 The buildings are set within the wider Catalyst Bicester business park and will benefit from its landscape setting, whereby at the eastern part of the Site land is set aside for flood alleviation and an ecological wetland area. These features will be delivered as part of this second phase of development, and, accordingly, details are provided.
- 4.9 The building development proposals continue the 'campus style' delivered in the first phase of the development to the west such that the development proposed via this RMA and other concurrent RMA submission will deliver a cohesive, single business park.
- 4.10 The units will differ in size and this allows for flexibility across the site and will help meet the needs of prospective occupiers.
- 4.11 Provision is made for servicing/deliveries and staff and visitor parking at appropriate ratios for the intended knowledge-based business use. The following breakdown of parking is proposed:

- Unit 5: 61 car parking spaces, 5 disabled spaces and 20 cycle parking spaces.
- Unit 6: 67 car parking spaces, 5 disabled spaces and 24 cycle parking spaces.
- Unit 7: 67 car parking spaces, 5 disabled spaces and 24 cycle parking spaces.
- Unit 8: 48 car parking spaces, 3 disabled spaces and 20 cycle parking spaces.
- Unit 9: 43 car parking spaces, 3 disabled spaces and 16 cycle parking spaces.

4.12 Vehicle, cycle and pedestrian access to the Site is clearly defined by the landscape-led approach to the layout. The units will each have an attractive and easy to identify entrance at ground level, with toilet facilities and lift access to first-floor offices.

4.13 The proposals will ensure connectivity to existing cycleways and public transport and will integrate with the existing access road to phase 1 of the development.

## Scale

4.14 The heights of the building accord with the parameter plans with the scheme proposing maximum ridge heights below the 76.25m and 76.5m AOD to accord with the parameter plan.

4.15 The floorspace aligns with the requirements set out in the outline permission and are as follows:

Unit	GIA (sqm)	Ground Floor (sqm)	Offices (sqm)
5	2,210.6	1,547.4	663.2
6	2,751.1	1,925.8	825.3
7	2,751.1	1,925.8	825.3
8	1,955.8	1,462.9	492.9
9	1,640.8	1,230.6	410.2
<b>Total</b>	<b>11,309.4</b>	<b>8,092.4</b>	<b>3,216.9</b>

## Appearance

4.16 The proposed development (Figure 3) will align with the design and place shaping principles expressed in the DFP. The external appearance of the buildings will follow the design concept and language adopted for Phase 1 of the Catalyst Bicester business park and will be consistent with the reserved matters submitted simultaneously for the former poultry site.

Figure 3: Proposed Buildings CGIs



## Landscaping

- 4.17 The proposals aim to sensitively integrate the proposed development into receiving landscape context, whilst improving biodiversity.
- 4.18 New trees and hedgerows are proposed in order to augment existing hedgerows and vegetation. This will create new blocks of trees, vegetation and hedgerows which will be consistent with the surrounding landscape.
- 4.19 New planting will screen and soften the view of the proposed development and connect existing and proposed Green Infrastructure across the business park.
- 4.20 Detailed proposals for the wetland area are also submitted, with the objective of ecological enhancement and habitat creation at their heart.

## Summary

- 4.21 The proposals are in accordance with the outline permission and relevant policies of the Local Plan. The high-quality development provides flexible options for potential future occupiers of the site and will help attract high-quality, knowledge-based occupiers to Catalyst Bicester and deliver the local planning authority's aspirations for Bicester Gateway, as per policy Bicester 10.

## 5 Reserved Matters Compliance

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- 5.1 The proposals comprise high quality employment space to suit the full range of B1 businesses<sup>2</sup> that are expected to be attracted to Bicester Gateway. .
- 5.2 The development will therefore enable the delivery of CDC's longstanding aspirations to delivery knowledge economy investment and jobs in this location.

### Outline Consent

- 5.3 The following planning conditions control Reserved Matters:
- Condition 24: Development shall comprise a maximum floorspace of 16,800sqm and shall be used only for purposes falling within Class B1, of which no more than 35% (5,880sqm) shall be developed for purposes falling within Class B1(a) (office).
  - Condition 26: No development shall commence until full details of the layout, scale, appearance and landscaping of the development proposed have been submitted and approved to the LPA.
  - Condition 27: Development shall accord with the design principles of the approved Development Framework Plan 18022-TP121D.
  - Condition 29: Development shall be carried out in accordance with the Site Location Plan and Parameters Plans.
  - Condition 31: The development shall be constructed to at least a BREEAM 'Very Good' standard.
- 5.4 Compliance with conditions 24, 27 and 31 will be maintained throughout the implementation of the development.
- 5.5 The hybrid consent is conditional upon development being brought forward in accordance with the conditions outlined, the DFP and the planning parameters referred to in condition 29.
- 5.6 The drawings established the overarching scheme design and landscape principles, and the locations and extent of development zones, building heights, access, and tree/hedge retention. As noted in Section 4 of this Report, these considerations/controls have been satisfied.
- 5.7 Conditions managing the pre-commencement and pre-occupation matters will be addressed through separate discharge of conditions submissions.

### Scheme Compliance

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<sup>2</sup> Now Use Class E (g), i.e. offices, research and development, light industry.

- 5.8 The scheme's compliance with the outline component of the extant hybrid permission for the Site and relevant planning policy objectives is addressed below.

#### Landscaping

- 5.9 The landscaping proposals provide a strong landscape setting for the development which follows the principles of the initial masterplan for Catalyst Bicester.
- 5.10 The application adheres to the tree retention requirements.
- 5.11 In the face of climate change, and adverse weather events, the landscaping will safeguard the Site's microclimate by creating a cooler environment through shading, to the benefit of occupiers and wildlife using the Site.
- 5.12 The landscaping proposals have important benefits for local wildlife connectivity and habitats, particular with the provision of substantial SuDS and wetland area on the eastern part of the Site.
- 5.13 The species chosen will be particularly beneficial for small wildlife/insects, which will in turn support larger populations of other wildlife. Species will be chosen to maximise the biodiversity benefits of the Site.
- 5.14 Provision of open space and planting will also be a significant benefit to occupiers and employees' health and wellbeing.

#### Layout

- 5.15 The layout provides efficient use of space and is designed within the requirements of the Development Framework Plan.
- 5.16 The proposed layout will provide a safe, legible and engaging environment.
- 5.17 The public realm and links to open space across the wider business park will encourage social inclusion and integration, enhancing public safety.
- 5.18 The layout allows for units to be spaced in a complementary way to each other with green buffers acting in between.
- 5.19 The layout enables visual permeability, ensuring all buildings are accessible to all users.

#### Appearance

- 5.20 The proposed buildings are contemporary and attractive, in-keeping with the design of the rest of Catalyst Bicester business park. The appearance allows flexibility and functionality for perspective occupants.
- 5.21 The colour palette and treatment of elevations accord with the approach taken across the rest of the business park and will contribute to creating a distinct, attractive and safe environment.

#### Scale

5.22 The proposed scale aligns with the parameters agreed with CDC at the outline stage to ensure sensitive integration with the surrounding context and character, reflective of local topography.

## Summary

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

5.24 In light of the above, the proposals demonstrably comply with Policy Bicester 10 and Policy ESD15 of the Local Plan, and relevant policies in the NPPF, providing sustainable development and achieving well-designed places.

5.25 The proposals fully accord with the conditions and parameters of the outline planning consent for the Site.

5.26 Given the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, this represents an opportunity to attract high-tech, knowledge-based businesses to occupy the Site.

5.27 Given the reasons outlined in this Reserved Matters Compliance Report, development should be approved without delay.



## 6 Conclusion

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- 6.1 This RMA is submitted on behalf of Albion Land; it seeks the approval of the details for five employment buildings and a wetland area, which will form part of a second and final phase of development at Catalyst Bicester. This RMA is submitted simultaneously with another RMA for the former poultry farm, forming the remainder of the second phase of development.
- 6.2 The Catalyst Bicester business park is a key component of CDC's vision to create a knowledge economy gateway to the south of the town and Albion Land has a strong track record of successfully delivering such development.
- 6.3 The built development proposals are brought forward to provide flexibility for future potential occupiers of the site, with several parties currently interested.
- 6.4 The proposals fully accord with the requirements of the outline component of the extant planning permission for the Site and the design of the buildings provide a flexible opportunity for potential occupiers on the site, whilst remaining consistent with the existing design of buildings in the first phase of development.



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