

Statement of Community Involvement

Graven Hill, D1 Site, Bicester

June 2022

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1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 This Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) has been prepared on behalf of the Applicant, Graven Hill Purchaser Ltd, in support of the proposed redevelopment of Graven Hill, D1 Site (which encompasses sites D1 & EL1), Bicester, OX26 6HF (hereafter referred to as 'the site'). The site lies within Cherwell District Council (CDC). See Appendix 1 for Site Photographs.
- 1.2 The D1 site, which is also known as '*the employment land*', lies to the south of Bicester on the southern side of Graven Hill. The site comprises five large vacant warehouses (Unit D1, Unit D2, Unit D4, Unit D7, Unit D10 & D20, the latter being the sub-station). These existing buildings total approx. 41,831 sq. m. This figure excludes the buildings removed as part of the Employment Access Road construction, which is to be completed later this year (e.g., Units D05, D03 & D12).
- 1.3 The site was formerly used by the Ministry of Defence (MOD) for storage and distribution purposes. This function dates back to September 1942 when a depot was constructed to provide logistical support for operations in Europe during World War II.
- 1.4 The site is accessed via Pioneer Road from the east, which is a slip road that stems from the A41 Aylesbury Road. Furthermore, Junction 9 of the M40, which links London, Oxford, and Birmingham, is located a short distance to the southwest. On this basis, the site benefits from excellent road transport links. The southwestern boundary of the site lies adjacent the Bicester Military Railway.
- 1.5 The site benefits from Outline Planning Permission (ref: 11/01494/OUT), which was Granted on 8th August 2014, as well as subsequent amending consents, such as Permission ref: 19/00937/OUT. This sets out a Masterplan for the surplus MOD land at Graven Hill and C site in Upper Arcott.
- 1.6 The site forms part of the wider Graven Hill development site and is allocated to deliver mixed-use development comprising 1,900 homes; retail and community facilities, and employment floorspace comprising up to 2,160 sq. m of B1(a) use, 2,400 sq. m of B1(c) use, 20,520 sq. m of B2 use and up to 66,960 sq. m of B8 use (a total of approx. 92,040 sq. m of employment floorspace). The majority of this employment floorspace is provided at the D1 Site.
- 1.7 Over the past 18 months the project team have assessed the feasibility of a number of potential commercial uses at the site. In this vein, the proposal seeks to provide a warehouse and logistics proposition (Use Class B8 '*Storage or Distribution*'). Recent structural changes in this market mean that there is significant demand for high quality logistics units in locations that have good road transport links.

- 1.8 The Outline Planning Application seeks to fix 'Access' only at this stage. Although an Indicative Masterplan has been used for assessment purposes for the supporting Environmental Statement, (ES) we are seeking to deal with the detailed matters of 'Scale', 'Layout', 'Appearance', and 'Landscape', of the Proposal at the 'Reserved Matters' Stage.
- 1.9 It should also be noted that the Outline Planning Application is supported by a Parameter Plan which fixes the maximum scale; those parts of the site that could be developed (up to the maximum floor area threshold) and 'green corridors' for ecological purposes. This Parameter Plan has also informed the various ES technical assessments.
- 1.10 This application provides a maximum floor area of B8 'Storage or Distribution' use at the site, as well as a maximum height threshold. Both matters could be dealt with via appropriately worded planning conditions. However, 'Scale' (or height) would also be controlled via the Parameter Plan.
- 1.11 We consider that the proposal would result in an efficient use of this large vacant brownfield site. It would also respond to the site allocation for 'Mixed Use (Housing and Employment)' and 'Site Specific' 'Policy Bicester 2: Graven Hill', within the Cherwell Local Plan 2011-2031. This approach will deliver much needed employment opportunities to create a balanced settlement, integrated with the existing community at Graven Hill and Bicester.
- 1.12 The scheme has evolved over a significant period, which included consultation and feedback with Officers from both Cherwell District Council (CDC) and Oxfordshire County Council (OCC) via the formal pre-application process; consultation with local Councillors as well as consultation with the local community and other stakeholders. Details of these consultation exercises are provided within this SCI.
- 1.13 The format of this SCI is set out as follows:
- Section 2 provides a summary of the proposal
 - Section 3 provides a summary of the consultation Policy context
 - Section 4 summarises the consultation actions and objectives of the project team
 - Section 5 provides our conclusion

2.0 Summary of the Proposal

2.1 The proposal and corresponding '*Indicative Masterplan*' has evolved over the past six to nine months. These scheme amendments have been made primarily in response to detailed pre-application consultation with CDC and Oxfordshire County Council (OCC), as well as infrastructure providers (e.g., electricity & water) and other stakeholder consultation. The key versions of the proposal during the pre-application stage are as follows:

- Pre-Application Scheme Version (January 2022)
- Post Pre-Application Scheme Amendments (March 2022)
- Proposed Scheme (June 2022)

2.2 These different scheme versions are summarised below:

Pre-Application Scheme Version (January 2022)

2.3 This version of the proposal comprised a logistics scheme totalling approx. 117,348 sq. m (GIA) of floorspace (1,263,122 sq. ft) at the site. The indicative Masterplan demonstrated how this floorspace could be provided across 9 separate units (Units 1-9).

2.4 Approximately 1,222 parking spaces were proposed, including HGV parking yards associated with the Logistics Units as well as disabled parking. These could be arranged in a variety of layouts to best respond to market demand as well as site constraints.

2.5 The 'Indicative' Masterplan layout (Pre-Application Scheme Version) is shown at Figure 1.1.

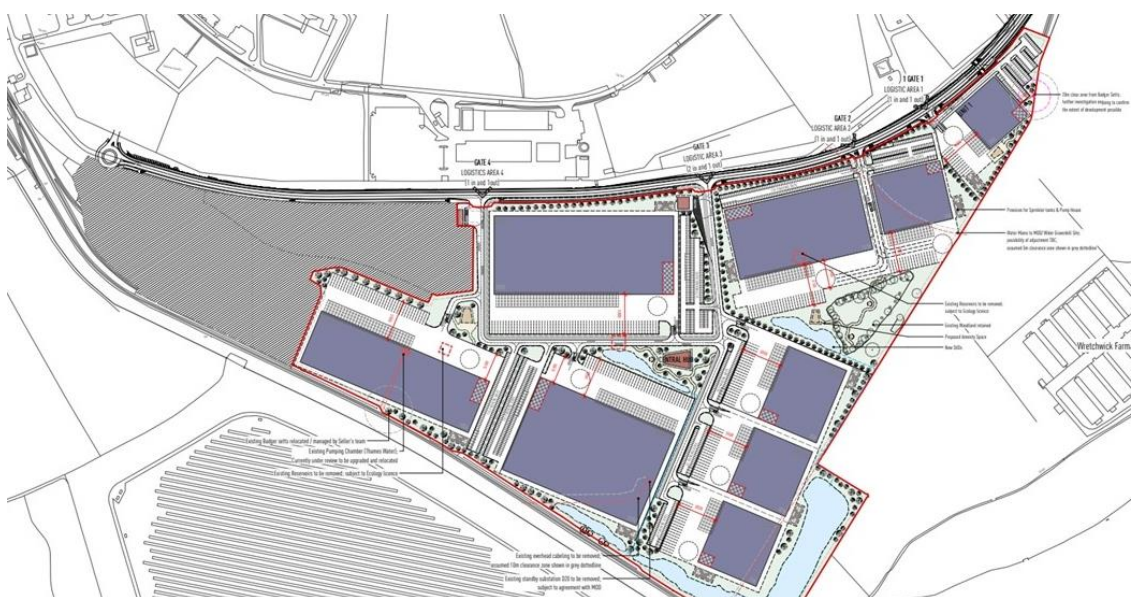


Figure 1.1: Proposed 'Indicative' Masterplan Layout (Pre-Application Scheme Version)

- 2.6 In terms of the logistics units, a total of 9 Units were envisaged (indicative scheme only), ranging from 50,000 sq. ft (Unit 1) up to 258,000 sq. ft (Unit 7). Unit 2 comprises 76,000 sq. ft and indicative images of the eastern and southern elevations are shown below at Figures 1.2 & 1.3.

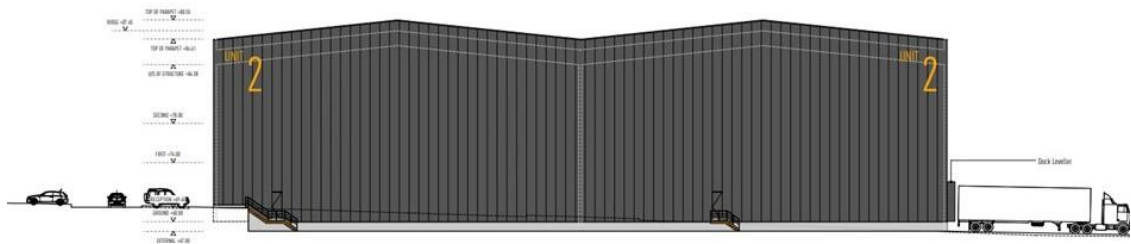


Figure 1.2: Proposed Unit 2 East Elevation (indicative only – previous darker colour)

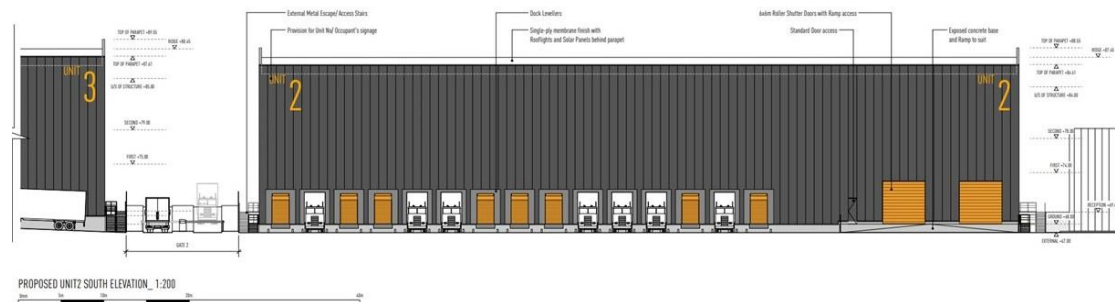


Figure 1.3: Proposed Unit 2 South Elevation (indicative only – previous darker colour)

- 2.7 The pre-application scheme version made a number of ‘assumptions’ with regards to the relocation of some existing site constraints. These constraints included the following:

- D20 ‘Sub-Station’ and overhead cabling;
- Pumping Station;
- Water main constraints (northeast of site); and
- Ecological constraints (subject to relocation and mitigation).

- 2.8 As part of our pre-application engagement with infrastructure and utility providers (as well as extensive engagement with CDC & OCC Officers) the Project Team concluded that it was prudent to progress the scheme on the basis that the key site constraints remain in situ. Specifically, this was due to the fact that some constraints are outside of the control of the Applicant.

2.9 On this basis, the Project Team felt that the submission of a Planning Application that could potentially be undeliverable would fail to achieve the jobs and investment ambitions for the site, or at the very least could significantly delay the delivery of the scheme. On this basis, alongside other pre-application responses, *'Post Pre-Application Scheme Amendments'* (March 2022) were made. This version of the scheme is summarised below.

Post Pre-Application Scheme Amendments (March 2022)

2.10 The Post Pre-Application Scheme Amendments (March 2022) version of the scheme comprised development totalling a maximum of 109,725 sq. m (GIA) of B8 '*Storage or Distribution*' floorspace at the site. This included ancillary office use within the B8 units. This represented a reduction of 7,623 sq. m (approx. 82,053 sq. ft) compared to the Pre-Application version of the scheme.

2.11 The indicative Masterplan showed how this floorspace could have been provided across 10 separate units (Units 1-10). However, it is important to note that the Masterplan has been prepared to assist with the assessment of the Outline Application and is illustrative only. See Figure 1.4 which shows the Indicative Masterplan.

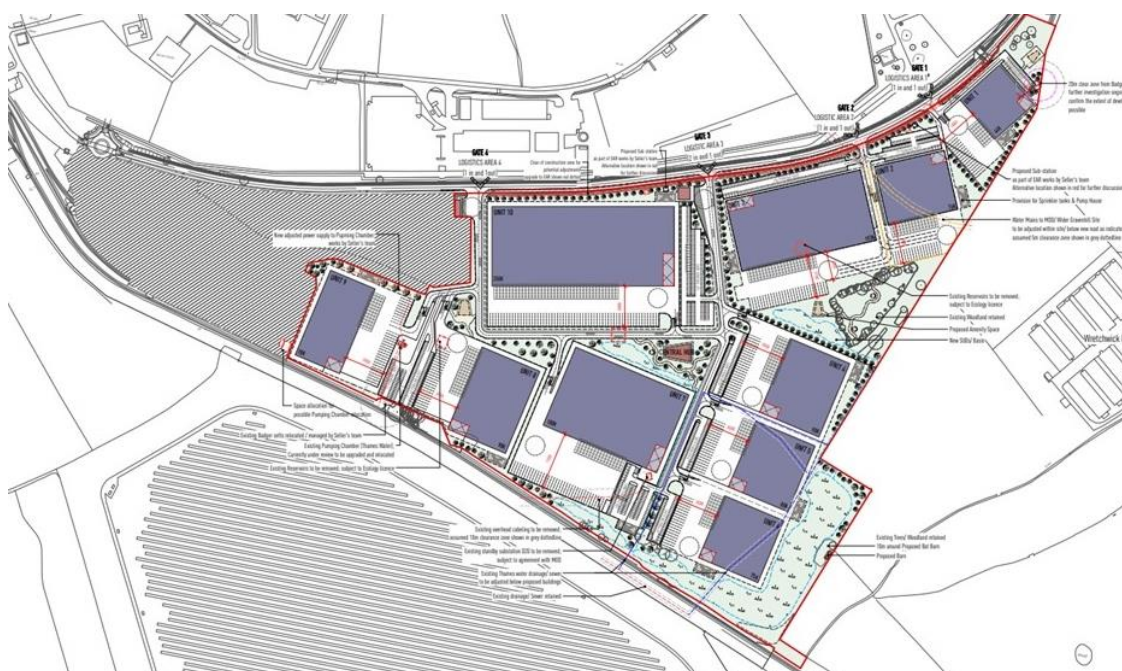


Figure 1.4: Indicative Masterplan Layout (March 2022 version)

2.12 Approximately 1,050 parking spaces were proposed, including HGV parking yards associated with the Logistics Units as well as disabled parking. These were capable of being arranged in a variety of layouts to best respond to market demand as well as site constraints.

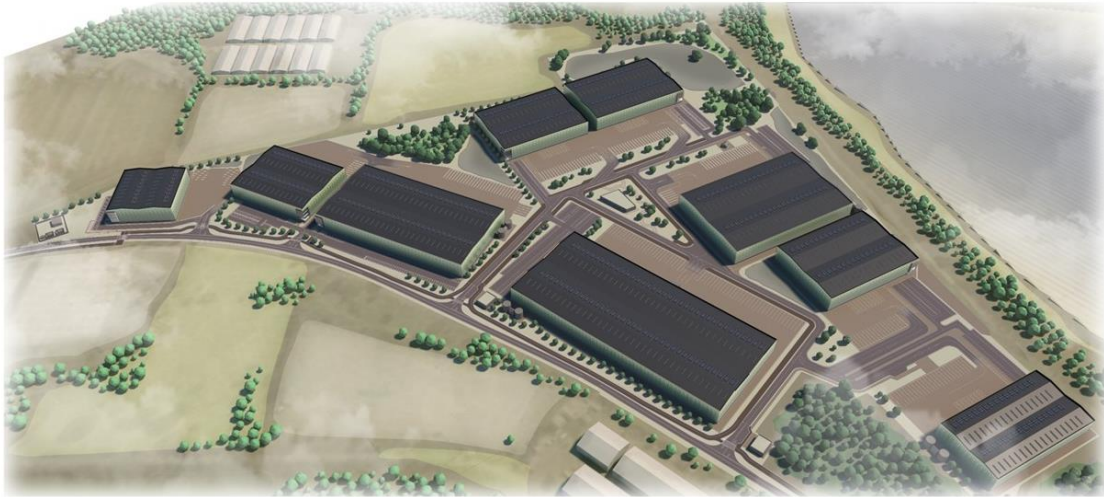


Figure 1.6: Aerial CGI view of the indicative masterplan, looking southeast across the site

- 2.17 In terms of the logistics units themselves, the 9 Units (indicative scheme only), range from 48,357 sq. ft (Unit 1) up to 250,315 sq. ft (Unit 9). The indicative Masterplan also provides approx. 902 parking spaces set around areas of open space and landscaping, details of which will be confirmed at the 'Reserved Matters' stage. See Figure 1.7 below for a CGI of the scheme, noting sensitive façade treatments (potential design options) that help the proposal blend into the landscape.



Figure 1.7: CGI view of the indicative masterplan, looking southwest across the site

- 2.18 Although the indicative Masterplan represents a realistic option of how the site could be developed, (having obtained detailed input from both agency and technical consultants within the project team), the applicant does not wish to fix the details of the scheme at this stage. It is envisaged that this approach will provide maximum flexibility and ensure that the scheme appeals to as many potential occupiers as possible.

3.0 Consultation Policy Context

- 3.1 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), published in July 2021 refers to the importance of *'pre-application engagement and front loading'*, of planning applications at paragraphs 39 – 46. Paragraphs 39 & 40 are particularly relevant and state:

'39. Early engagement has significant potential to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the planning application system for all parties. Good quality pre-application discussion enables better coordination between public and private resources and improved outcomes for the community.'

40. Local planning authorities have a key role to play in encouraging other parties to take maximum advantage of the pre-application stage. They cannot require that a developer engages with them before submitting a planning application, but they should encourage take-up of any pre-application services they do offer. They should also, where they think this would be beneficial, encourage any applicants who are not already required to do so by law to engage with the local community before submitting their applications.'

- 3.2 In addition to the NPPF, the Cherwell District Council Statement of Community Involvement (SCI), which was adopted on 18th October 2021, provides guidance on pre-application consultation. Specifically, the first two paragraphs of Section 5.2 *'Pre-application discussions and consultations'* state:

'For enquiries relating to specific schemes or emerging proposals, we offer a formal pre-application service. All potential applicants are encouraged to use this service before applying. Information on accessing pre-application advice, the service that will be provided and financial costs involved can be viewed on the Council's website.'

Government guidance encourages pre-application engagement with the community where it will add value to the process and the outcome. We will therefore encourage developers and promoters for large scale development to undertake their own consultation and engagement process with local people.

- 3.3 Section 5.2 goes on to state (in part):

'The Council will not undertake a public consultation exercise on pre-application submissions received and the detail of pre-application submissions will not be published on the Council's website (unless otherwise first agreed with the applicant). However, subject to prior agreement with the applicant, we may consult with technical consultees at the pre-application stage. This process can include Ward Councillors and Town and Parish Councils where appropriate.

- 3.4 Section 5.4 '*Commenting on a planning application*' refers to the need to make decisions in a timely manner and states (in part):

'Delays in the determination of planning applications hinder the delivery of new development and the associated benefits and infrastructure investment they bring. We need to consider applications in a timely manner, particularly as the Government measures our performance. Failure to meet targets can result in a Local Planning Authority losing its planning powers.'

- 3.5 Section 5.7 '*Determination of the application*', refers to the Planning Committee process, and states:

'The Planning Committee is a public meeting and both applicants and members of the public have the right to speak in relation to an application. Speakers must be registered in advance with the Council's Democracy team. Planning Committee agendas are normally published 5 working days in advance of the meeting with the items for consideration. The committee is administered by the Council's Democracy team.'

- 3.6 Given the scale of the proposal, it is envisaged that the application will be presented to the Cherwell District Council Planning Committee for debate and discussion at the appropriate time.

4.0 Consultation Actions and Objectives

- 4.1 In accordance with the CDC SCI the Applicant has engaged with the Council in relation to matters concerning the following specialisms:
- Response from Tree Officer
 - Response from Planning Policy Team
 - Response on Land Drainage
 - Response from Landscape Officer
 - Response from Environmental Health Officer
 - Response from Economic Development Officer
 - Response from Conservation Team
 - Formal response from Planning Officer
- 4.2 Additionally, the Applicant engaged with OCC in relation to matters relating to Highways, Flood Risk and Archaeology via the formal pre-application process.
- 4.3 Following on from the initial pre-application consultation, the Applicant contacted the following local 'Stakeholders' as part of our local engagement on the proposal. This list of consultees and interested groups was discussed with Officers at CDC prior to making contact. The following stakeholders were contacted on 8th April 2022:
- Local Ward Councillors (Cllr Lucinda Wing; Cllr Nick Cotter; Cllr Dan Sames)
 - The Town Council of Bicester
 - The Parish of Ambrosden
 - The Parish of Launton
 - Bicester Chamber of Commerce
 - Bicester Bike Users Group (BICESTERBUG)
 - Bicester Vision
 - Oxfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership (OxLEP)
 - Graven Hill Residents Association
- 4.4 A copy of the email sent to these organisations is provided at Appendix 2. Although we received responses from some organisations listed above, we sent a follow-up email on 11th May to those organisations that had not responded. A copy of the follow-up email is provided at Appendix 3.
- 4.5 The aim of this consultation exercise was to discuss our proposal with local stakeholders and respond to any queries, comments, or concerns. As the proposal is an Outline Planning Application with all matters 'reserved' (apart from 'Access') it was expected that many comments would relate to the detailed (Reserved Matters) stage of the application.

- 4.6 However, it is beneficial to consult with local stakeholders at this stage to discuss potential mitigation and consider schemes amendments or the use of Planning Conditions.
- 4.7 Due to recent concerns relating to the Covid-19 pandemic, it was felt that Virtual Consultation Meetings were most appropriate as an initial engagement forum. Such an approach enabled numerous stakeholders to attend consultation meetings (rather than being restricted to specific numbers in a meeting room or community hall) and allowed the Project Team to respond to any concerns raised with visual aids and information immediately on screen.
- 4.8 At the time of drafting the SCI, we had held consultation meetings with the Bicester Bike Users Group (2 attendees) and the Graven Hill Residents Association (50+ attendees). We had also arranged to meet with The Town Council of Bicester on 14th June, which would be an 'in-person' meeting. Our engagement to date is summarised below.

Bicester Bike Users Group (BICESTERBUG)

- 4.9 We held a Virtual Consultation meeting with George Bennett (Chair of Bicester BUG) and Paul Troop (organisation Secretary) at 3:30 – 4:30 pm on Friday 6th May. The Project Team attendees included Mark Goulding (Project Manager); Gooch Ozyigit (Architect); Matt Humphreys (Planning Consultant); and Michael Bredin (Transport Consultant).
- 4.10 Everyone introduced themselves and Paul Troop (PT) began by summarising 'Bicester BUG', noting that they have approx. 100 members. PT stated that their aim is to make routes and sites accessible to cyclists of all levels. He said that they have good relations with developers and are an active organisation.
- 4.11 Mark Goulding (MG) and Gooch Ozyigit (GO) then provided a summary of the background to the site as well as the evolution of the proposals to date, noting the extant planning permission. PT asked if 'Access' would be a Reserved Matter or confirmed at the Outline Planning Application stage. GO confirmed that 'Access' points from the Employment Access Road (EAR) would be confirmed at the Outline Application stage.
- 4.12 Michael Bredin (MB) then talked through the scheme connections to the EAR to the north of the site and the cycle and pedestrian routes proposed. PT noted that he was keen to show cycling priority. MB confirmed that LTN120 standards (which prioritise cyclists) had been adopted from the outset of the scheme and PT stated that it was impressive for the scheme design to follow LTN120 from the outset.
- 4.13 MG then highlighted that Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) is very important for occupiers and that cycling provision forms part of this. PT noted that 'electric bicycles' are becoming increasingly popular. However, due to their relatively high cost, he asked if the design (at the Reserved Matters stage) could provide these close to the buildings to maximise passive

overlooking from occupiers and reduce the risk of theft. GO confirmed that the 'indicative masterplan' adopts such a design approach.

- 4.14 PT noted that it was good to see separate cycle and pedestrian routes. PT also asked if the pedestrian and cycle routes within the site could be de-coupled from the road. George Bennett (GB) highlighted that this was achieved at Symmetry Park. MG noted that this is something the Project Team could look at and PT asked if he could be provided with a copy of the Indicative Masterplan to see if he could draw on potential cycle / pedestrian routes that are independent from the road layout. MG and GO agreed to send draft plans to PT. This was actioned on Tuesday 11th May.
- 4.15 Matt Humphreys (MH) highlighted that the current masterplan is indicative only, meaning that a different configuration and layout could come forward at the Reserved Matters stage. MH and all thanked PT and GB for their time and comments.

Graven Hill Residents Association

- 4.16 Members of the Project Team held a brief initial consultation meeting with Karen Sims who is the Chair of the Graven Hill Residents Association (GHRA) at 10:30am on 3rd May. The initial meeting was simply to agree a convenient time to hold a Virtual Consultation Meeting with the GHRA, as they have a substantial membership.
- 4.17 To maximise the number of potential attendees, it was agreed that an evening session would be most convenient. On this basis, Tuesday 17th May at 7:30pm was subsequently agreed via email.
- 4.18 The Virtual Consultation Meeting took place between 7:30 – 9:00 pm and approximately 51+ members of the GHRA attended. The meeting was chaired by Karen Sims and the Applicant Team attendees included Mark Goulding (Project Manager), Gooch Ozyigit (Architect), Justina Hwang (Architect) and Matt Humphreys (Planning Consultant). In addition, Gemma Davis, who is the '*Customer Experience Director*' at the Graven Hill Village Development Company (GHVDC) attended as an observer.
- 4.19 Karen Sims (KS) began by highlighting that the event had been advertised on the GHRA Facebook page and that the virtual meeting would be recorded. The Applicant Team introduced themselves and Mark Goulding (MG) provided a summary of the site and project to date. Gooch Ozyigit (GO) then talked through a number of presentation slides that set out the background; existing context; existing permission; site constraints and the proposal. A copy of the Presentation document is provided at Appendix 4.
- 4.20 MG also highlighted to the attendees that a separate planning application for the demolition of existing buildings at the site (as well as a bat barn) had already been submitted and is pending consideration by the Council.

- 4.21 After the presentation we moved onto a Questions and Answers session and the first question was by Damien Maguire (DM). He noted that a 25% electric vehicle charging level was proposed and asked if this was enough? MG responded by confirming that this level was policy compliant with the latest standards and that such provision also depended upon power infrastructure into the site.
- 4.22 DM noted that the indicative masterplan envisages approx. 350 cycle spaces and asked if this was enough. GO confirmed that this was simply an indication of how the scheme could develop and highlighted that such provision could be increased at the 'Reserved Matters' stage. MG also noted that many occupiers would be keen to provide cycle parking as part of their ESG ambitions and commitments.
- 4.23 The next question was from Michelle, who wanted to know what the traffic impact of the scheme would be. MG and GO confirmed that overall car numbers and trip numbers would be less when compared to the extant Outline Permission. MH also highlighted that the proposal included additional land along the Employment Access Road (EAR) at the north of the site, so that the road could be extended as part of the Southeast Relief Road (SERR) proposal, which is a long-term ambition for OCC. However, it was noted that the delivery of this is outside of the control of the applicant and will need to overcome constraints.
- 4.24 The next question was from Christine Clynes who asked if the employment area was the same as the previous area. MG confirmed that the employment area was broadly similar to the employment area within the extant permission, with the exception of Unit D08 and surrounding land at the west of the site.
- 4.25 Christine Clynes then asked if there was a green buffer between the residential area and employment area and if the proposal would encroach on any residential areas at Graven Hill. Christine Clynes was also keen to ensure that the proposal provided a pleasant environment.
- 4.26 GO confirmed that the site and proposals do not encroach onto the residential areas and that the heights of the buildings (approx. 15-20 m) would be lower than Graven Hill. MG mentioned that there would be some loss of trees at the south of the site to provide room for SuDS but that green corridors would be provided through the site.
- 4.27 The next question then queried if the SuDS area would be used as a public park. MG noted that there would be opportunities to provide landscape enhancements at the reserved matters stage. However, he highlighted that this would be a logistics park which are generally private.
- 4.28 The next question was from Clare Lowe who wanted to know what the buildings were going to look like. GO noted that the buildings range from approx. 15-20 metres and that the top of Graven Hill is approx. 110 metres AOD, with the site ranging from 60-65 metres AOD, meaning that the site is much lower. GO stated that the exact details of the design would come forward at the reserved matters stage, but that the units could be similar to the Symmetry Park scheme to the east of the site.

- 4.29 Clare Lowe then asked if there would be green roofs provided to help it blend into the landscape. GO noted that certain colours such as greens, olives, and natural colours could help it blend into the landscape more successfully. Clare Lowe noted that she would like to see design examples and MG highlighted the approach taken by the John Lewis building at Magna Park (Milton Keynes) as an example of a blended horizontal colour façade, which visually reduces the bulk of the building. MG showed an example of the image in response and Clare Lowe seemed to be content with the examples shown and asked to see examples in the application.
- 4.30 The next question was from Simon who asked if there would be solar panels and what the sustainability credentials of the scheme would be. MG noted that the project team were targeting BREEAM 'Excellent' rating and that detailed sustainability measures would be confirmed as part of the reserved matters applications.
- 4.31 Simon then stated that he would like to see OCC start work on the SERR as he felt that there were a lot of vehicles in the local area. He also agreed with earlier comments that many logistics operators are increasingly hi-tech, requiring more skilled IT and engineering staff.
- 4.32 The next question was from Sam who asked if the design was going to be ambitious and bold. GO noted that they had worked hard to focus upon the setting of the buildings and placemaking within the indicative masterplan. However, at this stage it was impossible to confirm exactly how the buildings would look. GO did note that design principles could be identified at the outline application stage to help support good quality design at the reserved matters stage.
- 4.33 Sam then asked if there were details about the phasing of the development and MG then talked about the likely demolition and construction phasing and timings.
- 4.34 Clare El-Mouden then asked if there was a lighting strategy to ensure dark vegetated corridors to help support the bats in the area. MG noted that RPS Ecologists were advising the Applicant Team and that matters concerning Great Crested Newts (GCN's) bats and general ecological interests were being fully considered. MG noted that it is intended for the lighting strategy to respond to the need for bat routes at the site.
- 4.35 MH then highlighted that this was an initial stage of consultation and that most details would come forward at the Reserved Matters stage. MH noted that the stakeholder engagement should be regular and ongoing and that we would be keen to continue an open dialogue with GHRA moving forward. Karen Sims noted these comments.
- 4.36 The next question raised concerns about the traffic and air quality impact (rather than traffic impact) especially as there will be a school at Graven Hill. MG noted that detailed traffic information had fed into the scheme development as well as the Air Quality report which would support the application. There was also concern about noise and traffic impact. MH responded noting that a Draft Travel Plan would support the application and that small measures (such as

providing facilities for coffee / lunch – noting the central Hub at the site) can help reduce traffic movements and reduce traffic impact.

- 4.37 The next question was from Nick Hughes who highlighted that he was an architect. He felt that traffic was a concern, especially at the Rodney House roundabout and that he agreed with the key points and was keen to see the details regarding visual impact, noise transmission concerns and air quality.
- 4.38 However, Nick stated that he felt that it was a good presentation and good to see. MG noted that much of this information would be in the planning application with more details at the Reserved Matters stage. Karen Sims thanked the Applicant Team for their input and noted that she would be in touch with MG to respond to the queries raised.

The Town Council of Bicester

- 4.39 In response to our initial consultation emails, representatives of the Town Council of Bicester invited members of the Project Team to present to them on 14th June at 7pm. This was an in-person meeting (not virtual), and Gooch Ozyigit and Matt Humphreys attended the meeting.
- 4.40 Gooch Ozyigit (GO) began by discussing the background to the site and presented the proposal via a power point slides. Cllr Nick Mawer then invited questions from the members of the Town Council for GO and Matt Humphreys (MH).
- 4.41 Cllr Les Sibley began by stating that he thought that the existing buildings at the site were in relatively good condition and queried if their re-use had been considered. He noted that the provision of approx. 1,500 jobs at the site but queried if these jobs would require employees to come to Bicester from further afield, rather than local residents. He also asked if the project team had considered electric vehicle parking as well as cycling and pedestrian access.
- 4.42 MH responded to Cllr Sibley, noting that the project team had looked at the existing buildings. However, due to a number of reasons, the proposal to demolish the buildings had been promoted.
- 4.43 MH noted that the existing buildings suffer from uneven floors which would put off most occupiers as well as low eaves heights (most potential occupier require taller buildings). Furthermore, the existing roofs comprise a material which is highly flammable, making it very difficult (potentially impossible) to obtain insurance for the buildings (noted by GO). It was for these reasons that demolition was proposed. MH noted that the application would be supported by a Demolition Report, which details these considerations.
- 4.44 MH then highlighted that there are a number of potential initiatives to help optimise the number of employees from the local area, including apprenticeship schemes at the construction stage. Such measures to provide job and training opportunities for local people would be explored during the post-submission and determination stage. MH also confirmed that the proposal

provided a policy compliant level of electric vehicle charging and that consideration of pedestrian and cycle routes, as well as consultation with Bicester BUG, had taken place.

- 4.45 Cllr Sandy Dallimore then asked if solar panels would be provided on the roofs of the buildings. GO confirmed that this would be the case. Cllr Dallimore then asked about how the number of jobs had been estimated and how robust these figures were (Cllr Alex Thrupp also asked this question). MH responded stating that the Economic Impact Assessment (EIA) had been formulated on reasonable predications on the number of employees per sq. m across a range of business types within Use Class B8.
- 4.46 MH confirmed that there was no pre-let and that it is difficult to accurately predict exact job numbers at the site until occupiers had been identified, which is likely to be at the reserved matters stage. However, it is both likely and reasonable to estimate that the jobs provision at the site would be within the ranges detailed within the EIA.
- 4.47 Cllr Donna Ford then asked about transport and highways, raising concerns about traffic. GO confirmed that the applicant had worked closely with OCC Highways Officers and that there would be less vehicle trips when compared to the consented outline permission at the site. Furthermore, due to the proposed B8 Use, there would be less AM and PM 'peaks' as these trips would be spread out more evenly over the day.
- 4.48 Cllr Nick Mawer noted that there are quite a few B8 Use schemes coming forward in Bicester and asked about competing schemes. MH responded noting that the site could potentially be used for alternative uses (e.g., B2 Use, subject to demand and planning consents) if demand for B8 reduced. MH also noted that the existing and historic use of the site was for B8 'storage or distribution' use as it was used by the MOD for approx. 60 years.
- 4.49 Furthermore, MH noted that the Local Plan and site allocation provides strong support for employment use (Policy Bicester 2) at the site and that this site was well suited for B8 use, compared to other competing schemes. The Outline Planning Permission, which includes a significant amount of B8 use was also noted by MH as a material consideration in favour of the current proposal.
- 4.50 Cllr Alex Thrupp then asked if there was going to be any historic reference to the site within the new proposal. MH responded, noting that the archaeology report referred to the demolished Prisoner of War (POW) camp at the site. However, MH and GO agreed that there was not currently any specific reference to the historic use of the site and MH and GO agreed that this was a very good idea that would be investigated further.
- 4.51 Cllr Mawer agreed and noted that Bicester was very proud of its links with the MOD and that some streets at the residential part of Graven Hill had been named after soldiers and that ideas such as this would be welcomed. Cllr Mawer then thanked MH and GO for their time.

Bicester Vision

- 4.52 On 24th May, we received an email response from Grae Laws, who is the Business Manager at Bicester Vision. He thanked us for contacting him and requested a virtual meeting on 23rd June, which is the next time the Executive Board meet. The Project Team confirmed that this date was suitable to review the proposal and discuss further.

Key Considerations and Project Team Responses

- 4.53 Although Consultation Meetings took place with a number of stakeholders, the following key themes were identified.
- A desire to ensure that the detailed design sits well within the landscape
 - A desire to promote sustainable development and promote cycle use & provision
 - A desire to ensure that local traffic impact is acceptable
 - A desire to maintain and promote green spaces & landscaping where feasible
 - A desire to ensure a high-quality scheme in terms of appearance & placemaking
- 4.54 Many of these points relate to the future 'management' of the scheme moving forward or can only be confirmed at the Reserved Matters or detailed design stage. However, we have endeavoured to provide assurances and suitable mitigation measures where feasible to positively respond to comments received.
- 4.55 As with all Stakeholder Engagement, effective engagement is not simply a 'tick box' exercise at the Planning Application stage. It is the intention of the Applicant that this recent consultation marks the beginning of meaningful community engagement which will take place throughout the development of the project and beyond on a regular basis. The benefit of this continuing consultation is as follows:
- Regular updates on the proposal to local stakeholders to keep everyone informed
 - Allowing a regular forum to enable local stakeholders to raise queries
 - Enhancing the prospect of opportunities for local employment and apprenticeships
 - Such employment benefits can be both at the construction and completed stages
 - Enabling communities to have a say on the detailed design stage (Reserved Matters)
 - Enabling communities to influence detailed designs and highlight their priorities
- 4.56 Although many of the points raised within the consultation exercise will ultimately be determined at the Reserved Matters Stage, we have provided greater detail on an indicative design within the Outline Planning Application and greater consideration of design principles in direct response to consultation feedback from stakeholders.

- 4.57 This shows how the ‘appearance’ of the site could ensure that it sits well within the landscape and provides a sensitive and high-quality logistics scheme. This is shown in the Computer Generated Image (indicative only) highlighted below, which shows how sensitive and graded use of natural colours on the facade (darker colours at the bottom of the buildings and lighter at the top) can help mitigate the visual impact and allow relatively large buildings sit comfortably within the landscape. See Figure 1.8 below.



Figure 1.8: CGI view of the indicative masterplan, looking southwest across the site

- 4.58 Additionally, we now have a greater understanding of the key considerations and issues that are of greatest importance to the local stakeholders. For example, a Draft Travel Plan has been submitted in support of the Outline Planning Application and this will be developed further at the Reserved Matters stage. The promotion of non-car modes of travel (e.g., cycles, e-bikes, dedicated cycle routes, bus provision etc) was a key consideration for many stakeholders.

5.0 Conclusion

- 5.1 In conclusion, the proposal at the site has evolved over many months in consultation with Officers at both CDC and OCC (as well as other Statutory Consultees) via formal pre-application meetings.
- 5.2 This collective feedback has led to key changes from the initial concept. These comprise the reduction of floorspace by approx. 12% from the pre-application scheme (January 2022) and enhanced consideration regarding open space and landscaping.
- 5.3 The feedback from local stakeholders highlighted a desire for additional cycle parking provision and cycle routes. Furthermore, there was a desire to see how the proposal could look when completed. However, stakeholders noted that this is an Outline Application only and that such details would be confirmed at the Reserved Matters Stage.
- 5.4 Many residents were keen to ensure that the proposal provided a high quality and sensitive proposal that sits well within the landscape. This feedback led to more detailed work and analysis into the potential façade treatments, colouring, colouring grading, and landscaping to help 'break-up' and mitigate the visual impact of the units.
- 5.5 We consider that the proposal has responded positively to the collective consultation received over the past 6-months. This has resulted in a framework and set of development parameters to facilitate the delivery of a high-quality logistics park at the Reserved Matters stage which will bring both significant investment and jobs to Bicester.
- 5.6 The comment from the Town Council of Bicester regarding consideration of historic reference in the new scheme to the former MOD use was agreed as a promising idea. This could be added as a condition to the planning consent and could include relevant road naming or other initiatives.
- 5.7 As noted previously, we consider that our recent stakeholder engagement represents the first stage on an ongoing dialogue with the local community and stakeholders. We envisage that further consultation and discussion will take place during the determination stage of the Planning Application, and we will continue to engage with stakeholders who are keen to be involved.

Appendix 1

Appendix 1: Site Photographs



Photo 1: North-east of the site looking east across the demolished Unit D5



Photo 2: Northeast corner of the site looking southwest towards Unit D1



Photo 3: North-eastern corner of Unit D1



Photo 4: Eastern elevation of Unit D1 looking north towards Graven Hill



Photo 5: Interior of vacant Unit D1 with high ceilings



Photo 6: Interior of Unit D1



Photo 7: Exterior of eastern elevation of Unit D4 looking north



Photo 8: Exterior of eastern elevation of Unit D4, looking south, adjacent Badger enclosure



Photo 9: Exterior of norther elevation of Unit D4, looking west



Photo 10: Exterior of wester elevation of Unit D7, looking east



Photo 11: Exterior of Unit D2, southern and western elevations



Photo 12: Exterior of Unit D2, eastern elevation, looking south



Photo 13: Interior of Unit D2



Photo 14: Exterior of Unit D7 (left) and D2 (right) looking north to Graven Hill



Photo 15: Interior of Building D2



Photo 16: Exterior of Building D10 at the centre of the site

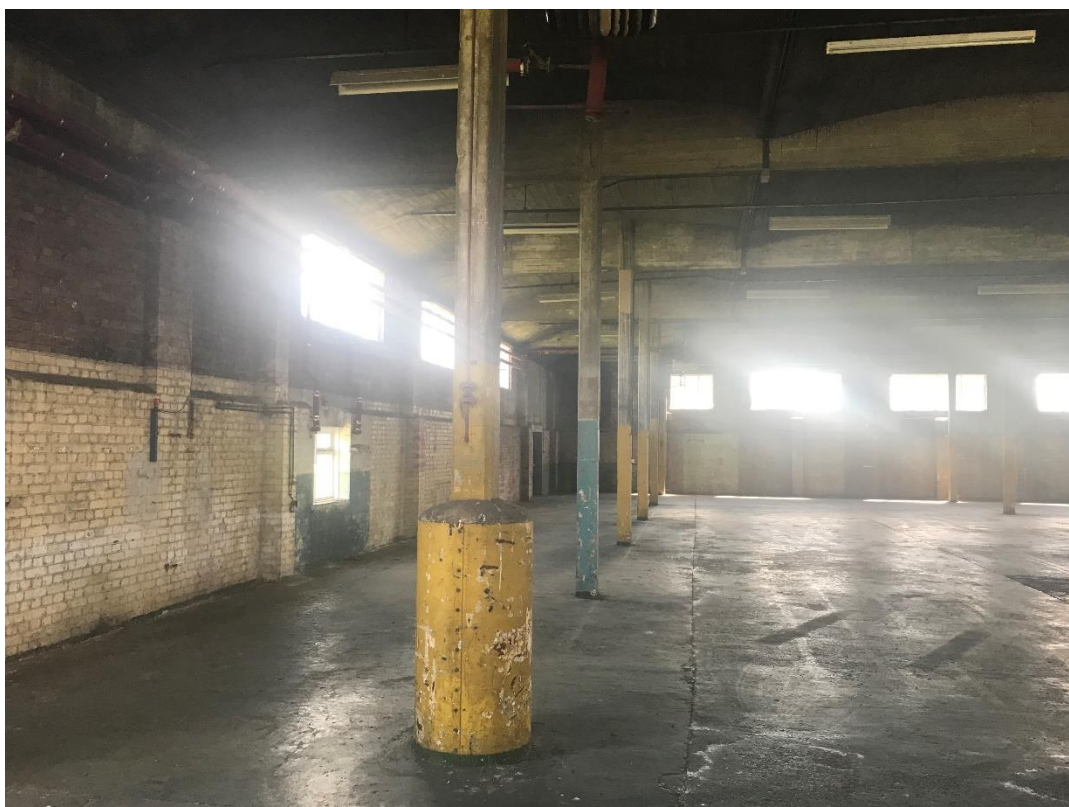


Photo 17: Interior of Building D10 at the centre of the site



Photo 18: Small woodland boundary adjacent the railway line (southern corner of the site)

Appendix 2

Matt Humphreys

From: Mark Goulding <Mark@resoluteproperty.co.uk>
Sent: 08 April 2022 15:49
To: lucinda.wing@cherwell-dc.gov.uk; nick.cotter@cherwell-dc.gov.uk;
daniel.sames@cherwell-dc.gov.uk
Cc: Matt Humphreys; Gooch (Gurcan) Ozyigit
Subject: Graven Hill Employment Site

Dear Councillors,

I hope you are keeping well. We are getting in touch as we are representing the Project Team who are seeking to regenerate the vacant Graven Hill Employment site, which was previously used by the Ministry of Defence (MOD). The site has been largely vacant since 2009 and lies to the south of St David's Barracks. The site comprises just over 30 hectares and benefits from an existing Outline Planning Permission for nearly 1,000,000 sq. ft of employment floorspace. However, to date, this part of the Graven Hill Masterplan has not come forward.

Over the past year, we have been engaging with Officers at Cherwell District Council (CDC) and Oxfordshire County Council (OCC) with regards to bringing the site forward for redevelopment. During this time, we have assessed a number of options for the site and we are now seeking to promote the site as a new logistics park. We feel that this use continues the historic MOD logistics use which started at the site in 1942 during World War II.

It is envisaged that the proposal will provide significant investment and jobs creation for Bicester which accord with the ambitions set out at the 'Bicester 2' Site Allocation within the Local Plan.

As part of our ongoing engagement, we would be keen to discuss our proposals with you to gather feedback in the hope that we are able to respond to any concerns that you may have.

At this stage, we feel that it may be most appropriate to organise virtual meetings to discuss further, but we would equally be content to meet in person should you wish.

If you would like to know more, please do feel free to contact me to discuss further and potentially arrange a time for a virtual meeting.

Kind regards



Mark J Goulding Director



mark@resoluteproperty.co.uk



07875 599970



023 9260 2463

Appendix 3

Matt Humphreys

From: Mark Goulding <Mark@resoluteproperty.co.uk>
Sent: 11 May 2022 09:54
To: info@bicestervision.co.uk
Cc: Matt Humphreys; Gooch (Gurcan) Ozyigit
Subject: Graven Hill Employment Site

Hi Bicester Vision,

Amazingly it is a month since we reached out to you – time flies.

I just wanted to reach out to you again as a reminder as we are keen to ensure we engage with as many stakeholders and interested parties as possible.

Please do contact me if we can arrange a time for a virtual meeting.

We look forward to hearing from you.

Many thanks

m

Mark J Goulding Director



mark@resoluteproperty.co.uk



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Resolute Property Consultancy Limited Registered office address: Fareham House, 69 High Street, Fareham, Hampshire, England Company No. 07012879

From: Mark Goulding
Sent: 08 April 2022 15:57
To: info@bicestervision.co.uk
Cc: Matt Humphreys <matt@hplanning.london>; Gooch (Gurcan) Ozyigit <gooch@ateliergooch.com>
Subject: Graven Hill Employment Site

Dear Bicester Vision,

I hope you are keeping well. We are getting in touch as we are representing the Project Team who are seeking to regenerate the vacant Graven Hill Employment site, which was previously used by the Ministry of Defence (MOD). The site has been largely vacant since 2009 and lies to the south of St David's Barracks. The site comprises just over 30 hectares and benefits from an existing Outline Planning Permission for nearly 1,000,000 sq. ft of employment floorspace. However, to date, this part of the Graven Hill Masterplan has not come forward.

Over the past year, we have been engaging with Officers at Cherwell District Council (CDC) and Oxfordshire County Council (OCC) with regards to bringing the site forward for redevelopment. During this time, we have assessed a number of options for the site and we are now seeking to promote the site as a new logistics park. We feel that this use continues the historic MOD logistics use which started at the site in 1942 during World War II.

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Kind regards



Mark J Goulding Director



mark@resoluteproperty.co.uk



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