

Case Officer: Katherine Daniels

Recommendation: Approval

Applicant: Crest Nicholson

Proposal: Discharge of condition 14 (zero carbon energy use) of 21/01227/F

Expiry Date: 27 October 2022

Extension of Time:

1. APPLICATION SITE AND DESCRIPTION OF APPROVED DEVELOPMENT

- 1.1. The application relates to the North West Bicester site, known as the Elmsbrook development, phases 3 and 4 of which are being constructed by Crest Nicholsons. This is part of the Bicester Eco Town site.

2. CONDITIONS PROPOSED TO BE DISCHARGED

- 2.1. The proposal is to discharge Condition 14 relating to the zero carbon strategy for the development. The applicants have submitted several documents, and the most up to date are the:
- 2.2. Sustainability Statement and the Sustainability Statement Supplement December 2023

3. RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

- 3.1. The planning history directly relevant to the proposal is:

21/01227/F – A full planning application for 57 dwellings and associated infrastructure. Permitted.

4. RESPONSE TO CONSULTATION

- 4.1 Bioregional Sustainability Consultants: The evidence provided for conditions 14 and 16, in our view still do not demonstrate exemplary level commitments.
- 4.2 However, it is important to note that the development is now at an advanced stage, leaving minimal opportunity for any further improvements on these conditions to be made. Therefore, the recommendation is that the conditions are discharged.

5. APPRAISAL

- 5.1 Officers note the comments of Bioregional which can be summarised as follows: *It is our view that it is very difficult for any further improvements related to condition 14 to be implemented into the building design, albeit the zero-carbon status of the scheme has been evidenced, the proposed methodology to achieve this we feel does not align with the exemplary nature of the scheme. Condition 16 has been met through the minimum information provision and is recommended to be discharged, provided the applicant provides the requested detail stated in the table above. However, our professional opinion is that the standards and associated information provided should go further given the exemplary nature of the development. We do note the time period that this scheme was originally assessed under and the*

subsequent advances in industry best practice around both operational and embodied carbon has improved substantially in the preceding 5 years. We do note the time period that this scheme was originally assessed under and the advances in industry best practice has. We do note the time period that this scheme was originally assessed under and the subsequent advances in industry best practice around both operational and embodied carbon has improved substantially in the preceding 5 years.

- 5.2 *Based on the evidence submitted, we do not fully agree that Policy BIC1 has been wholly complied with, which requires “high quality exemplary development and design standards including zero carbon development....and the use of low embodied carbon in construction materials”. The evidence provided for conditions 14 and 16, in our view still do not demonstrate exemplary level commitments.*
- 5.3 *Additionally, the evidence on planning condition 16 can also be highlighted by lack of confirmation that actual commitments to minimise embodied carbon have been incorporated into the dwellings as a result of modelling the embodied carbon and recommendations of the analysis.*
- 5.4 *However, it is important to note that the development is now at an advanced stage, leaving minimal opportunity for any further improvements on these conditions to be made. Therefore, the recommendation is that the conditions are discharged.*
- 5.5 Whilst Officers note the concerns of Bioregional and don't disagree with them, the advanced stage of the application being built out is noted. In addition, it is concluded that the build out of scheme, in line with how the rest of the Exemplar scheme has been constructed (or as far as possible) given this proposal relates to a re-plan of part of the area where the equivalent conditions have already been discharged, is acceptable. Noting for example the constraints posed by connection to the existing energy centre which is applicable to the rest of the site. On balance, it is considered appropriate for this condition to be discharged at this stage.

6. RECOMMENDATION

That Planning Condition 14 of 21/01227/F be discharged based upon the following:

Condition 14

Sustainability Statement dated April 2021 prepared by AES Sustainability Consultants Ltd.

Sustainability Statement Supplement December 2023 from AES Sustainability Consultants Ltd.

Case Officer: Katherine Daniels

DATE: 26 January 2024

Checked By: Caroline Ford

DATE: 28 February 2024
