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Training and Employment Plan

Catalyst Bicester (Phase 3)

MAY 2023

Q200424

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1 Introduction

- 1.1 This Training and Employment Plan (“TEP”) has been prepared on behalf of Albion Land (“the Applicant”).
- 1.2 It relates to the development approved via the granting of planning permission ref. 19/01746/OUT on 24 September 2020 for land to the south of Wendlebury Road, Chesterton (known as Catalyst Bicester).
- 1.3 In combination with earlier phases of development, 27,000 sqm GIA falling within the B1 Use Class will be delivered at Catalyst Bicester.
- 1.4 This TEP is prepared pursuant to Condition 17 of the planning consent, which requires:

No construction shall take place in any phase until a Training and Employment Plan for that phase has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. As a minimum this Plan shall include the arrangements by which the applicant (or other specified persons) will provide construction (and related trades) apprenticeship starts during construction of the relevant phase of the development hereby approved. Construction shall take place in accordance with the agreed Plan.

- 1.5 Full discharge of the condition is sought.
- 1.6 This TEP represents an updated version of the TEP which was approved for earlier phases of development at Catalyst Bicester and outlines how Parkway Construction (“the Contractors”) will provide apprenticeship starts throughout the construction of this final phase of employment development at the site.
- 1.7 Once approved by Cherwell District Council (“CDC”) this TEP will be applicable until the employment development is substantially completed.
- 1.8 As requested by CDC, this TEP also updates on the apprenticeship starts that were secured in earlier phases of development at Catalyst Bicester, demonstrating the successful implementation of the commitments that were made by the Contractors in relation to those works.

2 Context

- 2.1 The Applicant is committed to delivering all phases of the consented employment development at Catalyst Bicester (**Figure 2.1**), with the Contractor having been appointed to construct all phases of the employment development on their behalf.

Figure 2.1. Site Location



Parkway Construction

- 2.2 The Contractor is an established construction company that has been operating from its Milton Keynes base (less than 25 miles from the Site) since November 2003.
- 2.3 They have worked with Albion Land elsewhere in Bicester to deliver (inter alia) the first two phases of development at North West Bicester (known as Axis J9) and earlier phases of the Catalyst Bicester development. They have effectively delivered the approved Training and Employment Plans in all cases.
- 2.4 In relation to this development, as with earlier phases, there will be 3 permanent site-based employees, who are based within 30 miles of the Site and 3 supplementary management staff (site engineers) who are located within 40 miles of the Site.

2.5 The Contractor carries no construction labour resource, which is procured through sub-contractors. Any supplementary labour required by sub-contractors is normally sourced from the local workforce (as appropriate to the skills required).

3 Review of Earlier Phases

Apprenticeship Starts

- 3.1 During earlier phases of the Catalyst Bicester development, the Contractor employed 3 full time apprentices (2 no. Site Managers and 1 no. Setting Out Engineer).
- 3.2 The Site Managers both undertook a Level 3 Team leader apprenticeship at Abingdon and Witney College to give them the site experience and math qualification they needed to then follow on with their HNC in Construction and the Built Environment. One of these apprentices has now completed their initial apprenticeship stage and will be enrolled onto the HNC at the City of Oxford College in September 2023; this person has integrated well into the Contractor's team and will remain a valuable member of the business going forwards. The second Site Manager apprentice decided not to continue in the trade after 11 months of their apprenticeship.
- 3.3 The Setting Out Engineer has completed their first-year apprenticeship stage at Bedford College and is now in the second year of the Edexcel Level 4 Diploma in Construction and the Built Environment, with a projection of distinction across all modules. At the end of this second year a decision will be made about progressing to an HND and then onward to a degree. This person has also integrated well into the Contractor's business.
- 3.4 It is proposed that these apprentices will continue to work at Catalyst Bicester during the remainder of the construction phase.
- 3.5 During earlier stages of the project, sub-contractors place 6 no. additional apprentices at the site.

Local Skills and Supply Contractors

- 3.6 During earlier phases of the Catalyst Bicester development, the Contractors (and their sub-contractors) have made use of the following local supply chains and businesses:
 - Nichols Builder Merchants - Telford Rd, Bicester OX26 4LD
 - Blanchfords Builders Merchant - Unit 1, Lords Farm, Lords Lane, Bicester OX27 7HL
 - Nolan Fuels - Lodge Farm Depot, Bucknell Rd, Middleton Stoney, Bicester OX25 4TA
 - Jan's Kitchen Catering – (Behind Touch of Pine) Telford Rd, Bicester OX26 4LD
 - Screwfix - Wedgwood Road Launton Road Industrial Estate, Telford, Launton Rd, Bicester OX26 4LD
 - Travis Perkins - 128 Churchill Rd, Bicester OX26 4XZ
 - Toolstation - Unit 1, trade park, Launton Rd, Launton, Bicester OX26 4JG
 - Thames Water - Wendlebury Road. Bicester.
 - HG Timber - The HG Timber Building/Radclive Rd, Buckingham MK18 4FD

- Encon Witney - Unit 5, Stanton Harcourt Industrial Estate, Stanton Harcourt, Witney OX29 5UX
- Wickes – Bicester, Launton Rd, Bicester OX26
- Quest Hardware Buckingham - Signal Hill, Lenborough Rd, Buckingham MK18 4BU
- Gem Tool Hire and Sales - 28 Wedgewood Rd OX26 4UL
- Scottish & Southern - Yarnton, Kidlington OX5 1NY
- Bicester Green - The Yard, Launton Road
- Jewson - Station Rd, Launton, Bicester OX26 5DS
- Aggregate Industries - Telford Rd, Bicester OX26 4LD
- Smiths of Bletchington - Station Rd, Enslow, Kidlington OX5 3AY
- Bicester Sweepers - Stratton Lane, Bicester OX27 8RJ
- Bucks Recycling - Building 214, Westcott Venture Park, Westcott, Aylesbury HP18 0XB
- Wernic - Pipe Ln, Banbury OX16 2RP
- Various and numerous small and national retailers in the close proximity of the developments, i.e. shops and retail outlets for food and beverage.

3.7 It is anticipated that these local supply chains and businesses will continue to be used going forwards by the Contractors and their sub-contractors as required.

4 Apprenticeship Start Strategy

- 4.1 Parkway, Albion Land will use all reasonable endeavours to directly provide a further construction/trades apprenticeships during construction of final phase of development at Catalyst Bicester.
- 4.2 This will mean that a total of 4 no. apprenticeship starts have been directly secured during the construction of the Catalyst Bicester development, and a minimum of 10 no. in total including those secured by sub-contractors.
- 4.3 The Contractors propose to use the network they have built during earlier phases of the development to assist with the recruitment, selection and training of apprentices. They have established a particularly strong working relationship with Abingdon and Whitney College. Notably the following network will be called upon:
 - Edward Collett – Head of Business Development at Abingdon and Whitney College
 - Sharon Williams – Tutor/Assessor at Abingdon and Whitney College
 - Cat Armstrong – Community Employment Plan Advisor at The Oxfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership (OxLEP)
 - Steven Newman – Cherwell District Council Economic Growth Team.
- 4.4 The Contractor will also call upon the Bicester Construction Skills Centre if necessary or helpful in achieving the above objectives.
- 4.5 Apprenticeship opportunities will be advertised using appropriate means, with assistance from the above services. As a minimum, advertisements will be placed in local newspaper job sections, and posted on popular online services. Potential applicants will be made aware of the apprenticeship opportunity, the location and type of development.
- 4.6 Other local construction colleges may also be contacted (to arrange recruitment events and/or to ensure relevant students are made aware of the available opportunities).
- 4.7 Apprentices will be targeted in the local area, and within Cherwell and surrounding areas.
- 4.8 Following this, normal recruitment procedures will apply, with Applicants recruited and trained based on their abilities and skillsets, however where possible they will be introduced to all aspects of the construction process.
- 4.9 On request (and once the relevant phase of development is underway at the site) the Applicant / Contractor can provide the local planning authority with details of the apprenticeship starts secured during the final phase of the development



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