

**Planning Application: 23/02098/OUT Begbroke Science Park Begbroke Hill
OX5 1PF**

**Oxfordshire County Council Written Update for Planning Committee
5th September 2024**

The Officer Report for application 23/02098/OUT refers to Oxfordshire County Council's (OCC) responses dated 12/09/2023, 02/10/2023, 31/01/24, 29/04/2024 and 06/08/2024. This written update provides further clarification regarding Highways planning conditions and obligations, education provision and the Household Waste Recycling Centre contribution.

Highways Planning Conditions

A number of Highways planning conditions that were requested in our response dated 31/01/2024 are omitted from the recommended planning conditions in the officer report. Given the scale and location of the site there are specific highways requirements that need to be secured by condition to ensure a very low car mode share of travel and make it acceptable in terms of its traffic impact. As access is excluded from the outline application, it is necessary to provide detail of the required highway works and publicly consult on them through planning conditions. Referencing a list of approved documents is not an acceptable replacement for planning conditions as this does not include the detail of what is being sought by OCC. OCC is therefore concerned that without the specific conditions, the Local Planning Authority would not be in a strong position to refuse a Reserved Matters application if it did not deliver what OCC are seeking.

OCC therefore requires planning conditions relating to Access, Highway Works, Traffic Monitoring and Evaluation Plan, and Parking (see below), are included to ensure that the site is acceptable in terms of traffic impact. To secure delivery of these items, they need to be required through planning obligations in the S106.

Access

Prior to commencement of the development, details of the access arrangements at the Begbroke Hill / A44 junction between the development site and adopted highway shall be submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority. The proposed access arrangements shall include enhanced pedestrian and cycle crossings and, unless already delivered, a pair of bus stops including shelters on the A44 at the Begbroke Hill junction. The design be in accordance with the Oxford Street Design Guide and LTN1/20 standards. The approved access arrangements shall be implemented thereafter.

OCC considers that the above condition is required to ensure that all infrastructure items listed are included with the access junction design, including bus stop infrastructure and enhanced pedestrian and cycle crossings. OCC will seek to secure works through the S106 and these should be listed in the S106 requirements (currently omitted). To be clear, the detail which has not yet been agreed or consulted on is requested through condition and delivery should be secured through the S106.

Highway Works

Prior to the commencement of the development, details of a scheme of improvements on the A44 corridor between the Begbroke Hill junction and the Cassington Road junction shall be submitted to, and approved by, the Local Planning Authority. The improvements shall include segregated pedestrian and cycle facilities, to LTN 1/20 standards on the eastern side of the A44 along the extent indicated above, bus priority measures including a southbound bus lane on the approach to the Cassington Road junction and unless already delivered, signalised pedestrian and cycle crossings at the following locations:

- Around mid-way between the Begbroke Hill and Sandy Lane junctions on the A44*
- At the Sandy Lane junction on the A44*
- On the northern arm of the A44 / Spring Hill Road / Fernhill Road junction at Begbroke.*

The scheme of A44 highway works shall then be implemented in accordance with approved plans.

The requested works are to the A44 between Begbroke Hill and Cassington Road. OCC are requesting that the developer deliver these works to ensure the provision of a completed high-quality route between the site and Oxford along the A44 in time for occupation of the site. Hence the request for a condition which requires the high degree of sustainable transport content needed to support the low car modal share.

As with the access condition, we are seeking detail through the planning condition and would seek to secure delivery of these works, with a trigger, through the S106 agreement.

The financial contribution requested for A44 Highway Works Package included in Appendix 1 of the officer report is separate and relates to the stretch to the north of the above, from Begbroke Hill to Bladon, where OCC are looking for a contribution towards future OCC works.

Traffic Monitoring and Evaluation Plan

Prior to implementation a Traffic Monitoring and Evaluation Plan (MEP) shall be submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority, the actions within the MEP shall thereafter be implemented. The (MEP) shall record how the trip generation and mode share of the site evolves during build-out and occupation. Survey design shall account of multi-modal trips from all access points, including walking and cycling only accesses in addition to main vehicular accesses. The survey data will inform whether the targets and mode shares set out in the Transport Assessment and Travel Plans are achieved and will inform whether additional measures, to be identified in the Framework Travel Plan shall be implemented.

The above condition contains requirements for specific surveys at all access points to the site. This does go beyond the kind of surveys normally required through travel plans. However, OCC does consider that this could be included within a more specific Travel Plan condition or into Travel Plan requirements in the S106 agreement.

On-street Parking

Prior to use or occupation, the developer shall submit details of the implementation of a Residents Parking Zone to the Local Planning Authority for agreement and thereafter implement, maintain, and enforce the parking controls until such time as the roads are adopted by the local highway authority.

As currently drafted, the proposed parking strategy condition (draft condition 18) makes no mention of a requirement for the developer to set up a controlled parking scheme, the need for which was accepted by the Inspector on PR9 and which is being sought in connection with all the PR sites, given the need for low levels of parking provision to support the low car modal share, and the proximity to bus routes into Oxford, meaning that the sites could become a target for commuter parking. Without the reference to a controlled parking scheme in the planning condition, if the submitted parking strategy did not contain a proposal for such a scheme it would be difficult to refuse the application to discharge the condition on this basis. Whilst a parking strategy may be appropriate to cover site wide uses and existing parking, we still consider that a requirement for the developer to introduce a controlled parking scheme should be listed under the obligations. This has been tested at appeal on the adjacent site.

While Traffic Regulation Order fees are sought in the S106, these are to allow OCC to advertise and implement TROs on internal roads once adopted. These would be of no use in the potentially lengthy period when the internal roads are unadopted and OCC would not have the power to introduce TROs.

OCC is concerned that there is neither a suggested condition, nor inclusion in the list of obligations to secure this measure.

Sandy Lane S106 Requirement

The Committee Report notes that the applicant has proposed to provide an active travel bridge over the railway at Sandy Lane, and that, in consultation with the LPA, OCC and Network Rail, suitable mitigation measures will be developed to ensure the safety of that route.

It is noted that the delivery of an active travel bridge over the railway at Sandy Lane is included within the table of S106 obligations at Appendix 1 of the report. However, OCC also considers that the delivery of a bridge should be included in the list of obligations set out in the recommendation to the Committee, as most other key items of infrastructure have been, to ensure that it is absolutely clear that this crossing is critical and necessary for the delivery of the site. Moreover, it may be necessary to make part iv of the recommendation clearer that it requires all the items in Appendix 1 (not just to secure the items listed in the recommendation).

Rail Halt Safeguarding – S106 Requirement

OCC understands that the location and layout of the land required to be safeguarded for a potential future rail station at Begbroke, required under policy PR8, would be determined during the second phase of the planning process for this site, given the 'three tiered' approach of the applicant. OCC appreciates that funding towards a

feasibility study for a potential future station is included in the draft list of obligations. However, OCC considers that the obligation to safeguard land for a potential future rail station should be secured through the S106 for the development, and that this should also be included in the list of obligations.

Public Transport Service Contribution – S106 Requirement

Appendix 1 lists the Public Transport Service Contribution required from the site as £4,064,524 but does not include index linking for that figure. To be clear, the contribution sought for Public Transport Services is £4,064,524 index linked to October 2021 using RPI-x.

It is also noted that the Mobility Hub Contribution (£12,032,379 index linked from June 2022 using Baxter Index) is listed twice in the table of contributions.

Education

Secondary School Noise Levels

Paragraph 5.16 states that: *'OCC have expressed general support with regard to the location of the secondary school next to the railway line subject to technical criteria.'* OCC have concerns about achieving low enough noise levels to deliver the outdoor curriculum. The applicant has demonstrated that 55 dB LAeq and lower is achievable using acoustic mitigation (fences and bunding along the railway line) and this will need to be achieved prior to the freehold transfer of the site to OCC which will be required as part of the S106 agreement.

Kidlington Parish Council's Objection

Paragraph 7.3 mentions *"Kidlington Parish Council maintains a holding objection to the overall development associated with education provision. The Parish Council seeks an appropriate resolution of provision in agreement with Gosford Hill School to ensure that there is no detriment to the existing provision of secondary education in Kidlington."* The county council appreciates the parish council's concern that any additional school capacity should be planned in such a way as to avoid unnecessary detrimental impact to existing schools. The county council works closely with schools and academy trusts to plan expansion of capacity where that is necessary to meet local population growth. The county council's response of September 2023 sets out how additional education capacity will be planned. The cumulative impact of the Cherwell Local Plan Partial Review sites clearly exceeds the ability of local existing schools to absorb additional pupils, and new provision will be required, which will be within the PR8 site. As stated in the council's response, this could be via expansion of an existing school onto a satellite site or through a separate new school, and which route is most appropriate will not be determined until there is a clearer timescale of need for the new facility, so that the decision can be based on the latest available data.

Household Waste Recycling Centre contribution

Appendix 1 (Heads of Terms for Section 106 Agreement/Undertaking) lists OCC's S106 contribution requirement towards Household Waste Recycling Centres which is supported. For clarity, the contribution is towards the expansion and improving the efficiency of public Household Waste Recycling Centres and not the provision of bins for each property/dwelling (as mentioned in the second column of the table) which would be a separate item for CDC to require.