



TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1990

PLANNING STATEMENT

TO ACCOMPANY A FULL PLANNING APPLICATION FOR:

THE ERECTION OF TWO USE CLASS B8 FLOORSPACE UNITS (WITH ANCILLARY OFFICE FLOORSPACE (USE CLASS E(G(I))) WITH ASSOCIATED INFRASTRUCTURE INCLUDING: A BUILDING FOR THE USE AS AN ENERGY CENTRE (DETAILS OF THE ENERGY GENERATION RESERVED FOR FUTURE APPROVAL); LOADING BAYS; SERVICE YARDS; EXTERNAL PLANT; BIN STORES, VEHICLE PARKING (HGV, LORRY, CAR AND MOTORCYCLE); CYCLE PARKING, AMENITY AREAS, LANDSCAPING INCLUDING PERMANENT LANDSCAPED MOUNDS; SUSTAINABLE DRAINAGE DETAILS. DEMOLITION OF THREE VACANT AGRICULTURAL BUILDINGS (AND TWO SMALLER STRUCTURES) TO THE NORTH EAST CORNER OF THE SITE. ACCESS FROM THE EXISTING SYMMETRY PARK ESTATE ROAD.

ON

LAND AT SYMMETRY PARK, BICESTER PHASE 3

APPLICANT:

TRITAX SYMMETRY BICESTER 3

NOVEMBER 2024

LS/JB/10689

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 This Planning Statement is prepared on behalf of Tritax Symmetry Bicester 3 Ltd (the Applicant) (the client is referred to as Tritax Big Box Developments (TBBD) in the planning application submissions) in support of a full planning application for a logistics development on the land adjacent to Symmetry Park, Bicester Phases 1 and 2.

1.2 The application Site lies within the administrative boundary of Cherwell District Council (CDC) and extends to 7.34 ha and has a total gross developable area of 6.68 ha. The Site boundary is edged in red on the Site Location Plan (drawing reference 4036-X3-101-PL01).

1.3 The purpose of this Planning Statement, as an overarching document, is to explain the planning background of the proposals for the Local Planning Authority (LPA) and the surrounding community, and to consider the national, and local planning policy framework within which the application will be assessed. The description of development is as follows:

“The erection of two Use Class B8 floorspace units (with ancillary office floorspace (Use Class Eg) (i)) with associated infrastructure including: a building for the use as an energy centre (details of the energy generation reserved for future approval); loading bays; service yards; external plant; bin stores, vehicle parking (HGV, lorry, car and motorcycle); cycle parking, amenity areas, landscaping including permanent landscaped mounds; sustainable drainage details. Demolition of three vacant agricultural buildings (and two smaller structures) to the north east corner of the Site. Access from the existing Symmetry Park estate road.”

1.4 The Site is a proposed allocation for employment development in the Cherwell Local Plan Review 2042 (Regulation 19) Proposed Submission Plan, which was published on 4th November 2024, and is due to go out for public consultation in December 2024. The Site is allocated for employment as an extension to the successful Symmetry Park Phases 1 and 2. The allocation is for employment uses E(g)(i)/(ii)/(iii)/B2/B8 floorspace (Policy Reference BIC 5).

1.5 The following is submitted as part of the planning application:

- Application Drawings
- Planning Statement and Alternative Sites Assessment

- Statement of Community Involvement
- Design and Access Statement
- Health Impact Assessment
- Arboricultural Impact Assessment
- Agricultural Quality Report
- Sustainability Statement
- Flood Risk Assessment
- Drainage Strategy Report inc. Foul and SuDS Strategy
- Economic Benefits Assessment
- Transport Assessment
- Framework Travel Plan
- Air Quality Assessment
- Landscape and Visual Appraisal
- Ecology Appraisal (inc. Biodiversity Net Gain Metric)
- Archaeological and Heritage Assessment
- Written Scheme of Investigation
- Noise Impact Assessment
- Waste Management and Servicing Strategy
- Construction Environmental Management Plan
- Phase 1 Desk Study (Contaminated Land)

- 1.6 A Screening opinion (ref. 24/01433/SO) was obtained from the Council (Cherwell District Council (CDC) who confirmed on 1 July 2024 that due to the scale of development, the Site characteristics, its location and context and the nature of the development, that this proposal does not require the submission of an Environmental Impact Assessment.

2.0 THE SITE AND ITS CONTEXT

- 2.1 The Site extends to 7.34 ha and is shown on the Proposed Site Layout Drawing number 4036-X3-SK030 PLO1.
- 2.2 The Site extends to the north of the A41 to the south east of Bicester Town and is currently in agricultural use. The Site's western boundary is contiguous with the Symmetry Park, Bicester employment Site which, forms part of the wider South East Bicester allocated mixed-use site included in Cherwell's Local Plan, Planning Policy Bicester 12 (Wretchwick Green).
- 2.3 The wider Wretchwick Green development is located beyond Symmetry Park to the north-west of the application Site. Wretchwick Green has a Local Plan allocation for a mixed-use development and outline planning permission with all matters reserved apart from access for residential development including up to 1,500 dwellings, up to 7ha of employment land for B1 and/ or B8 uses, a local centre with retail and community use to include A1 and/ or A2 and/ or A3 and/ or A4 and/ or A5 and/ or D1 and/ or D2 and/ or B1, up to a 3 Form Entry Primary School, drainage works including engineering operations to re-profile the land and primary access points from the A41 and A4421, pedestrian and cycle access, circulation routes, related highway works; car parking; public open space and green infrastructure and sustainable drainage systems (ref. 16/01268/OUT) approved on 20 May 2022.
- 2.4 Adjacent to the site to the south is the A41. To the east of the Site is agricultural land and a number of small businesses, in particular Bicester Caravan and Leisure and L C Hughes Metal Recycling & Car Breakers which are both adjacent to the Site. There are also two dwellings, 'The Bungalow' and 'Windmill Cottage' located to the east. To the north of the Site is currently agricultural land, which is allocated as housing in the adopted Cherwell Local Plan (Policy Bicester 12 South East Bicester).
- 2.5 There are three vacant agricultural buildings and two smaller ancillary structures in the north-east corner of the Site.
- 2.6 The Site is relatively flat and is not subject to any landscape designations. The landscape character area falls within the 'The Character of England: Landscape, Wildlife and Natural Features' (Natural England) and the National Character Area (NCA) Profile 108 Upper Thames Clay Vales.

- 2.7 The nearest statutory ecological designated site is Arncott Bridge Meadows Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) located just over 2.5km to the south east of the Site. There are 6 Local Wildlife Sites (LWS) and a single Woodland Trust Reserve (WTR) within 2km of the Site. The nearest non-statutory designated wildlife site, Meadows NW of Blackthorn Hill Local Wildlife Site, is approximately 500m to the north. The River Ray Conservation Target Area is also located to the north.
- 2.8 There are two sites of geological interest, Stratton Audley Quarries, c4.0km north and Long Herdon Meadow, 5km east of the Site adjacent to the River Ray.
- 2.9 There are no designated heritage assets within the Site. Within 0.5km of the Site there are the following heritage assets:
- The scheduled monument of Wretchwick deserted medieval village 0.5km to the northwest of the Site;
 - Two Grade II listed buildings at Wretchwick Farm 100m to the southwest of the Site and on the opposite side of the A41;
 - Two Grade II listed buildings, Wretchwick Lodge 0.7km to the west of the Site; and
 - Blackthorn Hill windmill 1.1km to the south east.
- 2.10 The Site lies wholly in Flood Zone 1, where the risk of rivers that are included on the Environment Agency (EA) Flood Map for Planning flooding is less than 0.1% in any given year. There is also no risk of flooding from reservoirs. The western part of the Site is shown to be at risk of surface water flooding according to EA mapping, ranging from low to high. This risk originates from a small Ordinary Watercourse (known as Wretchwick Brook). It is unlikely that the Proposed Development will give rise to any significant environmental effects in respect of flooding as the FRA will ensure that there are no detrimental impacts to flood risk off site.
- 2.11 The Site has a Grade 3A/3B Agricultural Land Classification which relates to good to moderate quality land with some limitations that restrict the range of crops, and/or level of yield.
- 2.12 The Site does not lie within an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA). The nearest AQMA is located along Bicester Road near to the centre of Bicester.

- 2.13 Access to the Site will be provided by the existing Symmetry Park Road network which will link the Site with the A41.
- 2.14 As set out above, the majority of the existing Symmetry Park site (which the Site is immediately adjacent to) is located in an area allocated for development in the adopted Cherwell Local Plan 2011-2031 (adopted 2015) as a strategic allocation for employment development: Planning Policy Bicester 12: South East Bicester.
- 2.15 The site itself is a proposed allocation in the Cherwell Local Plan Review 2042 (Regulation 19) Proposed Submission Plan, which was published on 4th November 2024, as an employment site, as an extension to the existing Symmetry Park at Bicester. The draft allocation is for employment uses E(g)(i)/(ii)/(iii)/B2/B8 floorspace (Site Reference BIC 5).
- 2.16 Symmetry Park, Bicester was originally granted outline planning permission in 2016 (16/00861/HYBRID) for B8 uses. A summary of the relevant planning history is set out at **Appendix 1**. To note, all units are fully built and occupied.

3.0 THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

3.1 The Proposed Development consists of the construction of two units and associated infrastructure on the land adjacent to Symmetry Park, Bicester Phases 1 and 2. The total floor area proposed consists of 25,856 sqm (GEA) of logistics floor space (Use Class B8), with ancillary office space (Use Class E (g)(i)).

3.2 Each unit has the following floorspace:

- Unit E / 06: 14,836sqm (GEA) of logistics floor space (Use Class B8) which includes (GIA) ancillary office space (Use Class E (g)(i));
- Unit F / 07: 11,020 sqm (GEA) of logistics floor space (Use Class B8) which includes ancillary office space (Use Class E (g)(i)).
- Total: 25,856 (GEA)

3.3 Vehicular, pedestrian and cycle access to both units will be off the internal estate road. An emergency access will be created on the eastern boundary.

3.4 The following table schedules the proposed car/HGV and cycle parking provision.

	Car	HGV	Van	Motorcycle / PTW	Cycle
Unit E	97 (if which 6% spaces are disabled spaces and 25% are EV Car spaces)	34 (does not include loading dock spaces)	4	7	85
Unit F	72 (if which 6% are disabled spaces and 25% are EV Car spaces)	19 (does not include loading dock spaces)	5	6	71

- 3.5 A drainage strategy report accompanies this planning application. Surface water discharge will be addressed via below-ground attenuation, connected to an existing watercourse.
- 3.6 The Proposed Development accords with 'Secure by Design' and incorporates security measures to protect the buildings and staff from criminal behaviour. A 2.4m high security fence, with anti-climb mesh will be installed around the service yards. CCTV will be installed around the warehouse and plot and will provide 24-hour monitoring.
- 3.7 The proposed landscape strategy for the Site aims to soften and filter views of the Proposed Development and to enhance the Site's biodiversity value. Landscape buffers are proposed to the southern, eastern and northern boundaries. Overall, the long-term landscape will further assimilate the Proposed Development into the existing landscape.
- 3.8 The ecological value of the Site will be enhanced through the proposed landscape strategy. Additional landscape areas within the Site will include species rich meadow grass within open areas to improve access for nectar and pollen feeding insects, and wet areas to enhance local amphibian habitats within the Site.
- 3.9 The appearance of the buildings will follow the Tritax Big Box Developments livery and will complement the units already constructed, creating an integrated and attractive logistics park.
- 3.10 The Applicant will provide PVs equivalent to a total 660 kWp of the useable roof area (across the two units). However, planning permission is sought for a PV array extending to 100% across the useable roof area (i.e. the omission of space taken by roof lights; man-safe working and the roof signage). This level of PVs may be installed by the applicant subject to individual occupier requirements for additional power or a technical ability and viability in the exportation of electricity generated by the PV array into the national grid.

4.0 PRE-APPLICATION DISCUSSIONS AND PUBLIC CONSULTATION

4.1 As set out above, a screening opinion (ref. 24/01433/SO) was obtained from the Council (Cherwell District Council (CDC) who confirmed on 1 July 2024 that due to the scale of development, the Site characteristics, its location and context and the nature of the development, that this proposal does not require the submission of an Environmental Impact Assessment.

4.2 With regards to public consultation, the engagement strategy included a virtual exhibition. The consultation material was uploaded onto the Frampton Town Planning website to allow access for the community.

4.3 Invitations were sent to Parish Councils and Ward members to meet and discuss the proposals.

4.4 A Statement of Community Involvement is submitted as part of the planning application. This summarises the responses collected and the applicant's responses to the comments raised. In summary, the comments raised related to:

- Traffic impact;
- Impact on utilities;
- Loss of agricultural Land;
- That PVs should cover the entire roof;
- Water on the site should be collected and retained on site;
- Site access off A41 not adequate.

5.0 PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

5.1 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (as amended) requires the determination of Planning Applications to be made in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

5.2 The Development Plan comprises the:

- Adopted Cherwell Local Plan 2011-2031 (Part 1 (adopted 2015));
- ‘Saved’ policies Local Plan 1996 (November 1996);
- Cherwell Local Plan 2011-2031 (Part 1) Partial Review – Oxford’s Unmet Housing Need September 2020, and
- Oxfordshire Minerals and Waste Plan (Part 1- Core Strategy) September 2017.

5.3 The relevant planning policies of Cherwell District Council’s (CDC) development plan are set out below:

Adopted Cherwell Local Plan 2011-2031 (Part 1) (CLP)

- Policy ESD1 – Mitigating and Adapting to Climate Change
- Policy ESD2 – Energy Hierarchy and Allowable Solutions
- Policy ESD3 – Sustainable Construction
- Policy ESD4 – Decentralised Energy Systems
- Policy ESD6 – Sustainable Flood Risk Management
- Policy ESD7 – Sustainable Drainage Systems
- Policy ESD10 – Biodiversity and the Natural Environment
- Policy ESD11 – Conservation Area Targets
- Policy ESD13 – Local Landscape Protection and Enhancement

- Policy ESD15 – Character of the Built Environment
- Policy ESD17 – Green Infrastructure
- Policy INF1 - Infrastructure
- Policy PSD1 – Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development
- Policy SLE1 – Employment Development
- Policy Bicester 12 - South East Bicester

5.4 ‘Saved’ policies from the adopted Local Plan 1996 (November 1996) (LP)

- Policy C8 – Sporadic Development in the Countryside
- Policy C28 – Layout, Design, and External Appearance of New Development
- Policy ENV1 – Development Likely to Cause Detrimental Levels of Pollution
- Policy TR1 - Transportation
- Policy TR10 – Heavy Goods Vehicles

5.5 Development plans contain broad statements of policy, many of which may be mutually unreconcilable. It is hence important when considering the merits of a particular Planning Application to establish whether there is ‘dominant’ policy whose provisions are most relevant to the proposals. Policy SLE1 ‘Employment Development’ is the most relevant policy consideration.

5.6 Policy SLE1 comprises two parts, namely; the protection of existing employment sites and the focus of employment development within the built-up areas of Bicester, Banbury and Kidlington and on strategic allocations included within the CLP; and the circumstances where ‘new employment proposals’ on non-allocated rural sites will be supported.

5.7 As the Application Site is not allocated in the CLP and is located within the countryside, the Proposed Development falls within the second part of the policy. Fundamental to the support for employment developments on non-allocated rural sites are the following:

- The need to demonstrate ‘exceptional circumstances’;

- The requirement to demonstrate through a robust site assessment that the Proposed Development cannot be accommodated on land:
 - i. Committed for employment development;
 - ii. Allocated for employment development, and
 - iii. Within or adjoining Category A Villages.

5.8 Thereafter Policy SLE1 sets out criteria for assessing employment proposals on unallocated sites in the rural area, as follows:

'They will be outside the Green Belt, unless very special circumstances can be demonstrated; (Bullet Point 1)';

Sufficient justification is provided to demonstrate why the development should be allocated in the rural area on a non-allocated site; (Bullet Point 2);

They will be designed to a very high-quality standards using sustainable construction, and be of an appropriate scale and respect the character of the villages and the surroundings; (Bullet Point 3);

They will be small scale unless it can be demonstrated that there will be no significant adverse impact on the character of a village or surrounding environment. (Bullet Point 4);

The proposal and any associated employment activities can be carried out without undue detriment to residential amenity, the highway network, village character and its setting, the appearance and character of the landscape and the environment generally including on any designated buildings or features (or on non-designated buildings) or features of local importance; (Bullet Point 5);

The proposal will not give rise to excessive or inappropriate traffic and will wherever possible contribute to the general aim of reducing the need to travel by car; (Bullet Point 6), and

There are no suitable available plots or premises within existing nearby employment sites in the rural area. (Bullet Point 7).

5.9 A summary of the other relevant policies in the CDC Development Plan are summarised in **Appendix 2**.

Other Material Considerations

5.10 Other material considerations include:

- National Planning Policy Framework;
- Consultation draft of National Planning Policy Framework (2024);
- National Planning Practice Guidance;
- The Government's Green Paper 'Invest 2035: The UK's Modern Industrial Strategy' November 2024;
- National Design Guide;
- The National Infrastructure Commission;
- Written Statement to Parliament 'Planning Reforms for Lorry Parking';
- Local Industrial Strategy OXLEP (August 2020),
- Emerging Development Plan Policy (and evidence base).

5.11 A summary of the other material considerations is provided in **Appendix 2**.

6.0 PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS - POLICY SLE1

Local Plan Policy SLE1

- 6.1 This section considers the principle of the development against Policy SLE1. Section 7 then goes on to consider the proposals against the other relevant policies in the development plan.
- 6.2 Policy SLE1 is considered to be the most important policy provision for the determination of the application. Therefore, this section of the planning statement sets out below an analysis of compliance with Policy SLE1.

Exceptional Circumstances

- 6.3 SLE1 states: “Unless exceptional circumstances are demonstrated, employment development in the rural areas should be located within or on the edge of those villages in Category A (see Policy Villages 1)”
- 6.4 The policy does envisage the possibility of exceptional circumstances requiring new employment land to be released. The policy test is therefore for the Applicant to show exceptional circumstances to justify in principle the need for new employment development on unallocated land. Therefore, set out below are the exceptional circumstances for accommodating this development including: the Government’s number one mission of ‘growth’; the urgent need for more land to accommodate logistics floorspace; the draft allocation of the Site for employment uses (Use Class B2 and B8), and the economic benefits of the scheme.

Policy Recognition of Need for Logistics Floorspace

- 6.5 Firstly, the need argument is demonstrated by reference to recent National, Regional and Local policy, for example as demonstrated in the: NPPF (2023) and, the Government’s new consultation version of the NPPF; NPPG; the Governments recently published Green paper ‘Invest 2035: the UK’s Modern Industrial Strategy’ (November 2024); the National Infrastructure Commission; the planning reforms for lorry parking; Oxfordshire Growth Needs Assessment 2021 (OGNA); Local Industrial Strategy 2020 (OXLEP); the evidence base in the emerging Local Plan.
- 6.6 There is a policy recognition of the need for logistics floorspace, with national policy in particular recognising the need for resilience of global supply chains due to the changed circumstances from Covid-19, the UK’s changes in trade relationships, and the urgency of the need to promote jobs. There

is an urgent need for more land for logistics in the interests of UK and regional growth policy, and there is an evidenced local need.

National Policy

- 6.7 In the Government's recent consultation 'Invest 2035: the UK's Modern Industrial Strategy' (November 2024) Rachel Reeves, Chancellor of the Exchequer and Jonathan Reynolds, Secretary of State for Business and Trade, states

"Growth is the number one mission of this government. Our new industrial strategy is central to that growth mission"

- 6.8 The Government's headline policy is 'supercharging economic growth', logistics is a key sector in achieving this mission as it is a foundation on which all other sectors depend. The provision of adequate logistics facilities is essential to powering economic growth, enhancing productivity and supporting the Government to deliver its vision for growth. To actually realise this growth, sustainable sites must come forward now.

- 6.9 The green paper states that the government's growth mission will lead the way in delivering growth for all and acknowledged that reforms are already underway to address planning barriers to growth.

- 6.10 The current NPPF (2023) states:

"Planning policies and decisions should help create the conditions in which businesses can invest, expand and adapt. Significant weight should be placed on the need to support economic growth and productivity, taking into account both local business needs and wider opportunities for development. (Paragraph 85)

*Planning policies and decisions should recognise and address the specific locational requirements of different sectors. This includes making provision for clusters or networks of knowledge and data-driven, creative or high technology industries; **and for storage and distribution operations** at a variety of scales and in suitably accessible locations." (Paragraph 87) [emphasis added]*

- 6.11 Furthermore, the economic objectives of sustainable development in (NPPF paragraph 8) states that the planning system needs to be responsive by ensuring sufficient land of the right types is available in the right places and at the right time to support growth, innovation and improve productivity. The

Cherwell Local Plan (2015), based on evidence dated earlier than 2015, has not accounted for the changed economic circumstances set out above, and has not accounted for the need for logistics development. The NPPG's (2019) fundamental provision of the acknowledgement of the needs of the logistics industry, of which paragraph: 031 Reference ID: 2a-031-20190722 (Revision date: 22 07 2019) states that:

“The logistics industry plays a critical role in enabling an efficient, sustainable and effective supply of goods for consumers and businesses, as well as contributing to local employment opportunities, and has distinct locational requirements that need to be considered in formulating planning policies (separately from those relating to general industrial land).”

6.12 The current Local Plan review is proceeding too slowly to respond to satisfy the current existing need for logistics floorspace. Although the Local Plan review includes the site as a draft allocation for employment uses, the progress of the emerging Local Plan review is too sluggish and is unlikely to be adopted until 10-11 years after adoption of the current adopted Local Plan (adopted in 2015). It is therefore essential to grant the proposals planning permission now i.e. in advance of the Local Plan Review to meet need and as a result of doing so respond to the Government's number one mission for growth.

6.13 As of the date of this application, there are proposed reforms to the NPPF, presented by the newly elected Labour Government, the overarching theme of the reforms to the NPPF is again to reinvigorate sustained economic growth. The new Labour government is also driving a renewed focus on economic growth through revisions to the NPPF.

6.14 The revised draft NPPF (2024) states:

*“Planning policies should set criteria, or and identify strategic sites, for local and inward investment to match the strategy and to meet anticipated needs over the plan period. **Appropriate sites for commercial development which meet the needs of a modern economy should be identified, including suitable locations for uses such as laboratories, gigafactories, data centres, digital infrastructure, freight and logistics.**”* (Paragraph 84) [emphasis added to show draft added text].

6.15 The revised draft NPPF (2024) goes on to state:

*“Planning policies and decisions should recognise and address the specific locational requirements of different sectors. This includes making provision for;... b) **storage and distribution operations at a variety of scales and in suitably accessible locations, that allow for the efficient and reliable handling of goods, especially where this is needed to support the supply chain, transport innovation and decarbonisation,** and; c) the expansion or modernisation of other industries of local, regional or national importance to support economic growth and resilience.”* (Paragraph 85) (emphasis added to show draft added text).

- 6.16 Therefore, at paragraph 85, the onus is placed on Local Authorities to make sure that, through both planning policies and decisions, provision is made for storage and distribution.
- 6.17 There is an urgent need for more land for logistics in the interests of UK and regional growth policy. The CV19 health pandemic led to structural changes within the logistics sector in significant ways, including the dramatic shift in retail/purchasing away from ‘store attendance’ to online transactions. Other changes in the logistics sector include the realisation that global supply chains lack resilience in the certainty of supply and in timescales for the delivery of goods. The UK’s changed trading relationships, global conflicts and natural disasters have consequences for reliability of supply chains. As a consequence, logistics companies supplying goods to UK manufacturers require greater levels of stock holding within the UK.
- 6.18 The logistic sector contributes £232 billion of GVA a year to the economy and supports 2.7 million jobs.
- 6.19 The sector generates significant economic benefits supporting increasing numbers of high-quality jobs across the English regions. A thriving industrial and logistics sector is therefore critical to the Government delivering on its ambitions for growth.

Local Plan

- 6.20 At the local level, the adopted Local Plan (2015) (page 10) states that: *“securing the economic future of the District is the main priority of this Plan”*. Remaining economically competitive is a critical challenge facing the District over the next two decades (Local Plan paragraph 1.6).
- 6.21 The industrial and logistics sector will be instrumental in the growth of the UK. Logistics is an important part of Cherwell’s economy as a business sector in its own right and as an enabler to the success of

other businesses. Growth will not be possible without suitable strategic employment sites, such as the Application Site, to accommodate the necessary growth.

6.22 The adopted Local Plan (2015) also recognises that there is insufficient diversity within the local economy, an overdependence on a declining number of manufacturing jobs and a need to respond to a growing and ageing population. The Local Plan's Strategic Objectives therefore include:

- *'SO 1 To facilitate economic growth and employment and a more diverse local economy with an emphasis on attracting and developing higher technology industries ...*
- *SO 3 To help disadvantaged areas, support an increase in skills and innovation, improve the built environment and make Cherwell more attractive to business by supporting regeneration.'*

6.23 Paragraph B.32 of the adopted Local Plan states that: *"We will support the logistics sector, recognising the jobs it provides and the good transport links that attracts this sector"*.

6.24 The need for the logistics use is recognised and demonstrated by the draft allocation of the site in the Cherwell Local Plan Review 2042 (Regulation 19) Proposed Submission Plan, which was published on 4th November 2024, and is due to go out for public consultation in December 2024. The Site is identified as a draft employment site allocation (for employment uses E(g)(i)/(ii)/(iii)/B2/B8 floorspace) as an extension to the approved Symmetry Park (on which there has been a rapid uptake of units).

6.25 The Proposed Submission Plan, paragraphs 3.152 to 3.153 states:

"Our employment needs evidence indicates a need for around 250 hectares of employment land in Cherwell over the period 2021 to 2040. This assessment considered the delivery of employment land, but whilst recognising the potential contribution that existing allocated sites would make, did not factor this potential supply into an adjusted need figure. We have extrapolated this calculation of need to cover the additional two years that the Local Plan now covers so that the total employment need for the district is around 280 hectares to 2042.

6.26 *Our last local plan identified a significant amount of employment land and whilst much of this has been developed there still remains substantial areas of land available for development. Allocations from the 2015 Local Plan, referred at the time of the 2021 Economic Needs Assessment, which had yet to deliver*

*at that point would make a contribution of 160.4 hectares against the need total. The table below shows the updated information relating to delivery of those sites. In addition, we will need to take account of other permissions in place and development that has been completed on unallocated sites since the start of the plan. We have completed an Employment Land Review (October 2022) **and we have a number of additional potential employment sites across the District to inform the allocation of sites referred below We have proposed the allocation of 97.5 hectares of land on new sites.***

6.27 The emerging Local Plan therefore acknowledges the need for more employment floorspace (albeit we consider the Council has underestimated need and overestimated supply).

6.28 Paragraphs 5.13 of the Submission Draft (Regulation 19) states:

*“We have generally been successful in delivering our objectives from 2015. A significant proportion of the **allocated** employment land has now been developed and there continues to be **strong** interest for employment land at Bicester. **Our updated employment evidence identifies that Bicester is the most suitable location for accommodating identified employment needs to 2042 and we propose to continue to focus new sites here, including providing a high quality employment corridor into the town along the A41.....**”*

Economic Benefits of the Scheme

6.29 This proposal brings with it significant economic benefits. The Applicant has assessed the economic benefits of the Proposed Development and has provided an Economic Benefits Assessment to accompany this proposal.

6.30 In the report, estimates are given to the number of jobs and gross value added (GVA) which could be generated by the Proposed Development.

6.31 It is estimated that the construction phase will generate around 80 onsite construction job years over the duration of the construction process (assuming a 2-year construction period, this equates to an average of 35 gross construction jobs per annum).

6.32 Post-construction, the Proposed Development is anticipated to generate around 300 Full-Time Equivalent (FTE) net additional onsite and offsite jobs in Cherwell.

6.33 Finally, the on-site operational phase jobs are expected to add around £11 million in GVA to the local economy per annum. The proposals, once complete, will also generate Business Rates.

Conclusions

6.34 The Proposed Development addresses a specific need for logistics floorspace and will help build a strong and competitive economy. The development will create a significant number of jobs across a wide range of skill sets.

6.35 The Proposed Development will provide high quality logistics floorspace in a highly accessible location accessible to the strategic road network. The Proposed Development is ideally placed to address the growing need for logistics floorspace.

6.36 Tritax Big Box Developments has an exemplary track record of successful logistics and warehouse development in Cherwell, for example in Banbury and Bicester, and further afield. The scheme is brought forward as a direct response to the strong market demand for logistics floorspace, which has been reflected by the rapid uptake of units on the completed adjacent Symmetry Park.

6.37 The substantial and growing need for logistics floorspace is a significant material consideration in the decision-making process.

6.38 The NPPF states that significant weight should be placed on supporting economic growth and recognises the specific locational requirements of the logistics sector. The Proposed Development aligns with this. The decision-making framework is therefore in favour of development of the type proposed, and the wide-ranging benefits arising from the Proposed Development represent significant material considerations that weigh in favour of the proposals.

6.39 The industrial and logistics sector will be instrumental in the economic growth of the UK, which is the Government's number one mission.

6.40 Logistics is also an important part of Cherwell's economy as a business sector in its own right and as an enabler to the success of other businesses. This will not be possible without suitable employment sites, such as the Application Site, to accommodate the necessary growth.

- 6.41 The Proposed Development will help address the need for high-quality logistics floorspace. Without the Application Site, the supply imbalance will worsen and contribute to the already high levels of unsatisfied need in Cherwell and the wider region.
- 6.42 The fact that there are no currently available, suitable allocated or committed sites available that meet this investment requirement is in itself a crucial consideration in establishing 'exceptional circumstances'.
- 6.43 The phrase 'exceptional circumstances' should be given its ordinary meaning within the proper context and means 'much greater than usual'. The development plan anticipated that employment development needs would ordinarily be met on allocated or committed sites but has acknowledged that 'exceptional circumstances' may exist justifying in principle the provision of employment on an unallocated site, i.e., the development plan envisages that sites may come forward on unallocated sites in rural areas.
- 6.44 The development would build on existing local economic strengths in the logistics sectors, making a readily deliverable contribution to a strong and competitive economy, as already demonstrated by the success of the other logistics development, including at Symmetry Park which is fully occupied.
- 6.45 Rapid increase in the number of logistics businesses in this market has resulted in employment land being in particularly short supply. This need is demonstrated via the Site's draft allocation in the emerging Local Plan.
- 6.46 A substantial planning need exists for logistics development of the kind proposed in this application. The evident need for development of the type proposed carries substantial weight in the planning balance.
- 6.47 For the reasons set out above 'exceptional circumstances' have been demonstrated in compliance with Policy SLE1.

The Proposed Development would contribute substantially to the national policy imperative, expressed in paragraphs 85 and 86 of the NPPF 2023, to promote and support a strong competitive economy and support economic growth and productivity.

The overall suitability of the location for B8 uses

6.48 This section demonstrates the sequential test the applicant undertook to select this Site as the preferred location for this development.

6.49 Table 1 below identifies the allocated strategic scale (employment sites within the Cherwell Local Plan) sites analysed within the District. The suitability and availability of each of the strategic employment allocations to accommodate the proposals has been assessed in the comment column below. A more detailed assessment of each of the sites is contained in **Appendix 3**.

Table 1: Cherwell Local Plan 2011-2031 – Allocated Strategic Employment Sites

Policy	Site	Comment
Bicester (BIC1)	Bicester Planning Policy North West Bicester Eco-Town	Marketing name: Axis 9, Bicester Developer: Albion Land Site area:10ha. The site is fully developed and let. There is no available land on this site.
Bicester (BIC2)	Graven Hill	The employment land extends to 26ha. There has been no marketing information produced to advertise any future development in the near term and it is understood that there are no current development plans in the near term and is not currently available.
Bicester (BIC4)	Bicester Business Park / Bicester Arc	Site Area: 29.5ha. No available supply for B8. Now known as Bicester Office Park. The site is allocated for offices and therefore not allocated for B8 uses. The planning permission ref. 17/02534/OUT has secured 13.ha for development for B1a (offices) (now Use Class Eg)ii)iii)). However, subsequent discharging of condition permission ref. 24/00030/DISC confirms that a further 4ha of this has been used for landscape and ecological management to the east of the built form. Further to this, permission ref. 12/01193/F confirms that the circa 6.3ha parcel in the northwest corner of the

		<p>allocation has been developed for Tesco superstore. Finally, permission ref. 15/00082/F confirms that the circa 3ha parcel in the northeast corner is a balancing pond, serving the Bicester Village development north of the site.</p> <p>Therefore, of the Bicester 4 allocation, just 0.9ha remains in the southwest corner of the site. This is not large enough to accommodate this proposal.</p>
Bicester (BIC10)	Bicester Gateway/Catalyst Bicester	<p>The site area is 18ha.</p> <p>Use class B1 Business Uses. High tech knowledge industries.</p> <p>No available supply of B8 space.</p> <p>The site is already majority developed by Albion Land.</p>
Bicester (BIC11)	Employment Land at North east Bicester	The site is known as Link 9 and is fully built out with no available allocated employment land.
Bicester (BIC12)	South East Bicester	23.15ha of employment land - 6.66ha available as part of the consented Wretchwick Green site and 16.49ha that forms the Symmetry Park logistics park. Symmetry Park has now all been built out. The remaining employment undeveloped land within Wretchwick Green, comprises 7 ha consented B1 (now Use Class Eg)i)ii)iii) or B8 land (ref. 16/01268/OUT) approved on 20 May 2022. The approved parameter plans shows this employment land being accessed via a new road off the A41 which then goes through residential land which would not be ideal for the B8 uses proposed. There is also no confirmation/indication of the timing of the delivery of this scheme.
Banbury (BAN6)	Banbury 6: Employment Land West of the M40	Also known as CM40, the employment land has now been fully built out and let to occupiers including Pro Drive and Arrival. The remaining 10.3ha of undeveloped land within the allocation is located within Flood Zone 3b where development is precluded. This land has been reserved for biodiversity mitigation for the adjoining development located within South Northamptonshire Council.
Banbury (BAN15)	Employment Land North East of Junction 11	This strategic site to the east of the M40, extends to 13ha and is allocated for mixed employment use. Planning permission was approved in July 2020 for commercial development (19/00128/HYBRID) for up to 33,110sqm of flexible Use Class B2, B8 and ancillary office (Full for up to 2 units) and up to 16,890qm of flexible Use Class B2, B8 and ancillary B1 office (Outline Planning Permission for up to 2 units).

		3 units have now been completed (1 let, and strong interest on the remaining units of 217,000 sq ft and 180,000 sq ft which are both larger than the units proposed and cater for a Banbury rather than Bicester market). There is no available remaining land.
Villages 5	Former RAF Upper Heyford	<p>Employment on the allocation will be provided by the retention of the existing buildings already in commercial use. These include buildings on the historic airfield that lies within a Conservation Area and would not be appropriate for re-use/demolition for the proposals in addition to being too small to accommodate the proposals.</p> <p>The allocation includes a further 13.4ha of employment land.</p> <p>New large B8 proposals would not be considered compatible with Heritage/Conservation Area.</p>

6.50 The analysis above reveals that allocated employment sites of a strategic scale are too small, not suitable or not available and there no other sites committed for employment within Banbury, Bicester or Kidlington that can accommodate the Proposed Development’s requirements.

SLE1 – Employment

6.51 The operation of Policy SLE1 now requires consideration of the Proposed Development against the other criteria set out within the policy. The criteria are broad and overlap with other planning policies in the development plan, and these are assessed in the next section.

Policy SLE1: They (employment sites) will be outside the Green Belt, unless very special circumstances can be demonstrated. (Bullet Point 1)

6.52 The Proposed Development is outside of the Oxfordshire Green Belt.

6.53 The Proposed Development complies with Bullet Point 1.

Policy SLE1: Sufficient justification is provided to demonstrate why the development should be located in the rural area on a non-allocated site (Bullet Point 2): and,

Policy SLE1: There are no suitable available plots or premises within existing nearby employment sites in the rural area. (Bullet Point 7)

- 6.54 The site search assessment has demonstrated that there are no available or suitable sites that are committed for employment development in the Cherwell Local Plan. The need for the development, as set out above, also justifies why the development should be located on a non-allocated site.
- 6.55 The Proposed Development will be highly accessible to the strategic road network, which is a fundamental requirement of logistics operators. The Site is located immediately adjacent to A41 allow for fast and easy access to Bicester, and the wider strategic road network. The development would utilise the existing site infrastructure in place at earlier phases of Symmetry Park, and is promoted by a developer with available funding to deliver the scheme, such that the development can come forward quickly, therefore meeting the Government’s growth agenda.
- 6.56 The Proposed Development complies with bullet points 2 and 7.

Policy SLE1: They will be designed to a very high-quality standards using sustainable construction, and be of an appropriate scale and respect the character of the villages and the surroundings (Bullet Point 3)

Designed to Very High-Quality Standards Using Sustainable Construction

- 6.57 To mitigate for the anticipated operational energy related emissions, the Proposed Development will use the ‘energy hierarchy’ to reduce carbon emissions. The operational energy usage will be reduced using passive measures included within the design of the development. These will reduce energy use and the associated CO₂ emissions and include U values which exceed Building Regulation requirements; engineered facade design; and reduced air permeability.
- 6.58 The next level in the energy hierarchy is to maximise energy efficiency. High efficiency systems, plant, controls and equipment will be incorporated into the development such as: energy efficient LED lighting; enhanced lighting controls - automatic presence detection will be included in appropriate areas of the building. This form of control will ensure lights are automatically switched off during periods of non-occupancy; optimised plant controls; variable speed drives will be installed on circulation pumps and ventilation fans to allow the speed of the respective motors to be amended by

the automatic controls to suit changing load of the building; and inclusion of heat recovery on ventilation systems. All buildings will target to a minimum BREEAM 'Very Good' standard.

6.59 The Proposed Development will be of a high quality and sustainable construction. At Group level, TBBD has in place a commitment that all new commercial buildings delivered by TBBD Symmetry will be designed and delivered in accordance with Net Zero Carbon in Construction principles.

6.60 The whole of the useable roof area is constructed to accept PV panels; however, the initial kWp output of PV provision will be a maximum of 660 kWp (in total across both units), based on standard assumptions of future occupiers. The initial base build PV coverage is generally sufficient to power the building. Occupiers can then add further PV panels to meet their specific needs. This helps to avoid manufacture of redundant units and allows the most efficient units available to be used when required. The roof structure of the unit has been designed to take further PVs in the future.

6.61 The submitted Travel Plan contains details of the measures that will be incorporated to promote sustainable travel. This will assist in reducing carbon emissions associated with operational transport. These measures include: promoting walking and cycling through the issuing of a map identifying pedestrian and cycle routes; locations of cycle shops and mobile cycle repairs will be promoted; providing information on cost, timetables and services available for public transport; and promotion of car-sharing schemes.

6.62 In summary, the sustainability credential of the proposed scheme can be summarised as follows:

- Net Zero Carbon in Construction;
- A day 1 provision of 660 kWp available roof coverage PV installation in total across both of the units;
- 25% Electric Vehicle Charging for car parking provided with infrastructure for 100% provision;
- On site cycle storage facilities;
- Minimum BREEAM Very Good certificate; and
- Biodiversity Net Gain.

Appropriate scale and respect the character of the villages and the surroundings

6.63 With regards to the proposal being of an appropriate scale and respect the character of villages and the surroundings, the Proposed Development is not within a village or rural settlement, it is adjacent to the existing Symmetry Park development. The Landscape Plan identifies substantial areas of soft landscaping and bunds. A landscape-led approach has been adopted to ensure that development is of a high-quality design and sensitive to its surrounding landscape.

6.64 The Proposed Development complies with bullet point 3.

Policy SLE1: They will be small scale unless it can be demonstrated that there will be no significant adverse impact on the character of a village or surrounding environment (Bullet Point 4).

6.65 The nearest local village in close proximity of the Site is Ambrosden, 0.5km south. The Heritage Assessment and Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment consider the impact the Proposed Development will have on the setting of Ambrosden (as well as Launton and Blackthorn). These assessments form a robust basis on which to assess how the Proposed Development will impact the character of this village.

6.66 In assessing the impact of the Proposed Development, the Landscape Visual Impact Assessment concludes that from most roads and footpaths, views towards the Site are filtered by intervening vegetation within a relatively flat landscape.

6.67 There are very few residential receptors in close proximity to the Site due to the dispersed settlement pattern in the rural landscape.

6.68 The Proposed Development is situated next to the A41 (south) and Symmetry Park (west). It is physically related to Symmetry Park and will be seen as part of the existing Symmetry Park development. The Proposed Development will not have any adverse impact on the character of any village. The submitted plans identify areas of soft landscaping including a large landscaping buffer to the east and southeast of the Site. The development is sensitive to its surrounding landscape. It is submitted that the individual identity and character of Ambrosden will be retained, there will be no significant adverse impact on the character of a village or surrounding environment.

6.69 The Proposed Development complies with bullet point 4.

Policy SLE1: The proposal and any associated employment activities can be carried out without undue detriment to residential amenity, the highway network, village character and its setting, the appearance and character of the landscape and the environment generally including on any designated buildings or features (or on non-designated building or features of local importance) (Bullet Point 5).

Residential Amenity

6.70 The nearest residential dwellings (sensitive receptors) that may be affected by the Proposed Development are located in Ambrosden and directly to the east of the Site. Directly to the northeast there is a scrapyards, however its receptor threshold is relatively low due to its own noise and lighting activity. The following elements have the potential to impact amenity and wellbeing of neighbours:

- Noise;
- Lighting; and
- Air Quality.

6.71 The Noise Impact Assessment assessed the potential noise generating activities of the proposal, including noise associated with traffic. It concluded that the proposal is expected to have a low impact on sensitive receptors and will and will not substantially alter the existing acoustic climate.

6.72 An Air Quality Assessment (AQA) accompanies the planning application. The AQA assesses potential air quality impacts during both the operational and construction phases of the development.

6.73 The potential for construction activities to cause nuisance from dust is considered to be not significant. This potential adverse impact can be mitigated by the implementation of a Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP).

6.74 The AQA submitted alongside this Application confirms that the emissions arising from the construction phase are considered to be 'negligible'.

6.75 The AQA has also considered the operational effects of the Proposed Development and found the effects to be 'not significant'.

6.76 In addition, the LVA confirms that the lighting strategy for the proposed development responds to the context of the Site by limiting light spill at the Site boundaries, particularly at the northern edge, where new landscape features will provide a transition to the wider rural context, and also to the south and east where the Site boundaries would be reinforced in order to maintain the character of the approach to Bicester on the A41. Thus, light spill beyond the Site boundaries is limited.

6.77 The nearest residential properties comprise dwellings located to the east of the Site. No other residential properties are located within close proximity of either Site. The Site Plan requires the provision for landscape screening along the boundaries. Any adverse impacts on development can be appropriately mitigated by following the standard mitigation methods employed by the previous phases.

The Highway Network

6.78 The Transport Assessment demonstrates that the Proposed Development can be carried out without undue detriment to the highway network. This is addressed further in the response to bullet point 6

Village Character and its Setting

6.79 This impact of the proposal on village character and setting is addressed above.

Appearance and character of the landscape and the environment generally including on any designated buildings or features

6.80 The Landscape and Visual Appraisal (LVA) concludes that, following the maturation of the landscape mitigation proposals, there are no anticipated material adverse effects upon landscape designations or the underlying landscape character, nor any material visual effects upon PRow, minor roads or residential receptors in the wider area. There may be some intervisibility experienced by some residents close to the Site to the east, but the existing nature of the landscape, and the use proposed, would serve to moderate any effect accordingly.

6.81 The LVA continues, stating that the loss of a single agricultural field parcel to facilitate the Proposed Development would create a localised effect. When this effect is considered with the local context, it would not constitute an unacceptable impact on landscape fabric or the wider character. Accordingly, whilst the Proposed Development would certainly yield change to the character of the Site itself, this

appraisal finds no reason why the change of land use should be found to be so harmful as to be unacceptable in terms of the effects on the landscape character and visual amenity.

Heritage

- 6.82 Policy ESD 15 of the CLP 2031 requires appropriate information and assessments to be included within the application submission, to enable an assessment to be made of the potential impact of a development upon them. Saved Policies C18 and C25 of the adopted CLP 2031 are also relevant in terms of seeking to protect the setting of listed buildings and scheduled ancient monuments.
- 6.83 As set out in the Archaeological and Heritage Assessment provided by EDP, archaeological remains of high significance that could preclude development are unlikely to be present at the Site. It is therefore considered that any further archaeological works can be reasonably secured by an appropriately worded planning condition. The location, timing and extent of any archaeological mitigation will be discussed and agreed with the Council's archaeologist.
- 6.84 In line with Historic England's Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning, Note 3, The Setting of Heritage Assets (HE, 2017), the Site has been identified to have no potential to change any aspect of the settings of surrounding heritage assets, resulting in an impact on their heritage significance. Designated heritage assets located beyond the Site boundary are therefore not considered to be sensitive to change from development within the Site.
- 6.85 No built heritage effects are anticipated at the operational stage and no further mitigation measures are required. The Proposed Development is therefore consistent with Section 16 of the NPPF and Policy ESD 15 of the CLP 2031, which requires development to conserve and sustain designated and non-designated Heritage assets.
- 6.86 The Proposed Development complies with bullet point 5.

Policy SLE1: The proposal will not give rise to excessive or inappropriate traffic and will wherever possible contribute to the general aim of reducing the need to travel by car (Bullet Point 6).

Transport

- 6.87 The planning application is accompanied by a Transport Assessment (TA). The trip generation and traffic impact analysis indicate that the development impact on the highway network against the previous consent is negative and hence detailed highway capacity analysis is not considered necessary.
- 6.88 The Proposed Development will provide a safe environment on footways and cycleways within the Site, with connections to the proposed pedestrian / cycle link along the A41.
- 6.89 As part of the proposals, a Travel Plan will seek to encourage employees to travel by alternatives to the private car, to facilitate travel by bus, and by cycling. In addition, there are a number of electric vehicle parking spaces proposed.
- 6.90 The Proposed Development complies with bullet point 6.

Conclusion

- 6.91 The proposed layout and design of the development together with the supporting technical and environmental reports that accompany this planning application demonstrate that the Proposed Development satisfies the 7 bullet point criteria included in Policy SLE1, namely:
- Bullet Point 1: The development is not located on land within the Green Belt.
 - Bullet Point 2: It has been robustly demonstrated that there are no suitable and available sites.
 - Bullet Point 3: The building will be built to a very high standard using sustainable construction (see the Design and Access Statement for further details).
 - Bullet Point 4: The scale of the development will have no significant impact on the character of nearby villages.
 - Bullet Point 5: The proposals will have no adverse impacts on the residential amenity of nearby villages; the local highway network; the character and appearance of the local villages and landscape, or any designated or non-designated heritages assets within 2km of the Site.

- Bullet Point 6: The development will not lead to excessive or inappropriate traffic.
- Bullet Point 7: There are no suitable plots or premises within existing nearby employment sites in the rural area.

6.92 The development plan anticipated that employment development needs would ordinarily be met on allocated or committed sites but has acknowledged that 'exceptional circumstances' may exist justifying in principle the provision of employment on an unallocated site, i.e., the development plan envisages that sites may come forward on unallocated sites in rural areas. As set out above exceptional circumstances have been demonstrated and the proposed employment proposal, which is within the rural area (albeit being adjacent to the existing Symmetry Park development) and is a non-allocated site (currently unallocated), is in compliance with SLE1 as it then meets the 7 bullet point criteria. Therefore, the proposals are in compliance with the development plan when considered as a whole.

7.0 ASSESSMENT OF THE PROPOSALS AGAINST OTHER DEVELOPMENT PLAN POLICY

7.1 The following section assesses the Proposed Development against other relevant planning policies (development plan and national policies).

Sustainable Design

7.2 Significant areas of soft landscaping will be provided around the perimeter of the Site, in particular on the eastern boundary. Existing perimeter hedgerows will be retained and enhanced where possible and vegetation strengthened along sensitive boundaries.

7.3 The Proposed Development, the detail of which will be confirmed at reserved matters stage, will be of a high-quality design and construction; and will be energy efficient and resilient to climate change.

7.4 The Proposed Development will deliver minimum BREEAM 'Very Good' standard in accordance with Policy ESD 3 of the Cherwell Local Plan.

7.5 A Sustainability Statement has been prepared to demonstrate how this could be achieved.

7.6 Policy ESD 2 sets an energy hierarchy in seeking to achieve carbon emission reductions. At the top of the energy hierarchy is the 'reducing energy use', in particular by the use of sustainable design and construction measures. Level 2 of the energy hierarchy and Policy ESD 4 seeks to supply energy efficiently and to give priority to decentralised energy supply.

7.7 The accompanying Sustainability Statement has assessed a range of renewable sources including District Heating, Combined Heat and Power and biomass fuelled Combined Heat and Power. The suitability of decentralised energy sources is dependent upon the building base load requirements for heat and power. The base load for the Proposed Development will not be sufficient to support decentralised energy systems.

7.8 Level 3 of the energy hierarchy and Policy ESD5 relates to 'making use of renewable energy'. An assessment of the potential to make use of renewable energy systems is included in the Sustainability Statement.

7.9 A summary of sustainability measures incorporated into the proposal which are relevant to energy sustainability is as follows:

- The buildings will be designed to deliver a minimum BREEAM Very Good rating.
- Target EPC A-rating.
- New commercial buildings delivered by TBBD Symmetry will be designed and delivered in accordance with Net Zero Carbon in Construction principles.
- The roof structure is designed to accommodate full future coverage of useable roof area.
- Incoming loads for gas, water and electricity optimised and reduced.
- Potential utilisation of larger percentage roof coverage of rooflights and intelligent lighting systems.
- Utilise off-site fabrication for major building components providing CO² savings.
- Reducing heat losses through low air infiltration rates over and above that required by Building Regulations.
- High efficiency heat recovery ventilation system.
- Specific Fan Powers (SFPs) compliant with Building Regulations.
- Open plan office areas have VRF heating and cooling systems benefiting from heat recovery.
- Use of solar shading to limit solar heat gains.
- Internal and external lighting will be LED and office lighting will benefit from the use of occupancy detection and daylight sensing thereby enhancing energy efficiency.

- Whole building power factor correction, greater than 0.95 is to be provided.
- Low water use taps and WC's will reduce demands for water.
- Electric charging points for electric and hybrid cars will be provided on site.

7.10 The Proposed Development will therefore comply with the NPPF and policies ESD 3 and ESD 15 of the Local Plan, which seek to ensure sustainable and high-quality design, and that development is resilient to the impacts of climate change.

Landscape and Visual Impact

7.11 Planning Policy ESD3 of the CLP 2031 (Part 1) requires development to respect and enhance the local landscape character, securing appropriate mitigation where damage to the local landscape cannot be avoided. Policy ESD 15 of the CLP 2031 (Part 1) requires development to contribute positively to areas character and identity including respecting local topography and landscape features and trees. Saved Policy C28 requires control to be exercised over the layout, appearance and design to be sensitive to areas such as Conservation Areas, the AONB and areas of high landscape value.

7.12 NPPF paragraph 135 requires planning policies and decisions to ensure developments are visually attractive as a result of good architecture, layout and appropriate and effective landscaping. Paragraph 180 requires planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by protecting and enhancing valued landscapes, sites of biodiversity or geological value and soils (in a manner commensurate with their statutory status or identified quality in the development plan), and recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside, and the wider benefits from natural capital and ecosystem services – including the economic and other benefits of the best and most versatile agricultural land, and of trees and woodland.

7.13 The proposed mitigation measures shown on the landscape plan includes areas of new trees around the edges of the Site, particularly to the south, east and north which will also comprise bunding, and new hedge planting within the Site.

7.14 A Landscape and Visual Appraisal (LVA) has been prepared by EDP. It demonstrates how the Site relates very well in both landscape and visual terms to the existing context, and that the Site represents a

logical and easily assimilated development into this part of the countryside, in accordance with LP ESD13, ESD15 and C28, and NPPF paragraphs 135 and 180.

- 7.15 With regards to the existing context, the LVA notes at paragraph 6.4 that due to the completed built form to the east of the site, the proposal would be seen and experienced in the context of the existing adjacent structures. .
- 7.16 The proposal incorporates several mitigation and enhancement measures that are recommended in the LVA, and these include; existing hedgerows and associated mature trees have, where possible, been retained on all boundaries; a landscape buffer has been created on the southern and eastern boundaries to address the approach to Bicester on the A41, matching the treatment implemented as part of the existing Symmetry Park development; boundary planting has included broad-leaved native trees which serve to fragment views of the Proposed Development, and; introduction of SuDS features to encourage breeding, foraging, sheltering and overwintering opportunities for wildlife.
- 7.17 In its conclusion, the LVA surmises that the proposal represents a relatively small-scale development, which is entirely in keeping with local landscape character and would not therefore result in any material landscape or visual effects or policy contraventions.
- 7.18 The carefully considered layout and design of the proposal enables the development to contribute positively to the local landscape, whilst remaining sensitive to its existing character. The landscape proposals will mitigate the potential landscape and visual impacts of the development and provide an attractive setting for future occupiers.
- 7.19 Landscaped bunds will provide significant visual screening along the boundaries. Accordingly, the Proposed Development will result in non-significant effects on landscape character. The proposed landscape and planting strategy will help integrate the development into the landscape and contribute to achieving local landscape character objectives, although some loss of openness and landscape features will result.
- 7.20 In accordance with Policy ESD 13 of the Cherwell Local Plan, the Proposed Development has sought opportunities to enhance the character and appearance of the surrounding landscape. The Proposed Development will secure appropriate mitigation and will not cause undue harm to important natural landscape features and topography; impact on areas judged to have a high level of tranquillity, harm

the setting of settlements, buildings, structures or other landmark features or harm the historic value of the landscape.

7.21 Thus, with regards to the above, this proposal accords with the provisions of LP ESD 13, ESD 15 and C28, and NPPF paragraphs 135 and 180.

Ecology and Biodiversity inc. Arboriculture

7.22 CLP policy ESD10 states that protection and enhancement of biodiversity and the natural environment will be achieved by, amongst other things, when considering proposals for development, a net gain in biodiversity will be sought by protecting, managing, enhancing and extending existing resources, and by creating new resources, and; development proposals will be expected to incorporate features to encourage biodiversity, and retain and where possible enhance existing features of nature conservation value within the site.

7.23 Policy ESD11 is concerned with Conservation Target Areas (CTAs) and requires all development proposals within or adjacent to CTAs to be accompanied by a biodiversity survey and report identifying constraint and opportunities for biodiversity enhancement.

7.24 NPPF paragraph 180 (d) states that planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by minimising impacts on and providing net gains for biodiversity, including by establishing coherent ecological networks that are more resilient to current and future pressures.

7.25 The planning application is accompanied by an Ecological Appraisal (EA), provided by EDP.

7.26 The Site is spatially separated from the nearest statutory designated ecological site by just over 1.7km, with the closest being Arncott Bridge Meadows Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI).

7.27 The EA confirms that the development will have no impact on the special interest features of the SSSI. In addition, the majority of non-designated will also remain unaffected by the development.

7.28 The EA notes that the Site itself has been largely used for hay production and cattle grazing land but would now classify it as a grassland field.

- 7.29 In terms of Protected and Priority Species, the EA confirmed that there is a lack of suitability to support protected species, aside from the possibility of nesting birds. Likelihood of bat activity is generally low, and there was no evidence found regarding badgers or great crested newts on the Site.
- 7.30 The EA acknowledges that although the majority of higher value hedgerow, tree and woodland habitats are being retained, there will be a loss of small areas of lowland meadow as a result of the development. However, this area is considered to be of low quality and in poor condition to comprise notable habitat. Thus, off-site mitigation in line with BNG trading rules will be more than sufficient to compensate for this loss.
- 7.31 The EA concludes that, in light of the embedded mitigation and subject to the full implementation of the additional measures described in the draft Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP), and an Ecological Construction Method Statement (ECMS) both of which can be secured by condition, the proposed development is capable of compliance with relevant planning policy and legislation and can deliver net benefits for wildlife and biodiversity.
- 7.32 The planting of new native trees, shrubs, woodland and hedgerows along the boundaries will also serve to connect offsite habitats via new foraging and commuting route for a range of wildlife. The establishment and long-term management of these habitats will offset the losses to development and seek to result in an overall net gain in habitat of biodiversity value.
- 7.33 The submitted Biodiversity Net Gain report confirms that the Applicant intends to commit to delivering a net gain in biodiversity via an off-site solution to create/enhance habitats to generate the unit shortfall. The offsetting scheme will be set out within the Biodiversity Gain Plan which will be submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority pre-commencement as per the general biodiversity gain condition under the granted Planning Permission.
- 7.34 The Proposed Development is therefore consistent with paragraph 174 (part d) of the NPPF and Policy ESD 10 of the CLP 2031, which require development to contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by minimising impacts on and providing net gains for biodiversity. A Biodiversity Net Gain will be achieved and existing features of nature conservation within the Site will be retained and enhanced where possible.

Heritage

- 7.35 LP ESD 15 states that successful design is founded upon an understanding and respect for an area's unique built, natural and cultural context. New development will be expected to complement and enhance the character of its context through sensitive siting, layout and high-quality design. All new development will be required to meet high design standards. Where development is in the vicinity of any of the District's distinctive natural or historic assets, delivering high quality design that complements the asset will be essential. Policy ESD 15 of the CLP 2031 requires appropriate information and assessments to be included within the application submission, to enable an assessment to be made of the potential impact of a development upon them. Saved Policies C18 and C25 of the adopted CLP 2031 are also relevant in terms of seeking to protect the setting of listed buildings and scheduled ancient monuments
- 7.36 NPPF paragraph 200 states that [an] applicant [should] describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting. The level of detail should be proportionate to the assets' importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance.
- 7.37 Paragraph 205 of the NPPF states that when considering the impact of a Proposed Development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation (and the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be). This is irrespective of whether a potential harm amounts to substantial harm or less than substantial harm to its significance.
- 7.38 As set out in Section 6 above, archaeological remains of high significance that could preclude development are unlikely to be present at the Site. It is therefore considered that any further archaeological works can be reasonably secured by an appropriately worded planning condition. The location, timing and extent of any archaeological mitigation will be discussed and agreed with the Council's archaeologist.
- 7.39 Heritage assets within a 2km radius of the Site have been assessed in order to understand whether the Site forms part of their settings such that it contributes to their significance. It was determined that the Site is part of the setting of Grade II listed 18th century Blackthorn Hill Windmill, located c.400m east of the Site, Grade II listed early 18th century Wretchwick Farmhouse, located c.660m west of the Site, and Grade II listed early 18th century barn approximately 50m south of Wretchwick Farmhouse, located c.660m west of the Site. The submitted Archaeological and Heritage Assessment

concludes that the site has been identified to have no potential to change any aspect of the setting of surrounding heritage assets located beyond the site and therefore is not considered to be sensitive to change from development within the site.

- 7.40 No built heritage effects are anticipated at the operational stage and no further mitigation measures are required. The Proposed Development is therefore consistent with Section 16 of the NPPF and Policy ESD 15 of the CLP 2031, which requires development to conserve and sustain designated and non-designated Heritage Assets.

Transport and Access

- 7.41 LP SLE4 of the CLP 2031 Part 1 requires that new developments maximise opportunities for access to sustainable modes of travel and seek improvements to the highway network to mitigate significant adverse impact of traffic generation.
- 7.42 NPPF paragraphs 115 states that development should only be prevented or refused on highways grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety, or the residual cumulative impacts on the road network would be severe.
- 7.43 A Transport Assessment has been prepared to accompany the Application.
- 7.44 During the construction phase, it is proposed that the effects of construction vehicles will be managed by a Construction Traffic Management Plan (CTMP). The CTMP will include a range of measures, defining temporary construction vehicle access and limiting lane closures / vehicle movements during peak travel hours.
- 7.45 For the estimated traffic generation during the operational period of the development, the assessment has considered the effects based on data gathered from the previous development – ref. 16/00861/HYBRID. Trip rates have been estimated as 30 in the AM peak; and 21 in the PM peak.
- 7.46 The trip generation and traffic impact analysis indicate that the development impact on the highway network against the previous consent is negative and hence detailed highway capacity analysis is not considered necessary.

- 7.47 The Proposed Development will provide a safe environment on footways and cycleways within the Site, with connections to the proposed pedestrian / cycle link along the A41.
- 7.48 As part of the proposals, a Travel Plan will seek to encourage employees to travel by alternatives to the private car, to facilitate travel by bus, and by cycling. In addition, there are a number of electric vehicle parking spaces proposed.
- 7.49 Policy SLE4 of the CLP 2031 Part 1 requires that new developments maximise opportunities for access to sustainable modes of travel and seek improvements to the highway network to mitigate significant adverse impact of traffic generation.
- 7.50 As set out above, Proposed Development will promote sustainable modes of transport in accordance with Section 9 of the NPPF. Pedestrian/cycle routes will be provided to each unit connecting in to the wider Symmetry Park estate.
- 7.51 The Proposed Development will therefore encourage active and sustainable modes of travel in accordance with Section 9 of the NPPF and Cherwell Local Plan.
- 7.52 Given the type of development proposed and its location, the Proposed Development proposes appropriate opportunities to promote sustainable transport modes and will provide safe and suitable access for all users to both Sites in accordance with Section 9 of the NPPF and Policy SLE 4 of the Cherwell Local Plan.

Noise and Air Quality

- 7.53 Saved Policy ENV1 (Development likely to cause detrimental levels of pollution), seeks to ensure that the amenities of the environment and in particular the amenity of residential properties are not unduly affected by development. NPPF paragraph 191 states that policies and decisions should also ensure that new development is appropriate for its location taking into account the likely effects (including cumulative effects) of pollution on health, living conditions and the natural environment, as well as the potential sensitivity of the site or the wider area to impacts that could arise from the development.
- 7.54 The Noise Impact Assessment (NIA) submitted with this application recommends specific noise levels to not be exceeded in order to reduce impact on sensitive receptors to a minimum.

7.55 The Proposed Development has therefore considered the amenity of existing development in accordance with Policy ESD 15 of the CLP.

7.56 Measures to mitigate dust emissions will be required during the construction phase of the development in order to minimise effects upon nearby sensitive receptors. The implementation of the identified mitigation measures will ensure that the cumulative effect of construction activities on air quality will be ‘not significant’.

7.57 The operational impacts on human health of both developments will also be ‘not significant’. Nevertheless, the Air Quality Assessment sets out the mitigation measures for dust during the operational phase: These measures comprise:

- Minimising car-based commuting will be encouraged, and the occupation of the buildings will be subject to the approval of the Framework Travel Plan;
- Cycle shelters will be located in close proximity to the main office entrances. Pedestrian and cycle routes are segregated from routes used by motorised vehicles. Shower/changing facilities will be provided to all buildings to encourage non-car travel;
- 25% EV spaces to be provided, and 6% accessible;
- Cycle parking at Symmetry Park will be provided throughout the development,
- Development will deliver BREEAM ‘Very Good’.

7.58 The Proposed Development is therefore consistent with LP ESD 10 and paragraph 186 of the NPPF, which requires proposals to mitigate their impact on air quality.

Flood Risk and Drainage

7.59 LP ESD 6 states that development should be safe and remain operational (where necessary) and proposals should demonstrate that surface water will be managed effectively on site and that the development will not increase flood risk elsewhere, including sewer flooding.

- 7.60 Policy ESD6, ESD7 of the CLP 2031 together resist new development where it would increase flood risk or be unduly vulnerable to flooding. The policies also seek to ensure that the proposals incorporate sustainable drainage systems in order to prevent increased risk of flooding.
- 7.61 The Environment Agency's flood map indicates that the majority of the Site is located within flood risk zone 1 and therefore has a low probability of fluvial flooding, with less than a 1 in 1000 year annual probability of flooding.
- 7.62 A Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) accompanies the submission of the planning application. The flood resilient design of the Site's drainage, through the implementation of a Sustainable Urban Drainage Strategy (SuDS) will ensure that the Proposed Development can come forward without increasing the risk of flooding, either on the Site, or to the surrounding area.
- 7.63 The Proposed Development will have no impact on the movement of floodwater across the Site; there will be no increase in the floodwater levels due to the Proposed Development. The Proposed Development creates the opportunity to improve the surface water drainage and risk of flooding within the locality. Through the implementation of SuDS, the exposure of people and property to flood risk will be reduced and minimised compared to existing Site conditions.
- 7.64 When assessed against the relevant planning policy, this proposal accords with the provisions of ESD 6 and ESD 7 of the CLP.

Contamination

- 7.65 NPPF paragraph 189 states that planning decisions should ensure that a site is suitable for its proposed use taking account of ground conditions and any risks arising from land instability and contamination.
- 7.66 A Contaminated Land Report (Phase 1 Desk Study) has been prepared by Hydrock.
- 7.67 With regards to contaminated land, the report concludes that it is unlikely the Site would be classified as Contaminated Land in line with the definitions in the Environmental Protection Act 1990. It confirms that the overall risk from land contamination at the Site is considered to be low to moderate for its proposed use, as the development will be largely covered by hardstanding reducing the possibility of contact with any impacted soils.

7.68 As above, the proposal accords with the provisions of NPPF paragraph 189, taking account of ground conditions and assessing the likelihood of risk.

Agricultural Land

7.69 Footnote 62 of the NPPF states that where significant development of agricultural land is demonstrated to be necessary, areas of poorer quality land should be preferred to those of a higher quality. The best and most versatile agricultural land is defined in the NPPF as ‘land in Grades 1, 2 and 3a of the Agricultural Land Classification’.

7.70 The Agricultural Land Classification report accompanying the application states that the land comprises moderate quality (subgrade 3A/3B) agricultural land.

7.71 The Proposed Development will help address a substantial and growing need for new logistics floorspace at the national, regional (East Midlands and South East) and local (A41 corridor) level. Accordingly, the loss of agricultural land is necessary in this instance. The draft allocation of the site in the emerging Local Plan supports the loss of agricultural land on this site.

7.72 The Proposed Development will result in the loss of moderate quality (subgrade 3A/3B) agricultural land, which is widespread within Cherwell and Oxfordshire as a whole. The Proposed Development will not significantly harm national agricultural interests and is in accordance with the NPPF.

Climate Change

7.73 Policy ESD1 in the CLP seeks to: locate development in the most sustainable locations; to reduce the need to travel and encourage sustainable forms of transport as well as including climate change mitigation and resilience in design approaches.

7.74 The Proposed Development will result in carbon emissions during construction. New commercial buildings delivered by TBBD Symmetry will be designed and delivered in accordance with Net Zero Carbon in Construction principles.

7.75 To mitigate for the anticipated operational energy related emissions, the Proposed Development will use the ‘energy hierarchy’ to reduce carbon emissions from the built development: by minimising heat losses, reducing air permeability, maximising the use of natural light; maximising the energy efficiency

of the fittings and equipment that is incorporated into the development; and to incorporate renewables / low carbon technology. Solar panels (PVs) would be installed across the development, and the kWp of the arrays will be 370Wp on Unit E, and 290kWp on Unit F. This will provide the normal base load of electricity prior to including any specific requirements of the occupier.

7.76 The Proposed Development will also incorporate a range of climate change resilience measures as set out within the Environmental Statement. The Proposed Development is therefore consistent with paragraph 154 of the NPPF and policy ESD 1 of the Cherwell Local Plan, which requires new development to avoid increased vulnerability to the range of impacts arising from climate change, and to include suitable adaptation measures so that it is more resilient to climate change impacts.

How the Development Contributes to Sustainable Development

7.77 Central to both local and national planning policy is the commitment to sustainable development. The NPPF includes three objectives in achieving sustainable development: the economic objective; the social objective; and the environmental objective.

7.78 The following summarises how the Proposed Development meets these objectives:

Economic Objective

- Capital Investment into the economy;
- Indirect investment in local construction companies;
- Operational: Net GVA generation of £11m per annum to Oxfordshire's economy, and
- The Proposed Development will generate business rates, which can be invested in local services and infrastructure.

Social Objective

- The construction of the Proposed Development is anticipated to create a net addition of 80 jobs;
- The operation of the Proposed Development is expected to create up to 300 full-time equivalent onsite and offsite operational jobs in Cherwell jobs; Creation of a range of skilled and unskilled jobs;

- Open space provision;
- Improvements to cycle routes to enable/encourage staff to cycle to work to assist in maintaining good levels of health of the workforce, and
- Provision of cycle parking and showers to enable/encourage staff to cycle to work to assist in maintaining good levels of health of the workforce

Environmental Objective

- Improved infrastructure to reduce the impact of trips generations, reduce the impact of traffic on the local highway, and reduce pollution;
- Improved cycle infrastructure: internal and provision of shared pedestrian/cycle path;
- Cycle parking that is consistent with Council standards and guidance;
- Operating a Travel Plan that will encourage residents to make use of more sustainable modes of transport when travelling to/from the Site;
- Ecology – provision of a net gain in biodiversity.
- The Proposed Development is resilient to climate change, through for example use of SuDS and being built to high sustainability standards;
- Including SuDS will ensure that the Site will manage its surface water drainage in a sustainable manner, designed with additional capacity (40%) to ensure that the development will not increase the risk of flooding in the Site or surrounding area;
- Achieve a minimum EPC rating A;
- New commercial buildings delivered by TBBB Symmetry will be designed and delivered in accordance with Net Zero Carbon in Construction principles and, as the detailed design of the scheme emerges, a Whole Life Cycle assessment (LCA) exercise will be completed to determine the embodied carbon content (kgCO₂eq) of the individual units.
- Deliver a minimum rating of BREEAM ‘Very Good’.
- Incorporate substantial on-Site renewable energy generation through solar PV coverage on the roof, and
- Provide Electric Vehicle charging points for staff and visitors.

8.0 CONCLUSION AND PLANNING BALANCE

- 8.1 The development management considerations contained within the Development Plan, including the aspirations for high-quality and sustainable design, have informed the proposal.
- 8.2 The potential impacts of the Proposed Development, as well as its contributions to the following have all been assessed as part of this application; the local highway network; flood risk and drainage; biodiversity; designated Heritage Assets; trees; landscape and visual amenity; noise and air quality; and economic context.
- 8.3 It is demonstrated that the development would not have any adverse effects on the built or natural environment that cannot be minimised and mitigated to an acceptable level. In summary, the Proposed Development will provide high-quality logistics floorspace in a location that is adequately accessible to the strategic road network.
- 8.4 The Proposed Development will help address an urgent and substantial need for logistics floorspace and is supported in principle by the National Planning Policy Framework.
- 8.5 The development will create a range of **substantial economic**, social and environmental benefits and will contribute to a various objective of the Development Plan. Economic benefits include job creation, business rates contribution and around £11 million in GVA to the local economy per annum.
- 8.6 The proposals will build on the success of the adjoining Symmetry Park development.
- 8.7 Due to the ability to utilise the existing infrastructure and the same approaches as previous phases, development can be delivered early and therefore should be granted planning permission now to respond to the Government's growth agenda.
- 8.8 In addition, the Site has been allocated in the Cherwell Local Plan Review 2042 (Regulation 19) Proposed Submission Plan.
- 8.9 It has been demonstrated that the Proposed Development will not compromise the Council's employment strategy, and the delivery of the employment strategic sites included in the development plan.

- 8.10 Paragraph 11 of the NPPF states that plans and decisions should apply a presumption in favour of sustainable development sites. For decision making this means that a proposal accords with an up-to-date development plan should be approved without delay.
- 8.11 Policy SLE1 is responsive to situations where economic development is not able to be accommodated on committed employment, and in consequence the release of a (currently, in accordance with the extant Local Plan) unallocated site may be justified. The detailed Site Assessment robustly establishes that this investment or need cannot be accommodated on any land committed for employment development in the current Local Plan, or within or on the edge of the Category A Village. No urban land stands idle which might accommodate this scale or type of bespoke development.
- 8.12 In these circumstances it is necessary to demonstrate exceptional circumstances (which have been demonstrated above) to justify releasing a currently unallocated site for new economic development and to demonstrate that the criteria of Policy SLE1 are satisfied. It is submitted that the policy tests of SLE1 have been fully satisfied, and that the proposals comply with other relevant policies from the current Local Plan. The Proposed Development is considered to be compliant with the development plan read as a whole.
- 8.13 If the Council considers that this proposal is not compliant with provisions of a relevant policy, then an assessment has to be made as to the degree of any conflict and its significance when reading the Development Plan as a whole. Should there be policy conflict with the provisions of the Development Plan, it does not mean that an application has to be refused planning permission. The planning system is plan-led not plan determined. Material considerations such as the socio-economic benefits from this proposal would have to be weighed against the identified policy conflict. A decision then has to be made as to where in considering sustainable development, the overall public interest lies.
- 8.14 The Council would be entitled to make a decision in favour of this proposal even if the Proposed Development is considered to be in conflict with the development plan.
- 8.15 The Proposed Development is considered to accord with policies contained within the development plan specifically policy SLE1 which is most relevant to the Proposed Development. It will result in economic benefits within the surrounding area including increased spending and the creation of new jobs. On this basis it is felt that the proposals should be supported by officers and members alike.