

Land at North West Bicester

Cherwell District Council

Implementation Brief

Prepared on behalf of P3Eco (Bicester) Ltd and A2Dominion Group

November 2010

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This brief sets out the strategy to be adopted by P3Eco (Bicester) Ltd and A2Dominion Group to secure the implementation of the proposals for the development of an Eco Development on land at NW Bicester. Cherwell District Council (CDC) and P3Eco are promoting the release of land at NW Bicester to provide for some 5000 dwellings as an Eco Development, in accordance with the Government's policy as set out in the supplement to PPS1 'Eco-Towns' (the Supplement). The supplement identifies NW Bicester as one of four Eco Towns and sets a range of criteria that 'define' an Eco Town and against which any application should be judged. The Supplement identifies the potential for an early phase to be brought forward as an 'exemplar'.
- 1.2 CDC as local planning authority originally identified the site and are supportive of the release of land. The site is identified in the emerging Core Strategy (Preferred Options Stage February 2010) to provide for 5000 dwellings, 3200 of which are to be provided in the period to December 2026.
- 1.3 P3Eco have selected A2Dominion as the developer of the residential element of the exemplar phase and the affordable housing provider for the remainder of the scheme.
- 1.4 A masterplan is being prepared which will demonstrate the principles of development as a whole, together with the exemplar application.
- 1.5 This brief should be read in conjunction with the Planning Strategy (dated August 2010 a copy of which is attached at Appendix 1) and sets out the following:
 - Process – Key elements of the planning process as per the planning strategy and the form of permission that will be sought;
 - Programme – The principal elements of the programme – from promotion of the site through to implementation;
 - Implementation Strategy – the proposals for implementation;

- Disposal – The proposals for disposal (where appropriate) to developers and third parties;
- Governance and Continued Commitment.

1.6 It is important to note that a range of options and strategies are open to P3Eco and A2Dominion Group. With a development timetable beyond 2026, market forces and best practice will change and evolve. Accordingly, the contents of this brief should not be taken as fixed but should be seen as the principles that will be adopted to secure the beneficial implementation of the scheme and long term management, and should inform the terms upon which planning permission is sought and granted.

Process

1.7 The scheme is to be promoted through the core strategy and by way of a planning application(s). The Core Strategy will set the policy basis for the promotion and consideration of any application. Submissions on behalf of P3Eco in response to the emerging Core Strategy will inform the preparation of the master plan for the site as a whole. In the event that the Core Strategy is delayed, the application will be formulated having regard to the PPS1 Supplement and other relevant planning policy, guidance and best practice. A review of the applicable planning policies is contained within document 04 (Planning Policy Review).

1.8 The proposals for the Eco development will be set out in a Masterplan which will act as a development brief that demonstrates the principal elements of the scheme and that it is suitable, available and achievable and thus discharges the requirements of paragraph 54 of PPS3. The Masterplan will also serve to inform our representations in respect of the emerging planning policy, notably site specific policy NWB1 as set out in the draft Core Strategy. Draft policy NWB1 sets out the Council's proposed policy framework to guide the development as a strategic location. It is open to the Council to adopt the masterplan or similar documentation as a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) or similar, subject of course to the status of the Core Strategy and the development plan.

1.9 The masterplan will also guide the preparation and will support the submission of planning applications.

1.10 It is intended to seek planning permission for the wider site (either in total or part thereof) in outline. The outline application(s) is/are intended to be parameters based and will fix:

- Net developable area including density parameters;
- Access arrangements;
- Land use;
- Building heights;
- Landscape and play space strategy;
- Phasing.

1.11 It is anticipated that any resultant grant of outline planning permission will be subject to a number of conditions and limitations. One such example could be the requirement to prepare and submit sub framework plans in advance of reserved matters. These will be prepared at a greater level of detail than the masterplan, will identify development parcels and broad design guidelines/briefs to inform the submission of reserved matters. The design guidelines will also set out the requirements in terms of sustainability and participation in the initiatives to satisfy the Eco Town criteria. The outline application(s) may be accompanied by applications for full permission for infrastructure and access.

1.12 Alternatively, applications for permission may be submitted in full for individual phases or parts thereof. Any such applications will demonstrate the relationship of the scheme to the wider masterplan.

1.13 In addition, planning permission will also be sought for the development of an exemplar phase, in accordance with the PPS1 Supplement. This will be submitted in November 2010 and will seek permission for:

“Development of Exemplar phase of NW Bicester Eco Town to secure full planning permission for 394 residential units and an energy centre (up to 400 square metres), means of access, car parking, landscape, amenity space and service infrastructure and outline permission for a nursery of up to 350 square metres (use class D1), a community centre of up to 350 square metres (sui generis), 3 retail units of up to 770 square metres (including but not exclusively a convenience store, a post office and a pharmacy (use class A1)), an Eco-

Business Centre of up to 1,800 square metres (use class B1), office accommodation of up to 1,100 square metres (use class B1), an Eco-Pub of up to 190 square metres (use class A4), and a primary school site measuring up to 1.34 hectares with access and layout to be determined”.

- 1.14 The application will relate to some 21.1 ha of land and will be a hybrid submission. Outline permission will be sought for the scheme as a whole, with full permission sought for the residential element, the energy centre and layout and access details for all other uses.

Programme

- 1.15 Appendix 1 sets out the programme for securing the grant of planning permission in relation to the current programme for the preparation of the Core Strategy. The programme provides for the submission of the exemplar application in November (Q4) 2010 and the masterplan proposals in circa June (Q2) 2011. We have assumed that permission could be forthcoming for the exemplar phase in Q1 of 2011 with the outline permission for the wider masterplan being granted in Q4 2011. The first Sub Framework Plan could be submitted in Q4 2011 and approved Q2 2012.
- 1.16 In terms of completion rates, the Exemplar phase provides for an earlier start on site with completions commencing Q1 2012. The next phase of reserved matters could be approved in Q1 2014 with first occupations Q1 2015.
- 1.17 We have assumed at an initial completion rate of 50 dwellings in the first year rising to an average, per phase of 157 private sale and 68 affordable, assuming affordable housing at 30%. We have assumed at least 2 sales outlets for the private sale and 1 affordable housing provider, but a range of tenures, types potentially include social rented, shared ownership and low cost market. Appendix 2 sets out the projected rates of completions (all tenures).

Implementation Strategy

- 1.18 P3Eco are promoting the release of the site through the Core Strategy and the formulation of the master plan. Copies of the representations made in relation to the draft Core Strategy (February 2010) are contained at Appendix 3.

Exemplar

- 1.19 A2Dominion Group are the selected development partner of P3Eco and will be responsible for the implementation of all tenures (private sale and affordable) of the exemplar phase. Upon grant of permission, A2Dominion Group will be responsible for the discharge of conditions precedent pertaining to the residential elements with P3Eco being responsible for conditions and reserved matters relating to non residential uses.
- 1.20 P3Eco will lead the development of the non residential elements with its selected development partners. Agreement has been reached with the Co-op to provide for a food store (including a post office and pharmacy), together with a nursery, a community centre and office accommodation.
- 1.21 A2Dominion Group and P3Eco will be responsible for providing infrastructure and servicing the site. A2Dominion Group and P3Eco will likewise be jointly responsible for complying with the terms of the permission and any obligations and limitations imposed by way of a s106 agreement although P3Eco will be responsible for any financial contributions.

The Wider Site

- 1.22 The masterplan and outline application(s) will be promoted by P3Eco with the intention to secure permission within defined parameters. The purpose of which will be to:
- Define the residential development area and hence yield;
 - Define the commercial and non residential offer and its phasing in relation to residential occupations;
 - Define the infrastructure scheme, both in terms of costs and phased infrastructure;
 - Set the design and sustainability standards and hence define build costs.

- 1.23 The intention will be to determine net residential and non-residential land parcels for disposal. The individual development parcels will then be implemented by the selected developer(s).

Subsequent Phases

- 1.24 In addition, future residential phases may be the subject of separate applications for planning permission, promoted by P3Eco and/or by the selected residential development partner. A2Dominion Group are the selected affordable housing partner for subsequent phases.
- 1.25 Appendix 4 sets out the responsibility for securing and discharging various elements of the planning strategy/process and implementing the scheme.

Disposal Strategy

- 1.26 At present, there are two potential options for the implementation and disposal of the site, which are not mutually exclusive:

Option 1

- 1.27 P3Eco may seek a development/funding partner to assist in the promotion of the masterplan, outline scheme and implementation of the strategic infrastructure and landscape scheme and thus create serviced land parcels.
- 1.28 If this option is chosen the intention will be to dispose of the serviced land to developers. The land will be disposed with all necessary covenants and restrictions to ensure that the land parcel in question is implemented in accordance with the terms of the permission.
- 1.29 The intention of P3Eco is that individual land parcels will therefore be disposed of with the benefit of the following:
- The grant of outline permission;
 - An approved sub Framework Plan and Design and Sustainability Guidelines;

- Services and strategic landscape (implemented to a stage compatible with the phasing of the scheme);
- Obligations to satisfy the terms of the permission and subsequent consents and agreements;
- Site wide arrangements for governance and community development.

1.30 The affordable housing element will be implemented by A2Dominion Group and/or its affordable housing development partner who may be selected from time to time.

Option 2

1.31 In the context of the masterplan, planning permission is sought in respect of individual phases. Such applications may be promoted by P3Eco and/or its development partner, who would assume responsibility for implementation.

1.32 Under this scenario, P3Eco will retain the overall co-ordination of the delivery of phases to ensure consistency with the masterplan proposals and promote the vision and strategy for the eco-development. As such P3Eco, A2Dominion Group as affordable housing provider and BioRegional could be responsible for ensuring that the vision is brought forward in each phase of development.

Governance and Continued Commitment

1.33 The successful development of an Eco development should not be seen as a single development at a single point in time. Moreover, it should be implemented having regard to the best practice at the time but with flexibility to accommodate changing technologies and review of strategies in light of market response and delivery against the Eco Town criteria and performance criteria.

1.34 For example, the renewable energy technology will evolve over the life-time of the development and alternative solutions may emerge. Likewise, the ambitions for modal shift of the travel patterns of future occupiers may well rely upon a range of measures, the effectiveness of which will need to be monitored and reviewed throughout the life span of the project.

- 1.35 Accordingly, any grant of planning permission is likely to set a range of performance criteria, compliance with which is to be monitored and responses agreed with the Local Planning Authority and stakeholders through the framework established by the planning permission and/or masterplan.
- 1.36 A key element in the successful implementation of the Eco development is governance and the engagement of the residents and occupiers in that process. P3Eco and A2Dominion Group are looking at a range of options for community engagement such as a community development trust (CDT) or similar. The CDT or other such body would:
- Provide the vehicle for resident/occupier engagement with the continued implementation of the Eco development;
 - Act as the agency for monitoring performance against the Eco Town criteria and terms of the planning permission(s);
 - Own/operate/manage community infrastructure;
 - Manage the strategic landscape, open space and public realm.
- 1.37 The details of roles and responsibilities are developed further in the 'Community Governance Strategy' (Document 07) together with contractual and funding arrangements.

Agreements and Contracts

- 1.38 In addition to the CDT (or similar) and the normal application of conditions and s106 agreements pursuant to the planning acts, there is the opportunity to explore additional contractual arrangements with the LPA and other stakeholders, for example pursuant to the Local Government Miscellaneous Provisions Act and Local Investment Plans and Agreements.

Moving Forward

- 1.39 At this stage, it is important that fixed positions are not taken unless where necessary to move the project forward, but that all opportunities and scenarios are tested to secure the optimum success of the Eco development. The formulation of

the masterplan and subsequent submission of the outline planning application(s) will provide the vehicle to develop these proposals further.

PLANNING STRATEGY AND PROGRAMME
24 AUGUST 2010

DWELLING COMPLETIONS

CORE STRATEGY DPD CONSULTATION – REPRESENTATIONS
APRIL 2010

IMPLEMENTATION – ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITY