

REPORT

Transport Statement

Proposed Footbridge and Vehicular Bridge Widening

Client: Bicester Nominees Ltd and Bicester II Nominees Ltd

Reference: T&PPB4778R001D01

Revision: 01/Final

Date: 29 April 2016

HASKONINGDHV UK LTD.

2 Abbey Gardens
Great College Street
London
SW1P 3NL
Transport & Planning
VAT registration number: 792428892

+44 207 2222115 **T**
info.london@uk.rhdhv.com **E**
royalhaskoningdhv.com **W**

Document title: Transport Statement

Document short title:

Reference: T&PPB4778R001D01
Revision: 01/Final
Date: 29 April 2016
Project name: Bicester Village Phase 4
Project number: PB4778
Author(s): Richard Cornell

Drafted by: RC

Checked by: AW

Date / initials: AW 29/04/2016

Approved by: PH

Date / initials: PH 29/04/2016

Classification

Project related



Disclaimer

No part of these specifications/printed matter may be reproduced and/or published by print, photocopy, microfilm or by any other means, without the prior written permission of HaskoningDHV UK Ltd.; nor may they be used, without such permission, for any purposes other than that for which they were produced. HaskoningDHV UK Ltd. accepts no responsibility or liability for these specifications/printed matter to any party other than the persons by whom it was commissioned and as concluded under that Appointment. The quality management system of HaskoningDHV UK Ltd. has been certified in accordance with ISO 9001, ISO 14001 and OHSAS 18001.

Table of Contents

1	Introduction	1
1.1	Background	1
1.2	Scope of Study	2
2	Site Description & Current Transport Characteristics	3
2.1	Site Description & Current Access Arrangements	3
2.2	Operational Characteristics	3
2.3	Current Transport Characteristics	4
2.4	Bicester Village – Travel Plan	4
2.5	Non-Car Travel	4
3	Development Proposal	6
4	Policy Considerations	7
4.1	National Planning Policy Framework	7
4.2	Non-Statutory Cherwell Local Plan 2011	7
5	Transport Implications	8
6	Summary and Conclusion	9

Appendices

Appendix A	Site Location Plan
Appendix B	Highway Plan

1 Introduction

Royal HaskoningDHV have been instructed by Bicester Nominees Ltd and Bicester II Nominees Ltd to prepare a Transport Statement to accompany a Planning Application to improve an internal junction that serves the existing multi-storey car park area located between Pingle Drive and Bicester Village railway station.

The application seeks the introduction of a pedestrian footbridge and a widened vehicular bridge across Pingle Brook to provide access to the multi-storey and surface car parking to the north of the site.

The purpose of this document is to consider the transport implications of the proposals and to demonstrate that the residual cumulative impacts of the development proposals are not severe, in accordance with the requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (March 2012).

Paragraph 32 of the NPPF states that all development generating a significant amount of traffic movement should be supported by a Transport Assessment. Because the planning application does not propose additional floor area at Bicester Village, the development proposals will not generate additional amounts of movement to and from the site beyond that which currently occurs at present. However, this Transport Statement has been prepared in order to support the planning application and consider the traffic management and pedestrian connectivity benefits that the proposal can provide.

1.1 Background

By way of background, planning permission has been obtained in order to extend the existing retail units provided at Bicester Village onto the land formerly occupied by a Tesco Superstore. This is known as the Phase 4 Extension (application reference 15/00082/F). The re-siting of the Tesco Superstore to the Bicester Business Park and the proposed highway improvement works were covered in a supporting Transport Assessment (TA). Within the TA there were details of the internal highway improvement works which will include two inbound traffic lanes along Pingle Drive from the junction of Oxford Road, which when combined with the off-site highway works will bring significant benefits to free flow of traffic in the surrounding area.

The two inbound traffic lanes along Pingle Drive continue along (approximately 550 metres) to an existing internal junction that forms the access point to the main customer car park and the multi-storey and surface level car parks to the north of the site. The car parking numbers are as follows:

Car Park	Car parking numbers
Main car park (following implementation of the consented scheme improvements to Pingle Drive 15/AP/5125/F)	485
Main car park (Phase 4 extension)	520
Decked car park (Phase 3)	804
Rail Land Decked car park	570
Bloor North and South	417
TOTAL	2,796

Table 1.1 Summary of Bicester Village Car Parking Provision

The planning history of the car parking is provided below:

- An area of the site, known as the North West Car Park provides parking for some 417 vehicles.
- The latest planning consent (application reference 13/00448/F) was obtained in April 2013 for the continued use of land to the north east of Bicester Village on a permanent basis for parking for up to 217 vehicles.
- The southern area of the North West Car Park currently provides car parking for 200 vehicles. This site benefits from the permanent introduction of 200 car parking spaces together with parking for 20 coaches (application reference 12/00292/F).

In respect of the Phase 4 scheme, the additional floor area required by Bicester Village has led to Tesco relocating their store to a new site at the Bicester Business Park which is located to the south and east of the A41 Oxford Road, south of the site. The application to extend Bicester Village will deliver significant infrastructure improvements to the highway network serving the Bicester area, which are necessary to enable satisfactory access to Bicester Village. This includes works to Pingle Drive which will deliver two inbound lanes for traffic arriving at the site.

It is important to note that the traffic implications of the Phase 4 Extension scheme allowed for the usage of the temporary car parking spaces at Bloor Land North (the North West car park) when determining the future highway infrastructure requirements required in order to support the scheme.

The traffic implications of the Phase 4 Extension also included the usage of the car parking spaces at the North West Car Park when determining the infrastructure requirements that are necessary to support the new development.

1.2 Scope of Study

In terms of the scope of this document, this is as set out below: -

- Section 2 will provide a description of the site and current access arrangements including the parking characteristics at the site.
- Section 3 will describe the development proposals in transport terms.
- Section 4 will provide the necessary Policy context and show how the proposals will respond to these requirements
- Section 5 will consider the transport implications arising from the proposals.
- Section 6 will summarise and conclude the report.

The principle of this scheme has been discussed with Cherwell District Council and Oxfordshire County Council. In terms of the preparation of this report, regard has been given to the requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (March 2012), which provides Central Government's advice in relation to assessing the transport implications arising from development proposals.

2 Site Description & Current Transport Characteristics

This section will provide a description of the site as well as the current transport characteristics of Bicester Village and the surrounding area.

2.1 Site Description & Current Access Arrangements

The location of the site in relation to Bicester Village is provided at **Appendix A** on the drawing prepared by Lyon Sleeman Hoare Architects. There are a number of issues that should be mentioned from a transport point of view.

The current internal junction is formed between the three arms of Pingle Drive, the access to the north car park and access to the main car park. In the current arrangement Pingle Drive has a single lane in both directions. However the permitted scheme for the Phase 4 development will see Pingle Drive widened to two lanes inbound with one lane outbound (widening to two lanes outbound along the western section of Pingle Drive). The access to the North Car Parks is over an existing bridge across Pingle Brook and the footway alongside the car park access provides a walking and cycling connection to Bicester Village railway station. The scheme outlined in Section 3 takes into account the proposed changes to Pingle Drive as part of the Phase 4 development.

2.2 Operational Characteristics

Bicester Village (BV) Shopping Centre is a designer outlet centre accommodating approximately 130 outlets, as well as a small number of restaurants and cafés, Bicester Villages stores generally stock end-of-line ranges produced by high end designer fashion at discounted prices.

The Bicester Village complex is open seven days a week and whilst opening times vary, the following can be seen as the typical regime:

- Monday – Saturday 09:00 - 20:00
- Sunday 10:00 - 19:00

The Restaurants and Cafés at the complex generally have different opening hours to the core retail outlets. Generally, the cafes open and close before the retail facilities with the restaurants generally staying open later into the evening.

As with any retail operator, the number of visits to Bicester Village varies across the year and by definition, visits are discretionary. Demand at Bicester Village does increase around the Christmas season and also around Bank Holidays. The busiest times of the year are known by the Facilities Management element of Value Retail as “Red Days” and these also allow for other times of the year such as promotional periods.

The site is actively managed in order to try and reduce the propensity to travel to the site during peak traffic times. This has resulted in opening hours being extended, marketing introduced to try encouraging visitors to visit out of peak times, investing in public transport improvements and arranging where possible, promotional events away from weekends when demand is generally at its highest, but during the week instead.

Bicester Village is not only of regional importance it is also nationally recognised as a location to visit by tourists to the UK and this is often part of linked trips to Oxford and other surrounding places of interest. These visits are generally by coach or train.

Given the role Bicester Village plays at a national level it is clearly essential that satisfactory access and parking arrangements are in place at the site.

2.3 Current Transport Characteristics

During week days, the temporary car parking provided at Bloor Land North is used to accommodate staff vehicles so that the prime car parking areas along the façade of Bicester Village are available for visitors. At weekends, this car park is used to accommodate any overspill customer parking with staff parking provided at the Bicester Park and Ride site. A dedicated shuttle bus from the Park and Ride site to the Complex transports staff and customers.

Access to Bicester Village is generally straight forward during week days however during peak times, particularly weekends and Bank Holidays, congestion does occur on the approach to Pingle Drive from the Tesco Roundabout. A number of highway improvement measures will be provided as part of the recent permission to extend the site. These will greatly facilitate traffic flow and reduce congestion within the locality of Bicester Village.

The existing layout operates as a priority T junction between Pingle Drive (W), the north car park (N) and the main car park (E), (see drawing PB1209-SK-69) in **Appendix B**. In the past, during peak times when the car park has reached capacity, it has led to on street/ footway parking being accommodated on Pingle Drive. However traffic marshals have been employed for some time at Bicester Village in order to assist visitors in locating a parking space which works well. The traffic marshals assist traffic entering and leaving the site by:

- Directing inbound vehicles to the car parks with most capacity.
- Assisting the egress of outbound vehicles.

Whilst from time to time parking stress does occur at Bicester Village, it is generally possible to manage this position given the availability of internal traffic circulation routes such as parking aisles and Pingle Drive itself.

2.4 Bicester Village – Travel Plan

BV has been implementing a Travel Plan for a number of years. Survey data shows that the number of staff driving to work appears to be falling, which is positive.

2.5 Non-Car Travel

Notwithstanding the requirement for the internal and external highway improvements and additional car parking, Bicester Village has been successful in promoting the use of public transport and has become an ever more popular destination by those travelling by train, particularly given the available connections to London by rail.

Bicester Village has worked closely with Chiltern Railways and Network Rail to create the new Bicester Village railway station (formerly Bicester Town) on the new railway service between London Marylebone and Oxford Parkway station. This provides two services an hour from central London to the new station on the edge of the Complex, the fastest of which takes 46 minutes.

The shuttle bus service to Bicester North railway station has been retained as it is served by trains from Birmingham, providing access to a wider catchment throughout the Midlands. An arrangement with

Chiltern Railways allows customers to include the cost of the Shuttle Bus Service to be included within the rail ticket price.

It is considered that public transport usage will only continue to increase to the complex in the future, particularly given the marketing initiatives that are employed by Value Retail in order to promote these modes of travel.

In terms of bus/ coach travel, connections are available to Oxford on a half hourly basis with further connections available to London and Bicester Village running its own dedicated coach services from key central London hotels. It is understood that coach travel has become ever more popular at Bicester Village.

This does have implications for the operation of the car park as many coaches remain on site whilst passengers visit Bicester Village. Whilst there is currently a designated coach parking area, given the increase in travel by this mode to Bicester Village, this has had an impact on car parking availability as coach parking demand has outstripped supply. This has we understand resulted in coaches having to park within the main car park areas. Inevitably this has led to greater numbers of car parking spaces becoming unavailable to visitors.

Improvements to the pedestrian network will be brought forward by way of the Phase 4 extension in the fullness of time and this will provide improved pedestrian crossing facilities of the wider highway network and will provide connections to and from the development at Kingsmere to the west.

3 Development Proposal

The consented improvement of Pingle Drive, to create two inbound lanes, has an important role in complementing the improvements to the local highway network including the site access junction with London Road and the A41/ Oxford Road junction. By providing two continuous lanes from Oxford Road to the car park entrances, Pingle Drive has the ability to handle the peak demand for arrivals without causing a tailback affecting the operation of the local highway network.

The operational plan for Pingle Drive would see the nearside inbound lanes dedicated to access the North car parks and the off side lane to access the main car park. By widening the internal junction it will be possible traffic from the off-side lane to turn left into the north car park. This would add to the flexibility of the existing traffic management plan by allowing inbound traffic from the off-side lane to be turned into the north car parks as the main car park reaches capacity. To the north of the junction the car park access road forms two lanes including the right turn lane to the decked car park.

The proposed junction would also allow traffic exiting the main car park to turn right into the north car park access. This would be a low number of movements but would provide for the site's operational vehicles to reach the car parks and the drop off facility for Bicester Village railway station.

At Bicester Village railway station a concierge facility has been provided immediately adjacent to the extended platform in order to welcome visitors arriving by rail. From here a direct pedestrian route through the car park and to the south of the existing Phase 3 Deck Car Park provides the direct route towards Bicester Village and will assist in providing the necessary connections to a major non car transport node.

To the north of the Pingle Drive carriageway there is a continuous pedestrian and cycle path that forms a link to the National Cycle Network. A local connection from the NCN to Bicester Village railway station provides access through the site for pedestrians and cyclists. In order for the bridge to be widened for vehicular traffic by creating a third lane, a footbridge for pedestrians and cyclists will be provided across Pingle Brook, providing a wider and more commodious pedestrian and cycle connection.

4 Policy Considerations

This Section will review the Policy Considerations in relation to transport matters. This will be at the National and Local level.

4.1 National Planning Policy Framework

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was published in March 2012 and seeks to provide guidance in relation to achieving sustainable development, this being development that means ensuring that better lives for ourselves don't mean worse lives for future generations.

Paragraph 32 requires that all developments generating significant amounts of movement should be supported by a Transport Statement or Assessment. In this respect it should be considered whether:

“The opportunities for sustainable transport modes have been taken up depending on the nature and location of the site, to reduce the need for major transport infrastructure;

Safe and suitable access to the site can be achieved for all people; and

Improvements can be undertaken within the transport network that cost effectively limits the significant impacts of the development. Development should only be prevented or refused on transport grounds where the residual cumulative impacts of development are severe”.

In relation to the above points, BV already provides significant opportunities for travel by non-car modes and this does show a significant take up of alternative modes to the car, particularly by rail, which is shown by the shopper survey carried out in respect of the Phase 4 extension to consist of 19% of the modal share. This document will show that the residual cumulative impacts of the development proposals will not be severe.

The NPPF states at paragraph 36 the importance of the Travel Plan. Bicester Village has an existing Travel Plan and this will continue to move forward as the Phase 4 Extension takes place.

4.2 Non-Statutory Cherwell Local Plan 2011

At the local level, the Non Statutory Cherwell Local Plan 2011 provides details of Transport related policies. Whilst this document does not form part of the development plan process, it is understood it has been approved as interim planning policy for development control purposes and provides advice whilst the Local Development Framework is being prepared.

Other relevant policy considerations concern providing the ability to accommodate vehicle turning within the curtilage of a development site plus seeking to separate conflict between traffic and pedestrian movement.

5 Transport Implications

This section will consider the transport implications of the proposals which specifically concerns traffic management and access to parking.

The widening of Pingle Drive to two inbound lanes eastbound enables traffic to be efficiently routed to the nearest available parking area. Inbound traffic in the nearside lane would turn left over Pingle Brook into the north car parks, whilst traffic in the off-side lane could either turn left into the north car park or continue straight on into the main carpark. This system makes the best use of the lane capacity of Pingle Drive to meet the peak demand for arriving vehicles and will help to ensure that there is no queue back to the Oxford Road site access.

When complete the site will accommodate the following car parking numbers:

Car Park	Car parking numbers	Car Park	Car parking numbers	Total
Main car park	485	Decked car park (Phase 3)	804	
Main car park (Phase 4 extension)	520	Rail Land Decked car park	570	
		Bloor North and South	417	
Sub-total	1,005	Sub-total	1,791	2,796

Table 5.1 Car parking provision

From the above table the main car park and the Phase 4 extension will accommodate a total of 1,005 car parking spaces and the north car parks will accommodate 1,791 car parking spaces.

Based on traffic counts the peak hour is 13:00 to 14:00 on Sunday. The movements at the internal junction are as follows:

Inbound movement	Hourly traffic	Outbound	Hourly traffic
Pingle Drive turn left	578	North car park turn right	493
Pringle Drive straight on Eastbound	324	Pingle Drive Westbound	277
TOTAL	902		770

Table 5.2 Traffic movements at Pingle Brook junction

At peak times traffic management plans are put in place to direct vehicles to available parking. During the outbound phase traffic leaving the main car park will be directed to leave the car park at the middle exit where there is a dedicated exit lane. This removes this traffic from the Pingle Brook junction and will enable traffic leaving the north car parks to turn right virtually unopposed thereby reducing congestion in the car park area. Therefore it can be concluded that the proposed junction layout will be able to operate efficiently without delaying inbound or outbound vehicles.

6 Summary and Conclusion

Royal HaskoningDHV have been instructed by Bicester Nominees Ltd and Bicester Nominees II Ltd to prepare a Transport Statement to accompany a Planning Application to widen an internal junction between Pingle Drive and the entrance to the north car parks and provide a separate footbridge for pedestrians and cyclists alongside the carriageway. The proposals have been developed following informal discussions with Oxfordshire County Council and Cherwell District Council.

The proposals will enhance the operation of Pingle Drive, which has consent to be widened to two lanes inbound, and will enable onsite traffic management to have more flexibility to respond to peak demand. Inbound traffic will be able to turn left into the north car parks from both the nearside and the offside lanes. This will improve the lane utilisation of Pingle Drive as it will enable both lanes to access the north car parks should the main car park be close to capacity.

Therefore this report concludes the following points:

- The improved internal junction would reduce the risk of a delay to inbound vehicles to the site creating a queue and causing congestion that could impact on the public highway.
- Pedestrians and cyclists would benefit from using a separate footbridge structure 3.0 metres wide alongside the carriageway.
- Improved quality of access to Bicester Village railway station for local residents.

In terms of the key test of the NPPF in terms of transport matters, it is considered that if the planning application were not successful, then there would be potentially a higher risk of impact to the public highway occurring. This is because there would be a greater propensity for vehicles to queue back onto the public highway during peak periods.

Conversely, if the planning application is successful, then the widened bridge will assist in managing traffic demand at Bicester Village and will have a positive benefit in reducing the opportunity for traffic to queue and impact on the public highway.

Consequently this demonstrates that the application proposals will not result in a residual cumulative impact in transport terms.

Therefore it is considered that there should be no highways or transportation reason why this application should not be successful.