

DEVELOPMENT INTERNAL MEMORANDUM

From: Head of Strategic Planning and the Economy

To: Head of Public Protection & Development Management (Linda Griffiths)

Our Ref: 3.2

Your Ref: 15/01068/F

Ask for: Maria Garcia Dopazo

Ext: 7970

Date: 24/09/2015

APPLICATION FOR PLANNING PERMISSION PLANNING POLICY CONSULTATION RESPONSE

Planning Application No.	15/01068/F
Address / Location	Bicester Golf And Country Club Akeman Street Chesterton Bicester Oxfordshire OX26 1TE
Proposal	Erection of two storey extension to existing hotel to form 62 new bedrooms (net increase of 60 bedrooms)
Site Details	<p>Bicester Golf and Country Club occupies some 46 hectares of land located in the countryside on the edge of Chesterton, south west of Bicester. The site has an established use offering hotel accommodation (50 bedrooms), conference and wedding venue, golf, health & fitness and tennis.</p> <p>The Council's GIS system indicates there are designated group and individual Tree Preservation Orders on site and 2 parcels of land on the south western part of the site which could possibly be UKBAP grassland habitat. The system also indicates an area of potentially contaminated land in the northern part of the site.</p> <p>The proposed extension lies some 600m west of the north-western end of Chesterton Conservation Area. Public foot path 161/6/10 crosses the site to the west of the proposed extension.</p>
General Comments	The proposed extension concerns the provision of 62 new hotel bedrooms (60 bedrooms net increase) over 2 floors attached to the northern side of the existing hotel. The proposed 2,699.5 sqm GIA will double the existing C1 floor space on site.
Main Development Plan Policies	<p>On the 20 July 2015 the Council adopted the Local Plan 2011-2031 - Part 1. The Local Plan replaces a number of the saved policies of the 1996 adopted Cherwell Local Plan. These are set out in Appendix 7 of the Local Plan 2011-2031.</p> <p>The policies in the Local Plan 2011-2031 and the saved policies of the 1996 Local Plan most pertinent to this planning application are set out below.</p> <p>Local Plan 2011- 2031 - Part 1 (July 2015) PSD1 – Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development SLE1 – Employment Development</p>

	<p>SLE 2 – Securing Dynamic Town Centres SLE 3 – Supporting Tourism Growth SLE4 - Improved Transport and Connections ESD 1: Mitigating and Adapting to Climate Change ESD 2: Energy Hierarchy and Allowable Solutions ESD 3: Sustainable Construction ESD7 – Sustainable Drainage Systems ESD10 – Protection and enhancement of Biodiversity and the Natural Environment ESD13 – Local Landscape Protection and Enhancement ESD15 – The Character of the Built and Historic Environment</p> <p>Local Plan 1996 - Saved Policies (policies not replaced by Local Plan 2011-2031) TR1 – Transportation funding TR7 - Development Attracting traffic on minor roads T5 – proposals for new hotels in the countryside C8 – Development in the Open Countryside C14 – Countryside Management Projects C28- Layout, design and external appearance of new development C32 – Provision of facilities for disable people</p>
<p>NPPF</p>	<p>The main paragraphs of the NPPF which apply are as follows:</p> <p>Paragraph 14 - Presumption in favour of sustainable development. Paragraph 17 - Core Planning Principles Paragraphs 24, 26 and 27– Applying a sequential test for main town centre uses outside existing centres and the undertaking of an impact assessment Paragraph 28 – Supporting a prosperous rural economy Paragraphs 29, 30, 32 and 34-36 - Promoting sustainable transport Paragraph 56, 57, 61-65 - Requiring good design Paragraph 118 – Conserving and enhancing biodiversity Paragraph 162 - Working with other authorities concerning infrastructure Section 12: Conserving and enhancing the historic environment</p>
<p>PPG</p>	<p>The paragraphs of the PPG most pertinent to this application from a Local Plan perspective are:</p> <p>Paragraph: 001Reference ID: 2b-001-20140306 Ensuring the vitality of town centres Paragraph: 010Reference ID: 2b-010-20140306 Use of sequential test in decision-taking Paragraph: 011Reference ID: 2b-011-20140306 Locational requirements in the sequential test Paragraph: 013Reference ID: 2b-013-20140306 Impact test</p>
<p>Non-Statutory Cherwell Local Plan 2011</p>	<p>Whilst some policies within the Non-Statutory Local Plan may remain material, others have in effect been superseded by those of the Local Plan 2011 – 2031 – Part 1. The Planning Policy Team should be contacted on 01295 227985 if advice is required on individual policies.</p> <p>The following are the main policies which apply for this application: T5: Tourist facilities in the countryside TR5: Road safety measures for proposed development TR6: Public transport EN39: Preservation of listed buildings and the character of conservation areas EN40: Preservation of the character and appearance of conservation areas D3: Policy promoting local distinctiveness in design</p>

	D4: Design quality of buildings in general
<p>Other Material Policy Considerations</p>	<p>Cherwell Tourism Development Study 2008</p> <p>The study noted in paragraph 7.4 that [at the time] additional hotel rooms in the pipe line would be sufficient to meet increased demand until 2016. Of relevance to the proposal is the acknowledgement in the study (page 32) that although there was a good range of accommodation, this was mostly small scale and there was a lack of higher quality, larger and branded accommodation. With regards to Bicester, paragraph 3.2 of the study noted that there were ‘...few hotels in Bicester, and certainly nothing of sufficient quality to attract Bicester Village shoppers’.</p> <p>Applicant’s information regarding current trends and existing supply of hotel accommodation</p> <p>The 2008 tourism study indicated there were 19 hotels in the District all 2 and 3 stars or ungraded and 3 proposed hotels (Premier Inn at Bicester, Bicester Golf and Country Club at Chesterton and Holiday Inn at Banbury).</p> <p>These proposed hotels have since been built and the former Weston Manor Hotel upgraded to 4 star, now The Manor at West-on-the Green. There is limited high end accommodation in the District including at The Manor and the Bicester Hotel Golf and Spa at Chesterton. A resolution to approve was granted in 2014 (14/00403/F) for a town centre proposal in Bicester including a hotel.</p> <p>It is acknowledged that although Cherwell may have a good supply of visitor accommodation, this is mainly 3 star accommodation including the opening of the Bicester Premier Inn in 2013. Given current hotel provision in the District, the proximity of Bicester Village and the particular type of accommodation and services provided at the Bicester Hotel and Spa, it is likely that demand levels are high as noted in the information submitted by the applicant but given the date of the latest published Tourism Study (2008) officers should seek advice from CDC’s Recreation and Health department.</p> <p>Planning History</p> <p>The site gained planning permission in 2013 for an extension to provide 51 new bedrooms, a net increase of 49 bedrooms (13/01102/F). Current proposal seeks permission for an extension to provide a 60 room net increase.</p> <p>Sequential Assessment supporting the proposal</p> <p>The applicants sequential test identifies a number of alternative sites from:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • sites in emerging and adopted Local Plan documents indicating hotel use, • applicant’s own searches for vacant and available property, • capacity of existing hotels to accommodate additional rooms in a multifunctional leisure/golf complex, and • sites with planning permission but not completed. <p>The applicant makes use of the checklist in PPG Paragraph: 010 Reference ID: 2b-010-20140306 to justify whether the proposal complies with the sequential test and provides adequate information on the particular market and locational requirements of the proposal.</p> <p>Policy officers do not concur with the applicant’s assessment of Cherwell Local Plan 2011-2031 allocations Bicester 1 and Bicester 3 as being no more sequentially preferable than the application site. Bicester 1 and 3 are intended to</p>

	<p>provide a mix of uses and infrastructure as part of planned strategic urban extensions to Bicester while Chesterton is a rural settlement. Notwithstanding this, it is considered that the applicants have looked at a proportionate number of sites district wide and investigated sufficiently the capacity of existing hotels to accommodate the type of facilities they intend to provide.</p> <p>With the information available to us, we consider that it is unlikely to be a sequentially better site capable of providing accommodation of this type with associated uses including: golf, a spa, weddings etc. Also, due to proximity and the higher end accommodation offered, it will be able to respond well to Bicester Village's accommodation demand.</p> <p>Impact Assessment</p> <p>NPPF paragraph 26 requires an impact assessment for retail, leisure and office development outside of town centres, which are not in accordance with an up-to-date Local Plan. The requirement is subject to locally set thresholds. Local Plan Policy SLE2 sets the threshold for such assessments at 2,000 sqm gross at Banbury, 1500 sqm gross at Bicester and 350 sqm gross elsewhere.</p> <p>Although the proposed development would fall within the size threshold (c.2,700 sqm GIA proposed), it is for a hotel (tourism development) as per the NPPF's definition of 'main town centre uses' and thus falls outside the uses identified for the purpose of paragraph 26 of the NPPF. PPG Paragraph 13 ID: 2b-013-20140306 makes clearer the intention of NPPF Paragraph 26, noting that the test does not apply to all 'main town centre uses' but relates to retail, leisure and office development. An impact test is not required for the purpose of this application proposal.</p>
<p>Overall Policy Observations</p>	<p>There is a hotel already operating in this site with the principle of an extension to the hotel established by extant planning permission 13/01102/F. However the proposals will need to be considered against the current planning policy framework with regard to material considerations.</p> <p>The NPPF supports economic growth in rural areas including the provision of tourist and visitor facilities in appropriate locations. At the local level, Policy SLE3 supports proposals for new or improved tourist facilities in sustainable locations to increase overnight stays within the District. With regards to rural areas, paragraph B.36 of the Cherwell Local Plan limits employment growth in rural areas to schemes involving amongst other: <i>'sustainable growth in tourism including recreation based tourism'</i>. Saved Policy T5 of the 1996 adopted Local Plan considers proposals to extend existing hotels in the countryside acceptable provided they conform to other relevant policies.</p> <p>The proposal is regarded as tourism development, a 'main town centre use', for the purpose of NPPF and Policy SLE2 of the adopted Cherwell Local Plan. With regards to vitality of town centres, Policy SLE2 states that retail and other main town centre uses will be directed towards Bicester town centre and it requires a sequential approach to 'main town centre uses' with consideration given first to town centre and then edge of centre before considering out of centre locations. This proposal is in an out of town location but it is considered that the proposal satisfies the sequential test. The principle of the proposal is acceptable in policy terms but officers should consider any potential impact on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • highway safety by traffic generation in this rural location and the adequacy of proposed access and parking arrangements in liaison with Oxfordshire County Council in accordance to SLE4 and saved policies TR1,TR7;

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • designated Tree Preservation Orders, whether there are UKBAP grassland on site and the potential for biodiversity gain in accordance with Policy ESD10, Policy ESD13 and saved Policy C14; • the landscape/ countryside. Policy C8 of the 1996 Local Plan should be considered in the context of Policy ESD13 of the 2011-2031 Local Plan. • Chesterton Conservation area in accordance with ESD15 and NSLP Policies EN39 and EN40. <p>A high quality design should be sought for this proposal.</p>
<p>Policy Recommendation</p>	<p>There is no planning policy objection in principle subject to detailed consideration of transport, biodiversity, design and conservation matters.</p>