

# NW Bicester Masterplan

Statement of Community Involvement Report

21<sup>st</sup> March 2014

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Public Exhibition Press Advert  
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# 1. Introduction

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- 1.1 Following the identification of land to the north west of Bicester as a proposed site for an Eco-Town by Cherwell District Council (CDC) and with support from Oxfordshire County Council and Bicester Town Council, NW Bicester was announced as one of four new Eco-Towns in Eco-Towns: A Supplement to Planning Policy Statement One (July 2009). Since this time and in its role as lead developer, A2Dominion has secured permission for **the first 'Exemplar'** phase of the scheme, which comprises 393 new homes.
- 1.2 This strategy is one of a number of documents prepared on behalf of A2Dominion in support of the Masterplan. The Planning Policy Statement: Eco-Towns A Supplement to Planning Policy Statement 1 (July 2009) requires the preparation and submission of a master plan to demonstrate the eco town standards, as set out in the PPS1 supplement, will be addressed. The master plan will therefore provide the context for the formulation and preparation of subsequent planning applications. It is open to the Council to adopt the master plan for development control purposes.
- 1.3 **In line with CDC's own requirements and its own best practice approach,** A2Dominion has embraced a firm commitment to consulting local stakeholders and the local community in connection with the development of its draft Masterplan proposals. Indeed, the company has a strong track record in engaging with members of the local community, community groups, local councillors and other relevant third-party stakeholders and has invested considerable resources into building partnerships with the Bicester community.
- 1.4 The Masterplan has been informed by previous consultation that began in 2010 as part of the Exemplar phase. However, this was the subject of a previous and separate consultation report submitted at the time which detailed the relevant programme, activities and outcomes.
- 1.5 This document has been produced with the aim of clearly and concisely detailing the community consultation undertaken in 2013 by A2Dominion in respect of its emerging Masterplan proposals. Furthermore, this report sets out

how comments received have been considered by A2Dominion and its consultant team.

1.6 This document will therefore, provide a chronological account of the consultation activity that has been undertaken during the development of the draft Masterplan and, in addition, the activity that A2Dominion proposes to complete in future.

1.7 In order to assist with the community consultation and communication, A2Dominion appointed Remarkable Engagement, a specialist communications consultancy, to form part of its wider project team for the proposed redevelopment.

## 2. Background

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### 2.1 Policy Context

2.1.1 A2Dominion has been preparing its Masterplan proposals in line with the principles set out in Planning Policy Statement 1 (PPS1, Supplementary), including:

- A minimum number of 5,000 new homes built
- **A mix of affordable housing in line with CDC's requirements**
- 40 per cent public and private green space throughout
- Creating 1 job per homes within a sustainable travel distance
- Achieving a true zero carbon standard for the development
- Attaining a modal shift in travel patterns to encourage non-car use
- Real time energy and travel monitoring in every homes
- High levels of energy efficiency in the fabric of the buildings
- Primary schools within 800m of all homes

### 2.2 Masterplan Proposal

2.2.1 Within the key principles for the NW Bicester eco-town development, the Masterplan makes provision for:

- The creation of up to 6,000 new homes across the site
- Commercial floorspace
- Two local centres
- 40% green infrastructure, which may include country parks, allotments, sports pitches, nature reserves as well as other forms of greenspace
- Social and community facilities, including three additional primary schools (in addition to the primary school already included within the Exemplar phase), a secondary school, community centres and a health centre

2.2.2 If the Masterplan is considered acceptable, it will be used as the lead resource for all parties involved.

## **2.3 Cherwell District Council's Statement of Community Involvement**

2.3.1 Cherwell District Council adopted its Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) in July 2006. The document outlines the following as its expectations on the part of applicants to undertaken community consultation. The following extract sets out the methods that CDC encourages applicants to adopted as part of pre-application consultation.

2.3.2 *For a significant planning application, the applicant is encouraged to consider use of the following:*

- Public meetings/area, town and village meetings
- Letters e.g. to statutory bodies
- Parish/Town Councils
- Electronic consultation – web site, email
- One to one meetings with selected stakeholders
- Exhibitions/road shows/displays/stalls
- Workshops
- **Planning 'surgeries'**
- Formal written questionnaires/surveys/referenda
- Local design panels/groups
- Focus/discussion groups or citizen panels
- **"Planning for real" exercises & "enquiry by design"**
- Media
- Development briefs
- Leaflets/brochures/posters

## **2.4 Work streams**

2.4.1 In order to provide structure to the Masterplan process, work has been focused into a number of work streams as follows:

- Masterplan and Hubs
- Masterplan Sustainable Construction
- **Community Governance and Engagement**

- **Community Infrastructure and Development**
- **Employment**
- **Transport**
- **Energy**
- **Landscape/ Green Infrastructure**
- **Water**
- **Viability**

2.4.2 For each work stream, key consultants and statutory consultees were identified as work stream members. These members have been responsible for taking their relevant work stream forward, and feeding into the Masterplan process.

2.4.3 To inform this process, each work stream group prepared a brief which provided a tool against which progress could be monitored. Each brief identified the following:

- **Work** stream Leads
- **Work** stream Members
- **Key Stakeholders and Areas of Interest**
- Terms of Reference
- **Objectives**
- **Relevant Eco Town Criteria, Policy and Best Practice**
- **Matters to be Tested**
- **Key Outputs**

2.4.4 As well as providing a structure to deliver the Masterplan, work streams have provided the opportunity to consult with key consultees throughout the process. A series of meetings were set up for each work stream in which work stream members attended, and where applicable key stakeholders. This has provided a useful tool in securing on-going feedback from key consultees.

2.4.5 Final outputs from each work stream have informed the Masterplan framework, and strategies prepared based on each. Furthermore, strategies have been prepared based on each work stream. These strategies have been submitted in support of the Masterplan.



## 3. Pre-Submission Consultation

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### 3.1 Executive Summary

3.1.1 Government guidance and CDC's own SCI encourages pre-application discussions and community involvement from the outset.

### 3.2 Consultation objectives and methodology

3.2.1 Prior to consultation taking place on the draft Masterplan proposals, a community engagement programme was shared with CDC officers to confirm the intended approach, methodology and key activities in respect of engaging the community and key stakeholders.

3.2.2 Key objectives of the consultation programme included;

- Raising awareness and understanding amongst key target audiences
- Engaging the local community in respect of the development of a Masterplan for NW Bicester
- Ensuring stakeholders, the local community and its representatives were involved in formulating the proposals
- Building productive working relationships with key influencers, opinion-formers and decision-makers
- Acknowledging and involving key individuals and parties, including Initial Management Board (IMB) group members and recognising the key role this and other groups play during the consultation process.

3.2.3 The purpose of the consultation was to help inform the proposals for NW Bicester as the Masterplan progressed. In addition, involve and update stakeholders throughout the project.

### **3.3 Consultation with statutory consultees**

3.3.1 The various work streams set up prior to submission of the Masterplan, provided a forum in which topic areas could be discussed. Key consultees and statutory consultees attended regular work stream meetings, allowing all to be engaged in the Masterplan process and Masterplan outputs agreed. This approach provided a useful mechanism for securing feedback. Furthermore, regular meetings were held with CDC in which Masterplan progress was discussed.

### **3.4 Initial Management Board Group (IMB)**

3.4.1 As part of their existing work on the first Exemplar phase of NW Bicester, A2Dominion are committed to creating a unique resident-led community management structure for NW Bicester that gives local people the opportunity to have a say over the decisions that affect their immediate area.

3.4.2 To ensure that the new community does not grow in isolation from the wider town A2Dominion have identified and engaged a group of key Bicester Stakeholders to establish an Initial Management Board Working Group.

3.4.3 Between October 2012 and March 2014 over a series of 8 workshops the group have worked with A2Dominion to shape the initial structure and programme of activities the IMB, and also spent some time testing the principles of the wider NW Bicester Masterplan **and A2Dominion's approach to consultation. As well as** participating in the Key Stakeholder Group Workshops (section 3.5), the IMB reviewed:

- Earlier community facilities mapping work to populate a baseline of existing community facilities, their functionality and proximity to NW Bicester, identifying gaps in provision.
- And approved A2Dominions approach to robust community engagement and provided ideas and experiences of what creative consultation in Bicester looks like to further shape the approach.

- And analysed the options for a unique sport & recreational offer on the NW Bicester Masterplan.

In addition, the IMB work included engagement with representatives from:

- Grassroots Bicester
- Bicester Green Gym
- Bicester Youth Council
- Bicester Rotary Society
- Bicester Local History Society
- Bicester Vision
- Bure Park Residents Association
- Bicester Emmanuel Church
- Oxford Diocese
- Caversfield Parish Council
- Bicester Churches
- OYAP
- Bicester Green Reuse Centre
- Bicester Town Council
- CDC
- Bicester Community Land Trust
- Oxfordshire Voluntary

### **3.5 Key Stakeholder Group – Workshop Series**

3.5.1 As part of the initial engagement around the evolution and preparation of the draft Masterplan, **in addition to ‘testing’ the Masterplan brief, A2Dominion initiated three ‘Stakeholder Workshops’ prior to wider public consultation.**

3.5.2 The participants of the stakeholder workshops were selected by A2Dominion in liaison with CDC and on the basis of their roles and remit. The participants ranged from representatives of all relevant tiers of local government, community leaders, third party interest groups and more technical stakeholders from statutory bodies. A full list of stakeholders invited to participate in the workshop series is detailed in the individual reports produced following each **session, which form part of this report’s Appendices.**

3.5.3 The overall facilitator for all three stakeholder workshops was Henry Cleary, OBE, previously Deputy Director of Housing and Growth at the Department for Communities and Local Government.

### **3.6 Workshop 1**

3.6.1 The first stakeholder workshop was held on Wednesday 10<sup>th</sup> April 2013 at the Littlebury Hotel, Bicester between 9am and 12.30pm. The premise of this session, which was co-ordinated with support from CDC, was to re-activate leading local stakeholders given **A2Dominion's intention to prepare a comprehensive Masterplan** for the NW Bicester site.

3.6.2 The focus of the event was to explore the contents of the draft Masterplan brief for the site and to ensure that it reflected the aspirations and intentions of CDC, OCC and BTC as well as other relevant stakeholders.

3.6.3 27 representatives from those stakeholders invited and drawn from political, community, business and voluntary organisations in and around Bicester were welcomed to the event by Henry Cleary who explained the purpose of the event. Details of attendees can be found in the first workshop report contained within the Appendices of this report.

Participants then listened to introductory presentations about the development, the Masterplan brief and the process towards preparing the Masterplan, given by Jenny Barker (CDC) and Iain Painting (lead planning consultant, Barton Willmore) respectively.

3.6.4 Following the initial presentations, two exercises were initiated. The first involved four groups, each of six or seven participants, moving around four tables every 20 minutes to discuss and provide their views on the various topics contained within the Masterplan brief as set out below:

- **Table 1:** Green Infrastructure / Biodiversity / Landscape and Historic Environment
- **Table 2:** Zero Carbon / Climate Change / Waste / Water / Homes
- **Table 3:** Transport / Employment

- **Table 4:** Local services / Community Building and Governance / Healthy Lifestyles.

3.6.5 Each table was facilitated by an officer from CDC and / or OCC together with representatives from A2Dominion and its consultant team. Comments were recorded on large A0 size paper alongside each of the Masterplan issues - additional topics which people thought the Masterplan should address were added at the bottom of the sheets.

3.6.6 Attendees were also free to raise other issues, which although not necessarily directly related to the Masterplan, were of relevance to the project as a whole. By the end of this exercise everyone attending would have had an opportunity to make comments on all subject areas covered by the Masterplan brief.

3.6.7 After a short break, attendees were each provided with 12 sticky dots and asked to visit each of the tables in turn to place their sticky dots on those items which they considered to be of priority importance for the Masterplan to address - 3 dots per person, per table.

3.6.8 The event was concluded with a final short presentation by Jenny Barker setting out the next steps in the process, with Henry Cleary thanking people for their time and input. A summary of table discussions as recorded on the flipcharts (by topic/table) is detailed below with a full summary contained within the individual report of the workshop included within the Appendices.

#### **Table 1 Overview**

- Little dissent from the thrust of what was proposed
- Exception to the above being that amendments were sought to the wording of the action regarding the provision of the cemetery – there was a wish to a stronger commitment made to this with reference made to a burial ground as opposed to a cemetery

#### **Table 2 Overview**

- Strong interest in the environmental and technological improvements that will be built into the design of the development
- A clear appetite for innovation and where this should be most usefully focused

- **Confusion and some scepticism about the term 'zero carbon'; why it is being sought and what it exactly means**
  - A need expressed to see this item thought through and addressed both in the Masterplan brief, the final Masterplan and outline application.

**Table 3 Overview**

- Comments indicating broad agreement with the Masterplan on these topics
- A keenness to see good quality alternative provision to the car designed into the development and for any transport assessment to look at and address circumstances within the site but also within the wider town and further afield.

Whilst not directly related to the Masterplan, several other significant comments were raised:

- A wish for the Bicester to be promoted and marketed as a green employment location with the relevant skills to attract inward investment and encourage business to relocate
- An aspiration for there to be one railway station created, which would become a hub for east/west and north/south railway routes as well becoming a general transport hub for the town.

**Table 4 Overview**

- A clear interest in how NW Bicester would develop and integrate as a community, the importance of its built social infrastructure
- Acknowledgement that the above two matters are inextricably linked
- In common with the discussions at the other tables, there was little disagreement with the thrust of the Masterplan in this area; instead people were keen to add some detail on the specifics that should be addressed as well as citing some useful examples to be looked.

## **3.7 Workshop 2**

- 3.7.1 The second stakeholder workshop was held on Monday 22 July 2013 at The Littlebury Hotel, Bicester between 9am and 1pm. Following the first session and with initial work underway on the draft Masterplan, this second workshop was **held to aid and further inform A2Dominion's work** relating to the evolving Masterplan.
- 3.7.2 The focus of the event was to encourage discussion and invite feedback from stakeholders regarding key topics relating to the emerging Masterplan process and associated Work streams.
- 3.7.3 The event was attended by 36 stakeholders including consultant team members and comprising individuals as per the first stakeholder workshop, drawn from political, community, business and voluntary organisations in and around Bicester. Details of attendees can be found in the second workshop report contained within the Appendices of this report.
- 3.7.4 Participants were welcomed and provided with initial introductions by Gerry Walker (Regional Development Director, A2Dominion) and independent facilitator, Henry Cleary. This was followed by two sessions relating to five key topic areas as detailed below, with three topics discussed in session 1 and the remaining two topics in session 2. Participants were seated at three tables with a **ten minute presentation given on each topic by A2Dominion's consultant team** followed by 20 minute round table discussions and a five minute feedback session so that three main outcomes from each table could be captured, relayed to all participants and recorded on a flipchart. This format enabled each of the five topics to discuss in turn with facilitators on each table reporting back during the 5 minute feedback session.
- 3.7.5 Each table had three facilitators including an A2Dominion and CDC representative.
- **Topic 1: Housing Numbers**
  - **Topic 2: Green Infrastructure**

- **Topic 3: Schools and Community Hubs**
- **Topic 4: Access and Transport**
- **Topic 5: Employment**

3.7.6 The event was concluded by Henry Cleary thanking people for their time and input. A summary of table discussions as recorded on the flipcharts (by topic/table) is detailed below with a full summary contained within the individual report of the workshop included within the Appendices.

#### **Topic 1 Overview – Housing Numbers**

- The need to test and plan for the optimum number of homes the site could allow through the planning process with a view that this can exceed 5000
- The need for the density, design and eco principles of the development to be safeguarded through the Masterplan process and not compromised to accommodate an increased number of homes.

#### **Topic 2 Overview – Green Infrastructure**

- A need to design and plan for structured and focussed areas of open space with protected habitats.
- That a clear hierarchy of open space is ensured throughout the development.
- Maximise public access to open space, but avoid locating green space as a buffer between NW Bicester and existing communities.
- Create strong links with existing green corridors and surrounding countryside
- Ambitious in terms of sports provision and including a move away from the provision of small 'postage stamp' play areas.

#### **Topic 3 Overview – Schools & Community Hubs**

- Plan for 2 vibrant commercial hubs that contain a range of facilities and co-exist with primary schools to increase viability and parking provision
- Enable and encourage use of centres by new and existing communities.
- Consider the creation of a smaller third centre around a potential health hub
- More detail is required about how themed hubs could work



- Potentially allow for two primary schools if the total number of homes built is close to 5000, but plan for three if the number of homes is significantly more than 5000, with the potential for one to co-locate with the secondary school; more information to be considered to inform this decision
- Access and strong connections to green infrastructure are key factors when locating the secondary school. Multi-use facilities within the secondary school to be provided.

#### **Topic 4 Overview – Access & Transport**

- Further consideration of access and transport options is required to test the impacts of each.

#### **Topic 5 Overview – Employment**

- Agreement that jobs generated from the NW Bicester development can be created both on-site and in wider areas.
- In considering jobs on site, wider consideration has to be given to the town wide position on B8 type uses and locations.
  - NW Bicester should consider alternative types and locations for employment space to achieve the target number of jobs on site.
  - Consider flexible business space that can evolve with the development. Be ambitious with employment proposals and attract knowledge based industries that buy-into the NW Bicester philosophy.

3.7.7 The first and second workshops helped secure early feedback from key stakeholders on the Masterplan process and proposals. In light of comments received, consideration was given to how best to take the Masterplan forward, which included provision for a further workshop prior to public consultation as detailed below.

### **3.8 Workshop 3**

3.8.1 A third stakeholder group workshop was held on Wednesday 25 September 2013 at the Littlebury Hotel, Bicester between 2pm and 5pm. With work progressing on the Masterplan and with feedback arising from the earlier sessions over the importance of the potential options relating to access, transport and movement, it was considered appropriate to hold a topic specific session.

3.8.2 The event was attended by 35 stakeholders including consultant team members and comprising individuals as per the first two stakeholder workshops, drawn from political, community, business and voluntary organisations in and around Bicester. Details of attendees can be found in the final workshop report contained within the Appendices of this report.

3.8.3 As at the earlier workshops, participants were welcomed and provided with initial introductions by Gerry Walker of A2Dominion and Henry Cleary. This was followed by a feedback presentation on the findings from the 22 July workshop relating to the key topics of housing numbers, green infrastructure, schools and community hubs and employment.

3.8.4 Philip Harker (Hyder Consulting) then formally introduced the workshop and provided an overview on previous discussions held on access and transport, and the progress and work undertaken following the July workshop.

3.8.5 The workshop consisted of the following three access and connection themed sessions as detailed below.

- Part 1: Walking and cycling connections
- Part 2: Bus connections
- Part 3: Highway connections

3.8.6 Participants were seated at two tables with a 10 minute presentation given on **each topic by A2Dominion's consultant team followed by 20 minute round table** discussions and a 5 minute feedback session so that three main outcomes from each table could be captured, relayed to all participants and recorded on a flip

chart. This format enabled each of the three topics to be discussed in turn with facilitators on each table reporting back during the 5 minute feedback session.

3.8.7 Each table had two facilitators including an A2Dominion and Hyder Consulting representative.

3.8.8 As with the earlier workshops, Henry Cleary concluded the workshop and thanked people for their time and input with Iain Painting (Barton Willmore) subsequently updating attendees on the next steps. A summary of table discussions as recorded on the flipcharts (by topic/table) is detailed below with a full summary contained within the individual report of the workshop included within the Appendices.

3.8.9 Following the workshop on transport and access held on 25th September, the lead consultants for the transport topic, Philip Harker and Janice Hughes, reviewed the points raised and took the findings back to the Transport Workstream for wider discussion.

3.8.10 The statements below set out the considered responses to the points raised, providing clarity as to how these matters are being progressed as part of the Masterplan process and preferred options to move forward with to consultations in early December.

#### 3.8.11 Part 1 Walking and Cycling Connections

3.8.12 The discussion pointed to the need to set out clearly the principles for the walking and cycling routes and consider a range of destinations. A revised walking and cycling strategy has been produced and will be made available to stakeholders in late November. Specifically, a strategy section sets out the ideal requirements for the primary and secondary connections as:

- Accessible and integrated – giving an integrated network of routes, connecting to key destinations, direct routes, providing secure and sheltered cycle parking;
- Safe – routes having natural surveillance, safe crossings and segregated from traffic;

- Well signed and marketed – clear signage, branded routes between NW Bicester and the town centre and well publicised; and
- High quality – all weather surface, well lit and maintained as adopted routes by the local authority.

3.8.13 The revised document concentrates on planning for the main connections between NW Bicester and the town centre, whilst recognising that there are a range of other local connections that will be used to other facilities and services, specifically employment sites, schools and local shopping facilities.

3.8.14 The main connections are identified to focus investment whilst recognising that there are many examples of local routes, particularly for pedestrians, which will be well used through the residential areas.

#### 3.8.15 Part 2 Bus Connections

3.8.16 The discussion regarding the provision of bus connections for NW Bicester focussed on a number of areas, the need to give buses priority and minimise journey times from the development to key destinations; the importance of having a service which connects the different parts of NW Bicester as well as to the town; and the need to consider how services integrate with other routes and connect to a wider range of key destinations.

3.8.17 With regards to journey times, there was discussion that a service needs to offer less than a 15 minute journey to the town centre. The journey time will depend on the origin of the journey within NW Bicester and decisions by bus operators will also influence this. It is considered difficult to be prescriptive about a maximum time but it is recognised that the key issue is for the service to be attractive in comparison to using a car, taking account of journey time with cost and convenience.

3.8.18 By way of response, the transport team has revisited the bus options and provided a revised paper to the Transport Workstream group (comprising A2Dominion with officers of Cherwell District Council and Oxfordshire County Council, Hyder consultants and BioRegional). The paper considers a wider range of destinations and assesses the impact of a service which always provides a

connection between parts of the site. The paper puts forward a preferred option using Bucknell Road to and from the town centre, with a loop through the west and east sides of the railway using a general traffic underpass and a new Howes Lane to the north of the existing route (which gives potential to create a boulevard with development to the south, better integrated with the existing residential areas).

3.8.19 At the feedback session there were some comments that Middleton Stoney Road offers a better route. This might still be used depending on future bus operator requirements, but it is considered on balance that Bucknell Road offers a route with less conflict with general traffic and potential to improve priority where it joins the town centre. A route using Middleton Stoney Road relies on arriving via Kings End, which is a particularly congested part of the road network.

3.8.20 The next step is for the paper to be discussed and agreed within Oxfordshire County Council to determine the way forward. With respect to providing bus priority, a number of bus only links have been incorporated in key locations within the emerging Masterplan and there are on-going discussions in the workstream regarding the possibilities for bus priority within the town centre.

### 3.8.21 Part 3 Highway Connections

3.8.22 Following the presentation of the range of highway access options, Option 2 was most favoured involving a new route for Howes Lane and a new railway under-pass to the north of the Avonbury Business Park. As part of this option, it is suggested that **Bucknell Road (north of Lord's Lane) is diverted through the development**. The reason for this is to reduce the attractiveness of Bucknell Road towards Bucknell village for through traffic, whilst maintaining access for Bucknell residents. The option has been incorporated into the emerging Masterplan and topographical surveys are underway to enable preliminary design work to commence on the option so it can be tested for feasibility and consultations with Network Rail can be undertaken.

3.8.23 A further consultation event took place with the residents and businesses living in the immediate vicinity of Howes Lane on Saturday 9 November at the West

Bicester Community Centre to seek feedback on the proposed access and transport plans and understand the views of those most affected and what they would like to see become of the existing Howes Lane if it gets realigned.

3.8.24 There was discussion in the session of an Oxfordshire County Council strategic network option involving a ring road around the NW Bicester site, as one option being considered at present to address traffic issues for the whole town. Oxfordshire County Council are undertaking traffic modelling work to see if this is an option to be taken forward.

### **3.9 Freecycle Live Event**

3.9.1 **As part of A2Dominion's community** consultation and to ensure the wider Bicester community was informed and involved in the preparation of the draft Masterplan, members of the team sought a range of local opportunities and platforms through which to engage local residents. As a result, representatives of A2Dominion and Remarkable attended the Freecycle Live Event on Saturday 27 July 2013, organised by local community group, Grassroots Bicester.

3.9.2 Although this did not represent formal consultation, a display stand detailing key elements of the NW Bicester eco-town proposals was manned for the duration of the event. Members of the team used the event to informally speak to local people and through the use of a questionnaire, sought early feedback. 31 responses were received following the event. A copy of the feedback form used can be found in the Appendices.

3.9.3 It is encouraging to note that over 84 per cent of the feedback responses either supported the proposals or expressed support with reservations; in addition, only 10 per cent of responses have expressed outright objection.

3.9.4 A detailed analysis of the comments made can be found in the subsequent public consultation feedback section.

### 3.10 Howes Lane Residents Drop-In

3.10.1 Following feedback received during the stakeholder workshop held in September 2013 and with a key consideration of the Masterplan proposals being the planned realignment of Howes Lane, a dedicated drop-in event was arranged for surrounding residents. The event was held at the West Bicester Community Centre on Saturday 9 November 2013 between 10.00am and 2.00pm.

3.10.2 Residents from the surrounding area were informed of the dedicated event via invite letter, a copy of which is included in the Appendices.



*Howes Lane event consultation area*

3.10.3 Representatives of A2Dominion, Farrells, BioRegional and Remarkable were in attendance for the duration of the event and at which a series of display boards were on show. A copy of the display boards used can be found in the Appendices.

3.10.4A total of 261 residents including 11 local businesses were invited to attend the event. A total of 66 residents attended over the course of the day with 34 completed feedback forms being returned.



*Residents at the Howes Lane event*

3.10.5A detailed analysis of the feedback is included in the subsequent public consultation feedback section.



### 3.11 Public Exhibition

3.11.1 In order to provide the local community with every opportunity to view, consider and provide feedback on the draft Masterplan proposals, a public exhibition was held over the course of Friday 6 December between 2pm and 8pm and Saturday 7 December 2013 between 10.00am and 4.00pm in Unit 3, Crown Walk, Bicester. The public sessions were preceded by a dedicated stakeholder event held on Thursday 5 December between 3.00pm and 8.00pm.



*Unit 3, Crown Walk, Bicester*

3.11.2 Awareness of the event was created through an initial community invite newsletter, which was distributed to 15,000 homes in the vicinity of the site on the 22<sup>nd</sup> November 2013. A full copy of the newsletter, as seen below, is also included in the Appendices.



A2Dominion NW Bicester  
**Have your say in helping to shape the UK's first eco town masterplan**

As you may be aware, North West Bicester (NW Bicester) is a unique project led by A2Dominion to provide the UK's first eco town.

In the last few months, A2Dominion has been preparing a masterplan for NW Bicester which, when finalised, will be used to guide the future development of the eco town and its various component parts.

Following extensive discussions with Cherwell District Council and a range of local Bicester representatives and organisations, A2Dominion has now completed its draft masterplan.

We would like to invite the community to a public exhibition to view the masterplan proposals and meet the team. The exhibition is being held on:

Friday 6 December  
 between 2pm and 8pm  
 and Saturday 7 December  
 between 10am and 4pm

At Unit 3, Pioneer Square, Bicester

Members of the team will be on hand to answer any questions that you have and to talk you through the details of the proposals. Feedback forms will also be available so we can hear your views and receive community feedback.

**Interested in finding out more?**

If you have any questions about the masterplan or forthcoming events, please call the NW Bicester project team on freephone 0800 298 7040, email [info@nwbicester.co.uk](mailto:info@nwbicester.co.uk) or visit [www.nwbicester.co.uk](http://www.nwbicester.co.uk).

If you would like to have your say and find out more about the masterplan, we would be pleased to see you at our forthcoming public exhibitions. More details can be found over the page.

**About the proposals and masterplan**

The masterplan will set out the guiding principles for the future development of NW Bicester, including:

- the number of new homes and location of these
- supporting community facilities and location
- the location and nature of the scheme's open spaces and green infrastructure
- access arrangements - vehicular, pedestrian and cycle routes for the existing and new community
- highway arrangements to serve the neighbourhood
- the nature and location of the planned employment space

Following public consultation, further work will be undertaken by the project team so the masterplan can be finalised. This will then be submitted to Cherwell District Council, who will review its suitability. If the Council is satisfied that what's been prepared by A2Dominion will guide an acceptable and appropriate development at NW Bicester, the documents and plans that make up the masterplan will be used to inform future planning applications.



THINKING ABOUT TOMORROW

*The community newsletter*

3.11.3 The invite newsletter provided initial background on the Masterplan proposals together with details of the public exhibition as well as the supporting telephone enquiry line and dedicated project website. The scope of the households invited to attend the exhibition can be seen on the map overleaf and a full copy of the invite newsletter can be found in the Appendices.



*The consultation area*

3.11.4As referenced, a dedicated stakeholder preview session was held on Thursday 5 December with the below individuals invited to attend. The stakeholder preview invitation letters, issued on 22 November 2013 with a copy of the invite newsletter, contained the details of the exhibition, as well as information relating to the telephone enquiry line and dedicated project website. Copies of the stakeholder preview invitation letters are included in the Appendices.

- Cherwell District Council Executive & Lead Officers
- Cherwell District Council Political Group Leaders
- Cherwell District Council Cabinet members
- Cherwell District Council Local Ward members
- Cherwell District Council Planning Committee members
- Oxfordshire County Council Executive & Lead Officers
- Oxfordshire County Council Political Group Leaders
- Eco Bicester Strategic Delivery Board
- Bicester Town Council
- Caversfield Parish Council
- Bucknell Parish Council

- Chesterton Parish Council
- Middleton Stoney Parish Council
- Sir Tony Baldry, MP
- Community Groups
- Local media
- IMB group
- Primary and Secondary Schools
- Health service providers & agencies
- Faith groups
- Hard to reach groups and associations

3.11.5 To further raise awareness of the public exhibition, news releases were issued to the local and regional media including Oxford Mail, Bicester Advertiser and Review supported by paid for advertisements.



**NW Bicester: Have your say in helping to shape the UK's first eco town masterplan**

Friday 6 December 2013 between 2pm and 8pm  
& Saturday 7 December between 10am and 4pm

North West Bicester (NW Bicester) is a unique project led by A2Dominion to provide the UK's first eco town.

Following discussions with a range of local representatives and organisations, A2Dominion is now seeking community feedback on the emerging draft masterplan for NW Bicester.

If you would like the chance to find out more about the masterplan, how it will serve to shape the future of NW Bicester, as well as having the opportunity to meet the project team and have your say, A2Dominion would be pleased to see you at its forthcoming public exhibitions being held on: Friday 6 December 2013 between 2pm and 8pm & Saturday 7 December between 10am and 4pm

**At Unit 3,  
Pioneer Square, Bicester**  
(The unit is located adjacent to Coles Books and close to Boots Opticians and WH Smith)

**For further information, please call the NW Bicester project team on freephone 0800 298 7040, email at [info@nwbicester.co.uk](mailto:info@nwbicester.co.uk) or visit [www.nwbicester.co.uk](http://www.nwbicester.co.uk)**

north west bicester | a2dominion | THINKING ABOUT TOMORROW

*The Oxford Mail advert*

3.11.6 Two half pages adverts appeared in the Bicester Review on 29th November and the 6th December as well as a digital advert with 3,000 views per week. In

addition, adverts appeared in the Bicester Advertiser and Oxford Mail on Thursday 28<sup>th</sup> November and Thursday 5<sup>th</sup> December. Radio interviews were given by Gerry Walker of A2Dominion on 5 and 6 December which helped further promote the exhibition. Furthermore, posters were also produced and placed in key locations, including Bicester Library. Copies of the advertisements and posters are included in the Appendices.



*Unit 3 prior to the exhibition*

3.11.7 The exhibition displayed details about the draft Masterplan proposals and included information on:

- Site background
- Masterplan overview
- New zero carbon homes
- Green spaces and landscaping

- Highways and access arrangements
- Community facilities
- Employment provision
- Community governance
- Next steps and timescales

3.11.8 Copies of the exhibition display boards are contained within the Appendices.



*Residents view the display boards*

3.11.9 As part of the public exhibition, information was also on display about the permitted Exemplar phase of the NW Bicester eco-town alongside interactive stands relating to energy, energy efficiency, recycling and one planet living.

3.11.10 The following materials were also available:

- Feedback forms
- A visitors book, for registering interest and a desire to receive further information
- Freepost envelopes for the feedback forms



*Residents completing feedback forms*

3.11.11 The exhibition also provided:

- A ballot box to place completed feedback forms
- An A3 copy of the consultation area
- Pens and pads of paper
- A-board signage to lead attendees into the venue

3.11.12 Feedback forms could be completed at the venue, returned via the supplied postage-paid envelopes or completed online via the NW Bicester website.

3.11.13 These were then collated and the feedback analysed. A copy of the feedback form is included within the Appendices.

3.11.14 Representatives of A2Dominion, Barton Willmore (planning consultants), Farrells (architects and Masterplanners), Hyder Consulting (highways and drainage consultants), SQW (employment and economic consultants), BioRegional (sustainability consultants) and Remarkable Engagement were on hand during the course of all three sessions available to answer questions throughout the exhibition.

3.11.15 Whilst 388 individuals signed the attendees registration book (129 attendees, Friday 6 December, 221, Saturday 7 December), it is estimated that a total of circa 430 people attended the public exhibition over the course of the three days, including the following stakeholders:

- Leader of CDC
- Local Member of Parliament
- Representatives of BaECON
- Bicester Town Council
- Bucknell Parish Council
- Chesterton Parish Council
- Caversfield Parish Council
- Bicester Vision
- Bicester Green Gym
- Bicester Chamber of Commerce
- Representatives of Bure Park Residents Association
- Local School Governors and Representatives **including St Mary's School**
- Grassroots Bicester
- Officers of OCC and CDC

3.11.16 Following the event, a total of 67 completed feedback forms were received, seven of which **were via the project's supporting website**. A summary of the feedback can be found in the next section of this report.



### **3.12 Emmanuel Church Café Event**

3.12.1 To further engage the local community, representatives of A2Dominion and Remarkable attended a coffee morning held at Emmanuel Church, Bure Park, Bicester between 9.30am and 1.30pm on Friday 13 December 2013.

3.12.2 A number of the leading display boards used at the earlier public exhibition were available to view whilst members of the team were on hand to discuss the proposals with coffee morning attendees including a mothers and toddlers group. Furthermore, attendees were provided with copies of exhibition literature and referred to the project website if they wished to see further information.

3.12.3 Approximately 10 people viewed the exhibition boards although with discussions taking place with visitors in the café area; overall around 20 people were spoken with by the team. Attendees included:

- Steve Willott, Chair of Bure Park **Residents'** Association
- Reverend Ian Biscoe, Bicester Churches

### **3.13 Further outreach with community and hard-to-reach stakeholders**

3.13.1 Following the main consultation event held in December 2013, further contact was made with key community groups, including hard to reach groups and associations. In addition, further meeting offers were made with the following activities taking place in December 2013 and January and February 2014.

3.13.2 Follow up contact was initiated with the following key groups and organisations following the main consultation event held in December 2013. The purpose of the follow up activity was to ensure groups were aware of the project, to see if further information was required and offer meetings or briefings if required in advance of submission of the Masterplan.

- Southwold Primary School
- Kings Meadow Primary School

- Chesterston Church of England Primary School
- Oxford Association for the Blind
- Shopmobility
- Age UK
- Bicester Early Intervention Hub

3.13.3 Contact was also made with:

- Bure Park Primary School
- Brookside Primary School
- **Dr Radcliffe's CE Primary School**
- Disability Forum
- Oxfordshire MIND.

3.13.4 In conclusion, all groups and associations whilst appreciating the follow up **contact didn't wish to meet with A2Dominion** or the project team or require further information. All those contacted were happy to be kept updated in a general capacity or become more involved as the proposals progress.

3.13.5 All contacts appreciated the previous efforts of A2Dominion in publicising and seeking to involve them at the earliest opportunity including prior to and around the time of public consultation.

3.13.6 A2Dominion will continue to inform and involve community and hard to reach groups along with all other stakeholders as the proposals evolve and progress. This will include contact prior to further public consultation relating to outline planning applications.

### **3.14 Engagement with local schools**

3.14.1 The Cooper School

3.14.2 On 5th February 2014, A2Dominion visited The Cooper School, Bicester to update sixth form students and staff on the Exemplar phase and Masterplan project. In addition, A2Dominion were keen to understand the views of students regarding the Masterplan proposals and explore ways in which

students may want to be involved with the project as the plans progress. The team took along some of the exhibition boards from the exhibition held in December 2013 and the Exemplar promotional video. Students were also provided with the opportunity to discuss the proposals and provide their feedback via a dedicated feedback form provided by the team.

3.14.3 27 feedback forms were returned and all were supportive in principle. The main topic raised was a request for the inclusion of plenty of green spaces. In regard to the future, students saw good quality housing being provided as the most important factor. A full analysis of the feedback is included in the subsequent public consultation feedback section of this report.

#### 3.14.4 The Bicester Community College

3.14.5 On 5th February 2014, A2Dominion visited Bicester Community College, Bicester to update students and staff on the Exemplar phase and Masterplan project. In addition, A2Dominion were keen to understand the views of students regarding the Masterplan proposals and explore ways in which students may want to be involved with the project as the plans progress. The team took along some of the exhibition boards from the exhibition held in December 2013 and the Exemplar promotional video. Students were also provided with the opportunity to discuss the proposals and provide their feedback via a dedicated feedback form provided by the team.

3.14.6 77 feedback forms were returned and the majority were supportive in principle. Whilst some students were concerned by the potential increase in traffic and population, many praised the fact that the project considers the welfare of the environment, with this being the most common positive comment. **A full analysis of the feedback is included in the subsequent 'Public consultation feedback' section.**

3.14.7 Following the school and college visits, A2Dominion will continue to explore opportunities to engage students as the plans progress with a view to encouraging active involvement with the progression of NW Bicester.

### **3.15 Engagement with Bucknell Parish Council**

3.15.1 Following the consultation event in December, all Parish Councils were offered informal follow-up meetings. Whilst most were happy to be kept updated as the plans progress following further communication, Bucknell Parish Council were keen to meet with the A2Dominion team. An informal follow-up meeting was held with Bucknell Parish Council on Monday 24 February 2014, 6.30pm at Manor Farm, Bainton Road, Bucknell, Bicester.

3.15.2 Attendees from A2Dominion were Steve Hornblow, Gerry Walker and Louise Caves. In attendance representing Bucknell Parish Council were Councillor Derek Hedges, Councillor Daniel Blakey (Chair), Councillor Neil Wainman and Rachael Blakey (Clerk).

3.15.3 The meeting covered a range of topics and concerns including:

- Flooding and flood mitigation
- Drainage
- Proposed introduction and timing of new secondary schools, local shops and facilities, highways and traffic

3.15.4 Meeting discussions also covered Bucknell Road speed limits, bus transport and cycle routes and landscaping.

3.15.5 In conclusion, A2Dominion agreed to maintain communication with the Parish Council and along with other key stakeholders and Parish Councils ensure further engagement takes place following submission of the Masterplan and prior to outline applications being submitted.

### **3.16 Freephone information line**

3.16.1 During the consultation, access to a telephone enquiry line was offered to those who wished to find out more about the proposals, or register their comments via telephone.

3.16.2 This telephone enquiry line was manned between the hours of 8am to 6pm, with a message facility out of hours.

3.16.3 The telephone number was 0800 298 7040.

3.16.4 Information was given to callers where possible and if questions were of a technical nature, these were passed on to relevant people within the team for comment.

3.16.5 A postage-paid envelope was available to all attendees of the public exhibition, so no postage had to be paid by them when commenting on the proposals away from the venue.

### **3.17 Project website**

3.17.1 A website was made available throughout the consultation process as a first point of information for interested parties.

3.17.2 The address is [www.nwbicester.co.uk](http://www.nwbicester.co.uk) and the website included information about NW Bicester, the Masterplan, the first phase, news & events, sales information, and contact information.

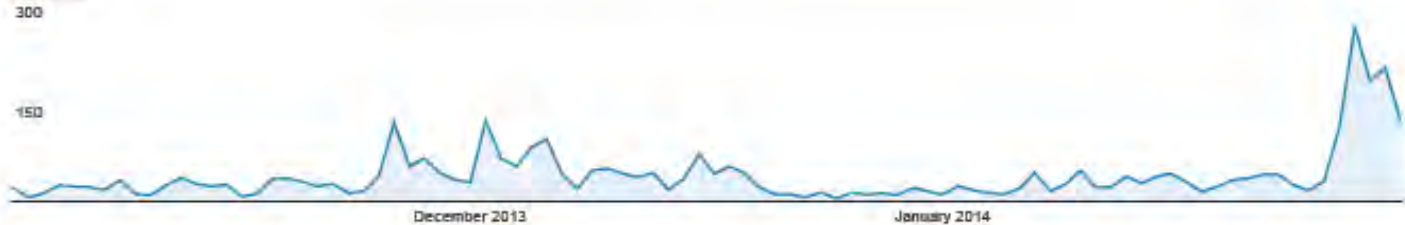
## Audience Overview

Nov 1, 2013 - Jan 31, 2014

All Visits  
100.00%

### Overview

#### Visits



#### Visits

3,503



#### Unique Visitors

2,576



#### Pageviews

16,233



#### Pages / Visit

4.63



#### Avg. Visit Duration

00:04:02



#### Bounce Rate

35.31%

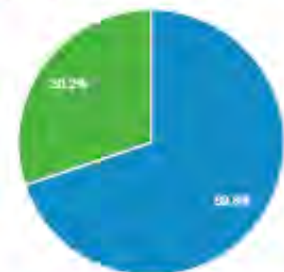


#### % New Visits

69.80%



New Visitor Returning Visitor



Language	Visits	% Visits
1. en-us	2,373	67.74%
2. en-gb	923	26.35%
3. fr	35	1.00%
4. en	33	0.94%
5. es	16	0.46%
6. fr-fr	16	0.46%
7. zh-cn	12	0.34%
8. it	11	0.31%
9. pt-br	10	0.29%
10. es-es	8	0.23%

### Overview of the website analytics

3.17.3 The website provides an option for residents to sign up in order to receive further information and to be kept updated on the proposals. A total of 775 people visited the NW Bicester website (<http://nwbicester.co.uk>) during the consultation period in December. Content on the project website included all

Masterplan exhibition boards and an online version of the exhibition feedback form which was available to complete during and after the consultation event was held in December.

## 4. Public consultation feedback

### 4.1 Freecycle Live event feedback – Saturday 27 July 2013

#### 1. Do you support our proposals for NW Bicester?

Total	Yes	No	Yes with reservations	Left blank (non-committal)
31	19 (61%)	3 (10%)	7 (23%)	2 (6%)

#### 2. Large areas of green open space will form a key part of the proposals. These could include sports pitches and recreation areas, walking and cycling routes, allotments, a community farm, and informal open space.

**How would you prefer the following green spaces to be located and designed at NW Bicester?**

##### Play areas

Grouped together in larger areas	Located throughout the site in smaller areas
10 (32%)	20 (65%)

- One respondent ticked neither of the boxes, instead writing '*For different age groups*' and '*Both mix*'.

##### Sports pitches

Small sports pitches located near play areas	Small sports pitches in separate areas throughout the site	Large sports pitches grouped in one area and located towards the outer edge of the site	Large sports pitches near the centre of the site
6 (19%)	6 (19%)	13 (42%)	10 (32%)

- One resident did not tick any of the boxes and noted that they have 'No views'
- Three residents ticked two boxes
- Two residents ticked all four boxes, showing that they would accept all of these options

Additional Comments
Two football field size pitches.
Cricket pitches are important.



## Allotments

Located towards the outer edge of the site	Centre of the site	Throughout the site	Grouped together
7 (22%)	4 (13%)	12 (39%)	8 (26%)

Additional Comments
Allotments grouped together will mean they are communal and protected.

## Additional provisions

Dog walking restricted to limited areas	Areas for nature conservation even if public access is limited to protect habitats	Provision for some areas with open water
11 (35%)	19 (61%)	26 (84%)

- Six residents voted for two of these options
- Seven residents ticked all three boxes

Additional Comments
All of the nature conservation areas should be public (two residents suggested this)
Retain additional hedgerows and trees
The open water provided should be a stream / not stagnant
Area is currently very much lacking in open water provision

### 3. If the development contained a community farm or nature reserve, what facilities would you be interested in?

Educational facilities	25 (81%)	
Shops with local produce	23 (74%)	
Café selling local produce	19 (61%)	
Community space/events (Summer Fair, Harvest celebration, Apple Day, May Day etc.)	21 (68%)	
Access to a working farm	17 (55%)	
Access to a nature reserve	23 (74%)	
A community growing area	14 (45%)	
A quiet area for contemplation	17 (55%)	
Other	A petting farm / corner	2 (6%)
	'An area for local enterprise'	1 (3%)

#### 4. If you could grow your own food, where would you prefer to grow it?

In your own garden		16 (52%)
On an allotment		11 (35%)
Community Farm		3 (10%)
Edible landscaping and street planting		2 (6%)
All of the above		6 (19%)
Other	<i>'Food production eaten by community'</i>	1 (3%)

#### Additional Comments

Below is a breakdown of the comments and reservations / concerns that respondents raised as a result of viewing the draft proposals:

<b>Comments</b>
<i>'New homes should not be built on agricultural land.'</i>
<i>'Build standard not high enough.'</i>

#### Suggestions and Questions

Below is a breakdown of the suggestions and questions that respondents wrote in the additional comments section.

<b>Suggestions</b>
<i>'Good disabled access.'</i>
<i>'All energy needed for heating and light does not come from carbon sources (free from carbon).'</i>
<i>'Ground source heat pump for all houses/properties on site – fundamental need for "innovative design".'</i>
<i>'Quiet picnic space near river, village green for cricket, post office, 'fruit farm' PYO (pick your own) with children's play, community facility for church use.'</i>

## **4.2 Howes Lane Drop-in event feedback – Saturday 9 November 2013**

- 4.2.1 From the 34 responses received, the most common concern was regarding the impact that increased traffic would have on the area as a whole. However, the majority of attendees also acknowledged the proposed improvements resulting from the proposed Howes Lane realignment including recognising the overall proposals to integrate NW Bicester with the existing town. **29%** of respondents expressed their concern and highlighted that Howes Lane has effectively become the 'Bicester bypass'.
- 4.2.2 Respondents were particularly positive regarding the proposed 'urban boulevard' road option with **82%** believing this option would provide an improved environment for the existing adjacent housing. In addition, attendees acknowledged the benefits of slowed traffic and the accessibility of the proposed facilities at NW Bicester.
- 4.2.3 Other concerns raised by a small number of respondents who attended the event were disapproval of the plans for the proposed industrial area and unease about the lack of safe cycle and pedestrian routes in the area. Both issues were raised by **12%** of the respondents; some respondents mentioned there are quite a few office class buildings which are unused in Bicester and it would not be justified to build more if there is not a demand to fill them.
- 4.2.4 The event proved extremely useful and helped the A2Dominion team clarify the proposals and seek feedback prior to formal public consultation taking place in December 2013.

## Specific responses based on the feedback form questions

1. **Do you feel the proposed route of the road that could replace Howes Lane is acceptable for vehicular access to the existing housing?**

<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Unsure</b>	<b>Total</b>
24 (71%)	3 (8%)	7 (21%)	<b>34</b>

2. **We believe the proposed “urban boulevard” road option, that could replace Howes Lane, would provide an improved environment for the existing adjacent housing. Do you agree?**

<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Unsure</b>	<b>Total</b>
28 (82%)	1 (3%)	5 (15%)	<b>34</b>

3. **If the existing Howes Lane is replaced, what do you feel would be an acceptable use for this area?**

N.B. Some respondents ticked more than one box.

The extension of the rear gardens of existing homes was the most popular option. This is not surprising due to many of the exhibition attendees residing on Howes Lane. It is important to note the popularity of the demand for footpath and cycle routes.

Publicly accessible amenity space	8 (24%)
Footpath & cycle route	13 (38%)
Extending the rear gardens of existing homes	22 (65%)
Allotments	10 (29%)
<b>Total</b>	<b>34</b>

**4. What do you feel would be a good and acceptable use for the space between any proposed new and previous road (Howes Lane) if this forms part of the proposals.**

N.B. Some respondents ticked more than one box.

The majority of respondents support for additional homes may reflect their view of the current housing shortage in the area. The two second most popular options being for a care home or a health centre which perhaps reflects the age of the respondents.

**Options included:**

Houses: terraced and detached	15 (44%)
Apartments	2 (6%)
Two storey care home	13 (38%)
A school	3 (9%)
Health centre	13 (38%)
Community centre	5 (15%)
<b>Total</b>	<b>34</b>

**5. Pedestrian and cycle routes between key destinations will form a key part of the overall Masterplan. Do you feel the proposed pedestrian and cycle routes provide good links for existing residents to access new community facilities and would encourage greater walking and cycling?**

<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Unsure</b>	<b>Left Blank</b>	<b>Total</b>
23 (68%)	2 (5.5%)	7 (21%)	2 (5.5%)	<b>34</b>

**6. Please use the space below to provide any additional comments you may have:**

In addition to the recurring themes above, some of the more relevant comments are listed below:

'Not keen on a business park being on the site – worry that village hubs will simply encourage loitering youths'

'If existing Howes Lane were to become garden extensions or cycle / footpath I would want a green area on the other side of the road'

'I would like to see the closure of Howes Lane completely for safety reasons'

'Any plan to lessen traffic on Howes Lane is a move in the right direction'

'Cycle routes from this area to the centre of town are poor'

'For a major development of this sort, Howes Lane would have to move'

'My concerns have always been light, noise pollution and increased flood risk'

'The sooner you can close Howes Lane the better'

'Proposals for business park a great improvement'

'Proposed changes will flood Shakespeare Drive with traffic'

**Common Themes from Howes Lane Drop-in event:**

<b>Comment</b>	<b>Number</b>
<b>Residents are concerned about the impact of heavy traffic</b>	<b>10 (29%)</b>
<b>Residents state the need for a cycle path</b>	<b>4 (12%)</b>
<b>Residents are not happy with the proposed industrial area</b>	<b>4 (12%)</b>
Residents are worried about vandalism/safety in this part of Bicester	3 (9%)
Residents believe green space would be the best use of adjacent land	3 (9%)
Residents are concerned about the lack of infrastructure	2 (6%)
Residents state students should work on transport requirements	1 (3%)
Residents are worried about access points	1 (3%)
Residents fear increase of noise pollution	1 (3%)
Residents believe there will be a flood risk	1 (3%)

### **4.3 Public Exhibition Feedback Analysis – Thursday 5 to Saturday 7 December 2013**

Initially, residents and stakeholders were asked whether they support the principle to develop the UK's first eco town at NW Bicester. Of the 67 responses received, 36 (54%) stated that they support the proposals, 15 (22%) had reservations and 11 (16%) respondents stated outright objection to the proposals. Only 5 (8%) respondents did not provide a stance to this question.

Respondents and exhibition attendees acknowledged the principles of the eco-development, new affordable energy efficient homes and provision for the amount and variety of green space.

The two topics most discussed in the feedback as a whole were: a concern that the proposals would create an increase in traffic and congestion, and the impact that the changes to Howes Lane would have on the area. Residents and stakeholders were then asked to comment on the proposals. The feedback form was broken down into several different themes, New Zero Carbon Homes, Green Spaces & Landscaping, Highways & Access Arrangements, Community Facilities, Employment Provision and Further Comments.

#### **1. Do you support the Masterplan proposals in principle to develop the UK's first eco town at NW Bicester?**

Of the **67** responses received, **36 (54%)** stated that they support the proposals, **15 (22%)** had reservations and **11 (16%)** respondents stated outright objection to the proposals. Only **5** respondents did not provide a stance to this question. The topics most frequently commented on with regard to this question were: concerns regarding an increase in traffic, and the belief that the concept is the right idea but in the wrong location.

**2. The proposed Masterplan will provide lower density homes on the more rural edges of the site, whilst properties that are more urban in character will be located closer to the centre. Do you agree with this approach?**

Of the **67** responses received, **52 (78%)** stated that they support lower density homes on the more rural edges of the site, **5 (7%)** had reservations and **4 (6%)** respondents stated outright objection to the proposal. **6 (9%)** respondents did not provide a stance to this question. The majority of respondents did not comment on this question, however, some mentioned that the element of social housing should be spread out. Another respondent was concerned that locals will not be able to afford the houses.

**3. How important is the energy efficiency of a house to you when moving home?**

Of the **67** responses received, **30 (46%)** stated energy efficiency is very important, **20 (30%)** stated that it is important, **3 (4%)** said that they were indifferent and **9 (13%)** stated that it would not affect their decision. Only **5 (7%)** respondents did not provide a stance to this question. The two most prevalent comments stated that the energy efficiency of a house is very important if it means saving money, however, a few mentioned that they would make it energy efficient themselves anyway.

**4. Do you feel the proposed new sports fields are well located and provide good access to the existing and new proposed housing areas?**

Of the **67** responses received, **32 (48%)** stated that they agree with the location of the sports fields, **27 (40%)** were unsure and **2 (3%)** respondents stated outright objection to the location. **6 (9%)** respondents did not provide a stance to this question. Respondents suggested that it is common sense to put them by a school and that they will create additional traffic.



**5. Do you feel the introduction of a nature reserve on part of the site represents a good use of the green space areas?**

Of the **67** responses received, **58 (88%)** stated that they support the introduction of a nature reserve, **1 (1%)** respondent had reservations and **3 (4%)** respondents stated outright objection to the nature reserve. **5 (7%)** respondents did not provide a stance to this question. The comments that appeared most frequently suggested that lakes or ponds should be incorporated into the nature reserve; additionally, many respondents were keen to see the creation of woodland.

**6. Do you think using part of the site for a new country park is a good idea and, if so, would you use it?**

Of the **67** responses received, **51 (77%)** stated that they believe a country park to be a good idea, **8 (12%)** had reservations and **3 (4%)** respondents stated outright objection to the proposals. **5 (7%)** respondents did not provide a stance to this question. Most of the respondents commented that they felt the park would be a good idea, many said they would use it for walking and others mentioned family activities or bird watching.

**7. In light of the potential for a nature reserve and country park, which of the following other uses would you most like to see incorporated within the green space? Please rank your top 3 choices, with number 1 as your highest priority.**

The respondents were asked to rank their top 3 choices out of a number of options. If a respondent simply ticked 3 boxes then these choices were all added to the 'third preference' column.

The community allotments were the most popular choice with a total of 34 choices overall, followed by the play area with a total of 30 choices overall, and a community farm came in third place with a total of 28 choices overall.

**8. NW Bicester will provide a frequent bus service between key destinations. How frequently do you use the current bus service in Bicester?**

Of the **67** responses received, **4 (6%)** stated that they used the bus daily, **10 (15%)** said they used it on a weekly basis, **19 (28%)** stated that they used it occasionally, while a further **28 (42%)** claimed that they did not use it at all. **6 (9%)** respondents did not provide a stance to this question. The comments that appeared most frequently suggested that, while the majority of respondents currently used their cars, they would consider using a better bus service. Some respondents highlighted that there are no stops near their residences.

**9. What would encourage you to travel by bus more frequently?**

This question gave respondents a number of options to choose from and many respondents ticked multiple boxes. In order to collate the data effectively it was applied to a bar chart. The most prevalent choice was a demand for a more frequent service, which was selected 38 times. Additionally, direct routes received 19 selections and desirable destinations received 18 selections.

**10. Do you feel the proposed pedestrian and cycle routes provide good links for existing residents to access the proposed new community facilities, and for new residents to access Bicester Town Centre?**

Of the **67** responses received, **26 (39%)** agreed with the proposed pedestrian and cycle routes, **27 (41%)** respondents had reservations and **7 (10%)** respondents stated outright objection to the proposed routes. **7 (10%)** respondents did not provide a stance to this question. The comment that appeared most frequently suggested that the routes on Buckingham Road and towards the town centre need to be improved, however, respondents highlighted that the eco town is too far from the town centre to cycle.

**11. Do you support the proposals for the realignment of Howes Lane to enable the new development to connect into the existing town?**

Of the **67** responses received, **29 (44%)** agreed with the realignment of Howes Lane to connect the new development, **18 (27%)** respondents had reservations and **13 (19%)** respondents stated outright objection to the realignment. **7 (10%)** respondents did not provide a stance to this question. The comment that appeared most frequently suggested that respondents believed the road will become a 'rat run'. Respondents were also concerned by potential congestion from the new road.

**12. Are the primary schools in the correct locations to serve the new community?**

Of the **67** responses received, **23 (34%)** agreed that the primary schools are in the correct locations in relation to the new development, **34 (52%)** respondents had reservations and **3 (4%)** respondents stated outright objection to the locations. **7 (10%)** respondents did not provide a stance to this question. The comments that appeared most frequently suggested that the respondents did not know the locations of the primary schools and that schools will increase the traffic and parking problems of an area.

**13. Will the secondary school location serve the needs of the new and existing community and encourage use of facilities/amenities by the wider town?**

Of the **67** responses received, **15 (22%)** agreed with the proposed location of the secondary school, **40 (61%)** respondents had reservations and **3 (4%)** respondents stated outright objection to the location. **9 (13%)** respondents did not provide a stance to this question. The comment that appeared most frequently suggested that the school should be located in Kingsmere instead. It was also requested that the Council ensures that the wider town can use the facilities.

**14. Community hubs will provide retail, services and employment opportunities for surrounding neighbourhoods. What facilities and services would you most like to see included within these? Please rank your top 3 choices, with number 1 as your highest priority.**

The respondents were asked to rank their top 3 choices out of a number of options. If a respondent simply ticked 3 boxes then these choices were all added to the 'third preference' column. The majority of the respondents asked for healthcare included as part of the hubs, which gathered a total of 42 choices overall. This choice was closely followed by requests for shops to be included with a total of 41 choices overall, and a restaurant or a pub in third place with a total of 26 choices overall.

**15. Is the proposed community hub, located south of the railway line, in the right place to serve existing and new residents?**

Of the **67** responses received, **15 (22%)** agreed with the proposed location of the community hub, **39 (59%)** respondents had reservations and **5 (7%)** respondents stated outright objection to the location. **8 (12%)** respondents did not provide a stance to this question. Some of the respondents felt that better use should be made of the existing town centre and highlighted that existing residents have their own hubs.

**16. How often do you currently work from home?**

Of the **67** responses received, **6 (9%)** stated that they worked from home permanently, **7 (10%)** respondents said that they worked from home regularly, **10 (15%)** respondents claimed to work from home occasionally and **34 (51%)** respondents stated that they did not work from home at all. **10 (15%)** respondents did not indicate a stance on this question. The comments that appeared most frequently were respondents admitting that they were retired. Others commented that it would not be possible with their job or that there is no guarantee that business will move to the area

**17. In your view, what would make it easier for you to work from home or attract more people to do so?**

This question gave respondents free reign to air their views as to how they believed effective working from home could be achieved. The responses were analysed and collected into distinct themes to make the feedback easier to understand. The most common theme was a desire to see better broadband internet in the area, which had a total of 15 comments that related to it. The two most regular issues which featured next were respondents commenting that they were retired; highlighting that effective working from home also depends on there being the right jobs in the area.

**18. Which of the following facilities would you most like to see included as part of a business centre within a community hub? Please rank your top 3 with number 1 as your highest priority.**

The respondents were asked to rank their top 3 choices out of a number of options. If a respondent simply ticked 3 boxes without specifying their order then these choices were all added to the 'third preference' column. The majority of the respondents asked for opportunities for small businesses included as part of a business centre within a community hub, which gathered a total of 38 selections overall. This choice was followed by requests for free broadband to be available, with a total of 30 selections overall, and a provision for meeting rooms in third place, with a total of 24 selections overall.

**19. Are there other key areas of employment that you feel should be explored?**

This question again gave respondents the opportunity to air their views about what areas of employment should be considered. Most respondents felt that the opportunities listed in the feedback form were sufficient to provide relevant employment to the area. However, some respondents highlighted the need for care professionals to work in nurseries or look after the elderly population. Also, respondents recommended that help be given to fund start-ups and science-based research.

**20. Do you agree with the principle of creating one job per home? If so, do you agree with the proposed locations for employment sites across NW Bicester?**

Of the **67** responses received, **28 (42%)** agreed with the principle of creating one job per home, **22 (33%)** respondents had reservations, and **10 (15%)** did not agree with the principle. **7 (10%)** respondents did not provide a stance to this question. The comments that appeared most frequently were respondents' concerns as to how this principle would be implemented. Additionally, respondents wanted to highlight that it should be one job per adult, and others asked if the jobs would be relevant to the people living in the area.

**21. Do you think that this kind of community involvement is a good idea?**

Of the **67** responses received, **44 (66%)** stated that they believed community involvement in the proposals is a good idea, **13 (19%)** respondents were unsure, and **2 (3%)** respondents stated that they did not think community involvement is a good idea. **8 (12%)** respondents did not provide a stance to this question. The comments that appeared most frequently were respondents questioning that community involvement depended on the people who were involved. Other respondents were concerned as they felt that the Council should be undertaking this role.

**22. What are your views on this approach?**

When asked how respondents viewed a community-led management structure, the majority of respondents replied positively. Respondents were keen to point out that resident involvement develops communal responsibility. The next two most prevalent comments were that respondents believed this approach to be good in principle; however, some of the respondents felt that this approach could isolate people who are unable to get involved. Interestingly, residents again highlighted that they felt this should be the Council's job.

## **General comments about the proposals**

Respondents were given the opportunity to provide general comments about the proposals for NW Bicester. A number of topics and concerns were raised by respondents; the most recurrent comment was the fact that respondents were concerned about the amount of extra traffic they believe the proposals will generate. Respondents were also worried about the changes that will be made to **Howes Lane, as many state that it acts as the unofficial 'Bicester Bypass.'** Additionally, while many respondents believe the proposals are a good idea in principle, they believe **Bicester's infrastructure needs to be improved first.**

A detailed breakdown of the comments made can be found in the Appendices.

## **4.4 Local schools feedback**

### 4.4.1 The Cooper School – Feedback – Wednesday 5 February 2014

Students were asked to comment on the proposals via a dedicated feedback form which was broken down into six different questions.

When analysing recurring themes that appeared in each question, some respondents raised multiple points, therefore the tally in some cases will be higher than the amount of responses.

#### **1. Having viewed the proposals, do you support the plans for the UK's first eco town at NW Bicester? Please provide your reasons**

Of the **27** responses received, **19 (70%)** stated that they support the proposals, and **8 (30%)** supported the proposals with reservations. The topic most frequently commented on with regard to this question was a general approval of the projects eco-friendly credentials.

#### **2. Which areas of the Masterplan for NW Bicester are of most interest to you?**

Of the **27** responses received; **20** selected 'Green spaces & leisure', **15** selected 'Homes & energy', **15** selected 'Employment & training', **13** selected 'Transport & access', **11** selected 'Youth provision & play', **10** selected 'Community facilities & infrastructure', and **4** selected 'Community engagement & participation'.

#### **3. Thinking about the areas of the Masterplan that are of most interest to you, do you have any specific comments or thoughts that you would like to share with us?**

Of the **27** responses received, **4 (15%)** stated that more needs to be done for the youth of Bicester and **3 (11%)** stated that it is good that effort is being made to help the environment. **14 (52%)** respondents did not provide a stance to this question.

#### **4. If we set up future focus groups to discuss the proposals in more detail, would you be interested in taking part in discussions to help us shape the Masterplan? (Likely to be approx.. 1hr discussion with a group of 8-10 other individuals)**

Of the **27** responses received, **12 (44%)** stated that they would be happy to participate in future focus groups, while **15 (56%)** would not wish to be part of any further discussions.



**5. What would be your preferred method of receiving future updates from us about NW Bicester? (Please rank these accordingly with 1 being your most preferred and 6 being your least)**

Of the **27** responses received; **9 (26 overall)** selected social media as their primary way of receiving updates about NW Bicester, **4 (24 overall)** selected visiting schools, **4 (23 overall)** selected by email, **2 (21 overall)** selected by post, **1 (22 overall)** selected through the project website, and **1 (22 overall)** selected information directly from schools. Where the respondents ticked boxes instead of ranking in order, these were counted as being their 6<sup>th</sup> choice.

**6. NW Bicester could take up to 30 years to build, making you the residents of the future. How would you like to live in the future? (Think about your home, lifestyle, community, work, etc.)**

Of the **27** responses received, **10 (37%)** stated that they see good quality housing as the most important issue in their future. **7 (26%)** would like to be sure of living in a safe environment, and **6 (22%)** hope there are plenty of local job opportunities and a thriving community spirit. Interestingly, only **2 (7%)** respondents would like there to be less reliance on cars in the future.

**General comments about the proposals**

Pupils were given the opportunity to provide general comments about the proposals for NW Bicester. The majority of students, **22 (81%)**, left this box blank. Some students reiterated that they believed the project to be a good idea, while others said they would like to live in an eco-town and are glad that the project is eco-friendly. The point was also raised that it is very important to keep Bicester's youth involved in the proposals.

A detailed breakdown of the comments made can be found in the Appendices.

#### 4.4.2 The Bicester Community College – Feedback – Wednesday 5 February 2014

**77** feedback forms were returned and the majority were supportive in principle. Whilst some students were concerned by the potential increase in traffic and population, many praised the fact that the project considers the welfare of the environment, with this being the most common positive comment.

Students were asked to comment on the proposals. The feedback form was broken down into six different questions.

When answering each question, some respondents raised multiple points, therefore, the tally of issues in some cases will be higher than the small number of responses.

#### **1. Having viewed the proposals, do you support the plans for the UK's first eco town at NW Bicester? Please provide your reasons**

Of the **77** responses received, **52 (68%)** stated that they support the proposals, **5 (6%)** did not agree with the proposals and **19 (25%)** supported the proposals with reservations. The topic most frequently commented on with regard to this question was that students felt it is good to consider the environment. However, some students were concerned by the increase in traffic and the increase in population.

#### **2. Which areas of the Masterplan for NW Bicester are of most interest to you?**

Of the **77** responses received **48** selected 'Green spaces & leisure', **43** selected 'Homes & energy', **33** selected 'Community facilities & infrastructure', **32** selected 'Transport & access', **28** selected 'Youth provision & play', **22** selected 'Employment & training', **16** selected 'Community engagement & participation' and **5** respondents did not select any of the options.

#### **3. Thinking about the areas of the Masterplan that are of most interest to you, do you have any specific comments or thoughts that you would like to share with us?**

Of the **77** responses received, **8%** stated that they would like to see more green spaces included in the proposals. **4%** of respondents believe there should be more play areas, a greater number of sports clubs, an improvement on the amount of public transport, and that the development should aim to create a strong community spirit. **40%** of respondents did not provide a stance to this question.

#### **4. If we set up future focus groups to discuss the proposals in more detail, would you be interested in taking part in discussions to help us shape the Masterplan? (Likely to be approx. 1hr discussion with a group of 8-10 other individuals)**

Of the **77** responses received, **24 (31%)** stated that they would be happy to participate in future focus groups, while **47 (61%)** would not wish to be part of any further discussions. **6 (8%)** of the respondents did not select an option for this question.

**5. What would be your preferred method of receiving future updates from us about NW Bicester? (Please rank these accordingly with 1 being your most preferred and 6 being your least)**

Of the **77** responses received, **11 (48 overall)** selected emails as their primary way of receiving updates about NW Bicester, **7 (47 overall)** selected visits to schools, **6 (46 overall)** selected the project website, **4 (42 overall)** selected post, **3 (39 overall)** selected information received direct to schools, and **3 (36 overall)** selected social media as their preferred choice. Where the respondents ticked boxes instead of ranking in order, these were counted as being their 6<sup>th</sup> choice. **9** respondents did not select any of the choices.

**6. NW Bicester could take up to 30 years to build, making you the residents of the future. How would you like to live in the future? (Think about your home, lifestyle, community, work, etc.)**

Of the **77** responses received, **13 (17%)** stated that they would like to live somewhere with the eco credentials of NW Bicester. **10 (13%)** stated that in the future they will not be living in Bicester, and **9 (12%)** hope that they live somewhere with a strong community spirit. **19 (25%)** respondents did not provide any comments to the question.

**General comments about the proposals**

Students were given the opportunity to provide general comments about the proposals for NW Bicester. The majority of students, **53 (69%)**, left this box blank. Some students reiterated that they believed the project will help to strengthen the sense of community in Bicester, while others said they would prefer to see the current housing in Bicester improved before the start of this project.

A detailed breakdown of the comments made can be found in the Appendices.

## 5. Response to Public Consultation Feedback

- 5.1 The responses below follow the consideration of all feedback received as a result of the public consultation completed, including the public exhibition, by A2Dominion and its project team. These responses relate to the main questions and themes (questions 2-22 on the exhibition feedback form) whereby people were invited to provide comments and feedback to the team to help inform the emerging Masterplan proposals.
- 5.2 **Lower housing density on the edges of the development with higher density homes closer to the centre :** A2Dominion is pleased to see that over three quarters of respondents were in support of the approach adopted in respect of the proposed housing elements of the Masterplan. In response to the small number of respondents that held concerns, A2Dominion is keen to highlight that **the approach adopted is considered the most appropriate in respect of the site's location and context.** It should also be noted that the housing and density layouts are a matter for the subsequent application stages.
- 5.3 **Energy efficient houses:** A2Dominion notes the positive response from the community in respect of the creation of true zero-carbon, highly energy efficient homes, which support its research that people are becoming more sustainability conscious and increasingly aware of the cost of energy, both of which will attract people to NW Bicester.
- It should be noted, however, that whilst the housing designs are a matter for the application stages, the Masterplan is taking into account provision of energy centres to meet the zero carbon requirements.
- 5.4 **School playing field location:** The Masterplan is proposing the sports pitches are located near the school playing fields to benefit from some shared use of facilities. The Masterplan has taken into account the existing landscape constraints which are more sloping, with more trees and large hedgerows to the north, which favours the suggested location of the sports pitches near the school playing fields south of the railway.

5.5 **Nature reserve:** A2Dominion's plans to include a proposed area for a nature reserve within the Masterplan received wide spread support (88 per cent of respondents supported the introduction of this facility).

- In response to particular suggestions over the incorporation of lakes and woodlands, A2Dominion is of the view that the proposed nature reserve could provide a mix of habitats including natural wet areas and woodland. Exact details of the specific habitats that could be created will be determined as part of the ongoing programme of work undertaken by A2Dominion and its consultant team.

5.6 **Country Park:** A2Dominion notes that over three quarters of respondents considered the inclusion of a country park to be a good idea. In response to specific comments raised over what this space could be used for (family activities, walking), it should be noted that the country park will be located close to existing and proposed footpaths, providing a mix of amenity spaces.

5.7 **Other uses to incorporate within the green space:** A2Dominion sought responses on **people's** preferences over a number of other uses within the green space of the Masterplan. In light of the ranking of the proposed uses by respondents, the Masterplan now includes proposed areas for community allotments and play areas distributed across the residential areas as well as a proposed area for a community farm in a central location.

5.8 **Bus service:** A2Dominion recognises comments made by respondents in connection with the use of public transport, with the majority stating that whilst they use their cars, they would consider using an improved bus service. The Masterplan includes proposed routes for bus services and its associated travel strategy promotes frequent services to key destinations within the town (between 10 to 15 minutes frequency) in order to encourage sustainable travel.

5.9 **Cycle and pedestrian routes:** Whilst 39 per cent of respondents agreed with the proposed pedestrian and cycle links, A2Dominion notes that 41 per cent held reservations while 10 per cent were in objection. Having spent much time in developing the Masterplan and, in particular, on ensuring it is easily and well

connected to the existing local communities, A2Dominion considers that the access proposals as presented offer the best and most direct connections to key local destinations.

**5.10 Realignment of Howes Lane:** A2Dominion was encouraged by the fact that nearly half of the respondents agreed with the proposed realignment of Howes Lane to connect the new development. Whilst the concerns raised over this specific aspect of the Masterplan were noted and considered, A2Dominion firmly considers on the basis of advice from its professional team that the realignment of Howes Lane will help improve traffic flow locally whilst also delivering a new crossing of the railway and assisting in the integration of NW Bicester with the existing town.

- Transport modelling work is ongoing to determine the scope and scale of potential implications.

**5.11 Location of primary schools:** In response to the feedback received on the topic of the location of the primary school, A2Dominion noted that over a third of respondents considered that the proposed primary schools were in the correct locations. Furthermore, A2Dominion recognises that over 50 per cent of respondents held reservations about the proposed locations. It should be noted that the comments most frequently raised suggested that respondents were, at this stage in proceedings, unclear about the exact locations of the primary schools. Whilst acknowledging concerns expressed over the potential for traffic and parking to increase in particular areas, it should be noted that the primary schools has been distributed across the residential areas within 400m travel distance of all homes. It is, therefore, hoped that given the emphasis placed on public transport and sustainable choices of travel, that a number of parents will use non-car methods of transport when collecting their children from school.

**5.12 Location of secondary school:** Whilst just over 20 per cent of respondents agreed with the proposed location of the secondary school within the Masterplan, A2Dominion noted that over half of respondents held reservations and/or were in objection. The proposed location of the secondary school is the result of work carried out by A2Dominion in conjunction with CDC and OCC, and is considered by

A2Dominion to be ideally located for most of the site. With regards to concerns expressed regarding the that the secondary school should be located in Kingsmere, A2Dominion understands the proposal secondary school for Kingsmere is still going ahead, but the overall schools strategy for Bicester is currently being finalised by Oxfordshire County Council.

5.13 **Local centre uses:** A2Dominion notes that the leading uses ranked in preference order by respondents was as follows – healthcare, shops and a restaurant or pub. It should be recognised that a new health centre is proposed as part of the local centre, and planned to be located south of the railway line nearest to the existing community that presently has to travel furthest to reach existing provision.

- Furthermore, A2Dominion is keen to highlight that both shops and a pub or restaurant will be amongst a number of uses that will form the proposed community hubs.

5.14 **Location of proposed local centre south of the railway line:** A2Dominion recognises that 22 per cent of respondents considered the hub location south of the railway line is correct. Further to this, A2Dominion notes that 59 per cent of respondents held reservations on this matter whilst a further 7 per cent were in objection. In response to this, it should be noted that A2Dominion has proposed **the scheme’s supporting community hubs in locations that are within reasonable travel distance of all homes and existing communities.** Furthermore and as referenced above, the hub proposed south of the railway line, which will include the new health centre, has been duly located to help address issues affecting the existing community.

5.15 **Working from home:** The Masterplan would encourage working from home by providing a superfast broadband network in homes and good public transport. In addition, there will be provision of local centres with small business space and support services which will be distributed across the residential areas in a high quality of environment within reasonable travel distance of all homes.

- The feedback from the consultation event is consistent with the assumptions we have made in the economic strategy about home working. The Masterplan aims to enable people to work from home through the design of housing and the

availability of local facilities including the eco business centre, coffee shops and various informal meeting places in the other retail/business areas within the scheme.

- Working from home is often associated with jobs in professional and personal services, and art and craft work. These types of jobs will be encouraged locally. However, working from home is also often linked to jobs which are not based locally – for example, some people whose jobs are based in London or Oxford work from home in Bicester all or part of the week, because it is more time and cost efficient.

5.16 **Business centre facilities:** Feedback received in respect of facilities to be provided within the planned business centre focused on seeing opportunities provided for small start-up businesses, requests for free broadband as well a provision for meetings rooms to be available.

- In response to this feedback, A2Dominion's Masterplan includes space designed for small business within the local centres whilst there will also be flexible accommodation for firms within the eco business centre. Furthermore, there will also be provision made to assist people working from home in the form of the use of meeting rooms. Superfast broadband network will be available to all businesses, but the terms on which it is made available will be dependent on the providers or the eco business centre management.

5.17 **Employment mix and provision:** A2Dominion notes that the consultation feedback indicated a preference for help to be given to fund start-ups and science-based research. This may be desirable, but A2Dominion is not in a position to provide grants to start ups and science based research. However, support will be provided to businesses in Bicester and science based research through initiatives like the Oxfordshire City Deal and the national Growth Accelerator programme, and organisations like the Oxfordshire and South East Midlands Local Enterprise Partnerships.

5.18 **Community Involvement:** A2Dominion were pleased to see that over 60 per cent of respondents recognised the benefit of community involvement whilst noting that comments were also made that the nature of such activity depended



on those involved. In response to concerns raised over the fact that such activity should be completed by CDC, it should be noted that the council has limited resources across the district. However, A2Dominion is working with both CDC and BTC on the creation of a unique community led governance structure, so community development work in the area is cohesive and inclusive and does not duplicate any existing functions by the Council.

5.19 **Community led management:** A2Dominion were pleased to receive such a positive response to its approach to building a community and the importance of resident involvement to develop ownership and a sense of responsibility. A2Dominion is committed to creating a vibrant, resilient and inclusive community that is truly integrated with the wider town.

- Furthermore, A2Dominion is already working in partnership with a range of local Bicester stakeholders spanning the public, private, voluntary and community sectors to allow the existing community to become involved, helping to shape what a community governance structure could look like.
- As new residents start to occupy NW Bicester we will work with them through **'welcome to your home events'**, **community engagement** support and via regular communication on the Live In-home information system to encourage their participation in the governance structure, giving them a wide range of opportunities and methods to participate based on their availability, interests and the skills they have to offer.

## 6 Ongoing Consultation

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### **Updating Materials & 'Reporting Back'**

6.1.1 Those who request further information by telephone, letter or email will be responded to in the most appropriate manner. In addition, A2Dominion will be issuing an update newsletter to participants from the public consultation, the key stakeholder workshop group, Friends of NW Bicester and the community together with updating the project website.

### **Ongoing Consultation**

6.1.2 Consultation with stakeholders will continue to help further inform the Masterplan. In addition, further consultation will take place later this year relating to detailed elements of the outline applications to be submitted to CDC.