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North West Bicester Eco-Town  
Local Centre

Statement of Community Involvement

Prepared on behalf of A2Dominion Developments Ltd

April 2015

# North West Bicester Eco-Town Local Centre

## Statement of Community Involvement

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## **CONTENTS**

<b>1.0 INTRODUCTION .....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>2.0 CHERWELL DISTRICT COUNCIL'S STATEMENT OF COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT .....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>3.0 CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN .....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>4.0 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION .....</b>	<b>6</b>

## **APPENDICES**

**APPENDIX 1 :**

**APPENDIX 2 :**

## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This Statement has been prepared on behalf of A2Dominion Development Ltd ('the Applicant') in respect of land to the north west of Bicester covering an area of some 0.6405 hectares north west of Lords Lane within the Exemplar part of North West Bicester (NW Bicester) (LPA reference 10/01780/HYBRID) ('the Site'). The Site falls within the administrative area of Cherwell District Council ('the Council') (CDC) and forms part of the NW Bicester Eco-Town proposals as identified in the emerging Cherwell Local Plan.
- 1.2 The principle of the development of an Eco Town at North West Bicester is identified in the Supplement to PPS1: 'Eco Towns'. The NW Bicester proposal represents the largest single opportunity within Cherwell District, and more specifically Bicester, to provide for much needed new housing to meet the needs of the residents of Bicester and Cherwell as a whole in the context of the ongoing substantial shortfall in housing land supply. To support this housing growth, services and facilities also need to be provided. NW Bicester provides an opportunity to establish a new, mixed use and sustainable community designed to achieve high standards of sustainability and energy efficiency in line with the Planning Statement: Eco-Town, A Supplement to Planning Policy Statement 1 (July 2009) ('the PPS1 Supplement').
- 1.3 The application, which this Statement is submitted in support, seeks Full planning permission for:

**"Development of a new local centre comprising a 503 sqm convenience store (Use Class A1), 444 sqm of retail units (flexible Use Class A1/A3/A5), 664 sqm pub (Use Class A4), 523 sqm community hall (Use Class D1), 869 sqm nursery (Use Class D1), 614sqm of commercial units (flexible Use Class A2/ B1/ D1) with associated access, servicing, landscaping and parking."**

- 1.4 The principle of a local centre in this location is established by the extant grant of permission for the Exemplar phase (Reference 10/01780/HYBRID). The Exemplar phase is consistent with the master plan prepared on behalf of A2D which is now the subject of the draft SPD currently being progressed by the Council. An extensive programme of consultation and engagement has been undertaken by A2D in association with the formulation of the masterplan, the Exemplar application and other application currently submitted to the Council for determination. In addition, the Council has undertaken further consultation as part of the preparation of the local plan and the SPD.
- 1.5 When compared with the Exemplar permission, this scheme seeks a revision to the constituent floor areas of the uses that comprise the local centre and provides details that would have been determined through reserved matters submissions pursuant to the Exemplar application.

## **2.0 CHERWELL DISTRICT COUNCIL'S STATEMENT OF COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT**

2.1 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.

2.2 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

### **3.0 CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN**

- 3.1 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 proposals for NW Bicester since the preparation of the Exemplar application (reference 10/01780/HYBRID), through the Masterplan process and preparation of subsequent applications (references 14/01384/OUT, 14/01641/OUT and 14/01968/F).
- 3.2 This planning application seeks to amend the Local Centre as approved as part of application 10/01780/HYBRID. These amendments are to ensure the delivery of a Local Centre which is both vibrant and viable.
- 3.3 As the amendments made to the Local Centre as part of this application are minor, we seek to draw upon the extensive consultation already undertaken on NW Bicester, including that on the Exemplar application (10/01780/HYBRID) and the NW Bicester Master Plan.

#### **Exemplar Planning Application (Reference 10/01780/HYBRID)**

- 3.4 A2Dominion secured planning permission for 393 dwellings and a local centre as part of the NW Bicester Exemplar site in July 2012 (reference 10/01780/HYBRID). This extant and implemented permission is material to the consideration of this application and establishes the principle for the local centre in this location.
- 3.5 The consultation undertaken as part of the Exemplar application (reference 10/01780/HYBRID) is relevant to this Application. Please find enclosed at Appendix 1 the Statement of Community Involvement submitted as part of the Exemplar application.

#### **NW Bicester Master Plan**

- 3.6 A2Dominion has also undertaken extensive consultation as part of the preparation of the NW Bicester Master Plan which was submitted to Cherwell District Council in March 2014 with further information submitted in May 2014. The aim of the Master Plan was to apply the terms of the PPS1 Supplement to the specific example of NW Bicester and the aims and aspirations of the community, Council and developer.

- 3.7 The Master Plan considered the entire NW Bicester site, including the Local Centre within the Exemplar. We therefore consider that the consultation undertaken as part of the Master Plan is relevant for this Application also. We enclose at Appendix 2 the Statement of Community Involvement submitted as part of the Master Plan. The role of the local centres, their character and functioning was fully tested through the master planning process.
- 3.8 I suppose the issue is that there are no new issues raised by the current proposals that give rise to the need to further consultation and engagement over and above that already undertaken and which informed the decision of the Council to grant permission. The scheme is consistent with the masterplan, the emerging local plan and the SPD and the changes proposed when compared to the approved scheme are relatively minor.

## **4.0 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION**

- 4.1 A2Dominion 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. This consultation and engagement process has continued through the master planning process, to the formulation of the various planning applications including that for the Exemplar phase. The principle of the Local Centre has been established through the local centre and this application provides for a revision to the floor area of the constituent elements of the local centre and provides details that would have been provided through reserved matters pursuant thereto.