NW Bicester Exemplar Local Centre

Retail Assessment

On Behalf of A2Dominion Developments Limited

April 2015

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PLANNING / DESIGN / DELIVERY

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A2Dominion Developments Ltd

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 This Retail Assessment has been prepared by Barton Willmore on behalf of A2Dominion Developments Ltd ("the Applicant") to assess the retail planning issues arising from a full planning application for a Local Centre within the North West Bicester Exemplar site ("the Proposed Development").

1.2 Planning permission for the Local Centre was originally granted on 10th July 2012 as part of a hybrid planning permission ref: 10/01780/HYBRID ("the Exemplar scheme"). This permits a range of uses including Class A1 floorspace of up to 770 sqm and a Class A4 public house up to 190 sqm, as well as residential, office and community facilities.

1.3 The new application arises from a requirement to amend the scale / mix of floorspace in the Centre, to comprise the following:

- Class A1 Convenience Store of 503 sqm gross.
- Class A4 Public House of 664 sqm gross.
- Flexible Class A1/A3/A5 floorspace of 444 sqm gross.
- Flexible Class A2/B1/D1 floorspace of 614 sqm gross.
- A Class D1 Nursery (869 sqm) and Community Hall (523 sqm).

1.4 A full overview of the planning application and proposal is provided in the Planning Statement and Design & Access Statement.

1.5 The Local Centre is intended to serve residents of the northern part of North West Bicester, including but not limited to the Exemplar scheme. The principle of the Centre has been established through the grant of planning permission and is supported in the emerging Local Plan under Policy Bicester 1. Notwithstanding this, as the Site would be classed as 'out-of-centre' in retail policy terms and is not allocated in the adopted Development Plan, a Retail Assessment has been requested to demonstrate the acceptability of the proposed Class A1-A5 uses against the NPPF sequential and retail impact tests.

1.6 Against this background, the assessment covers the following:

- **Section 2** – a description of the application site and proposed development;
- **Section 3** – analysis of the relevant planning policy context;
- **Section 4** – an overview of the application site's retail context including existing centres and retail facilities;

- **Section 5** – an assessment of the proposed retail floorspace against the NPPF sequential test; and
- **Section 6** – an assessment of the proposed retail floorspace against the NPPF impact tests; and
- **Section 7** – outlines the summary and conclusions arising from the above including the scheme's compliance with the NPPF and relevant adopted / emerging Development Plan policy.

1.7 This Assessment has been prepared in accordance with the Scoping Note issued to officers for consideration, prior to the submission of the application. Full details of the scheme and justification against other issues is provided in the other documents submitted as part of the planning application.

2.0 APPLICATION SITE AND PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

Application Site & Surroundings

2.1 The boundary of the site is identified in red on the Site Location Plan submitted with the application.

2.2 The Site is 0.6ha in size and is located north of Lords Lane (A4095), north east of the railway line. Banbury Road (B4100) is located to the east of the Site which links Bicester with Junction 10 of the M40 and surrounding villages in between, such as Caversfield and Bainton.

2.3 The Site forms part of the wider NW Bicester Eco Town scheme, comprising circa 400 hectares of land. Since the approval of the Exemplar development on 10th July 2012, construction has started on land immediately surrounding the Application Site to implement the approved residential development.

Proposed Development

2.4 The Application proposes the following development:

"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."

2.5 Further commentary on the scheme is provided in the Planning Statement and the Design & Access Statement.

Class A1-A5 Component

2.6 The scheme includes up to 1,611 sqm of Class A1-A5 floorspace, broken down as follows:

- Class A1 Convenience Store of 503 sqm gross.
- Class A4 Public House of 664 sqm gross.
- Flexible Class A1/A3/A5 floorspace of 444 sqm gross.
- Flexible Class A2/B1/D1 floorspace of 614 sqm gross.

2.7 Aside from the convenience store and public house, flexibility is sought in respect of the other Class A uses. These could comprise other shops, hairdressers, banks, estate agents, restaurants, cafés and / or hot food takeaway, which are all uses typically found in Local Centres.

2.8 The scale of floorspace will ensure that the Class A component will serve the local needs of residents of the wider development and provide a complementary role to Bicester Town Centre, as well as existing Local Centres which will still serve their local residential neighbourhoods.

2.9 The retail component of the scheme has been assessed against the NPPF sequential and impact tests at Sections 5-6 of this Assessment. It is important to note at this stage that there is no requirement to demonstrate a 'need' for retail proposals in a development management context.

2.10 Other relevant development management issues are addressed in the Planning Statement.

3.0 PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

3.1 This section reviews planning policy which is of relevance to the retail component of the proposed scheme and this Assessment. A comprehensive review of the policy context for the development as a whole is provided in the Planning Statement.

National Planning Policy Framework

3.2 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was published in March 2012 and sets out the Government's objectives for achieving sustainable development. The NPPF establishes a presumption in favour of sustainable economic development.

3.3 Of relevance to this Assessment, Section 2 (Ensuring the Vitality of Town Centres) sets out the retail planning framework. In relation to this type of scheme and location, paragraph 24 requires a 'sequential test' to be applied to planning applications for main Town Centre uses not in a Centre and not in accordance with an up-to-date Development Plan.

3.4 Paragraph 26 requires an impact assessment for schemes outside of Town Centres and not in accordance with an up-to-date Local Plan for schemes over 2,500 sq m gross or a local set threshold in the Development Plan. This should assess the impact on:

- existing, committed and planned public and private investment in a Centre(s) in the catchment area of the proposal; and
- Town Centre vitality and viability, including local consumer choice and trade in the Centre and wider area up to five years from the time an application is made. For major schemes where the full impact will not be realised in five years, the impact should also be assessed up to ten years from the time the application is made.

3.5 Whilst the scheme falls below the NPPF threshold and there is currently no locally set threshold, as requested by Officers we have undertaken an assessment against the above criteria.

3.6 The sequential and impact assessment against the NPPF tests is detailed in Sections 5 and 6 of this Assessment, respectively.

Planning Practice Guidance

3.7 The Planning Practice Guidance (“PPG”) was published in March 2014 and provides guidance to support the NPPF.

3.8 Of relevance to the proposed retail floorspace, Section 14 sets out guidance supporting paragraphs 23-27 of the NPPF in seeking to ‘Ensure the Vitality and Viability of Town Centres’ and provides further detail in respect of undertaking sequential and impact assessments. In respect of impact, the PPG recognises that impact should be assessed on a ‘like-for-like’ basis in a particular sector and that retail uses tend to compete with their most comparable competitive facilities.

The Development Plan

3.9 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act requires that planning applications are determined in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The Development Plan for the Site comprises the Adopted Cherwell Local Plan (1996) and Policy GB1 (Development in the Green Belt) of the Central Oxfordshire Local Plan (Cherwell) 1992. As Policy GB1 relates to development of land within the Green Belt, it is of limited relevance to this Assessment. Both documents are out of date and can only be given limited weight for the purposes of this assessment.

3.10 Progress on the emerging Local Plan is also at an advanced stage. The emerging Cherwell Local Plan (Part 1) will replace the strategic and site specific documents of the adopted Local Plan 1996. The remainder of the adopted development management policies will be replaced by the Cherwell Local Plan (Part 2).

3.11 The Examination in Public for the Local Plan (Part 1) ended in December 2014 and the Council is currently awaiting the Inspector’s Report.

Cherwell Local Plan (November 1996)

3.12 The Cherwell Local Plan 1996 was adopted in November 1996 and several policies were saved on 27th September 2007. It will eventually be replaced by the new Cherwell Local Plan (Parts 1 & 2).

3.13 There are limited saved policies of direct relevance to this Assessment. Policy S28 (Local Shops) states that favourable consideration will be given to proposals for small shops or extensions to existing shops to serve local needs, subject to other policies within the plan. The policy seeks to allow new shops serving a small local catchment to be established in suitable locations.

3.14 The site is out-of-centre in terms of the adopted Local Plan.

Emerging Cherwell Local Plan 2006 – 2031

3.15 The emerging Cherwell Local Plan 2011-2031 (Part 1) sets out strategic policies and allocations for the District. It is currently at an advanced stage, with Examination in Public commencing in June 2014. It was subsequently suspended for a period of six months to allow Cherwell DC to submit modifications to the plan to increase housing delivery to meet the needs of the District. The hearing sessions resumed and concluded in December 2014. The Council is currently awaiting the Inspector's Report.

3.16 Draft Policy Bicester 1 identifies the Application Site as part of the North West Bicester strategic allocation to provide 6,000 new homes, of which 3,293 will be provided within the plan period. The allocation supports mixed use local centre hubs to include the following uses Use Class B1(a), A1, A2, A3, A4, A5, C1, D1 and D2.

3.17 The Policies Maps contained within the emerging Local Plan also identifies the existing centres, including Bicester Town Centre and Local Centres in Bicester.

3.18 Emerging Policy SLE 2 (Securing Dynamic Town Centres) states that 'main town centre uses' should be directed towards the town centres of Banbury and Bicester and Kidlington Village Centre. Proposals for 'main town centre' uses not in these locations should be located within edge-of-centre locations. Only when suitable edge-of-centre sites are not available, should out-of-centre sites be considered. For Bicester, it sets a threshold of 1,500 sq m gross for undertaking a retail impact assessment.

3.19 The policy further sets out that the Council will support the provision of new local centres containing a small number of shops to meet the day to day needs within the strategic housing allocations / strategic sites, which includes North West Bicester. The proposed development accords with this requirement.

Partial Review of the Cherwell Local Plan 2011-2031 (Part 1)

3.20 Upon adoption, a partial review of Part 1 of the Local Plan will be undertaken to help meet the identified unmet housing needs from elsewhere in the Oxfordshire Housing Market Area and arising infrastructure requirements.

Cherwell Local Plan 2011-2031 (Part 2)

3.21 The Cherwell Local Plan 2011-2031 (Part 2) will set out the detail planning policies to assist the implementation of the strategic policies and the development management process. Work has begun to review the previous issues and options document carried out as part of the Site Allocations DPD. CDC intends to undertake fresh consultation on a new Issues and Options document in July 2015.

Bicester Masterplan SPD

3.22 In August 2012, the Council consulted on the draft Bicester Master Plan SPD. The Master Plan SPD sets out the vision for Bicester and how change in Bicester will be managed to provide for an enlarged settlement. Preparation of the document is currently on hold until the emerging Cherwell Local Plan is adopted.

North West Bicester Master Plan

3.23 The North West Bicester Master Plan was submitted to the Council by A2Dominion in March 2014 and amended in May 2014. The intention is that it will be adopted as an SPD in accordance with the emerging Policy Bicester 1. The Masterplan has been the subject of over five years of consultation and engagement between the Applicant, the Council, Oxfordshire County Council, key stakeholders and local residents. The Bicester Masterplan SPD will expand upon and provide further detail to the Local Plan policies for the North West Bicester Eco-Development. Progress with the document is on hold until the emerging Cherwell Local Plan is adopted.

Evidence Base

3.24 The Cherwell District Council Retail Study Update was prepared by CBRE in October 2012 ("the CRS") and forms part of the evidence base to inform the emerging Local Plan.

3.25 The CRS considers Bicester Town Centre to be healthy and well-patronised with a broad range of convenience and comparison floorspace. The study includes an assessment of the town centre in terms of the comparison and convenience goods provision (19.24% convenience floorspace and 42.06% comparison floorspace). The remaining floorspace fell within the service/food/drink bracket (30.23%) or were vacant. The percentage of the vacant floorspace is below the national average at 6.8%. We comment further on existing provision in Bicester in Section 4.

3.26 The CRS identifies capacity for additional convenience goods floorspace of 8,246 sq m gross in 2022, increasing to 10,553 sq m gross in 2031. In terms of comparison goods provision, the CRS suggests that current commitments will meet the identified need in the short to medium-term, but by 2022 there will be capacity of 23,765 sq m gross, rising to 85,263 sq m gross net by 2031.

Policy Conclusions

3.27 The adopted Local Plan is considered to be out-of-date for the purpose of this assessment and is therefore superseded by the NPPF in retail policy terms. The scheme falls below the NPPF threshold for undertaking a retail impact assessment.

3.28 The emerging Local Plan is currently at an advanced stage of preparation and Policy Bicester 1 supports the provision of new Local Centres to meet the day to day needs within the strategic housing allocations, including NW Bicester.

3.29 The principle of a Local Centre has been established through the grant of planning permission in 2012. Notwithstanding this and the emerging policy support, the Application Site would be classed as out-of-centre against the adopted Development Plan and as requested by CDC officers, this Assessment sets out the compliance of the scheme with the NPPF sequential and retail impact tests at Sections 5-6. This in turn informs consideration against the adopted and emerging Development Plan.

4.0 RETAIL CONTEXT

Background

4.1 This section provides an overview of existing and planned retail provision in Bicester and the nearby area, in order to inform the Impact Assessment at Section 6.

Bicester Town Centre

4.2 Bicester is defined as a Town Centre in the adopted and emerging Development Plan and is at the top of the retail policy hierarchy (alongside Banbury) in the District.

4.3 The Centre lies approximately 2.4km to the south east of the Application Site. The main focus of the Town Centre is along Sheep Street which is permeated to the west by pedestrian links to Pioneer Square, a modern shopping mall which opened in July 2013.

4.4 The Town Centre's main convenience provision comprises of the Sainsbury's store at Pioneer Square (8,953 sqm gross). There is also a Marks and Spencer food hall and Iceland on Sheep Street, along with a range of independent smaller convenience stores, including sandwich shops and newsagents.

4.5 Comparison goods provision in the Town Centre comprises a number of national retailers including Argos, Boots, Dorothy Perkins and New Look.

4.6 The Centre generally provides a pleasant and accessible environment and appeared, at both morning and afternoon visits in April 2015, to be busy and popular. Vacancy levels within the Centre were low and there were a number of smaller vacant units within the Pioneer Square area which were being actively marketed.

4.7 Our overview of the Town Centre has identified that it is on the whole vital and viable, in line with the findings of the CBRE Retail Study Update.

Local Centres

4.8 There are a number of Local Centres in Bicester, as identified in the emerging Local Plan. This overview focuses on those Centres in the west of Bicester, closest to the Application Site.

Bowmont Square Local Centre

4.9 The Centre is located approximately 2.4km south west of the Application Site and primarily serves a residential catchment in the west of Bicester. It comprises of three retail units including a Tesco Express convenience store, Fish & Chip takeaway and a Coral bookmakers. A Public House (The Shakespeare) and associated car park is located opposite the retail units.

4.10 The CRS identifies that the Tesco store has a limited draw across Bicester and the District, with a convenience goods market share of 0.18%. The Centre does not contain any comparison goods retailers. The Centre was well used by customers on the day of our visit.

Kingsley Road Local Centre

4.11 The Centre is located approximately 1.6km to the south west of the Application Site fronting Bucknell Road. The Centre comprises of five ground floor retail units including a Co-op convenience store, a Fish & Chip takeaway, a Laundrette, a Hairdresser and a Chinese takeaway.

4.12 The CRS identifies that that the Co-op store has a convenience goods market share of 0.15%. The Centre generally appeared to be busy and well-populated on the day of the visit.

Barberry Place Local Centre

4.13 The Centre is located approximately one kilometre south of the Application Site. It contains five shop units and a pub/restaurant serving the surrounding residential area. It contains a Co-op Convenience Store, Co-op Pharmacy, Hairdresser, a Chinese takeaway, a Fish & Chip shop and a family pub / restaurant.

4.14 The CRS identifies that the Co-op store has a 0.21% convenience goods market share. There were a number of people visiting the shops on the day of the site visit and the car park was almost full.

Holm Square Local Centre

4.15 The Centre is located at the centre of a large residential development and is closest to the Application Site at just under a kilometre to the south east. It comprises of four retail units which are occupied by Tesco Express, a hairdressers, a Chinese takeaway and a Fish & Chip takeaway. The Tesco has a limited convenience goods market share of 0.06%.

4.16 The Centre generally appeared to be busy on the day of the site visit. All units were occupied and the car park was nearly full.

Audley House Local Centre

4.17 The Centre fronts Buckingham Road and was developed in 2005, following the grant of Planning Permission (Ref: 05/01734/F). The Centre contains ground floor retail units which are occupied by a Co-op Convenience Store, KFC takeaway, a Fish & Chip takeaway and a Ladbrokes bookmaker. The CRS identifies that that the Co-op store has a convenience goods market share of 0.09%. The Centre generally appeared to be busy and well-populated on the day of the site visit.

Other Provision

4.18 In addition to the above, there are a number of Local Centres in Bicester which are located to the east of the Town Centre, which generally contain a convenience store and local services to serve their immediate residential neighbourhood.

4.19 There are also a number of out-of-centre retail stores in Bicester including Aldi and Lidl discount stores on Launton Road. The Aldi store is located adjacent to a Wickes DIY store. The Lidl supermarket is located further north adjacent to the Launton Road Retail Park, which comprises a number of bulky goods operators including Halfords, Carpet Right, Pets at Home, Benson for Beds and Homebase.

4.20 Bicester Village Outlet Centre is located on the outskirts of Bicester to the south. The Centre is not allocated in retail policy terms but is one of the UK's largest shopping outlet centres offering a wide range of premium designer brands. The convenience offer at the outlet is limited. On 16th April 2015, Members resolved to grant Planning Permission for the demolition of the existing Tesco food store, petrol filling station to facilitate the extension of the Bicester Village Shopping Outlet providing additional Class A floorspace (LPA Ref: 15/00082/F).

4.21 The Tesco at Pingle Drive is due to be relocated to larger purpose built premises (8,135 sqm gross) on land adjoining the A41 Oxford Road, south west of Bicester Village following the grant of Planning Permission (LPA Ref: 12/01193/F).

Summary and Conclusions

4.22 Arising from the above review, it is clear that existing Local Centres generally have between 4-6 units, all containing a convenience store and some with a public house, along with other Class A uses.

4.23 This context has been used to inform the scheme and our sequential and impact assessments at Sections 5-6.

5.0 SEQUENTIAL ASSESSMENT

5.1 This section sets out our commentary of the scheme's compliance with the NPPF sequential test.

5.2 It is important to recognise at the outset that the principle of the Local Centre has been established through the grant of planning permission in 2012. The emerging Local Plan is at an advanced stage, with Policies Bicester 1 and SLE2 both supporting the provision of new Local Centres as part of the wider North West Bicester Strategic allocation.

5.3 Whilst there is no current definition of a Local Centre, PPS4 (Annex 2) previously defined Local Centres as containing a small range of shops of a local nature, serving a small catchment, including a small convenience store amongst other shops. The proposed Local Centre is consistent with both this definition and provision in existing Local Centres in Bicester, as outlined in Section 4.

5.4 In particular, the Class A1-A5 component of the scheme is intended to encourage sustainable local shopping patterns and reduce the need for residents to travel. It is not anticipated that it would perform a wider role for residents outside of the development or be of a scale that would draw trade in from beyond the North West Bicester scheme to any substantial degree. This is addressed in more detail in Section 6 which demonstrates that the Class A1 floorspace is of an appropriate scale, being supported in expenditure terms by residents of the wider scheme. As such, it is considered entirely appropriate to provide the proposed Local Centre as part of the wider North West Bicester scheme, in this location.

5.5 Seeking to locate the proposed Class A1-A5 floorspace in Bicester Town Centre or other Local Centres outside of Bicester would not meet the local needs of residents of the wider development. It is also likely to result in less sustainable patterns of travel as residents would have to travel further to meet daily 'top-up' shopping and service requirements.

5.6 We conclude that the Application Site and scheme represents a locationally specific requirement that cannot be located elsewhere in Bicester. It therefore represents the most sequentially appropriate location for the proposed retail floorspace. As such, it is not considered necessary or appropriate to undertake a detailed sequential assessment of potential alternative sites.

5.7 On this basis, the Class A1-A5 component of the scheme is considered to be in accordance with the NPPF sequential test at paragraph 24 and in turn paragraph 27.

6.0 IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Background

6.1 It is important to recognise that planning permission for a Local Centre was granted in 2012 and was considered to be acceptable in impact terms. Whilst this application proposes a greater quantum and mix of floorspace within the Centre, the maximum proposed Class A1 floorspace will only be 177 sq m gross above that previously permitted.

6.2 In this context and given the scheme falls below the NPPF threshold, it is not considered that a retail impact assessment is strictly required.

6.3 Notwithstanding this and for robustness, this section sets out our assessment of the proposed development against the NPPF impact tests at paragraph 26.

NPPF Paragraph 26 – Impact Test for Retail Development Outside of Town Centres not in Accordance with the Development Plan.

6.4 This test requires the proposed floorspace to be assessed against the following:

- the impact of the proposal on existing, committed and planned public and private investment in a centre or centres in the catchment area of the proposal; and
- the impact of the proposal on Town Centre vitality and viability, including local consumer choice and trade in the Town Centre up to five years from the time an application is made. For major schemes where the full impact will not be realised in five years, the impact should also be assessed up to ten years from the time the application is made.

6.5 Given the nature of the development and timescales for completion, this assessment focuses on the scheme's compliance with the above tests and assesses the potential impact at 2025 (i.e. 10 years from submission of the application). We also provide commentary on impact at 2020 (5 years from submission of the application) and 2026, when the residential component in the northern part of the wider site will be completed.

Role & Function of the Proposed Scheme

6.6 Before assessing whether the proposed Class A1-A5 floorspace is likely to have a significant adverse impact on existing centres or not, it is important to understand the anticipated role and function of this component of the scheme in the context of the wider proposed development.

6.7 The proposed Class A1-A5 floorspace will comprise a Class A1 convenience store of 503 sq m gross, which is intended to provide a local facility to meet the top-up convenience and day-to-day needs of new residents in the northern part of the wider North West Bicester scheme. The scheme also includes other Class A floorspace, including a Class A4 public house of 664 sq m; flexible Class A1/A3/A5 floorspace of 444 sq m; and 614 sq m of flexible employment / community floorspace for Class A2/B1/D1 uses.

6.8 Aside from the convenience store and public house, flexibility is sought in respect of the other Class A uses. These could comprise hairdressers, banks, estate agents, restaurants, cafés and / or hot food takeaway. This would provide supporting service uses to meet local needs whilst recognising that residents would also visit higher order centres which contain a greater retail and service offer, such as Bicester Town Centre.

6.9 As set out above the application only proposes a maximum Class A1 floorspace of 177 sq m gross above that previously permitted and it is only strictly necessary to test the impact of this increase in floorspace. However, and notwithstanding that flexibility is sought, in order to demonstrate robustness we have assessed impact on the basis of the proposed Class A1 convenience store (503 sq m gross) and assuming that the remaining maximum Class A1/A3/A5 floorspace (444 sq m gross) could be occupied entirely by Class A1 comparison goods retailers.

6.10 In this respect, it is not intended that this component of the scheme would compete with Bicester Town Centre to any substantial degree, as given the nature and scale of floorspace, residents of the development will still look to the Town Centre for the majority of their retail and service needs. In addition, the scale of floorspace is unlikely to attract residents from outside of the development to any substantial degree.

6.11 To reinforce the acceptability of the proposed retail floorspace, we have undertaken an assessment of the expenditure generated by residents and compared this with the potential turnover of the scheme.

Available Expenditure

6.12 Table 1 of **Appendix 1** shows:

- at 2020 (i.e. five years from the submission of the application), 770 dwellings are estimated to have been completed and will generate a new population to the area of 2,071 persons. These residents would generate convenience goods expenditure of £4.1m and comparison goods expenditure of £6.9m.

- at 2025 (i.e. ten years from the submission of the application), 1,318 dwellings are estimated to have been completed and will generate a population of 3,501 persons. These residents would generate convenience goods expenditure of £7.0m and comparison goods expenditure of £13.7m.

- at 2026 (i.e. on completion of the residential component), 1,420 dwellings are estimated to be completed and will generate a population of 3,767 persons. These residents would generate convenience goods expenditure of £7.6m and comparison goods expenditure of £15.2m.

Estimated Scheme Turnover & Retention

6.13 The estimated turnover of the Class A1 convenience and comparison goods floorspace of the scheme is set out at Table 2, **Appendix 1.** This shows the convenience goods turnover of the scheme at 2025 would be £1.9m and the comparison goods turnover would be £1.5m.

6.14 Tables 3, 3a and 3b, **Appendix 1** compares the available expenditure generated by residents with the proposed retail turnover. For robustness, this allows for the retail floorspace to draw some turnover from residents outside of the wider scheme, equating to 15% of turnover. Even at 2020, it is clear that there is more than sufficient expenditure generated to support the retail floorspace. At 2025 when the majority of dwellings are complete, the turnover of the proposed convenience goods floorspace would account for 23% of the available convenience goods expenditure. This is broadly in line with the level of expenditure that residents would typically spend on 'top-up' convenience goods shopping and reinforces the acceptability of this component of the scheme.

6.15 The comparison goods floorspace would account for just 10% of the available convenience goods expenditure at 2025.

6.16 In this respect the proposed Class A1 floorspace is of a size and scale that can be supported, in expenditure terms, entirely by residents of the proposed development at 2025 (the year of assessment). At 2026, as the residential component in the northern part of the wider North West Bicester scheme (i.e. that the Local Centre would serve) is complete, the level of retention will reduce as more expenditure is available to support these facilities.

6.17 Whilst there is no requirement to demonstrate need in a development management context, it is clear from the above that the level of retention associated with the scheme is consistent with that associated with top-up convenience shopping, recognising that residents would typically undertake main-food shopping trips elsewhere. For comparison goods, the scale of floorspace is appropriate for local day to day needs, but allows for the fact that residents would primarily look to higher order centres and locations to undertake the bulk of comparison goods shopping.

6.18 In this respect, residents of the wider scheme will primarily look to Bicester Town Centre for their main convenience and comparison goods shopping requirements, with the Local Centre serving their day to day needs. The expenditure generated by residents but not spent within the proposed development (circa £8.0m at 2020, increasing to £17.7m in 2025 and £19.7m in 2026) is therefore available to existing centres, including Bicester Town Centre and other Local Centres in the area and could further support their overall vitality and viability. On this basis, it is not considered that there is a reasonable likelihood of a significant adverse impact on existing centres arising from the proposed retail floorspace.

Retail Impact

6.19 It has been established above that the proposed Class A1 retail floorspace can be supported in expenditure terms by new residents within the wider North West Bicester scheme. These residents will generate substantial expenditure, with only a small amount spent within the proposed Local Centre, with the remainder capable of supporting existing Centres in Bicester.

6.20 Notwithstanding this, in order to demonstrate robustness, we have undertaken an assessment of the potential impact effects of the scheme, assuming that the retail floorspace could draw some of its trade from residents outside of the North West Bicester scheme.

6.21 Table 4, **Appendix 1** sets out the potential level of inflow to scheme, on the basis that 15% of the turnover of the Class A1 floorspace will be drawn from residents outside of the scheme (i.e. inflow).

6.22 Table 5, **Appendix 1**, undertakes an assessment of the potential impact of the convenience and comparison goods floorspace. It finds that the impact effect on Bicester Town Centre would be around 0.2%, whilst the impact on existing Local Centres in the western part of Bicester would be around 1-2%. These levels could not reasonably be considered 'significantly adverse' (i.e. the NPPF test).

6.23 Aside from the convenience and comparison goods floorspace set out above, the scheme will also include other Class A1-A5 floorspace. Whilst it is not possible to undertake a quantitative impact assessment for these components of the scheme, the scale of floorspace for these uses is considered to be appropriate and as they are intended to serve residents of North West Bicester, it is unlikely that they would compete with similar facilities in existing Centres to any significant degree.

6.24 Importantly, it should be noted the above does not take into account the additional expenditure generated by residents and not spent within the scheme (as highlighted at paragraph 6.18 above). This additional expenditure is available to be spent in existing Centres and would more than off-set the minimal trade diversions identified above.

Policy Assessment

6.25 From the findings of our retail context and quantitative impact analysis above, we set out below our assessment of the proposed development against the key NPPF impact criteria.

Impact on Investment in Centres

6.26 The main focus of investment in the area is Bicester Town Centre. The level of trade diversion from the Centre is minimal and is not considered to be at a level which could potentially impact on future investment in the Centre.

6.27 Importantly, as set out above, the wider scheme will result in almost £20m of additional expenditure at 2026 being available to be spent at locations outside of the proposed Local Centre. The additional expenditure generated by new residents of the wider North West Bicester scheme could in fact assist in supporting the delivery of new retail facilities in the Town Centre.

6.28 Against this background, there is no clear evidence to suggest the scheme will have a significant adverse impact upon existing or planned investment in existing Centres.

Impact on Trade / Turnover and Vitality and Viability

6.29 Our quantitative impact analysis in this Section and included at **Appendix 1** has demonstrated that the proposed Class A1 floorspace can be supported in expenditure terms by residents of the proposed development and is of an entirely appropriate scale. It has also been demonstrated that, even allowing for some inflow of trade from residents outside of the wider scheme, the level of trade diversion from existing facilities will be well within acceptable levels.

6.30 The greatest trade diversion will be from Bicester Town Centre, although at 0.2% this is de minimis. This is not a level that will have any material effect on the Centre and would not be classed as significant adverse.

6.31 The impact on existing Local Centres in the west of Bicester is estimated to be between 1-2%, which again is not at a level that would reasonably be classed as significant adverse.

6.32 Whilst it is not possible to undertake a quantitative impact assessment for the other Class A uses proposed, the scale of floorspace is clearly at a level which is primarily intended to serve the local needs of residents of the wider scheme and support its overall sustainability objectives. They would clearly not be of a scale that would be likely to result in a significant adverse impact on the vitality or viability of existing Centres.

6.33 It is also important to recognise that any trade diversion effects will be reduced and more than off-set by the expenditure generated by the wider scheme’s residents, but not spent within the Local Centre. This expenditure is available to other locations and would only assist in maintaining or enhancing the role and function of Bicester Town Centre and other Centres.

6.34 Against this background, we have not identified any clear evidence or likelihood of a significant adverse impact upon the turnover or vitality and viability of existing centres.

Summary and Conclusions

6.35 Arising from the above assessment, there is no evidence that the proposal will lead to significant adverse impacts on existing centres in terms of investment, trade / turnover and overall vitality and viability under NPPF paragraph 26. The proposed Class A1 convenience and comparison floorspace can be entirely supported in expenditure terms by residents of the development, whilst the remaining Class A floorspace is of a scale appropriate to support local service needs. Importantly, the expenditure generated by residents of the wider development but not retained within the Local Centre will support existing and future retail provision in Bicester, with the expenditure generated by the new residents of the wider North West Bicester scheme will more than off-set trade diversion from existing facilities.

6.36 As compliance with the sequential and impact tests have been demonstrated, the retail component of the scheme complies with NPPF paragraph 27 and in turn the adopted and emerging Development Plan and should be determined positively.

7.0 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

7.1 This Retail Assessment has been prepared to consider the appropriateness of the proposed Class A floorspace to be provided in the 'Exemplar' Local Centre, which will form part of the wider residential led scheme at North West Bicester.

7.2 The principle of the Local Centre already has been established through the 2012 planning permission and is fully supported in the emerging Local Plan, which is at an advanced stage. The Local Centre is consistent with existing Local Centres in Bicester in terms of its scale and mix of uses.

7.3 The proposed Class A1 convenience and comparison goods floorspace is small in scale and is intended to meet the local needs of residents of the wider scheme. In this respect, it has been demonstrated that it can be entirely supported in expenditure terms by the new residents of the North West Bicester scheme. Along with the other Class A floorspace, the proposed development will provide locally accessible retail and service facilities to serve residents of the development but is not of a scale that is considered likely to compete to any material extent with existing provision in Bicester or draw trade into the development to any substantial degree.

7.4 The Application Site therefore represents the most sequentially preferable location to accommodate the proposed retail floorspace.

7.5 Whilst it has been demonstrated that the Class A1 convenience and comparison goods retail floorspace can be entirely supported by residents of the development, an assessment has been undertaken to understand whether there is likely to be a significant adverse impact on existing Centres. Allowing for some inflow of expenditure from outside of the development, it has been demonstrated that the impact effects on existing facilities will be less than 2% and cannot reasonably be considered 'significantly adverse'.

7.6 Importantly, the wider North West Bicester scheme will generate substantial retail expenditure which is available to be spent at other locations, including Bicester Town Centre. This will more than off-set the potential trade diversion and could in turn support and enhance the vitality and viability of existing centres and retail facilities.

7.7 The scheme will also have a range of other benefits, including improving local choice and competition; accessibility to local retail provision; encourage sustainable shopping patterns; and creating new job opportunities.

7.8 Against this background, the retail component of the scheme complies with NPPF paragraph 27 and the relevant policies in the adopted and emerging Development Plan.

Appendix 1

Retail Impact Assessment

NW BICESTER
RETAIL IMPACT ASSESSMENT

TABLE 1 - POPULATION & AVAILABLE EXPENDITURE OF PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

	2015	2020	2025	2026
No. of Dwellings	-	770	548	102
Population		2,071	1,430	266
No. of Dwellings	-	770	1,318	1,420
Population	-	2,071	3,501	3,767
Expenditure Per Head (£)				
- Convenience Goods	1,924	1,957	1,998	2,008
- Comparison Goods	2,946	3,332	3,910	4,039
Total Expenditure (£m)				
- Convenience Goods	-	4.05	7.00	7.56
- Comparison Goods	-	6.90	13.69	15.21

Notes:

1. Phasing / Population provided by Applicant.
2. Expenditure per head taken from Experian, based on existing expenditure profile of Bicester.
3. Expenditure grown and special forms of trading deducted in line with Experian Retail Planner Briefing Note 12.1 (October 2014).
4. Figures presented in 2013 prices.
5. Figures may not cast due to rounding.

NW BICESTER
RETAIL IMPACT ASSESSMENT

TABLE 2 - PROPOSED RETAIL FLOORSPACE & ESTIMATED TURNOVER

	Gross Floorspace (sq m)	Net Floorspace (sq m)	Convenience Goods		Comparison Goods		Total (£m)
			Floorspace (sq m net)	Turnover (£m)	Floorspace (sq m net)	Turnover (£m)	
Convenience Store	503	352	317	1.90	35	0.21	2.11
Comparison Goods	444	333	0	0.00	333	1.33	1.33
Total	**947**	**685**	**317**	**1.90**	**368**	**1.54**	**3.44**

Notes:

1. Assumes net to gross ratio of 70% for the convenience store and 75% for comparison stores.
2. Assumes 10% of convenience store will be used for the sale of comparison goods.
3. Sales density of £6,000 per sq m for convenience store and £4,000 per sq m for comparison stores based on Mintel and BW estimates.
4. Figures presented in 2013 prices.
5. Figures may not cast due to rounding.

NW BICESTER
RETAIL IMPACT ASSESSMENT

TABLE 3 - CONVENIENCE & COMPARISON GOODS RETENTION (2020)

Goods Type	Scheme Turnover (£m)	Turnover Drawn From NWB (£m)	Available Expenditure in NWB (£m)	Retention within NWB (%)
Convenience	1.90	1.62	4.05	39.9
Comparison	1.54	1.31	6.90	19.0

TABLE 3a - CONVENIENCE & COMPARISON GOODS RETENTION (2025)

Goods Type	Scheme Turnover (£m)	Turnover Drawn From NWB (£m)	Available Expenditure in NWB (£m)	Retention within NWB (%)
Convenience	1.93	1.64	7.00	23.4
Comparison	1.62	1.38	13.69	10.1

TABLE 3b - CONVENIENCE & COMPARISON GOODS RETENTION (2026)

Goods Type	Scheme Turnover (£m)	Turnover Drawn From NWB (£m)	Available Expenditure in NWB (£m)	Retention within NWB (%)
Convenience	1.93	1.64	7.56	21.7
Comparison	1.64	1.39	15.21	9.2

Notes:

1. Derived from Tables 1 and 2.
2. Scheme turnover grown at 0.25% p.a for convenience and 1% p.a. for comparison goods.
3. Assumes 85% of turnover drawn from NWB residents.
4. Figures may not cast due to rounding.

NW BICESTER
RETAIL IMPACT ASSESSMENT

TABLE 4 - POTENTIAL INFLOW FROM OUTSIDE NW BICESTER (2025)

Goods Type	Scheme Turnover (£m)	Inflow (£m)
Convenience	1.93	0.29
Comparison	1.62	0.24
Total	**3.55**	**0.53**

Notes:

1. Derived from Table 2.
2. Assumes 15% of turnover from outside NW Bicester.
3. Figures may not cast due to rounding.

NW BICESTER
RETAIL IMPACT ASSESSMENT

TABLE 5 - POTENTIAL TRADE DIVERSION / IMPACT (2025)

Location	Turnover (£m)	Convenience Trade Diversion (£m)	Comparison Trade Diversion (£m)	Total Diversion (£m)	Scheme Impact (%)
Bicester Town Centre					
Sainsburys	85.98	0.08	0.02	0.10	0.12
Other Convenience	4.86	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.06
Comparison Stores	17.75	0.00	0.15	0.15	0.86
Total	*108.59*	*0.08*	*0.18*	*0.26*	*0.24*
Local Centres					
Bowmount Square	1.95	0.04	0.00	0.04	1.93
Barberry Place	2.27	0.04	0.00	0.04	1.65
Buckingham Road	0.97	0.01	0.00	0.01	1.48
Kingsley Road	1.62	0.02	0.00	0.02	1.33
Holm Square	0.65	0.01	0.00	0.01	0.89
Other Locations					
Tesco, Pingle Drive	25.80	0.04	0.00	0.05	0.19
Aldi	5.82	0.01	0.00	0.01	0.20
Lidl	8.75	0.01	0.00	0.01	0.13
Other	-	0.03	0.06	0.09	-
Total	**-**	**0.29**	**0.24**	**0.53**	**-**

Notes:

1. Turnover of existing locations derived from Cherwell Retail Study Update 2012, rebased to 2013 prices.
2. Benchmark convenience turnover's applied to Sainsbury's and existing Tesco stores.
3. Efficiency growth applied at 0.5% p.a. for convenience goods and 1% p.a. for comparison goods.
4. Total diversions based on inflow to scheme set out in Table 4.
5. Trade diversions are BW estimates.
6. Figures may not cast due to rounding.