

OXFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL'S RESPONSE TO CONSULTATION ON THE FOLLOWING DEVELOPMENT PROPOSAL

District: Cherwell

Application no: 15/00760/F-2

Proposal: Development of a new Local Centre comprising a Convenience Store (use class A1), Retail Units (flexible use class A1/A3/A5), Pub (use class A4), Community Hall (use class D1), Nursery (use class D1), Commercial Units (flexible use class A2/B1/D1) with associated Access, Servicing, Landscaping and Parking with a total GEA of 3,617 sqm

Location: North And South Arcade At Bicester Eco Town Exemplar Site Charlotte Avenue Bicester

Purpose of document

This report sets out Oxfordshire County Council's view on the proposal.

This report contains officer advice in the form of a strategic localities response and technical team response(s). Where local member have responded these have been attached by OCCs Major Planning Applications Team (planningconsultations@oxfordshire.gov.uk).

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Location: North And South Arcade At Bicester Eco Town Exemplar Site Charlotte Avenue Bicester

Officer's Name: Lisa Michelson

Officer's Title: Locality Manager

Date: 08 October 2015

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Transport

Recommendation:

No objection subject to conditions

Key issues:

- Concerns over 'High Street' layout and materials
- Further tracking/swept path analysis required

Legal agreement required to secure:

- Revision to existing S38 agreement for spine road subject to County Legal team agreeing amendments;
- A lorry routing agreement is proposed within the Transport Assessment.

Conditions:

Road Construction, Surface and Layout

Prior to the commencement of the development hereby approved, full specification details of the spine road through the development including construction, surfacing, layout, drainage and road markings, shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Thereafter and prior to the first occupation of any of the buildings in the local centre the road/footways etc. shall be constructed in accordance with the approved details as agreed within the Section 38 documentation.

Reason DR2

Turning Area and Car Parking

Prior to the first occupation of the development, the service/turning area and all on street and off street car parking spaces shall be constructed in accordance with the approved details and shall be retained for the parking and manoeuvring of vehicles at all times thereafter.

Reason DR3

Cycle Parking Provision

Prior to the first use or occupation of the development hereby permitted, covered cycle parking and Sheffield stands shall be provided within the application site in accordance with the details submitted. The covered and uncovered cycle parking facilities shall be permanently retained and maintained for the parking of cycles in connection with the development.

Reason DR4

Travel Plan – condition requiring individual site travel plans – detail to follow.

Construction traffic management plan – will be required if not already covered by the Hybrid consent for the Exemplar Site as a whole.

Parking management plan for the centre (application site) - will be required if not already covered by the Hybrid consent for the Exemplar Site as a whole.

Drainage Strategy

Prior to the commencement of the development, full details of a drainage strategy for the entire site, detailing all on and off site drainage works required in relation to the development, shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Thereafter, the drainage works shall be carried out and completed in accordance with the approved strategy, until which time no discharge of foul or surface water from the site shall be accepted into the public system.

Reason ER15

Informatives:

Detailed comments:

The principle of development in this location within the context of a wider development and transport mitigation for the site has been secured through the planning application 10/01780/HYBRID. A full planning application has been made due to the changes in floor areas of the proposed uses within the site.

Cherwell District Local Plan seeks to address the issue of significant out-commuting from Bicester through the provision of employment land. Whilst the proposed increase in Class 'A' land uses will provide some food/non-food retail employment, there is already a range of similar employment opportunities within walking/cycling distance of the site. The reduction of the currently approved class 'B' employment use could result in an increase in out commuting from Bicester reducing the potential sustainability benefits of the approved site.

Notable changes in usage are significant increases in the size of the nursery, and the pub. This is likely to attract more users in from outside the development and beyond Bicester.

However, the Transport Assessment (TA) provides a comparison between the trip generation associated with the consented land use and the proposed land use, which shows a reduction in peak hour trips, based on trip generation rates per floor area used in the assessment of the hybrid planning application. Therefore there is not considered to be any additional impact on peak hour traffic.

Car parking

The parking provision is well below the maximum parking standards. The TA argues that the various uses do not generate demand at the same time. Notwithstanding the parking accumulation survey which has been provided seeking to demonstrate that the parking would be adequate, and the overall future sustainability of the site and strong travel plan measures, there are concerns that in reality parking would not be adequate and inappropriate overspill parking would be a problem.

A total of 34 spaces are proposed to be available to the public, with the remaining 46 allocated for staff at all the various uses. The CDC max parking standard for the Eco Business Centre and Nursery (which would be very largely intended for staff) alone would be 84, so there is a significant risk of all-day staff parking spilling into the public parking spaces or into nearby residential areas. The Travel Plan states that there will be a 'need for a strict parking management regime' and 'enforcement of inappropriate overspill parking' but no detail is provided in the TA. It is also not clear in whose ownership the car park will be. Further details including a parking management scheme will be required.

Uses other than the Eco Business Centre and Nursery are likely to have demand at the same time, albeit the peaks may differ. Staff taking up spaces for customers/users of the pub, community centre and shops will add to the pressure on spaces for daytime users and people dropping children off at the nursery.

The Travel Plan states there would be car sharing spaces there is no evidence of this on the submitted drawing.

Servicing

Tracking has been provided showing how delivery lorries would enter and exit the service yard for the pub and convenience store. However, this needs to extend to show the vehicles turning off and onto the 'High Street' as this would indicate the size of the radii at the junction. It is noted that there is street furniture located close to the edge of the junction/access and it is critical that a tracking/swept path analysis is carried out at this particular location for safety reasons i.e. does not affect the location of the street furniture particularly the bench.

Tracking/swept path analysis should also be provided for refuse vehicles into the yard behind units 5 and 4 (assuming the gates to the service yard are closed).

It is noted that there is an aim to provide future servicing access from the south. This would be much preferable as it would keep it separate from pedestrians and cyclists, but it cannot be guaranteed. It is unfortunate that the car and servicing accesses are directly opposite each other, in the middle of the parades.

The 'High Street'

The first thing to note is that the spine road for the Exemplar Site is covered by an existing Section 38 agreement (road adoption), which specifies the design and materials namely coloured asphalt for the footways and black asphalt for the carriageway. The planning application would need to reflect what has been legally agreed within the Section 38 both in terms of materials and layout in light of this there are also significant changes in the layout with on street parking, additional trees and benches being introduced.

What have also been omitted from the layout scheme are the open drainage channels in the local centre area to the south of the spine road at the road edges.

The 'formal' crossing points in fact appear to be informal. Also they only show a change in paving element size rather than a change in colour. Unless there is significant contrast in the road surface colour or some other warning, vehicle drivers will assume priority. They need to be very clearly differentiated or not marked on the carriageway at all. Particularly given the HGV use, it is preferable to see them further away from the turning into the service yard/car park.

The paving appears to be flush all the way across the adoptable areas. Kerb upstands would help prevent parking outside the designated bays and if there are no upstands some bollards or other deterrent may be required to prevent vehicles accessing the non-vehicular areas.

The proposed public car parking space (disabled space) outside the convenience store is too wide which doesn't leave much space for an adoptable footway immediately adjacent to it. The width of this space should be reduced to 3m width which should leave at least 2m for the footway adjacent to it.

The proposed street design would need to be the subject of a revision to the S38 agreement, which would require further technical audit. It would be helpful for the applicant to confirm the areas proposed to be offered for adoption at this time. The submitted drawings appear to indicate a colonnade on both sides – areas underneath this will not be adopted.

Public transport

The developer must provide greater detail about the bus stopping area, including clearer information about the proposed style of bus shelter and the intended method of procuring the shelter and the adjacent pole/flag/information case unit. The developer should provide a detailed plan of this area, showing the exact orientation of the suggested style of bus shelter, the location of the pole/flag/information case unit, and the clear walking route from the bus to the retail facilities.

Travel Plan

A Travel Plan exists for the Exemplar Site as a whole, associated with the consented hybrid planning application for the site. This is intended to be followed up by individual Travel Plans for each of the uses at the local centre once the occupier is known. The developer does not propose to update the framework Travel Plan, but since it contains specifics, for example parking and cycle parking figures relating to the previously consented floor areas of each use, and provides the framework for future travel planning, it should be updated to reflect the revised floor areas.

Officer's Name: Jeff Hernandez

Officer's Title: Senior Engineer

Date: 07 October 2015
