

RESPONSE TO CONSULTATION ON THE FOLLOWING DEVELOPMENT PROPOSAL

District: Cherwell

Application no: 14/01384/OUT

Proposal: Development comprising redevelopment to provide up to 2600 residential dwellings (Class C3), commercial floorspace (Class A1 - A5, B1 and B2), social and community facilities (Class D1), land to accommodate one energy centre, land to accommodate one new primary school (Up to 2FE) (Class D1) and land to accommodate the extension of the primary school permitted pursuant to application (reference 10/01780/HYBRID). Such development to include provision of strategic landscape, provision of new vehicular, cycle and pedestrian access routes, infrastructure, ancillary engineering and other operations

Location: Bicester Eco Town Exemplar Site Banbury Road B4100 Caversfield

Archaeology

Recommendation:

No objection subject to conditions

Key issues:

The site is located in an area of archaeological interest as identified by a desk-based assessment, a geophysical survey and a trenched evaluation. A further programme of archaeological investigation and mitigation will need to be undertaken ahead of any development. This can be secured through a condition on any resultant planning permission.

Legal Agreement required to secure:

None

Conditions:

- a** Prior to any demolition on the site, the commencement of the development and any archaeological investigation, a professional archaeological organisation acceptable to the Local Planning Authority shall prepare a first stage archaeological Written Scheme of Investigation, relating to the application area, which shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason - To safeguard the recording and inspection of matters of archaeological importance on the site in accordance with Policy BE6 of the South East Plan 2009 and Government guidance contained within the National Planning Policy Framework.

- b** Prior to any demolition on the site and the commencement of the development and following the approval of the first stage Written Scheme of Investigation referred to in condition **[a]**, a programme of archaeological evaluation, investigation and recording of

the application area shall be carried out by the commissioned archaeological organisation in accordance with the approved first stage Written Scheme of Investigation.

Reason - In order to determine the extent, character and significance of the surviving remains of archaeological interest and to safeguard the recording and inspection of matters of archaeological importance on the site in accordance with Policy BE6 of the South East Plan 2009 and Government guidance contained within the National Planning Policy Framework.

Informatives:

None.

Detailed Comments:

The site is located in an area of archaeological interest as identified by a desk-based assessment, a geophysical survey and a trenched evaluation. The geophysical survey and evaluation identified a number of areas of surviving archaeological features including a Neolithic Pit, an area of Bronze Age activity including two possible 'burnt mound' deposits, a number of areas of Iron Age activity and a number of areas of Roman activity. This development will therefore disturb these surviving features and a further programme of archaeological investigation and mitigation will need to be undertaken ahead of any development.

We would, therefore, recommend that, should planning permission be granted, the applicant should be responsible for ensuring the implementation of a staged programme of archaeological investigation to be maintained during the period of construction. This can be ensured through the attachment of a suitable negative condition as suggested above.

If the applicant makes contact with us at the above address, we shall be pleased to outline the procedures involved, provide a brief upon which a costed specification can be based, and provide a list of archaeological contractors working in the area.

Officer's Name: Richard Oram

Officer's Title: Planning Archaeologist

Date: 08 September 2014

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Economy and Skills

Recommendation:

No objection

The Economy and Skills Team have been involved in the development of the Economic Development Strategy for the Bicester Eco Town and are satisfied that employment and training opportunities will be made available to local people during the construction and end user phase of the development.

Officer's Name: Dawn Pettis

Officer's Title: Economic Development Strategy Officer

Date: 28 August 2014

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Location: Bicester Eco Town Exemplar Site Banbury Road B4100 Caversfield

Education

Recommendation:

No objection subject to conditions

Key issues:

This section of the eco-town development is estimated to generate 539 primary school pupils, 508 secondary school pupils, and 20.1 pupils attending special educational needs provision (SEN).

This section of the eco-town development is to include a primary school, and to contribute towards the cost of primary, secondary and SEN school provision. The mechanism for apportioning costs towards these services between the separate applications which comprise the eco-town development is to be agreed.

Legal Agreement required to secure:

- An acceptable site of 2.22ha for a 2 form entry primary school, adjoining an additional 0.8 ha playing field to accommodate possible future expansion to 3 form entry size.
- Financial contributions towards the necessary primary and secondary school capacity; the mechanism for apportioning these costs across the separate applications is to be decided.
- £616,186 Section 106 developer contributions towards the expansion of permanent Special Educational Needs school capacity by a total of 20.1 pupil places. This is index linked to 1st Quarter 2012 using PUBSEC Tender Price Index. We are advised to allow £30,656 per pupil place to expand capacity in special educational needs schools.

Conditions:

Planning permission to be dependent on a satisfactory agreement to secure the resources required for the necessary expansion of education provision. This is in order for Oxfordshire County Council to meet its statutory duty to ensure sufficient pupil places for all children of statutory school age.

Detailed Comments:

Demand for Bicester primary school places has risen rapidly in recent years. Bicester secondary schools currently have spare capacity, but this will be filled as the higher numbers now in primary school feed through. A strategic approach to expanding primary and secondary school capacity across the town will be required to meet the demands of the local population and housing growth. For the eco-town development at NW Bicester, this includes up to 4 new primary schools and a new secondary school.

This section of the eco-town development is estimated to generate 539 primary school pupils, 508 secondary school pupils, and 20.1 pupils attending special educational needs provision (SEN).

Primary school provision will in the first instance be through the new primary school being built on the exemplar development. In time, this will grow to accommodate 420 pupils age 4-11, plus nursery pupils. This school will also be serving the needs of the exemplar development.

In the longer term, another new primary school is expected within the area covered by this application. The timing and details of this school will be subject to further discussion. A 2.22ha site is required at zero cost from this development for a 2 form entry school, plus an additional 0.8 ha playing field to accommodate possible future expansion to 3 form entry size.

The estimated cost of a 2 form entry primary school, delivering 420 places, is £8.334m, equivalent to £19,843 per pupil place. A proportionate share of the cost of primary school provision for 539 pupils would therefore be £10,695,377.

Secondary school provision will be through the new secondary school planned as part of the southern section of the eco-town development. This application should make a proportionate contribution towards this school. To allow phasing of the school construction, in the first instance, a 600-place secondary school is expected to be built, the cost of which is estimated to be £14,205,000. A proportionate share of this cost for 508 pupils would therefore be £12,026,900.

The mechanism for apportioning costs towards primary and secondary school provision between the separate applications which comprise the eco-town development is to be agreed.

For SEN provision, across Oxfordshire 1.11% of pupils are taught in special schools and all housing developments are expected to contribute proportionately toward expansion of this provision.

Officer's Name: Barbara Chillman

Officer's Title: Pupil Place Planning Manager

Date: 15 September 2014

RESPONSE TO CONSULTATION ON THE FOLLOWING DEVELOPMENT PROPOSAL

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Location: Bicester Eco Town Exemplar Site Banbury Road B4100 Caversfield

Ecology

Key issues:

- The applicant has used a recognised biodiversity metric which demonstrates how the development should deliver a net gain in biodiversity (in line with NPPF).
- Appropriate management and monitoring of the site could be crucial to whether the proposed development would be able to deliver a net gain in biodiversity. The applicant proposes that a LHMP (Landscape & Habitat Management Plan) would be produced for each reserved matters application. The LHMPs would contain both management and monitoring proposals.
- I support the principle of off-site mitigation for farmland birds. However, I have some comments and suggestions on the details of the method of achieving this.

Detailed Comments:

Off-site farmland bird mitigation

- Section 5.2 of the Biodiversity Strategy (Appendix 6J) gives the proposals for off-site farmland bird mitigation. I support the principle of off-site mitigation in this case, because it is not possible to mitigate for these species on site, due to their breeding and habitat requirements. The model proposed by the applicant here is similar to a scheme in operation relating to a development in Buckinghamshire. However, that scheme includes a substantial contribution towards administration costs. If this approach is followed I consider that there should be a contribution towards the time for

an officer to work with farmers. I am concerned that, without someone working in this role the project would be unsuccessful with too few farmers taking up the scheme to provide enough additional habitat for farmland birds compared with the habitat lost as a result of the development. The proposed approach should bring nature conservation benefits in the 25 years it is funded, but after funding ceases it might well be that the land management changes and no longer benefits farmland birds, whereas the development site is no longer suitable for these species either.

- An alternative approach, that might be much simpler to set up and provide much longer-term biodiversity benefits, is for funds to be used for the purchase of land in an agreed area and then the management of this land for nature conservation. Funds should provide for management for the initial 25 years (as proposed in Biodiversity Strategy), but the conservation organisation managing the land should then continue on-going management at its own cost and management could continue in perpetuity.
- I understand that previous information had suggested that farmland bird scheme would be in the Ray Valley, is this still the proposed location?

Monitoring & Management

- Appropriate management and monitoring of the site could be crucial to whether the proposed development would be able to deliver a net gain in biodiversity. Section 9 of the Biodiversity Strategy explains that a LHMP (Landscape & Habitat Management Plan) would be produced for each reserved matters application which would contain both management and monitoring proposals and that the management may need to be modified according to the results of the monitoring work.
- The public areas of the site would need to be managed for biodiversity in perpetuity to avoid the loss of potential benefits from the mitigation and enhancement measures. Ecological monitoring is important to ensure that the management is successful in meeting its objectives for biodiversity and to enable remedial action to be identified, if necessary.
- The LHMPs should include enhancements in biodiversity built into the design from an early stage on various scales, from individual house design to the masterplanning work. Features for biodiversity within the site should be planned to link up to habitats and features in the surrounding landscape. The applicant should ensure that they follow best practice, as suggested in the Oxfordshire Biodiversity & Planning Guidance (<https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/cms/content/planning-and-biodiversity>).
- Green Infrastructure should be designed to ensure that it would provide a network of interconnected habitats to enable dispersal of species across the wider environment. Open spaces within developments should be linked to biodiversity in the wider countryside, including on designated sites, priority habitats and CTAs. Green Infrastructure should also be planned to provide ecosystem services such as flood protection, microclimate control and filtration of air pollutants.
- The District Council should be seeking the advice of their in-house ecologist on the current application, who may be able to provide more detailed comments on the proposed scheme.

Clarification on the impact on SSSIs

- Please ask the applicant to confirm that there would be no impact on SSSIs in terms of both water quality and quantity.

Officer's Name: Tamsin Atley
Officer's Title: Ecologist Planner
Date: 19 September 2014

RESPONSE TO CONSULTATION ON THE FOLLOWING DEVELOPMENT PROPOSAL**District:** Cherwell**Application no:** 14/01384/OUT

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Extra Care Housing**Recommendation:**

No objection

Key issues:**Legal Agreement required to secure:****Officer's Name:** Nigel Holmes**Officer's Title:** Commissioning Manager**Date:** 04 September 2014
