

Outline Application

NW Bicester Application 1

Planning Statement

Land at North West Bicester
North of Railway

Cherwell District Council

Planning Statement

Prepared on behalf of A2Dominion South Ltd

August 2014

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APPENDIX 1 SCHEDULE OF MASTER PLAN DOCUMENTS AND DRAWINGS

1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This Planning Statement has been prepared on behalf of A2 Dominion ('the Applicant') in respect of land to the north west of Bicester, covering an area of some 154.82 hectares, north west of Lords Lane and north east of the railway line ('the Site'). The Site falls within the administrative area of Cherwell District Council ('the Council') and forms part of the NW Bicester Eco-Town.
- 1.2 The NW Bicester Eco-Town represents the largest single opportunity within Cherwell District, and more specifically Bicester, to provide for much needed new housing to help meet the needs of the residents of Bicester and Cherwell as a whole in the context of an ongoing substantial shortfall in housing land supply. Further, it presents 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 Policy Statement: Eco-Towns, A Supplement to Planning Policy Statement 1 July 2009 ('the PPS1 Supplement'). The development proposals provide for a range and mix of housing and other land uses in a form that will contribute to meeting the full range of needs and aspirations and ensure the delivery of a sustainable community.
- 1.3 Outline planning permission, with all matters reserved, is sought for:

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 [ref 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.

- 1.4 The PPS1 Supplement identified four potential locations for eco-towns. This included land at NW Bicester. The PPS1 Supplement sets out a range of criteria to which eco-

- town developments should respond and which aim for eco-towns to be exemplars in good practice and provide a showcase for sustainable living (paragraph 3).
- 1.5 The Council promoted the Site and is supportive of the principle of bringing forward an Eco Town in this location. The draft Local Plan identifies land to the North West of Bicester for an eco-town development to deliver, inter alia, approximately 5,000 new homes and 5,000 new jobs (draft policy Bicester 1).
 - 1.6 Planning permission was granted in July 2012 (LPA reference 10/01780/HYBRID) for the NW Bicester Exemplar in the northern part of the NW Bicester Eco-Town area ('the Exemplar'). The Exemplar will comprise 393 new homes, land for a new primary school as well as local facilities such as shops and a nursery along with the eco-business centre. Development on the Exemplar commenced in April 2014.
 - 1.7 In accordance with the PPS1 Supplement (Criteria ET 20), a Master Plan has been prepared for the NW Bicester Eco-Town area and was submitted to the Council in March 2014 with additional/ amended information submitted in May 2014. The Master Plan responds to the PPS1 Supplement and the Master Plan Brief (November 2013). The aim of the Brief was to reflect the terms of the PPS1 Supplement to the specific example of NW Bicester and the aims and aspirations of the community, Council and developer. It sets out the vision for NW Bicester.
 - 1.8 The Master Plan was formulated through a series of 'workstreams' which provided for focused debate and review of key elements or topics. The outcome of the workstreams was a number of strategies that in turn have informed the Master Plan and/ or have been submitted as part of the Master Plan submission. A schedule of Master Plan documents is enclosed at Appendix 1.
 - 1.9 This application (referred to as 'Application 1') is submitted alongside a further application for outline planning permission for new homes and facilities on land to the south west of the railway and north west of Howes Lane ('Application 2'). A third application for full planning permission for a strategic road link and infrastructure is being prepared and is currently subject to discussions with Oxfordshire County Council.
 - 1.10 Application 1 relates to land to the south west of the Exemplar, north west of Lords Lane and north east of the railway line. The Site forms part of a swathe of undulating

agricultural land that wraps around the north western boundary of Bicester. The south eastern boundary of the Site is currently denoted by the town ring road (A4095 known at this point as Lords Lane). To the north east of the Site is the B4100 (Banbury Road) which links Bicester with Junction 10 of the M40 and the villages between including Caversfield and Bainton. The south west boundary is marked by the railway line with Bucknell Road, leading to Bucknell in the north west, running through the south western part of the Site. Beyond the railway line to the south west are fields that form part of the wider Eco-Town area, including those to which Application 2 relates, and the B4030 (Middleton Stoney Road) which links the Eco-Town to Middleton Stoney. There are a number of farms located within the NW Bicester Eco-Town area, two of which are located within this part of the land. However, both farms are to be retained and are excluded from the application red line boundary.

- 1.11 Outline planning permission is sought for the erection of up to 2,600 new homes in addition to schools, community facilities, a range of commercial uses and an energy centre. All matters are reserved for future determination. The parameters of this application are set out in the Description of Development and Application Parameters (Document 03) and on the Parameter Plans (Document 02a), both of which are submitted for approval and which future reserved matters applications would come forward in accordance with.
- 1.12 The development is considered to constitute Environmental Impact Assessment ('EIA') development falling within Schedule 2 of The Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) (England and Wales) Regulations 2011 (as amended). The proposed Scope of the EIA was set out in a report prepared by Hyder Consulting UK dated May 2014. An EIA has been undertaken in accordance with the submitted Scope and is submitted with this planning application (Documents 06, 07 and 08).
- 1.13 This application is preceded by extensive discussions with the Council, statutory consultees including Oxfordshire County Council, the Highways Agency and Environment Agency, key stakeholders and the local community. Details of the consultation undertaken, views expressed and how these have been responded to, are set out in the Statement of Community Involvement (Document 16).

1.14 This application relates to part of the Master Plan area. It is consistent with the Master Plan insofar as it relates to the Application Site. The Master Plan sets out the vision for NW Bicester which when taken together, will deliver a sustainable development. Not all the strategies or parts thereof can of course be delivered by this application. However, this application makes an appropriate contribution to the various strategies that underpin the Master Plan vision.

1.15 This Planning Statement sets out a description of the proposals, Site, surroundings and relevant designations, the planning policy context, the case for development and how the proposals accord with the PPS1 Supplement and Master Plan and therefore constitute sustainable development. The Statement is structured as follows:

- Detailed description of the proposals;
- Site, surroundings and relevant designations;
- Planning policy context;
- Case for development;
- Compliance with the PPS1 Supplement and Master Plan; and
- Summary and conclusions.

2.0 PROPOSALS

2.1 The proposals, within a total site area of 154.82 hectares, can be summarised as follows:

- Retention of the existing storage building adjacent to Bucknell Road;
- Provision of up to 2,600 new homes (Use Class C3) across 66.97 hectares of net residential land, to include up to 250 homes to be provided on an 'Extra Care' basis (Use Class C3);
- 0.77 hectares of land to accommodate commercial uses (falling within Use Classes A1-A5, B1 and B2) within a new local centre;
- 0.47 hectares of land to accommodate social and community facilities (Use Class D1) including a community hall;
- 2.22 hectares of land to accommodate a new two form entry primary school and playing fields;
- 0.88 hectares of land to accommodate an extension to the primary school approved as part of the Exemplar (LPA reference 10/01780/HYBRID) and 0.79 hectares of land for a possible playing field extension at the Exemplar primary school, which would increase this school from two to three form entry;
- Provision of 68.01 hectares of green infrastructure (circa 46% of the total site area excluding schools) including 4.0 hectares to be offered to the Council as a burial ground, 1.0 hectare of community farm and 2.0 hectares of allotments;
- 0.2 hectares of land to accommodate an energy centre where on-site energy will be generated through low carbon technology such as a biomass boiler and/ or biomass or gas Combined Heat and Power plant ('CHP');
- Quantum and tenure split of affordable homes to be determined through viability assessment;

- New homes to be constructed to achieve a minimum of Code for Sustainable Homes Level 5;
- All residential units to be designed to Lifetime Homes standards;
- Commercial buildings constructed to achieve BREEAM 'excellent';
- Development as a whole to be 'true' zero carbon (taking in to account regulated and unregulated energy as defined in the PPS1 Supplement) to be achieved through a range of measures including high performance building fabric, reduced energy consumption, renewable and low carbon energy generation;
- Aspirations to water neutrality (as defined in the PPS1 Supplement) and provision of Sustainable Drainage Systems ('SUDS');
- Water Treatment Works to be provided on-site subject to technical considerations;
- Retention of the majority of existing trees and hedgerows and provision of strategic landscaping;
- Adoption of a range of measures, including off-site compensation for the loss of farmland bird habitat, the enhancement of on-site habitats such as hedgerows, woodland and river corridors and creation of new habitats, to encourage a net gain in biodiversity;
- New roads, cycle routes and pedestrian footpaths including the partial realignment of Bucknell Road with routes designed to give priority to buses, cyclists and pedestrians.

Departure and Notification

- 2.2 Whilst the Application Site falls within the land at NW Bicester identified within the PPS1 Supplement as a potential eco-town location and in the draft Local Plan, the Site is not allocated within the adopted development plan for any form of development and includes proposals for in excess of 5,000 sq.m of commercial floorspace in an out-of-centre location.
- 2.3 Accordingly, insofar as the scheme is considered by the local planning authority, it constitutes a departure from the development plan. We would therefore invite the Council to undertake the necessary notifications and consultations pursuant to The Town and Country Planning (Consultation) (England) Direction 2009.

3.0 SITE AND SURROUNDINGS

- 3.1 A full description of the Application Site and surroundings is set out in the Design Framework (Document 04). This provides a description of the Site, its characteristics, constraints and opportunities and surroundings.
- 3.2 In summary, the Application Site comprises some 154.82 hectares of land to the south west of the Exemplar, north west of Lords Lane and north east of the railway line within approximately 400 hectares of land comprising the NW Bicester Eco-Town.
- 3.3 The south eastern boundary of the Site is denoted by the town ring road (A4095 known at this point as Lords Lane). To the north east of the Site, beyond the Exemplar, is the B4100 (Banbury Road) which links Bicester with Junction 10 of the M40 and the villages between including Caversfield and Bainton. The south west boundary is marked by the railway line with Bucknell Road, leading to Bucknell in the north west, running through the south western part of the Site.
- 3.4 Beyond the railway line to the south west are fields that form part of the wider Eco-Town area, including those to which Application 2 relates, and the B4030 (Middleton Stoney Road) which links the Eco-Town to Middleton Stoney. To the north west are further agricultural fields providing separation between the NW Bicester Eco-Town land and the village of Bucknell.
- 3.5 The Site forms part of a swathe of undulating agricultural land that wraps around the north western edge of Bicester. There are a number of farms located within the NW Bicester Eco-Town area, two of which are located within the part of the land to which this application relates (Lords Farm and Hawkwell Farm). Both of these farms are to be retained in accordance with the Master Plan and are excluded from the application site. The River Bure runs through the eastern part of the Site on a north-south axis before turning south to join a second watercourse (known as Langford Brook) running through the southern part of the Site. The Bure then continues south through the Bure Park Nature Reserve and Bicester town.

- 3.6 There are a number of trees and hedgerows across the Site primarily forming the boundary of agricultural fields and/ or located adjacent to the watercourses.

Designations

- 3.7 The Site is not subject to any Local Plan designations as set out on the Proposals Map 1996.
- 3.8 The Site is not subject to any national, regional or local landscape or ecological designations. The Environment Agency Flood Map identifies the area of land immediately adjacent to the River Bure as falling within Flood Zones 2 and 3.
- 3.9 The Bure Park Nature Reserve, located approximately 60 metres to the south at the closest point, is designated as a Local Nature Reserve ('LNR').
- 3.10 The nearest Site of Special Scientific Interest ('SSSI') is the Ardley Cutting and Quarry located some 600 metres to the north west at the closest point. Beyond that are the Ardley Trackways (approximately 2 km to the north west) and the Stratton Audley Quarries (approximately 2 km to the east).

4.0 PLANNING POLICY

The Development Plan

- 4.1 Section 38 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 ('PCPA') requires planning applications to be determined in accordance with the provisions of the development plan unless other material considerations indicate otherwise. The Development Plan for this site comprises the saved policies of the Cherwell Local Plan 1996.
- 4.2 Material to the consideration of this application are Planning Policy Statement: Eco-Towns, A Supplement to Planning Policy Statement 1 2009 ('PPS1 Supplement') and the National Planning Policy Framework 2012 ('NPPF').
- 4.3 The NPPF was published in March 2012 and with it the majority of Planning Policy Statements were replaced. This did not include the PPS1 Supplement which remains extant. The Council's Local Plan was adopted prior to the publication of the NPPF. Paragraph 215 of the NPPF confirms that, from March 2013, policies within existing local plans should be afforded weight according to their degree of consistency with the NPPF.

Policy Designations

- 4.4 NW Bicester is identified in the PPS1 Supplement as an eco-town location (see Annex A).
- 4.5 In terms of local plan designations, these are set out on Cherwell's Proposals Map November 1996 (Inset Map 2). The Proposals Map does not identify any local plan designations on the Site.

Cherwell Local Plan November 1996

- 4.6 The Cherwell Local Plan was adopted in 1996. It was originally envisaged that the Local Plan would cover the period to 2001 (page 1). In 2007 relevant policies were 'saved' by direction of the Secretary of State.

- 4.7 The Local Plan has exceeded its specified period (i.e. up to 2001) by over 10 years and, whilst the NPPF allows weight to be given to relevant policies accordingly to their degree of consistency with the NPPF, the policies within the Local Plan are considered out-of-date. A new Local Plan has been progressed but examination of this has been suspended (see below). Thus for the purposes of this application, it is considered that the proposals ought to be assessed against the PPS1 Supplement and NPPF. Suffice to say that in terms of housing land supply alone, the local plan is out of date.

Emerging Cherwell Local Plan 2006 – 2031

- 4.8 The submission version Cherwell Local Plan 2006 – 2031 (January 2014) was submitted to the Secretary of State on 31 January 2014. Examination in public commenced on 3 June 2014 and was subsequently suspended on 4 June 2014 for a period of 6 months to allow Cherwell DC to put forward modifications to the plan involving increased housing delivery to meet the full, objectively assessed needs of the District (see Inspector's Note No. 2 – 09.06.14). The Council's letter of 6 June 2014 envisages consultation on the modifications August/ September 2014, with the hearings resuming in December 2014.
- 4.9 Whilst limited weight should be attached to the draft Local Plan, it is noted that North West Bicester is identified as a strategic allocation to provide approximately 5,000 new homes, of which at least 1,793 new homes are to be delivered within the Plan period (see draft policy Bicester 1).

Draft Bicester Master Plan August 2012

- 4.10 In August/ September 2012, the Council consulted on the draft Bicester Master Plan Supplementary Planning Document ('SPD') prepared by White Young Green ('WYG'). The relates to the town of Bicester as a whole. The Master Plan SPD aims to set out the vision for Bicester and how change will be managed to provide for an enlarged and vibrant town with an expanded role within the region. The Master Plan refers to NW Bicester as an 'eco-development' for 5,000 homes. A further draft is to be published for consultation Summer 2014.

- 4.11 The adoption of this Master Plan is dependent upon adoption of the Local Plan. As examination and, as a result, adoption of the Local Plan has been delayed, this will likewise delay adoption of the Bicester Master Plan as SPD. It would be open to the Council to adopt the Master Plan as an interim, non-statutory document. However, this application is submitted in advance of adoption as interim guidance or SPD and as such falls to be considered against the provisions of the PPS1 Supplement, NPPF and other material considerations.

Planning Policy Statement 1 Supplement: Eco-Towns July 2009

- 4.12 The PPS1 Supplement on eco-towns sets out a range of minimum standards which aim to ensure that eco-towns are exemplars of good practice and sustainable living (see paragraph 3). North West Bicester is identified as an eco-town location at Annex A and as, inter alia, capable of delivering a minimum of 5,000 homes (ET 2.2). The standards within the PPS1 Supplement provide the framework within which these proposals have been developed and against which they ought to be assessed. Appendix 1 sets out an assessment of these applications and the Master Plan against the various criteria set out in the PPS1 Supplement. The proposals, the subject of this application, are consistent with the Master Plan. The Master Plan satisfies the criteria set out in the PPS1 Supplement.

North West Bicester Master Plan

- 4.13 Standard ET 20 of the PPS1 Supplement envisages each eco-town having an overall master plan which demonstrates how the eco-town standards will be achieved. The North West Bicester Master Plan was submitted to the Council in March 2014 and amended in May 2014. This is the product of over five years' consultation and engagement between the Applicant, the Council, Oxfordshire County Council, key stakeholders and local residents. The Council has been invited to adopt the NW Bicester Master Plan as supplementary planning guidance.

4.14 The Council's Local Development Scheme ('LDS') provides a timetable to adoption of the NW Bicester Master Plan with initial consultation June/ July 2014, review and preparation of the Supplementary Planning Document ('SPD') July/ August 2014, further consultation August/ September 2014 and adoption February 2015. This application has been prepared in accordance with the submitted NW Bicester Master Plan which, in turn, was prepared in accordance with the PPS1 Supplement.

National Planning Policy Framework March 2012

4.15 The National Planning Policy Framework ('NPPF') provides national planning guidance and is a material consideration in the determination of planning applications. The NPPF introduced a presumption in favour of sustainable development, the three inter-related dimensions of which are identified as economic, social and environmental (paragraph 7). The presumption in favour of sustainable development is to be seen as a 'golden thread' running through plan-making and decision-taking (paragraph 14). It is our position that consistency with the PPS1 Supplement will satisfy the tests for sustainable development as set out in paragraph 7 of the NPPF and accordingly, the presumption in favour of the grant of planning permission.

4.16 In addition to paragraphs 7 and 14, the sections of the NPPF particularly relevant to these proposals are:

- 1 Building a Strong, Competitive Economy;
- 2 Ensuring the Vitality of Town Centres;
- 4 Promoting Sustainable Transport;
- 6 Delivering a Wide Choice of High Quality Homes;
- 7 Requiring Good Design;
- 8 Promoting Healthy Communities;
- 10 Meeting the Challenge of Climate Change, Flooding and Coastal Change;
- 11 Conserving and Enhancing the Natural Environment; and
- 12 Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment.

Overview

- 4.17 The adopted Local Plan is out-of-date and there is no up-to-date Local Plan document sufficiently advanced to address the housing needs of the District. That said, NW Bicester is identified in the emerging Local Plan to provide for approximately 5,000 new homes. We would suggest that the primary planning documents that the application falls to be considered against are the NPPF and the PPS1 Supplement. Paragraph 14 of the NPPF sets out the presumption in favour of sustainable development as defined at paragraph 7. Moreover, the PPS1 Supplement sets out a range of criteria against which the proposals for NW Bicester should be judged. This application is consistent with the submitted Master Plan and the Master Plan satisfies the criteria set out in the PPS1 Supplement as summarised in the Sustainability Statement (Document 09).

5.0 CASE FOR DEVELOPMENT

- 5.1 The Council's adopted Local Plan is out-of-date and the adoption of the new Local Plan has been delayed pending a review of additional options to increase housing delivery to meet the full, objectively assessed needs of the District. In the absence of an up-to-date Local Plan, it is our position (as set out above) that the proposals for the NW Bicester Eco-Town ought to be assessed against the PPS1 Supplement and NPPF.
- 5.2 The NPPF requires applications for new homes to be considered in the context of the presumption in favour of sustainable development and that relevant policies for the supply of housing are to be considered out-of-date if the Council cannot demonstrate a five-year supply of deliverable housing sites (paragraph 49). The Council's Annual Monitoring Report 2013 (December 2013) ('AMR') confirms that the Council does not have a five-year supply of deliverable sites (see Table 11). Furthermore, the Local Plan end date is 2001. Applications for housing ought, therefore be considered in the context of the presumption in favour of sustainable development with planning permission granted unless the adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, or specific policies in the NPPF indicate that development should be restricted (paragraph 14).
- 5.3 The Council's AMR 2013 recognises the Council's recent record of under-delivery of new homes and accordingly applies a 20% buffer in accordance with paragraph 47 of the NPPF (AMR paragraph 5.22). The Council's current stated housing target is 670 dwellings per annum. This target is maintained in the draft Local Plan. However, the Oxfordshire Strategic Housing Market Assessment 2014 identifies a need for Cherwell to deliver in excess of 1,000 dwellings per annum based on projected demographic and economic growth and having regard to affordable housing need. This significantly exceeds the previous housing target which the Council failed to meet in recent years and that it planned for in the draft Local Plan. There is, therefore a pressing need for additional homes in Cherwell District and for the potential of housing sites to deliver new homes to be optimised. Planning permission needs to be granted now, in advance of the adoption of the Local Plan, in order to provide for the much needed identified housing needs of the District.

- 5.4 The NW Bicester Eco-Town represents the largest single opportunity within Cherwell District, and more specifically Bicester, to provide for much needed new housing to help meet the needs of the residents of Bicester and Cherwell as a whole. Further, it presents 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 PPS1 Supplement. The development proposals provide for a range and mix of housing and other land uses in a form that will contribute to meeting the full range of needs and aspirations and ensure the delivery of a sustainable community.
- 5.5 The submission draft Local Plan trajectory identified NW Bicester as capable of delivering a minimum of 1,793 homes within the Plan period to 2031. It is our view that this significantly under-estimates the contribution NW Bicester can make to housing delivery. In consultation with Cherwell District Council and Oxfordshire County Council, the Applicant has tested the likely rate of delivery as part of the population modelling submitted in support of the NW Bicester Master Plan. This work tested a higher delivery rate amounting to 3,773 new homes at NW Bicester within the plan period (approximately 241 dwellings per annum). We consider that a minimum of 3,773 homes can be provided up to 2031, in addition to substantially more than the 1,800 job opportunities identified in the draft policy.
- 5.6 This application provides for up to 2,600 new homes in addition to commercial, community and education facilities which provide for a varied and complementary mix of uses across the site. The objective of the Applicant is for the development to not only be compatible with the aspirations and objectives of the PPS1 Supplement and NPPF, but to act as a catalyst for the regeneration of the wider area and exemplar of sustainable living and good practice. The intention is to bring forward a development that integrates with the existing community and is truly sustainable.

- 5.7 The three dimensions of sustainable development are set out at paragraph 7 of the NPPF as: economic, social and environmental. The PPS1 Supplement provides detailed standards that eco-towns are to achieve which fall within the three dimensions of sustainable development as set out in the NPPF. The proposed development has been developed having regard to the PPS1 Supplement standards to ensure a highly sustainable development. It is our position that the proposals do not give rise to any adverse impacts that would not be outweighed by the substantial benefits, including the delivery of market and affordable homes, employment opportunities and community facilities/ services, and no specific policies within the NPPF indicate that development in this location and of this scale ought to be restricted. The presumption is therefore to grant planning permission.
- 5.8 To demonstrate how the proposals respond to the PPS1 Supplement standards for eco-towns, and thus constitute sustainable development, a Sustainability Statement has been prepared (Document 09). The key aspects of the Statement are summarised in Section 6.0 below.

6.0 COMPLIANCE WITH THE PPS1 SUPPLEMENT & MASTER PLAN

- 6.1 Criteria ET 1 to ET 6 set out the planning context to eco-towns and the principles and Locational criteria that underpin them. NW Bicester has been identified as a potential Eco-Town location, as such Criteria ET 1 and ET 2 have been satisfied. Criteria ET 3 to ET 6 relate to regional spatial strategies (which are no longer in force), the local development framework, determining planning applications and monitoring which are matters for the local planning authority. We have therefore focussed on the Eco-Town Standards ET 7 to ET 22.
- 6.2 Standard ET 20 'Master planning' seeks an overall Master Plan for the eco-town area which demonstrates how the eco-town standards will be achieved with individual planning applications coming forward in accordance with the Master Plan. A Master Plan has been prepared and was submitted to the Council in March 2014 with additional/ amended information provided in May 2014. The Master Plan sets out the vision for the NW Bicester Eco-Town and includes a range of strategies to demonstrate how that vision will be achieved having regard to the PPS1 Supplement standards and to ensure a sustainable development is delivered.

ET 7 Zero Carbon in Eco-Towns

- 6.3 The PPS1 Supplement defines zero carbon for the purposes of eco-towns as (ET 7.1):

'over a year the net carbon dioxide emissions from all energy use within the buildings on the eco-town development as a whole are zero carbon or below.'

- 6.4 It was agreed through the Master Plan Brief (November 2013) that the Master Plan for NW Bicester would include a definition of 'zero carbon'. The definition is provided in the submitted Master Plan Vision document (May 2014) which confirms that the development will be 'true' zero carbon, taking in to account both regulated and unregulated emissions (page 107).

- 6.5 The submitted Master Plan provides an energy hierarchy to be followed to achieve zero carbon across the Eco-Town (see Vision Document page 106):
- Be Lean – reduce energy demand and Fabric Energy Efficiency;
 - Be Clean – produce energy locally;
 - Be Green – use of renewable energy.
- 6.6 It is envisaged that this will be achieved through high level Fabric Energy Efficiency ('FEE'), along with a District Heating Network powered by local energy centres utilising low and zero carbon technology and roof mounted photovoltaics.
- 6.7 An energy centre is proposed as part of this application and is located within the southern part of the Site (see Framework Plan BIMP6/116C). Full details of how the proposed development will achieve the 'true' zero carbon objective are set out in the Energy Strategy (Document 12). This has been developed to follow the Master Plan strategy and provides additional details of the building fabric, low and zero carbon technologies and phasing to demonstrate how the scheme will achieve the zero carbon objective.

ET 8 Climate Change Adaptation

- 6.8 Eco-towns are to aim to provide for sustainable communities that are resilient and can adapt to the changing climate (ET 8.1) and are developed on the basis of the latest climate change scenarios (ET 8.2). The agreed Master Plan Brief (November 2013) confirms that the vision for NW Bicester is for a development where climate change impacts are taken in to consideration in the design of the proposals particularly having regard to variations in temperature (including overheating), water stress and flood risk. This is confirmed in the submitted Master Plan (see Vision Document pages 45 and 106).
- 6.9 This application has been developed having regard to the changing climate and is accompanied by a Flood Risk Assessment (Documents 07 and 08), Landscape Strategy (Document 05), Energy Strategy (Document 12), Sustainability Statement (Document 09) and Design Framework (Document 04) which take full account of climate change in their assessments and demonstrate how the proposals will be designed in this regard.

ET 9 Homes

- 6.10 Standard ET 9.1 of the PPS1 Supplement sets out a range of provisions in respect of the homes to be provided in an eco-town including:
- a) Building for Life Silver Standard and a minimum of Code for Sustainable Homes Level 4;
 - b) Lifetime Homes standards;
 - c) Real-time energy monitoring, real-time public transport information and high speed broadband;
 - d) 30% of the homes to be provided as affordable;
 - e) Energy efficient building fabric; and
 - f) Through a combination of energy efficiency and low/ zero carbon energy generation achieve carbon dioxide reductions (from heating, ventilation, hot water and fixed lighting) of at least 70% relative to 2006 Building Regulations (Part L).
- 6.11 This application provides for up to 2,600 new homes to include circa 250 'extra care' homes (Use Class C3). All homes are to achieve Code for Sustainable Homes Level 5 as a minimum (point a) and will be designed to Lifetime Homes standards (point b). Real-time energy monitoring and public transport information are to be provided in each home in addition to high speed broadband (point c). Affordable housing provision will be subject to viability testing but will aspire to the 30% aim (point d). An Affordable Housing Statement is provided in support of this application (Document 17). Building fabric energy efficiency ('FEE') will be equivalent to Code for Sustainable Homes Level 5/ anticipated 2016 Building Regulation target FEE (point e). The Energy Strategy (Document 12) sets out the preferred strategy to achieve the zero carbon target which includes details of how each home will achieve a 100% carbon dioxide reduction based on regulated and unregulated energy as per the PPS1 definition of zero carbon (point f). The proposals are therefore fully compliant with PPS1 Supplement standard ET 9.

ET 10 Employment

- 6.12 The PPS1 Supplement aims for eco-towns to be 'genuine mixed-use communities' where 'unsustainable commuter trips are kept to a minimum' (ET 10.1). Each eco-town development is to be accompanied by an economic strategy which provides for a minimum of one employment opportunity per dwelling that is easily reached by walking, cycling and/ or public transport. The Economic Strategy provided as part of the Master Plan submission sets out the strategy for providing employment opportunities. In the region of 4,600 job opportunities are to be created at the Eco-Town through a mix of Use Class B accommodation, local services and facilities and a focus on home-working. Further opportunities are to be provided in the local area through a range of initiatives including local labour, training and apprenticeship schemes.
- 6.13 Within this development some 3.89 hectares of land are to be provided for new/ extended schools (2.22 hectares for a new two form entry primary school, 0.88 hectares for an extension to the Exemplar primary school and 0.79 hectares for a possible playing field extension to the Exemplar primary school) and commercial uses falling within Use Classes A1-A5, B1 and B2 (0.77 hectares). The locations of the education and commercial facilities have been carefully considered to allow for easy access by foot, bicycle or public transport from the proposed dwellings and from the existing dwellings to the south east.

ET 11 Transport

- 6.14 Reducing the need for residents to travel and improving sustainable travel choices is a key component of the PPS1 Supplement. Standard ET 11.1 aims for eco-towns to be designed to give priority to walking, cycling and public transport using techniques such as filtered permeability, with all homes located within 10 minutes of public transport and neighbourhood services. Standard ET 11.5 aims for a maximum walking distance of 800 metres from homes to the nearest school for primary school children.

- 6.15 Travel plans are to be provided with planning applications which demonstrate how 50% of trips originating from the eco-town can be made by non-car modes (with potential to increase to 60%), how 'transport choice messages' will be provided from first occupation and details of how the carbon dioxide impact of transport will be monitored (ET 11.2). Evidence is to be submitted with planning applications for eco-towns to show that the eco development will not increase congestion on existing roads (ET 11.3) and, where electric car schemes are to be included, evidence that sufficient 'energy headroom' has been provided to meet the higher electricity demand without compromising the zero carbon objective (ET 11.4).
- 6.16 The submitted Master Plan sets out a range of measures to achieve the objectives of the PPS1 Supplement. These include limiting the need to travel through the strategic location of uses to enable greater levels of transport containment, providing high quality cycling and pedestrian links within the development and connecting to the existing Bicester settlement and promoting sustainable travel choices through a range of measures including providing a travel plan coordinator (see Vision Document pages 36, 41, 58 and 96-103 for example).
- 6.17 This application has been developed to accord with the Master Plan and as such the PPS1 Supplement. It is accompanied by a Transport Assessment (Document 10) and Framework Travel Plan (Document 11) which are consistent with the Master Plan appraisal and philosophy relating to modal share targets and demonstrate how this application will deliver that part of the Travel and Access Strategy relevant to the area it covers.

ET 12 Healthy Lifestyles

- 6.18 Standard ET 12.1 aims for eco-towns to be planned and designed to support healthy and sustainable environments and enable residents to make healthy choices easily. The Master Plan envisages this being delivered through design that encourages outdoor play, safe and convenient walking and cycling routes that connect to the wider countryside, provision of allotments for local food production, outdoor spaces that are accessible to all and convenient access to health services.

- 6.19 The Master Plan has been developed to create an integrated built and natural environment based on the landscape-led concept 'Space to Live' which incorporates health and well-being principles (see Master Plan Green Infrastructure and Landscape Strategy section 3). This includes space to breathe, move, for connections, to grow, learn, play and share.
- 6.20 This application proposes some 68.01 hectares of green space including 2.0 hectares to be provided as allotments, 1.0 hectare of community farm and 4.0 hectares to be made available to the Council for a new burial ground. The green space and allotments will be easily accessible and conveniently located to encourage use. A range of walking and cycling routes are to be provided to facilitate easy access to local services/ facilities and employment and longer recreational routes in accordance with the 'Space to Live' concept as set out in the Master Plan and accordingly, the PPS1 Supplement aspiration to encourage healthy lifestyles.

ET 13 Local Services

- 6.21 A good level of services and facilities are to be provided in eco-towns to provide for a sustainable community including, inter alia, leisure, health and social care, education, retail, arts and culture, library services, sport and community facilities (ET 13.1).
- 6.22 The Master Plan aims to provide a range of services and community facilities across the eco-town to meet residents needs but which are also integrated, and do not compete, with the town-wide facilities. These are to include shops, food outlets, community halls, schools and recreational facilities.
- 6.23 This application proposes some 0.47 hectares of land to accommodate community facilities alongside a new primary school and extension to the Exemplar primary school and playing fields (on land totalling some 3.89 hectares). A new local centre is to be provided comprising commercial uses falling within Use Classes A1-A5, B1 and B2 (0.77 hectares) and acting as a hub of activity within this part of the eco-town in line with the Master Plan and PPS1 Supplement.

ET 14 Green Infrastructure

- 6.24 The PPS1 Supplement aims for 40% of the total area of eco-towns to be provided as a range of types of green space, of which half is to be publicly accessible (ET 14.1). Provision of land for local food production is particularly encouraged (ET 14.2).
- 6.25 The Master Plan provides for over 40% of the eco-town area to be provided as green space as a variety of formal and informal spaces, private gardens of a range of sizes, sports and play spaces, allotments, wetland areas, strategic landscaping and a burial ground.
- 6.26 This application satisfies the criteria for 40% of the site area to be provided as green space. A Landscape Strategy (Document 05) is submitted with the application which sets out the approach to landscape. Approximately 2.0 hectares are to be provided as allotments, 1.0 hectare of community farm and a further 4.0 hectares is to be made available for a new burial ground. The green spaces proposed are in line with the Master Plan and provide for a range of spaces across the Site including opportunities for local food production, play and recreation.

ET 15 Landscape & Historic Environment

- 6.27 Standard ET 15.1 requires planning applications for eco-towns to assess and consider the impact of the development on the local landscape and historic environment and aim for the development to complement and where possible enhance.
- 6.28 The Master Plan is underpinned by a Strategic Environmental Assessment (May 2014) which includes an assessment of landscape and visual impact (Chapter 5) and cultural heritage (Chapter 10). These have informed the development of the Master Plan and the proposal to retain two of the existing farms in the Eco-Town area (namely Lords Farm and Hawkwell Farm). A requirement for archaeological investigations and subsequent mitigation is set out in the Strategic Environmental Assessment, similar to the work undertaken for the Exemplar.

6.29 This application relates to land surrounding the retained Hawkwell Farm and Lords Farm, albeit these are not located within the boundary of the application. The proposals have been developed to respect the setting of these farms and wider landscape including the retention of historic field boundaries, watercourses and woodland.

ET 16 Biodiversity

6.30 Eco-towns are to aspire to deliver a net gain in biodiversity and not result in harm to designated nature conservation sites or SSSI (ET 16.1) with planning application supported by a strategy for conserving and enhancing local biodiversity (ET 16.3).

6.31 The Master Plan sets out a strategy to achieve the PPS1 Supplement aspirations in respect of biodiversity through a combination of measures. This includes off-site compensation for the loss of farmland bird habitat and the enhancement of on-site habitats such as hedgerows, woodland and river corridors. In addition new habitats are to be created including meadows, wetlands, woodlands and scrub. A new nature reserve and country park are also proposed.

6.32 The proposals have been developed in accordance with the landscape and biodiversity strategy of the Master Plan with at least 40% of the total Site area is to be provided as green space. This Site includes the provision of a wetland habitat and country park. Hedgerows and woodland will be protected and enhanced and significant habitat will be created adjacent to the river corridors. The scheme will therefore make an appropriate contribution to the overall strategy to enhance biodiversity across the Eco-Town in accordance with the PPS1 Supplement and Master Plan.

ET 17 Water

- 6.33 Eco-towns are to be ambitious in terms of water efficiency across the whole development (ET 17.1) and planning applications are to be accompanied by a water cycle strategy developed in partnership with interested parties that looks at water demand and how this will be managed, demonstrates that surface water/ ground waters will not deteriorate as a result of the development and set measures to improve water quality and avoid surface water flooding (ET 17.2). The use of sustainable drainage systems ('SUDS') are encouraged where feasible (ET 17.3) and are to be accompanied by a strategy for their long-term management and maintenance (ET 17.4). Eco-towns in areas of serious water stress are to aspire to 'water neutrality' (ET 17.5) defined as 'the concept where the total water used after a new development is no more than the total water used before the development' (PPS1 Supplement Annex B).
- 6.34 A Water Cycle Study was submitted as part of the Master Plan. This was formulated in conjunction with the Environment Agency, Thames Water, Cherwell District Council and Oxfordshire County Council. The Water Cycle Study confirms that non-residential buildings will be fitted with efficient fixtures and fittings to achieve a 55% reduction against baseline demand for whole building potable water use (equivalent to BREEAM 'excellent'). For residential, efficient fixtures and fittings will reduce per capita consumption to 105 litres/ person/ day with water recycling technologies employed to supplement domestic supply to reduce demand to less than 80 litres/ person/ day (in line with Code for Sustainable Homes Level 5). Overall this results in a potable water demand reduction of 40% against the baseline which falls within the growth levels assumed by Thames Water in its Water Resource Management Plan. Additional options are set out in the Water Cycle Study to further reduce water usage with the aspiration of achieving water neutrality. Discussions with the relevant parties on the additional measures are on-going.
- 6.35 The Master Plan provides two strategies for wastewater treatment with either on-site treatment or conveyance to the existing wastewater treatment works.

- 6.36 With regard to surface water and flood risk, the Master Plan proposes a network of above-ground attenuation SUDS that are incorporated within the green infrastructure. The SUDS network has been sized to ensure no flooding occurs on the Eco-Town (taking in to account an allowance for climate change) and that run-off is less than greenfield run-off rates to ensure no increase in flood risk elsewhere.
- 6.37 This application has been developed to accord with the Master Plan Water Cycle Study in relation to water efficiency. Sufficient space has been made available as part of the green infrastructure to accommodate an on-site water treatment works should one be required and subject to technical considerations. Specific details of the space available to accommodate the above-ground attenuation features to ensure run-off rates achieve the level specified in the Master Plan are provided and it has been agreed with the Environment Agency that the detailed design will be addressed by way of planning conditions/ at the Reserved Matters stage.

ET 18 Flood Risk Management

- 6.38 Standard ET 18.1 aims for eco-towns to reduce and avoid flood risk wherever practicable. There is an expectation in the PPS1 Supplement that all built development within eco-towns will be located within Flood Zone 1, with land within Flood Zone 2 used for open space and informal recreation and no development, except water compatible development, within Flood Zone 3 (ET 18.2).
- 6.39 The Master Plan confirms that all built development will be located within Flood Zone 1 in accordance with the PPS1 Supplement. The Flood Risk Assessment submitted with the Master Plan confirms that sufficient attenuation measures are proposed to ensure no increase in flood risk off-site.
- 6.40 In accordance with the Master Plan and PPS1 Supplement, no built development within Application 1 will take place in Flood Zones 2 or 3 (i.e. all built development will take place in Flood Zone 1). A Flood Risk Assessment is submitted in support of the proposals which finds that the location of buildings within Flood Zone 1 and the maintenance of surface water run-off rates to equal or better than existing greenfield run-off rates, through SUDS, will not increase the risk of flooding to the Site or elsewhere.

ET 19 Waste

- 6.41 Planning applications for eco-towns are required by Standard ET 19.1 to be accompanied by a 'sustainable waste and resources plan, covering domestic and non-domestic waste'. This is to include targets for residual waste, recycling and landfill diversion and how this will be monitored and maintained, details of how the development has been designed to facilitate achievement of the waste and recycling targets, consideration of using waste locally as a fuel source, and means of ensuring no construction, demolition or excavation waste is sent to landfill.
- 6.42 The Master Plan is accompanied by a Sustainable Waste and Resources Plan which sets out the approach to domestic and non-domestic waste including targets for residual waste, recycling and landfill diversion. This will be monitored to ensure that the targets are achieved. The Master Plan envisages waste and recycling stores being conveniently located within buildings and proposes dedicated areas for green waste composting, amongst other measures.
- 6.43 This application has been developed having regard to the PPS1 Supplement and Master Plan. A site-specific Sustainable Waste and Resources Plan is submitted in support of this application which will ensure that the development integrates with the Eco-Town waste strategy as articulated in the Master Plan. Construction waste will be diverted from landfill except where this is the least environmentally damaging option.

ET 20 Master Planning

- 6.44 As set out above, Standard ET 20.1 requires a Master Plan for the entire eco-town area to be produced and for individual planning applications to come forward in accordance with the Master Plan. The Master Plan for NW Bicester was submitted to the Council in March 2014 with amended/ additional information submitted in May 2014. The Council has been invited to adopt that Master Plan as supplementary planning guidance and consulted publicly on the Master Plan until 24 July 2014. This application has been developed in accordance with the agreed Master Plan Brief (November 2013) and the subsequently submitted Master Plan.

ET 21 Transition and ET 22 Community & Governance

- 6.45 Details of phasing, delivery, engagement with relevant parties, monitoring and transition of governance from developer to community are required to be submitted with planning applications in accordance with Standard ET 21.1.
- 6.46 With specific regard to community and governance, Standard ET 22.1 requires long-term governance structures to be developed and implemented to ensure that the development retains its integrity as an eco-town.
- 6.47 The Exemplar phase established a structure for the long-term governance of the development, through a three stage process, whereby residents' engagement and role in the community developed.
- 6.48 The intention is to continue the arrangements established through the Exemplar in this application.

7.0 DRAFT HEADS OF TERMS

- 7.1 Discussions are continuing with the Council and Oxfordshire County Council as to the requirements of any S106 agreement and conditions. The Master Plan as submitted demonstrates that the spatial requirements of the Councils, for example in relation to school sites and community facilities can be accommodated. In formulating its requirements, the Councils have had regard to the County's modelling of the likely population POPCALC and not the Chelmer based assessment undertaken by Barton Willmore on behalf of A2Dominion.
- 7.2 In addition, the Master Plan and the proposals the subject of this application are the subject of viability testing. Accordingly, the level of contributions sought and the triggers for payments will be subject to further discussion. Any requirements of the Councils must meet the requirements of the CIL regulations.
- 7.3 Planning permission was granted in 2012 for the Exemplar phase. The Exemplar will deliver a number of strategies and initiatives that are intended to support sustainable lifestyles and satisfy the criteria set out in the supplement to PPS1. A2Dominion's intention is to continue and develop these initiatives through subsequent phases.
- 7.4 It is anticipated that the S106 will provide for:
- Provision of affordable housing, at a maximum of 30% of all new homes, comprising both affordable rent and intermediate tenures. Quantum, phasing and tenure split to be determined;
 - Provision of land and an appropriate financial contribution to provide for primary and secondary education;
 - Provision of land for community facilities and/or financial contribution;
 - Provision of sporting facilities and/ or financial contribution;

- Provisions in relation to the management and maintenance of open space and playspace;
- Provision of land to provide a burial ground;
- Provisions in relation to governance arrangements;
- Provisions in relation to energy and waste management;
- Provisions in relation to measures to promote sustainable lifestyles;
- Provisions in relation to local employment, training and skills;
- Preparation, agreement and implementation of a travel plan, to include the promotion of sustainable transport measures;
- Financial contributions to support the provision of bus services;
- Financial contributions towards off-site highways schemes, pedestrian and cycle initiatives;
- Provisions in relation to SUDS.

8.0 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

- 8.1 Land at NW Bicester is one of four potential eco-town locations identified in the Planning Policy Statement: Eco-Towns, A Supplement to Planning Policy Statement 1 July 2009 ('the PPS1 Supplement'). It presents a unique opportunity within Cherwell District to deliver a highly sustainable development that responds to the criteria set out in the PPS1 Supplement and would be an exemplar in good practice and sustainable living (PPS1 Supplement paragraph 3).
- 8.2 The NW Bicester Eco-Town represents the largest single opportunity within Cherwell District, and more specifically Bicester, to provide for much needed new housing to help meet the needs of the residents of Bicester and Cherwell as a whole. Further, it presents 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 PPS1 Supplement. The development proposals provide for a range and mix of housing and other land uses in a form that will contribute to meeting the full range of needs and aspirations and ensure the delivery of a sustainable community.
- 8.3 This application relates to the part of the NW Bicester Eco-Town area north of the railway line and Lords Lane (south of the Exemplar). It proposes up to 2,600 new homes along with commercial floorspace, social and community facilities and land to accommodate a new school, an extension to the school approved as part of the Exemplar (LPA reference 10/01780/HYBRID), an energy centre and wastewater treatment works. The proposals provide over 40% of the total Site area as green space which includes allotments, a community farm and land for a burial ground. Measures are proposed which respond directly to the PPS1 Supplement criteria for eco-towns and which will ensure the delivery of a sustainable community that integrates with the existing settlement at Bicester and makes a valuable contribution to addressing housing and employment needs within Bicester and Cherwell District.

APPENDIX 1
SCHEDULE OF MASTER PLAN DOCUMENTS

MASTER PLAN DOCUMENTS & DRAWINGS

The documents and drawings which comprise the master plan are:

- Masterplan Vision and Objectives;
- Masterplan Framework (reference BIMP6 01 rev A);
- Green Infrastructure Framework (reference BIMP6 02 rev A);
- Movement and Access Framework (reference BIMP6 03 rev A);
- Access and Travel Strategy;
- Green Infrastructure and Landscape Strategy;
- Economic Strategy;
- Economic Baseline;
- Energy Strategy;
- Water Cycle Study;
- Flood Risk Assessment;
- Surface Water Drainage Strategy;
- Residential Strategy;
- Statement of Community Involvement;
- Strategic Environmental Report;
- Social and Community Infrastructure Strategy;
- Governance and Community Building Strategy.

