



# PLANNING STATEMENT

SGR1 (BICESTER 1) LIMITED

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# 1 Introduction

- 1.1 This Planning Statement has been prepared by Quod, on behalf of SGR (Bicester 1) Limited (the “Applicant”), in support of an outline planning application for the redevelopment of the land to the west of Home Farm, B4100, Bicester (the “Site”). The description of development is as follows:

*Outline planning permission with all matters reserved (excluding access) for up to 75 homes, pedestrian and cycle routes, creation of new access point from Charlotte Avenue, provision of open space, play space, allotments, orchard, parking and associated works.*

- 1.2 The Site lies within the North West Bicester Eco-Town (the “Eco-Town”) allocated within Cherwell Local Plan Part 1, which is intended to deliver 6,000 new homes as part of a mixed use development. The Site sits within the area of the Eco-Town identified for residential development and green space by the Masterplan which forms part of the North West Bicester Eco-Town Supplementary Planning Document (2016) (“NW Bicester SPD”).
- 1.3 The proposed scheme has undergone pre-application discussions with Cherwell District Council (“CDC”), as well as consultation with neighbouring residents groups.
- 1.4 This Statement assesses the application proposals against relevant planning policy and other material considerations and is set out as follows:
- Section 2 sets out the site and surrounding context, including relevant neighbouring planning history;
  - Section 3 summarises pre-application discussions and public consultation;
  - Section 4 describes the proposed development;
  - Section 5 outlines the relevant planning policy;
  - Section 6 provides a detailed assessment of the development against the relevant planning policy; and
  - Section 7 draws conclusions.

## 2 Site and Surroundings

### Site Location

- 2.1 The Site's location is shown on the Site Location Plan submitted as part of this outline planning application. It lies adjacent to the Bicester Exemplar scheme which is currently under construction. The Site is shown in context in Figure 1 below.

Figure 1: Site Context



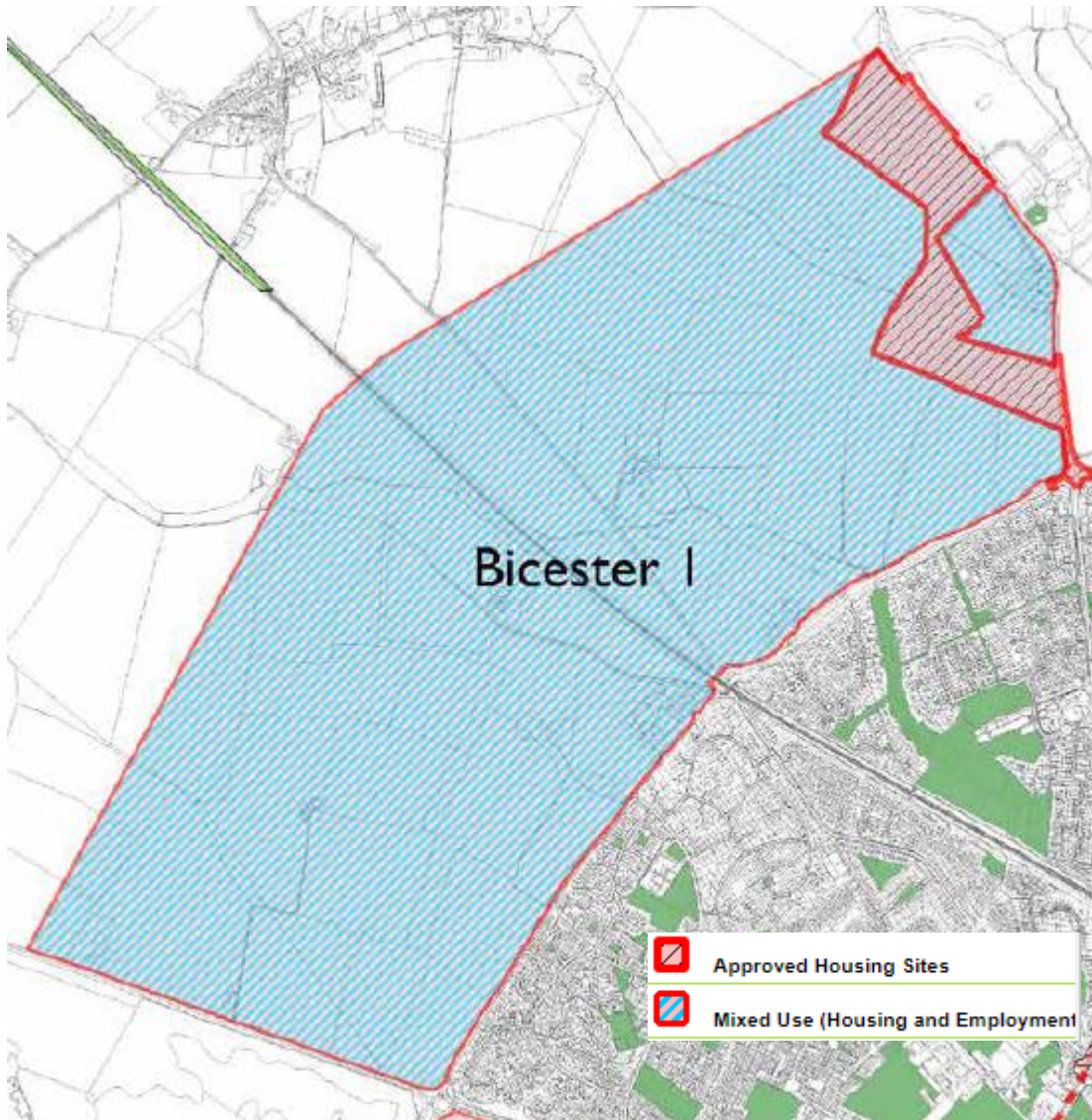
- 2.2 The Site extends to 5.03 ha and comprises uncultivated agricultural land. A drainage watercourse runs along the south eastern boundary of the site, whilst a private access road to Home Farm from the B4100 runs adjacent to the north eastern boundary of the Site meeting the B4100 at the northern boundary. Hedges form the north western and south eastern boundaries.

### Surrounding Context

- 2.3 The Bicester Exemplar scheme lies to the south west and north west of the Site. It is under construction and once complete will comprise 394 residential units, primary school and other uses, and which is currently under construction (as indicated as a 'Mixed Use Housing and Employment Site' within Figure 2 below). The north eastern boundary of the Site is bounded by the B4100 which link Bicester with junction 10 of the M40. To the south east of the Site lies Home Farm (Grade II listed building), whilst to the east of the B4100 lies the St Laurence Church (Grade II\* listed building).

- 2.4 As previously noted, the Site forms part of the Eco-Town to the north west of Bicester allocated by the Cherwell Local Plan Policy Bicester 1 (as indicated in Figure 2), which extends to 390ha in total. The delivery of the Eco-Town is a high priority of CDC, central to its spatial and housing delivery strategy.

Figure 2: Policy Bicester 1



- 2.5 New infrastructure is to be delivered as part of the Eco-Town, including schools, local services/facilities and public transport.

### Relevant Planning History

- 2.6 There is no relevant planning history on the Site.
- 2.7 A number of planning applications have been made on neighbouring sites within the NW Bicester Eco-Town. These are summarised within the table below.

Application Ref.	Site	Description of Development	Current Planning Status
10/01780/HYBRID	'Exemplar Site'	Full planning permission for 393 homes, energy centre, amenity space. Outline planning permission for nursery, community centre, retail, eco-business centre, post office, pharmacy, office accommodation, pub and primary school.	Consented 10.07.2012. Construction commenced April 2014.
14/01384/OUT	Northern component of NW Eco-Town	Outline application for up to 2,600 homes, commercial floorspace (A1-A5, B1 and B2), social and community facilities, energy centre, primary school, landscaping, infrastructure and access routes.	Resolution to grant at March 2015 Planning Committee. Pending completion of legal agreement.
10/01641/OUT	Land to the west of Bucknell Road and Howes Lane.	Outline application for up to 900 homes, commercial floorspace (A1-A5, B1 and B2), leisure facilities, social and community facilities, energy centre, primary school, landscaping, infrastructure and access routes.	Resolution to grant at October 2015 Planning Committee. Pending completion of legal agreement.
14/01968/F	New highways aligned with Howes Lane	Construction of new transport infrastructure.	Resolution to grant at February 2016 Planning Committee. Pending decision notice
14/02121/OUT	Proposed Himley Village, Land to the north of B4030	Outline application for up to 1,700, retirement village, commercial floorspace (A1-A5, B1, C1 and D1), social and community facilities, energy centre, primary school, landscaping, infrastructure, access.	Resolution to grant at March 2017 Planning Committee. Pending decision notice
14/01675/OUT	Land to the south west of Howes Lane and north east of A4095	Outline application for up to 53,000sqm of B8/B2 floorspace and 4.5ha of residential land.	Supported by Planning Officers however refused by Planning Committee in June 2016 over concerns regarding employment development. Approved at appeal November 2017
17/00455/HYBRID	Land to the south west of Howes Lane and north east of A4095	Hybrid application: full planning permission for temporary vehicular and pedestrian access and highway works; outline planning permission for residential development, including landscaping, public open space vehicular and pedestrian access.	Approved 7 August 2017

### 3 Statement of Consultation

3.1 The Application has undertaken pre-application engagement and public consultation with Planning and Technical Officers, local community groups and neighbouring uses. The results of these exercises have enabled the proposals to evolve, and positively informed the form and design of the development proposals.

#### Cherwell District Council

3.2 A pre-application meeting was held with CDC on 9 January 2018. Further engagement with the Planning Officer as well as technical Officers at the Council via email and telephone was also undertaken in the lead up to submission of the Planning Application.

3.3 CDC Officers welcomed the provision of residential development on land forming part of the site allocated by Policy Bicester 1 at NW Bicester. Two indicative layout plans were presented to Officers at the pre-application meeting, one following the NW Bicester masterplan residential development line, and one pushing this boundary slightly. Officers highlighted it would be necessary to justify the benefits of pushing the line of the NW Bicester Masterplan to outweigh any potential conflict.

3.4 Officers generally supported the design and general layout of the proposals, in particular:

- Concept of higher density development along an avenue with softer edges to open spaces
- Providing a gateway to the site at the entrance vista
- Provision of a play area
- Provision of pedestrian and cycle routes through the site
- Improvement of accessibility towards Church of St Laurence

3.5 Officers also made a number of comments relating on the proposals with regards to housing and affordable housing mix; impacts on neighbouring listed buildings; landscaping; parking; access; SUDS; etc.

3.6 Taking on board the comments received, the proposals were amended as follows:

- Provision of an informal car park to for use of Church of St Laurence and users of the proposed allotments
- Amendments to vehicular access to proposed allotments, utilising existing access road
- Incorporation of design guidelines in order for future detailed design to provide a soft gateway to the Site

3.7 In addition, further justification and explanation for the slight extension of the development line is addressed within the DAS.

#### Local Community Consultation

3.8 Consultation has been undertaken with key members of the Church of St Laurence and members of the Major Works Committee in the form of a meeting on 27<sup>th</sup> February 2018. The Church gave a background to the current use of the Church and its facilities, and how they expected this to grow through with the new communities to the area. It was expected the number of services and attendees of the Church is already increasing through the new residents at the Exemplar site, including parenting and old people support groups.

3.9 During the meeting a discussions was had, and the following points were noted:

- The Church welcomed the proposals, and were encouraged by the creation of the vista creating a view line towards the Church.
- The provision of increased connectivity through the pedestrian and cycle routes were encouraged.
- The Church noted problems with the current arrangement of people walking along the grass verge from the Home Farm access road, thus the creation of a pedestrian route through the site, to link with a potential future crossing to the Church, was welcomed.
- It was noted the Church currently held an informal arrangement with Home Farm for parking to take place along the private access Home Farm road. Therefore the provision of an informal car parking area adjacent to the allotments was welcomed.

3.10 Contact has been made with the residents group for the residents on site at the exemplar scheme, however at the time of submission a meeting has not yet been arranged to discuss the proposals.



## 4 The Proposed Development

4.1 Planning permission is sought by SGR (Bicester 1) for residential development to provide up to 75 new residential units, the provision of open space including play space, pedestrian/cycle routes, informal car park, and a community orchard and allotment. The proposals are being sought in outline with all matters reserved, excluding means of access to the site.

4.2 As such, this application seeks outline planning permission for the following description of development:

*Outline planning permission with all matters reserved (excluding access) for up to 75 homes, pedestrian and cycle routes, creation of new access point from Charlotte Avenue, provision of open space, play space, allotments, orchard, parking and associated works.*

4.3 Residential development will cover the western area of the site, adjoining the Exemplar scheme located to the north-western and south-western boundaries of the Site, and currently under construction. The residential development is arranged in two parcels, either side of a central spine through the site, providing a 'vista' and views towards the listed St Laurence Church. The dwellings will generally comprise 2 storey houses, with some up to 2.5 to 3 storeys along the central spine. Each dwellings will have a rear garden and off-street parking.

4.4 The community orchard will be located along the eastern boundary of the site. Allotments and an area of informal car parking is proposed to the northern boundary of the Site, with vehicular access taken from the existing Home Farm access road.

4.5 Means of access to the site is not reserved and full details have been provided. Access to the residential component of the Site will be taken from Charlotte Avenue within the Exemplar scheme, comprising an existing T junction arrangement. This follows the aspirations of the NW Bicester SPD. The internal road arrangements will be reserved for future approval, and will be consistent with the design codes for the neighbouring Exemplar scheme and wider NW Bicester masterplan.

4.6 A significant area of open space will cover the remainder of the Site, providing a significant buffer to the adjacent listed building at Home Farm. It is considered this will comprise publically accessible informal green space.

4.7 Pedestrian and cycle routes are proposed through the open space, accessed from the north-western boundary abutting the Exemplar scheme, leading to the open space towards the southern boundary of the scheme. An additional pedestrian route is then proposed, continuing the 'vista' through the Site to where the Site abuts Banbury Road, leading towards the Church of St Laurence. This will facilitate a pedestrian link through the Site to the Church of St Laurence, safeguarding the area to ensure that a pedestrian crossing to the Church can be delivered separately. The provision of pedestrian and cycle routes through the Site are consistent with the strategies within the NW Bicester SPD.

4.8 Further information on the parameter plans is available within the Development Specification and Design and Access Statement (DAS), submitted as part of this application.

## 5 Relevant Planning Policy

5.1 This section introduces the national and local planning policy context in which the proposals should be considered against. It also describes the designations of the site. A summary of the relevant national and local planning policies and relevant SPDs is provided at **Appendix 1**.

### The Development Plan

5.2 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 states that planning applications should be determined in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. In this instance, the Development Plan for the Site comprises:

- The Cherwell Local Plan 2011-2031 (CLP) (adopted July 2015);
- The saved policies of the Cherwell Local Plan 1996 (“CLP 1996”); and
- North West Bicester Supplementary Planning Document (adopted February 2016).

5.3 Consideration has also been had to a number of other adopted and emerging supplementary planning documents, including the Developer Contributions SPD (February 2018), the CLP partial review (proposed submission plan July 2017); and Cherwell Design Guide SPD (Draft October 2017). The key development management policies are highlighted below.

5.4 An assessment of the scheme against those policies considered to carry weight in the determination of this application is provided at **Section 6**.

### National Planning Policy Framework

5.5 In March 2012 the Government published the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) which sets out the Government’s planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied. The NPPF is a material consideration in planning decisions (paragraph 2). It also replaces almost all of the previous national guidance contained within Planning Policy Statements (PPS) and Planning Policy Guidance (PPG).

5.6 Paragraphs 6 and 7 of the NPPF state that the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development and that there are three dimensions to sustainable development: economic, social and environmental.

*“These dimensions give rise to the need for the planning system to perform a number of roles:*

*an economic role – contributing to building a strong, responsive and competitive economy...*

*a social role – supporting strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by providing the supply of housing required to meet the needs of present and future generations...*

*an environmental role – contributing to protecting and enhancing our natural, built and historic environment...”*

5.7 At the heart of national policy is a presumption in favour of sustainable development, which is a “golden thread” running through decision taking. This means “approving development proposals that accord with the Development Plan without delay” where the Development Plan is up to date and in accordance with National Policy (NPPF Paragraph 14). Paragraph 47 of the NPPF goes on to set out the requirement for local planning authorities to ‘boost significantly the supply of housing’.

- 5.8 In addition, Paragraph 49 states that housing applications should be considered in the context of the presumption in favour of sustainable development, whilst relevant policies for the supply of housing should not be considered up to date if the local planning authority cannot demonstrate a five year supply of deliverable housing sites.
- 5.9 NPPF Paragraph 109 requires the planning systems to contribute and enhance the natural and local environment by (inter alia) minimising impacts on biodiversity and providing net gains in biodiversity where possible.
- 5.10 The Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government has recently published consultation proposals on the draft revisions to the NPPF. Given the very early stages of this emerging document, the draft NPPF does not hold any weight for which the application will be determined against. Importantly however, the presumption in favour of sustainable development is still at the heart of the NPPF as well as the requirement to significantly boost the supply of homes.

## Local Planning Policy

### Cherwell Local Plan 2011-2031

#### Policy Bicester 1: North West Bicester Eco-Town

- 5.11 Policy Bicester 1 allocates 390 hectares to the north-west of the town for a new zero carbon mixed use development.
- 5.12 North West Bicester was identified in Annex A of the Eco-Towns PPS (2009) as one of the four potential locations for the development of an Eco-Town. It is central to the Council's district-wide strategy and its strategy for Bicester. Delivering an Eco-town was considered one of the most sustainable means of accommodating strategic growth at Bicester to 2031.
- 5.13 The Policy seeks to deliver development in accordance with a comprehensive masterplan for the whole Eco-Town area to be approved by the Council as part of a NW Bicester SPD. This SPD has now subsequently been adopted by CDC in February 2016.
- 5.14 Policy Bicester 1 sets out CDC's expectations that the Masterplan and subsequent applications for planning permission to deliver the following development:
- A minimum of 10ha for employment uses;
  - Up to 6,000 homes (3,293 during the plan period), incorporating 30% affordable housing and the provision of extra care housing;
  - Four 2-form entry primary schools and one secondary school;
  - A seven GP surgery and a dental surgery;
  - 4ha site for a burial ground;
  - 40% of the total gross site area as green space;
  - Appropriate crossings of the railway line and changes/improvements to Howes Lane and Lords Lane;
  - Community facilities, to include leisure, health, social care, education, retail, arts, culture, library services, indoor and outdoor sport, play and voluntary services; and
  - Utilities and infrastructure to allow for zero carbon and water neutrality on site and the consideration of sourcing waste heat from the Ardley Energy recovery facility.

5.15 Policy Bicester 1 cross-refers to other development management policies set out within the CLP 2015.

#### **Policy BSC3: Affordable Housing**

5.16 Policy BSC3 sets out that developments of 11 dwellings or more at Banbury and Bicester will be expected to provide at least 30% of new housing as affordable homes on site.

5.17 The Policy also sets out that 70% of the affordable housing will be expected to provide 70% of the affordable housing as affordable/social rented dwellings and 30% as other forms of intermediate affordable homes.

#### **Policy BS4: Housing Mix**

5.18 Policy BSC4 requires new residential development to provide a mix of homes to meet current and expected future requirements, with the mix to be negotiated having regard to up to date evidence on housing need and local market conditions. Supporting table 67 concludes the evidence base from the Oxfordshire's Strategic Housing Market Assessment regarding mix of homes as:

	<b>1-bed</b>	<b>2-bed</b>	<b>3-bed</b>	<b>4-bed</b>
Market	5%	25%	45%	25%
Affordable	25-30%	30-35%	30-35%	5-10%
All Dwellings	15%	30%	40%	15%

#### **North West Bicester Supplementary Planning Document**

5.19 Policy Bicester 1 of the CLP 2015 seeks to deliver development in accordance with a "comprehensive masterplan" for the whole Eco-own area.

5.20 A Masterplan Framework and supporting visions and objectives document was produced for the Eco-Town by A2Dominion. Following local consultation by A2Dominion during 2013, these were submitted to the Council in March 2014 and have formed the basis of the NW Bicester SPD.

5.21 The NW Bicester SPD, including the Masterplan Framework, was adopted by the Council in February 2016 following three further rounds of consultation (July 2014, January 2015 and November 2015) but does not form part of the Development Plan.

5.22 The NW Bicester SPD is intended to guide preparation of planning applications and the development of the Eco-Town. It "provides further detail to the policy and a means of implementing the strategic allocation" (paragraph 1.1).

5.23 A Masterplan was created as part of the NW Bicester SPD. The site is designated for residential development and green infrastructure as shown in Figure 3 below.

Figure 3 – Extract from North West Bicester Supplementary Document – Masterplan Framework (published February 2016)



5.24 Chapter 4 of the NW Bicester SPD sets out “key development principles and requirements for the site” to guide the preparation of planning applications. Development Principle 4 – Homes and Development Requirement 4 – Homes specifically refer to residential development proposals, requiring (inter alia):

- high standards of design and the delivery of true zero carbon development;
- all applications to be supported by an Energy Strategy;
- homes to be designed to high environmental and space standards;
- the delivery of “walkable neighbourhoods”;
- the density of development to reflect its location within the site, with high density residential development along public transport corridors and adjacent to local centres;
- home designs to encourage more sustainable ways of living (and working) and incorporating “smart” technology;
- design principles to include the use of local materials, flexibility in house design and size including the potential for additions to adapt to changing circumstances.

5.25 It is noted in Chapter 4 of the NWB SPD that the majority of these principles will be explored at the detailed design stage.

### Other Relevant Documents and Guidance

5.26 Whilst not forming part of the Development Plan, the following material considerations are also of relevance:

- Developer Contributions SPD (adopted February 2018), which sets out CDC's approach to seeking Section 106 planning obligations. Further information is included out within **Appendix 2** of this statement, which sets out the draft Heads of Terms for the development.
- Partial review of the CLP (proposed submission plan July 2017 incorporating changes and minor modifications February 2018) to address Oxford's Unmet Housing Need, further information is set out in the heading below.
- Cherwell Design Guide SPD (draft October 2017). Whilst this SPD does not contain adopted policy, it is understood this is targeted to be adopted by CDC in February 2018, as such regard has been had to relevant emerging policies which provide limited weight.
- Eco-Towns Supplement to PPS1 (other than the policies relating to Bicester, the Supplement was revoked in March 2015).
- One Shared Vision. The document was approved in 2010 and sets out a vision for the town, which is to *"create a vibrant Bicester where people choose to live, to work and to spend their leisure time in sustainable ways"*.

### Housing Land Supply

5.27 The Annual Monitoring Report (AMR) (2016/2017) reviews the implementation of the Cherwell's adopted planning policies and informs the development of emerging policies. The AMR covers the period from April 2016 to March 2017. The AMR confirms the overall net gain of housing completions for 2016/17 was 1,102, with a 5.5 year housing land supply for the period 2017-2022. CDC's existing housing land supply is heavily reliant upon the housing delivery at the Eco-Town, which will provide 6,000 new homes. It is noted that a number of the applications within the Eco-Town are yet to benefit from planning consent.

5.28 The CLP is currently undergoing a partial review in order to accommodate Cherwell's share of the unmet additional housing need for Oxford. A consultation on the proposed submission Development Plan Document (DPD) was undertaken in July to October 2017, and the review has now been submitted to the SoS for examination, with adoption targeted for November 2017. Limited weight can therefore be afforded to this emerging revised DPD. The review seeks to provide specific policies for delivering additional development to help meet Oxford's housing needs without undermining the existing Local Plans development strategy for meeting Cherwell's needs and detracting from the delivery of growth including at Bicester. In this regard, Cherwell have been asked to accommodate an addition 4,400 homes within the plan period up until 2031, within the broad locations of Kidlington (and surrounding area) and North and East of Kidlington.

### Summary

5.29 The Site forms part of a mixed-use allocation in the CLP 2015 to deliver an Eco-Town to the north-west of Bicester and is identified for residential development and open space as part of this allocation.

5.30 There is therefore a plan-led presumption in favour of the development and planning permission to be granted without delay unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

- 5.31 The Government's objective is to "boost significantly the supply of housing" (NPPF Paragraph 47). Significant weight should therefore be afforded to the proposed delivery of market and affordable housing in the planning balance.
- 5.32 The delivery of the Eco-Town is a key priority for CDC and central to its spatial strategy, in which the proposed development will help deliver.

## 6 Planning Considerations

6.1 This section of the Statement reviews the development proposals against the relevant planning policies and guidance (identified within Appendix 1).

### Principle of Development

6.2 The application proposes up to 75 homes across a mix of sizes, types and tenures.

6.3 The Site forms an integral part of the Eco-Town allocated under Policy Bicester 1 of the CLP 2015, and is located within an area allocated for residential development by the NW Bicester SPD. The development Plan is therefore supportive of the proposed residential use in principle in this location. In this regard, paragraph 14 and 49 of the NPPG sets the presumption in favour of sustainable development, and approving development proposals that accord with the Development Plan without delay.

6.4 In addition, as set out within the AMR, CDC's housing supply position is heavily reliant upon the housing delivery at the Eco-Town. It is therefore beneficial for Sites such as this to be brought forward now to assist CDC in order to boost the District's housing land supply position, in accordance with the NPPF (paragraph 47).

### Provision of Residential Development

#### *Mix*

6.5 Policy BSC4 of the CLP 2015 requires new residential development to provide a mix of homes to meet current and expected future requirements, having regard to up to date evidence on housing need and local market conditions. The supporting text and table 67 notes developments should aim for a mix of market housing being 5% as 1-bed; 25% as 2-bed; 45% as 3-bed and 25% at 4-bed, whilst paragraph B.123 supports a greater provision of 3 bedroom properties within Cherwell.

6.6 The proposals are submitted in outline thus the mix is not fixed. The Development Specification and Design Guidelines set out within the DAS and submitted as part of this application sets a range for the housing mix, for which future reserved matters applications will need to comply with, as follows:

- 1 bedroom: 0-5%
- 2 bedroom: 15-25%
- 3 bedroom: 40-50%
- 4 bedroom: 20-30%

6.7 The proposed development will comprise the provision of low density single family dwellings, with off-street parking and gardens, in line with the local context and new adjacent development coming forward. It is therefore considered the proposed provision of largely 3 and 4 bedroom homes is suitable and appropriate for the Site.

#### *Affordable Housing Provision*

6.8 Policy BSC 3 requires 30% affordable housing provision on sites within Bicester that include 11 or more homes, subject to viability. Of the 30% affordable homes, 70% are required to be social rented, with the remaining 30% to be as other forms of intermediate affordable homes.

6.9 The scheme will seek to provide a policy compliant level of affordable housing provision (30%), and will be subject to a review mechanism secured through the Section 106 Agreement. The total provision of affordable housing will be secured through the Section 106 agreement. The detailed mix, type and location



of the affordable homes will be determined through the submission of Reserved Matters. This will take into account the indicative mix set as a guide by Officers through the pre-application.

- 6.10 A separate Affordable Housing Statement has been prepared under **Appendix 3** of this report. As such, the development will be in accordance with Policy BSC 3, Policy Bicester 1, and NW Bicester SPD Development Requirement 4.

#### *Density*

- 6.11 Policy BSC 2 sets the expectation that new housing development should be provided on net developable areas at a density of at least 30 dwellings per hectare.
- 6.12 The application proposes up to 75 dwellings at within the residential development component (as defined by the Land Use Plan) comprising approximately 2.15ha, proposing a maximum plot density of 35 homes per hectare within the developable area.
- 6.13 In this regard, the proposals are comparable to the neighbouring sites and in accordance with Policy BSC 2.

#### *Design, Layout and Heights*

- 6.14 The proposed residential development is arranged across two parcels of land, with a main residential avenue running from west to east between the two. As can be demonstrated from the illustrative masterplan, and as will be brought forward at detailed design stage, the two parcels of land will be broken up further through tertiary roads and private drives, to create smaller residential communities. The DAS includes a set of Design Guidelines on how this could be achieved. The remainder of the Site towards the northern, eastern and southern areas will comprise open space, providing a buffer of the development edge and wider NW Bicester Eco-Town to the existing listed buildings.
- 6.15 The proposed heights of the development will vary marginally across the Site. Along the main residential avenue through the Site taller homes (up to 2½ - 3 storeys/up to 13m to ridge height) will be located, framing this vista view towards the listed church. The remainder of the Site will comprise smaller homes of up to 2 storeys or up to 8.5m to ridge height from existing site level. The proposed building heights are therefore similar to the surrounding exemplar scheme, where homes of largely 2 to 3 storeys are being constructed.
- 6.16 Additional planting areas are proposed within the development, comprising a 'community orchard' along the eastern boundary, as well as areas of landscaping within the open space buffer and interceding the residential development. Further details on the landscaping throughout the Site will be secured at Reserved Matters stage, taking into account the Design Guidelines set out in the DAS.
- 6.17 The application is accompanied by a Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) (Volume II of the Environmental Statement), which considers the potential landscape and visual effects of the proposed development parameters. This concludes that the proposals would not result in undue negative effects on the landscape and represent an acceptable extension of the existing and consented residential area of NW Bicester.
- 6.18 The illustrative masterplan demonstrates how the total quantum of up to 75 homes can be reasonably accommodated on the Site, providing a well laid out arrangement of residential accommodated, interceded by green spaces, without compromising the residential amenity of neighbouring residential properties, or future occupiers of the development.
- 6.19 The proposals are therefore in accordance with CLP Policies Bicester 1, ESD 13 and ESD 15.

## Open Space

- 6.20 The proposals comprise a significant amount of open space within the northern, eastern and southern areas of the Site. The majority of this comprises informal open parkland space, publically accessible to future residents of the Site and surrounding properties. A pedestrian and cycle route is also proposed through this area to increase the accessibility and connectivity of this open space to the surrounding areas of open space within the wider NW Bicester allocation. The proposed open space also includes a Sustainable Urban Drainage System (SUDS) within the southern area of the Site where the Site slopes down. This area will be mainly dry other than in storm events, thus can be used as open space.
- 6.21 The areas of open space include a range of different types of uses. This includes the provision of community allotments, comprising up to 0.10ha, located to the northern part of the Site, accessed from the existing access route to Home Farm via Banbury Road. A community orchard is also proposed along the eastern boundary between the private access route and Banbury Road.
- 6.22 A LEAP is proposed within the northern component of the Site. This comprises 0.16ha of space, and will incorporate a buffer. Based on the indicative site mix, the proposals would result in the requirement of 0.21ha of outdoor sports provision. It is considered this can be addressed through the provision of a financial contribution towards an off-site provision, secured through a S106 agreement.
- 6.23 Finally, areas of open space will intercede the proposed residential development in the form of tree planting, incidental areas of open space and private gardens.
- 6.24 The proposals comprise approximately 2.79ha of open space, comprising approximately 56% of the total gross site area. This includes the provision of allotments, orchards and play space. Further information on how this has been calculated is provided within the DAS.
- 6.25 The proposals therefore accord with CLP policies Bicester 1, BSC10, BSC11 and ESD17.

## Transport and Accessibility

- 6.26 The application is accompanied by a Transport Assessment and draft Framework Travel Plan.
- 6.27 Permission is full is sought for vehicular access to the site, taken from the internal access road through the Exemplar Site, known as Charlotte Avenue, by means of a T-Junction. Charlotte Avenue, including the T Junction has recently been constructed and it is understood an application has been submitted to the Roads Agreement Team of Oxfordshire County Council to adopt Charlotte Avenue as public highway. The proposed access of the Site has been discussed during pre-application discussions with Oxfordshire County Council as Local Highways Authority.
- 6.28 As previously noted, pedestrian and cycle links are proposed through the open space, linking with the existing routes within neighbouring sites, providing a legible hierarchy of routes, encouraging sustainable modes of transport in accordance with Policy Bicester 1.
- 6.29 The draft Travel Plan submitted in support of the application sets out how the design of the development will encourage sustainable travel choices by the future residents. A final Travel Plan can be secured through the Section 106 Agreement and planning conditions prior to the occupation of the development, and monitored thereafter.
- 6.30 The Design Guidelines set out within the DAS provide further guidance for future detailed design stages on the proposed street hierarchy.

6.31 The proposals therefore accords with CLP policies Bicester 1 and ESD 1.

### Energy and Sustainability

6.32 As required by CLP Policy Bicester 1 and the NW Bicester SPD, development within the NW Bicester Eco-Town boundary should achieve a 'zero carbon' standard and requires all major development to be supported by an Energy Statement to demonstrate how this could be achieved. An Energy Statement has been prepared and is enclosed in support of this application. It sets out the approach to low carbon design principles and considers opportunities for energy efficiency in the site layout, design and contributions to CO2 reductions from decentralised and low carbon and/or renewable energy technologies. Engagement with SSE has also been carried out in looking to opportunities to connect to the Elmsbrook district heating scheme. As this is an outline planning application, this strategy will be defined, and further detail provided through reserved matters stage. Further information on the energy strategy is provided within the Energy Statement.

6.33 CLP Policy ESD1 and ESD3 require new development to take into and incorporate suitable measures to help to mitigate the impact of climate change, and to ensure all new residential development incorporates sustainable design and construction. In this regard, a Sustainability Statement has been prepared and is enclosed as part of this application. This demonstrates how the proposed development aligns with the range of sustainability objectives. Further information is available within the enclosed Statement.

### Heritage

6.34 No built heritage assets are located within the Site boundary however two listed buildings are located adjacent to the application Site. Home Farm (Grade II Listed Building) is located to the eastern boundary, whilst the Church of St Laurence (Grade II\* Listed Building) is located to the east of Banbury Road. A Built Heritage Statement has been prepared in order to assess the proposed developments impact on these neighbouring heritage assets in accordance with the relevant requirements of the NPPF, and local policy and guidance.

6.35 The proposed development has been designed taking account of these heritage assets. The open space around Home Farm has been retained to as to allow for some separation between these buildings and the new development. Furthermore, the central residential route through the site has been located so as to allow for a vista from the development framing the view to the Church of St Laurence, as well as providing accessibility to the neighbouring exemplar site.

6.36 The Built Heritage Assessment concludes a less than substantial harm (and at the lower end of this spectrum) to Home Farm and the Church of St Laurence, and should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposals in delivering much needed homes, and other community facilities.

6.37 The proposals are therefore in accordance CLP Policy ESD 15, as well as the NPPF.

### Site-Wide and Community Infrastructure

6.38 Draft Heads of Terms for a Section 106 Agreement are enclosed within **Appendix 2** of this Statement, and will be the subject of negotiation during the determination of the application.

6.39 The Applicant is committed to making proportionate contributions and/or on-site provision for relevant site-wide and community infrastructure, necessary to support the delivery of the wider Eco-Town where these would satisfy Regulation 122 of the Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations and the corresponding provisions of NPPF Paragraph 204.

6.40 The development will therefore be in accordance with the requirements of CLP 2015 Policy Bicester 1.

## Economic Strategy

6.41 The Proposed Development will deliver up to 75 homes which will have a positive impact on the local economy and labour market. Benefits of housing delivery are both direct and indirect. Direct benefits include creation of construction employment, council tax revenue, New Homes Bonus and household spending. Indirectly, the Proposed Development will support new jobs in the local economy. Details of these benefits are outlined below.

### Direct Economic Benefits

6.42 It is estimated that the Proposed Development will accommodate a monthly average of between 50 and 90 construction workers on-site depending on the construction period<sup>1</sup>. The total Gross Value Added (GVA) generated from the construction of this project will be £6.2 million.

6.43 Once complete, it is estimated that the annual Council Tax contribution of up to 75 new homes could be up to £170,000. Additionally, the delivery of new homes will also generate New Homes Bonus of approximately £490,000 over four years<sup>2</sup>. New Homes Bonus is a grant paid to Local Authorities by Central Government as an incentive to promote housing growth. The Bonus is a non-ring-fenced payment that the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) has paid since 2011 to local authorities for every home added to their council tax register.

6.44 The residents accommodated in the Proposed Development would generate economic benefits for the local economy through indirect spending. The average weekly household spending on local goods and services is £270 in the South East<sup>3</sup>. Therefore the 75 new homes would generate approximately £1 million per annum in additional spending.

6.45 A significant proportion of spending generated by residents would be captured locally, supporting existing local services and facilities within Bicester town centre through additional patronage. It will also support the services and facilities (including new shops, schools, community facilities and public transport) delivered as part of the Eco-Town.

### Indirect Economic Benefits

6.46 A clear relationship exists between housing and jobs with well-located, affordable, good quality homes supporting the labour market through providing a skilled workforce.

6.47 Bicester is one of Cherwell District Council's (CDC) major centres for employment and housing with approximately 22% of the Council's population and jobs. Data from the 2011 Census reveals that currently one in three resident's commutes within Bicester for work with an additional 8% choosing to work at or from home. The delivery of homes within the Proposed Development will continue to support the employment opportunities in Bicester.

6.48 At a broader spatial context, Bicester falls within the 22 authorities that comprise the defined Oxford – Milton Keynes – Cambridge growth corridor<sup>4</sup>. This area is expected to experience significant growth in the next 15 years with an additional 200,000 homes and 200,000 jobs<sup>5</sup>. Bicester is well-placed to build-on and benefit from this growth with close access to Oxford to the south and Milton Keynes to the east through

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<sup>1</sup> Calculated using CITB model based on construction period of 18 and 30 months

<sup>2</sup> Assuming that the District meets its baseline housing delivery

<sup>3</sup> Office for National Statistics, 2017. Household Expenditure Survey

<sup>4</sup> National Infrastructure Commission

<sup>5</sup> Strategic Economic Growth – A study on behalf of Cherwell Council, April 2017. GVA.

the strategic road network. According to the 2011 Census, Bicester residents already support the nearby centre of Oxford with 14% in employment within the city.

- 6.49 Local spending, as set out above, will stimulate jobs in the local shops and services in Bicester. Furthermore, new housing in this strategic location would provide homes for a new workforce which could serve and contribute to the economy of Bicester, centres across CDC and nearby city centres of Oxford and Milton Keynes.

### Other Environmental Considerations

- 6.50 The application is accompanied by a Flood Risk Assessment (FRA), as well as a Water Cycle Strategy. The FRA confirms that the majority of the Site falls within Flood Zone 1, with southernmost part of the Site falling within Flood Zone 2. The FRA demonstrates that the proposals would not be at risk of flooding, nor would it increase the risk of flooding elsewhere.
- 6.51 An Archaeological Assessment has been submitted in support of the application. This assessment concludes that the Site is considered to have a negligible potential for significant as-yet to be discovered archaeology remains, and an appropriately worded planning condition would be welcomed to safeguard any matters of archaeological importance on the Site during constructions.
- 6.52 A Noise Impact Assessment is enclosed as part of this application, which concludes the Site is suitable for residential use.

### Cultural Wellbeing

- 6.53 At the heart of the NPPF is the presumption in favour of sustainable development. Three interdependent roles are identified for the planning system including an economic, social and environmental role. As part of the social role is a requirement to meet the needs of the public to support health, social and cultural well-being.
- 6.54 This is reflected in local policy with the North West Bicester SPD and Policy Bicester 1 highlighting the importance of cultural well-being to all development plans. Development Principle 14 and Appendix V of the NW Bicester SPD states that proposals should demonstrate how cultural wellbeing “*will be incorporated into detailed development plans*”. This section of the Planning Statement outlines the benefits to local culture and sustainability brought forward by the Proposed Development.
- 6.55 The Proposed Development will provide approximately 56% of its land as open space and playspace. Community uses are proposed including allotments and a community orchard providing new spaces with opportunities for residents to meet and build relationships. These spaces would contribute to the Proposed Development’s aim to integrate into the surrounding community, creating a cohesive and sustainable place.
- 6.56 The Proposed Development has been designed to enhance and support culture in the wider area. As outlined in the DAS, the scheme proposes physical links which slot into existing strategic routes in the local area. This includes improving access through an informal car park to the Church of St Laurence and improving pedestrian and cycle routes to the surrounding area. Overall, the Proposed Development has been designed with community cohesion and integration as the core focus. The details of management and governance of these spaces will be discussed with relevant stakeholders as the planning process advances. Possible strategies include transferring governance of the open spaces to management trusts which will be responsible for owning and managing these spaces.
- 6.57 The Proposed Development is committed to celebrating the natural environment with the provision of significant, publicly accessible green spaces. This will include informal open space, play space provision,

allotments and a community orchard. Biodiversity will be embedded in the design of these spaces with native tree planting throughout and new grasslands and water habitats (via the SUDs system). These spaces will work to encourage healthy and active lifestyles among new and existing residents while also bringing nature to the centre of community life, particularly within the allotments and community orchard.

- 6.58 The design and layout of the Proposed Development will encourage sustainable travel including walking and cycling. The provision of new routes as well as links to the strategic network will improve the permeability of the site and enable residents to access surrounding areas throughout the Eco-Town. For example, an uncontrolled pedestrian crossing is proposed along Banbury Road (B4100) to facilitate access to The Church of St Laurence and the wider area. Design of routes is key with the Applicant committed to signposting new and improved routes to create a cohesive and sustainable place.
- 6.59 The Applicant has engaged with the community throughout the pre-application process as outlined in Section 3 of this Statement. Engagement has included consultation with officers, County Council (as Highways Authority) and the local community group at Church of St Laurence.
- 6.60 The Applicant is dedicated to implementing sustainable design principles as outlined in the Sustainability Statement and DAS submitted as part of this Application. As part of the North West Eco-Town the Proposed Development will be a Zero Carbon Development and will approach construction materials in a sustainable manner. The approach to delivering energy and carbon emission reductions will be defined in the reserved matters planning application however, the Outline Energy Statement submitted as part of this application presents and considers approaches to delivering a Zero Carbon Development.
- 6.61 As this comprises an outline application, the details regarding construction materials and processes are not yet known, however, it is advised that construction materials are sourced in line with Building Research Establishment (BRE) BES 6001 'The Framework Standard for Responsible Sourcing'. The implementation of a construction waste management strategy will encourage a sustainable approach with a focus on eliminating, reducing, reusing and recycling materials.
- 6.62 As well as the natural environment the Applicant is committed to conserving and enhancing the historic environment. Two heritage sites are located nearby – Home Farmhouse and St Laurence Church. The Heritage Statement submitted alongside this application outlines the Applicant's commitment to ensuring the design layout to respect the setting of local heritage assets. This includes retaining areas of open space around Home Farmhouse and The Church of St Laurence to allow for some separation and preserving the immediate rural context of these sites.

## Summary

- 6.63 The proposed development is in full accordance with the relevant policies of the development plan. The proposals will deliver a high quality, sustainable and zero-carbon residential development, with vast areas of accessible open space, in accordance with the NW Bicester SPD. The development will bring a range of local benefits, including the delivery of new homes,

## 7 Conclusions

- 7.1 The site forms part of the Eco-Town allocated by Policy Bicester 1 of the CLP 2015 which is intended to deliver 6,000 new homes over the Plan Period as a part of mixed use development. It is also located within the area of the Eco-Town identified for residential development and green space by the NW Bicester SPD.
- 7.2 The Development Plan and adopted supplementary planning guidance is therefore fully supportive of the proposed use in principle and there is a plan-led presumption in favour of the development.
- 7.3 The proposed development would be in full accordance with all relevant local and national planning policy and it has been shown that there are no impacts of this development that are unacceptable or cannot be appropriately mitigated.
- 7.4 In addition, the proposals will deliver significant benefits which are strong in their own right and as such there is no sound planning reason why the development cannot be approved without delay.

## Appendix 1 – Planning Policy and Guidance

### Planning Policy and Guidance

#### Introduction

- 1.1 This document provides a summary of the most relevant national, regional and local planning policies and guidance to the redevelopment of the land to the west of Home Farm, Bicester.
- 1.2 In summary, relevant planning policy and guidance is set out within the following documents:

Policy Level	Document
National	National Planning Policy Framework (adopted March 2012)
	National Planning Practice Guidance (published March 2014)
Local	Cherwell Local Plan 2011-2031 (adopted July 2015) (“CLP”)
	Saved policies of the Cherwell Local Plan 1996 (“CLP 1996”).

### National Planning Policy Guidance

#### National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (March 2012)

- 1.3 In March 2012, the Government published the NPPF which sets out the Government’s planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied. The NPPF is a material consideration in planning decisions (para. 2). It also replaces most of the previous national guidance within Planning Policy Statements (PPS) and Planning Policy Guidance (PPG).

#### Sustainable Development

- 1.4 Paragraphs 6 and 7 of the NPPF state that the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development and that there are three dimensions to sustainable development: economic, social and environmental.

*“These dimensions give rise to the need for the planning system to perform a number of roles:*

- *an economic role – contributing to building a strong, responsive and competitive economy...*
- *a social role – supporting strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by providing the supply of housing required to meet the needs of present and future generations...*
- *an environmental role – contributing to protecting and enhancing our natural, built and historic environment...”*

- 1.5 Paragraph 8 states that the economic, social and environmental gains should be sought jointly and simultaneously through the planning system in order to achieve sustainable development.



- 1.6 The NPPF is underpinned by a presumption in favour of sustainable development. Paragraph 14 of the NPPF states inter alia:

*“At the heart of the National Planning Policy Framework is a presumption in favour of sustainable development, which should be seen as a golden thread running through both plan-making and decision-taking.*

*...For decision-taking this means:*

- approving development proposals that accord with the development plan without delay; and*
- where the development plan is absent, silent or relevant policies are out-of-date, granting permission unless:
 
  - any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole; or*
  - specific policies in this Framework indicate development should be restricted.”**

- 1.7 Paragraph 17 sets out 12 Core Planning Principles that should underpin decision making, including:

*“proactively drive and support sustainable economic development to deliver homes, business and thriving local places that the country needs. Every effort should be made objectively to identify and then meet the housing, business and other development needs of an area, and respond positively to wider opportunities for growth...;*

*always seek to secure high quality design and a good standard of amenity for all existing and future occupants of land and buildings;*

*take account of the different roles and character of different areas, promoting the vitality of our main urban areas...;*

*encourage the effective use of land by reusing land that has been previously developed (brownfield land), provided that it is not of high environmental value;*

*promote mixed use developments, and encourage multiple benefits from the use of land in urban and rural areas...;*

*conserve heritage assets in a manner appropriate to their significance...;*

*actively manage patterns of growth to make the fullest possible use of public transport, walking and cycling, and focus significant development in locations which are or can be made sustainable.”*

### **Residential Development**

- 1.8 Local Planning Authorities are required to demonstrate five years' worth of housing supply against their housing requirements
- 1.9 Of particular relevance in terms of residential development is paragraph 22 of the NPPF, which states:

*“Planning policies should avoid the long term protection of sites allocated for employment use where there is no reasonable prospect of a site being used for that purpose. Land allocations should be regularly reviewed. Where there is no reasonable prospect of a site being used for the allocated employment use, applications for alternative uses of land or buildings should be treated on their merits having regard to market signals and the relative need for different land uses to support sustainable local communities.”*

- 1.10 Paragraph 49 states that housing applications should be considered in the context of the presumption in favour of sustainable development, whilst relevant policies for the supply of housing should not be considered up to date if the local planning authority cannot demonstrate a five year supply of deliverable housing sites.

### Transport

- 1.11 Paragraph 32 of the NPPF states that decisions should take account of whether safe and suitable access to the site can be achieved for all people and that development should only be prevented or refused on transport grounds where the residual cumulative impacts of a development are severe.

### Design

- 1.12 The NPPF states that the Government attaches great importance to the design of the built environment and that good design is indivisible from good planning (paragraph 56). Paragraph 58 states that planning decisions should aim to ensure that developments:

- *will function well and add to the overall quality of the area, not just for the short term but over the lifetime of the development;*
- *establish a strong sense of place, using streetscapes and buildings to create attractive and comfortable places to live, work and visit;*
- *optimise the potential of the site to accommodate development, create and sustain an appropriate mix of uses (including incorporation of green and other public space as part of developments) and support local facilities and transport networks; and*
- *respond to local character and history, and reflect the identity of local surroundings and materials, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation.*

- 1.13 Paragraph 60 of the NPPF also states that planning policies and decisions should not attempt to impose architectural styles or particular tastes but it is, however, proper to seek to promote or reinforce local distinctiveness.

### The Natural Environment

- 1.14 Paragraph 109 states that the planning system should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment. Planning policies and decisions should encourage the effective use of land by re-using land that has been previously developed (brownfield land), provided that it is not of high environmental value.

### Decision-taking

- 1.15 Paragraph 173 states that pursuing sustainable development requires careful attention to viability and costs in plan-making and decision-taking. To ensure viability, the costs of any requirements likely to be applied to development, such as requirements for affordable housing, standards, infrastructure contributions or other requirements should, when taking account of the normal cost of development and mitigation, provide

competitive returns to a willing land owner and willing developer to enable the development to be deliverable.

- 1.16 The NPPF also contains policy on decision-taking and states that local planning authorities should approach decision-taking in a positive way to foster the delivery of sustainable development (paragraph 186). Additionally, decision-takers should seek to approve applications for sustainable development where possible and local planning authorities should work proactively with applicants to secure developments that improve the economic, social and environmental conditions of an area (paragraph 187).
- 1.17 Annex 1 of the NPPF explains that due weight should be given to relevant policies in existing plans according to their degree of consistency with the NPPF.

### **National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG) (March 2014)**

- 1.18 On 6 March 2014, the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) published the National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG) which provides supporting guidance to the NPPF. This replaced all previous supporting national guidance.
- 1.19 The NPPG provides supporting guidance across a range of topics. A summary of those relevant to this application is provided below.

#### **Housing and Economic Development**

- 1.20 Guidance within the NPPG supports local planning authorities in objectively assessing and evidencing development needs for housing (both market and affordable) and economic development (which includes main town centre uses). The primary objective of identifying need is to identify the future quantity of land, floorspace and housing required.
- 1.21 The NPPG sets out the approach to guide councils in identifying appropriate land to meet housing and economic development needs. It states that housing and economic land availability assessments should inform local plans by identifying sites with potential, assessing their development potential, and evaluating their suitability and likelihood of development coming forward. The NPPG notes that this approach will ensure that all land is assessed together as part of plan preparation.

#### **Air Quality**

- 1.22 The NPPG states that planning should be concerned with air quality, particularly in light of EU legislation. It is further note that air quality, odour and dust can affect both biodiversity and local amenity values. When deciding whether air quality is relevant to a planning application, the NPPG advises that considerations could include whether the development would, inter alia, significantly affect traffic in the surrounding areas, affect biodiversity, or give rise to potentially unacceptable impact (particularly during construction).

#### **Climate Change**

- 1.23 Effective spatial planning is an important part of a successful response to climate change and local planning authorities should ensure that protecting the local environment is properly considered alongside the broader issues of protecting the global environment.
- 1.24 In the decision making process, the NPPG requires local planning authorities to pay attention to integrating adaptation and mitigation approaches that support sustainable development. Accordingly, it is stated that local planning authorities will want to consider:

- Identifying responses to climate change that also deliver other benefits, such as green infrastructure that improves adaptation, biodiversity and amenity;
- Building in flexibility for future adaptation; and
- The potential vulnerability of a development to climate change risk over its whole lifetime.

### Design

- 1.25 The NPPG states that planning policies and decisions should consider the following issues in achieving good design: local character; safe, connected and efficient streets; a network of green spaces and public places; crime prevention; security; access and inclusion; efficient use of natural resources; and cohesive and vibrant neighbourhoods.
- 1.26 It continues that decisions on planning applications should clearly support the design objectives in the Development Plan.
- 1.27 Further guidance is given regarding light pollution, which the NPPG states is an important component to be carefully considered through good design.

### Flood Risk and Coastal Change

- 1.28 It is noted within the NPPG that the NPPF tests to protect against flooding are designed to ensure that if there are better sites in terms of flood risk, or a proposed development cannot be made safe, it should not be permitted. A sequential approach should be applied so that, as far as possible, development is located to where there is the lowest risk of flooding. Several ways are outlined in which new development can be made safe, including the provision of flood risk management infrastructure and designing buildings to avoid flooding by, for example, raising floors.

### Health and Wellbeing

- 1.29 The NPPG requires local planning authorities to ensure that health and wellbeing are considered in planning decision making. The NPPG advises that the range of issues that could be considered include, inter alia, potential pollution and other environmental hazards; opportunities for healthy lifestyles; and the support of strong, vibrant and healthy communities.

### Natural Environment

- 1.30 Local plans are required to include strategic policies for the conservation and enhancement of the natural environment. Local planning authorities should consider the opportunities that development proposals may provide to enhance biodiversity and contribute to wildlife and habitat connectivity in the wider area.

### Noise

- 1.31 Noise needs to be considered by the decision taker, particularly when new developments may create additional noise and when they would be sensitive to the prevailing acoustic environment. It is furthered that there may be opportunities to consider improvements to the acoustic environment through the decision making process.
- 1.32 It is stated within the NPPG that decision taking should take account of the acoustic environment and in doing so consider:
- Whether or not a significant adverse effect is occurring, or likely to occur;

- Whether or not an adverse effect is occurring, or likely to occur; and
- Whether or not a good standard of amenity can be achieved.

### **Transport Assessments and Travel Plans**

- 1.33 Consistent with the NPPF, the NPPG notes that transport assessments and travel plans can result in a range of positive benefits, including sustainable travel, reduced traffic generation, carbon emissions reduction, improved health outcomes and the creation of accessible, connected and inclusive communities. The NPPG includes a range of guidance as to the level of information that should be included in such documents.

### **Open Space**

- 1.34 The NPPG states that open space should be taken into account in planning for new development, which can take many forms and provide health and recreation benefits. Consistent with the NPPF, the NPPG notes that as well as being an important part of the landscape and setting of built development, open space is an important component in the achievement of sustainable development.

### **Renewable and Low Carbon Energy**

- 1.35 It is noted that increasing the amount of energy from renewable and low carbon technologies will help to make sure the UK has a secure energy supply, reduce greenhouse gas emissions to slow down climate change and stimulate investment in new jobs and businesses. The NPPG acknowledges that planning therefore has an important role in the delivery of new renewable and low carbon energy infrastructure in locations where the local environmental impact is acceptable.

### **Use of Planning Conditions and Planning Obligations**

- 1.36 Developers may be asked to provide planning obligations that will mitigate the impact of unacceptable development to make it acceptable in planning terms. The NPPG notes that obligations should meet the statutory tests set out within the Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations 2010 and as policy tests within the NPPF.
- 1.37 Guidance within the NPPG states that planning conditions can enhance the quality of a development, and enable development to proceed where it would otherwise be necessary to refuse planning permission, by mitigating the adverse effects. The objectives of planning are best served when the power to attach conditions to a planning permission is exercised in a way that is clearly seen to be fair, reasonable and practicable.

### **Community Infrastructure Levy**

- 1.38 Guidance on CIL was added to the NPPG on 12 June 2014, which replaced previous standalone guidance that was published in February 2014. The NPPG notes that the levy may be payable on development which creates a net additional floorspace, where the gross internal area of new build exceeds 100 square metres.
- 1.39 From April 2015 there are restrictions on the pooling of planning obligations.

### **Viability and Decision Taking**

- 1.40 Where the deliverability of a development may be compromised by the scale of planning obligations and other costs, the NPPG advises that a viability assessment may be necessary to act as incentive for the development to be undertaken.

## **The Development Plan**

- 1.41 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that where in making any determination under the Planning Act, regard is to be had to the development plan. The determination shall, therefore, be made in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
- 1.42 The statutory development plan for the application site comprises the Cherwell Local Plan 2011-2031 (adopted July 2015) (“CLP”) and Saved Policies of the Cherwell Local Plan 1996 (“CLP 1996”).
- 1.43 The weight that can be given to the policies in the existing Development Plan is determined by their degree of consistency with the National Planning Policy Framework (“NPPF”).
- 1.44 The CLP 2015 was adopted recently. The Inspector’s Report (May 2015) confirmed that its policies were in accordance with the policies of the NPPF (March 2012).
- 1.45 There have been no changes to the NPPF since that time and the CLP 2015 should be considered “up-to-date” on that basis. The relevant policies of the CLP 2015 are set out below.
- 1.46 The CLP 1996 pre-dates the NPPF and is now of considerable age. The NPPF does however confirm that the policies in a Local Plan should not be considered “out-of-date” simply because they were adopted prior to the publication of the NPPF. The relevant policies of the CLP 1996 are set out below.

## **Cherwell Local Plan 2015 (Readopted December 2016)**

### **Housing**

- 1.47 Policy BSC1 sets the housing target across the District for 22,840 homes for the period 2011-2031. 10,129 new homes is the target for Bicester between the time periods set out above.
- 1.48 The CLP is currently undergoing a partial review in order to accommodate Cherwell’s share of the unmet additional housing need for Oxford. A consultation on the proposed submission Development Plan Document (DPD) was undertaken in July to October 2017, and the review has now been submitted to the SoS for examination, with adoption targeted for November 2017. Limited weight can therefore be afforded to this emerging revised DPD. The review seeks to provide specific policies for delivering additional development to help meet Oxford’s housing needs without undermining the existing Local Plans development strategy for meeting Cherwell’s needs and detracting from the delivery of growth including at Bicester. In this regard, Cherwell have been asked to accommodate an addition 4,400 homes within the plan period up until 2031, within the broad locations of Kidlington (and surrounding area) and North and East of Kidlington.
- 1.49 Policy Bicester 1, North West Bicester Eco-Town aims to provide development that will be deliver high quality, zero carbon residential development in accordance with the Master Plan forming part of the NWB SPD. It will make necessary provision for affordable housing, infrastructure, green infrastructure and net biodiversity gain.
- 1.50 Policy BSC3 sets out the requirement for 30% affordable housing provision on sites of 11 or more units and states:

*Where development is demonstrated to be unviable with the above requirements, further negotiations will take place. These negotiations will include consideration of: the mix and type of housing, the split between social rented and intermediate housing, and the availability of social housing grant/funding and the percentage of affordable housing to be provided.*

- 1.51 Policy BSC4 relates to Housing Mix. The policy requires new residential development to provide a mix of homes to meet current and expected future housing need, with the mix having regard to the latest evidence on housing need a location market conditions.

### Open Space

- 1.52 Policy BSC10 relates to Open Space, Outdoor Sport and Recreation provision. The policy states:

*The Council will encourage partnership working to ensure that sufficient quantity and quality of, and convenient access to open space, sport and recreation provision is secured through the following measures:*

- *Protecting existing sites*
- *Addressing existing deficiencies in provision through qualitative enhancement of existing provision, improving access to existing facilities or securing new provision, and*
- *Ensuring that proposals for new development contribute to open space, sport and recreation provision commensurate to the need generated by the proposals.*

- 1.53 Policy BSC11 Local Standards of Provision – Outdoor Recreation requires development proposals to contribute to the provision of open space, sport and recreation, together with secure arrangements for its management and maintenance. The amount, type and form of open space will be determined by the nature size of development and community needs.

*Where this is not possible or appropriate, a financial contribution towards suitable new provision or enhancement of existing facilities off site will be sought, secured through a legal agreement.*

- 1.54 It states that Eco-Town proposals will be considered against the requirements of Policy Bicester 1.

- 1.55 Policy BSC12 Indoor sport, recreation and community facilities encourages the provision of community facilities to enhance the sustainability of communities. It seeks to ensure that new development contributes towards the provision of new or improved facilities where the development would generate a need for sport, recreation and community facilities which cannot be met by existing provision.

### Sustainable Development

- 1.56 Policy ESD1 sets out the Plan's strategic approach to mitigating the impact of development within the District on Climate Change. The incorporation of suitable adaptation measures in new development should take consideration of the following:

- *Taking into account the known physical and environmental constraints when identifying locations for development*
- *Demonstration of design approaches that are resilient to climate change impacts including the use of passive solar design for heating and cooling*
- *Minimising the risk of flooding and making use of sustainable drainage methods, and*
- *Reducing the effects of development on the microclimate (through the provision of green infrastructure including open space and water, planting, and green roofs).*

1.57 Policy ESD3 Sustainable construction requires new residential development to incorporate sustainable design and technology to achieve zero carbon development in line with Government policy. All development proposals will be encouraged to provide high quality design and high environmental standards but not limited to:

- *Minimising both energy demands and energy loss*
- *Maximising passive solar lighting and natural ventilation*
- *Maximising resource efficiency*
- *Incorporating the use of recycled and energy efficient materials*
- *Incorporating the use of locally sourced building materials*
- *Reducing waste and pollution and making adequate provision for the recycling of waste*
- *Making use of sustainable drainage methods*
- *Reducing the impact on the external environment and maximising opportunities for cooling and shading (by the provision of open space and water, planting, and green roofs, for example); and*
- *Making use of the embodied energy within buildings wherever possible and re-using materials where proposals involve demolition or redevelopment.*

1.58 Policy ESD6 Sustainable flood and risk management requires a sequential approach to development and site specific flood risk assessments which demonstrate that the development will not be at risk of flooding and will not increase flood risk elsewhere.

1.59 Policy ESD7 Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) sets out the Councils approach to SuD, which states:

*All development will be required to use sustainable drainage systems (SuDS) for the management of surface water run-off.*

1.60 Policy ESD10 Biodiversity and the Natural Environment seeks a net gain in biodiversity for all development proposals. The protection of trees is encouraged and the Policy sets out measures for the protection and enhancement for the protection and enhancement of biodiversity and the natural environment.

1.61 Policy ESD13 Local Landscape protection and enhancement stipulates that opportunities will be sought to secure the enhancement of the character and appearance of the landscape. Development will be expected to respect and enhance local landscape, character, securing appropriate mitigation where damage to local landscape character cannot be avoided. Proposals will not be permitted if they would:

- *Cause undue visual intrusion into the open countryside*
- *Cause undue harm to important natural landscape features and topography*
- *Be inconsistent with local character*
- *Impact on areas judged to have a high level of tranquillity*



- *Harm the setting of settlements, buildings, structures or other landmark features, or*
- *Harm the historic value of the landscape.*

1.62 Policy ESD15 Character of the built and historic environment requires new development to complement and enhance the character of its context through sensitive siting, layout and high quality design. All new development is required to meet high design standards.

#### **Infrastructure**

1.63 Policy ESD17 Green Infrastructure requires all strategic development sites to incorporate green infrastructure provision and proposals should include details for future management and maintenance.

1.64 Policy INF1 Infrastructure sets out the Council's approach to infrastructure planning and how it will support strategic site allocations and ensure the delivery of essential infrastructure. A detailed schedule of infrastructure requirements is set out in the Infrastructure Delivery Plan within the CLP 2015.

#### **Cherwell Local Plan 1996**

1.65 Policy C28 Design of New Development requires the design of buildings to be sympathetic to the character of the urban or rural context.

1.66 Policy C30 Design Control requires new housing development to be compatible with the appearance, character, layout, scale and density of existing dwellings in the vicinity.

## Appendix 2 – Draft Heads of Terms

- 1.1 CDC have recently adopted the Developer Contributions SPD in February 2018. This sets out CDC’s approach to seeking Section 106 planning obligations in the absence of a Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Charging Schedule within the District.
- 1.2 The NPPF Paragraph 204 states that planning obligations should only be sought where they are:
- *“Necessary to make the development acceptable in planning terms;*
  - *Directly related to the development; and*
  - *Fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind to the development.”*
- 1.3 NPPF Paragraph 173 sets out that pursuing sustainable development requires careful attention to viability and costs in decision taking. It states:
- “...sites and the scale of development identified in the plan should not be subject to such a scale of obligation and policy burdens that their ability to develop viably is threatened. To ensure viability, the costs of any requirements likely to be applied to development, such as requirements for affordable housing, standards, infrastructure contributions or other requirements should, when taking account of the normal cost of development and mitigation, provided competitive returns to a willing land owner and willing developer to enable the development to be deliverable.”*
- 1.4 NPPF Paragraph 205 additionally requires *“local planning authorities to take account of changes in market conditions over time and, wherever appropriate, be sufficiently flexible to prevent planning development being stalled”*.
- 1.5 During pre-application discussions, CDC has provided a draft set of Section 106 Heads of Terms, however these have not been agreed.
- 1.6 Based on the proposals, it is considered that the following matters will form the basis of further negotiations during the determination of the application:
- Affordable housing provision;
  - Employment Skills and Training Plan, targeting three new apprentices;
  - Public open space provision, including on-site LEAP, allotments, orchard and SuDS;
  - Proportionate financial contributions to mitigate the impacts of development on existing community infrastructure, for example:
    - Burial ground;
    - Community hall facilities;
    - Primary and secondary education;
    - Health facility;
    - Sports centre;
    - Sports pitches;
    - Biodiversity off-set to farmland birds;
  - Proportionate financial contribution towards site-wide infrastructure required as part of the wider Eco-Town, for example:

- Bus provision;
- Cycle improvements
- Strategic highways/footpaths

## Appendix 3 – Affordable Housing Statement

1.1 Affordable housing is defined in Annex 2 of the National Planning Policy Framework (2012):

*Outline planning permission with all matters reserved (excluding access) for a residential development of up to 75 residential units, pedestrian and cycle routes, provision of open space, play space, parking and associated works.*

*Social rented, affordable rented and intermediate housing, provided to eligible households whose needs are not met by the market. Eligibility is determined with regard to local incomes and local house prices. Affordable housing should include provisions to remain at an affordable price for future eligible households or for the subsidy to be recycled for alternative affordable housing provision.*

*Social rented housing is owned by local authorities and private registered providers (as defined in section 80 of the Housing and Regeneration Act 2008), for which guideline target rents are determined through the national rent regime. It may also be owned by other persons and provided under equivalent rental arrangements to the above, as agreed with the local authority or with the Homes and Communities Agency.*

*Affordable rented housing is let by local authorities or private registered providers of social housing to households who are eligible for social rented housing. Affordable Rent is subject to rent controls that require a rent of no more than 80% of the local market rent (including service charges, where applicable).*

*Intermediate housing is homes for sale and rent provided at a cost above social rent, but below market levels subject to the criteria in the Affordable Housing definition above. These can include shared equity (shared ownership and equity loans), other low cost homes for sale and intermediate rent, but not affordable rented housing.*

*Homes that do not meet the above definition of affordable housing, such as “low cost market” housing, may not be considered as affordable housing for planning purposes.*

### Policy Context

1.2 The Local Plan requires all proposed developments over 11 dwellings within Bicester to provide at least 30% of new housing as affordable homes on site, as set out under Policy BSC 3. The policy goes on to note that 70% of the affordable housing is expected to be provided as affordable/social rented dwellings, with the remaining 30% as other forms of intermediate affordable homes. As confirmed within this policy, this is subject to viability. The provision of 30% affordable housing is reiterated within the North West Bicester SPD (February 2016), noting proposals should include detailed of a type and tenure to meet local needs, through assistance with the council’s Strategic Housing Officer.

1.3 Policy BSC 4 of the Local Plan relates to housing mix, which will be negotiated with regard to the Council’s most up to date evidence on housing need and available evidence from developers on local market conditions. The policy is supported by Table 67 which sets out the housing evidence base from the Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA). With regards to mix needs for affordable homes, this confirms the following:

- 1 bed: 25-30%;
- 2 bed: 30-35%;
- 3 bed: 30-35%;
- 4 bed 5-10%.

## Policy Compliance

- 1.4 In line with the Local Plan, the proposed development seeks to provide 30% affordable housing across the site.
- 1.5 The mix of affordable housing will aim to comprise 70% affordable/social rented homes and 30% intermediate homes. The unit mix will respond to most up to date evidence on housing need in accordance with Policy BSC 4.
- 1.6 The total amount and detailed mix of affordable housing can be secured by the required S106 planning agreement, and will be subject to a review mechanism.