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**Our ref:** WA/2018/124752/01-L01  
**Your ref:** 17/02534/OUT  
**Date:** 29 January 2018

Dear Matthew

**The construction of a business park of up to 60,000 sq.m (GEA) of flexible class B1(a) office / class B1(b) research & development floorspace; parking for up to 2,000 cars; and associated highways, infrastructure and earthworks**

**Land north of Bicester Avenue Garden Centre, Oxford Road, Bicester**

Thank you for contacting us regarding the proposed development noted above. We have reviewed the information submitted with regards to our remit and have the following comments to make.

#### **Environment Agency position**

The proposed development will only meet the requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) if the following measures as detailed in the submitted Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) Bicester Office Park Environmental Impact Assessment Volume 1: Environmental Statement December 2017 and the Bicester Office Park, Design and Access Statement, December 2017 are implemented and secured by way of a planning condition on any planning permission.

#### **Condition**

The development permitted by this planning permission shall be carried out in accordance with the Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) Flood Risk Assessment Bicester Office Park Environmental Impact Assessment Volume 1: Environmental Statement December 2017 and the following mitigation measures detailed within the FRA:

- Buildings will be located outside the 1 in 100 year including 35% climate change allowance flood extent.
- There shall be no raising of existing ground levels in the functional flood plain.
- Finished floor levels at a minimum of 300mm above the 1 in 100 year flood level including 35% allowance for climate change.

The mitigation measure(s) shall be fully implemented prior to occupation and subsequently in accordance with the timing / phasing arrangements embodied within the scheme, or within any other period as may subsequently be agreed, in writing, by the local planning authority.

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## Reason

This condition is sought in accordance with paragraph 103 of the NPPF:

- To reduce the risk of flooding to the proposed development.
- To ensure that during a flood event there is not an unacceptable risk to the health and safety of the occupants and an increased burden is not placed on the emergency services.
- To prevent flooding elsewhere by ensuring that the flow of flood water is not impeded and the proposed development does not cause a loss of flood plain storage

## Informatives/Advice

We are reliant on the accuracy and completeness of the reports in undertaking our review, and can take no responsibility for incorrect data or interpretation made by the authors.

### Finished floor levels

The finished floor level of the proposed development is set above the 1% annual probability (1 in 100) flood level with an appropriate allowance for climate change level including a 300mm freeboard. This will reduce the risk of flooding to people and property.

We recommend that in areas at risk of flooding consideration be given to the incorporation into the design and construction of the development of flood proofing measures. These include barriers on ground floor doors, windows and access points and bringing in electrical services into the building at a high level so that plugs are located above possible flood levels. Further information can be found at:

[http://www.planningportal.gov.uk/uploads/br/flood\\_performance.pdf](http://www.planningportal.gov.uk/uploads/br/flood_performance.pdf)

### Fencing design

Walls and fences can have a significant impact on the flow and storage of flood water, especially if they are constructed across a flood flow route. This can lead to higher levels of flood water on the upstream side of the fence or wall which will potentially increase the flood risk to nearby areas. Therefore walls and fences should be permeable to flood water.

We recommend the use of post and rail fencing, hit and miss fencing (vertical slats fixed alternately on each side of horizontal posts) or hedging. If a solid wall is proposed there must be openings below the 1% annual probability (1 in 100) flood level with an appropriate allowance for climate change to allow the movement of flood water. The openings should be at least 1 metre wide by the depth of flooding and there should be one opening in every 5-metre length of wall.

### Environmental permitting regulations (EPR)

This development may require an Environmental Permit from the Environment Agency under the terms of the Environmental Permitting (England and Wales) (Amendment) (No. 2) Regulations 2016 for any proposed works or structures, in, under, over or within 8 metres of the top of the bank of designated 'main rivers'. This was formerly called a Flood Defence Consent. Some activities are also now [excluded](#) or [exempt](#). An environmental permit is in addition to and a separate process from obtaining planning permission. Further details and guidance are available on the GOV.UK website: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/flood-risk-activities-environmental-permits>.

**Final comments**

Our comments are based on our available records and the information submitted to us. Please use our reference number in any future correspondence. If you have any questions please contact me.

Yours sincerely

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