

## Eco Bicester Strategic Delivery Board

<b>Date of meeting: 24<sup>th</sup> July 2014</b>	<b>AGENDA ITEM NO:</b>  <b>5</b>
<b>Report title: Eco Bicester Living Lab</b>	
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### 1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 This report is to provide information for the Board on the development of the Eco Bicester Living Lab and to seek advice and future opportunities.

### 2. Background

- 2.1 The Eco-Bicester team and their partners have been pioneering new ways of developing communities and new ways of delivering a vision for a sustainable town. They have attracted some £3 million of research money to the town, with grateful thanks to the Technology Strategy Board and DECC.
- 2.2 We are keen to see all the learning and innovation that is happening in Bicester captured and made available to all. We want to see further innovation and new ways of doing things. We also want to build on our approach of working with academic partners to look at how well our projects are working.
- 2.3 Bio Regional and Oxford Brooks have decided to bring all of the innovation and R&D projects together in one virtual home called the Eco-Bicester Living Lab. The mission of the Living Lab is:
- To bring world-leading research and innovation into sustainable buildings and communities within Bicester to enable the creation of a truly sustainable town for the 21st century.
  - To build an ongoing framework of learning and improvement for the various sustainable initiatives and programmes.
  - To capture the learning from this and enable the widespread conversion to sustainable communities across the UK and around the world.
  - To provide a focused platform for advances in solutions to sustainability as applied and tested in Eco-Bicester.
  - To promote the Eco-Bicester Living Lab as a centre for research and innovation
- 2.4 Eco-Bicester Living lab (EBLL) captures the learning and innovation that is happening in Bicester through knowledge-sharing and academic rigour. To date, seven projects are included within the EBLL:
1. Design for Future Climate
  2. Invest in Innovative Refurbishment
  3. Building performance evaluation of Bryan House
  4. Rethinking the Build Process

5. Smart power and smart demand
6. Green Deal Pioneer Places
7. Local Energy Assessment Fund in Highfield

These projects have all been reported on at previous SDB meetings

- 2.5 Further innovation and R&D projects will be developed and evaluated at different scales, focussing on sustainability in all its dimensions. Future research areas could include:
1. Building performance
  2. Smart Grid – how can we enable the widespread facilitation of renewables across Bicester without overloading the grid
  3. Health impacts – for example, shall we investigate whether residents of new developments in Bicester have better health due to better air quality and more exercise based forms of transport
  4. Assessment of skills needed for delivering zero carbon homes
  5. Innovative town wide approaches to sustainable transport
  6. How can we ensure we build social cohesion and community development into new developments? What techniques and approaches at small and large scale help to build social capital?

### **3. Progress Report**

#### **3.1 Creation of website**

A dedicated website has been created by BioRegional and Oxford Brookes University. The site provides background to Eco Bicester, NW Bicester and the Living Lab concept. The website also contains a dedicated events, news and contact us page. It can be found at [www.bicesterlivinglab.org](http://www.bicesterlivinglab.org)

#### **3.2 Launch event**

The Living Lab was launched on the 1<sup>st</sup> July 2014 at the John Paul II Centre, Bicester. Approximately 40 delegates attended the invitation only event from a range of backgrounds including Local Authority officers, Councillors, local businesses and academics.

Guest speakers provided an overview of the Living Lab concept, the NW Bicester Eco Town and a summary of projects completed. A synopsis of the event and copies of the presentations can be found here: [www.bicesterlivinglab.org/events/](http://www.bicesterlivinglab.org/events/)

#### **3.3 Next steps**

Eco Bicester Living Lab is now looking for seed funding to enhance its web presence, enable events to be held, carry out promotional activity and work towards a physical presence in Bicester. Opportunities are also being sought for signposting stakeholders to future research and business opportunities and identification of future research areas. The support of the Board in moving these matters forward would be welcomed.

### **4. Recommendations**

The Board are asked to

- 1) note the contents of the report;
- 2) confirm their support for the Living Lab; and
- 3) contact the Living Lab if they have opportunities for seed funding or other support that could be provided by their organisations.