

Eco Bicester Strategic Delivery Board

Date of meeting: 23 October 2014	AGENDA ITEM NO: 4
Report title: NW Bicester Steering Group Report	
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1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 This report is to set out progress on the development at NW Bicester. The report covers progress on the exemplar development which is now underway, the master planning for the remainder of the NW Bicester site and progress towards further planning applications.

2. Background

- 2.1 The Eco Towns PPS identified NW Bicester as 1 of 4 eco towns to be developed nationally in 2009. The land at NW Bicester is identified as a strategic allocation for development in the emerging Local Plan and Bicester Masterplan.
- 2.2 Since the identification of the site at NW Bicester for an eco development, the Eco Bicester project team has been working with developers to deliver an exemplary sustainable development that will function as part of the growing Bicester town.

3. Exemplar Development

- 3.1 In July 2012 planning permission was granted for an exemplar development of 393 dwellings, local centre, eco business centre and primary school (Application reference 10/01780/HYBRID). The proposed development is believed to be the largest Code for Sustainable Homes level 5 scheme and domestic PV array in the country. The proposal also includes rainwater harvesting and reduced water use, car club and sustainable travel incentives, high speed broadband, provision for electric vehicles, allotments, real time transport and community information to each home, net biodiversity gain, provision for a local management organisation and 30% affordable housing. The application therefore does achieve an exemplary sustainable development which is attracting considerable attention both nationally and internationally.
- 3.2 Work on the development commenced in May 2014 with construction starting on highway access work. These works were programmed for 25 weeks although extended working took place to speed up the construction in the highway to enable the fourway traffic controls to the roundabout to be removed. The southern access to the site is now formed enabling work to start on site on the infrastructure provision and first residential properties which are programmed to complete in 2015. Work also continues on the more northerly access to the site which will form the construction access as the site builds out.

- 3.3 In addition to residential development the planning permission for the exemplar also includes a local centre, eco business centre, primary school and open space. The first elements of the local centre, the convenience store and community hall, are required prior to the completion of 250 dwellings and a planning application needs to be submitted 12 months prior to the start of on site works or the occupation of 100 dwellings, whichever is the sooner. Marketing of the retail store is also required to commence to the same time line. These triggers have not yet been met so there has been no requirement to submit details to date.
- 3.4 P3Eco are currently looking at options for the delivery of the local centre, to include the delivery of additional facilities. A report appears elsewhere on the agenda on the timing of the provision of the primary school. In addition a report on the delivery of the Eco Business centre is due to be presented to Cherwell's Executive Committee in December 2014. Updates on these matters will be brought to the Board as they progress.

4. Master Plan for NW Bicester

- 4.1 A2Dominion have been leading on masterplanning for the whole of the NW Bicester site. The Masterplan and supporting documents were submitted to Cherwell District Council in May 2014 with updated transport strategy on 24 June 2014. This masterplan has been worked up in collaboration with the Council and key stakeholders.
- 4.2 The District Council is now producing a supplementary planning document (SPD) to guide development proposals for the site. This will build on much of the information in the masterplan documents to provide a framework for the development. The first stage of preparation of the SPD has been to consult on the masterplan on issues and options to inform the preparation of the draft SPD. Consultation has taken place with a wide range of consultees and public web based consultation and drop in session having been held. The consultation ended on the 24th July. The programme is to produce a draft SPD which will be reported to the November meeting of Cherwell's Executive. There will be further consultation on the draft SPD with a view to being able to report it to the SDB and the District Council's Executive for approval early next year. Formal adoption will need to follow the adoption of the local plan.

5. Outline Planning Applications

- 5.1 A2Dominion have submitted 2 outline applications to Cherwell District Council for determination. The applications are for;

14/01384/OUT

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

Bicester Eco Town Exemplar Site, Banbury Road B4100, Caversfield

14/01641/OUT

Outline Application - To provide up to 900 residential dwellings (Class C3), commercial floor space (Class A1-A5, B1 and B2), leisure facilities (Class D2), social and community facilities

(Class D1), land to accommodate one energy centre and land to accommodate one new primary school (up to 2 FE) (Class D1), secondary school up to 8 FE (Class D1). Such development to include provision of strategic landscape, provision of new vehicular, cycle and pedestrian access routes, infrastructure, ancillary engineering and other operations

Land Adj To Bicester Road And South West Of Avonbury Business Park, Howes Lane, Bicester

These applications are currently subject to consultation and review.

- 5.2 Albion Land has submitted an application for;

14/01675/OUT

OUTLINE - Erection of up to 53,000 sqm of floor space to be for B8 and B2 with ancillary B1 (use classes) employment provision within two employment zones covering an area of 9.45ha; parking and service areas to serve the employment zones; a new access off the Middleton Stoney Road (B4030); temporary access of Howes Lane pending the delivery of the realigned Howes Lane; 4.5ha of residential land; internal roads, paths and cycleways; landscaping including strategic green infrastructure (G1); provision of sustainable urban systems (suds) incorporating landscaped areas with balancing ponds and swales. Associated utilities and infrastructure.

OS Parcel 4200 Adjoining And North East Of A4095 And Adjoining And South West Of Howes Lane, Bicester

This application was received 7 October 2014 and is also the subject of consultation and review

- 5.3 P3Eco have undertaken public consultation on proposals for Himley Farm (land south of the railway line and the west of the site) for up to 1700 dwellings and supporting facilities. It is understood these proposals are likely to be formally submitted later in the year.
- 5.4 The above proposals cover much, but not all, of the NW Bicester site. The way the site is coming forward as a series of individual large applications adds to the complexity of dealing with the proposals as it is necessary to ensure that they cumulatively deliver the masterplan proposals for the site and the delivery of infrastructure is co ordinated between proposals. It is therefore anticipated that these applications will not be determined until 2015.

6. Conclusions

- 6.1 Good progress is being made with the delivery of the exemplar development on site. The development will be a national exemplar and set new standards for sustainable development. In addition the good progress on the submission of outline applications for the site is being made with applications for approximately 3640 dwellings and commercial development already submitted and up to a further 1700 dwelling proposal being actively pursued.

7. Recommendation

- 7.1 The Board are asked to note the progress on the delivery of development at NW Bicester.