

Eco Bicester Strategic Delivery Board

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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 site and progress towards further planning permissions.

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 Banbury Road 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.

- 3.3 Timber frames on the first properties, which include the show homes, have now been erected with the first solar panels also now being installed. The energy centre will also be constructed as part of the first phase and laying out of the first part of the river corridor open space.
- 3.4 The construction process is being monitored through an innovative UK project which is seeking to help improve the construction for homes that are of higher sustainability standards. The learning that comes through this project will be shared through the Eco Bicester Living Lab, <http://bicesterlivinglab.org/>.
- 3.5 In addition to residential development the planning permission for the exemplar also includes an outline permission for the local centre, eco business centre. 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, although they will be reached later in 2015, so there has been no requirement to submit details to date. Some initial discussions have taken place regarding the design and delivery of the local centre.
- 3.6 The primary school has been the subject of a separate application to Oxfordshire County Council as they are the planning authority for developments for their own use. An academy provider has been chosen to run the school and they have been invited to attend the next meeting of the SDB to be introduced to the Board.

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 has produced a supplementary planning document (SPD) to guide development proposals for the site. This has built on much of the information in the masterplan documents to provide a framework for the development. The first stage of preparation of the SPD was 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. This was used to inform the production of a draft SPD which is now the subject of further consultation until the 23rd January. Following the consideration of representations received a final version of the SPD will be produced and reported to Cherwell's Executive for approval. Formal adoption will need to follow the adoption of the local plan.

5. **Outline Planning Applications**

- 5.1 A2Dominion have submitted 3 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

This application was registered 15 August 2014 and has been subject to consultation and amendments.

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

This application was registered 30 September 2014 and has been subject to consultation and amendments.

14/01968/F

Construction of new road from Middleton Stoney Road roundabout to join Lord's Lane, east of Purslane Drive, to include the construction of a new crossing under the existing railway line north of the existing Avonbury Business Park, a bus only link east of the railway line, a new road around Hawkwell Farm to join Bucknell Road, retention of part of Old Howes Lane and Lord's Lane to provide access to and from existing residential areas and Bucknell Road to the south and a one way route northbound from Shakespeare Drive where it joins with the existing Howes Lane with priority junction and associated infrastructure.

Twenty Ha Of Land Proposal Of New Highway Aligned With Howes Lane Bicester

This application has been validated (26 November14) and been the subject of consultation. This application is for full planning permission.

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 submitted an application for;

14/02121/OUT

OUTLINE - Development to provide up to 1,700 residential dwellings (Class C3), a retirement village (Class C2), flexible commercial floorspace (Classes A1, A2, A3, A4, A5, B1 and C1), social and community facilities (Class D1), land to accommodate one energy centre and land to accommodate one new primary school (up to 2FE) (Class D1). Such development to include provision of strategic landscape, provision of new vehicular, cycle and pedestrian access routes, infrastructure and other operations (including demolition of farm buildings on Middleton Stoney Road)

*Proposed Himley Village North West Bicester
Middleton Stoney Road
Bicester
Oxfordshire*

This application was validated 31 December 2014 and is currently subject of consultation and review.

- 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.
- 5.5 The applications raise a range of issues both individually and cumulatively and these are currently being assessed as well as the compliance with planning policy, consistency with the masterplan and emerging SPD and delivery of infrastructure.
- 5.6 The largest application, 2600 dwellings, is that for land north of the railway. This application was also the first submitted and therefore is also likely to be the first application that is be considered by Cherwell's Planning Committee February or March. It is anticipated that the remaining applications will not be considered until later in 2015. Each application will also need to be the subject to legal agreements and these will need to be completed prior to the issuing of planning permission and therefore it is likely to be the end of the year prior to any permissions being issued.

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.
- 6.2 Further progress has also been made with the publication of draft SPD for consultation.
- 6.3 In addition the good progress on the submission of outline applications for the site is being made with applications for the majority of the site now received. These raise a number of

issues and complexities with them coming forward as a series of separate applications which are being reviewed and considered, particularly with regard to the delivery of a comprehensive development and the delivery of infrastructure.

7. Recommendation

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