

Eco Bicester Strategic Delivery Board

Date of meeting: 12 May 2011	AGENDA ITEM NO: 4
Report title: NW Bicester First Phase Application Update	
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1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To advise the SDB of the progress of the planning application for the first phase of development at NW Bicester.

2. Background

- 2.1 The application has the reference 10/01780/HYBRID and the following description of development;

Development of Exemplar phase of NW Bicester Eco Town to secure full planning permission for 394 residential units and an energy centre (up to 400 square metres), means of access, car parking, landscape, amenity space and service infrastructure and outline permission for a nursery of up to 350 square metres (use class D2), a community centre of up to 350 square metres (sui generis), 3 retail units of up to 770 square metres (including but not exclusively a convenience store, a post office and a pharmacy (use class A1)), an Eco-Business Centre of up to 1,800 square metres (use class B1), office accommodation of up to 1,100 square metres (use class B1), an Eco-Pub of up to 190 square metres (use class A4), and a primary school site measuring up to 1.34 hectares with access and layout to be determined.

- 2.2 The application is a hybrid application. The residential elements of the scheme, including roads and open space areas and the proposed building for the energy centre are fully detailed and full planning permission is sought for these. The remainder of the application, the non residential elements such as the local centre facilities and the eco business centre, are in outline with access and layout to be dealt with as part of the application and other matters reserved for later consideration.

3. Consultation

- 3.1 The application was registered on the 23rd December 2010.
- 3.2 Consultation commenced on the 5th January 2011 and the following consultation has been carried out;
- Statutory consultees and other interested organisations notified by letter
 - Neighbouring properties (Home Farm, St Lawrence Church and Caversfield House) notified by letter
 - Site Notices posted
 - Press advert

- Letter to local Members
- Application details are posted on Cherwell's web site
- Twitter announcement

3.3 The formal consultation period ran to 4th February 2011.

3.4 Revisions to the application were received 7, 8, 13 and 19th April.

3.5 Re consultation took place as outlined above with the end of the re consultation being 13th May 2011.

4. The Application

4.1 The application was reported to SDB at the meeting in January 2011.

4.2 A progress report was taken to Cherwell District Council's Planning Committee on the 24th March 2011. This sets out the issues and progress on the application as of that date. This report can be viewed at <http://modgov.cherwell.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=117&MId=1682>

4.3 P3 Eco and A2 Dominion will provide a short update on the changes to the application.

4.4 There remain a number of outstanding issues at the time of writing this report these include;

4.5 **Masterplan** – The masterplan supporting the application shows how the proposed development could fit within a wider plan for the NW Bicester site. A separate report follows regarding progress on the masterplan.

4.6 **Delivery of community infrastructure** - An application for nearly 400 dwellings gives rise to significant infrastructure requirements. Consultation on the Shared Vision highlighted the importance of the delivery of community infrastructure when new development is planned. In addition to meet the higher standards sought on the site there are increased build costs. There is agreement over the delivery of 30% affordable housing. However work is underway to understand the viability of the scheme and the level of infrastructure that it is possible to secure from the development and the timing of delivery. Further work is ongoing regarding the management and maintenance of facilities on site and the aim of establishing a local management organisation that could potentially take on these responsibilities.

4.7 **Employment provision & contribution to economic development** – A group including both the public and private sector has been established to inform and review the economic strategy and economic baseline report submitted in support of the planning application. A revised strategy has been submitted as part of the revisions to the application. Further discussions are taking place particularly regarding the delivery of the Eco Business Centre which would deliver a unique employment offer on the site.

4.8 Design & Green Infrastructure

Amendments to the design have improved the layout of the northern fields particularly through the introduction of central green spaces to each development parcel and a more legible layout. More dwellings have been orientated with south facing roof slopes to accommodate photovoltaics and increased numbers of 'special' architect designed house types have been included. The central river corridor has also been increased in size. Never the less there remain issues around the design with regard to green infrastructure and bio diversity and

detailed layout around street design house types and parking. Further details are awaited and consultation responses with regard to the revised submission.

4.9 Technical Details and PPS Standards

The application is accompanied by a large amount of technical information and an environmental statement. Responses to amendments of this are awaited with regard to the energy strategy, flood risk and water neutrality, biodiversity gain and other areas.

4.10 It is hoped that outstanding issues with regard to the application will be resolved to enable the application to be considered by the Cherwell District Council Planning Committee on the 16th June 2011.

5. Recommendations

5.1 The SDB are recommended to note the report.