

For: PLANNING AND REGULATION COMMITTEE – 13 JANUARY 2014

By: Deputy Director (Strategy and Infrastructure Planning)

Development Proposed:

Construction of a remote park and ride facility including up to 580 car parking spaces, 60 cycle parking spaces, cycle shelter, bus laybys and shelter, fencing, landscaping, attenuation pond and drainage ditch, pedestrian walkways, height restriction barriers and security lighting and cameras

Division Affected: Ploughley/ Bicester West

Contact Officer: Mary Thompson **Tel:** Oxford 815901

Location: Land to the North West of the A41, Junction of A41/Vendee Drive, Bicester, Oxfordshire.

Application No: R3.0146/13 (13/10736/OCC)

District Council Area: Cherwell

Applicant: Oxfordshire County Council

Date Received: 4 November 2013

Consultation Period: 14 November – 5 December 2013

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Recommendation

The report recommends that the applications be approved.

• Part 1 – Facts and Background

Location

1. The site is located to the south west of Bicester, approximately 2 kilometres (1.25 miles) from the town centre. It is located off a roundabout on the A41 and Vendee Drive which has recently been constructed as part of the Kingsmere residential development. The site lies approximately 21 kilometres (13 miles) north east of Oxford and approximately 1 kilometre (0.62 miles) from Bicester Village shopping centre.

Site and Setting

2. The site is accessed from its north east corner onto the existing A41 roundabout. It covers 2.84 hectares and is approximately square in shape although the application site also includes a drainage corridor running south west from the site to Gagle Brook.
3. The site is not affected by any statutory designations.
4. The nearest residential properties to the site include Lodge Farm, approximately 300 metres to the south west of the site, Lakeside, 250 metres east of the site, a park home site 150 metres south-east of the site and new housing development being built up to 50 metres to the north of the site boundary on the other side of Vendee Drive.
5. The village of Chesterton lies approximately 1 km to the west of the site, separated from it by agricultural fields and a belt of mature trees.
6. The site is not affected by any public rights of way.
7. There is a Scheduled Ancient Monument (SAM) less than 200 metres to the south of the edge of the site on the opposite side of the A41. This is the site of the Roman town of Alchester.
8. The site is surrounded to the south east by the A41, to the north by Vendee Drive (B4030) and to the west and south by agricultural land. Land to the west has been safeguarded for use as a community woodland. The site itself is currently an open field which was previously used for arable farming.

Details of the Development

9. It is proposed to construct a new park and ride car park on the site. This would provide up to 580 car parking spaces and 60 cycle parking spaces along with three bus stops. Bus services would allow people parking at the site to travel to

Bicester, Oxford or Bicester Village shopping centre. It is envisaged that it would primarily operate as a park and ride for Bicester town centre, although it would also function as a 'remote' park and ride for Oxford and provide overflow car parking for Bicester Village.

10. Access for all motorised vehicles would be from an existing roundabout forming the junction between the A41 and Vendee Drive. The roundabout contains an existing but redundant arm which would be utilised to provide access to this development. There would be a separate pedestrian and cyclist access from Vendee Drive.
11. The site would also contain a 900 cubic metres attenuation pond with a depth of approximately 1 metre in the eastern part of the site. A Sustainable Urban Drainage System (SUDS) would be provided: Surface water from the site would drain into this pond and then be discharged into an existing drainage ditch leading along the highway verge south west out of the site to Gagle Brook. It is proposed to clear and re-grade this ditch.
12. There would be areas of designated disabled parking and access gates into the neighbouring community woodland. It is not proposed to construct a terminal building.
13. Buses would use a one way loop system to enter and leave the site. A separate car/motorcycle lane & one-way system within the site would be provided to prevent bus/car conflict. There would be a 55 metre long area for bus shelters and the bus shelters would be glazed front and back, measuring 3.2 metres high by 3.7 metres long by 4.5 metres wide by 3 metres wide with seating for passengers to wait in. There is an area that could be used for motorcycle parking in the future should there be sufficient demand. The separate pedestrian/cyclist access would lead pedestrians and cyclists directly to the bus waiting area and cycle parking area to prevent any conflict with buses and other vehicles. A raised pedestrian crossing would be provided to allow pedestrians to safely cross the car park exit lane.
14. There would be 28 lighting columns across the site to a height of approximately 8 metres. The lighting design for the car park would provide a maintained average horizontal illuminance of 10 LUX. The lighting design for the car park access roads and bus stop area would provide a minimum maintained average horizontal illuminance of 15 LUX. Each lighting column would be fitted with a road lighting LED luminaire to minimise obtrusive light, light spill and sky glow. The luminaires would be controlled by individual luminaire mounted photoelectric cells. The luminaires would have electronic dimmable drivers and part night dimming would be provided. Alternatively the luminaires could be group time-switched controlled so that the lighting could be set to switch on and off at different times during the week. CCTV coverage of the site would be provided. A detailed management plan for the facility would be produced.
15. Two pedestrian access gates and footways would be provided along the south-western boundary of the Site for people wishing to visit the reserved community

woodland in the future. Further landscaping and fencing would be provided across the site along with the provision of bird boxes,

16. The applicant considers the application to be in general compliance with relevant planning policies and that it would serve to reduce congestion and carbon emissions, have no detrimental impacts on air quality, highway safety, landscape character, geological or heritage features and enhance biodiversity.

• **Part 2 – Other Viewpoints**

Representations

17. At the time of drafting the report 13 letters of representation had been received. One stated that it was an objection. Two of these letters were letters of support but with some comments on potential improvements. Others did not state whether they were supporting or objecting but contained comments and concerns. The points raised are considered and responded to in Annex 1.

Consultations

18. A summary of consultation responses received in relation to this application can be found in Annex 2. They are also available to read in full on the eplanning website.

Part 3 – Relevant Planning Documents

Relevant planning documents and legislation (see Policy Annex to the committee papers)

19. Planning applications should be decided in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
20. The relevant development plan documents are:
 - The Cherwell Local Plan 1996 (CLP) (saved policies)
21. The Government's National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) is a material consideration in taking planning decisions.
22. The non-statutory Cherwell Local Plan 2011 (NSCLP) also contains relevant policies which are a material consideration. However, it does not comprise part of the development plan.
23. Cherwell District Council are in the process of preparing a new Local Plan covering the period until 2031. The draft Submission document was endorsed by a meeting of CDC Full Council in October 2013 and it is now being prepared for formal submission to the Secretary of State. Therefore, although this plan

has not been through the public examination process, it is at an advanced stage of preparation and some weight can be given to its policies.

Relevant Policies

24. The relevant policies are:

Cherwell Local Plan (CLP) 1996

C4 – Creation of new habitats

C7 – Landscape conservation

C8 – Sporadic Development in the Open Countryside

C9 – Scale of development compatible with a rural location

C25 – Development affecting the site or setting of a Scheduled Ancient Monument

C31 – Compatible development in residential areas

ENV1 – Development likely to cause detrimental levels of pollution

Non-statutory Cherwell Local Plan (NSCLP) 2011

EN1: Environmental Impact

EN3 – Pollution control

EN6 – Light pollution

EN15 – Surface water

EN16 – Development on green field land

EN22 – Enhancement of biodiversity

EN24 – Protection of sites & species

EN27 – Creation of new habitats

EN30 - Sporadic Development in the Countryside

EN31 - Scale of development compatible with a rural location

EN32 – Prevention of the coalescence of settlements

EN34 – Landscape character

EN47 – Archaeology

TR6 – Public Transport

Emerging Cherwell Local Plan (ECLP) 2006-2031 (Proposed Submission Draft)

Policy Bicester 3 – South West Bicester Phase 2

Policy ESD1- Mitigating and Adapting to Climate Change

Policy ESD7- SUDS

ESD10 – Protection and enhancement of biodiversity and the natural environment

Policy ESD13- Local Landscape Protection and Environment

Strategic Objective S013 – Reducing dependency on the private car

Part 4 – Analysis and Conclusions

Comments of the Deputy Director for Environment and Economy (Strategy and Infrastructure Planning)

Transport Policy

25. NPPF section 4 refers to promoting sustainable transport. Paragraph 29 states that the transport system needs to be balanced in favour of sustainable transport, giving people a real choice about how they travel. Paragraph 30 states that encouragement should be given to solutions which support reductions in greenhouse gas emissions and reduce congestion. Paragraph 32 states that developments which would generate significant amounts of movement should be accompanied by a Transport Assessment and decisions should take into account whether opportunities for sustainable transport nodes have been taken up and whether safe and suitable access can be achieved.
26. NSCLP policy TR6 states that the Council will seek to facilitate the provision and operation of an effective public transport system, this will include making provision for interchange facilities.
27. ECLP Strategic Objective S013 is to reduce dependency on the private car through increasing the attraction of travelling on public transport. Policy ESD1 states that development will be delivered which encourages sustainable travel options including public transport.
28. The proposed development would provide a new interchange facility to make it easier for people to use public transport buses for part of their journey to Bicester, Oxford or Bicester Village shopping centre. The provision of facilities that encourage use of public transport is supported by NSCLP policy TR6 and ECLP policy ESD1 and by the NPPF.
29. A Transport Assessment was submitted with the planning application, as required by the NPPF. In order to provide a robust assessment, this assumed that all trips generated by the development would be new to the network. It concludes that the proposals are unlikely to have a significant detrimental impact on the highway network. In practice, the car journeys to the site would not all be new to the network as it is expected people who would be travelling to Bicester or Oxford in any case would use the park and ride to facilitate undertaking part of that journey by bus rather than private car. Therefore, by making bus services more convenient and easier to access, the development has the potential to remove some traffic from congested areas.
30. There has been no objection from the Highways Authority and the access and layout are to their satisfaction.

Location in the Countryside

31. The site is an open field location adjacent to land which is permitted for residential development. The residential development would be to the north of Vendee Drive and this site is to the south. A new park and ride at Bicester, associated with the South West Bicester Development is referred to in paragraph C.15 and Policy Bicester 3 in the ECLP.

32. However, the site location is identified as a 'green buffer' on Figure 5.2 'key Proposals: Bicester' contained within that plan. CLP policy C8 and NSCLP policy EN30 state that sporadic development in the open countryside including development in the vicinity of major road junctions will generally be resisted. The supporting text states this will apply to all new development proposals beyond the built up limits of settlements. CLP policy C9 and NSCLP policy EN31 state that beyond the existing and planned limits of Bicester development of a type, size of scale which is incompatible with a rural location will not normally be permitted.
33. NSCLP policy EN32 states that the Council will prevent the coalescence of settlements by refusing development which would reduce the openness of land which is important for distinguishing between them. The supporting text notes that some gaps are more vulnerable than others and lists Chesterton and Wendlebury and rural communities in close proximity to Bicester, which may feel particularly threatened. Policy EN16 of the NSCLP states that development on green field land will not be permitted unless there is an over-riding need for the development and opportunities have been assessed to accommodate it on previously developed sites and land within the built-up limits of settlements.
34. Vendee Drive forms part of the Bicester ring road and represents the limits of the built up area of Bicester. This proposed development is proposed outside that enclosed area, to the south of Vendee Drive.
35. The location of this development is not fully supported by policies which aim to keep development within the existing built up area of settlements, and in the case of Bicester within the boundary set by Vendee Drive. However, a park and ride is a specific type of development which can be expected to be found on the outskirts of settlements. The proposed location on the south side of Vendee Drive would mean that Vendee Drive would provide a buffer between the development and the adjacent proposed new area of residential development.
36. The site area is relatively small and therefore it would not in itself compromise the open space forming the gap between Chesterton and Bicester. It is not considered that the location of this development on open green field land between the settlements would create a precedent for other built development in that location because a park and ride facility is a very specific land use of which proliferations do not occur.
37. The fact that this location is not fully supported by policies aimed at protecting the countryside needs to be balanced against the policy support for the provision of facilities which encourage the use of public transport. There is specific policy support in the ECLP for a park and ride facility as part of the south west Bicester development, however that plan does not identify a specific site and land within the ring road has been identified for residential development. I note that Cherwell District Council has made no policy objection and indeed welcomes the application, although expresses concern as to how it would be integrated into the local landscape (see below). I consider that the specific locational requirements of park and ride sites and the policy support for

development encouraging the use of public transport outweigh the fact that the location does not fully accord with policies aimed at protecting the countryside.

Landscape

38. Policy C7 of the CLP states that development will not normally be permitted if it would cause demonstrable harm to the topography and character of the landscape. Policy EN34 of the NSCLP makes similar provision. ECLP policy ESD13 states that opportunities will be sought to secure the enhancement of the character and appearance of the landscape, particularly in urban fringe locations.
39. Cherwell District Council have expressed concern about the visual impact of this development beyond the built limits of Bicester, given the minimal planting proposed around the site boundary.
40. The topography of the site and surrounding area is generally flat and open with hedgerows and small areas of woodland. I consider that the development would be acceptable in landscape impact terms subject to a condition requiring a more detailed landscaping plan to be submitted, approved and implemented should planning permission be granted. The proposals which have been submitted demonstrate that there is the scope for soft landscaping around the site boundaries, which would improve and mitigate the appearance of the development to help enhance the landscape in this urban fringe location in accordance with policy C7 of the CLP, policy EN34 of the NSCLP and ECLP policy ESD13.

Impacts on Amenity

41. NPPF paragraph 123 states that planning decisions should aim to avoid noise giving rise to significant adverse effects as a result of new developments, whilst recognising that development will often create some noise. It also states that decisions should aim to mitigate and reduce to a minimum other adverse impacts on health and quality of life through the use of planning conditions. Paragraph 125 states that decisions should limit the impact of light pollution from artificial light. CLP policy C31 states that in proposed residential areas, development which is not compatible with the residential character of the area, or would cause an unacceptable level of nuisance, would not normally be permitted. Policy ENV1 of the CLP states that developments which would cause detrimental levels of noise will not normally be permitted. NSCLP policy EN3 makes similar provision.
42. NSCLP policy EN1 states that development which would have an unacceptable environmental impact will not be permitted. NSCLP policy EN6 states that in determining planning applications the Council will seek to avoid unnecessary light pollution.
43. Some neighbours have expressed concern that noise or light from this development has the potential to affect their residential amenity. However, the location of the development on the other side of Vendee Drive from the area for

future residential development and on the other side of the A41 from some of the current nearest properties, would help to mitigate the effects.

44. A lighting plan and specification was submitted with the application. The supporting information states that each lighting column would be fitted with a road lighting LED luminaire to minimise obtrusive light, light spill and sky glow. It is proposed that part light dimming would be provided. It is also proposed to submit a management plan detailing the day to day running of the site, including the lighting programme. There has been no objection from the Environmental Health Officer. Therefore, it is considered that measures to avoid obtrusive lighting have been incorporated into these proposals and planning conditions could be used to ensure that the development is carried out as proposed.
45. A noise assessment was submitted with the planning application. This concludes that the park and ride is not expected to result in significant adverse noise impacts and therefore mitigation measures would not be required.
46. Therefore, the development is considered to be in accordance with relevant policies CLP policies ENV1 and 31, NSCLP policies EN1, EN3 and EN6.

Biodiversity

47. NPPF paragraph 109 states that the planning system should enhance the natural environment by minimising impacts on biodiversity and providing net gains in biodiversity where possible. Policy EN24 of the NSCLP makes a similar provision as does policy ESD10 of the ECLP. Policy C4 of the CLP supports the creation of new habitats. This is reflected in policies EN22 & EN27 of the NSCLP & again in policy ESD10 of the ECLP.
48. The habitats currently on the site have limited ecological value and therefore there would only be a relatively small ecological impact as a result of the development. As there is some potential for nesting birds, reptiles and foraging badgers to be present, it is recommended that conditions should be attached to secure the mitigation and enhancement measures set out in the Ecological Assessment. Subject to this the development is considered to be in accordance with policies aimed to protect and enhance biodiversity.

Historic Environment

49. NPPF paragraph 141 states that planning authorities should require developers to record and advance understanding of the significance of any heritage assets to be lost. NPPF paragraph 133 states that when a proposed development would lead to substantial harm to a designated heritage asset, permission should be refused.
50. CLP policy C25 states that in considering proposals which would affect the site or setting of a SAM, regard will be given to maintaining its overall historic

character. EN47 of the NSCLP also seeks to protect sites of archaeological importance. Policy Bicester 3 of the ECLP seeks to protect archaeology.

51. Although not within the designated SAM which is located on the other side of the A41, the County Council's Principal Archaeologist has advised that the site is located in an area of considerable archaeological interest and the development would impact on the on-site archaeological features. It is therefore recommended that planning conditions are used to ensure that there is a stage programme of archaeological investigation in accordance with an agreed scheme and a full report is produced.
52. Subject to conditions as set out above, the proposals are considered to be in accordance with the NPPF advice on heritage assets and archaeological features and with CLP policy C25, policy EN47 of the NSCLP & policy Bicester 3 of the ECLP.

Drainage

53. NSCLP policy EN15 states that development generating increased surface water run-off likely to result in an adverse impact to drains and water courses, will not be permitted unless the proposals include appropriate attenuation measures.
54. ECLP policy ESD7 states that all development will be required to use sustainable drainage systems (SUDS) for the management of surface water run-off.
55. The drainage proposals for surface water run-off have been fully set out in the planning application and these incorporate SUDS to ensure that surface water run-off does not exceed existing green field run off rates. There has been no objection from the drainage team. The proposals are considered to be in accordance with NSCLP policy EN15 and ECLP policy ESD7.

Other Points Raised by Consultees

56. The points raised by neighbours are fully addressed in Annex 1. The District and Parish Councils also made suggestions for potential improvements to the application.
57. Both Chesterton and Wendlebury Parish Councils expressed concerns about safety of the access roundabout, due to the speed of traffic on the A41 and the use of the fifth arm of the junction. The Transport Assessment confirms that there were 11 personal injury accidents at the access junction since April 2011, however 8 of these were during the construction phase when drivers were unfamiliar with the new road layout. The relatively minor increase in traffic at this junction as a result of the development is not anticipated to have a

significant impact on accidents. There has been no objection from the Highway Authority.

58. Cherwell District Council made suggestions regarding improving the site for the use of cyclists including increasing the proposed number of cycle spaces, providing cycle lockers and improving the connections between the site and the cycle route network. The applicant has confirmed that they do not intend to amend the application to address these points. They consider the 60 proposed spaces to be sufficient and note that this is a higher proportion than that at Thornhill Park and Ride and these are underused. They do not consider there is a need for cycle lockers as there would be 24 hour CCTV and confirm that there are existing dropped kerbs, tactile paving and a toucan crossing to assist access to national cycle route 51.
59. Cherwell District Council consider toilet facilities to be essential. However, the applicant has confirmed that the scheme has been designed to discourage people from lingering around the site and from sleeping there. Therefore, washroom facilities are not part of the proposals.
60. Cherwell District Council recommends that electric charging points are required for charging electric vehicles and this would be supported by policy ESD1 of the ECLP. The applicant has responded that this has been discussed with the Highways Authority and it was decided that this is not required at this time. However, if approval is given ducting for electrical charging points would be included so that infrastructure could be retrofitted if demand arises. This ducting can be ensured by condition.

Conclusions

61. The proposed development would provide a new interchange facility which would make it easier for people to use public transport for part of their journey to Bicester or Oxford. The proposals are acceptable in terms of policy relating to transport, amenity, biodiversity, historic environment, landscape and drainage. Although policy does not fully support the location in the open countryside, I consider that the specific locational requirements of park and ride sites and the policy support for development encouraging the use of public transport outweigh this.

Recommendation

62. **It is RECOMMENDED that Application R3.0146/13 be approved subject to the conditions to be determined by the Deputy Director (Strategy and Infrastructure Planning) but in accordance with those set out below:**

Heads of Conditions

1. **Complete accordance with plans**
2. **Commencement within 3 years**

3. **No use of the site until the parking, access and manoeuvring areas are laid out as per approved plans**
4. **Archaeological Written Scheme of Investigation to be submitted prior to commencement**
5. **Implementation of Written Scheme of Investigation**
6. **Ecological mitigation measures as proposed to be implemented**
7. **Submission of a detailed landscaping plan**
8. **Protection of trees and hedges to be retained**
9. **Submission, approval and implementation of a Construction Travel and Management Plan**
10. **Development to be carried out in accordance with approved Flood Risk Assessment**
11. **Implementation of surface water management scheme**
12. **Submission of full details of lighting programme**
13. **Ducting for electric charging points**
14. **Submission of management plan to cover day to day running for the site**
15. **Submission of final details of bus stands**

MARTIN TUGWELL

Deputy Director (Strategy and Infrastructure Planning)

January 2014

Annex 1 – Representations

Representations Annex

Points raised by neighbours are set out below, with an officer response.

- **The proposed capacity is not enough**

The applicant has responded that the size of the facility is based on the available land within OCC ownership.

The application submitted has to be determined on its merits. It must be established whether the proposal is acceptable in terms of the development plan and other material planning considerations. The potential that a different proposal, such as one with a larger area and a greater number of parking spaces, might also be suitable is not relevant.

- **COTM model was used and this failed for Bicester Village**

- **Traffic study should have taken into account various scenarios not just a Friday**

- **This location would worsen existing congestion**

The modelling methodology had been agreed with the Highways Authority, who have not objected to the application or requested any further assessment work.

- **A better location would be closer to the M40 junction 9**

- **M40 junction 9 location would also reduce noise and lighting impacts**

- **Could also have a filter lane off M40 for Bicester Village keeping the dual carriageway free for Bicester traffic and emergency services.**

The application submitted has to be determined on its merits. It must be established whether the proposed site is suitable in terms of the development plan and other material planning considerations. The potential that other sites, which may not be available, might also be suitable is not relevant.

- **Drainage must be carefully considered as the area has flooded**

The drainage proposals have been checked by the Lead Flood Authority and they have confirmed that the proposals are satisfactory.

- **Concern about lighting**

- **Concern about noise**

Noise and lighting assessment work was submitted with the application and there has been no objection from the District Environmental Health officer. These matters can be controlled by conditions on any planning consent granted.

- **People using Bicester Village will not use the proposed Park and Ride**

The development is proposed to serve as a park and ride for Bicester, a 'remote' park and ride for Oxford and overflow parking for Bicester Park and Ride. Its primary

purpose therefore is not to provide additional parking for Bicester Village, but it can provide this if required.

- **There should be some coach parking provision**

The applicant has confirmed that it is not intended to provide coach parking as this would limit the number of car parking spaces available.

- **There should be separate roads for entry and exit / two entry lanes**

The modelling work has tested the access road design and indicates that it will operate adequately given the size of the facility. The internal layout has been designed in liaison with stakeholders and would provide separate one-way systems for buses and other vehicles within the site. The Highway Authority has not objected to the application on highway safety grounds.

- **Would ask for electronic signage on A41 to be included to update on parking and traffic at Bicester Village to avoid traffic entering town/ Tesco area unnecessarily.**

This is not proposed as part of this application and is not necessary to make the development acceptable.

- **The temporary parking at Bicester Community College should be closed**

This is not an issue for this planning permission.

- **A coachway park should be developed**

If planning permission was granted coach operators who wish to stop at the site could discuss this with the County Council. It is not proposed to offer any coach parking facilities.

Annex 2 – Consultation Responses

1. **Cherwell District Council** – Welcomes the application, but has a number of comments.
 - i) Cycle provision – The number of spaces should be increased and lockers provided at the outset to encourage users of the park and ride to cycle and to ensure security in this remote location. CCTV should specifically monitor the cycle parking. Connections should be created from the new Park and Ride to National Cycle Route 51 to discourage cyclists from accessing the site from the newly constructed roundabout. There should be adequate signage from the cycle route.
 - ii) Electric charging points – should be provided for electric vehicles.
 - iii) Washroom facilities – should be provided due to the remote nature of the site.
 - iv) Landscaping – concerned about the visual impact and lighting given the location of the site in countryside beyond the built up limits of Bicester. Effective landscaping and tree planting is needed to integrate the development into the landscape.

2. **Cherwell District Council – Environmental Health** - No objection. Satisfied that the conclusions of the noise assessment are valid and that the proposed scheme would not give rise to unacceptable levels of light trespass, obtrusive light or sky glow.

3. **Chesterton Parish Council** – Recognise the need to control traffic at Bicester Village. Access to the community woodland will be opened up and this is welcomed. However, peak usage of the park and ride is likely to coincide with peak usage of the community woodland, which could result in parking on Vendee Drive. Concerns about the entrances and exits from the car park, this would create a five access roundabout which was previously understood to be unacceptable. The new roundabout is not currently safe for users cutting across A41 traffic to Vendee Drive and this needs to be addressed before the problem is exacerbated by opening a fifth access. Not including a terminal building is considered to be a missed opportunity. Would ask that hydrologists carefully check that there would not be increased flood risk due to the impermeable surface.

4. **Wendlebury Parish Council** – Concern that the site is outside of the Bicester ring road, setting a precedent for urban spread which the road was supposed to contain. Concerned also about traffic management in the vicinity of the roundabout and entrance. This is already a dangerous roundabout and the increase in traffic would make this worse. There are already problems for people travelling from Wendlebury to the roundabout as the traffic on the A41 is too fast and does not slow down to allow traffic to access. Safety and access issues should be a priority.

5. **Bicester Town Council** – No response received at the time of writing the report.
6. **Environment Agency** – The development is in flood zone 1, which has a low probability of flooding. However, a flood risk assessment was provided as the development is over 1 hectare. As the site is less than 5 hectares in size the EA will not be providing a bespoke response. Standing advice on surface water flooding is available. The advice of your land drainage engineer should be sought.
7. **Lead Local Flood Authority/Drainage** – No objection. Happy with the discharge into the adjacent highway ditch. The discharge is green field run off rate only and there would be no increase in flows to Wendlebury.
8. **English Heritage** – The application should be determined in accordance with national and local policy guidance and on the basis of your own specialist conservation advice.
9. **Archaeology** – No objection. The site is located in an area of considerable archaeological potential and is immediately north of the Roman town of Alchester. The area of settlement of this town extends beyond the area protected by the Scheduled Ancient Monument. The site is also to the north of the crossroads of two Roman roads. An archaeological evaluation of the site has recorded a number of features, some of which have been dated to the Roman period. The development will impact on these features. Therefore, it is important that should planning permission be granted, conditions are attached requiring the implementation of a staged programme of archaeological investigation.
10. **Biodiversity** – No objection. There would be a relatively small ecological impact, due to the habitats present on the site. However, there is some potential for nesting birds, reptiles and foraging badgers and as such measures to avoid harm to these species have been set out in the Ecological Statement. These include replacement bird nesting opportunities, timing or methods of vegetation clearance works for birds and reptiles and measures to ensure badgers can climb out of any trenches. I would advise that a condition requiring the development to proceed in accordance with the mitigation measures.
11. **Arboricultural Officer** – No objections.
12. **Highway Authority** – No objection subject to a condition to ensure that the access, parking and manoeuvring areas are as set out in the plans. The submitted Transport Assessment demonstrates that a number of local junctions are over capacity either currently or without the proposed development. The development would add to demand and put further strain on these junctions. However, the impact on delay would be negligible. In order to provide a robust assessment, the TA has assumed all trips associated with the development to be 'new' to the network, but in reality most traffic using the site would otherwise have been using the highway network to the destination. These diverted trips

would in fact be beneficial to the local network and sensitive junctions. Provision for pedestrians and cyclists is considered to be appropriate, safe and convenient. There are no safety concerns with regard to access off of the existing roundabout.

Annex 3 – European Protected Species

The Local Planning Authority in exercising any of their functions, have a legal duty to have regard to the requirements of the Conservation of Species & Habitats Regulations 2010 which identifies 4 main offences for development affecting European Protected Species (EPS).

1. Deliberate capture or killing or injuring of an EPS
2. Deliberate taking or destroying of EPS eggs
3. Deliberate disturbance of a EPS including in particular any disturbance which is likely
a) to impair their ability –

- i) to survive, to breed or reproduce, or to rear or nurture their young, or
- ii) in the case of animals of a hibernating or migratory species, to hibernate or migrate; or
- b) to affect significantly the local distribution or abundance of the species to which they belong.

4. Damage or destruction of an EPS breeding site or resting place.

Our records and/ or the habitat on and around the proposed development site and/or ecological survey results indicate that European Protected Species are unlikely to be present. Therefore no further consideration of the Conservation of Species & Habitats Regulations is necessary.



