

7 TRANSPORT

Introduction

7.1 WSP Development and Transportation Ltd has produced a Transport Assessment (TA) on behalf of Countryside that considers in detail all the transport aspects associated with the proposed development at South West Bicester. This section sets out the transport measures proposed in conjunction with the development proposals.

Committed transport schemes

7.2 To support growth of the Bicester area and provide better transport services, there are a number of schemes that affect all the transport modes in the area.

Pedestrian and cycle schemes

7.3 The Oxfordshire Local Transport Plan (LTP) supports the improvement of pedestrian and cycle schemes. Notably its cycle plan for Bicester identifies a number of future schemes along the corridors into the town centre, including the A41 Oxford Road and Pingle Drive. Future off-carriageway cycle tracks along the B4030 Middleton Stoney Road and along the A4095 Howes Lane are also proposed. The Bicester Integrated Transport and Land Use Plan (BITLUP) also identifies further improvements in the local area.

Public transport schemes

7.4 Policy LT2 of the LTP, together with the BITLUP, identify future public transport proposals for Bicester. These include initiatives for a premier bus route between Bicester and Oxford, a remote park and ride site in Bicester, and in the longer term, the east-west railway scheme. The latter proposal aims to link Bristol, Oxford, Bedford and Cambridge to Bicester, with the potential for interchange improvements at both Bicester Town and Bicester North stations.

7.5 In respect of the park and ride site, the Design and Development Framework document identifies potential sites associated with this proposal. However, Countryside considers land to the south of the perimeter road, next to the A41 to be the most appropriate location. Such a site is not an appropriate use within an urban area and is better located on the edge of the town, and next to main roads. Oxfordshire County Council has yet to justify the requirement for a site, and confirm its size. Countryside does not wish to frustrate the county's ambition for a site and has identified a potential site capable of accommodating up to 500 car parking spaces outside the application boundary, on land within Countryside's control. This site will be available for a park and ride facility should Oxfordshire County justify the need. The County can then seek planning permission for it, and assess its impact, when more details are known, although the unadopted Cherwell Local Plan Policy TR7 states Oxford-based park and ride facilities will not be permitted.

Highways schemes

7.6 The need for a perimeter road linking the A41 to the A4095 Howes Lane is identified both within the unadopted local plan and the BITLUP, and a suggested alignment is identified on the proposals map. A package of improvements to Junction 9 of the M40 has also been identified within the LTP, which are intended to accommodate the predicted increase in household numbers in Cherwell, including South West Bicester.

Transport strategy/proposals

7.7 To facilitate the development of the land uses set out in Section 3, the following transport principles, strategies and proposals will be implemented on the site.

Travel by foot and cycle

7.8 The majority of Bicester town is located within a radius of approximately 2 km from the centre of the site, a distance identified by PPG13 as being a reasonable journey by foot and on bicycle. A number of existing routes within the area of the site provide access to the town centre, the Tesco superstore and Bicester Village. Additionally, route 51 of the national cycle network links Old Place Yard with the garden centre on the A41 Oxford Road via Roman Road.

7.9 The layout of the development has been designed to facilitate easy movement by foot and cycle. A principal network of segregated footways and cycleways will be developed, some of which will be alongside roads or shared with vehicles. Traffic speeds within the development will be controlled accordingly in order to provide a safe environment for pedestrians and cyclists.

7.10 The routes for the strategic pedestrian and cycle network have been carefully considered in response to the disposition of land uses and identification of the key desire lines for movements within the proposed development. The resulting proposals ensure that foot and cycle journeys to the major destinations within the new quarter, such as the local centre and schools, can be undertaken directly and comfortably. Design of the pedestrian and cycle routes will generally be in accordance with national design guidance ensuring that good quality routes are provided which are both conspicuous and convenient.

7.11 In addition to the principal routes, the development will be designed to be permeable for pedestrians and cyclists allowing them to travel conveniently and safely to access the principal routes or other destinations. Secure cycle parking and storage facilities will be incorporated into the residential areas, local centre and employment areas in accordance with unadopted Policy TR9.

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