



Quod

Planning Statement

J10 M40

September 2021

Q210254

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Executive Summary

This Planning Statement has been prepared on behalf of Albion Land ('the Applicant') in support of their proposed development at the sites known as 'land to the west of the A43 and south of the B4100' (the Western Site) and 'land to the east of the A43 and south of the B4100' (the Eastern Site).

It supports two planning applications, which together seek to deliver large-scale, high-quality and purpose-built logistics (warehouse) floorspace in a highly accessible location adjacent to Junction 10 of the M40. Collectively, the two applications will provide up to 280,000 sq.m (GIA) of high-quality new logistics floorspace.

There is a substantial and growing need for logistics and warehouse floorspace nationally, in the South East and East Midlands regions, and along the M40 corridor specifically.

The demand for logistics floorspace now significantly outweighs supply. This trend has been exacerbated by the Covid-19 pandemic and will continue given the limited 'development pipeline', which is not sufficient to satisfy the substantial and growing demand for logistics floorspace.

The Proposed Development will help address the need for high-quality logistics floorspace in the South East and East Midlands regions.

The Proposed Development is ideally placed to address the existing deficiency since the sites are highly accessible to the strategic road network, with easy access to London, Birmingham and the M25. The development will also have access to a growing labour market.

The sites are also of a scale that lend themselves to a mix of unit sizes, including large logistics buildings, that would be attractive to international, national and regional occupiers. It is anticipated that a leading logistics distributor will occupy a significant proportion of the logistics floorspace proposed within the Western Site.

There are no other suitable alternative sites or opportunities for large scale logistics buildings of this nature along the M40 corridor. With its excellent links to the strategic road network, the Proposed Development would be unrivalled in the M40 corridor.

The Proposed Development will create up to 3,830 direct new jobs as well as a significant number of indirect jobs, construction jobs and apprenticeships. A significant proportion of these new jobs will be entry level roles and will be well matched to the district's skill profile.

The proposals will also support an increase in skills and innovation and generate approximately £8.8 million per year in business rates and up to £228 million gross value added per year.

The Proposed Development will therefore help realise the Strategic Objectives of the Cherwell Local Plan as well as the objectives of the emerging Oxfordshire Plan 2050, which aim to facilitate economic growth and employment and support an increase in skills.

The relevant policies of the Development Plan are out-of-date and very limited weight should be applied to them.

This is because the Development Plan does not reflect the substantial and growing demand for logistics floorspace and is inconsistent with national planning policy, which states that:

- Significant weight should be placed on supporting economic growth;
- Planning policies and decisions should recognise the specific locational requirements of different sectors and make provision for storage or distribution operations in suitably accessible locations; and
- Local Planning Authorities should recognise that in rural areas sites to meet local business needs may have to be found adjacent to or beyond existing settlements

The substantial and growing need for logistics floorspace is a significant material consideration in the decision-making process.

Albion Land has a proven track record of successful commercial development in Cherwell and further afield. Through the delivery of these sites, live enquiries and negotiations with prospective occupiers, and advice from their professional team, they have acquired in-depth knowledge and understanding of the local market.

The scheme is brought forward as a direct response to known market demand for logistics floorspace in a high-quality environment with rapid access to the strategic highway network. The Proposed Development will comprise a high quality and sustainable scheme that has been informed by discussions with potential occupiers, Cherwell District Council and the local highway authority. The Proposed Development will be sensitively designed and include high quality soft landscaping. A biodiversity net gain of over 10% will also be achieved.

The development management considerations contained within the Development Plan, including the aspirations for high-quality and sustainable design, have informed the Parameter Plans and 'key design commitments' identified in the accompanying Development Specification. These include achievement of BREEAM Very Good and delivery of an operationally zero carbon development.

The potential impacts of the Proposed Development on the local highway network, flood risk and drainage, biodiversity, designated heritage assets, trees, landscape and visual amenity, noise and air quality have all been assessed as part of the applications. It is demonstrated that the development would not have any adverse effects on the built or natural environment that cannot be minimised and mitigated to an acceptable level.

In summary, the Proposed Development will provide high-quality logistics floorspace in a location that is highly accessible to the strategic road network. The Proposed Development will help address an urgent and substantial need for logistics floorspace and is supported in principle by the National Planning Policy Framework. The development will create a range of substantial economic, social and environmental benefits and will contribute to various objectives of the Development Plan.

1 Introduction

- 1.1 This Planning Statement has been prepared on behalf of Albion Land ('the Applicant') in support of their proposed development at the sites known as 'land to the west of the A43 and south of the B4100' (the Western Site) and 'land to the east of the A43 and south of the B4100' (the Eastern Site).
- 1.2 It supports two planning applications, which are submitted concurrently:
 - Application 1 seeks outline planning permission for the erection of buildings comprising logistics (Use Class B8) and ancillary office (Use Class E(g)(i)) floorspace; and the construction of associated parking, servicing, hard and soft landscaping and a new access from the B4100 at the Western Site.
 - Application 2 seeks outline planning permission for the erection of buildings comprising logistics (Use Class B8) and ancillary office (Use Class E(g)(i)) floorspace; and the construction of associated parking, servicing, hard and soft landscaping and a new access from the B4100 at the Eastern Site.
- 1.3 Together, the Applications seek to deliver high-quality and purpose-built logistics (warehouse) floorspace in a highly accessible location adjacent to Junction 10 of the M40. Collectively, the two applications will provide up to 280,000 sq.m (GIA) of new floorspace.
- 1.4 The applications have been submitted separately to meet the specific requirements of the prospective occupiers of each Site. It is anticipated that a leading logistics distributor will occupy a significant proportion of the logistics floorspace proposed within the Western Site.
- 1.5 The proposals will address a significant need for logistics floorspace along the M40 corridor, which has been exacerbated by the Covid-19 pandemic and evolving consumer trends. The Sites benefit from fast road transport links to London, Birmingham and the M25 and are ideally placed to meet this growing need.
- 1.6 A summary of the development proposals is set out below.

Application 1

- 1.7 The Proposed Development will provide up to 170,000 sq.m of logistics (Use Class B8) and ancillary office (Use Class E(g)(i)) floorspace as well as a new access from the B4100 and hard and soft landscaping. The Proposed Description of Development is as follows:

"Application for outline planning permission (all matters reserved except for access) for the erection of buildings comprising logistics (Use Class B8) and ancillary office (Use Class E(g)(i)) floorspace; construction of new site access from the B4100; creation of internal roads and access routes; hard and soft landscaping including noise attenuation measures; and other associated infrastructure".

Application 2

- 1.8 The Proposed Development at the Eastern Site will include up to 100,000 sq.m (GIA) of logistics (Use Class B8) and ancillary office (Use Class E(g)(i)) floorspace. The Proposed Description of Development for the Site is:

“Application for outline planning permission (all matters reserved except for access) for the erection of buildings comprising logistics (Use Class B8) and ancillary office (Use Class E(g)(i)) floorspace and associated infrastructure; construction of new site access from the B4100; creation of internal roads and access routes; and hard and soft landscaping”.

Related Applications

- 1.9 In addition to applications 1 and 2, the Applicant has also separately submitted an application for full planning permission for enabling works within part of the Western Site.
- 1.10 The proposed enabling works include the diversion of the existing public right of way, the creation of site access and the installation of in-ground services and drainage to serve some of the plots within the Western Site.
- 1.11 The enabling works application has been submitted concurrently to the Western Site outline planning application so that both applications can be determined together. The prospective occupier of part of the Western Site has an urgent requirement to commence works on site as soon as possible. The submission of the enabling works application at the same time as Applications 1 and 2 will allow the initial works required to service their plots to commence in advance of reserved matters approval. This in turn will allow the prospective occupier to commence construction of the superstructure immediately following the granting of reserved matters.
- 1.12 The environmental impacts of the three applications have been considered in a single Environmental Statement. This is because the three applications are intrinsically linked.

Document Structure

- 1.13 This Planning Statement has been prepared by Quod to support the application and is structured as follows:
- Section 2 describes the Site and its surroundings and summarises the relevant planning history;
 - Section 3 describes the pre-application consultation;
 - Section 4 describes the relationship with the enabling works application;
 - Section 5 describes the application proposals;
 - Section 6 sets out the relevant planning designations and planning policy context;

- Section 7 discusses the principle of development;
- Section 8 discusses the development management and environmental considerations;
- Section 9 draws conclusions and demonstrates that there is a strong case in favour of planning permission being granted for both sites without delay.

2 Background

Site and Surrounding Context

2.1 The following section describes each Site and its surrounding context.

The Western Site

2.2 The Site is located to the north of Junction 10 of the M40 and is bounded by the B4100 (a single carriageway road) to the north, the A43 dual carriageway to the east and the M40 and M40 slip road to the south west and south.

2.3 The junction of the B4100 and A43, which comprises a dual lane roundabout, is located approximately 200 metres to the north east of the site with a service station and fast food restaurant beyond. Three residential properties are located to the west of the roundabout and adjoin the Site along its north-eastern corner.

2.4 A private single-lane road is located immediately west of the Site beyond which are agriculture fields. Agriculture fields, including Baynards Green Farm, are also located to north of the B4100.

2.5 A communications mast is located to the south west of the Site immediately adjacent to the M40.

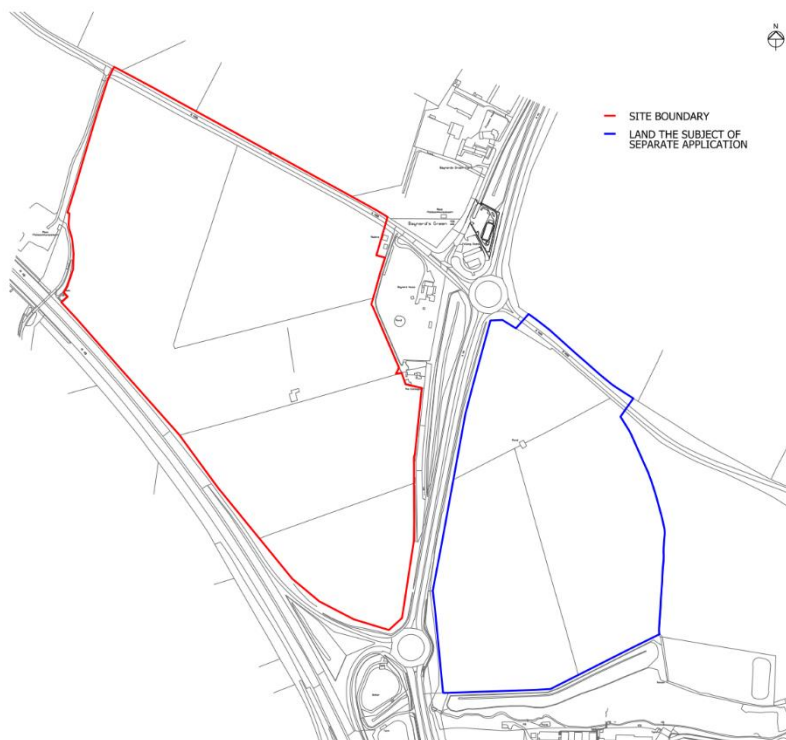


Figure 2.1 – Western Site

- 2.6 The Site extends to an area of 43.9 hectares and is predominately in agricultural (arable) use. The Site contains crops, areas of bare ground, ditches, hedgerows and other scrub and vegetation. A small farm building, currently used for storage, is located towards the centre of the Site.
- 2.7 The Site also incorporates part of the B4100 along its northern boundary.
- 2.8 A public right of way (PROW) passes through the centre of the Site and along parts of the eastern and western boundaries. Tree belts and hedgerows are located around the north, eastern and western boundaries of the Site.
- 2.9 An overhead power cable crosses over the western part of the Site.

The Eastern Site

- 2.10 The Site is located to the north east of Junction 10 of the M40 and is bounded by the B4100 to the north, the A43 dual carriageway to the west and agricultural land to the east. A small area of woodland is located immediately south of the Site beyond which is grassland and the Cherwell Motorway Services. The Cherwell Motorway Services comprise a petrol filling station; a hotel; retail, restaurant and amenity facilities; and car and HGV parking.
- 2.11 The B4100 / A43 junction is located to the north west of the Eastern Site with the service station and fast food restaurant beyond.
- 2.12 Agricultural fields are located to north of the B4100.
- 2.13 The Site extends to an area of 23.18 hectares and is predominately in agricultural (arable) use. The Site contains crops, areas of bare ground, ditches, hedgerows and other scrub and vegetation. A small waterbody is also located within the Site.
- 2.14 Tree belts and hedgerows are located around the boundaries of the Site.
- 2.15 The Site incorporates part of the B4100 along its northern boundary.



Figure 2.2 – Eastern Site

Relevant Planning History

- 2.16 Planning permission (LPA reference. 01/00135/CM) was granted in March 2001 for the temporary storage of soils and other materials on the Eastern Site in conjunction with the upgrading of the A43. The permission was for a temporary period until 31st March 2003.
- 2.17 There is no other relevant planning history for either Site. However, several large scale developments are expected to come forward in the coming months nearby. The Oxford Strategic Rail Freight Interchange is in its infancy, with very little information in the public domain. The Council has nevertheless asked the Applicant to consider the interaction of the Proposed Development with this scheme. Further details of these schemes are set out in Table 2.1 below.

Site / Scheme	Summary of development proposals
Heyford Park	<p>A hybrid planning application (LPA reference 18/00825/HYBRID) for the mixed-use development of the 'Heyford Park' site was approved subject to the completion of a Section 106 Agreement in November 2020. The approved development comprises the construction of up to 1,175 new residential dwellings and a range of other uses. Off-site mitigation to be secured as part of the Section 106 Agreement include 'M40 Junction 10 improvements' as well as improvements to the A43 Baynards roundabout. The latter will include the reshape and extension of the existing roundabout to the west, upgrade of the A43 in both directions and minor capacity improvements for local approaches.</p>
Oxfordshire Strategic Rail Freight Interchange Development Consent Order	<p>A request for a Scoping Opinion (case reference TR050008) for the Oxfordshire Strategic Rail Freight Interchange Development Consent Order was submitted in June 2021. The Proposed Development comprises a Strategic Rail Freight Interchange (SRFI) together with associated development on land south of the Chiltern Railway line, and west of the B430, east of Upper Heyford Former Airfield.</p> <p>The rail freight facility is expected to include a new rail terminal, large warehouses (providing a maximum of 675,000 sq.m of floorspace), a management building, rail reception sidings, container storage area and associated container transfer equipment and a refuelling facility. The development will also include a range of highway works including improvements at Junction 10 of the M40. Several options for these highways improvements are currently being considered.</p> <p>A Scoping Opinion was formerly issued on behalf of the Secretary of State in July 2021.</p>
Land to the east of M40 and south of A4095, Chesterton, Bicester (Great Wolf)	<p>Planning permission (LPA reference 19/02550/F) was granted at appeal in May 2021 for the "<i>redevelopment of part of golf course to provide new leisure resort (sui generis) incorporating waterpark, family entertainment centre, hotel, conferencing facilities and restaurants with associated access, parking and landscaping</i>".</p>

Table 2.1 – Summary of relevant development proposals

3 Consultation

- 3.1 The Proposed Development has been subject to pre-application discussions with Cherwell District Council (CDC) Planning and Economic Development Officers. The Applicant is also committed to engaging with local ward members and parish councillors following the submission of the applications.
- 3.2 The proposals were discussed with senior Planning and Economic Development officers in June 2021. Officers acknowledged the growing demand for logistics floorspace along the M40 corridor as well as the evolving role of the logistics sector as part of the economic recovery to the Covid-19 pandemic.
- 3.3 A formal pre-application meeting was also held with CDC planning (Development Management) officers on 2nd July 2021.
- 3.4 The proposed access arrangements, traffic impact, sustainable transport measures and public right of way have also been subject to pre-application discussions with the Local Highway Authority (Oxfordshire County Council).
- 3.5 The final proposals have been updated to reflect these discussions.
- 3.6 The Applicant has also consulted the residents of the properties adjoining the Western Site and A43 roundabout and they are supportive of the proposals.

Environmental Impact Assessment

- 3.7 The Proposed Development has been subject to an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA). A single Environmental Statement has been prepared for the Western Site and the Eastern Site developments and the proposed enabling works development. This is because the proposals are intrinsically linked.
- 3.8 A request for an EIA Scoping Opinion (LPA reference 21/02235/SCOP) was submitted to CDC on 22nd June 2021. The Scoping Opinion was formerly issued by CDC on 29th July 2021. The Scoping Opinion agreed that the following topics should be scoped into the Environmental Impact Assessment: socio-economics, traffic and access, air quality, noise and vibration, archaeology, ecology and biodiversity, climate change and greenhouse gases and landscape and visual impacts.
- 3.9 The Scoping Opinion also recommended that chapters relating to Built Heritage and Water Resources and Flood Risk are included within the Environmental Statement.
- 3.10 A request for an EIA Screening request was also submitted to CDC on 27th July 2021 in relation to the proposed enabling works. The request concludes that, based on the findings of the Screening Appraisal undertaken, the enabling works are unlikely to give rise to significant environmental effects and, as such, do not constitute and EIA development.

- 3.11 The EIA Screening Opinion (LPA reference. 21/02581/SO) was received from CDC on 16th August 2021 and concludes that, in the Council's opinion, the proposed enabling works comprise EIA Development.
- 3.12 Although the conclusions of the Screening Opinion are disputed, for robustness the enabling works have been assessed as part of the EIA that has been prepared to inform Applications 1 and 2.

4 Relationship with Enabling Works Planning Application

- 4.1 The Proposed Development includes the erection of buildings comprising logistics (Use Class B8) and ancillary office floorspace, as well as associated infrastructure; a new access from the B4100; and hard and soft landscaping at land to the west of the A43 and south of the B4100 ('the Western Site) and land to the east of the A43 and south of the B4100 ('the Eastern Site'). Separate outline planning applications have been submitted for the Western Site and the Eastern Site.
- 4.2 At the same time, an application for full planning permission for enabling works within part of the Western Site has also been submitted.
- 4.3 The proposed enabling works include the diversion of the existing public right of way (PROW), the creation of site access and the installation of in-ground services and drainage to serve some of the plots. The application has been submitted concurrently to the Western Site outline planning application so that both applications can be determined together. The Prospective Occupier have an urgent requirement to commence works on site as soon as possible. The submission of the enabling works application at the same time as Applications 1 and 2 will allow the initial works required to service their plots to commence in advance of reserved matters approval. This in turn will allow the prospective occupier to commence construction of the superstructure immediately following the granting of reserved matters.
- 4.4 The enabling works comprise:
- Clearance of existing vegetation and structures;
 - Construction of a new access roundabout on the B4100;
 - Construction of an internal roundabout, including adjacent footpaths, landscape verge and street lighting;
 - Construction of a 7.3m wide roadway (and adjacent footpaths, landscape verge, street lighting and a bus layby) to connect the new roundabouts;
 - Construction of a foul drainage station to serve the Site and a temporary access road and electrical point;
 - Construction of swales;
 - Installation of utility connections, including electricity, water, BT and GTT fibre infrastructure;
 - Diversion of an existing overhead cable; and
 - Diversion of the existing public right of way.

4.5 The environmental impacts of the three applications have been considered in a single Environmental Statement. This is because the three applications are intrinsically linked. However, as the applications are capable of being delivered independently of each other the Environmental Statement considers the environmental effects of the following in turn:

- Development at Land to the west of the A43 and south of the B4100 (including both the development proposed through the outline planning application and the enabling works application)
- Development at Land to the east of the A43 and south of the B4100
- Development at both Land to the west of the A43 and south of the B4100 (including the development proposed through the outline planning application and the enabling works application) and at Land to the east of the A43 and south of the B4100
- Development at both Land to the west of the A43 and south of the B4100 (including the development proposed through the outline planning application and the enabling works application) and at Land to the east of the A43 and south of the B4100 and cumulative schemes.

5 Description of Proposals

- 5.1 The following section provides an overview of the Control Documents that will govern the outline planning permissions and describes the proposals for the Western Site and the Eastern Site.

Overview of Control Documents

- 5.2 Applications 1 and 2 are supported by two Control Documents, which describe the principal components of the development for each site, define the parameters for the development and control how the development will come forward in the future. The Control Documents provide the parameters, design principles and controls that will guide future reserved matters applications (RMAs). These Control Documents are the Development Specification and the Parameter Plans.
- 5.3 The Development Specification has been prepared to define and describe the principal components of each development, including the form and content of both applications as well as the parameters for future detailed applications to be submitted under reserved matters.
- 5.4 The Development Specification also sets out the type and quantity of development proposed for each Site and 'key design commitments' future RMAs will be required to comply with.
- 5.5 The Parameter Plans set the parameters associated with the scale, layout and distribution of buildings across each Site as well as the extent and location of hard and soft landscaping. The Parameter Plans identify proposed build zones, maximum building heights and existing vegetation to be removed, retained/enhanced or strengthened.
- 5.6 The Parameter Plans provide a level of flexibility for the detailed design at a later date, which will need to be approved by CDC through subsequent RMAs.

Proposals Summary

- 5.7 Applications 1 and 2 both seek outline planning permission (all matters reserved except for access) for the erection of buildings comprising logistics (Use Class B8) and ancillary office (Use Class E(g)(i)) floorspace along with the construction of new site accesses from the B4100, internal access roads, parking and servicing, hard and soft landscaping and other associated infrastructure.
- 5.8 Details of layout, scale, landscaping and appearance are submitted in outline for each application and are reserved for future approval. These details will be submitted for approval via future RMAs. An illustrative masterplan has been submitted for information to demonstrate one way in which the proposed parameters could be interpreted.
- 5.9 Access to each Site will be provided via new roundabout entrances located on the B4100. Full details of the proposed accesses are enclosed with each application.
- 5.10 The detailed design of each Site will be informed by various design principles including:

- Development will be of a high quality design, visually attractive and fit for growing the logistics industry
- Buildings will have an ordered layout rationalised by a structural grid and optimised to create efficient open plan warehouse accommodation
- Careful consideration of size, scale and massing to minimise the development's impacts on surroundings.
- The proposed development will have a high degree of integration and connectivity with the surrounding road network
- The proposed development will include good connections to existing public transport and cycleways
- Defined routes will be provided through the site for vehicle and pedestrian access to offer safe and easy access for all
- Structured landscaping will be provided throughout each site and existing vegetation preserved and enhanced. Tree lined routes will be provided with links to surrounding vegetation
- Quality external spaces will be provided to aid the wellbeing of occupants

Application 1

Description of Development

5.11 The proposed Description of Development is as follows:

“Application for outline planning permission for the erection of buildings comprising logistics (Use Class B8) and ancillary office (Use Class E(g)(i)) floorspace; the construction of a vehicular and pedestrian access from the B4100 and internal access roads; the construction of parking and servicing areas; substations and other associated infrastructure; and hard and soft landscaping”.

Overview of maximum floorspace and land use

5.12 Application 1 seeks approval for a maximum of 170,000 sq.m of floorspace to be provided across the Western Site.

5.13 The development will comprise predominately logistics (Use Class B8) floorspace. Ancillary office (Use Class E(g)(i)) floorspace will also be provided within the Site. The quantum of logistics and ancillary office floorspace will not exceed the proposed maximum permitted floorspace figures set out in Table 5.1 below.

5.14 Although, when added together, the figures in Table 5.1 exceed the proposed maximum floorspace to be provided within the Site (as set out in paragraph 5.12 above), these represent maximum amounts for each use. For the avoidance of doubt, the total combined quantum of logistics and ancillary office floorspace will not exceed 170,000 sq.m.

Use	Proposed Maximum Floorspace (GIA)
Logistics (Use Class B8)	170,000 sq.m
Ancillary Office (Use Class E(g)(i))	10,000 sq.m

Table 5.1 - Application 1 Proposed Maximum Floorspace

Access

- 5.15 The Western Site development includes the construction of a new roundabout on the B4100, which will provide vehicular, cycle and pedestrian access to the Site. The roundabout will be located approximately 340 metres to the west of the B4100/A43 junction and will comprise a 40m inscribed circle diameter roundabout. The roundabout has been fully designed to relevant 'Design Manual for Roads and Bridges' (DMRB) standards.
- 5.16 The access will accommodate cyclist and pedestrian infrastructure and will allow lorries, cars, cyclists and pedestrians to safely enter and exit the Site. The design and layout of the roundabout has been subject to pre-application discussions with the local highway authority (LHA).
- 5.17 The proposed roundabout will provide a direct entrance into the Western Site and will connect (via a new internal road) to a second roundabout located within the Site. Other internal access routes will connect to this second roundabout and will be detailed in future RMAs.
- 5.18 Detailed drawings of the proposed access are enclosed with this application. The construction of the new entrance roundabout will require works to the public highway, which will be secured via a Section 278 agreement.

Parameter Plan Summary

- 5.19 Three Parameter Plans have been prepared as part of Application 1. The Parameter Plans are submitted for approval and set the parameters for the scale, layout and landscape retention and enhancement within the Site. The Parameter Plans establish the 'Build Zones' within the Site and the maximum building heights and identify the proposed public right of way diversion.
- 5.20 All future RMAs will be required to comply with the Parameter Plans. The Parameter Plans are shown below and a written description of them is set out in the Development Specification.
- 5.21 Figure 5.1 shows the distribution of the proposed 'Build Zones'; 'Hard Landscaping Zones' and 'Soft Landscaping Zones' within the Site. Three 'Build Zones' are located within the Site – two towards the north western corner and a larger zone in the south east. The zones are broadly rectangular in shape and are surrounded on all sides by 'Hard Landscaping Zones'. The Hard Landscaping Zones connect directly to the proposed site access. These areas will include

parking, servicing and internal access routes. Soft Landscaping Zones are proposed around the perimeter of the Site and within the central area.

5.22 The plan also shows the route of the diverted PROW, which will cross through the site. The route is shown for information only. Approval for this PROW diversion is sought separately as part of the proposed enabling works application. A public path order application has also been submitted under separate cover to CDC.

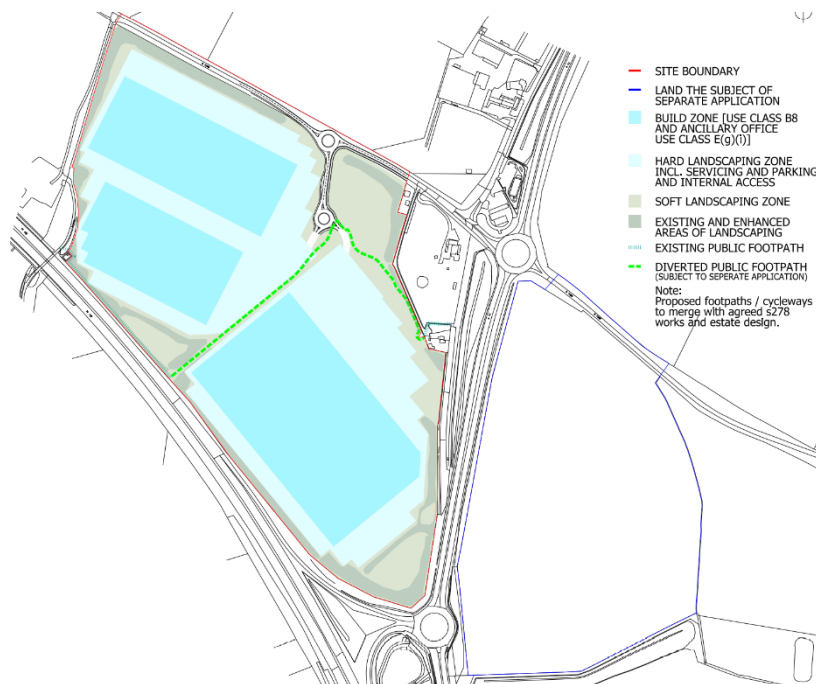


Figure 5.1 – Extract of Western Site Land Use Parameter Plan

5.23 The Building Heights Parameter Plan identifies the maximum proposed ridge heights within each build zone as well as the proposed site levels for the hard landscaping zones. The maximum proposed building height within all three build zones is 23 metres from the SSL. The proposed site levels are higher (between 121.85 – 124.25) in the north western part of the Site than in the south eastern part of the Site (117.75m). Accordingly, the Parameter Plan allows the final ridge heights of the buildings in the north west of the Site to be marginally higher than the ridge height of any building in the south eastern part of the Site.

5.24 The Vegetation Retention and Removal Parameter Plan identifies the existing hedgerows to be removed and retained/enhanced as well as areas within the Site where vegetation will be strengthened. Several hedgerows located within the Site will need to be removed to facilitate the Proposed Development, including part of the hedgerow located along the Site's northern boundary. This will be removed to enable the new site access to be provided from the B4100. The remaining hedgerow along the northern boundary of the Site will be retained and enhanced, as will the hedgerow located around the south eastern corner. Vegetation will be strengthened along the Site's boundary with the M40 and in the north eastern corner of the Site (adjacent to the residential properties).

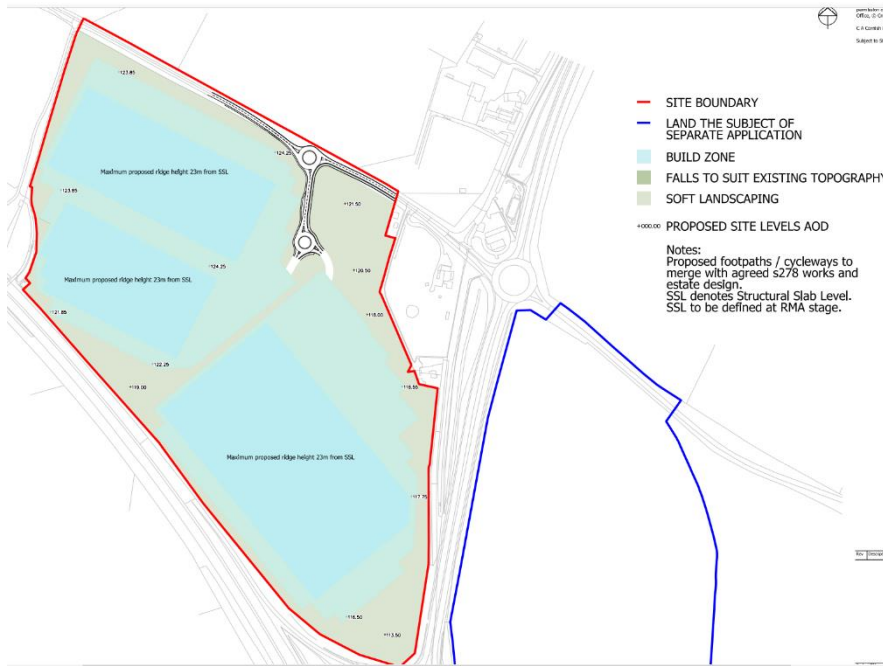


Figure 5.2 – Extract of Western Site Building Heights Parameter Plan

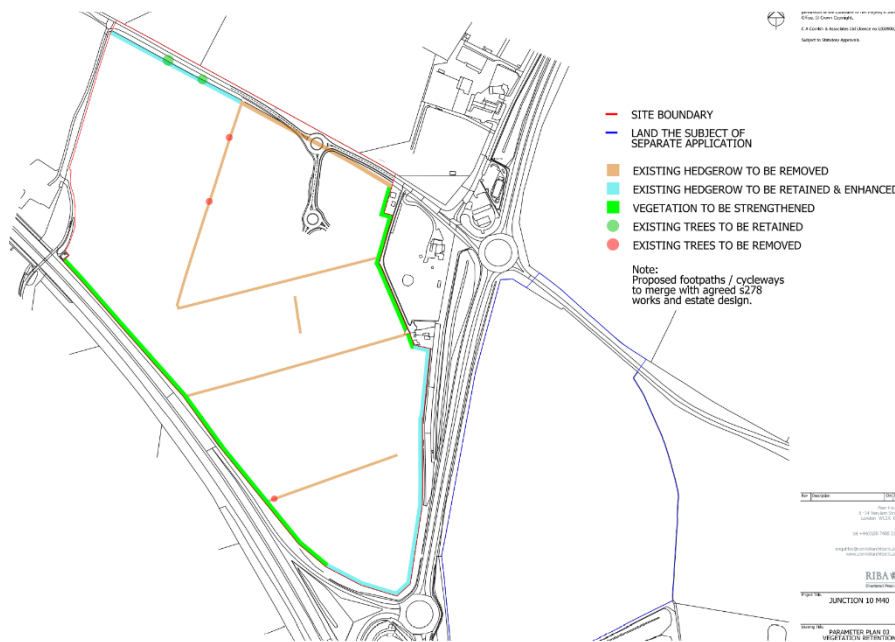


Figure 5.3 – Extract of Western Site Vegetation Retention Parameter Plan

Application 2

Description of Development

5.25 The proposed Description of Development is as follows:

“Application for outline planning permission (all matters reserved except for access) for the erection of buildings comprising logistics (Use Class B8) and ancillary Office (Use Class

E(g)(i) floorspace and associated infrastructure; construction of new site access from the B4100; creation of internal roads and access routes; and hard and soft landscaping”.

Overview of maximum floorspace and land use

- 5.26 Application 2 seeks approval for a maximum of 100,000 sq.m (GIA) of floorspace to be provided across the Eastern Site. This will predominately comprise logistics (Use Class B8) floorspace as well as ancillary office (Use Class E(g)(i)) floorspace.
- 5.27 The quantum of logistics and ancillary office floorspace provided within the Eastern Site will not exceed the maximum permitted floorspace figures set out in Table 5.2 below.
- 5.28 Although, when added together, the figures in Table 5.2 exceed the proposed maximum floorspace to be provided within the Site (as set out in paragraph 5.26 above), these represent maximum amounts for each use. For the avoidance of doubt, the total combined quantum of logistics and ancillary office floorspace will not exceed 100,000 sq.m.

Use	Proposed Maximum Floorspace (GIA)
Logistics (Use Class B8)	100,000 sq.m
Ancillary Office (Use Class E(g)(i))	7,000 sq.m

Table 5.2 - Application 2 Proposed Maximum Floorspace Access

- 5.29 A new roundabout entrance to the Eastern Site will be constructed on the B4100. The entrance will be located approximately 180 metres to the east of the B4100/A43 junction and will comprise a 55m inscribed circle diameter roundabout.
- 5.30 The roundabout has been designed to comply with the relevant DRMB standards and will include cycle and pedestrian infrastructure.
- 5.31 The roundabout will allow lorries, cars, cyclists and pedestrians to safely enter and exit the Site and its design has been subject to pre-application discussions with the LHA.
- 5.32 Detailed drawings of the proposed access are enclosed with this application. The construction of the new entrance roundabout will require works to the public highway, which will be secured via a section S278 agreement.

Parameter Plan summary

- 5.33 Three Parameter Plans have been prepared to support Application 2. All future RMAs for the Eastern Site will be required to comply with these Parameter Plans. A written description of each Parameter Plan is set out below.

5.34 Figure 5.4 shows that two 'Build Zones' are proposed within the Site. The zones are broadly rectangular in shape and are surrounded on all sides by 'Hard Landscaping Zones'. The Hard Landscaping Zones connect directly to the proposed site access and will include parking, servicing and internal access routes. Soft Landscaping Zones are proposed around the eastern, northern and southern boundaries of the Site.

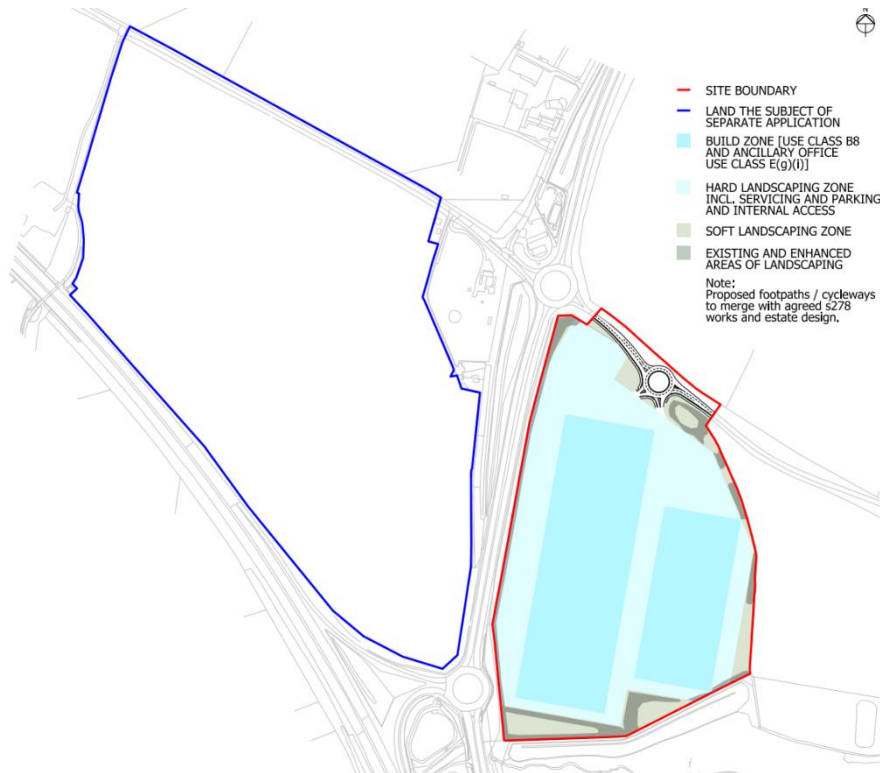


Figure 5.4 – Extract of Eastern Site Land Use Parameter Plan

5.35 The Building Heights Parameter Plan identifies the maximum proposed ridge heights within both Build Zones as well as the proposed site levels for the Hard Landscaping Zones. The maximum proposed building height within both build zones is 23 metres from slab level.

5.36 The Vegetation Retention and Removal Parameter Plan shows that several existing hedgerows within the site are proposed to be removed, including along part of its northern boundary (to facilitate the construction of the new site access). The remaining hedgerow located along the perimeter of the Eastern Site will be retained and enhanced. Vegetation will be strengthened along the eastern boundary of the Site.

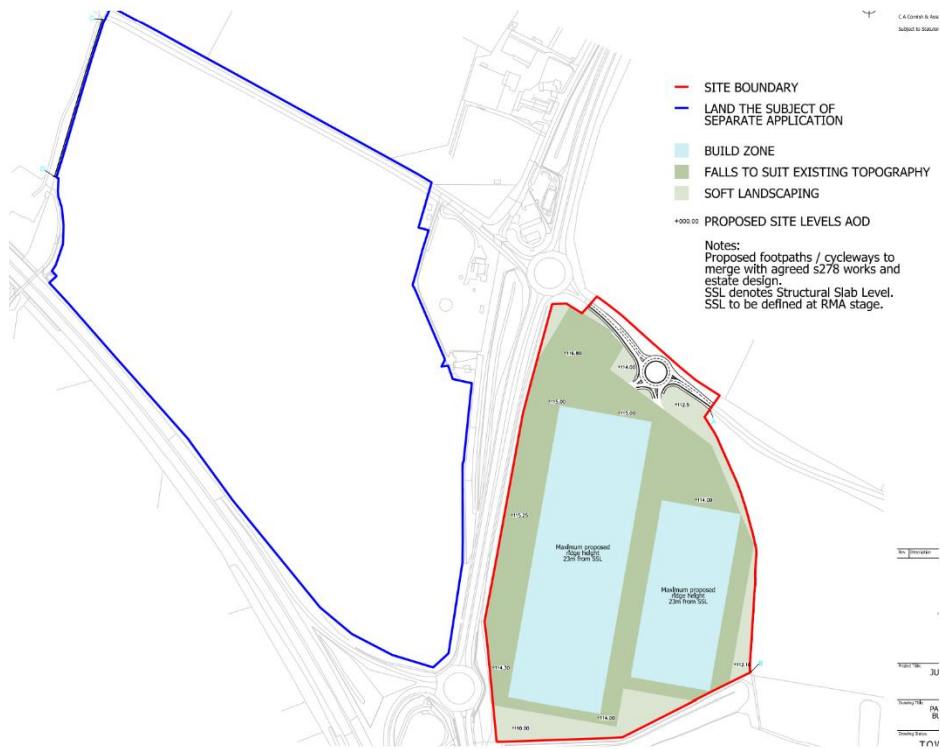


Figure 5.5 – Extract of Eastern Site Building Heights Parameter Plan

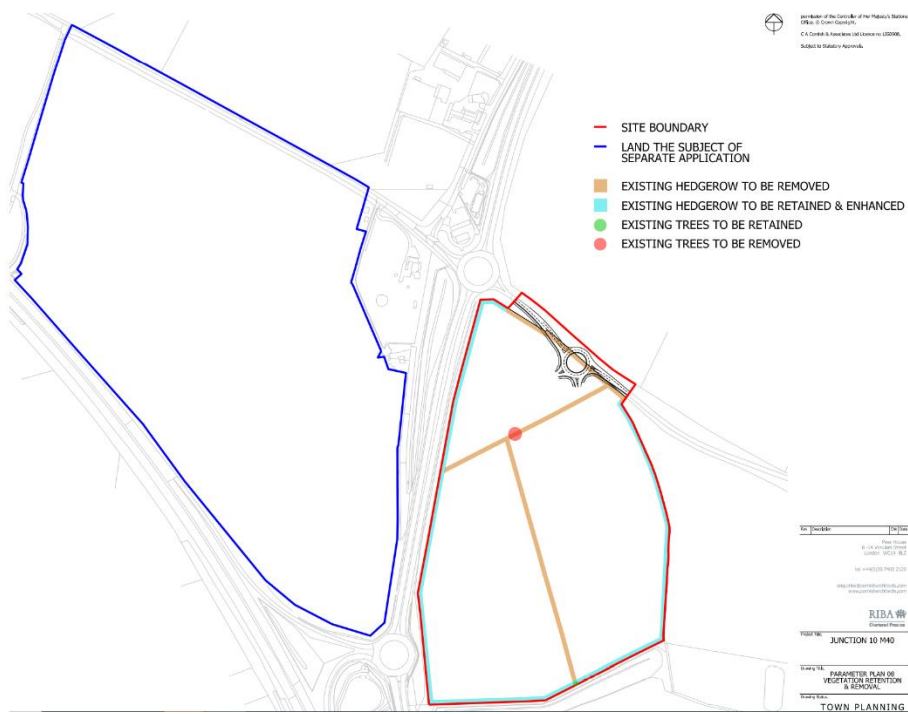


Figure 5.6 – Extract of Western Site Vegetation Retention Parameter Plan

Indicative Masterplans

- 5.37 An indicative masterplan has been prepared for the Western Site and the Eastern Site. The masterplan is submitted for information only and demonstrates how the proposed parameters could be achieved.
- 5.38 For the Western Site the indicative masterplan includes three warehouse buildings, servicing areas, car and lorry parking and internal access roads and hard and soft landscaping, as well as the proposed new access from the B4100.
- 5.39 The proposed buildings face towards the centre of the Site with car parking located close to the office entrances. Lorry parking is predominately located towards the side and rear elevations of each building.
- 5.40 The Eastern Site masterplan includes two warehouse buildings as well as parking, internal roads and hard and soft landscaping. The buildings are orientated north towards the Site entrance. Car parking is located immediately north of each building.

Phasing

- 5.41 The Western Site development will be delivered in two phases. The first phase will comprise construction of the permanent site access (to be undertaken as part of the proposed enabling works) and buildings in the north west of the Site, along with associated parking, servicing, access and landscaping.
- 5.42 The second phase will comprise development in the remaining part of the Site.
- 5.43 Development will commence in 2022 and is expected to be completed in 2025.
- 5.44 Development at the Eastern Site is expected to commence in mid 2023 and will take approximately seventeen months to complete.

Technical Assessments

- 5.45 A number of technical assessments have been prepared to support Applications 1 and 2. The assessments consider the proposed development on the Western Site and the Eastern Site in isolation and cumulatively so that the individual and collective impacts of the two developments, as well as the required mitigation for each site, can be fully understood.
- 5.46 The proposed approach will also allow CDC to determine one application without prejudicing the determination of the other.
- 5.47 Details of the approach taken to EIA are set out in Section 5.

6 Planning Designations and Policy Context

- 6.1 This section provides the national and local planning policy context to the proposals and describes the designations affecting the Site.

National Planning Policy

National Planning Policy Framework (July 2021)

- 6.2 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) is a material consideration in the decision-taking process. The NPPF (para 7) states that the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development.
- 6.3 Achieving sustainable development means that the planning system has three overarching objectives: an economic objective; a social objective; and an environmental objective.
- 6.4 Paragraph 10 identifies a presumption in favour of sustainable development. For decision-taking this means:
- “c) approving development proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan without delay; or*
- d) where there are no relevant development plan policies, or the policies which are most important for determining the application are out-of-date, granting permissions unless:*
- i) the application of policies in this Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a clear reason for refusing the proposed development; or*
- ii) any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole”.*
- 6.5 Paragraph 38 requires Local Planning Authorities (LPAs) to approach decisions on proposed development in a positive and creative way. Decision makers should seek to approve applications for sustainable development where possible.
- 6.6 Paragraph 55 explains that LPAs should consider whether otherwise unacceptable development could be made acceptable through the use of conditions or planning obligations.
- 6.7 Chapter 6 (‘Building a strong, competitive economy’) states that:

*“**Significant** weight should be placed on the need to support economic growth and productivity, taking into account both local business needs and wider opportunities for development. The approach taken should allow each area to build on its strengths, counter any weaknesses and address the challenges of the future. This is particularly important where Britain can be a global leader in driving innovation, and in areas with high levels of productivity, which should be able to capitalise on their performance and potential” [Quod’s emphasis added].*

- 6.8 Planning policies and decisions should recognise and address the specific locational requirements of different sectors. This includes making provision for storage and distribution operations at a variety of scales and in suitably accessible locations (paragraph 83).
- 6.9 Chapter 6 (para 84) goes on to state that planning policies and decisions should enable the sustainable growth and expansions of all types of business in rural areas, including through well-designed new buildings.
- 6.10 Planning policies and decisions should recognise that sites to meet local business needs in rural areas may have to be found adjacent to or beyond existing settlements and in locations that are not well served by public transport (para 85).
- 6.11 Paragraph 100 states that planning decisions should protect and enhance public rights of way and access, including taking opportunities to provide better facilities for users.
- 6.12 Section 9 (para 104) of the NPPF requires transport issues to be considered at the earliest stages of development proposals. Patterns of movement, streets, parking and other transport considerations should be integral to the design of schemes.
- 6.13 Significant development should be focused on locations which are or can be made sustainable, through limiting the need to travel and offering a genuine choice of transport modes. However, paragraph 105 recognises that opportunities to maximise sustainable transport solutions will vary between urban and rural areas and states that this should be taken into account in decision-making.
- 6.14 Development should take up appropriate opportunities to promote sustainable transport modes; achieve safe and suitable access to the site for all users and reflect current national design guidance.
- 6.15 Proposals should demonstrate that any significant impacts from the development on the transport network (in terms of capacity and congestion) or on highway safety can be cost effectively mitigated to an acceptable degree. However, development should only be prevented or refused on highways grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety or the residual cumulative impacts on the road network would be severe (para 111).
- 6.16 Paragraph 112 expects development to give priority first to pedestrian and cycle movements and secondly (so far as possible) to facilitating access to high quality public transport. Development should be designed to enable charging of plug-in and other ultra-low emission vehicles.
- 6.17 Section 11 states that decisions should promote an effective use of land and encourage multiple benefits from urban and rural land, including through taking opportunities to achieve net environmental gains.
- 6.18 Paragraph 126 of the NPPF relates to design. It explains that good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, creates better places and helps make development acceptable to communities.

- 6.19 Planning policies and decisions should ensure that development will function well and add to the overall quality of the area; are visually attractive; are sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting; establish or maintain a strong sense of place; optimise the potential of the site to accommodate and sustain an appropriate amount and mix of development; and create places that are safe, inclusive and which promote health and well-being (para 130).
- 6.20 Development that is not well designed should be refused. Conversely, significant weight should be given to development that reflects local design policies and government guidance on design and/or outstanding or innovative designs which promote high levels of sustainability so long as they fit in with the overall form and layout of their surroundings.
- 6.21 Paragraph 152 states that the planning system should support the transition to a low carbon future in a changing climate. New development should be planned for in ways that avoid increased vulnerability to the range of impacts arising from climate change and that can help to reduce greenhouse gas emissions (para 154).
- 6.22 New development is expected to comply with any development plan policies for decentralised energy supply unless it can be demonstrated that this is not feasible or viable. Development proposals should take account of landform, layout, building orientation, massing and landscaping to minimise energy consumption (para 157).
- 6.23 Paragraph 159 states that development should be directed away from areas at highest risk of flooding. Development should not increase flood risk elsewhere (para 167) and should incorporate sustainable drainage systems unless there is clear evidence that this would be inappropriate (para 169).
- 6.24 Paragraph 174 requires planning policies and decisions to contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by protecting and enhancing valued landscapes, sites of biodiversity or geological value and soils; recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside and the wider benefits from natural capital and ecosystem services; and minimising impacts on and providing net gains for biodiversity. LPAs should prevent new and existing development from contributing to, being put at unacceptable risk from, or being adversely affected by, unacceptable levels of soil, air, water or noise pollution or land instability.
- 6.25 If significant harm to biodiversity resulting from a development cannot be avoided, adequately mitigated, or compensated for, then planning permission should be refused (para 180). Opportunities to improve biodiversity in and around developments should be integrated as part of their design, especially where this can secure measurable net gains for biodiversity or enhance public access to nature.
- 6.26 New development should be appropriate for its location taking into account the likely effects (including cumulative effects) of pollution on health, living conditions and the natural environment as well as potential sensitivity of the site or the wider area to impacts that could arise from the development. Development should mitigate and reduce adverse impacts resulting from noise from new development; and limit the impact of light pollution from artificial light (para 185).

6.27 Paragraph 186 requires development to identify opportunities to improve air quality or mitigate impacts.

National Design Guide (2021)

6.28 The National Design Guide (NDG) is a material consideration in the decision-making process. The document identifies ten characteristics of well-designed places:

- Context – enhances the surroundings
- Identity – attractive and distinctive
- Built form – a coherent pattern of development
- Movement – accessible and easy to move around
- Nature – enhanced and optimised
- Public spaces – safe, social and inclusive
- Uses – mixed and integrated
- Homes and buildings – functional, healthy and sustainable
- Resources – efficient and resilient
- Lifespan – made to last.

6.29 The NDG states that development should understand and relate well to the site, its local and wider context (C1); respond to existing local character and amenity (I1); comprise well-designed, high quality and attractive buildings (I2); create character and identity (I3); and promote a compact form of development and utilise appropriate building types and form (B1 and B2). All modes of transport should be positively designed into the built form and public rights of way protected, enhanced and well-linked into the wider network of pedestrian and cycle routes. Parking and servicing should be well-considered. Development should also include a network of high quality green open spaces; improve and enhance water management; support rich and varied biodiversity; follow the energy hierarchy; maximise resilience and be adaptable to changing needs and evolving technologies.

National Model Design Code 2021

6.30 The National Model Design Code (NMDC) provides guidance on the production of design codes, guides and policies to promote successful design. The document expands on the ten characteristics of good design set out in the NDG and sets a baseline standard of quality and practice which LPAs are expected to take into account when determining planning applications.

Development Plan

6.31 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 states that planning applications should be determined in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

6.32 The Development Plan for the Western Site and the Eastern Site comprises:

- The Cherwell Local Plan 2011 – 2031 (adopted July 2015);
- The Cherwell Local Plan 2011 – 2031 (Part 1) Partial Review – Oxford's Unmet Housing Need (adopted September 2020); and
- The 'Saved' Policies of the Adopted Cherwell Local Plan 1996;

6.33 The Mid-Cherwell Neighbourhood Plan 2018 – 2031 (made May 2019) also forms part of the Development Plan for the Western Site.

6.34 A new Oxfordshire Plan (2050) and a new Cherwell Local Plan Review (2040) are also currently being prepared and once adopted will form part of the Development Plan for the Site. The new Cherwell Local Plan Review (2040) will replace the adopted Cherwell Local Plan 2015 and 'saved' policies in the Cherwell Local Plan (1996). However, the document is not expected to be adopted until July 2023 at the earliest.

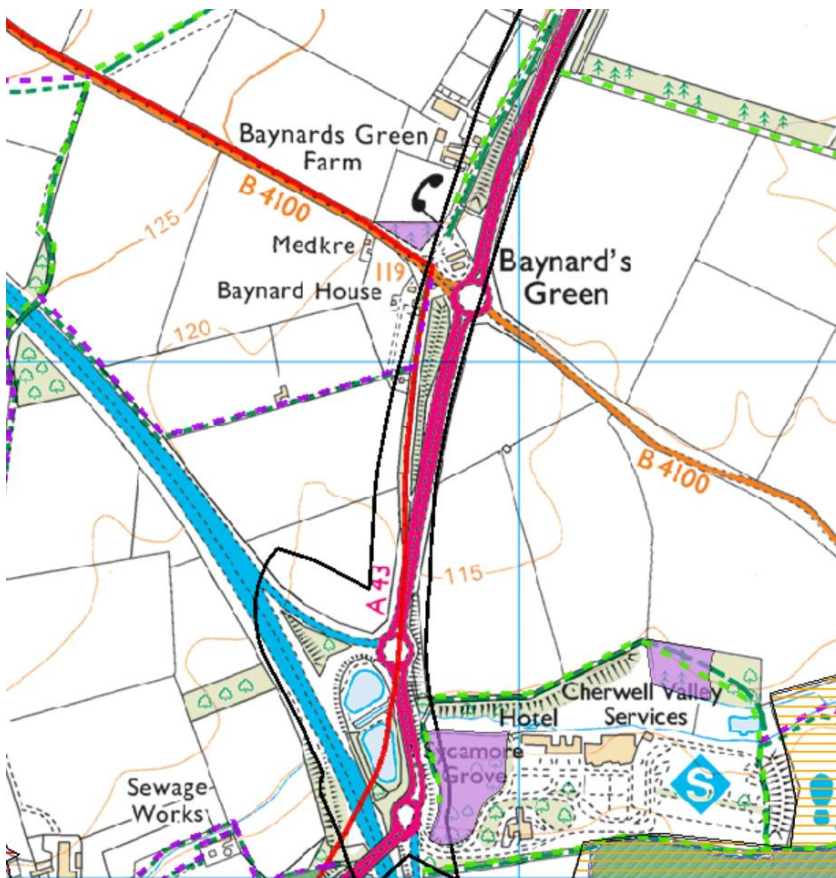


Figure 6.1 - Extract of Local Plan Policies Map

- 6.35 The Policies Map shows that a designated public footpath runs across the Western Site and identifies the A43 as a designated 'new or improved road'. This designation incorporates a small part of the Western Site and the Eastern Site and relates to the saved policies of the Cherwell Adopted Local Plan 1996.
- 6.36 Both sites are at very low risk of flooding from rivers or sea and flooding. A very small area of land located along the southern boundary of the Western Site is at greater risk of surface water flooding.
- 6.37 Public footways are located to the south of the Eastern Site. Two areas of land located adjacent to Cherwell Services are also designated as 'Nerc Act S41 Habitats'. To the east and south east of Cherwell Services is a designated Conservation Target Area. A Local Wildlife Site and ancient woodland are located to the south of Cherwell Services.
- 6.38 No other planning policy designations affect either site.

Overview of Relevant Policies

Cherwell Local Plan 2011 -2031 (adopted 2015)

- 6.39 Policy SD1 sets out a presumption in favour of Sustainable Development.
- 6.40 Policy SLE 1 states that employment development should be focussed on existing employment sites. Unless exceptional circumstances are demonstrated, employment development in the rural areas should be located within or on the edge of the Category A villages. New employment proposals within rural areas on non-allocated sites will be supported if they meet the following criteria:
- *“They will be outside of the Green Belt, unless very special circumstances can be demonstrated.*
 - *Sufficient justification is provided to demonstrate why the development should be located in the rural area on a non-allocated site.*
 - *They will be designed to very high standards using sustainable construction, and be of an appropriate scale and respect the character of villages and the surroundings.*
 - *They will be small scale unless it can be demonstrated that there will be no significant adverse impacts on the character of a village or surrounding environment.*
 - *The proposal and any associated employment activities can be carried out without undue detriment to residential amenity, the highway network, village character and its setting, the appearance and character of the landscape and the environment generally including on any designated buildings or features (or on any non-designated buildings or features of local importance).*
 - *The proposal will not give rise to excessive or inappropriate traffic and will wherever possible contribute to the general aim of reducing the need to travel by private car.*

- *There are no suitable available plots or premises within existing nearby employment sites in the rural areas”.*

6.41 Policy SLE 1 states that the Local Plan has an urban focus. Justification for employment development on new sites in rural areas will therefore need to be provided. This will include demonstrating a need for and benefits of employment in the location proposed and explaining why the proposed development should not be located at the towns.

6.42 Policy SLE 4 requires all development (where reasonable to do so) to facilitate the use of sustainable transport. The policy encourages solutions which support reductions in greenhouse gas emissions and reduce congestion. Proposals will be required to mitigate the transport impacts of development. Development not suitable for the roads that serve it and which have a severe traffic impact will not be supported.

6.43 Policy ESD 1 states that growth will be distributed to the most sustainable locations as defined in the Local Plan. Development that seeks to reduce the need for travel and encourages sustainable travel options will be delivered. Developments will be designed to reduce carbon emissions and use resources more efficiently. The use of decentralised and renewable or low carbon energy will be promoted.

6.44 Suitable adaptation measures will be incorporated within development to ensure it is resilient to climate change. This will include consideration of known physical and environmental constraints; demonstration of design approaches that are resilient to climate change impacts; minimising the risk of flooding and using sustainable drainage methods; and reducing the effects of development on the microclimate.

6.45 Policy ESD2 states that the Council will promote the following energy hierarchy:

- reducing energy (in particular by the use of sustainable design and construction measures);
- supplying energy efficiently and prioritising decentralised energy supply;
- making use of renewable energy;
- making use of allowable solutions.

6.46 Policy ESD 3 requires all new non-residential development to meet at least BREEAM Very Good with immediate effect. All development will be encouraged to reflect high quality design and high environmental standards, demonstrating sustainable construction methods.

6.47 Policy ESD 4 requires the use of decentralised energy systems in all new developments. A feasibility assessment for district heating or combined heat and power is required for all non-domestic development involving more than 1,000 sq.m floorspace. Where this demonstrates that decentralised energy systems are deliverable and viable, such systems will be required as part of the development unless an alternative solution would deliver the same or increased benefit.

- 6.48 Policy ESD 6 promotes the sequential approach to development for flood risk. Development should be safe, manage surface water effectively on site and not increase flood risk elsewhere. Policy ESD 7 requires all development to use sustainable drainage systems.
- 6.49 Policy ESD 10 states that a net gain in biodiversity will be sought by protecting, managing, enhancing and extending existing resources and by creating new resources. If significant harm resulting from a development cannot be avoided, adequately mitigated or compensated then development will not be permitted. Development proposals are expected to incorporate features to encourage biodiversity and retain and where possible enhance existing features of nature conservation value within the site.
- 6.50 Development is also expected to respect and enhance local landscape character (Policy ESD 13). Where damage to local landscape character cannot be avoided appropriate mitigation will be secured. Proposals that cause undue visual intrusion into the open countryside, undue harm to important natural landscape features and topography, are inconsistent with local character and impact on areas of a high level of tranquillity will not be permitted.
- 6.51 Policy ESD 15 states that new development is expected to complement and enhance the character of its context through sensitive siting, layout and high quality design. All development is required to meet high design standards. New development proposals should:
- be designed to deliver high quality, safe, attractive, durable and healthy places to live and work in;
 - be adaptable to changing social, technological, economic and environmental conditions;
 - support the efficient use of land and infrastructure;
 - contribute positively to an area's character and identity by creating or reinforcing local distinctiveness and respecting local topography and landscape features;
 - Consider the amenity of both existing and future development;
 - Limit the impact of light pollution from artificial light on local amenity, intrinsically dark landscapes and nature conservation.
 - incorporate energy efficient design and sustainable construction techniques; and
 - integrate and enhance green infrastructure and incorporate biodiversity enhancement features where possible.
- 6.52 Policy ESD 17 requires development to maintain and enhance the district's green infrastructure
- 6.53 Policy INF 1 states that development proposals will be required to demonstrate that infrastructure requirements can be met.

Saved Policies of the Adopted Cherwell Local Plan 1996

- 6.54 Saved Policy TR1 requires the Council to be satisfied that new highway improvement works and other transport measures needed as a result of development will be provided.
- 6.55 Saved policies C7 and C8 relate to landscape and development in the countryside. The policies state that development will not normally be permitted if it would cause demonstrable harm to the topography and character of the landscape and that sporadic development in the open countryside, including developments in the vicinity of motorway or major road junctions, will generally be resisted.
- 6.56 Saved Policy C9 confirms that beyond the existing and planned limits of Banbury and Bicester development of a type, size or scale that is incompatible with a rural location will normally be resisted.
- 6.57 Saved Policy C28 requires development to demonstrate high standards of layout, design and external appearance.

Mid Cherwell Neighbourhood Plan (made 2019)

- 6.58 Policy PD4 requires development proposals to demonstrate sensitivity to the important views and vistas and be designed to avoid any adverse impact on the sensitive skylines identified in the plan. Proposals which cause significant harm to any of these views will only be acceptable where the benefits of the proposal clearly outweigh the harm.
- 6.59 The Site is located approximately 1km to the north of the church tower in Ardley but is not within a designated view or vista or within a sensitive skyline.
- 6.60 Policy PD5 states that development should be designed to a high standard. Proposals should wherever possible include appropriate landscape mitigation measures to reduce the impact of the built form and to provide a net gain in biodiversity.
- 6.61 Policy PD6 requires development to minimise the risk of light spillage beyond the development site boundary.

Emerging Oxfordshire Plan 2050

- 6.62 The emerging Oxfordshire Plan 2050 states that the creation of jobs across a range of sectors and in various locations will be supported. Objective five of the emerging plan is to:
- “To sustain and strengthen Oxfordshire’s economic role and reputation by building on our key strengths and relationship”.*
- 6.63 The supporting evidence base (Oxfordshire Council’s Growth Needs Assessment (July 2021)) explains that the scale of employment land needed across Oxfordshire could be up to 807 hectares.

6.64 The emerging Oxfordshire Plan 2050 also contains proposals to assist with the economic recovery from the Covid-19 pandemic. These proposals build on the strengths of the economy and seek to harness its capability in the long-term to maintain high level of GVA growth.

Policy Summary

6.65 The National Planning Policy Framework (2021) promotes a presumption in favour of sustainable development and states that significant weight should be placed on a need to support economic growth and productivity. Policies and decisions should recognise and address the specific locational requirements of different sectors, including making provision for storage and distribution operations in suitably accessible locations.

6.66 The NPPF supports the sustainable growth of all types of businesses in rural areas and recognises that sites may need to be found adjacent to or beyond existing settlements in locations not well served by public transport.

6.67 Development should only be refused on highways grounds if it will have an unacceptable impact on highway safety or if the cumulative impacts on the road network are severe. Development should be of a good design, support a transition to a low carbon future, and contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment, including through providing net gains for biodiversity.

6.68 The Sites are not allocated within the Development Plan. A designated public right of way crosses through the Western Site. There are no relevant policy designations affecting either site.

6.69 The Cherwell Local Plan (2015) has an urban focus and states that employment development in the rural areas should be located within or on the edge of the Category A villages unless exceptional circumstances are demonstrated. Justification for employment development on new sites in rural areas is expected to be provided.

6.70 The Local Plan requires development to respect and enhance local landscape and character and provide appropriate mitigation where this cannot be avoided. Development should be of a high standard of design and provide a net gain in biodiversity.

6.71 Emerging planning policy, including the Oxfordshire Plan 2050, supports the creation of jobs and economic growth in various locations across the county.

7 Principle of Development

- 7.1 The Proposed Development will provide high quality logistics floorspace in a highly accessible location adjacent to Junction 10 of the M40.
- 7.2 The Proposed Development aligns with NPPF policies which seek to build a strong and competitive economy and support economic growth and productivity (taking into account wider needs for development), as well as several of the key objectives of the Cherwell Local Plan. The Local Plan (page 10) states that:
- “securing the economic future of the District is the main priority of this Plan”.*
- 7.3 Remaining economically competitive is a critical challenge facing the district over the next two decades (Local Plan paragraph 1.6).
- 7.4 Key challenges to achieving a sustainable local economy in Cherwell include a requirement for new employment sites to meet modern business needs; providing potentially suitable employment sites in rural areas; the relatively high number of people in the district without qualifications and basic skills; and pockets of multiple deprivation in the district (paragraph A.14).
- 7.5 The Plan also recognises that there is insufficient diversity within the local economy, an overdependence on a declining number of manufacturing jobs and a need to respond to a growing and ageing population.
- 7.6 The Plan’s Strategic Objectives therefore include:
- *“SO 1 To facilitate economic growth and employment and a more diverse local economy with an emphasis on attracting and developing higher technology industries*
 - *SO 2 To support the diversification of Cherwell’s rural economy*
 - *SO 3 To help disadvantaged areas, support an increase in skills and innovation, improve the built environment and make Cherwell more attractive to business by supporting regeneration..”*
- 7.7 The Proposed Development will help address the challenges facing the district and achieve the strategic objectives set out within the Plan. The Proposed Development will create up to 3,830 direct jobs across a variety of skill sets, up to 3,400 indirect jobs and a significant number of construction jobs. Apprenticeship starts during the construction phase will also be provided and secured through a Section 106 Agreement and it is likely that occupiers will have their own further commitments to apprenticeships and training.
- 7.8 A significant proportion of the new direct jobs created will be entry level roles. These jobs will be well matched to the district’s skill profile and will help support an increase in skills and innovation in accordance with Strategic Objective 3 of the Local Plan.

- 7.9 The Proposed Development will therefore help address the challenges facing Cherwell (many of which have been exacerbated by the Covid-19 pandemic) and will facilitate economic growth and employment. The Proposed Development will generate Gross Value Added of £228 million per year as well as business rates of approximately £8.8 million per year, which can be invested in local services and infrastructure.
- 7.10 Paragraph B.32 of the Local Plan states that:
- “We will support the logistics sector, recognising the jobs it provides and the good transport links that attracts this sector”.*
- 7.11 The Proposed Development aligns with this and is a direct response to the substantial and growing need for logistics floorspace, which has been exacerbated by the Covid-19 pandemic and changes to consumer habits.
- 7.12 The accompanying ‘Logistics market assessment and land availability’ report explains that take-up of logistics floorspace is currently at a record high, whilst availability is at a record low. This has resulted in a significant under-supply of high quality logistics warehouses, which is evident at a national and regional level and along the M40 corridor.
- 7.13 The existing ‘development pipeline’ is insufficient to address this need. Further development is therefore essential to ensure that the demand for high quality logistics floorspace is satisfied.
- 7.14 The provision of up to 280,000 sq.m (GIA) of high quality logistics (and ancillary office) floorspace immediately adjacent to Junction 10 of the M40 will help address this need. The Proposed Development represents a rapid response to changing economic circumstances and will support economic growth in accordance with Section 6 of the NPPF.
- 7.15 Given the significant and growing need for logistics development, as well as local market conditions, the Proposed Development comprises an efficient use of land in accordance with paragraph 124 of the NPPF. The location, size and configurations of the Sites lend themselves to a mix of unit sizes including large units. There are no other suitable sites along the M40 corridor that are capable of accommodating development of the scale proposed.
- 7.16 The Proposed Development is ideally placed to address the growing need for logistics floorspace as it will be highly accessible to the strategic road network. The Sites are located immediately adjacent to Junction 10 of the M40 and will allow for fast and easy access to London, Birmingham and the M25.
- 7.17 Saved Policy C8 of the adopted Cherwell Local Plan 1996 states that sporadic development in the open countryside, including developments in the vicinity of motorway or major road junctions will generally be resisted. Although the policy does not prevent all development in the open countryside, it is inconsistent with paragraphs 83 – 85 of the NPPF. Accordingly, no weight should be applied to it in the decision-making process.
- 7.18 Paragraph 83 of the NPPF states that planning decisions should recognise and address the specific locational requirements of different sectors and that this includes making provision for storage or distribution operations at a variety of scales and in suitably accessible locations. Paragraph 85 states that sites to meet local business needs in rural areas may have to be

found adjacent to or beyond existing settlements and in locations that are not well served by public transport.

- 7.19 The Proposed Development will be located immediately adjacent to the strategic highway network, which is a fundamental requirement of logistics operators, and there are no other suitable sites capable of accommodating development of the scale proposed.
- 7.20 Policy SLE 1 of the Cherwell Local Plan (2015) states that employment development should be focussed on existing employment sites and that, unless exceptional circumstances are demonstrated, employment development in the rural areas should be located within or on the edge of the Category A villages.
- 7.21 However, the policy is based on evidence that it is over six years old and does not reflect the urgent requirement for logistics floorspace, which has been exacerbated by the Covid-19 pandemic.
- 7.22 Policy SLE 1 is also inconsistent with paragraphs 83 – 85 of the NPPF, which promote a prosperous rural economy and require Local Planning Authorities to recognise and provide for the specific locational requirements of logistics operators and acknowledge that employment sites may need to be provided outside of settlement boundaries.
- 7.23 Policy SLE 1 is therefore out of date and very limited weight should be applied to it.
- 7.24 The NPPF (paragraph 11) states that where there are no relevant development plan policies, or the policies which are most important for determining the application are out of date, planning permission should be granted unless the application of policies in the Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a clear reason for refusing the development or if any adverse impacts of doing so would significant and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in the framework as a whole.
- 7.25 The Site is not within any area or asset identified to be of particular importance by the NPPF and there would not be any adverse impacts of granting planning permission that would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits. Accordingly, planning permission should be granted for the development in accordance with paragraph 11 of the NPPF.
- 7.26 Notwithstanding this, the remainder of this section demonstrates how the Proposed Development complies with the relevant criteria of Policy SLE 1 and is in-line with the spirit of the policy and the objectives it is seeking to deliver.
- 7.27 The Proposed Development is not located within a Category A Village. However, the 'exceptional circumstances' required by Policy SLE 1 are satisfied for the reasons set out below:
- The evidence base underpinning the Cherwell Local Plan is out-of-date and does not reflect current demand for employment floorspace within Cherwell and the wider area. At the examination of the Cherwell Local Plan 2015, it was determined that “*examining options for the release of land at motorway junctions in the district for very large scale logistics buildings in the Part 2 LP*”, it is not necessary.....*This is because the existence of such a need, specifically in this district, is as yet largely unproven and appears to be*

essentially reliant on speculative enquiries only at present". The Inspector also determined that non-strategic employment sites could be allocated through the Local Plan Part 2. However, as demonstrated in the accompanying Logistics market assessment and land availability' report there is now a significant and growing need for logistics floorspace at a national, regional and local level (including along the M40 Corridor). This need has been exacerbated by the Covid-19 pandemic. Take-up of logistics floorspace is currently at a record high, whilst availability is at a record low. The Proposed Development will serve the South East and East Midlands regions, which have both reached a tipping point where demand significantly outweighs supply. This imbalance is expected to increase given that there is limited development currently under construction and the Local Plan Review has yet to be prepared and is not expected to be adopted until July 2023 at the earliest. Additionally, development has already commenced or completed at most of the strategic employment sites identified within the current Local Plan.

- The Applicant is in discussions with a leading logistics distributor to occupy a significant amount of the proposed floorspace within the Western Site. Interest from an operator of this nature at this stage demonstrates the strength of the occupational market and the need for more warehousing in the region
- The Proposed Development is of a scale and nature that is not compatible with a Category A Village location. There are no other suitable sites capable of accommodating the scale of development proposed
- The Site is highly accessible from the strategic road network. This is a fundamental requirement of logistics operators. The Proposed Development will also provide a mix of unit sizes, including large warehouses, that is required to address market demand and cannot be accommodated on any other existing employment sites or other suitable sites along the M40 corridor.
- The Proposed Development will create up to 3,830 direct jobs (across a wide range of skill sets) and 3,400 indirect jobs, as well as construction jobs and apprenticeships. The Proposed Development will also generate between £168 million to £228 million per annum in Gross Value Added and up to £8.8 million annually in business rates. The Proposed Development will therefore make a significant contribution to the local economy's recovery from the Covid-19 pandemic
- A holistic masterplan approach has been adopted across the Western Site and the Eastern Site to ensure that development is sensitive to its landscape setting.
- The Proposed Development will result in a Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) of at least 10% and will provide a range of ecological benefits to the area.

Table 6.1 demonstrates how the proposals comply with the criteria set out within Policy SLE 1 for new employment proposals within rural areas on non-allocated sites.

Policy SLE 1 Criteria	Compliance
They will be outside of the Green Belt, unless very special circumstances can be demonstrated	The Site is not located within the Green Belt
Sufficient justification is provided to demonstrate why the development should be located in the rural area on a non-allocated site.	<p>The Proposed Development comprises the construction of logistics buildings. The Applicant is in discussions with a leading logistics distributor regarding the occupation of a significant quantum of the proposed floorspace.</p> <p>The Proposed Development will be highly accessible to the strategic road network, which is a fundamental requirement of logistics operators. The Site is located immediately adjacent to Junction 10 of the M40 and will allow for fast and easy access to the motorway as well as the major 'A roads'. The proposed buildings would be able to serve national, regional and local demand and there are very few sites nationally that have such favourable road links.</p> <p>Although there are other smaller sites located along the M40 corridor these are generally incapable of accommodating large scale warehouses (in excess of 1 million square feet). The Proposed Development will provide a mix of unit sizes required to satisfy market demand that cannot be accommodated elsewhere.</p> <p>Development has already commenced or completed at most of the strategic employment sites allocated in the current Local Plan and there are no other suitable sites within the urban areas that are capable of accommodating development of the nature proposed (which is required to address a significant market demand).</p>
They will be designed to very high standards using sustainable construction, and be of an	The Proposed Development will be of a high quality and sustainable construction. All buildings will meet at least BREEAM 'Very

Policy SLE 1 Criteria	Compliance
<p>appropriate scale and respect the character of villages and the surroundings.</p>	<p>Good' standards. The offices and building cores will (operationally) be net zero carbon.</p> <p>The elevational treatments will carefully be selected with due regard to their sustainability, appearance within the surrounding landscape and glare.</p> <p>The Proposed Development is situated between two trunk roads and the B4100 and is not within a village or rural settlement. Accordingly, the Proposed Development will not have any adverse impact on the character of any village.</p> <p>The enclosed Parameter Plans identify 'Build Zones' as well as areas of soft landscaping and the existing hedgerows that will be enhanced/retained and strengthened. The Build Zones represent the maximum width and length of any buildings to come forward on site.</p> <p>A masterplan approach has been adopted across the Western and Eastern Sites to ensure that development is of a high quality design and sensitive to its surrounding landscape.</p> <p>The Parameter Plans will ensure that there are visual breaks within the massing of the buildings and that substantial landscaping will be provided within each Site, including along their perimeters. A detailed landscaping scheme will be submitted as part of subsequent RMAs and will be required to comply with the Parameter Plans.</p> <p>A series of key design commitments are also proposed. These relate to matters including the final appearance, layout, massing and landscaping of the development and will ensure that the development is sensitive to the existing character and appearance of the area.</p>

Policy SLE 1 Criteria	Compliance
<p>They will be small scale unless it can be demonstrated that there will be no significant adverse impacts on the character of a village or surrounding environment.</p>	<p>The Site is located adjacent to Junction 10 of the M40 as well as the A43 and B4100. The Site is not located within or adjacent to any villages.</p> <p>The Proposed Development will not have any significant adverse impact on the character of any villages or the surrounding environment.</p> <p>A masterplan approach has been adopted across the Western and Eastern Sites to ensure that the Proposed Development respects the character of its surroundings and that it's impacts can be appropriately mitigated.</p> <p>The Parameter Plans will ensure that there are visual breaks within the massing of the buildings and that substantial landscaping will be provided within the Site, including along its perimeters. A detailed landscaping scheme will be submitted as part of subsequent RMAs and will be required to comply with the Parameter Plans.</p> <p>A series of key design commitments are also proposed. These relate to matters including the final appearance, layout, massing and landscaping of the development and will ensure that the development is sensitive to the character and appearance of the existing area.</p>
<p>The proposal and any associated employment activities can be carried out without undue detriment to residential amenity, the highway network, village character and its setting, the appearance and character of the landscape and the environment generally including on any designated buildings or features (or on any non-designated buildings or features of local importance).</p>	<p>The nearest residential properties comprise three dwellings located to the north west of the Site. No other residential properties are located within close proximity of either site.</p> <p>The Parameter Plans require the provision of suitable noise attenuation measures along the north western corner of the Western Site. Other noise mitigation will also be provided outside of the Site. The final noise attenuation measures will be defined at</p>

Policy SLE 1 Criteria	Compliance
	<p>reserved matters stage following robust testing and will ensure that impact on residential or visual amenity is minimised.</p> <p>The key design commitments set out within the Development Specification require external lighting to be sensitively designed and located so to minimise light spill within and outside the Site. Future RMAs will be required to demonstrate compliance with the Development Specification.</p> <p>Chapter seven of the Environmental Statement and the associated Transport Assessment demonstrate that the Proposed Development will not give rise to excessive or inappropriate traffic.</p> <p>The Proposed Development will result in non-significant effects on landscape character. The proposed landscape and planting strategy will help integrate the development into the landscape and contribute to achieving local landscape character objectives, although some loss of openness and landscape features will result. The Proposed Development will provide high quality design and finishes to buildings within a considered and functional layout that will create a strong sense of place.</p> <p>The Proposed Development will not have any effects on archaeology or built heritage effects once operational. Any effects on archaeology during construction will be mitigated through an appropriately worded condition.</p>
<p>The proposal will not give rise to excessive or inappropriate traffic and will wherever possible contribute to the general aim of reducing the need to travel by private car.</p>	<p>Chapter seven of the Environmental Statement and the associated Transport Assessment demonstrate that the Proposed Development will not give rise to excessive or inappropriate traffic.</p> <p>The Proposed Development will contribute to the general aim of reducing the need to travel by private car. Pedestrian and cycle</p>

Policy SLE 1 Criteria	Compliance
	infrastructure will be incorporated into both proposed site entrances and safe and secure cycle parking facilities provided to promote active travel. The internal road within the Western Site has been designed to allow a bus to enter and leave the site in forward gear. The Applicant is committed to providing a bus service to both sites and this will be secured through the Section 106 Agreement.
There are no suitable available plots or premises within existing nearby employment sites in the rural areas	The Logistics market assessment and land availability' report confirms that there are not any other sites along the M40 that are generally capable of accommodating large scale warehouses (in excess of 1 million square feet) of the type proposed.

Table 7.1 – Compliance with Policy SLE 1 criteria

7.28 As set out above, the Cherwell Local Plan Review is not anticipated to be adopted until July 2023 at the earliest. Given the significant and growing demand for logistics floorspace, further employment development needs to be secured now and in advance of the Local Plan Review. The Proposed Development provides a good opportunity to address this growing and significant need for logistics floorspace in a highly accessible location.

Case for Growth

7.29 An Logistics market assessment and land availability report has been prepared to support applications 1 and 2. The report explains that the UK logistics market is at a critical point where demand is significantly exceeding supply. This has resulted in stock levels for available warehousing being at unprecedentedly low levels. The report summarises the state of the UK logistics market as follows:

- Take up is at record high levels
- Online retail dominated take-up accounting for more than 40% of space in Q2 2021
- Availability of logistics space is at record low levels
- The level of 'under offer' space is at record high levels
- The level of speculative development under construction is inadequate to meet demand
- Industrial land prices are increasing significantly across all regions of the UK

- 7.30 The Covid-19 pandemic has been a catalyst for a change in consumer habits with online retail accounting for 28% of all sales in 2020 compared to 19.2% in 2019. This fundamental change has remained even after 'High Street' shops re-opened in March 2021.
- 7.31 Total take-up of warehouse floorspace in 2020 was 35% higher than the previous record year and Quarter 2 2021 has seen a record take up of large 'big box' warehouses.
- 7.32 Nationally, the availability of logistics floorspace has been falling steadily since 2018. However, this trend has noticeably accelerated during the past 18 months and the availability of built stock is now at a record low.
- 7.33 The Proposed Development will be located on the border of the South East and East Midlands regions and will serve both geographies. These regions are traditionally regarded as the two 'powerhouses' of the UK logistics market but have both reached a 'tipping point' where demand significantly outweighs supply.
- 7.34 The Logistics market assessment and land availability report notes that demand for logistics and distribution floorspace in the South East and East Midlands was exceptionally strong during 2020 and this has accelerated in 2021. However, availability has fallen over the past six months and the regional markets are under supplied to meet the needs of current strong levels of demand. With limited speculative development under construction this imbalance is expected to exacerbate.
- 7.35 The Logistics market assessment and land availability report also explains that the development pipeline is insufficient to meet the increasing demand for logistics floorspace. As such the market undoubtedly has the capacity to accommodate a scheme of the nature proposed even if other schemes identified for similar development are also bought forward.
- 7.36 With its excellent road connections, the Proposed Development would be unrivalled along the M40 corridor. The two sites are situated adjacent to Junction 10 of the M40 and benefits from fast road transport links to London, Birmingham and the M25.
- 7.37 The location, size and configurations of the Sites lend themselves to a healthy mix of unit sizes that would be attractive to international, national and regional occupiers. The Site is capable of accommodating a unit in excess of 1 million square feet and there are few other suitable sites for similar scale development along this part of the M40 corridor.
- 7.38 An Economic Statement has also been prepared to accompany Applications 1 and 2. The Statement explains that the Proposed Development will generate between 2,830 to 3,830 direct new jobs as well as a significant number of construction jobs. Whilst the jobs created will be suitable for a wide range of skill sets, a high proportion of the employment opportunities generated will be entry level roles.
- 7.39 The skill profile of residents in Cherwell is skewed towards lower skilled occupations than the average for the Oxfordshire and the South East. The jobs created by the Proposed Development are therefore well matched to the district's skill profile
- 7.40 This is beneficial in the context of wider job growth within the area which is expected to be predominantly in high skilled roles associated with the knowledge based sectors. Providing a

higher proportion of lower skilled roles will help to ensure opportunities are available for all of Cherwell's residents, including entry level positions.

7.41 An Employment, Skills and Training Plan (ESTP) will be prepared (and secured through the S106 agreement) which will demonstrate how local employment, apprenticeships and training can be created and maximised during the both the construction and operation of the Development. The provision of apprenticeships will help contribute towards the objectives of the Cherwell Local Plan in training and upskilling residents to help support economic growth within the area.

7.42 In addition to the significant number of direct jobs the Proposed Development will create multiplier effects through expenditure by the tenant businesses directly and by their workers. The Economic Statement explains that:

“For every job created by the Development, a further 0.89 jobs will be supported elsewhere in the economy – including in local firms in Cherwell”.

7.43 Accordingly, the Proposed Development could create an additional 2,500 to 3,400 jobs through indirect effects, as well as various beneficial induced effects.

7.44 The new jobs created by the Proposed Development will generate between £168 million to £228 million per annum in Gross Value Added. Additionally, the Proposed Development could be expected to generate approximately £8.8 million annually in Business Rates.

7.45 The Proposed Development will therefore provide a series of wide-ranging benefits and will support economic growth and productivity in accordance with Section 6 of the NPPF. The Proposed Development will address a specific national, regional and local need for logistics floorspace and will help build a strong and competitive economy. The development will create a significant number of jobs across a wide range of skill sets, including entry level roles and will provide training and apprenticeship opportunities. These are important material benefits that weigh heavily in favour of the Proposed Development.

7.46 The Proposed Development can therefore make a significant contribution towards the objectives set out within the Cherwell Local Plan (2015) as well as the ambitions of the emerging Oxfordshire Plan 2050, which supports the creation of jobs and economic growth across the county. However, these benefits will only be realised if the substantial and growing need for logistics floorspace along the M40 corridor is addressed now.

Summary

7.47 The Proposed Development will provide high quality logistics floorspace in a highly accessible location adjacent to Junction 10 of the M40.

7.48 The Proposed Development will address a substantial and growing need for logistics floorspace at a national, regional and local level, including along the M40 corridor.

7.49 The development will provide a significant number of new jobs and create wide ranging benefits to the local area.

- 7.50 To ensure that these benefits are realised within Cherwell it is vital that provision is made for new logistics floorspace on the Site now.
- 7.51 The relevant policies of the Development Plan are inconsistent with the NPPF and fail to reflect the substantial and growing demand for logistics floorspace. These policies are therefore out-of-date and very limited weight should be applied to them. However, notwithstanding this, the proposals are generally in accordance with the principles and spirit of policy SLE 1.
- 7.52 The NPPF states that significant weight should be placed on supporting economic growth and recognises the specific locational requirements of the logistics sector. The Proposed Development aligns with this and will also significantly contribute towards several of the strategic objectives set out within the Cherwell Local Plan.
- 7.53 The decision making framework is therefore in favour of development of the type proposed, and the wide ranging benefits arising from the Proposed Development represent significant material considerations that weigh in favour of the proposals.

8 Development Management and Environmental Considerations

Design

- 8.1 Applications 1 and 2 seek outline planning permission with all matters reserved except for access. The scale, layout, appearance and landscaping of the Proposed Development will be detailed within future RMAs.
- 8.2 All future RMAs will be required to demonstrate compliance with the two Control Documents submitted as part of each application. The Control Documents comprise the Development Specification and Parameter Plans and describe the principal components of, and define the parameters for, each development.
- 8.3 The Control Documents control the massing, layout and appearance of the Proposed Development as well as the location of hard and soft landscaping. On both the Western Site and the Eastern Site the proposed buildings will have a maximum ridge height of 23m above slab level. The proposed massing is reflective of market requirements for logistics floorspace and will ensure that each Site's development potential is fully optimised.
- 8.4 As no minimum height, width or length is proposed, the Parameter Plans allow for variation of scale and massing across both sites. Breaks in the massing are proposed to ensure that views across and through both sites are maintained.
- 8.5 The proposed Parameter Plans allow for the largest unit within the Western Site to be located in the south eastern corner of the Site immediately adjacent to the A43 and M40. The largest unit within the Eastern Site is also likely to be located adjacent to the A43.
- 8.6 The final size of each building will be determined at reserved matters stage. The buildings will be linked by areas of hard and soft landscaping, which will break up the massing, as well as offering advantages in terms of access and market suitability.
- 8.7 Significant areas of soft landscaping will be provided around the perimeter of each site and within the central area of the Western Site. Existing perimeter hedgerows will be retained and enhanced where possible and vegetation strengthened along sensitive boundaries. A range of landscape character areas will be provided within both sites.
- 8.8 A series of key design commitments are set out within the Development Specification. These relate to matters including (but not limited to) elevational treatments and materials; parking; hard and soft landscaping; sustainability and noise mitigation.
- 8.9 These commitments will ensure that the Proposed Development is of a high quality design and construction; is sympathetic to local character and biodiversity; provides visual interest; reflects the principles of inclusive design; enhances water management; and is energy efficient and resilient to climate change.

- 8.10 The Development Specification requires careful consideration to be given to the size, scale and massing of buildings so that they minimise their impact on their surroundings so far as possible. The document also includes a commitment for the Proposed Development to achieve at least BREEAM 'Very Good' standard in accordance with Policy ESD 3 of the Cherwell Local Plan and to limit light spill within and outside of the Sites.
- 8.11 The Proposed Development therefore accords with paragraph 126 of the NPPF and policies ESD 15, ESD 17, C28, PD5 and PD6 of the Development Plan, which promote high quality and sustainable design.
- 8.12 The design of each proposed site entrance has been submitted in detail. The proposed site entrances will comprise new roundabouts located on the B4100. The proposed access to the Western Site will connect (via an internal road) to a second roundabout located further within the Site.
- 8.13 Both entrances have been designed in accordance with the relevant guidance and will provide access to each site for pedestrians, cyclists, cars and larger vehicles. The design of the internal road within the Western Site, which will incorporate a bus layby, and the internal roundabout will allow bus services to enter the site, turnaround and leave in forward gear. The Proposed Development will there encourage active and sustainable modes of travel in accordance with section 9 of the NPPF and Cherwell Local Plan.

Landscape and Visual Impact

- 8.14 The Sites are located on an elevated plateau situated between the Cherwell Valley and the lower and flatter landscape to the north of Bicester. As such there are few elevated positions to experience the Sites. Areas of woodland associated with Cherwell Services merge with Stoke Wood and Stoke Little Wood to limit many views from the south and southeast.
- 8.15 Similarly, belts of woodland curtail many views towards the Site from the north and north east. From the east, views of the sites are reduced by small pockets of tree cover and linear woodlands between Stoke Lyne and the sites. Visual screening to views from the west is provided by roadside tree belts associated with the B4100 and A43 and the linear woods to the west of the M40.
- 8.16 Notwithstanding this, a landscape strategy has been prepared for both sites to mitigate the potential landscape and visual impacts of the development and to provide an attractive setting for future occupiers. The landscape strategy will guide and inform all future RMAs.
- 8.17 The landscaping strategy includes retaining the majority of good quality trees along the boundaries of both sites; retaining the existing hedgerows along the M40, A43 and B4100 corridors; enhancing existing hedgerows; and replacing any dead, dying or dangerous trees with trees of a similar species. A native woodland of between 15 to 20 metres wide will be established along the eastern boundary of the Eastern Site. This will connect to the existing woodland surrounding the Site and provide significant visual screening along the eastern boundary for the proposed built development. New hedgerows will also be provided adjacent to the diverted PROW.
- 8.18 All planting will comprise locally native species or species that reflect the landscape character.

- 8.19 The Parameter Plans identify proposed areas of soft landscaping within each site. The soft landscaping will comprise of a range of landscape character areas including semi natural woodland screen planting; wet woodland scrub; native hedgerow planting; specimen tree planting; neutral grassland; and amenity grassland.
- 8.20 Accordingly, the Proposed Development will result in non-significant effects on landscape character. The proposed landscape and planting strategy will help integrate the development into the landscape and contribute to achieving local landscape character objectives, although some loss of openness and landscape features will result. The Proposed Development will provide high quality design and finishes to buildings within a considered and functional layout that will create a strong sense of place.
- 8.21 Significant residual visual effects are expected on users of the PRoW to the south of the Site. Elsewhere, residual visual effects will be not significant. Views from settlements and the PRoW will be generally unchanged from Year 1 after the introduction of mitigation measures.
- 8.22 The proposed landscape and planting strategy will help integrate the Proposed Development into the landscape and reduce views of lower building elevations. Where visible the proposed buildings will be experienced as contemporary, high quality buildings set amongst a structured landscape.
- 8.23 In accordance with Policy ESD 13 of the Cherwell Local Plan, the Proposed Development has sought opportunities to enhance the character and appearance of the surrounding landscape. The Proposed Development will secure appropriate mitigation and will not cause undue harm to important natural landscape features and topography; impact on areas judged to have a high level of tranquillity, harm the setting of settlements, buildings, structures or other landmark features or harm the historic value of the landscape.

Transport

Road Network

- 8.24 The proposed new site entrances have been modelled using industry standard software. The results show that the proposed roundabouts have ample capacity to accommodate the development demand with limited delay or queuing on any arm.
- 8.25 A Transport Assessment has been prepared to accompany Applications 1 and 2 and is appended to the Environmental Statement.
- 8.26 The Transport Assessment concludes that the relative change in traffic demand individually and cumulatively on the A43 as a result of the development will be small and will not have a material impact on the operation of the local road network.
- 8.27 The greatest change in demand will occur at the Baynard's Green roundabout and Banbury Road roundabout. However, both of these junctions have already been identified for improvement to adapt to future patterns of demand as a result of wider growth in the Bicester area and the development is not expected to affect the future configuration of these junctions. Improvements to the Banbury Road roundabout are planned by March 2023 (ahead of completion and operation of the Proposed Development).

- 8.28 Growth Funding has been allocated to improve the capacity of the Baynard's Green roundabout. The Growth Fund improvement scheme is expected to signalise the Baynard's Green Roundabout and include widening of the entry and exit to provide two full lanes across the Eastern Site frontage. The proposed access to the Eastern Site has been designed to be compatible with this.
- 8.29 To support the Proposed Development, an interim mitigation scheme is proposed at the Baynard's Green roundabout to offset the additional demand arising from the development in advance of the Growth Fund scheme. The proposed mitigation will be secured by a Section 278 agreement and will provide flaring on the B4100 approaches.

Parking

- 8.30 The accompanying Development Specification sets out key design principles future RMAs will be required to comply with. These include a commitment for HGV, car and cycle parking to be provided in accordance with the relevant adopted standards.
- 8.31 The Applicant is also committed to promoting the use of electric vehicles. Ten percent of car parking spaces and ten percent of HGV parking spaces will include active electric charging provision. Fifteen percent of car parking spaces and fifteen percent of HGV spaces will include passive electric charging provision.
- 8.32 The Proposed Development is therefore consistent with paragraph 112 of the NPPF, which requires development to be designed to enable charging of plug-in and other ultra-low emission vehicles in safe, accessible and convenient locations.

Sustainable Transport

- 8.33 The Proposed Development will promote sustainable modes of transport in accordance with Section 9 of the NPPF. The proposed site accesses include pedestrian and cyclist infrastructure, whilst segregated pedestrian/cycle routes will be provided within each Site (to be detailed in future RMAs).
- 8.34 A series of off-site measures are also proposed to encourage active travel to each site and will be secured through the S106 and S278 Agreements. These include (but are not limited to) the provision off road footway/cycleways along the B4100 (on both the western and eastern side of its junction with the A43) as well as financial contributions to mitigate the impact of the development on the surrounding PROW network.
- 8.35 The Applicant is also committed to supporting the provision of a scheduled bus service linking both the Western and the Eastern sites to Bicester. The internal link road (which incorporates a bus layby) and roundabout within the Western Site has been designed to allow buses to enter the site, turn around and exit in forward gear. A bus lay-by will also be provided in the Eastern Site when the detailed design of the site is developed at reserved matters stage.
- 8.36 Given the type of development proposed and its location, the Proposed Development has taken up appropriate opportunities to promote sustainable transport modes and will provide safe and suitable access for all users to both sites in accordance with paragraph 109 of the NPPF and Policy SLE 4 of the Cherwell Local Plan.

Sustainability and Energy

- 8.37 The key development principles set out within the Development Specification identify a commitment by the Applicant for all buildings to be constructed on Site to achieve at least BREEAM 'Very Good' standard and for the offices and building cores to be 'Zero Carbon' (operationally). A sustainability statement has been prepared to demonstrate how this could be achieved.
- 8.38 The Proposed Development will therefore comply with the NPPF and policies ESD 3 and ESD 15 of the Local Plan, which seek to ensure sustainable and high-quality design and that development is resilient to the impacts of climate change.

Biodiversity

- 8.39 The Proposed Development includes the removal of a number of hedgerows and trees within the Western Site and the Eastern Site. This is required to facilitate the construction of each site access and ensure the most efficient use of each Site. However, only trees and hedgerows of moderate quality and value and or low quality and value will be removed. No high quality trees or hedgerows will be removed from either site.
- 8.40 A significant landscaping scheme is also proposed within each Site, which will provide a future net gain in tree cover and serve to strengthen the boundary hedgerows and tree groups.
- 8.41 The final details of the landscaping scheme will be confirmed at reserved matters stage. However, the Parameter Plans identify a number of existing hedgerows that will be retained and enhanced, other hedgerows that will be strengthened and large areas within each site for soft landscaping. A landscape strategy has also been prepared to inform future RMAs and includes the provision of various soft landscaping character areas within each Site.
- 8.42 A Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) assessment has been completed to accompany Applications 1 and 2 and to ensure that a net gain in biodiversity is achieved. The BNG assessment is included within the technical appendices of the accompanying Environmental Statement. A final version of the metric (based on full baseline data and detailed post-development habitat data) will be completed at RMA stage.
- 8.43 An area of off-site habitat compensation will be created on a separate site located in Piddington, which is also under the Applicant's control. This will be secured through the Section 106 agreement.
- 8.44 The BNG assessment anticipates that the Proposed Development will achieve a net gain of 11.96% in habitat units and 11.17% in hedgerow units. This will be achieved through the creation of 20ha of neutral grassland and 1.5km of hedgerows at the Piddington site in addition to the on-site provision of neutral grassland, street trees, mixed scrub, hedgerows and broadleaved woodland habitats.
- 8.45 The Proposed Development is therefore consistent with paragraph 174 (part d) of the NPPF and Policy ESD 10 of the Cherwell Local Plan, which require development to contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by minimising impacts on and providing net gains

for biodiversity. A significant Biodiversity Net Gain will be achieved and existing features of nature conservation within each Site will be retained and enhanced where possible.

Agricultural Land

- 8.46 Footnote 58 of the NPPF states that where significant development of agricultural land is demonstrated to be necessary, areas of poorer quality land should be preferred to those of a higher quality. The best and most versatile agricultural land is defined in the NPPF as “*land in Grades 1, 2 and 3a of the Agricultural Land Classification*”.
- 8.47 The Agricultural Land Classification report accompanying Applications 1 and 2 explains that the quality of the agricultural land at the Sites is limited mainly by soil droughtiness. Neither the Western Site or the Eastern Site comprise Grade 1 (excellent) or Grade 2 (Very Good) agricultural land. The majority of the land (65%) across the two sites comprises moderate quality (subgrade 3B) agricultural land. The remaining sub-grade 3a land is primarily concentrated in the Western Site but is dispersed and broken up by large areas of poorer quality land.
- 8.48 The Agricultural Land Classification report further explains that the majority of land within Oxfordshire and Cherwell is either Very Good (Grade 2) or Good to Moderate (grade 3) agricultural land. In Cherwell this accounts for 67% of land, which is significantly higher than the national average.
- 8.49 The Proposed Development will help address a substantial and growing need for new logistics floorspace at the national, regional (East Midlands and South East) and local (M40 corridor) level. The accompanying Logistics market assessment and land availability report explains that there are no other suitable sites along this part of the M40 corridor that could accommodate large warehouse development of the type proposed and that very few sites nationally benefit from such good links to the strategic highway network (which is a fundamental requirement of logistics operators).
- 8.50 Accordingly, the loss of agricultural land is necessary in this instance.
- 8.51 The Proposed Development will predominately result in the loss of moderate quality (subgrade 3B) agricultural land, which is widespread within Cherwell and Oxfordshire as a whole. As the sub-grade 3B land represents some of the poorest quality land available within the district, the Proposed Development will not significantly harm national agricultural interests and is broadly consistent with the NPPF.

Ground Conditions

- 8.52 No obvious sources of contamination have been identified through a desk study, walkover and site observations. All of the testing undertaken on the soils as part of the investigation did not reveal any contaminants elevated above the relevant screening criteria.
- 8.53 On this basis, the risk assessments have established a negligible to low risk to human health and controlled water receptors. Remedial actions are therefore not considered necessary. Special ground gas measures are also unlikely to be required.

8.54 The Proposed Development is there fully consistent with paragraph 183 of the NPPF, which states that planning decisions should ensure that a site is suitable for its proposed use taking accounts of ground conditions and any risks arising from land instability and contamination.

Other Environmental effects

Noise

8.55 Significant noise effects are anticipated at a number of locations as a result of operational road traffic for the Proposed Development on the Western Site. However, mitigation measures can be implemented to reduce noise levels at the relevant receptors. The measures will be discussed with CDC but could include the provision of a noise barrier of sufficient density on land adjacent to the B4100; low noise road surfacing; or a financial contribution to the landowners to contribute to upgrades in building insulation.

8.56 These mitigation measures will reduce noise to acceptable levels and no significant effects are expected on these receptors following implementation of this mitigation. Residents of the relevant properties have been consulted regarding the applications and are supportive of the proposals. The Proposed Development has therefore considered the amenity of existing development in accordance with Policy ESD 15 of the Cherwell Local Plan.

8.57 Operational Road Traffic Noise associated with the Proposed Development will result in a potential significant effect (during the night-time period only) on residential properties located at The Lodge, Swifts House Farm, Braeburn Avenue/ B4100, and Charlotte Avenue / B410. However, a detailed Travel Plan will be prepared at RMA stage to mitigate the potential noise impacts on these properties.

Air Quality

8.58 Measures to mitigate dust emissions will be required during the construction phase of the development in order to minimise effects upon nearby sensitive receptors. The implementation of the identified mitigation measures will ensure that the cumulative effect of construction activities on air quality will be 'not significant'.

8.59 The operational impacts on human health of both developments will be 'not significant'.

8.60 In regards to ecological receptors, the air quality assessment has assumed a worst-case assessment and does not take account of any mitigation measures that may be implemented during the development's operation. It is considered that any planning permission could include an appropriately worded condition which requires an air quality assessment (to assess the impact of the development on the Ardley Cutting and Quarry Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)) to be undertaken with the submission of an RMA.

8.61 Taking account of the small contribution of traffic emissions on the SSSI from the development and that a further assessment would be undertaken at RMA stage, it is considered that the effects of the Proposed Development on the Ardley Cutting and Quarry SSSI are not significant.

8.62 The Proposed Development is therefore consistent with paragraph 186 of the NPPF, which requires proposals to mitigate their impact on air quality.

Climate Change

- 8.63 Mitigation measures will be implemented during the construction and operation phases of the Proposed Development to minimise greenhouse gas emissions. Good and best practice will be adopted in selecting materials and minimising greenhouse gases from construction activities and best practice performance standards and guidelines followed. A Construction Environmental Management Plan will also be adopted.
- 8.64 During the operation phase of the Proposed Development a travel plan will be implemented to promote the use of sustainable transport; electric vehicle charging provided for cars and HGVs; energy efficient design measures adopted; and a bus layby provided to promote public transport.
- 8.65 Although these mitigation measures will minimise greenhouse gas emissions during construction and throughout the lifetime of each development, a net increase in greenhouse gases will occur as a result of both developments.
- 8.66 Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment (IEMA) Guidance makes clear that any increase in GHG emissions should be considered significant. However, the residual emissions arising from the development at the Western Site and the Eastern Site are a small component in the context of the local greenhouse gas emissions. Additionally, the mitigation proposed follows best practice and is in accordance with relevant local and national policy and the energy strategy for each development achieves a net reduction in operational energy emissions compared to Building Regulations Part L compliance.
- 8.67 Accordingly, the residual effects of the Proposed Development have been minimised through an appropriate degree of mitigation consistent with best practice and IEMA Guidance.
- 8.68 The Proposed Development at each site will also incorporate a range of climate change resilience measures as set out within the Environmental Statement. The Proposed Development is therefore consistent with paragraph 154 of the NPPF and policy ESD 1 of the Cherwell Local Plan, which require new development to avoid increased vulnerability to the range of impacts arising from climate change and to include suitable adaptation measures so that it is more resilient to climate change impacts.

Heritage

- 8.69 Archaeological remains of high significance that could preclude development are unlikely to be present at the sites. It is therefore considered that any further archaeological works can be reasonably secured by an appropriately worded planning condition. The location, timing and extent of any archaeological mitigation will be discussed and agreed with CDC and their archaeological advisor.
- 8.70 There may be some cumulative impacts on below ground archaeological receptors in general terms as a result of the interaction of the Proposed Development with other schemes. However, given the generally isolated, small scale and localised nature of archaeological remains, no significant cumulative effects are identified in relation to below ground archaeological remains arising from the construction and operational phases of the Proposed Development.

- 8.71 A Grade II Listed Barn is located to the north of the Western Site within Baynard's Green Farm. The asset holds architectural interest as a late 18th Century stone barn, however to a lesser extent, due to significant alterations and conversions in the 20th Century. The application sites make no contribution to the importance of the heritage asset.
- 8.72 The Proposed Development will not diminish the ability to appreciate the importance of the barn and will not obstruct or interfere with any important views of the assets.
- 8.73 Accordingly, no built heritage effects are anticipated at the operational stage and no further mitigation measures are required.
- 8.74 The Proposed Development is therefore consistent with Section 16 of the NPPF and Policy ESD 15 of the Cherwell Local Plan, which requires development to conserve and sustain designated and non-designated heritage assets

9 Conclusions

- 9.1 The NPPF states that significant weight should be placed on supporting economic growth and recognises the specific locational requirements of the logistics industry.
- 9.2 There is a substantial and growing need for logistics floorspace at a national, regional and local level. In the South East and East Midlands regions a 'tipping point' has been reached whereby demand significantly outweighs supply.
- 9.3 This demand has been exacerbated by the Covid-19 pandemic and cannot be satisfied by the existing development pipeline.
- 9.4 The Proposed Development represents a unique opportunity to address this growing and substantial demand for high quality logistics floorspace. The sites are highly accessible to the strategic highway network and can accommodate a range of unit sizes including larger warehouses (of which there is a significant demand for). Few sites nationally are as well connected to the strategic highway network and there are no other suitable sites along the M40 corridor that are capable of accommodating development of the nature proposed.
- 9.5 The Proposed Development will create a significant number of direct jobs and apprenticeships for local residents. These jobs will be well matched to the skill profile of Cherwell, will support an increase in skills and will promote more sustainable patterns of travel by reducing out-commuting from the district.
- 9.6 The Proposed Development will generate a significant amount in business rates and gross value added, as well as creating indirect jobs and construction jobs, and will therefore play an important role in the local and regional economy's recovery from the Covid-19 pandemic.
- 9.7 The Proposed Development will be of a high quality and sustainable design, which will be resilient to the effects of climate change and promote a transition to a low carbon economy. Opportunities for the use of sustainable modes of transport to, from and within each site will be maximised and pedestrian and cyclist infrastructure prioritised where possible.
- 9.8 The Proposed Development will achieve a minimum ten percent biodiversity net gain through a combination of on-site landscaping and off-site compensatory habitat provision. Existing hedgerows and planting will be retained/enhanced and strengthened where possible and significant areas of soft landscaping, incorporating a diverse range of 'character areas', provided across both sites. The Proposed Development will be sensitively designed and integrated within its surroundings to minimise its visual impact.
- 9.9 The proposed landscape and planting strategy will help integrate the development into the landscape and contribute to achieving local landscape character objectives. The Proposed Development will provide high quality design and finishes to buildings within a considered and functional layout that will create a strong sense of place.

- 9.10 To support the Proposed Development, an interim mitigation scheme is proposed at the Baynard's Green roundabout to offset the additional demand arising from the development in advance of the Growth Fund scheme.
- 9.11 The Proposed Development is therefore generally consistent with the National Planning Policy Framework.
- 9.12 Paragraph 11 of the NPPF states that where there are no relevant development plan policies, or the policies which are most important for determining the application are out-of-date, planning permission should be granted unless:
- i) The application of policies in the NPPF that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a clear reason for refusing the development proposed; or
 - ii) Any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in the NPPF as a whole.
- 9.13 The relevant policies of the Development Plan are inconsistent with the NPPF and fail to reflect the growing and substantial need for logistics floorspace at a local, regional and national level. These policies are therefore out of date and very limited weight should be applied to them.
- 9.14 The Proposed Development will not harm any of the areas or assets of particular importance identified in the NPPF and there would not be any adverse impacts of approving the development that would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the substantial and wide-ranging benefits associated with the development.
- 9.15 The Proposed Development will result in the loss of approximately 68 hectares of agricultural land. However, this predominately comprises 'moderate' quality agricultural land, which is widespread both within Cherwell and the wider Oxfordshire area.
- 9.16 Noise and light spill will be minimised as far as possible through good design and mitigation measures. The residual lighting impacts will be very localised and the adjoining property owners are supportive of the proposals.
- 9.17 These impacts will not significantly and demonstrably outweigh the substantial and wide ranging benefits associated with the development, which includes the creation of up to 3,830 direct new jobs and up to 3,400 indirect jobs. The creation of these new jobs and the other benefits of the scheme will contribute significantly to Cherwell's recovery from the Covid-19 pandemic and will address many of the key challenges set out within the Cherwell Local Plan. The Proposed Development will also address an urgent national, regional and local need for logistics floorspace.
- 9.18 The Proposed Development will support economic growth, represents an effective and efficient use of land, and will address a substantial and growing demand for high quality logistics floorspace, which is a significant material consideration that weighs heavily in favour of the proposals.
- 9.19 Overall, the Proposed Development is acceptable in principle, accords with the key principles of the NPPF and will provide wide ranging benefits including addressing a growing and

substantial need for logistics floorspace. There are no adverse impacts that would significantly and demonstrably outweigh these benefits or other material considerations. It is therefore respectfully requested that planning permission is granted for both applications without delay.