



Porsche Club

Great Britain



Bicester Heritage Q&A

(Version 4 with the addition of Questions 29-40)

The Board has taken steps to secure the option to lease a new building, at the unique Bicester Heritage site. A building that would potentially become the Clubhouse home of Porsche Club Great Britain for the next 20 years or more.

While a great deal of preliminary work has been done already to develop the concept we have not entered into a contract or an agreement with Bicester Heritage.

We only want to move ahead with the project with your support. To that end we will be sharing as much information as we can to enable you to fully understand our plans, our vision for the club and the many benefits it would deliver for all of us.

We want you to help us create a Clubhouse where members can meet up, hold events, learn about their Porsches and use as a base for drives and activities. A clubhouse that would sit seamlessly with our administration centre. A Clubhouse set on a site where our neighbours share an automotive passion with the same enthusiasm as we do.

There is a unique, 'once in a generation opportunity' on offer at Bicester Heritage. With your support we aim to grasp it for the good and benefit of members today and for next generation of members.

The questions and answers in this document will help inform your view.

Should you have any specific questions please email them to us at: bicesterquestions@porscheclubgb.com - we aim to respond to questions within five working days.

Q1: Who decided that the Club needs to move to new premises?

The decision was taken by the Board over the weekend period of 22-23 October, the 60th anniversary of the foundation of Porsche Club GB.

The decision to relocate emerged from our Club strategy where the board is duty bound to continually monitor the use and benefit of the Clubhouse – part of a range of areas of Club business. This duty is fundamental to the four strands or pillars of our Club strategy, which we refer to as – PACE, Partnership, Advice, Community and Experiences.

We have a responsibility to members to ensure our Clubhouse can, as fully as possible, support our membership, not just now, but in the years to come.

It has been apparent for a number of years that with the growth of the club (22,514 members as of 7 December 2021) we have outgrown Cornbury House (CH).

While CH met the needs of our Club 21 years ago when we acquired it, today CH simply cannot be developed to meet the needs of the growing membership of PCGB, the second largest Porsche Club in the world.

The way forward is clear, it is not a case of 'do we develop and relocate', but rather 'when do we develop and relocate'.

It should be bore in mind throughout this project that we (the Board) have no plans to sell CH. We plan to retain it as an appreciating asset.

Q2: What is the way forward?

Before considering an alternative location, we set ourselves an ambitious specification list.

New premises requirements included:

- A destination for members, rather than 'just a building'
- Ideally it would be part of a large, well-established site, clearly focused on cars, classic and modern, and ideally motorsport
- A pleasant place to work for our Clubhouse team
- Presence to reflect our brand
- Offer a home for our archive to allow it to be developed, displayed and enjoyed
- It must have ample parking for members
- Ideally a 'blank canvas' to allow us to build a Clubhouse to meet the needs of members
- On a secure site
- Close to a track facility.
- Central point with good access from the road network

Q3: Why now?

In addition to the points highlighted in the answer to Question One, in our 60th year, and with the growth of the Club over the last five years, we feel the time is right to build on our success and ensure our club house is fit for purpose for the mid to long term future.

We are in a strong financial position to invest for the future.

Q4: Why Bicester Heritage?

Simply, Bicester Heritage not only meets all of our requirements, it offers many other member benefits.

Bicester Heritage is dedicated to cars, from classic to modern with a focus on the enthusiast who enjoys specialist vehicles. It's already a destination in its own right. It has a track onsite with several catering outlets with ample parking.

Set on 444 acres, future plans for the site include a large hotel and residential accommodation available to let.

It's four miles from the M40 and close to Porsche Reading the home of our major partner. It's around a 40-minute drive from Silverstone and the Porsche Experience Centre.

Bicester Heritage is set close to general shopping areas where members can take advantage of discount scheme and free parking.

Local tourist destinations include Blenheim Palace and Oxford, important considerations for visitors spending a number of days in the area.

Q5: Why not consider other locations?

In approaching the challenge, we set out a very ambitious list of requirements (see Q2).

That list guided us to Bicester Heritage. It was a case of selecting the right setting, rather than compromising on alternative sites and trying to make them fit.

We feel that Bicester Heritage is the right place and its available at the right time to secure the future needs of PCGB for the foreseeable future.

Q6: What is the timetable of the proposed events?

Work can begin very quickly. Aside from the background planning and associated work. Fitting out the building, which is a new shell, would begin mid-2022, and we could potentially relocate by around the end of 2022, rounding off our celebration for our 60th anniversary.

Q7: What impact will this have on the Clubhouse team?

The team was briefed ahead of the announcement to the membership.

Our Clubhouse team members are an essential element of PCGB, and we are very conscious that relocation will impact on them as individuals. The working environment will be much superior to that in CH.

We are also conscious that there will be implications for the team. In some cases, additional travel time. We are working to agree a package of disruption allowances for everyone.

Q8: Can the Club afford the relocation to Bicester Heritage

We have fully assessed the costs and we are absolutely confident that is an affordable investment and the correct course of action.

Q9: How do our commercial partners feel about the proposal?

We felt duty bound to discuss our plans in confidence with Porsche Cars GB. They have given us their enthusiastic support.

We have developed and now enjoy a close working relationship with all of our key partners. We are confident that they will immediately see the benefits of locating at Bicester Heritage for the membership and for themselves commercially.

Q10: Is it a requirement that the membership need to vote to approve the project?

There is no requirement in our articles for members to formally 'approve' the project. However, the Board would not proceed without consulting the membership.

We are confident that this is an enormous 'once in a generation' opportunity, similar to the way CH was over two decades ago and that this next stage will have your support.

All members are invited to become involved in the project and as part of the engagement an Extraordinary General Meeting (EGM) is planned to take place in January to discuss the move. A formal announcement of the EGM has now been issued.

Q11: Will membership fees increase?

It will cost more to run the Clubhouse from Bicester Heritage and we need to increase the subscription fees, however, our fees are excellent value with all the new facilities compared with other clubs.

With careful financial management we have held annual membership fees for several years at £60 for a primary member, with an option to add a joint member for an additional £3 for several years.

Had membership fees increased in line with the Retail Price Index, they would be now be around £80 annually.

From April 2022 fees will increase to:

£75 for a primary member

To add a joint member the cost will increase from £3 to £5

This reflects an increase of £1.25 per month for a primary membership and £1.41 for a joint membership.

The realignment of fees will mean that every single member, whether primary or joint, will be directly helping create our new hub, safeguarding the Club for decades ahead.

For example, as a comparison to other premium car clubs our membership fee remains the most competitive with an unrivalled package of member benefits.

- Aston Martin Club - £105 + £30 joining fee
- Ferrari Owners Club - £135
- Goodwood Road Racing Club - £245

Q12: Can we buy the building at Bicester Heritage rather than taking a rental lease?

There is not currently an option to buy, however, irrespective of that being an option, we feel the financial model to rent is a much more attractive proposition which will leave us free and in a much stronger position in terms of what best meets members' needs in future years.

Q13: Appreciating the need for a larger, more purposeful building, how will it benefit members in outlining areas, such as Scotland, Northern Ireland and island Regions?

Bicester Heritage will not only become our club headquarters, we plan that it will become a world-class destination centre (see Q5).

With that in mind and with the track facility on site and several nearby national attractions and choice of accommodation, we see regions using BH as part of an extended trip, perhaps over several days or a weekend period.

Q14: With COVID remaining so prevalent and with the new threat from the Omicron variant is this the right time for such a major strategic change for the club?

Covid and developing variants are expected to be with us for the foreseeable future. During the last two years our Club has faced challenges that would have been unimaginable in the past. Our membership continues to grow.

We believe that an opportunity such as the one on offer at Bicester Heritage simply cannot be missed (see Q1-3).

There is seldom a 'perfect time' for decisions such as this, but we believe that now is the 'right time'.

Q15: Will we be forced to commit to Bicester Heritage long term?

We have an option to terminate with Bicester Heritage after five years. However, we see Bicester as a medium to long term investment and we have based our projections on a ten-to-twenty-year term.

We are firmly of the opinion that Bicester will be our home beyond the ten-year point.

Q16: Can members visit the Bicester Heritage site to see the new building?

In the New Year we will be publishing a list of 'open days' to facilitate visits which can be booked via the Region and Register Directors.

Q17: Will the Club have two (operational) centres close together?

No, the Club would be based at Bicester Heritage.

There are no plans to sell Cornbury House, it would be managed by PCGB as an appreciating asset to generate income, for example rented/leased to a third party.

We do not need to sell Cornbury House, but we would need to put it up for rental.

Q18: How can members ask questions about the project?

Engagement is already underway.

The Board met with the Clubhouse team on Thursday, 9 December during the working day and later by Zoom with our Club Officials. A newsletter was emailed to members the same evening explaining the project, along with a news item on the homepage ([read here](#)).

Information is available on the Club website and Porsche Post will also be used to keep members informed about the project.

An Extraordinary General Meeting is planned for January when members can join via Zoom to discuss the matter, the details of which have now gone to members.

In addition, we are planning two virtual 'open nights' in January ahead of the EGM. Details of attending the meetings will go to members in the first week in January.

Members can pose questions directly to the Board via email at bicesterquestions@porscheclubgb.com

The Board aim to respond as soon as possible to questions or within five working days.

Common and relevant questions will be added to this Q&A document for the convenience of all members.

Q19: With plans to lease the building how can this be viewed as an investment?

This project represents a highly significant and direct investment to enhance the membership experience.

The already extensive range of benefits on offer will increase, inline with our mission to keep PCGB at the heart of Porsche ownership and enjoyment in the UK. (please also see answer to Q4)

Q20: Would the new building (at Bicester) be considered under our Articles in the same way as Cornbury House?

No, the difference being that PCGB owns Cornbury House and the building at Bicester Heritage will be under a lease agreement. (please also see Q15)

Q21: Is the membership fee increase a result of the proposed move to Bicester?

The fee increase was planned for last year but postponed due to a number of factors, in particular the Covid pandemic.

(See Board minutes of 12 January 2020 item 5.1 ([here](#)) and 21 March 2020 3.2.3 ([here](#)))

With careful financial management we have held annual membership fees for several years at £60 for a primary member, with an option to add a joint member for an additional £3.

But with rising costs over the last few years it had become necessary to increase fees in any case to maintain our current liquidity.

Had membership fees increased in line with the Retail Price Index they would be now be around £80 annually.

[View Membership Costs](#)

Q22: Has the decision to relocate to Bicester Heritage already been taken ahead of the EGM?

No, that is not the case. Contracts have not been signed. We have given Bicester Motion a 'letter of intent' to signal our interest in the property.

We will only move forward with the support of the membership.

Q23: How will members have their say about the proposed move?

To offer every member an opportunity to express their own view, as part of the forthcoming [Extraordinary General Meeting](#) (EGM) on Wednesday, 19 January an indicative poll will be taken on this important milestone for the Club.

Full details of how to take part in the poll will be sent to everyone ahead of the meeting, but briefly the poll will open on the night and will remain open for 48 hours afterwards.

In addition, a programme of engagement has been launched.

Club wide membership engagement opened on Thursday, 9 December with a Zoom meeting with Club Officials (Regional Organisers and Register Secretaries) to provide them with detailed information about the project. The same night, the news was announced via newsletter to members and a news item on our website. (Our Clubhouse Team received a briefing earlier the same day).

There is a package of information available on our website, including this Q&A document (which is being regularly updated with common questions as they emerge) along with images and a site map – view [here](#).

Additionally, a dedicated email address has been created (bicesterquestions@porscheclubgb.com) to provide members with a direct channel to the Board to present their questions about the matter.

All members have the opportunity to join an Extraordinary General Meeting (EGM) on 19 January 2022 to discuss the matter openly with the Board and other fellow members. The details of the EGM were circulated to members on 16 December.

Q24: In terms of the future of Cornbury House, members need to vote if we (the club) wanted to sell the property, but is there a vote needed to allow the Club to put it up for lease?

The rental income that would be generated from Cornbury House is included in the feasibility study and overall business plan.

If the project moves forward members will be asked to vote to approve the leasing of Cornbury House.

Q25: The ‘national events’ postponed from earlier in 2021 are planned to take place in 2022, but will similar ‘national events’ take place in subsequent years?

We are confident that the events planned for 2022 across the UK will bring our members together in a new and exciting way.

While ultimately it will be for members to decide if they should be repeated in future years, we see the ‘national events’ as a great opportunity to enhance our programme of event on an annual basis.

Q26: The lack of parking at Cornbury House has been highlighted as being one of the reasons for the proposed move. What parking is available at Bicester Heritage?

General and disabled parking facilities would be available beside the building as you would expect.

Currently there is additional parking for around 250 vehicles available approximately 150m away. This is set to increase. There is secure parking available on site.

Bicester Heritage itself extends to over 444 acres and offers display parking for several thousand vehicles.

Q27: Does the site have electric charge points?

Our plans include the provision of dedicated electric charge points for PCGB members.

Q28: How much has been spent on the project to date?

The Board approved a spend of up to £5000 for professional fees (for example - legal and architect fees). To date approximately £3500 has been spent.

Q29: Given that the country is going through a pandemic and the economy is quite turbulent to say the least, what is the likelihood of Cornbury House being rented out?

Taking advice from local agents we are confident that it will be an attractive building to rent. We have already received two unsolicited enquiries from professional organisations.

Q30: Any company that inhabits Cornbury House will indeed wish to make alterations. Will they pay for these alterations and then make good when they vacate?

In general terms, other than making the building tidy, secure and safe which we would have to ensure, any agreed development would be the responsibility of the incoming tenant after our approval. The Club would benefit from any improvements they might make.

Q31: Define what proportion of the poll will be determined as 'overwhelming' when counting supporters versus objectors?

In relation to the poll (which will remain open for 48 hours post EGM), this will be an exercise in canvassing views from our members. The Board has not set a specific threshold but will definitely take into account the general views of the meeting before making a decision.

Q32: Will you (the Board) allow a spokesperson or group to put forward a counter argument in writing before the poll?

All members have been invited to input to the discussion and to make their views known. The EGM offers that opportunity and the board will therefore be guided by those members who choose to participate.

Q33: How many emails have you had objecting to the proposal as set out? Similarly, how many emails have you had saying that without further details, support is not being given?

Emails and other communications are being received on a regular basis via multiple channels and cover wide ranging issues. Definitive running totals are not available.

Q34: If PCGB relocates to the Bicester Heritage will members get free site access?

As a tenant of Bicester Heritage, the members of our Club would benefit from free access/parking when visiting the proposed Clubhouse.

Q35: Has any company or group expressed an interest in renting Cornbury House?

Two parties have already expressed an interest in renting Cornbury House.

Q36: Having looked at the video on our website, has the size of the building been assessed for further expansion in membership? In my view of the video the communal areas look fairly small.

The video presentation is conceptual - one of the benefits of the proposed move is that we would be starting with a 'blank canvas' building. Final designs would provide multi use areas with reconfiguration options for specific events.

Q37: Please will you advise the size of the proposed new location versus the size of Cornbury House. Is additional space one of the criteria for the move?

The proposed new Clubhouse is approximately 9634 Sqft. Cornbury House is approximately 7000 Sqft. Additional space is one of the criteria for the proposed move in the context of the answers to Q1&2 in this document which explain the background and advantages of relocating.

Q38: Is there an option to build the new clubhouse facilities onto the footprint of a new Porsche Centre (PC) development in 2022/2023? Given there are potential cost savings to be made by collaborating with other building plans already in train and the added value to an PC of more regular traffic of Porsche enthusiasts - worth considering or investigating further?

In terms of a potential joint venture with a PC, the site at Bicester Heritage offers an enormous range of additional benefits for members on a 444 acre site compared to a typical PC. The answer to Q2 outlines some of the main benefits. These facilities, we feel are unique to the Bicester site.

Q39: Why has there been no transparency in the Board minutes over the move to Bicester?

The notion of relocating has been discussed informally over many years by different boards. The project was discussed formally by the current Board as a whole, once it became evident that the right opportunity at Bicester Heritage was available on a site that met our specification list (Q2).

Q40: Has the Club been provided with detailed advice in respect to open market letting Cornbury House?

Yes, by the same professional company that has been valuing Cornbury House for the last 20 years.