

**SUPPORTING  
PLANNING STATEMENT**

**HEYFORD PARK  
RAF HEYFORD PARK  
HEYFORD  
OXFORDSHIRE**

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(Table PB-11a, September 2007)
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(Schedule RD 4ae and Drawing N.0111\_22-1h)

## **PREFACE**

This Statement has been updated in June 2008 in order to reflect changes to the application made on 26<sup>th</sup> June to Cherwell District Council. Where relevant, it also incorporates changes made earlier in May 2008.

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1. This brief supporting statement has been prepared by Pegasus Planning Group on behalf of North Oxfordshire Consortium Limited in support of the outline planning application submitted to Cherwell District Council in respect of Former RAF Heyford Park, Bicester, Oxfordshire. This statement is not intended to exhaustively repeat issues which are already comprehensively addressed in the Environmental Statement but rather is intended to summarise the key points arising.
- 1.2. The statement describes the proposed development at Heyford Park and outlines the principal planning policy issues.
- 1.3. Section 2 of this report describes the nature of the proposals and gives the description of development.
- 1.4. Section 3 describes the planning policy context for Heyford Park which underlies the preparation of these comprehensive development proposals.
- 1.5. Section 4 sets out a resume of the additional supporting material and reports which accompany the planning application submission. This includes a full Environmental Statement and a Design and Access Statement.

## 2. DESCRIPTION OF DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS

- 2.1. The scheme comprises a comprehensive mixed use new settlement of about 1,000 dwellings incorporating new dwellings and employment buildings within the New Settlement Area together with some retained buildings and structures and permanent changes of use on the balance of the site comprising the wider Flying Field.
- 2.2. The scheme comprises one single outline planning application for all these activities incorporating both new buildings, engineering activities and changes of use covering the whole of the former Heyford Park Air Base. It is also accompanied by a series of separate (but linked Conservation Area Consents) involving removal of protected buildings/trees within the Conservation Area.
- 2.3. The proposed **New Settlement Area** includes the following uses and development:-
- 1) Class C3 (residential dwellinghouses): up to 1,075 new dwellings (including the retention of some existing military housing), to be erected in 2 and 3 storey buildings, together with change of use of Building 455;
  - 2) Class D1 (non residential institutions): change of use of building 457 to a nursery/crèche, building 549 to provide accommodation for a Community Hall and building 572 to provide accommodation for a Chapel; Buildings 126, 129 and 315 to provide a Heritage Centre up to 4,200 sq.m, together with associated car parking.
  - 3) Change of Use of Building 74 to Class C1/D1 use as a hotel/conference centre of up to 4,150 sq. metres.
  - 4) Class A1 retail provision of up to 743 sq.metres floorspace, and change of use of Building 459 to Class A1 retail.
  - 5) Change of Use of Building 103 to Class A4 Public House, provision of up to 340 sq.metres of Class A4 floorspace in total.
  - 6) Provision of 1 no. Primary School on 2.2 hectares.
  - 7) Erection of 6 no. Class B1 (a), (b) and (c) buildings comprising up to 7,800 sq.metres of floorspace, together with change of use of Buildings 100 and 125 to Class B1.
  - 8) Change of Use of Building 354 to Class B2 use.
  - 9) Change of Use of Buildings 80, 151, 172, 320, 345, 350, 354 to mixed Class B2/Class B8 use.
  - 10) Change of Use of Building 158 to Class B8 use.
  - 11) Change of use of Structure 89a to a petrol pump station (*sui generis* use)

- 12) Provision of playing pitches and courts, sports pavilion plus incidental open space including NEAPS and LEAPS.
- 13) Provision of all infrastructure to serve the above development including the provision of the requisite access roads and car parking to District Council standards.
- 14) Removal of boundary fence to the south of Camp Road.
- 15) Removal of buildings and structures within New Settlement Area as detailed in separate schedule (Demolitions Schedule Table RD 4bd).
- 16) Landscaping alterations including the removal of identified trees within the Conservation Area (see separate schedule) and planting of new trees and off-site hedgerows and access track.

2.4. The proposed **Airfield Area** will include the following uses and development:

- 1) Change of Use for vehicle preparation and car processing comprising 17 hectares<sup>1</sup>.
- 2) Change of Use of Buildings 205, 234, 1109, 3205, 3208, 3209, 3210 to Class B1 (Business) use.
- 3) Change of Use of Building 350A to mixed Class B1 (Business)/B8 (Storage) use.
- 4) Change of Use of Buildings 259, 260, 336, 337, 1011 to Class B2 use.
- 5) Change of Use of Buildings 209, 324, 3140 to mixed Class B1/Class B2 use
- 6) Change of Use of Buildings 221, 325, 327, 328, 335, 366 to mixed Class B2/Class B8 use.
- 7) Change of Use of Building 249 to Class D1/Class B2/Class B8 use.
- 8) Change of Use of Buildings 210-212, 226, 237-239, 279, 292, 1001-1009, 1023, 1026-1038, 1041-1048, 1050, 1100, 1102-1108, 1111-1115, 1159-1185, 1372, 1601- 1625, 2001-2009, 3001-3035, 3043-3051, 3056, 3200-3203 to Class B8 use.
- 9) Change of use of Building 299 to a *sui generis* use as computer data storage.
- 10) Demolition of Building 3135 in the north-western corner of Airfield (also subject to Conservation Area Consent application).

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<sup>1</sup> Clarification of what is meant by 'car staging', now referred to as 'car processing', may assist. This use consists of a mixture of office accommodation, technical workshops, ancillary facilities and areas of hardstanding in which cars are parked awaiting preparation and delivery. The car processing element itself comprises of the inspection, valeting, washing, repairing, tyre replacement, processing and delivery of cars and other car processing activities as may be required from time to time.

- 11) Removal of identified parts of the boundary fence and partial replacement with 1.5 metre fencing in locations as identified on the Landscape Master Plan (also subject to Conservation Area Consent applications).
  - 12) Provision of all infrastructure to serve the above development, including the provision of the defined access arrangements and car parking to Cherwell District Council standards.
  - 13) Landscaping alterations including the removal of some trees within the Conservation Area (see separate schedule).
  - 14) Reopening of Portway and Aves Ditch as public rights of way across the Airfield.
- 2.5. For the avoidance of doubt the scheme does not include the removal of the Petrol Oil Lubricant (POL) system since this can be retained and stabilized using engineering techniques which are outlined in a separate report (see Appendix 13).
- 2.6. A scheme indicating the proposed means of accessing buildings on the Flying Field is set out in the Base Management Plan using the existing runways, taxiways and roads (see Base Management Plan, Appendix 8).

### 3. PLANNING POLICY ASSESSMENT

#### **a) The Development Plan and Associated Documents**

- 3.1. The relevant planning policies are considered in detail within the accompanying Environmental Statement (Chapter 5) and it is not the intention to repeat that detailed analysis in this particular Statement. Instead, this section is intended to provide an overview and draw out some key themes and aspects of planning policy which are relevant to the proposed development.
- 3.2. The Development Plan for Heyford Park is formed by the strategic Regional Planning Guidance for the South East (RPG9), the Oxfordshire County Structure Plan 2016 (approved December 2005) and the Cherwell Local Plan (1996); under the terms of the current Local Development Framework the District Council has also prepared a Supplementary Planning Document in the form of a Revised Comprehensive Planning Brief (RCPB) which was adopted in March 2007 and which provide site specific policies and guidance.
- 3.3. It should be noted that the statutory Local Plan applying to the site dates back to 1996 but because it predates the identification of this site in the Oxfordshire Structure Plan to 2011 (adopted in 1999) it contains no policies of relevant to this application. Additionally there is the Non-Statutory Cherwell Local Plan 2011 which is a material consideration but was abandoned by the Council before it reached statutory adoption. It is understood to have been adopted by the District Council for development control purposes but carries little statutory weight. It does contain some policies referring to the Heyford Park base but has largely been superseded by the RCPB.
- 3.4. This section of the Statement considers first the Policy within the Oxfordshire Structure Plan, 2016 before then considering other specific policies contained within the Development Plan documents.
- 3.5. The planning application to which this Statement refers is based on a strategic growth policy for about 1,000 dwellings in accordance with Policy H2 of the Oxfordshire Structure Plan 2016. As noted above this Policy originates from the earlier Structure Plan (to 2011) which identified the base as a suitable location for development following the cessation of military use in 1994.



- 3.6. Policy H2 'Heyford Park' of the Oxfordshire County Structure Plan 2016 provides the overarching policy for the site. The site specific nature of this policy is rather unusual but reflects its strategic importance. It states:-

**Heyford Park**

- H2**
- a) Land at RAF Heyford Park will provide for a new settlement of about 1,000 dwellings and necessary supporting infrastructure, including a primary school and appropriate community, recreational and employment opportunities, as a means of enabling environmental improvements and the heritage interest of the site as a military base with Cold War associations to be conserved, compatible with achieving a satisfactory living environment.**
  - b) Proposals for development must reflect a revised comprehensive planning brief adopted by the district council and demonstrate that the conservation of heritage resources, landscape, restoration, enhancement of biodiversity and other environmental improvements will be achieved across the whole of the former Air Base in association with the provision of the new settlement.**
  - c) The new settlement should be designed to encourage walking, cycling and use of public transport rather than travel by private car. Improvements to bus and rail facilities and measures to minimise the impact of traffic generated by the development on the surrounding road network will be required.**

The supporting text is also important because, even though it does not form part of the development plan (and therefore does not carry the full statutory weight set out in Section 38(6) of the Act), it does indicate the approach which the County Council were expecting to take to development in this location particularly as regards to the scale of new housing development. The text states:-

- 7.7 Land declared surplus by the Ministry of Defence at the former Air Base at Heyford Park represents an opportunity to achieve an appropriate balance between environmental improvements to a rural part of Oxfordshire, conservation of the heritage interest from the Cold War, and re-use of some existing buildings and previously developed land located in the former technical and residential core area of the base. However, the scale of development must be appropriate to the location and surroundings. The County Council is opposed to the development of a**

large new settlement due to the site's relatively isolated and unsustainable rural location, the threat of urbanisation in a rural area, the location of the site in relation to Bicester with which it would compete for investment in services and facilities, and conflict with the objectives of Government planning policy in PPG13 to provide accessibility to jobs, shopping, leisure facilities and services by public transport, walking and cycling and to reduce the need to travel by car<sup>1</sup>. Therefore, the Plan provides for modest development of about 1,000 houses. There are about 300 existing houses on the site of which some or all could be retained or demolished, but the total limit of about 1,000 dwellings will be the determining factor. This proposal has been recognised by the First Secretary of State as 'an exception to normal sustainability objectives as a means of facilitating the remediation of the former Air Base to enable the site to present a more environmentally acceptable face than it does now'<sup>2</sup>.

**7.8** Proposals for development must be in accordance with a revised comprehensive planning brief for the site adopted by Cherwell District Council. Care should be taken to ensure that the heritage interest of the site as an Air Base with Cold War associations, landscape restoration and biodiversity are all taken into account in deciding appropriate measures. In revising the comprehensive planning brief, the District Council should continue to consult English Heritage and the developer on how heritage conservation issues should be addressed, including treatment of buildings from the Cold War era that English Heritage have recommended for protection. A conservation plan for the whole area of the Air Base is being prepared by the District Council in partnership with English Heritage, to enable appropriate decisions to be reached in revising the comprehensive planning brief.

**7.9** In drawing up development proposals attention should be paid to ensure a satisfactory living environment is provided for future residents. Proposals should be designed to a high quality in accordance with policy H3 and will need to provide for appropriate on- and off-site infrastructure to meet the needs of the development in accordance with policy G3, including primary and secondary education, library facilities, and public transport and other highway and transport improvements. Proposals should not provide for any further significant growth beyond that envisaged in policy H2.

<sup>1</sup> In June 2003 the Secretary of State refused permission for proposals for development of a settlement on the site because he considered that the scheme did not comply with the development plan.

<sup>2</sup> Office of the Deputy Prime Minister, 23 June 2003, reference APP/C3105/A/02/1080800.

- 3.7. The proposed development at Heyford Park included within this application complies with the three policy criteria listed as part of Policy H2.
- 3.8. The **first criterion** is that the development should include proposals for ‘about 1,000 dwellings’. The planning application includes provision for 1,075 dwellings, which is within a 10% range of what is typically regarded as being reasonable in allowing for an element of flexibility in interpreting housing policies. This total has arisen as a result of discussions between the consultant team acting for North Oxfordshire Consortium and the Local Planning Authority. The range of accompanying supporting infrastructure is included and provided for as part of the planning application submission.
- 3.9. The Structure Plan supporting text notes that there are about 300 dwellings already existing within the Base and that there could either be demolished or retained in whole or in part. As will be noted from the Master Plan, the proposal involves the demolition of most of the existing residential development to the south of Camp Road, save for the retention of the existing houses around Carswell Circle. The development also allows for the retention of the enclave of Officer housing to the north of Camp Road in the eastern part of the New Settlement Area.
- 3.10. The reason for the removal most of the existing residential properties within the Base is that for the most part these are fairly ordinary structures of little architectural merit but, more importantly, they are served by infrastructure which is not sufficient robust to meet current standards for adoption. Therefore, even if these buildings were to be retained all of the roads and service facilities would need to be removed and reconstructed to meet current standards. In these circumstances NOC has decided to remove virtually all of these structures and to replace them with a more modern form of development as shown in the Master Plan. This approach accords with the provisions set out in Paragraph 7.8 of the Structure Plan and meets the expectations of the County Council at that time.
- 3.11. The **second criterion** states that the proposals must reflect a revised comprehensive planning brief adopted by the Council. This is also the case with the planning submission. Whilst not every aspect of the planning application adheres fully to precise requirements of the Brief, the planning application proposals do reflect the spirit and content of the planning brief. In particular, the proposals set out a robust and realistic position with regard to the conservation of heritage resources,

landscape restoration, enhancement of biodiversity and other environmental improvements which Structure Plan Policy H2 requires. In particular, the proposals pay particular regard to the statutory provisions for protecting and enhancing those structures within the Conservation Area which contribute to its overall cultural and historic character following the advice contained in PPG15. In that context it should be noted that the designation of the Conservation Area took place in April 2006 after the readoption of Structure Plan Policy H2 in the previous December. It was also well after the Secretary of State letter (June 2003) in respect of the earlier scheme which was dismissed at appeal. To that extent we believe that this statutory requirement for protection and enhancement should be given slightly more weight than the approach taken in the RCPB (see covering letter) but we have nonetheless tried to keep as close to the RCPB as possible. The main differences between the application and the RCPB involve the retained buildings outside the New Settlement Area. The current proposals prefer the approach taken in PPG15 regarding the re-use of protected structures and do not follow the RCPB which severely limits the use of these buildings or proposes that they be retained with no uses at all; this is a new concept entitled “monumentalization”.

- 3.12. The **third criterion** promotes sustainable modes of transport and these are fully incorporated into the development proposals particularly walking and cycling. The details are fully set out in the accompanying Transport Assessment.

### **Enabling Development or Not**

- 3.13. Whilst Policy H2 may be characterized as an “enabling” Policy, to allow for the re-use of this brownfield site in an acceptable manner, it is important to note that in our opinion the balance of potentially conflicting objectives within the Policy has changed quite significantly since its designation as a Conservation Area.
- 3.14. In accepting that the Structure Plan Policy can be characterized as an enabling policy, it is important to point out that this does not mean that the development itself should be described as “enabling development”. English Heritage provide clear policy advice on this concept. In the case of “enabling development” the advice from English Heritage is set out in the document entitled “Policy Statement: Practical Guidance to Assessment: Enabling Development and the Conservation of Heritage Assets” which updated an earlier (1999) policy statement on the same issue. The concept of “enabling development” is set on Page 12 of that document where it states that:-

**“Many planning applications affect Heritage assets. Most either enhance, or are materially damaging to, the asset or its setting, they conform with statutory development plan policies and planning permission rightly follows (sic). Creative adaptation and development, which makes the most of the opportunities that historic buildings and places present, whilst respecting their integrity, is often vital to securing their future by facilitating their continued use and enjoyment. It can make a major contribution to regeneration strategies.”**

- 3.15. This opening statement is followed by a more precise definition of “enabling development” as follows:-

**“By contrast “enabling development” whilst it would achieve significant benefits to a Heritage asset, would normally be rejected as clearly contrary to other objectives of national, regional or local planning policy. Such proposals are put forward on the basis that the public benefit of rescuing, enhancing or even endowing the Heritage asset (and sometimes additional objectives for example providing employment or affordable housing) would outweigh the harm to other material interests and so justify their being carried out”.**

- 3.16. The advice goes on to indicate that:-

**“This statement addresses only “enabling development” intended to facilitate the conservation of Heritage assets, although the concept has a much wider application in relation to, for example, arts and social projects in the conservation of the natural environment. It is not a statutory term but was confirmed as a legitimate planning tool in 1988 when the Court of Appeal in R v Westminster City Council ex parte Monahan, upheld the validity of a planning permission authorizing office development, even though contrary to the Development Plan, on the basis that it would provide funds to improve the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden, unobtainable by other means”.**

- 3.17. The advice goes on to indicate that “enabling development” is intended to allow the continued protection of the asset in the following terms:-

**“The problem which “enabling development” typically seeks to address is that the costs of maintenance, major repair or conversion to the optimum viable use of a building is greater than its resulting value to its owner or in the property market. This means that a subsidy to cover the difference – the conservation deficit – is necessary to secure its future”.**

- 3.18. Finally the opening comments makes it clear as to the sort of scale of development which is being protected as follows:-

**“The scale and range of enabling proposals varies greatly. Whilst often associated with proposals for residential development to support the repair of a country house, it can include, for example an extension acceptable in historic building terms, but exceeding the maximum permitted under Development Plan Policies in Rural Areas; or a change of use, compatible with the character and appearance of a Listed Building but contrary to policy. It may be proposed within the asset or its setting, or on some distance site in the same ownership”.**

- 3.19. This advice makes it clear that the development being permitted is contrary to planning policy but an exception is being made in order to secure the future of a historic or cultural asset.
- 3.20. Before concluding on this point it is worthwhile noting that English Heritage are updating this document and a consultation draft was issued in July 2007. In the opening paragraph of the Summary (Page 11) to this document the earlier definition of “enabling development” is refined as follows:-

**“Enabling development is development that is contrary to established planning policy, but which is occasionally permitted because it brings public benefits that have been demonstrated clearly to outweigh the harm that would be caused, and which could not otherwise be achieved. The key public benefits in the context of Heritage assets is securing their long term future, but may include, for example, a degree of public access or contributions to biodiversity. Such public benefits are paid for by the value added to land as a result of the granting of planning permission for its development. Enabling development can therefore be considered a type of public subsidy. To limit the need for “enabling development”, local authorities should monitor the condition of the Heritage assets and where necessary use the statutory powers to limit deterioration”.**

- 3.21. It is also worth noting in Paragraph 1.1.5 (under the heading “The Concept of Enabling Development”) “enabling development” is characterized as a “last resort” and an established and useful planning tool whereby a community may be able to secure the longer term future of a Heritage asset.
- 3.22. It is evident from this advice that “enabling development” involves:-
- i) Development which not in accordance with Development Plan Policies;
  - ii) Development which generates value for cross subsidizing the protection of historic and cultural assets;

- iii) Usually applies to individual buildings or groups of buildings which may be in substantial danger of deterioration.
- 3.23. In this case it is clear that, whilst Structure Plan Policy H2 represents a balanced attempt to achieve a number of objectives, development in this locality on the scale proposed in this planning application, fully complies with an adopted part of the Development Plan. As such it can clearly be differentiated from the “enabling development” described in the English Heritage document.
- 3.24. The second point to note is that there is no danger of the existing buildings and structures within the Conservation Area from deteriorating provided they can be occupied in accordance with the advice which is set out in PPG15 (see below). The third point is that the overall scale of development involved in this case is very large compared to the examples set out in the English Heritage guidance which refers to individual buildings that need to be preserved. In this case the overall scale of the development involves a small new settlement which, as noted above, is in line with Adopted Plan Policies.
- 3.25. Thus, whilst the previous Appeal Inspector (and Secretary of State) referred to the application as “enabling development” the basic criticism was that the submitted scheme did not provide a solution for the whole of the Airfield in a comprehensive and planned way which took into account the other objectives contained within Policy H2. This application differs markedly in that respect in providing a long term solution to the use of the Airfield in a manner which balances historic and cultural objectives, visual objectives and ecological objectives. To that extent the proposal fully meets the requirements of Policy H2 of the Structure Plan by including the whole of the Airbase (and with it the Conservation Area) within its boundaries, together with a Comprehensive Management Plan indicating how these assets will be managed. The key factor is that the proposals accord with a reasonable interpretation of Policy H2 which in turn was introduced in the Structure Plan as a balanced means of achieving the three objectives outlined above.
- 3.26. When in April 2006 Cherwell District Council identified the whole of the Air Base as a Conservation Area, (with an accompanying Conservation Area Appraisal) it also involved the Heritage assets which required particular protection. The result of this decision to designate the whole of former RAF Heyford Park base as a Conservation Area has reduced the opportunities for “landscape restoration” identified in Policy H2, primarily because the statutory requirements for any Conservation Area, are that



demolition should only occur where this preserves or enhances the character of the Conservation Area.

- 3.27. The adopted Cherwell Local Plan 1996 contains no specific policies for RAF Heyford Park, with the 'Non-Statutory Local Plan, 2011' providing interim planning policy for development control (whilst Cherwell District Council prepares a Local Development Framework). Although the non-statutory Local Plan does contain site specific policies for the site, it is the Adopted Cherwell District Council Supplementary Planning Document 'Revised Comprehensive Planning Brief' 2007 (RCPB), which seeks to provide further guidance for the implementation of Structure Plan Policy H2. Further, this document takes into account information about the heritage significance of the former RAF Heyford Park base that was not available when the non-statutory Local Plan was prepared in the late 1990s. However, the RCPB does not form part of the Development Plan (see Paragraph 2.42 of PPG12) and although a "material consideration" does not carry the full statutory weight of Section 38(6) of the Act. NOC also has reservations about the lack of consultation during the emergence of this document particularly having regard to the fact that unusually the whole of this Conservation Area is owned by one landowner i.e. NOC, whose views were not properly taken into account.

### **Regeneration, Sustainability and Delivery Issues**

- 3.28. The adopted and approved Oxfordshire Structure Plan 2016 and Cherwell Revised Comprehensive Planning Brief establish the policy background for the development of the former RAF Heyford Park base. This has been built upon with a substantial body of work which supports this application (as referred to within the accompanying Environmental Statement and other documents).
- 3.29. Given the long lead in times for large scale development projects, we trust that there will be no delay by Cherwell District Council in granting of planning permission, particularly when there is a clear strategic policy position established allowing for the development of the site. Although there are some areas where the proposed development departs from the RCPB this only relates to a relatively small part of the scheme and only involves the re-use of existing (now protected) buildings.
- 3.30. PPS1 emphasises the critical role of planning in delivering the Government's wider macroeconomic, social and environmental objectives. It is the Local Planning Authorities' responsibility to be positive and proactive in facilitating sustainable patterns of development as outlined in the Development Plan for the area.



- 3.31. Through the Revised Comprehensive Planning Brief, Cherwell District Council has sought to ensure that suitable land is made available for development, which can contribute to necessary growth within the area whilst protecting and, where possible, enhancing that natural and historic environment. The NOC believe that this planning application is of a high quality, proposes a safe, sustainable, and attractive community which provides good access to jobs and key services together with a good level of supporting infrastructure. This is all to be achieved in a manner which protects and enhances the environment, prudently using natural resources, encourages sustainable patterns and methods of development, and fully meets the aim of PPS1, to deliver;

**“Community cohesion in urban and rural areas, meeting the diverse needs of all people in existing and future communities, promoting personal well-being, social cohesion and inclusion and creating equal opportunities for all citizens”** (paragraph 14).

- 3.32. The development of Heyford Park will provide a well designed environment, taking its lead from Paragraph 33 of PPS1, which states “that good design is indivisible from good planning”. The Master Plan and Design & Access Statement have been prepared taking this advice fully into account and the resulting new settlement when implemented will provide an attractive high quality development attractive to house purchasers and new investment.
- 3.33. The design of Heyford Park takes the opportunity presented by the location to enhance and improve the character and quality of the former Airbase, its relationship to adjoining settlements whilst at the same time protecting its historic and cultural heritage.
- 3.34. With a site of this size and its multi-faceted sensitivity community involvement has been significant in seeking to developing the proposals with the local population and existing business community already located on the Base. The Statement of Community Involvement and the good level of response to this exercise indicate a considerable level of local interest; a number of the points put forward in this process have been taken into account in the preparation of the application.

### **Conservation Issues**

- 3.35. The recent designation of the site as a Conservation Area in April 2006 begins with a statutory duty to preserve or enhance all the aspects of the character or appearance, that define that area's special interest. It has undoubtedly shifted the balance as between the potentially conflicting objectives in Structure Plan Policy H2 as regards visual improvements and protection of historic and cultural assets. Moreover, its designation requires the advice contained in PPG15 as regards both demolition of buildings and structures and re-use of retained buildings, to be fully taken into account.
- 3.36. The accompanying ES addresses and appraises the heritage interest in considerable detail. Whilst a number of structures and buildings primarily to the south of Camp Road are proposed for demolition (in order to facilitate the construction of an inclusive and sustainable New Settlement Area) the majority of buildings on the Flying Field are to be retained. In the various Conservation studies of the Base, it has been indicated that the area south of Camp Road is of less importance to defining the special character or appearance of the wider Conservation Area. More recently an allowance for demolition in this area is also made within the RCPB.
- 3.37. Similarly to the north of Camp Road, there are a number of demolitions of structures proposed which will provide an attractive setting for development of the New Settlement, but again whose demolition will not unduly affect adversely the character or appearance of the wider Conservation Area.
- 3.38. On the wider Flying Field, which contains many of the most significant structures and buildings which do contribute to the character of the Conservation Area, there are some differences lie between the RCPB and the submitted planning application.
- 3.39. The RCPB proposes selective demolition in key areas (notably in the North West and South East corner of the airfield); the planning application has respected this and proposes demolition to accord with this policy requirement but whether or not this can be justified in terms of enhancing or conserving the character of the Conservation Area, is more difficult to determine. The same comments apply in relation to the surrounding perimeter fence which has in large part been removed in accordance with the RCPB but has been partially replaced around the Core Flying Field to provide protection for the protected structures and to protect the ecological assets.

- 3.40. In accordance with advice in PPG15, the planning application seeks to re-use existing structures and buildings proposed for retention on the Flying Field. In this context Paragraph 3.8 of PPG15 notes that ‘generally the best way of securing the upkeep of historic buildings and areas is keep them in active use’, and paragraph 3.10 notes that ‘the best use will very often be the use for which the building was originally designed, and the continuation or reinstatement of that use should certainly be the first option when the future of a building is considered.’ As noted above this approach does depart from the RCPB in some respects - although the restrictions on uses set out at Paragraph 5.5.3 of the RCPB can in fact be accommodated in a great many instances (for instance, in respect of the Hardened Aircraft Shelters and the bomb stores). This approach is set out in more detail in the proposed Base Management Plan which accompanies this planning submission (as required by the RCPB).
- 3.41. Even so, there are some smaller structures which are not capable of economic re-use across the wider airfield which the planning application proposes to retain with ‘nil use’. These include a variety of structures and buildings which cumulatively add to the character and appearance of the wider airfield. These are detailed in a separate schedule Table RD4a within the Base Management Plan.
- 3.42. The development proposals therefore recognise that, in order to provide a sustainable community and provide effective stewardship of Heyford Park, appropriate permanent uses should be found for much of the site. As the supporting documentation demonstrates in many cases continued or new usage is the best manner to provide for a buildings perseverance and this fully accords with central Government guidance in PPG15 as well as advice from English Heritage. The proposals as submitted are accompanied by a detailed Management Plan and Buildings Schedule which seeks to provide guidance and reassurance that the built environment retained as part of the lasting arrangement will be effectively maintained. More importantly the Management Plan demonstrates that those features and items worthy of protection will not lost or damaged as Heyford Park becomes a vibrant and viable new community.

### **Housing Issues**

- 3.43. The proposals at Heyford Park reflect the Government’s key housing objective as laid down in Paragraph 9 of PPS3, viz:-

**“to ensure that everyone has the opportunity of living in a decent home, which they can afford, in a community where they want to live”.**

- 3.44. With regard to identifying suitable locations for housing development, PPS 3 paragraph 36 indicates that in support of its objective of creating mixed and sustainable communities, the Government's policy is to ensure that housing is developed in sustainable locations which offer a range of community facilities and with good access to jobs, key services and infrastructure. Priority should be given to the development of previously developed land, such as at Heyford Park, although all suitable locations should make effective use of land, existing infrastructure and available public and private investment. It is also relevant to note Paragraph 36 of PPS3 which encourages early consideration of publicly owned sites for housing development. Heyford Park previously fell into this category and should therefore be considered in the context of this advice.
- 3.45. The development of Heyford Park as a New Settlement for about 1,000 dwellings forms an important component in the Structure Plan provision for housing in Cherwell District Council area. The strategic location has now been identified for nearly 10 years and, whilst there have been delays in bringing the application forward (for a variety of reasons), employment activities have continued to be attracted to the area thereby improving its sustainability credentials. However, in housing terms planning permission ought to be granted to assist the Planning Authority in meeting its housing requirements particularly given the delays in bringing forward other housing sites through the Local Plan and the housing shortfall that built up in the early years of this decade.
- 3.46. The principles in accommodating a balance of housing and other uses to ensure an element of self containment with reduced commuting, can be comprehensively addressed through the development of Heyford Park in order to create an inclusive, mixed community.
- 3.47. The proposed development regards good design as fundamental to the development of high quality new housing. The accompanying Design and Access Statement covers design matters in greater detail. However, as this is an outline application with all matters reserved, it is anticipated that much of the detail is appropriately dealt with at a future stage when details established in Design Codes and Reserved Matters Applications are put before Cherwell District Council. Linking the Master Plan and

Design & Access Statements into this process can best be achieved through the imposition of conditions.

- 3.48. Achieving a variety and mix of housing sizes and tenures is also held to be important by the NOC. The proposals seek to reflect demand both in the quantum and the profile or 'type' of market housing required, (in terms of tenure and price) to provide a balanced sustainable community. The proposals will provide a proportion of affordable housing commensurate with current national guidance and Cherwell District Council requirements. This is set out in more detail in the accompanying Affordable Housing Statement.
- 3.49. The overall density of the housing within these proposals is just over 30 dwellings per hectare and reflects the balance towards family housing within the scheme (see Design & Access Statement). This accords with the latest PSS3 target of 30 dwellings per hectare which is advocated as a national indicative minimum standard.
- 3.50. With regard to the deliverability of Heyford Park, the application proposals detail delivery and phasing over a five year timescale, in line with CDC's Housing Delivery Monitor (published at CDC Executive Committee, February 2007). It is anticipated that allowing for the discharge of conditions completions can start to occur within about 18 – 24 months from the date when outline planning permission is granted.

### **Sustainable Development in Rural Areas**

- 3.51. PPS7 identifies four main objectives in relation to sustainable development in rural areas:
- To raise the quality of life and the environment in rural areas;
  - To promote more sustainable patterns of development;
  - To promote the development of the English regions by improving their economic performance so that all are able to reach their full potential, and
  - To promote sustainable, diverse and adaptable agriculture sectors.
- 3.52. PPS7 specifically supports a wide range of economic activity in rural areas (Paragraph 5) as well as looking specifically at the re-use of buildings in the countryside (Paragraph 17).

- 3.53. The aim is that the Heyford Park proposals will seek to facilitate and promote a sustainable pattern of development within this rural area by providing a balance of uses including an appropriate level of jobs within the scheme. It has been noted that whereas Policy H2 of the Structure Plan does not refer to any specific level of job provision the RCPB aims to try and restrict the number of jobs to be provided to a level of about 1,300, most of which will be focussed within the New Settlement Area. In order to continue the economic momentum which has built up at Heyford Park over the last 10 years (during which temporary consents have been granted) the current planning application allows for the creation of new jobs both within the New Settlement Area and the retention and creation of new jobs elsewhere on the Flying Field. Since many of the existing structures on the Airfield are occupied by specialist employment uses it is a little difficult to predict the precise job numbers arising from this application. However it is estimated that the total numbers which could arise will amount to about 1,500 jobs which is slightly above the employment figure calculated in the RCPB. However, taking into account the fact that there are already about 900 jobs within the site we do not believe that this difference represents a material consideration justifying refusal of planning permission especially given that it entails occupation of all the protected structures.
- 3.54. It is self evident that the occupation of many of the buildings within the wider Flying Field has had a positive impact on the rural economy of Central Oxfordshire. Indeed, outside Banbury and Bicester Urban Areas, Heyford Park constitutes the largest quantum of usable floorspace within the whole of Cherwell District Council area. At present there exists about 120,000 sq.metres of floorspace capable of employment use. As a result of a number of temporary and personalized consents issued since 1996, the total workforce within the Conservation Area now exceeds 900 persons. Therefore Heyford Park is already well placed to facilitate healthy and diverse economic activity within the rural area, particularly if suitable occupants are found for the remaining protected structures.
- 3.55. Many of the existing buildings within the Conservation Area that are proposed for retention are already occupied on a temporary basis although such uses do not fall into the conventional Class B Use Class Order category. Many of the uses attracted to the site are specialist activities which require high levels of security, together with reasonable access to the Trunk Road network. Other uses are attracted by the relatively cheap accommodation together with the good headroom, whilst other uses make use of some of the hardstanding for specialist forms of external storage (car

staging). The existing employment within the site and the potential for future growth both within the Flying Field and within the New Settlement Area is addressed in more detail in the accompanying Employment Assessment at Appendix 1.

#### **APPENDIX 1 – BUILDINGS IN CURRENT EMPLOYMENT USE (Table PB 11)**

- 3.56. The development will have little visual impact on the surrounding countryside because the housing within the New Settlement Area largely replaces existing buildings. Some employment growth will also occur within the New Settlement Area with the majority taking place by change of use within the existing structures on the Flying Field. This approach to the development within the Conservation Area retains the important cultural and historic assets whilst at the same time introducing a physical form of development which fits in with the overall rural character of the surrounding villages. In many respects the stark and austere appearance of the buildings on the wider Flying Field will remain as will its separation from the agricultural elements in the surrounding landscape. As such, we believe it important to retain as many of the Cold War features on the Airfield as possible, to demonstrate the impact which this had on the wider landscape. At the same time it is necessary to remove or replace the less important structures, particularly the poorer quality residential development to the south of Camp Road.

#### **Development of Brownfield Land**

- 3.57. So far as the re-use of brownfield sites in urban areas is concerned, PPS7 (Paragraph 1 (v)) repeats the advice in PPS1 and PPS3 by giving priority to the re-use of previously development (brownfield) sites in preference to the development of greenfield sites. The only exception to this is where these brownfield sites perform so poorly in terms of sustainability considerations. However, this matter has to a large extent been determined through the Structure Plan process where Policy H2 promotes development of about 1,000 dwellings together with the necessary supporting infrastructure, including employment opportunities. In other words the judgement about whether or not the site performs adequately in sustainability terms has already been made through the Development Plan, as regards the quantum of residential development.
- 3.58. It should also be noted that PPS3 (Paragraph 40) indicates that the key central Government objective is that local planning authorities should continue to make effective use of land by re-using previously developed sites. It goes on to suggest that the National target is at least 60% of new house building should be on such land



and that in working towards Local Development Documents authorities should set out a local previously developed target for this category of development (derived from RSS targets), together with a trajectory over the ensuing five years to ensure that this is achieved. It is clear from an examination of the existing residential sites within Cherwell District Council area that the proportion of brownfield sites is relatively low and that it will be difficult to come close to achieving the RSS9 standard without the inclusion of development at Heyford Park. It follows that the early development of this site, albeit within a rural area, is an important part of the Local Authority's strategy for this area in meeting:-

- i) overall Structure Plan housing requirements;
- ii) Affordable Housing targets;
- iii) brownfield land targets and trajectories;
- iv) securing potential economic growth within the rural area.

### **Transport**

3.59. Planning Policy Guidance Note 13 promotes an integrated transport strategy. The development of Heyford Park must comply with this advice and so the lasting arrangement places a realistic and workable transport strategy as part of the development aspirations and proposals. Full details are set out in accompanying Transport Assessment.

3.60. The three key objectives of PPG13, as set out at paragraph 4, are to integrate planning and transportation at the national, regional and local level in order to:

- Promote more sustainable transport choices; proposals for Heyford Park will at offer a choice of mode of transport within and to the new community, both for residents and employees;
- Promote accessibility to jobs, shopping, leisure facilities and services by public transport, walking and cycling. With the opening of remnant footpaths and the creation of new paths and bridleways, Heyford Park and its new facilities will be highly accessible from the existing surrounding settlements by walking, in line with Paragraphs 75 and 78 of PPG 13 Transport. An internal footway cycleway network will be introduced to minimise internal private vehicular trips;
- Reduce the need to travel, especially by car: The proximity of Heyford Park to Bicester allows opportunities for the enhancement and the provision of a new



bus routes, which incorporate some of the adjoining villages. Improved 30 minute services will be provided to Bicester and during the peak hour to Oxford via the station at Lower Heyford.

- 3.61. The principles of PPG13 have been incorporated into the planning application. Prospective residents of the development, and indeed those in the neighbouring residential areas, will have access to the proposed employment, retail, leisure and community facilities, which will improve the sustainability credentials of this rural growth point in line with the advice in PPS7. The scale of development and the proposed mix of uses on the site itself offer opportunities for a more self-sustaining community without the reliance on private vehicles.

### **Summary**

- 3.62. Taken overall the proposed application provides a strategic mixed-use development of a large, previously developed, site in accordance with the principles outlined in Structure Plan Policy H2. The proposed scheme represents a “modest” sized New Settlement in accordance with the County Council requirements (as set out in the supporting text), whilst at the same time building on the established economic base of the site which already contains a significant number of employees and employers. The quantum of residential development is appropriate to this area (as defined in Policy H2) and the recent decision by the District Council to introduce a Conservation Area provides additional opportunities to retain existing businesses on the Base in accordance with advice in PPG15. Given the difficulties which much larger settlements such as Bicester have had in attracting employment growth commensurate with rates of residential growth (thereby contributing to increased levels of outward commuting to Oxford), it is important that any proposal for a New Settlement in this location builds on the economic attractions it already possesses rather than trying to recreate a new commercial market. The circumstances are such that many of the specialists uses currently occupying buildings on the Flying Field can be retained to form an integral part of the New Settlement in a way which allows the existing retained structures to find alternative appropriate uses. NOC has never seen the justification for eliminating the existing businesses on the Flying Field, nor for any limitations on the overall scale of employment growth within the former Airbase. In this context it is relevant to note that, not only does the Conservation Area designation fully justify the need to secure alternative uses for the protected structures, but the Structure Plan policy does not seek to impose artificial limitations on the potential scale of employment growth in the manner outlined in the RCPB.

- 3.63. NOC believe that any proposals to limit occupation of the protected structures cannot be justified and that any proposal to limit employment growth to only 1,300 jobs and for these jobs to be focussed solely on the New Settlement Area, is not an appropriate solution.
- 3.64. Thus, having regard for the wording of the Approved Development Plan and the advice contained in central Government Guidance, we believe that the proposals fully accord with the overall concept advanced in this application.

### **Development Plan Policy Resume**

- 3.65. The table blow sets out a summary of the principal planning policies as set out in the Development Plan which apply to a consideration of these comprehensive development proposals:

### **Regional Planning Guidance 9**

<b><u>Planning Policy</u></b>	<b><u>Policy Context</u></b>	<b><u>Heyford Park Proposals</u></b>	<b><u>Compliance</u></b>
RE1	Support and further development of the regional economy	Additional employment opportunities created	Yes
RE10	Economic diversity should be encouraged, facilitating small and medium enterprises, and supporting the growth of a variety of economic sectors including manufacturing.	Development proposals will provide a range of flexible business premises offering a range of employment opportunities.	Yes
H4	A range of dwelling types and sizes should be provided, including alternative forms of tenure, in order to meet the needs of all sectors of the community and to plan for balanced communities. Affordable housing should be provided to meet locally assessed need.	The development of Heyford Park will provide an appropriate density, mixture tenures and sizes of dwelling commensurate to the requirements of local and sub-regional need.	Yes

**Oxfordshire Structure Plan 2016**

<b><u>Planning Policy</u></b>	<b><u>Policy Context</u></b>	<b><u>Heyford Park Proposals</u></b>	<b><u>Compliance</u></b>
G2	Improvement of the quality and design of development	Proposals for Heyford Park will remove unsightly derelict buildings, and restore areas of the site for the benefit of residents, workers and tourism and create and enhance wildlife habitat.	Yes
G3	Providing infrastructure and service	Development proposals will provide for appropriate and necessary infrastructure, both on- and off-site. These include measures addressing, recreation, leisure, educational, health and community facilities, utilities and environmental improvements. These are addressed in more detail within the Environmental Statement and other documents supporting this application.	Yes
G6	Energy and resource conservation	Proposals incorporate best practice in energy efficiency and resource conservation commensurate with National, Regional and District guidance and policy	Yes
T1	Improvement of travel choice and reduction of dependence on motorised travel	Proposals for Heyford Park will introduce and enhance public transport options for the locality and the wider district with the aim of reducing the need to rely on private motorised transport; this is further discussed within the Transport Assessment and Environmental Statement.	Yes
T2	Car parking	Heyford Park proposals have adopted a comprehensive approach to the provision and management of car parking spaces, with the	Yes

		aim of promoting sustainable travel choices, including the application of maximum parking standards.	
T3	Public transport	Development proposals seek to increased use of public transport through the provision, encouragement and promotion of convenient, reliable, secure and high standard public transport services.	Yes
T4	Freight	The Heyford Park development will incorporate routeing agreements to minimise impacts of HGV traffic.	Yes
T5	Networks for pedestrians and cyclists	Networks of routes for pedestrians and cyclists will be promoted and developed	Yes
T6	Networks for motorised travel	Development proposals will promote and support a comprehensive strategy for the safe and convenient carriage of people and freight from and to Heyford Park	Yes
T8	Development to provide adequate access and to mitigate adverse transport impacts	Development proposals will seek the improvement of the surrounding highway network commensurate with the creation of an enlarged new community, (See Transport Assessment).	Yes
EN1	Development to contribute to the protection, maintenance and enhancement of Oxfordshire's landscape character	Proposals for Heyford Park will remove unsightly derelict buildings, and restore areas of the site for the benefit of residents, workers and tourism and create and enhance wildlife habitat.	Yes
EN2	Promotion of biodiversity and protection of the sites of nature conservation importance	The significant ecological interests associated with Heyford Park will be protected, with significant enhancement to take place, see Environmental Statement for further elaboration.	Yes
EN7	Protection of geological sites of Special Scientific Interest	Development proposes provision of interpretation facilities and walking routes commensurate with	Yes

		the County Wildlife Site, see Environmental Statement for further elaboration.	
EN8	Development not leading to a deterioration in water quality	Proposals for Heyford Park will, through effective management, lead to the watercourses and water quality to be protected.	Yes
EN9	New development not leading to an increase in run-off which would exacerbate flood risk elsewhere	Proposals at Heyford Park will manage and mitigate for any potential flood risk through the use of appropriate attenuation, see Environmental Statement for further elaboration.	Yes
EN10	Water resources and waste water infrastructure	Development will provide adequate water resources and waste water infrastructure for the development, commensurate with utilities provision and requirements.	Yes
E1	New employment development provided in accordance with priorities of the plan	Employment uses not a priority of the plan, but will achieve economic growth	Partially
E4	Small firms and local employment diversity	Development at Heyford Park will provide and encourage small scale business through the provision of premises (up to about 500 square meters)	Yes
E5	Tourism and culture	Tourism projects at Heyford Park will be based on the conservation, education and enjoyment of the site's historical significance and the presence of protected wildlife species and habitat.	Yes
H1	The amount and distribution of housing	Heyford Park will assist in meeting Oxfordshire County Structure Plan dwelling requirements to 2016.	Yes
H2	Heyford Park Site specific policy establishing the allocation of the site	In line with Structure Plan policy proposals provide for a new settlement, reflecting the Revised	Yes

		Comprehensive Planning Brief and policy and guidance relating to sustainable development.	
H3	Design, quality and density of housing development	Housing development proposed at Heyford Park will be at a minimum density of 30 dwellings per hectare commensurate with National, Structure Plan and Local policy and guidance.	Yes
H4	Affordable housing	Heyford Park will provide for affordable housing and key worker housing at a level demonstrated by housing need within the District and Central Oxfordshire.	Yes
R1	Countryside recreation	Proposals provide opportunities to create new outdoor facilities which are appropriate in scale and are sensitive to the rural location.	Yes
R2	Access to the countryside and rights of way network	The existing network of public rights of way, including routes to neighbouring villages will be maintained and improved.	Yes
EG1	Proposals for renewable energy development	Development at Heyford Park will help meet Oxfordshire's contribution to regional targets, acting to support development of a more dispersed and locally based pattern of energy generation and use.	Yes

**Cherwell Local Plan (1996)**

<b><u>Planning Policy</u></b>	<b><u>Policy Context</u></b>	<b><u>Heyford Park Proposals</u></b>	<b><u>Compliance</u></b>
H2	Housing Delivery	Proposals at Heyford Park accord with the housing trajectories for Cherwell District, assisting meeting of targets established	Yes

		within Structure Plan and Regional guidance.	
H4	Delivery of housing for the elderly and those with special needs.	Upper Herford will provide housing schemes for the elderly and people with disabilities, in locations within convenient reach of shops, community facilities and public transport.	Yes
H5	Affordable Housing	Heyford Park will provide for affordable housing and key worker housing at a level commensurate with Cherwell District and identified local housing need.	Yes
EMP4	Employment generating development in rural areas- development of an existing employment site is acceptable, subject to safeguarding amenity/landscape	Development of existing site is proposed to provide business units in accordance with use class B1, B2 and B8 as part of the creation of a mixed use new community in line with the Revised Comprehensive planning brief.	Yes
TR1	New highways, highway improvement works, traffic-management measures, additional public transport facilities or other transport measures proceed will be provided as appropriate.	Heyford Park will provide new highways, highway improvement, traffic-management measures, additional public transport facilities or other transport measures detailed within the Transport Assessment.	Yes
TR2	The minimization of conflict between vehicles and pedestrians, cyclists and people with sensory and mobility impairments by securing segregated provision, controlled crossings or other measures as appropriate.	Proposals will minimise conflict between vehicles and pedestrians, cyclists and people with sensory and mobility impairments.	Yes
TR3	Provision of a Traffic Impact Assessment for development proposals.	This document will be provided as part of the Transport Assessment undertaken as part of the planning application.	Yes
TR4	Public Transport	Increased use of public transport will be sought through the encouragement and promotion of convenient, reliable, secure and high	Yes

		standard public transport services.	
TR5	Parking and Servicing provision	Development proposals will provide necessary highway safety requirements relating to access, turning, servicing and parking provision, including appropriate measures to reduce visual impact.	Yes
TR7	Minor Roads	Development proposals will minimise and mitigate the impact of the development on the surrounding minor road network.	Yes
TR9	Road hierarchy in residential areas	Development proposals will devise a hierarchical road network for Heyford Park, creating safe and liveable communities.	Yes
TR10	Heavy good vehicles - development that would generate frequent HGV movements through residential areas or unsuitable urban or residential roads and where traffic problems would adversely affect the amenity of residential areas or villages will not be permitted - minimisation of HGV movement by using rail	Lorry and freight traffic routing agreements to be agreed to avoid residential areas.	Yes
R4	The safeguarding of existing public-rights-of-way Network.	Proposals for Heyford Park will enhance and improve the existing rights of way associated to the surrounding settlements and landscape.	Yes
R10	The extension of sporting and recreation facilities	Development proposals will provide a recreation and leisure facilities commensurate to the size of the working and resident population in line with District standards	Yes
R11	Loss of sporting and other recreational facilities	Development at Heyford Park will maintain and enhance the level of sporting and recreational facilities for the benefit of the exiting and new community.	Yes
R12	Minimum provision of public open space	Proposals at Heyford Park will meet The Cherwell District Council requirement for 2.43	Yes



		Hectares (6 acres) of public open space per 1,000 population.	
R15	Provision of village halls, sports fields, allotments and other local facilities.	Development proposals at Heyford Park will enhance and give additional provision of community facilities commensurate with Policy R15 and other applicable policies of the Local Plan and the revised Comprehensive Planning Brief.	Yes
T1	Provision of new or improved facilities for tourists and enhancement of the area for tourism.	Heyford Park proposals will, provide a heritage facility in recognition of the historical aspects of the site.	
C1	Promotion of the interests of nature conservation	Existing wildlife habitats maintained and enhanced, see Environmental Statement for further elaboration.	Yes
C2	Species and habitat Protection	Existing grass and woodland habitats and associated species given due protection within development proposals in accordance with International, National and District policy and guidance	Yes
C3	Provision of interpretative facilities and Schemes that provide or increase access to wildlife	Provision of new nature trail/walk through the County Wildlife portion of Heyford Park.	Yes
C4	Promotion of the creation of new habitats whilst seeking to protect the ecological value and rural character through the control of development in the flood plan of the River Cherwell	Existing grassland habitat retained and enhanced protection within development proposals in accordance with International, National and District policy and guidance	Yes
C7	Development will not normally be permitted if it causes demonstrable harm to the topography and character of the landscape	Proposals for Heyford Park will remove unsightly derelict buildings and restoration areas of the site for the benefit of residents, workers tourism and the creation and enhancement of wildlife habitat.	Yes
C28	Appropriate standards of layout, design and external appearance.	Development proposals comprehensively take account of the historical character of the site and advice on layout, design and external appearance.	Yes

		See the Design and Access Statement.	
C31	Compatible development in association to proposed residential areas.	The proposed mix of uses replaces existing and provided proposed areas of residential amenity.	Yes
C32	Development which fully considers the needs and requirements of disabled people.	Through comprehensive design all new and existing areas will be made accessible to disabled people, in accordance with National and District Council guidance and policies.	Yes
C33	Retention of undeveloped land important in preserving character of a loose-knit Settlement structure or the setting for a Listed building or the preservation of a view or feature of recognized amenity or historical value.	Due to the strong boundary constraining Heyford Park, proposals do not intend any alteration to the character of the surrounding landscape and neighbouring settlements.	Yes
ENV1	Development likely to cause materially detrimental levels of noise, vibration, smell, smoke, fumes etc will not normally be permitted	Proposed uses have been assessed and mitigation measures provided as necessary where required to address any environmentally detrimental impacts.	Yes
ENV7	Protection of water quality of surface or underground water bodies	Water quality to be protected through mitigation and management of the hydrological environment	Yes
ENV9	Treatment and handling of surface water run-off and development impacting on watercourses and habitats	Through the evidence supplied within the Environmental Statement, development proposals at Heyford Park will mitigate for the effects of surface water run off on watercourses and associated habitats created by the development through the enhancement and provision of additional capacity as required for the development of a new community in addition management schemes will be put in place to provide	Yes

		effective stewardship of the hydrological environment.	
ENV10	Proposals likely to damage or be at risk from hazardous installations.	Development proposals will identify and mitigate against the presence of hazardous pipelines and installations.  All remnant Petrol, Oil and Lubricant facilities will be placed in a permanent out of use state.	Yes
ENV11	The placement and location of installations handling hazardous substances will not be permitted in close proximity to housing and other land uses	Proposals will place all remnant Petrol, Oil and Lubricant facilities within Heyford Park out of use for the safety of residents, workers and the environment.	Yes
ENV12	Land contamination and measures to address possible threats to the environment and human health.	In accordance with National and District guidance and policy, a comprehensive assessment of the pollution threat created by Heyford Park's former use has been assessed, with effective measures outlined in the Environmental Statement for the mitigation of this threat.	Yes

3.66. In addition, the proposals have been assessed against the emerging Development Plan and other planning policy;

**Submitted Regional Spatial Strategy (March 2006)**

<b><u>Planning Policy</u></b>	<b><u>Policy Context</u></b>	<b><u>Heyford Park Proposals</u></b>	<b><u>Compliance</u></b>
H1	Housing Provision within the District	The development of Heyford Park will assist Cherwell District Council in meeting its housing requirement of 11,800 for the Plan period to 2026.	
H3	The Location of Housing	In line with Regional policy and guidance Heyford Park allows for creative use to be made of brown field land for the creation of a mixed tenure, new	

		community that contributes to the quality of life within the District and Sub-region.	
CO2	Scale and distribution of Housing in Central Oxfordshire	Heyford Park will assist in the delivery within Central Oxfordshire of housing requirements of the South East Regional Plan, building on the sub-region's economic strengths particularly in education, science and technology	
CO4	Affordable Housing	Heyford Park will provide for affordable housing and key worker housing at a level commensurate with Regional and Cherwell District guidance and policy.	

### **Non-Statutory Cherwell Local Plan 2011**

<b><u>Planning Policy</u></b>	<b><u>Policy Context</u></b>	<b><u>Heyford Park Proposals</u></b>	<b><u>Compliance</u></b>
UH1- UH4	Site specific policies for Heyford Park	Development proposals propose a new community 1,075 dwellings, community facilities and employment commensurate with Policy H2 of the Oxfordshire Structure Plan and Revised Comprehensive Planning Brief.	Oxfordshire Structure Plan
H1a – 7	Housing	Accords with the housing trajectories for Cherwell District. Heyford Park will provide attractive new community.	Yes
TR1-6, TR8–11, TR16, TR19, TR36	Transportation network	Development proposals will provide necessary highway safety requirements relating to site design and access. Provide a transport environment which encourages public transport	Yes

R2, R4, R6, R8 - 10a, R11-12, T1	Sport, recreation, community and tourism opportunities	Development proposals will seek the creation of a tourism facility for Heyford Park addressing the history and ongoing wildlife assets of the site. in addition improved access to the surrounding countryside will promote healthy activity amongst the residents and workers at Heyford Park.	Yes
EN1-3, EN5-7, EN11-12, EN15-28, EN30, EN34-49, EN51	Conservation and enhancement of the environment including the Rousham Historic Park and Conservation Area	Development proposals demonstrate the importance of nature conservation both of the site and neighbouring assets within the locality.	Yes
D1-D10, D12	Spatial and Building Design	Housing development proposed at Heyford Park will be at a minimum density of 30 dwellings per hectare commensurate with National, Structure Plan and Local policy and guidance. With the Design and Access Statement and master plan detailing spatial positioning and the scale, height and massing of the new and existing structures within the New community at Heyford Park.	Yes
OA1-2, OA5	Provision of services and facilities	Development Proposals at Heyford Park provide adequate facilities and services for the provision of a mixed use community of 1,075 dwellings and associated employment.	Yes

### **West Oxfordshire Local Plan**

- 3.67. Rousham Historic Park lies within West Oxfordshire District Council and as such the policies of the West Oxfordshire Local Plan represent a material consideration. The character, setting, amenities, historical context and views into or from the Grade 1 listed park are protect by Policy CO11 of the adopted West Oxfordshire Local Plan 2001, and also policy BE11 of the emerging West Oxfordshire Local Plan 2011 although it is difficult to see how the policy itself can apply across the administrative

boundary. Moreover, as the Conservation Area now imposes statutory requirements on both the Local Planning Authority and the owners of the site (NOC), it is important to balance these with the objectives for protecting the setting of Rousham Hall. The removal of some of these structures identified by the previous Inspector will improve the impact of the Base on the outlook from Rousham Park but there is also a need to retain all those structures which do not detract from the character and appearance of the Cold War airfield. NOC believe that the current application which allows for the demolition of some of the Hardened Aircraft Shelters in the North West of the Flying Field strikes this balance satisfactorily.

### **RAF Heyford Park Revised Comprehensive Planning Brief (RCPB)**

- 3.68. An earlier Comprehensive Planning Brief was prepared and published in 1999, which was based on the previous Oxfordshire Structure Plan 2011. The rationale was to transform the legacy of military use and repair a landscape scarred by military intrusion and activity. However, as this earlier brief predated both the latest Oxfordshire Structure Plan 2016, and the recent designation of the entire site as a Conservation Area in 2006, a revised brief was deemed to be necessary.
- 3.69. A revised document was prepared with adoption by Cherwell District Council in March 2007. This revised document took account of the requirement for a new brief as required by Policy H2 of the Oxfordshire Structure Plan 2016. However, the revised brief does not form part of the Statutory Development Plan but expands upon and supplements Structure Plan policy. In synopsis, the Development Brief sets out the Planning Authority's proposed approach to the development of the entire former airbase site.
- 3.70. In relation to the New Settlement Area it establishes a set of principles to guide development; these include location and context, conserving the heritage interest, the provision of a satisfactory living environment, settlement components, transport, the design of the settlement, sustainability and future management.
- 3.71. The Flying Field is addressed with a similar set of principles for development, namely, environmental improvements, public access, conservation of Heritage assets, the provision of a satisfactory living environment, the future of the wider airfield and future management.

3.72. In relation to the lasting delivery of these principles for development within both the New Settlement Area and the Flying Field, the RCPB outlines seven specific aspects which the lasting arrangement for the planning application should address:

*'i. Any planning application must provide a comprehensive scheme for the whole of the area occupied by the former airbase. It must clearly demonstrate the enabling works that are required to deliver the environmental improvements and conservation of heritage assets, together with the creation of a satisfactory living environment.*

*ii. Any planning application will need to be accompanied by sufficient information to enable the impact of the proposals to be understood and assessed including a master plan for the site.*

*iii. An Environmental Statement produced in accordance with an agreed scoping opinion should accompany any planning application for the development of a new settlement at the site.*

*iv. As part of the development proposals the Council will seek a Management Plan setting out arrangements for the ownership and management of the site to include proposals to ensure the flying field is managed as a whole to maintain and enhance the site's ecological and historic interest in the long term. The application should include details of how the management plan process will be funded and staffed, how it will be produced and reviewed, and how input from local residents and other interested individuals will be accommodated.*

*v. High quality innovative design is sought, respecting the established character of the conservation area and the scheduled and listed buildings, the site's rural location and the need to achieve a satisfactory living and working environment. The detailed design of new development on the*

***site will be guided by design codes to be submitted in advance of Reserve Matter applications.***

***vi. The Council will seek appropriate S106 planning obligation agreements as required to secure the provision of facilities to serve the settlement, appropriate phasing of delivery and the delivery of the requirements of Policy H2.***

***vii. The Council will require a phased program for the implementation of the development as a whole,' (Heyford Park Approved Development Brief, Executive Summary, Page 4).***

3.73. In preparing the planning application for the Heyford Park New Settlement NOC has paid particular regard to these seven guiding principles insofar as:-

1. The planning application represents a comprehensive scheme for the whole of the Conservation Area setting out all the relevant new buildings and structures and changes of use that will be required to deliver the Conservation of Heritage assets and environmental improvements. The planning application differs slightly from the proposals and policies set out in the SPD but it nonetheless represents NOC's vision for development of the Base. It represents an attractive, implementable and sustainable interpretation of Government guidance and Policy H2 providing a satisfactory compromise between the varying objectives. For reasons which are outlined above the application does not seek to justify "the enabling works that are required to deliver the environmental and conservation of heritage assets" since the development does not accord with the English Heritage definition of "enabling development". It presents the quantum of development clearly together with proposals for the retention and maintenance of existing historic, cultural and environmental assets.
2. The application is accompanied by a full range of information to enable the proposals to be fully understood, including the preparation of a Master Plan for the whole site.
3. The scheme is accompanied by an Environmental Statement which follows an agreed Screening and Scoping exercise.
4. The application is accompanied by a Management Plan which sets out the arrangements for the ownership and management of the site particularly



dealing with the Flying Field. Although the fourth criterion suggests that the Management Plan will not need to be produced until after the planning application is submitted, the application nonetheless contains appropriate details of about how the management process will be undertaken, funded and staffed, together with information on input from local residents, local authorities and other organizations.

5. An innovative design has been prepared which fits in with the established character of the Conservation Area to create an attractive living and working environment. Although the guidance indicates that Design Codes will be subject to preparation following conditional approval i.e. before reserved matters submission, it is NOCs intention to prepare Design Codes for submission before the outline application is considered by Committee.
6. The draft Section 106 obligation/Heads of Terms paper outlines those aspects where NOC will put forward contributions including affordable housing, social infrastructure, maintenance aspects, and transport subsidies.
7. The Design & Access Statement sets out a phased programme for the implementation of the scheme as this affects the New Settlement Area, including demolition and the introduction of new physical and social infrastructure. Phasing arrangements on the Flying Field cannot be specified in greater detail at this stage since this will depend upon interest from the market.

#### **4. ADDITIONAL SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS**

4.1. The planning application is supported by the following reports and statements.

##### **Environmental Statement (ES)**

- 4.2. The planning application is supported by a comprehensive Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) as outlined in the ES. The EIA process is the mechanism by which project proposals are appraised in terms of environmental and socio-economic criteria, in addition to the engineering and technical considerations. The EIA process defines the context of the proposed development/project and examines the significant environmental effects together with any appropriate mitigation.
- 4.3. The purpose of the EIA is to establish the nature of the development proposed, and the environment in which it is likely to take place, so as to identify likely 'significant effects' that may arise by comparing the existing situation (baseline) with the situation once each stage of the development programme has been completed. The significance of effects during any construction phases associated with the proposals are also considered in the environmental impact assessment.
- 4.4. The document produced as a result of the EIA process is known as the Environmental Statement (ES) and is based on a Parameters Assessment Plan issued to all specialist consultants together with the description of development.
- 4.5. The EIA Regulations (1999) require that any proposed development falling within the description of a 'Schedule 2 development' within the meaning of the Regulations, will require to be subject to an Environmental Impact Assessment where such development is likely to have 'significant' effects on the environment by virtue of such factors as its nature, size or location (Regulation 2(b)).
- 4.6. The various elements of the proposed project at Heyford Park are considered to fall under different parts of Schedule 2 of projects which accompanies the EIA Regulations (1999).
- 4.7. The ES includes an assessment of the following issues as arranged in the following chapter order:
- Chapter 1 Introduction
  - Chapter 2 Proposed Development Programme
  - Chapter 3 Planning Policy Context and Socio Economic Issues

- Chapter 4 Landscape and Visual Issues
- Chapter 5 Ecology
- Chapter 6 Cultural Heritage and Archaeology
- Chapter 7 Transport and Traffic Issues
- Chapter 8 Rail Infrastructure
- Chapter 9 Air Quality
- Chapter 10 Noise and Vibration
- Chapter 11 Hydrology and Hydrogeology
- Chapter 12 Flood Risk, Surface Water Drainage and Water Quality
- Chapter 13 Contaminated Land and Geotechnical Issues
- Chapter 14 Geological Resource and Conservation
- Chapter 15 Infrastructure Services
- Chapter 16 Sustainable Construction and Design
- Chapter 17 Summary

4.8. The main aspects for consideration within each chapter, although not restricted to, are:

- Introduction
- Assessment Approach, including methodology and relevant policy considerations;
- Baseline Conditions, including a description of the site relevant to particular discipline;
- Key Impacts and Likely Significant Effects, including impact magnitude and sensitivity assessment;
- Mitigation and Enhancement, including analysis of residual effects post-mitigation;
- Non-technical Summary of the findings

#### **Statement of Community Involvement**

4.9. The planning application is also supported by a Statement of Community Involvement. This Statement sets out the detail of pre-application consultation undertaken in conjunction with the community and other stakeholders. Public consultation took place in order to table and explain the emerging concepts and proposals. The statement sets out the comments received and also indicates NOC's response to the issues raised and how the application has evolved to take account of responses.

#### **Design and Access Statement**

- 4.10. The Design and Access Statement reflects the recent changes to the General Permitted Development Order introduced in August 2006 for all planning applications to include a statement on how design and access considerations have been incorporated into the proposals. The preparation of this Statement follows advice contained in Circular 01/2006 and by advice issued by the Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment (CABE). It is expected that the applicant will make further presentations to CABE shortly, prior to the determination of the application.

#### **Waste Minimisation Statement**

- 4.11. This document outlines the principles that will be applied to the design, construction and occupation of the site in the form of a Waste Management Strategy (WMS).

#### **Building Appraisal**

- 4.12. This document analyses the current buildings and structures within the site and notes their location, previous uses and state of repair (where known).

#### **Demolition Schedule and Plan**

- 4.13. A comprehensive document and accompanying plan which details the buildings and structures to be retained and lost as part of the lasting arrangement for the re-development of Heyford Park. (See Plan Ref: 'Building Status' N.0111\_17-1c) The Demolition Schedule is accompanied by the relevant Conservation Area Consent applications.

#### **Change of Use Schedule and Plan**

- 4.14. This comprises a comprehensive document and accompanying plan which details the usage of the buildings and structures to be retained as part of the lasting arrangement for the re-development of Heyford Park, (See Plan Ref: N.0111 22-1f).

#### **Employment Statement**

- 4.15. This report has been prepared by Roger Tym & Associates outlining the existing patterns of employment growth within the District Council area, the availability of sites, the competition from other locations and the potential for growth at Heyford Park.

#### **Flood Risk Assessment**

4.16. This is incorporated within the Environmental Statement.

**Section 106, Draft Heads of Terms**

4.17. A draft statement of obligations has been prepared by Eversheds setting out Heads of Terms.

**Transport Assessment**

4.18. This is incorporated with the Environmental Statement.

**Tree Retention and Removal Schedule and Plan**

4.19. This forms part of the folder including Conservation Area Consent applications.

**Sustainability Assessment**

4.20. This is a separate document prepared by Arups outlining the methods of improving sustainability both during construction and after the development is occupied.

**Affordable Housing Statement**

4.21. This is a document produced by NOC outlining:

- (i) the amount and type of affordable housing that will be erected;
- (ii) the anticipated availability of Housing Corporation grant funding;
- (iii) the potential mix of tenures and how these will be delivered;
- (iv) the phasing and delivery of appropriate groups of affordable dwellings;
- (v) the interrelationship of affordable housing provision with existing tenants so as to provide the latter with alternative accommodation so far as possible;
- (vi) the registered social landlords (RSLs) with whom the Consortium wishes to work.

**Petrol Oil Lubricant System Assessment**

4.22. This is a separate document prepared by Arups outlining the approach towards addressing the POL system present on the site.

## **A P P E N D I X   O N E**

### **BUILDINGS IN CURRENT EMPLOYMENT USE**

(TABLE PB 11A, SEPTEMBER 2007)

## **A P P E N D I X   T W O**

### **Schedule of Retained Buildings & Proposed Use Class**

(Schedule RD 4ad)