

**Planning Position Statement
by North Oxfordshire Consortium Ltd**

30th May 2007

1. The site of the former RAF Upper Heyford, known as Heyford Park, is subject to Policy H2 of the adopted Structure Plan 2016, which provides for the development of a new settlement of about 1,000 dwellings, including 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.
2. The Draft Cherwell Local Plan 2011 progressed to the stage of Pre-Inquiry Changes, but a Local Plan Inquiry was not held and the Local Plan as far it reached in December 2004 has been adopted for the purposes of Development Control, although its status is a non-statutory Local Plan. For Heyford Park, the policies broadly reflect those of Structure Plan Policy H2.
3. The development of the site is also to be guided by a revised Comprehensive Planning Brief for the site, which was adopted by Cherwell District Council in March 2007. Despite significant issues arising over the Council's imposition of policy changes without further public consultation, the Council proceeded to adopt the Brief in a form which has caused the NOC considerable concern. It is noted that the Brief makes provision for the retention of QEK and car staging as an integral component of the lasting solution for the site as well as for a temporary transitional period pending completion of the new settlement.
4. NOC is at an advanced stage of preparing an outline planning application which will take into account the policies of the Revised Comprehensive Planning Brief for the site. A masterplan for the site is being approved by the NOC at present in readiness for final consultation and submission. The accompanying Environmental Statement, Transport Assessment and Conservation Management Plans are all under preparation, and discussions have already commenced with Cherwell District Council. Further pre-application community and stakeholder consultation is also on the verge of being rolled out by the NOC in order to consult on its plans for an appropriate lasting solution.
5. The outline planning application and masterplan will encompass the whole of the former airfield site. The NOC fully intend to incorporate car staging and QEK's requirements within the emerging masterplan and the proposed lasting solution. It is anticipated that detailed phasing negotiations will be necessary as part of the determination of this application, and it would appear sensible that any changes to QEK's operational footprint should also be framed within wider discussions on the Management Plan for the whole site.

6. The timing for the finalisation and submission of the comprehensive outline application by the NOC is expected to be a formal submission in summer 2007, to be followed by extensive negotiations with relevant stakeholders over the remainder of 2007.
7. Assuming that permission is forthcoming after due determination by Cherwell District Council in late 2007/early 2008, it is expected that a period of several years for infrastructure delivery for the new settlement and wider airfield will need to be undertaken, in concert with new residential and commercial development together with associated social infrastructure. Details of the likely phasing and construction periods are currently being evaluated by NOC and will be submitted as part of the outline planning application and masterplan later this summer.
8. In summary, the incorporation of QEK's operations, both on an interim basis for the proposed 5 year period, and indeed into the longer term, will be consistent with the NOC's wider aspirations to achieve a reasonable balance of jobs and residential opportunities, whilst securing environmental objectives and also preserving and enhancing the character of Conservation Area. The retention and incorporation of QEK will be an integral part of delivering a viable and workable lasting solution for the airfield site.