

## 3 THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

### 3.1 INTRODUCTION

3.1.1 This Chapter covers the following issues:

- The scope of the outline planning application
- The development proposals
- Design approach and underlying design principles
- Development proposals rationale
- Approach to sustainability
- Alternatives considered in developing the proposals

3.1.2 The design aspects of these issues are dealt with in greater detail in the Design and Access Statement

#### Terminology

3.1.3 Heyford Park is the name given to the development of the former RAF Upper Heyford establishment situated near to the village of Upper Heyford. In describing development proposals at Heyford Park, the following terms are used (see Figure 01):

#### 3.1.4 Application Site

The Application Site is defined in Figure 01 and is the area for which outline planning permission is sought for the proposals, covering the whole of the former airbase and some areas of off-site works.

#### 3.1.5 Settlement Area

The Settlement Area is that part of the former airbase that comprised the former Technical Area of workshops and offices and the Residential Area, which included the establishment's family housing, barracks, community and welfare facilities.

#### 3.1.6 New Settlement Area

The New Settlement Area is the area within which new development is proposed. It coincides with the original Settlement Area except on its western side, where it is similar to the settlement area described in Cherwell District Council's Comprehensive Planning Brief, 2007 (March). It excludes the part of the original Settlement Area to the southwest of Camp Road formerly occupied by school and sports facilities in which no future development is proposed.

#### 3.1.7 Flying Field Area

The Flying Field Area is that part of the former airbase outside the Settlement Area. Its former functions related to the active functions and housing of aircraft, and it is now subject to significant historic and environmental conservation constraints.

#### 3.1.8 Conservation Area

The Conservation Area, designated in April 2006, coincides with the original Settlement Area and Flying Field.

## 3.2 SCOPE OF THE OUTLINE APPLICATION

- 3.2.1** The extent of the application site is shown in Figure 01 and the location and characteristics of the site are described in Chapter I.
- 3.2.2** The application site covers an area of approximately 516 hectares. The site, which covers the whole of the former RAF Upper Heyford establishment, falls into two portions, the Flying Field Area, and the New Settlement Area.
- 3.2.3** The application seeks outline planning permission for a mixed development including 1,075 dwellings, of which 70 are existing houses and 1,005 new houses and flats: the proposals entail the demolition of 255 existing houses. The majority of these are bungalows that formerly provided family housing accommodation for junior ranks and which form a large enclave south of Camp Road. The phasing of redevelopment will allow current residents who wish to remain at Upper Heyford to move into newly built accommodation before their existing houses are required for demolition. The former single airmen's and NCOs' barracks, which form an adjacent enclave south of Camp Road, will also be demolished to make way for new housing and the primary school site.
- 3.2.4** The application includes 127,275 m<sup>2</sup> of employment, of which 118,369 m<sup>2</sup> are existing buildings and 8,906 m<sup>2</sup> are new. The proposals entail some demolition of existing buildings and changes of use to others, as listed in the Planning Supporting Statement to the planning application. The application includes associated amenities and facilities for the new development and one primary school. Some of the community facilities like the chapel and community hall are existing buildings, which serve the community at present and are to be retained.

## 3.3 DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS

- 3.3.1** The proposal is for a new mixed-use sustainable community utilising the former RAF base at Upper Heyford. Heyford Park will provide a new settlement with necessary supporting infrastructure, including a primary school, heritage centre, appropriate community, recreational, amenity and employment opportunities whilst being protective towards the wildlife assets of the site, the environment and the wider sustainability agenda.
- 3.3.2** The proposed **New Settlement Area** is to include the following uses and development:-
- Class C3 (residential dwellinghouses): construction of up to up to 1,005 new dwellings and the retention of 70 existing military dwellings), to be erected in 2 and 3 storey buildings,
- Class D1 (non residential institutions): change of use of 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 and up to 4,200 sq.m of visitor facilities; together with associated car parking.
- Class C1/D1: change of Use of Building 74 to use as a hotel/conference centre of up to 4,150 sq. metres.
- Class A1 retail provision of up to 743 sq.metres of floorspace.

Class A2 and Class A3 and A5 units: provision of up to 1,000 sq.metres of floorspace as part of a Local Centre.

Class A4: change of Use of Building 103 to Public House, provision of up to 340 sq.metres of Class A4 floor space in total.

Provision of 1 no. two-form entry Primary School on a site of 2.22 hectares.

Class B1 (a), (b) and (c): erection of 6 no. buildings comprising up to 7,800 sq.metres of floorspace.

Class B2: change of Use of Building 172 to Class B2 use.

Class B2/Class B8: change of Use of Buildings 80, 151, 320, 345, and 350, 354 to mixed Class B2/Class B8 use.

Provision of playing pitches and courts, sports pavilion and four tennis courts plus incidental open space including NEAPS and LEAPS.

Provision of all infrastructure to serve the above development including the provision of the requisite access roads and car parking to District Council standards.

Removal of boundary fence to the south of Camp Road.

Removal of buildings and structures within New Settlement Area as detailed in separate schedule (Demolitions in New Settlement Area).

Landscape alterations including the removal of some trees within the Conservation Area (see separate schedule) and planting of new trees and off-site hedgerows and access track.

**3.3.3** Proposed **Wider Airfield Area** to include the following uses and development:

- i) Change of Use for vehicle preparation and car staging comprising 17 hectares.

Class B1 (Business): Change of Use of Buildings 3205, 3208

Class B1 (Business) and B2 (Industrial): change of Use of Buildings to mixed Class B1 (Business) and B2 (Industrial) use

Class B1 (Business) and B8 (Storage): Change of Use of Buildings 234, 324, 350A, 3209 to mixed Class B1 (Business) and B8 (Storage) use

Class B2: change of Use of Buildings 259, 260, 292, 336, 337, 340, 1011, 3210 to Class B2

Class B2/Class B8: change of Use of Buildings 221, 249, 325, 327, 328, 329, 366 to mixed Class B2/Class B8 use.

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Class B8: change of Use of Buildings 1001-1009, 1023, 1026-1038, 1041-1048, 1059, 1062, 1100, 1102-1109, 1111-1115, 1159-1185, 1372, 1601- 1625, 2001-2009, 3001-3037, 3043-3051, 3056, 3140, 3200-3203

Removal of part of the boundary fence covering the perimeter and its replacement by a similar 3 metre fence.

Demolition of Buildings 3052-3055 and 3135 in the north-western corner of Airfield.

Demolition of Buildings 3036-3042 in the south eastern corner of the Airfield.

Provision of all infrastructure to serve the above development, including the provision of the requisite access roads and car parking to Cherwell District Council standards.

Reopening of Portway and Ave's Ditch as public rights of way. Associated strategic infrastructure, comprising main spine road formed by Camp Road; with access to the main flying field to the north and residential areas to the south of Camp Road.

Removal of trees as detailed in accompanying schedule.

- 3.3.4** Further detailed information on the comprehensive redevelopment proposals can be found within the Design and Access Statement, Environmental Statement, Transport Assessment and other supporting documents accompanying this application. Also refer to the following parameter plans:

1135\_060 Parameter Plan Street Structure

1135\_061 Parameter Plan Development Uses

1135\_062 Parameter Plan Building Heights

1135\_063 Parameter Plan Development Area Open Space

1135\_064 Parameter Plan New Settlement Area & Flying Field

## 3.4 DESIGN APPROACH

- 3.4.1** The masterplanning approach is based on an understanding of the special historic and landscape context of the former RAF Upper Heyford, embracing the special open setting, military context and modern history of the airbase and expressing this in a way that affords a taste of its heritage to everyone living and working there. It is informed by considerable analysis undertaken over many years, which is brought together in CDC's Comprehensive Planning Brief. Special note has also been made of the designation of the site as a Conservation Area in April 2006, the supporting Conservation Area Appraisal Statement, and the designation of two scheduled monuments within the settlement area.
- 3.4.2** Six specific masterplan objectives are identified. These have been discussed in greater detail in the Design and Access Statement. A summary is given below.

### **Plan for neighbourhoods**

**3.4.3** It is essential that the proposed development is conceived as a true neighbourhood and not just as a housing estate. At Heyford Park the New Settlement Area includes not only housing, but also extensive areas of employment, and the vision for the settlement must also take account of the interests of the many people who already live or work there.

Neighbourhoods are distinguished by having a centre with a range of facilities within easy walking distance of residential areas and accessible by all. Most people are prepared to undertake a five to ten minute walk in their daily lives and this prescribes a neighbourhood with a radius of a quarter to half a mile. At Heyford Park the proposed development must provide a balanced development, with housing in both the existing residential areas and the original camp centre.

### **Design with nature**

**3.4.4** There are a number of major natural assets that need to be incorporated into the proposals. The retained elements are connected by landscape corridors to create both visual continuity of landscape and provide potential for wildlife corridors.

**3.4.5** The key elements which inform the plan include:

- Many mature trees, of which a substantial number are of the highest grade;
- A defined open character plateau landscape;
- Agricultural fields surrounding the air base;
- Gentle slopes southwards, picking up the natural drainage of the area;
- Ecological habitats, preserved because of limited public access due to airfield security.

### **Create a legible public realm**

**3.4.6** The network of streets, squares, open space and incidental spaces will shape people's view of the new neighbourhood. The way in which street pattern, townscape, land use and human activity are combined is therefore at least as important as the individual buildings.

**3.4.7** A permeable street layout (i.e. that facilitates a choice of convenient walking routes) combined with a hierarchy of street types, differentiated through width, enclosure and design treatment, emphasises the relative importance of routes within a network. Townscape views and vistas, nodes and landmarks should aid orientation, creating memorable sequences of spaces as one moves through the neighbourhood.

### **Promote local distinctiveness**

**3.4.8** Successful neighbourhoods have unique characteristics that flow from the way in which buildings respond to the natural landscape. By careful placement and orientation of buildings, the underlying topography of the site can be revealed, extending the area's natural features into the neighbourhood and helping to establish a 'genius loci' that makes the neighbourhood unique.

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**3.4.9** At Heyford Park, there is the very special built and historic setting of the airfield and military settlement related to it. This provides precedents for the scale, form, materials and layout of new development, but also sets challenges for designs that mediate between the scale of buildings like the aircraft hangars and residential areas.

### **Ensure safe and convenient access for all**

**3.4.10** A range of residential densities will be provided to suit different locations within the site and make efficient use of land. Amenities such as primary education, community facilities, convenience shopping and essential local services are provided within the development to minimise the need for off-site travel. Land use and movement patterns are interrelated and the following criteria set out requirements for streets and paths:

- Pedestrian and cycle movement is to be encouraged through a 'permeable' or connected street structure.
- Streets other than the main access roads will seek to restrict vehicular movement to 20 mph through design.
- The bus route should be located such that stops can be provided within 400m distance of most dwellings.
- Measures must be employed on Camp Road through the settlement area to calm traffic speeds and give priority to movements within the settlement, i.e. across the road from north to south.

### **A lasting arrangement**

**3.4.11** The proposed development must provide a framework for a lasting arrangement for the preservation and management of the historic and natural assets of the whole of the site. At the same time it must ensure sustainable development principles are embedded in the design of new parts of the neighbourhood, minimising the consumption of power, water and fuel and reducing the environmental impacts of waste, drainage and construction materials.

**3.4.12** Most buildings would be capable of adaptation over time to ensure that change and flexibility of occupancy is achieved. A range of house types, size and tenure will encourage a broad social mix. Careful consideration of orientation, fenestration, materials and energy standards can minimise the use of energy in construction and operation.

## **3.5 DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS RATIONALE**

**3.5.1** The proposed development at Heyford Park was developed on the basis of many considerations covering the following issues.

### **Landscape structure**

**3.5.2** Heyford Park is a distinct settlement within the wider landscape setting. It is characterised by openness and by areas of mature trees within the New Settlement Area. The treatment of this landscape is therefore a key structuring element of the design.

**3.5.3** Key landscape issues that have influenced the masterplan are:

- The edge of the settlement;
- The landscape structure of the former airfield;
- The green network within the settlement area;
- Retention of existing trees;
- Protected wildlife areas; and
- Sports pitches and play space.

#### ***The edge of the settlement***

- 3.5.4** The design approach adopted for the interface between new residential areas and the adjacent landscape draws on the pattern of development evolved in local villages. Typically the edge between village and landscape is ragged, with houses backing onto small-scale fields and paddocks, which extend the wider field pattern into the settlement. The same approach is proposed in the scheme, which softens the visual impact of the development edge and provides a view onto countryside for a high proportion of new houses.

#### ***The landscape structure of the Flying Field Area***

- 3.5.5** The masterplan seeks minimal impact on the landscape of the Flying Field Area. It seeks to mitigate some of the impacts of the existing airfield, such as the removal of the most visually obtrusive hardened aircraft shelters and restoration of the historic routes of Aves Ditch and Portway. Landscape improvements include the removal of alien species and management of existing woodlands and the replanting of certain hedgerows.

#### ***The green network within the New Settlement Area***

- 3.5.6** A system of green spaces is proposed to create walking routes and habitat connections through the New Settlement Area. The corridor through which Camp Road passes is developed as a linear park, and green spaces connect the settlement centre and the edges. Play areas are sited within the green network and sports fields are provided on the open area to the west. Buildings from the former hospital to the former school are to be cleared, emphasising the landscape separation between the new settlement and the village of Upper Heyford.

#### ***Retention of existing trees***

- 3.5.7** Mature tree cover is characteristic of the settlement area, especially north of Camp Road and in the former barracks area. Tree surveys have been undertaken to establish the root protection area (RPA) of every tree. The detailed layout of new buildings and streets, and works to existing streets, take close account of the limits imposed by RPAs where appropriate to ensure the healthy survival of as many trees as possible and removal of any that are likely to be adversely affected. New trees will reinforce retained planting along existing streets, and will be planted along new streets where possible, to soften the impact of the built form and help create a sense of place.

#### ***Protected wildlife areas***

- 3.5.8** The county wildlife site will be protected from inappropriate public access in order to retain the value of its grassland.

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***Sports pitches and play space***

- 3.5.9** Formal sports recreational facilities will be provided to the west of the settlement area, south of Camp Road, in line with the National Playing Field Association (NPFA) standards, which require that 6 acres (2.42 hectares) be provided per 1,000 people. 1075 dwellings would therefore require approximately 2.1 hectares of children's play space and 4.2 hectares of playing field space with associated changing facilities.

**Neighbourhood structure**

- 3.5.10** The New Settlement Area has been designed on the principle that most people are willing to undertake a five-minute walk to reach local shops and services from their home. A maximum distance that people might be prepared to walk for everyday purposes is generally considered to be 5 to 10 minutes. Those walking times prescribe walking radii of 400m and 800m respectively. All Heyford Park residents will live within the appropriate walking distances to the local school, health facilities and neighbourhood shops.

**Movement structure and street hierarchy*****Proposed street network***

- 3.5.11** The strategy is to create a highly permeable street structure with traffic speeds calmed through design. A primary objective is to improve connectivity between the original sub-areas of the settlement, which were developed historically as separate enclaves for organisational reasons. This involves developing north-south routes across Camp Road, which has been a strong barrier though the centre of the New Settlement Area, and a creating a new main avenue south of Camp Road to link the former family housing and barracks areas east to west. With Camp Road, these new north-south and east-west avenues are the main members of a lattice of streets and lanes that serve residential and business areas. A new heavy vehicle access route is proposed to the east of the former officers' mess to feed business traffic into the airfield area without passing through the settlement centre and residential areas.

***Residential car parking***

- 3.5.12** Car parking is provided to Oxfordshire County Council guidance standards, but it is recognised that car ownership tends to be higher in rural areas. Provision for cars and parking is led by the masterplan design, rather than dictating it. The street layout will provide opportunities for additional planned car parking on street and in public spaces to disperse parking and minimise its visual impact. Allocated parking will be provided in designated bays on the street or in shared surface areas; in parking squares and designated areas within the public realm; in small, shared courts behind houses ; in courts serving flats; and on plots beside / behind houses, not in front.

***Parking for employment areas***

- 3.5.13** The majority of employees in the settlement area work in existing buildings. The buildings to be retained are mostly large scale with significant associated hard surfaced areas that are used for parking. Parking will be



reorganised to use existing and new hard surfaced areas between buildings and appropriate consideration given to tree root protection areas where possible.

### **Land use and density**

#### ***Land use***

**3.5.14** The Comprehensive Planning Brief sets a residential development target of “about 1,000” dwellings. Estimates of population and employment generation are linked to this number, based on average statistics in Cherwell district for household occupancy and the level of economic activity within the population. The proposals are for up to 1,075 dwellings, set out in tables in the Design and Access Statement section 4.7.

**3.5.15** The Brief notes that 1,000 dwellings would create about 1,331 economically active people. Pro rata, 1,075 dwellings create 1,431 economically active people. Including jobs already based at Heyford Park, it is estimated that new employment development and the re-use of vacant buildings will create up to 1,449 jobs in total.

#### ***Residential density***

**3.5.16** The average density proposed for new housing is just over 30 dph, i.e. within the range of acceptable residential densities indicated in PPS3. This density excludes areas of existing housing to be retained. Within areas of new housing there will be different residential characters ranging above and below the overall average.

#### ***Employment Areas***

**3.5.17** Heyford Park currently provides 141,000 m<sup>2</sup> of employment space supporting 879 jobs. These are in office, workshop, light industrial and storage activities, and approximately 300 are not related to specific buildings. The development proposals bring 64,000 m<sup>2</sup> of currently vacant buildings back into productive use, primarily in workshop and storage uses, which have relatively low rates of occupancy. These could provide a further 283 jobs, bringing the projected total of jobs to 1,162.

**3.5.18** The remainder of jobs to be provided at Heyford Park will be in proposed buildings in the New Settlement Area, north of Camp Road. 8,906 m<sup>2</sup> of new office buildings will provide 287 further jobs, bringing the total employment at Heyford Park to 1,449. There will be an overall reduction in employment floor-space across the whole application area.

#### ***Shops & Services***

**3.5.19** The proposals are for a new general store. It would provide 280 m<sup>2</sup> (3,000 ft<sup>2</sup>) net sales area and 92.5 m<sup>2</sup> (1,000 ft<sup>2</sup>) storage. In addition, four unit shops of a typical area of 92.5 m<sup>2</sup> (1,000 ft<sup>2</sup>) each are to be provided for other services. The proposals include for the conversion of the existing narrow boat workshop (building 103 on the north side of Camp Road) to a pub/family restaurant.

#### ***Education***

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**3.5.20** New facilities include a two-form entry primary school on a site of 2.22 hectares, a nursery school, a conference centre in the former officers' mess and a heritage centre in A-type hangar 315. The primary school and nursery school are adjacent to the planned shops and existing community buildings. There is an existing bus stop nearby but for most Heyford Park residents the school will be within a five-minute walk.

**Buildings to be demolished**

**3.5.21** Figure 03 shows buildings to be demolished within the Conservation Area, summarising the reasons for their removal. All buildings required for retention in the Comprehensive Planning Brief will be retained, as are key spaces that the Brief identifies (e.g. the parade ground). The Brief also identifies buildings considered appropriate, but not required, for retention, including three within the former barrack block area: former offices, building 474, barrack block 595, and the social club and dining facility, building 488. The barrack block area is to be redeveloped for residential use, and the scale and function of these buildings is unsuitable for appropriate conversion. Their original context on the parade ground is also lost as a result of later development, a scale of enclosure of the parade ground was established and this is reflected in proposals for new three-storey housing facing over the parade square.

**Housing type and tenure**

**3.5.22** NOC is committed to creating a mixed and balanced community for the scheme. This will be achieved through a variety of house types, sizes, tenures and the ability of existing residents to remain on the development for the long term.

**Market Housing**

**3.5.23** Within the market sector, dwelling types will range from one and two-bedroom flats to five-bedroom houses. The proposed development is designed for a range of plot widths, which are able to accommodate different sizes of house. The disposition of plot widths to create variety, mix and distinctive characters in different parts of the neighbourhood is described below.

**Affordable Housing****Tenure**

**3.5.24** The Council is seeking a range of social rented and intermediate tenures (shared ownership and shared equity) that will assist those that are unable to purchase or wish to become first time buyers but are unable to buy on the open market.

**Nominations**

**3.5.25** The Council will seek to ensure that priority is given to those in housing need with a local connection with the area. Accordingly the Council will receive 100% nominations on all first occupancies and 75% on subsequent occupation.

**Design**

**3.5.26** The affordable dwellings will be built to the same high standards as the open market dwellings. They will be 'tenure neutral' in that it should not be possible to identify the difference in tenure between the rented, intermediate and open market dwellings

***Management***

**3.5.27** Management of the affordable housing will be undertaken by a provider accredited by the Housing Corporation. As such it is likely to be a housing association that has an excellent track record in housing management for all tenures.

***Phasing***

**3.5.28** It is anticipated that over 70% of the affordable provision shall be built prior to 50% of the open market provision. The remaining 30% affordable shall be built prior to the 90% of the open market being occupied.

***Location***

**3.5.29** The affordable housing shall be located throughout the development and not concentrated in a single area. It is likely to be built in tranches of 10-15 subject to the decanting and reprovision of existing residents.

***Funding***

**3.5.30** The NOC has made a commitment that it will provide 30% affordable housing on this development. Moreover, the NOC will provide a minimum of 5% rented and 25% intermediate without recourse to public subsidy. Any public subsidy provided will increase the amount of rented up to an agreed target figure. This proposal is in line with the latest Housing Corporation requirements and expectations.

**Scale and appearance**

***Scale***

**3.5.31** All of the existing family housing at Heyford Park is one or two-storey, although most of it is to be replaced. Key character buildings in the settlement are also one or two-storey and some, such as Heyford House and former barrack blocks, are two storey but on a larger scale than the domestic character of the family housing. New residential development will be predominantly two-storey, reflecting the established scale of most of the settlement area. In key locations, for example around formal spaces such as the parade ground or trident area, building heights will be three-storey to reflect the larger scale and formality of the early RAF buildings in those locations. New employment buildings are proposed between the A-type hangars and new three-storey residential development in order to mediate between their differing architectural scales. The proposed employment buildings will be two storey offices, of a larger scale than houses (equating to about three residential storeys) to reflect the greater storey heights required for modern office buildings.

***Architecture and Materials***

**3.5.32** The most consistent architectural precedents at Heyford Park are the 1925 RAF buildings, built in the "British Military" style (ref. Conservation Area Appraisal Statement). These are designed in simple, controlled styles

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with careful thought for the placement and proportion of elevational elements such as windows and doors and with a minimum of applied decoration. Materials are almost exclusively red brick walls and brown clay plain roof tiles, assembled to good quality, traditional details. This architecture can readily be referenced in the design of new housing and other buildings. Simple “traditional” designs would be suitable, but equally more contemporary designs that express modern methods of construction and the simple rectilinear proportions of the original buildings would be appropriate.

### 3.6 SUSTAINABILITY

- 3.6.1** Sustainability is important to CDC’s Comprehensive Development Brief for the site. The Brief follows the fundamental principle underlying Policy H2 of the Oxfordshire County Structure 2016, which is for enabling development to facilitate the environmental improvement and conservation of heritage features on the former RAF site. It sets the amount of housing and employment in the Heyford Park site at a scale that balances the impact of total new and existing development on its surroundings with the benefits of maintaining employment, providing new homes and managing the historic and natural resource of the conservation area.
- 3.6.2** At the heart of the proposals is the re-use of existing development assets, which allows the retention, improvement and future management of the whole site resource. Accordingly, Heyford Park is on previously developed land, providing residential dwellings, key community facilities and business and employment areas. The development will enable conservation and preservation of sites of historic significance including the RAF Upper Heyford Conservation Area, Scheduled Ancient Monuments and a County Wildlife Site. Sustainability principles are embedded in the masterplanning and layout of the neighbourhood and will feature highly in the standards of design and construction.
- 3.6.3** Heyford Park will provide a mixed, balanced community, achieved in part by varying the size, type & tenure of dwellings. Sustainable modes of transport will be promoted giving priority to the pedestrian and cyclist. Heyford Park will be a walkable neighbourhood with local amenities and facilities within easy walking distance of all residents. There will be convenient links to the local transport infrastructure to the wider area.

#### Development Proposals and Layout

- 3.6.4** More sustainable development can be achieved not only in the detail and method of design and construction, but also in the overall development layout. The pattern of existing development at Heyford Park lies close to the optimum east-west axis to benefit from solar energy, and the proposed design of the New Settlement Area in the street network will retain and exploit this attribute.

#### Surface Water Drainage

- 3.6.5** While the majority of the site’s catchment will remain unchanged within the Flying Field Area, development of the New Settlement Area will result in changes to the surface water run-off characteristics. A surface water management strategy will be developed to facilitate the implementation of SUDS best management practices.

This is considered further in Chapter 13. Three key components will be developed as part of an integrated surface water management strategy:

- Maximise natural runoff losses through infiltration techniques;
- Maximise surface water runoff quality improvements through natural BMP techniques such as bioremediation;
- Reduce the total volume of surface water runoff discharged in line with Environment Agency requirements

## **Biodiversity**

**3.6.6** The existing County Wildlife Site will be enhanced through the development of the scheme. Works will include the scarification of a major part of the taxiway and removal of the east and west nibs of the runway. Important areas of the County Wildlife Site will be fenced off and public access will be controlled to protect the habitat for ground nesting birds. The whole site will be subject to a base management plan to maintain favourable conservation status and ensure continued habitat for protected species (see below). The core development area also includes a network of green spaces to promote local biodiversity.

## **Sustainable transport**

**3.6.7** Within the New Settlement Area, the proposed development promotes cycling and walking through its layout. It provides for a bus route through the settlement to be able to extend the existing route that serves Heyford Park. A Travel Plan will be developed as the design of the scheme progresses. Further detail on the proposed improvements to public transport and the Travel Plan framework can be found in Chapter 6 Traffic, Access and Movement.

## **Waste**

**3.6.8** The issues and impacts of utility services, operational waste, construction waste and contamination are dealt with in detail in ES chapters 7 and 8 respectively.

## **Management**

### ***Base Management Plan***

**3.6.9** A management company will be set up to ensure the preservation and enhancement of the historic and natural heritage of RAF Upper Heyford. It will fund a liaison group with representatives from freeholders, managing agents, English Heritage, wildlife organisations and from Parish, District and County Councils. Its remit will cover four key areas:

- Historic and cultural heritage
- Landscape
- Ecology
- Public access and movement within the Flying Field Area

### 3.7 ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED

**3.7.1** In accordance with the EIA Regulations 1999, this section of the ES provides an outline of the main alternatives studied by the applicant and an indication of the main reasons for the Proposed Development.

**3.7.2** It should be noted that the proposals for Heyford Park have been formulated in the context of and in response to the Comprehensive Planning Brief produced by CDC. The alternatives considered therefore lie within the limits set out within the Brief. In formulating the proposals described in the previous section, alternatives were considered for the overall layout and for proposed and existing elements of the settlement. These principles are described more fully in the Design and Access Statement and in the Base Management Plan that accompany the application. In summary, these are:

#### **Land Use**

**3.7.3** The overall land use arrangement of the New Settlement Area broadly follows the historic pattern of residential development south of Camp Road at the eastern edge, and technical and office activities north of Camp Road extending to the airfield. Initial options considered following this pattern closely, with no more residential development north of Camp Road than the retained Officers' and Tobacco Housing, and business uses only in the Trident area. This option was rejected primarily because it did not conform to CDC's Comprehensive Planning Brief, which seeks mixed uses, i.e. including residential development, in the technical area.

#### **Vehicular access to the airfield**

**3.7.4** Employment will continue on the airfield and within the settlement area north of Camp Road, and business and HGV traffic will require access into these areas from Camp Road. Consideration has therefore been given to minimising the impact of such traffic on new and retained residential areas, while ensuring the arrangement is as viable and convenient as possible for business users. At present, HGV traffic travels along Camp Road, passing the whole length of the residential area, before entering the airfield at the western gate. This is considered to create an unacceptable level of impact on the residential area and was therefore discounted as an option.

**3.7.5** Other alternatives considered for this access have been:

- Develop an existing access point close to the A-type hangars and nose-docks, giving convenient access for users of those buildings and direct access to the airfield – this was discounted because it still HGV access close to residential areas and community facilities;
- A new access road east of the settlement, entering the airfield in the vicinity of Letchmere Farm – this was discounted because of prohibitive costs and the environmental impact of a new road on previously undeveloped land;
- A new route immediately to the east of The Officers' Mess, joining Camp Road at the existing driveway access, and passing through the innovation centre and into the business area: this has been adopted as the preferred route.

### **Retention or demolition of prefabricated bungalows**

**3.7.6** An alternative proposal was developed that retained the majority of existing bungalows south of Camp Road.

The premise was that:

- within the Conservation Area there would be a presumption to retain existing buildings;
- the existing bungalows provide high space standards and occupiers like them for this reason;
- retaining the bungalows would reduce the personal disruption of rehousing occupiers.

**3.7.7** Subsequent technical studies have shown that, not only is the environmental performance of the existing houses poor, but also the existing roads and services infrastructure could not be brought up to adoptable standards. Retention of bungalows is therefore not a practical option, except for the small area known as the “Tobacco Houses” north of the officers’ housing area: these present fewer problems in terms of extent and highway layout.

### **The Neighbourhood Centre**

**3.7.8** Key facilities in the original camp centre were spread between the community hall and church in the west and the gatehouse in the east. This separation is a challenge to creating a compact and well-integrated centre for the new settlement.

**3.7.9** Options considered for creating a strong, attractive neighbourhood centre for the settlement included:

- Rebuilding the shop, church and hall in a more focal location – e.g. at the existing Main Gate;
- Alternatively, rebuilding the shop, church and hall in a focal location north of Camp Road, using the Trenchard street layout as the structure.
- Moving the visual focus on Camp Road from the Main Gate to the area around Dow Street, retaining the existing shop, church and hall;
- Redeveloping the area of the existing shop, including its car park and petrol station, with higher density mixed use development;

**3.7.10** The proposal uses aspects of both of these last two options, retaining existing buildings that are well used and serviceable and bringing in new facilities for mutual support.

### **Camp Road**

**3.7.11** Options were considered to redirect traffic from Camp Road through the central area onto parallel routes on its north or south sides as a more radical speed attenuation measure. On balance, it was determined that this would affect other areas within the neighbourhood, extending the effects of through traffic, and that the strength of the Camp Road alignment is a fundamental characteristic of Heyford Park which the design should continue to follow.

**3.7.12** As an alternative, measures are proposed on Camp Road to emphasise the presence of the neighbourhood centre, such as small lateral shifts and colour changes in the carriageway, and other traffic management measures are proposed at frequent intervals on the approaches to the centre.

### Siting of the School

**3.7.13** Options for siting the school are a balance of handling the large area of open space associated with its playing fields and the desire to integrate the buildings and activities of the school as closely as possible into the community facilities of the settlement. Broadly the options have been:

- A site on the western side of the residential area, where school fields could visually be part of the existing area of playing fields to be retained there and would not interrupt the coherence of the residential area;
- A site on the eastern side of the residential area, where school fields could visually be part of the wider landscape to the east and south of the settlement and also would not interrupt the coherence of the residential area;
- A site at the centre of the residential area, where school buildings could be incorporated into the urban form of the settlement centre, with other community facilities, provided good east-west links could be made within the residential area.

**3.7.14** Following consultation with County and District local authorities, the last option was taken forward, recognising that the other two would not provide the level of integration of facilities and relative equidistance from all residential areas.

### Re-use of key buildings

**3.7.15** The airbase includes over 500 non-residential buildings in a wide range of physical condition, use and current occupancy. The future of each building has been considered, and there are options for many.

**3.7.16** Key examples in the settlement area include:

- Officers' mess (Building 74) as Care Home, Hotel, or offices: Hotel/conference centre is the preferred option
- Building 457(in part) as shop or nursery school: the latter is the preferred option
- Building 455 as flats
- Building 103 as pub/restaurant
- A-type hangar 315 as a heritage centre
- A-type hangars 151, 172, 320, 345 and 350 for B2 employment uses
- Re-use vs. replacement of church and community building (buildings 549 and 572): retention is the preferred option

**3.7.17** On the Flying Field Area options have been considered for individual buildings including B1, B2 and B8 uses, and for demolition.

### Open areas and boundaries

**3.7.18** Proposals for the Flying Field Area have been made following careful consideration of options, most significantly:

- Reduced areas of car staging related to B2 activities going on in retained employment buildings;
- Options for routing and securing restored public access across the airfield, taking account of historic alignments, ecological considerations and operational security for businesses;
- Options for planting the edge of the application area to integrate new and retained development into the surrounding landscape;
- Options to retain by "monumentalisation" buildings for which no viable future use can be identified.



### **3.8 KEY REFERENCES**

#### **3.8.1** Specific reference documents relevant to this chapter are:

- RAF Upper Heyford Revised Comprehensive Planning Brief 2007 – CDC March 2007
- RAF Upper Heyford Conservation Area Appraisal – CDC April 2006
- Heyford Park Buildings Appraisal – REAL July 2006