



Redevelopment of MOD Bicester

C Site & Graven Hill

Planning Statement September 2011

PLANNING STATEMENT SEPTEMBER 2011

Contents

1.0	Executive Summary	2-5
2.0	Introduction	6-8
3.0	C Site	9-14
4.0	Graven Hill	15-24
5.0	Planning Policy	25-29
6.0	Economic Strategy	60-61
7.0	Conclusion	62-63

Appendices

1	C Site Existing
2	C Site Strategic Master Plan
3	Graven Hill existing
4	Graven Hill – Strategic Master Plan
5	Graven Hill Detailed Master Plan
6	Walking/cycling distances – Graven Hill Proximity to Town Centre
7	Proposed Transport Improvements
8	Draft Heads of Terms Section 106

Executive Summary

1. The Ministry of Defence (MOD) currently occupies some 600 hectares of space around Graven Hill & Arncott Hill. There are two barracks (St George's & St David's) occupied by Land Forces (the Army). There are also six storage & distribution sites that surround each of the hills, occupied by the Logistics Commodities and Services (LCS).

2. C Site is located to the west of Arncott Hill on the edge of Arncott village and comprises 57ha in total.

3. The Graven Hill site comprises E Site to the north-west and D Site to the south-east together with the hilltop area centrally and comprises 207.23ha. The site adjoins St David's Barracks, which would be retained by the MOD and lies outside of the planning application site boundary.

4. The opportunity to modernise provided by the Bicester estate became the focus of Her Majesty's Treasury (HMT) Operational Efficiency Programme (OEP) in late 2008, which charged MOD with looking at its storage and distribution function, along with the estate it occupies to determine whether there are any opportunities to release funds back to HMT. The most drastic of these options being privatisation of the whole business.

5. The following sites would not be affected by these plans:

- St David's Barracks, Graven Hill
- St George's Barracks, Arncott
- B, G & H sites, Arncott
- The RSME (Defence Explosive Ordnance Disposal School and National Search Centre moving from Chatham).

6. The key aims of this programme are to reduce the capital cost of the estate, reduce future operational costs, increase efficiency and avoid unplanned expenditure. The Government Property Unit aims to rationalise the government estate to the necessary minimum. As such this programme supports the Government's aims.

7. In December 2009 MOD stated its firm intention to Cherwell District Council to redevelop C Site and withdraw from D and E Sites (collectively referred to as Graven Hill), using the value of the surplus land. An outline plan was presented in January 2010 and the Defence Infrastructure Organisation has since promoted the redevelopment of the Graven Hill site through the draft Core Strategy and the Strategic Land Allocations Assessment at the appropriate times.

8. The MOD has explored the value that can be gained from Graven Hill were it to come forward solely for employment/commercial use. Such a scheme would

PLANNING STATEMENT SEPTEMBER 2011

not provide sufficient surplus capital to fund the redevelopment of C Site. Financial viability exercises have concluded that a mixed use scheme which includes a residential element of 1900 homes is required to provide sufficient capital without additional funding. The redevelopment of C Site and Graven Hill could not only secure 420 jobs providing MOD services but it could also increase this figure by 200 and provide land for commercial activity that, based on floorspace alone, would accommodate at least 2070 additional civilian jobs.

9. Outline planning consent is sought to enable the construction of a specifically designed, fit for purpose, Fulfilment Centre on C Site and to develop a sustainable employment and residential development on Graven Hill that would boost the local economy with around 2270 new jobs (the total of the additional 200 jobs providing MOD services and the 2070 civilian jobs) and make good use of surplus brownfield land. This could enable the military logistics presence to be strengthened and retained in Bicester and create an attractive and welcoming community with strong links to Bicester, so that residents (new and old) can benefit from new facilities. Both aspects of the proposal would increase the vitality and viability of Bicester as a place to work and live.

10. This application covers C Site and Graven Hill and seeks outline planning permission, with all matters reserved except access, for the following:

11. Demolition of buildings C1, C4, C7, C9, C11, C13, C21, C49, C60, C61 and C63 (totalling 35,836 m²) on C Site and all MOD buildings on E and D Sites (hereafter referred to as Graven Hill) at MOD Bicester. Erection of a 70,400m² Fulfilment Centre on C Site and associated on site access improvement works, hardstanding, parking and circulation areas; and a mixed use redevelopment of Graven Hill to include:

1, 900 Homes;

A Local Centre including:

A 2 Form Entry Primary School (Class D1) incorporating a multiuse games area with Sports Pavilion and parking areas on a 3.4ha site (suitable to accommodate a 3 Form Entry school to allow for any future expansion);

A Community Hall of 660m² co-located with the primary school;

Five local shops or facilities to include A1, A2, A3, A5 and D1 uses totalling 500m², on a site of 0.8ha;

A grocery store (Class A1) 1,858sqm gross on a 0.6ha site;

A Pub/Restaurant/Hotel (Class A4/A3/C1) 1,000m² and parking areas within a 1.5ha site;

Employment Floorspace comprising:

PLANNING STATEMENT SEPTEMBER 2011

B1(a) (Office) Business floorspace comprising up to 4 storey units of 2,160m² on a 0.6ha site;

B1(c) (Light Industrial) Business floorspace and B2 General Industrial floorspace up to 20,520m² and B1(b) (Research and Development) Business floorspace up to 2,400m² on a 5.7ha site with buildings from 50-800m² on maximum plots of 0.93ha (2.3 acre);

B8 Storage and Distribution floorspace up to 66,960m² on a 18.6ha site with units ranging from 2,790 to 9,290m²;

A total of 62.41 ha of public open space is provided including allotments provision on two sites totalling 4 ha. Public parks are comprised of accessible woodland at 25.21 ha, playing pitches at 5.87 ha, playspace at 3.6 ha and Natural Green Space at 23.73 ha.; and

Associated Highway Improvement works, Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems; Biodiversity Improvements; Public Transport Improvements and Services Infrastructure.

12. The application seeks to gain permission for the quantum and mix of development, and the access arrangements of the sites only. The proposal is that MOD shall sell the Graven Hill site with outline planning permission and work with a logistics partner to deliver the Fulfilment Centre. Therefore, it is appropriate to reserve all other details, including layout, appearance, scale and landscaping, for the end developer to address and seek permission for.

13. This document assesses the application against applicable planning policy. The full list of submitted documents is as follows:

- Outline Planning Application (forms, certificates and notices)
- Planning Statement
- Draft Heads of terms for s.106 (appended to the Planning Statement)
- Statement of Community Involvement
- Sustainability Appraisal
- Plans document (note that these would also be included in the Design and Access Statement – see below)
- Design and Access Statement
- Environmental Statement Volume 1: Non-technical summary
- Environmental Statement Volume 2: Main report
- Environmental Statement Volume 3: Appendices
- Graven Hill Flood Risk Assessment
- C Site Flood Risk Assessment
- Energy Strategy
- Transport Assessment (including appendices)
- Graven Hill Travel Plan
- C Site Travel Plan
- Graven Hill Drainage Strategy
- Graven Hill Utilities Strategy

PLANNING STATEMENT SEPTEMBER 2011

- C Site Drainage Strategy
- C Site Utilities Strategy
- Graven Hill Tree Survey
- C Site Tree Survey



Introduction

14. There is significant opportunity to reduce MOD's land holdings in Bicester by reducing the footprint of those logistics activities. Defence Infrastructure Organisation (DIO) and Logistic Commodities & Services (formerly DSDA) are working together on the programme to transform logistics whilst at the same time realising maximum value from the estate to enable this transformation. This opportunity was recognised in the Chancellor's Pre-Budget Report (Asset Portfolio document), as a result of the Operational Efficiency Programme run by HM Treasury, which found that further rationalisation and modernisation of the business and infrastructure should release surplus land and allow for innovative new partnerships with the private sector for the delivery, management and ownership of the future infrastructure. This should be based around the strategic location and opportunities provided at Bicester as a core site. In the medium to longer term further value could be released through partnering for commercial developments at Bicester.

15. In summary:

- There is a need to reduce the cost of Defence; new facilities on a smaller footprint would allow efficiencies to be taken whilst at the same time improving the service to the Armed Forces
- The widely dispersed estate at Bicester is ageing and suffers from under-investment and so represents an increasing liability for unplanned capital investment
- The Programme Team has engaged with a cross-section of the logistics and property industries to develop a procurement strategy that would interest the market and give rise to a healthy competition. The commercial opportunities at Graven Hill, enabled by the residential development have sparked significant market interest
- DIO's priority is to support our Armed Forces. MOD Bicester offers a significant opportunity to provide logistics facilities that would meet military needs for years to come, whilst reducing defence operational costs in the future
- The programme must be self-funding
- The alternative to the redevelopment of C Site, funded by the sale of Graven Hill, is for MOD to withdraw its logistics function entirely, which would reduce the number of jobs in the area, and remove the attraction for MOD suppliers planning to locate next to the gateway to defence bringing with them additional jobs. This approach could leave a vast tract of vacant land in the hands of a developer who would undoubtedly pursue a similar - if not more aggressive - approach to its development, but with the government receiving none of the benefits of the land release and having to implement a sub-optimal logistics solution at greater cost. This eventuality would also be unable to benefit from the anchoring effect of the

PLANNING STATEMENT SEPTEMBER 2011

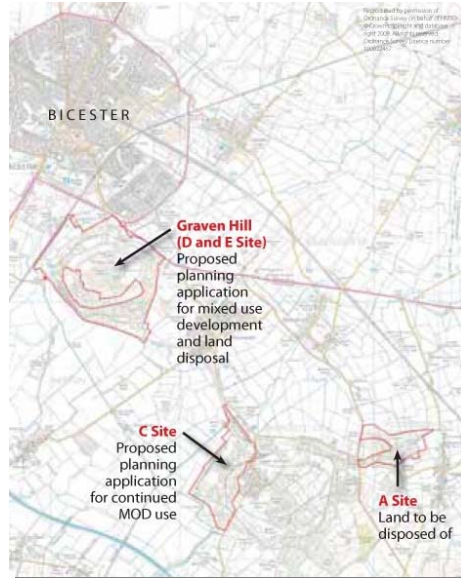
MOD logistics gateway. However, there must be a 'Plan B'; the process of engaging a logistics provider, being conducted in parallel to this application, requires that any other potential locations proposed by bidders are considered and these would provide the necessary contingency should planning consent not be forthcoming

- The footprint of MOD Bicester covers a huge 630 hectares and is shared between Land Forces and LCS. MOD logistics are based on sites A, C, D & E. Land Forces occupy the remainder of the sites. St David's Barracks is wrapped around the south side of Graven Hill and is the home of 23 Pioneer Regiment. B site and St George's Barracks are the home of the new Defence Explosive Ordnance Disposal School, which is currently being built and whose training areas would stretch into surrounding agricultural land (Besterman Land and Piddington Training area). No changes are planned for G and H site at this point although G site provides space to fulfil an aspiration to co-locate units with a function compatible with the new School, which although very real is currently unaffordable. Ambrosden would remain the Garrison Centre where there are patches of Service Families Accommodation. The MOD also plans to sell A Site in its current form and as such it is not covered under this planning application
- The MOD has carefully considered its infrastructure needs as a whole, and whether any of these could be met using the estate in Bicester, particularly given the return of troops from Germany. Other sites in the UK are more suitable for the accommodation of troops returning from Germany as they already have the required facilities such as Single Living Accommodation, that MOD Bicester lacks. Building new accommodation would be a significant investment that would not be made while other sites can be used with minimal transition costs. Having completed their considerations, the different parts of MOD have all formally agreed that there is no requirement in the long term for the land that would be made surplus under these plans.
- The proposed new Fulfilment Centre on C Site could retain the existing 420 MOD jobs, and increase MOD employment by an extra 200 staff.
- The proposed redevelopment at Graven Hill and the new Fulfilment Centre at C Site could secure 2,690 jobs directly attributed to those developments. This number does not include home working, construction, or jobs and services that could be predicted to be indirectly supported by the additional workforce and residents.
- Based on the proposed floorspace, the proposed redevelopment of Graven Hill could generate:
 - 570 jobs within the B1(c) Light Industrial and B2 General Industrial Use class;
 - 890 jobs within the B8 Storage and Distribution Use Class;
 - 200 jobs within the B1(b) Research and Development Use Class;
 - 180 jobs within the B1(a) Office Use Class;

PLANNING STATEMENT SEPTEMBER 2011

- 30 jobs in the primary school;
- 55 jobs in the Pub/Restaurant/Hotel (Use Classes A3, A5, C1);
- 110 jobs within the food store; and
- 35 jobs within the local units.

Total = 2070 new jobs



16. A potential layout with indicative scales and heights of buildings has been provided to demonstrate that the quantum of development proposed is entirely appropriate to the sites. It is important to note however, that the layout and design shall not be decided upon, or approved until the Reserved Matters stage. This document shall outline the plans for C Site and Graven Hill separately and then assess them both against relevant planning policies and material considerations.

C Site

17. C Site is located to the west of Arccott Hill. It is bounded to the north by civilian properties off Ploughley Road with Norris Road to the east. Civilian properties on Green Lane also bound the eastern edge of the site as part of the Upper Arccott Settlement, with Murcott Road forming the south eastern boundary of the site. The western boundary is formed by railway lines within the site and agricultural fields adjoining the site. Please see map at Appendix 1.

18. The site is 57ha in total and contains numerous large warehouses, most with road and rail access. Access to the site is off Norris Road. A further access point (currently gated) is to the south off Murcott Road.

19. The main rail access into the site is from the north-west corner and a link to other site leaves the south-east corner of the site. A further link leaves the site in the north east corner.

20. The OEP identified that the logistics functions of the LCS would be most efficiently delivered from a collocated fit for purpose facility. Further research into existing practices and requirements and best examples from industry determined that the following components would enable MOD logistics to meet efficiency expectations:

- A new Fulfilment Centre building providing 70,400sqm of operational floorspace in a single new building measuring 320m x 220m;
- A new Road/Rail Transfer Area to the west of the Fulfilment Centre to process incoming and outgoing goods;
- An unloading yard to the west and north of the building;
- Car parking for up to 350 cars would be provided to the south of the building;
- Reprovision of the container storage area (re-located from Graven Hill) as hardstanding along with additional provision covering container storage and capacity to cover exceptionally busy periods; and
- A new internal 7.5m wide road to link the re-modelled access point, around the north and west of the new building to link into the existing internal road network.

21. The Fulfilment Centre would measure 14.6m to external eaves height and 18.6m to ridge height. The biggest building on C Site currently is C32 which measures 13,425 m² in floorspace and approximately 6m to eaves height and 9m to ridge height. Please see map at Appendix 2.

22. The impact of the proposed new building upon visual and residential amenity has been thoroughly assessed. The building has been designed so that all loading activity would take place to the west of the building, allowing the building to act as a noise and lighting shield to the existing residential properties. Lighting shall be sensitively designed to optimise safety while minimising light spillage and pollution.

PLANNING STATEMENT SEPTEMBER 2011

23. Following feedback from the public participation exercises, the building has been moved as far away from existing properties on Green Lane and Norris Road as possible while maintaining essential circulation and external hardstanding areas to enable the Road Rail Transfer Area to operate effectively. There would be a distance of 61m between the building and the nearest residential property.

24. The building would be sunk into the ground by between 2 and 4 m below existing floor level. A significant landscape buffer is proposed, consisting of a mound which is between 3.13m and 4.26m above existing ground levels. New planting is proposed on the top of this mound with higher planting and trees to the west and lower ground screen planting to the eastern edge. This buffer has been designed to result in a unified and effective screen for all residents in adjoining Green Lane and Norris Road (calculated from eyeline height (1.75m) from the rear of private houses) to the proposed building. A full landscape plan shall be prepared at Reserved Matters stage when the details of the proposed building would be finalised.

25. Following public consultation feedback in regard to the existing entrance to C Site, it is proposed that the entrance gateway be re-landscaped and the security fence pulled back from the main public highway from the current 46m to a total of 63m to create an improved entrance into the village of Arccott. A new stand of formalised trees would be set back from the road with a grassed area forming the interface with the street.

26. The new entrance would allow up to five rigid HGVs to wait for entry off the public highway. This would remove the obstruction of HGVs queuing onto the highway. Vehicular, pedestrian and cycle movements accessing and leaving the site would use this single point of access for security reasons. Safety precautions would ensure HGV and car traffic is separated from pedestrians and cyclists.

27. Existing freight rail tracks are proposed to be retained to the north of the new building and used as a rail sidings area with no connection out of C Site to the east. The main rail access into the site would be down the western edge of the site and connecting to the new Road Rail Transfer Area (RRTA).

28. C Site does not operate after 10pm on a regular basis. However, the existing buildings and hard standing areas on the site could be used to full capacity, twenty four hours per day, seven days per week, without the requirement for any further permissions, under Crown permitted development rights.

29. The Fulfilment Centre would operate 24 hours a day Monday to Friday with a "skeleton" staff over the weekends and bank holidays to deal with priority orders. The Sunday to Thursday shifts are likely to be 06.00 to 14.15 & 14.00 to 22.15 with a fixed night shift of 22.00 to 06.15, which would operate primarily within the building minimising vehicle movements after 10pm. There would be approximately 620 staff working at C Site over three shifts in a 24 hour period.

Flood Risk and Drainage

30. Most of C site is in Flood Zone 1 i.e. outside Flood Risk Zone 3 and 2, with the exception of a very small area at the north-western most part of the site adjacent to the River Ray at Arncott Bridge. However, comparison of the flood extent with the detailed topographic survey indicates that the area marked as Flood Zone 3 and 2 is actually the existing railway embankment and bridge over the River Ray. This is elevated above the river and flood levels, and would not be altered by the development proposals, remaining as it is at present. Therefore the site is not at risk from the 0.1% annual exceedance probability (AEP) of flooding, (i.e. the flood event which is expected to occur every 1000 years on average).

31. The geology at the site is impermeable which indicates that groundwater flooding is unlikely. The Strategic Flood Risk Assessment reported no incidences of historic groundwater flooding, and the Environment Agency did not report any in their response to AMEC's flood data request.

32. The site's future drainage system would be designed to modern standards, and as such would be designed to appropriately convey and attenuate the expected volumes of site runoff. The drainage system phasing would be designed, such that new infrastructure is in place when new development commences in each area of the site.

33. A Flood Risk Assessment and Drainage Strategy accompany this application.

Land Quality

34. A Phase Two Land Quality Assessment has been carried out and accompanies this application. The assessment found only localised levels of contamination present in the investigated areas and all concentrations of contaminants found were below the screening criteria for a commercial/industrial end use.

Walking and Cycling

35. Pedestrian and cycle priority links are provided through the site from the access point to the main building access. The links avoid any conflict with HGV traffic and are located off road or on quieter vehicle routes through the site.

36. Cycle parking provision would be supplied as per negotiations with CDC and OCC.

Public Transport

37. In accordance with the overall sustainability objectives of the development, C Site's new Fulfilment Centre would be within 400m from a bus stop on Ploughley Road/Norris Road in the vicinity of the Public House.

Car Parking

38. Parking provision would comprise 350 spaces for the new Fulfilment Centre, in line with the parking standards for B8 developments. Priority parking provision (i.e. nearest to the site entrances) would be given to disabled drivers, car sharers and visitors. The draft Travel Plan sets out initiatives to reduce the level of private car use at the site. It is impossible to ascertain how many parking spaces there are on site at the moment as few are formally laid out.

39. A Transport Assessment and draft Travel Plan accompany this application.

Biodiversity and Ecology

40. The proposed development would not have a significant effect on the ecological receptors that the site supports. The creation of areas of woodland and a mosaic of habitats within existing areas of amenity grassland represent 'gains' to biodiversity. Furthermore, it is proposed that a central area of woody scrub in which a dormouse nest was found, is reconnected to the surrounding plantation woodland via a mixture of additional planting and through the installation of arboreal ropes, linking the canopies. It is hoped that these measures would safeguard the future of the existing but vulnerable population of dormouse on-site, and as such positive effects on the local conservation status of this species are anticipated.

41. Please refer to the accompanying Environmental Statement.

Energy

42. An Energy Strategy accompanies this application. The application is in outline only, so the Strategy assesses the opportunities for incorporating renewable and low carbon energy as part of the development. The assessment has shown that wind power may have some potential in this area but detailed studies would have to be done, not least to ascertain whether any such structures would have a negative impact upon radar at Brize Norton or elsewhere. Opportunities would be fully assessed at Reserved Matters stage.

43. The proposed Fulfilment Centre would be built to DREAM Excellent standard. The DREAM classification is specifically for Defence buildings but mirrors the BREEAM classification.

Historic Environment

44.C Site has been in use by the military since the establishment of the Central Ordnance Depot in 1941. On-site accommodation was provided within the depot in the form of Nissen huts organised into self-contained camps, and groups of Romney huts were added in order to supply the build-up of American forces during the war. The Site has continued to operate as a depot in the post-war period, though temporary hutted accommodation camps were gradually removed along with most of the Romney huts. None of the buildings the site are listed.

45. The development of the Site would involve the demolition of the military buildings within the northern part of C Site. As the WWII buildings are of some historic interest a programme of recording would be undertaken in advance of their loss. A group of Romney huts within C Site would be retained. With these measures in place the loss of these buildings is unlikely to be significant.

46. It is not expected that similar sub-surface archaeology is likely to be present at C Site due to the building and disturbance that has already taken place. No significant effects on archaeology are likely to occur.

Highways Issues and Improvements

47. Paragraph 8.2.6 of the accompanying Transport Assessment notes that the proposed C Site development traffic generation would result in an overall net reduction in traffic generation in Peak Time. This is due to the proposed shift pattern. Therefore, the road network around C Site does not require assessment as there is a reduction in traffic.

Indicative Phasing of Development

48. Phase 1

Buildings C1, C4, C7, C9, C11, C13, C21, C49, C60, C61 and C63 would be demolished, to enable levelling of the required building platform to receive the new Fulfilment Centre. In parallel, upgrading of the rail lines on the west of the Site and adjacent new hardstanding, would be completed, to provide the new the new Road Rail Transfer Area (RRTA).

49. Phase 2

The new Fulfilment Centre would be constructed. The first stage (estimated to take around three months) would involve levelling of the site, which would generate material to be used in the earth mounding around the site perimeter as part of the landscape proposals. Completion of this stage would provide the opportunity to carry out planting works to the Site's east and north perimeters, and the main gate area. The main gate would be re-provided at this time, along with re-alignment of the perimeter security fencing in its vicinity. In parallel with this activity, screen planting and habitat creation works on the western perimeter would be completed.

50. Phase 3

The subsequent stages would focus first on the superstructure followed by internal finishes and services. The method of working would be to broadly move from east to west in the completion of the superstructure. This would take advantage of the separation between the village and construction activity that the structure itself would provide. Fitting out of the new Fulfilment Centre is anticipated to take approximately a further four months.

51. Following the completion of the RRTA, the north part of the site would also be cleared and other external hardstanding areas, drainage and services would be completed in two phases, falling within the Fulfilment Centre construction

PLANNING STATEMENT SEPTEMBER 2011

period. Following construction of remaining roadways and private parking, works would be complete in early 2015.

52. Following outline planning consent, DIO would work with industry to secure a logistics partner who would assist MOD with provision of the infrastructure to allow the transformation of the logistics operation.

Graven Hill

53. Sites D and E, referred to collectively as Graven Hill, comprise an area of 207.23ha. E Site is the closest to Bicester, north west of Graven Hill and measures circa 70 ha, of which 48.6ha is currently within B8 Storage and Distribution use. D site is to the south east of Graven Hill and measures circa 60ha, of which circa 36.8ha is currently in B8 Storage and Distribution use. The sites form a donut shape around Graven Hill itself. Please see map at Appendix 3.

54. St. David's Barracks, to the south-west of the Hill, is self contained and excluded from this area as it is to be retained with an area for expansion if required in the future. Under these proposals, Sites D and E and the Hill itself shall be sold by the MOD to form a mixed use redevelopment comprising 1900 dwellings, a local centre and 95,398m² of employment floorspace (excluding the primary school) to directly accommodate 2070 jobs.

55. The site is previously developed brown field, surplus public sector land, 0.9miles from Bicester town centre. Analysis of cycle and walking distances from the town centre to Graven Hill show that the northern part of the site is around 12 minutes walk and a five minute cycle from the town centre. The southern extent of the site is around a 35 minute walk and a 10 minute cycle. This puts sustainable access to the facilities in the town centre within reach of the whole site.

56. E Site contains four main large warehouses and several smaller offices, administration and industrial buildings scattered across the site. Site D contains eight large warehouses, a number of smaller buildings centrally in the form of a training building and fire station and five large hardstanding areas along the southern edge of the site.

57. Graven Hill is bounded to the north east by the A41 Aylesbury Road, the railway line to the west, railway tracks and sidings to the south-west. The southern and eastern boundaries of the site are formed by adjoining agricultural fields with a railway line within the site on both these edges.

58. The site includes the Bicester International Freight Terminal (BIFT) which is in the north of the site along the A41 and in total extends to circa 6ha. There are two main vehicular access points to the site. The main access currently is the roundabout in the north east corner off the A41 Aylesbury Road, the A4421 Neunkirchen/Seelscheid Way and Gravenhill Road North. The ghost island priority junction at the A41/Pioneer Road junction and a further access point to the south off Langford Lane, which in turn leads out to join the A41 to the west, are currently gated for security reasons.

59. Rail access into the site is from the south near the sidings area. The main rail route forms the majority of the northern and western edges of the site.

60. Adjoining uses include Wretchwick Farm to the north east and a sewage treatment works to the north west on the opposite side of the Chiltern railway line.

PLANNING STATEMENT SEPTEMBER 2011

Langford Park Farm adjoins the site to the north west. A stables business and residence is located to the south west of the site at Langford Lane.

61. The design proposals have evolved from early concepts through to the masterplan which accompanies this application, the process of which is set out in the accompanying Design and Access Statement. During this process numerous stakeholders and technical experts have influenced the form of the development including the local authority, statutory stakeholders and the general public.

62. The site is currently used as part of the LCS logistics hub. Under this proposal the LCS logistics operation would be rationalised and moved to C Site.

63. The northern part of the site, closest to the town centre would be the focus of the residential development. A local centre is proposed with a grocery store, five small shops/facilities units, office floorspace, a two form entry primary school, with space to expand if required, sports facilities and allotments to support the proposed 1900 dwellings.

64. The southern part of the Graven Hill site would be used to site 18.6ha of B8 Storage and Distribution floorspace and 5.7ha of B1(c) (Light Industrial), B2 (General Industrial) and B1(b) Research and Development uses, enabling Graven Hill itself to act as a buffer between the proposed residential development and heavier employment users.

65. It is proposed to demolish all MOD buildings on the site and redevelop for the following uses:

1, 900 Homes;

A Local Centre including:

A 2 Form Entry Primary School (Class D1) incorporating a multiuse games area with Sports Pavilion and parking areas on a 3.4ha site (suitable to accommodate a 3 Form Entry school to allow for any future expansion) (30 jobs);

A Community Hall of 660sqm co-located with the primary school;

Five local shops or facilities to include A1, A2, A3, A5 and D1 uses totalling 500m², on a site of 0.8ha (35 jobs);

A grocery store (Class A1) 1,858sqm gross on a 0.6ha site (110 jobs);

A Pub/Restaurant/Hotel (Class A4/A3/C1) 1,000m² and parking areas within a 1.5ha site (55 jobs);

Employment Floorspace comprising:

B1(a) (Office) Business floorspace comprising up to 4 storey units of 2,160sqm on a 0.6ha site (180 jobs);

B1(c) (Light Industrial) Business floorspace and B2 General Industrial floorspace up to 20,520sqm (570 jobs) and B1(b) (Research and Development) Business floorspace (200 jobs) up to 2,400m² on a 5.7ha site with buildings from 50-800sqm on maximum plots of 0.93ha (2.3 acre);

B8 Storage and Distribution floorspace (890 jobs) up to 66,960sqm on a 18.6ha site with units ranging from 2,790 to 9,290sqm;

PLANNING STATEMENT SEPTEMBER 2011

A total of 62.41 ha of public open space is provided including allotments provision on two sites totalling 4 ha. Public parks are comprised of accessible woodland at 25.21 ha, playing pitches at 5.87 ha, playspace at 3.6 ha and Natural Green Space at 23.73 ha; and

Associated Highway Improvement works, Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems; Biodiversity Improvements; Public Transport Improvements and Services Infrastructure.

66. The Design and Access Statement accompanying this application sets out in detail the proposals for the site and how the opportunities and constraints of the site have shaped the proposals.

67. The site relates well to the recent development pattern of expansion of the existing settlement beyond the ring road.

68. There is no issue with coalescence between Bicester and any of the existing small settlements. The proposed development would form an urban extension at a sufficient scale to support facilities and services within the site to serve the proposed population.

69. The redevelopment of the site is an opportunity for employment land and residential dwellings to be accommodated within close enough proximity to be truly sustainable in terms of travel to work, while ensuring a high residential amenity.

70. The redevelopment of the site offers a unique opportunity to improve the visual impact of the site on the existing settlement. The site is self contained and currently occupied by several large storage buildings. The masterplan seeks to improve the visual impact of the existing development on the surrounding landscape. Please see Appendix 4 and 5.

71. The site is optimally located for access to the existing settlement of Bicester and beyond by transport modes other than the private car. Separate access points exist to serve the northern and southern parts of the site, meaning that the vehicles generated by the employment area of the site would not travel through the residential part of the site. The provision of 1900 dwellings, a local centre and additional employment space to accommodate 2070 new employees, would enable the site itself to have a good level of self containment as well as contributing to the vitality and viability of Bicester as a whole.

72. The site is not within a sensitive landscape setting. There are no Tree Preservation Orders on site. The site is not within a Conservation Area.

Flood Risk and Drainage

73. Infiltration tests found that infiltration rates are negligible for the whole of the Graven Hill site. The proposed Sustainable Urban Drainage scheme does not therefore, include soakaways but include a variety of measures to ensure that appropriate run-off rates are achieved.

74. In the north-west corner of the site where the boundary is adjacent to the Langford Brook, the mapping indicates that both flood zone 3 and 2 may extend into the site (to the south of the Brook) by a matter of centimetres. The boundary in the extreme west of the site also abuts the edge of the Flood Zone 3 and 2, (0.005ha being in Flood Zone 3 and 2). No new development is proposed at these two locations, and they would remain as woodland/public open space. All new development would be located in Flood Zone 1.

75. A Flood Risk Assessment and Drainage Strategy accompany this application.

Land Quality

76. The Phase Two Land Quality Assessment which accompanies this application, concludes that the localised areas of contamination would not significantly constrain future development and as such both sites are considered suitable for redevelopment for a residential (with gardens) end use and further commercial /industrial use.

Walking and cycling

77. The site has good access to the existing bus network and the north west of Graven Hill site is within 1km (10-15 minute) walk from Bicester Town railway station, and 2km (30 minute walk) from Bicester North railway station. Please see map at Appendix 6.

78. The location of the site and its topography are such that residents and employees would be encouraged to cycle for journeys both on site and off-site. To promote this, the following measures would be included:

- an extensive network of shared use walking and cycling routes within the site which connect to the external network;
- cycle parking for each dwelling;
- secure cycle parking within public open spaces and employment areas; and
- personal showers/lockers in the employment and local centre space to encourage walking and cycling to work.

79. All streets would have standard footways on either side and cyclists would be accommodated with a combination of on-road routes and off- road shared use routes. On-road routes would be along the main streets in appropriately scaled cycle lanes along Westacott Road, Circular Road, Pioneer Road and the new Main Street. This would provide an accessible network of streets and routes enabling walkable neighbourhoods and encouraging local travel by foot or cycle. Dedicated recreational routes would also be provided alongside green spaces.

80. All housing areas would be within 800m of the Local Centre and denser areas would be within 400m. Home Zone type design principles would be applied to the

PLANNING STATEMENT SEPTEMBER 2011

residential priority streets where the living environment would be predominant over provision for traffic. Vehicles would be controlled to create a safe environment through street design, landscape design and highway engineering. Pedestrian and cycle priority links would be provided through the site and safe crossing points would be provided across the A41 as described in the following sections and illustrated in Figure 6.1.

81. It is proposed to signalise the A41/B4100/A4421 roundabout which would improve the capacity of the junction, and would also enable toucan crossing provision to enhance the pedestrian environment as part of the package of measures to address the issue of the A41 severance.

82. It is proposed to provide an at-grade pedestrian/cycle crossing on the A41 in the form of a toucan crossing at a location some 165m to the west of the A41/B4100/A4421 roundabout, where there is evidence of an existing informal crossing point. The crossing would be accessed from the site along a section of the route, within the red line boundary, that leads to Langford Farm. The crossing would provide a connection to an existing footway across the highway authority land to a footway along the southern side of the B4100 which also leads to a bus stop.

83. The existing pedestrian underpass under the A41 could be upgraded in order to increase its attractiveness for use. This could include improved ground surfacing, entrance spaces, vehicle access restraints, wall and ceiling finishes and lighting. Opportunities to do this with the input of the local community and particularly the new school would be ideal to utilise funds for public art for example to productive and beneficial use.

84. In accordance with the overall sustainability objectives of the development, the site layout has been optimised so that no part of the scheme would be more than 400m from a bus stop. The form of Graven Hill lends itself particularly well to this given its broadly circular form. Accordingly the main circular loop road through the development would be designed to accommodate bus services, with provision for high quality bus stops being made at regular intervals as indicated.

85. Cycle parking would meet Oxford County Council standards. The accompanying Transport Assessment details fully the approach taken to the future walking and cycling environment.

Public Transport

86. The site is currently not directly served by a bus service. Bus services 23, 30, 94 and S5 (Oxford to Langford bus route via Bicester) passes by the site to the north along the A41 and the B4421 London Road.

87. The Graven Hill bus stop on the London road is located approximately one minute walk from the entrance to the site. In addition, the Langford Village,

PLANNING STATEMENT SEPTEMBER 2011

Ravencroft bus stop is located approximately five minutes walk from the Graven Hill site.

88. It is anticipated that all bus services would focus around the Local Centre as the main stopping point, with other stops at key points throughout the employment area linking into the green/footpath network in particular. This network of potential bus services and enhancement of existing bus services is presented in the accompanying Transport Assessment and Travel Plan.

89. General guidance on levels of bus service provision identifies a frequency of at least 15-20 minutes is required to provide a feasible alternative to private car use.

90. It is proposed to provide a new 15-20 minute frequency bus service to link the site to the town centre and railway stations. This would comprise a minibus during the initial stages of occupancy, upgrading to a larger bus as the development builds out. The service would link with train times.

91. It has been acknowledged by Oxford County Council that the employment area doesn't need a frequent service all day and that service times can be restricted to peak periods and lunchtime.

92. As there is no public funding available to subsidise buses, the service would need to be commercially viable within a specified time frame as it is recognised that a development cannot be expected to fund a service indefinitely. The opportunity for the bus service to link to other developments would be investigated with the promoters of those sites; this would help the funding and commercial viability of the service. The draft Heads of Terms (Please see Appendix 8) contains information upon funding.

93. The proposed development would increase the number of people living and working within walking distance of the existing settlement, increase usage of, and improve public transport networks and improve pedestrian links.

94. The accompanying Transport Assessment details fully the approach taken to the future public transport environment.

Car Parking

95. As this application is in outline only, and all detailed layout matters shall be assessed at Reserved Matters stage, this application shows that Oxford County Council standards for car and cycle parking can be accommodated on site. At Reserved Matters stage, detailed layout assessment can inform an appropriate parking strategy.

Biodiversity and Ecology

96. As a result of the environmental measures/mitigation strategies to be included within the proposed development design, it can be concluded that the proposed development would not have any significant effects on the ecological receptors that the site supports. Indeed, the creation of areas of woodland, water bodies, mosaics of habitats and green corridors on-site would result in 'gains' to the biodiversity on-site and the legally protected/notable species that these areas of habitat support.

Energy

97. The proposal includes a 400m² Energy Centre to be located in the local centre area, to be close to the major energy users, i.e., the Grocery Store. An area is safeguarded in the employment area to the south for a similar Energy Centre should it be practicable to locate one there. The Energy Strategy which accompanies this application sets out the process and analysis that has taken place. The detail must be dealt with at Reserved Matters stage when the exact location of the proposed uses is known.

98. The proposed primary school would be a zero carbon building.

99. Since 2010 the Code for Sustainable Homes has been mandatory for new build dwellings. Dwellings built after 2016 have to be built to the Code level 6 and therefore be Zero Carbon. Based on the predicted build rate and the current standards required by Building Regulations, all 1900 dwellings would be constructed so as to be zero carbon.

100. The standards required for commercial buildings are also controlled via the Building Regulations regime. Based on the current predicted regulations, commercial buildings would be required to be zero carbon in 2018. The commercial buildings would be built to comply with the appropriate regulations at the time of construction.

Historic Environment

101. Graven Hill has been in use by the military since the establishment of the Central Ordnance Depot in 1941. On-site accommodation was provided within the depot in the form of Nissen huts organised into self-contained camps, and groups of Romney huts were added in order to supply the build-up of American forces during the war. The Site has continued to operate as a depot in the post-war period, though temporary hatted accommodation camps were gradually removed along with most of the Romney huts. None of the buildings within the site are listed.

102. The proposed development would involve the demolition of the buildings within Graven Hill. Some buildings are of some historic interest a programme of recording would be undertaken in advance of their demolition. With these measures in place the loss of these buildings on each site is unlikely to be significant.

103. Whilst much of the Graven Hill Site has been disturbed by the twentieth century military use, archaeological surveys have identified a number of areas of

potential archaeological interest. These include the course of a former road, as well as evidence for sub-surface archaeological features. Provision would be made for the detailed excavation and recording of any such areas in advance of any demolition and construction work. No significant effects on archaeology are likely to occur and the County Archaeologist has confirmed that there is no case for pre-determination archaeological evaluation on the sites. Full details are provided in the accompanying Environmental Statement.

Public Open Space

104. A total of 62.41 ha of public open space is provided including allotments provision on two sites totaling 4 ha. Public parks are comprised of accessible woodland at 25.21 ha, playing pitches at 5.87 ha, playspace at 3.6 ha and Natural Green Space at 23.73 ha.

105. The proposed development would not only deliver a working and living environment designed with green space as a constant theme, it would also deliver a new public park within walking distance of the town centre.

Highway Issues and Improvements

106. The site is on an existing transport corridor, having excellent links to the strategic highway network and public transport networks. Graven Hill is located at a point where traffic accessing and leaving the site would take two different routes, depending upon their origin and destination. The key site access routes are:

- Enhanced roundabout junction between A41 Aylesbury Road, the A4421 Neunkirchen/Seelscheid Way and Gravenhill Road North;
- New roundabout junction between A41 Aylesbury Road and re-modelled Pioneer Road, replacing existing ghost island priority junction.

107. The following junction enhancements are proposed to not only mitigate the impact of the increase in traffic at that location, but by their form and nature seek to improve both safety and accessibility for the local communities they serve:

- Widening of A41/B4030 roundabout;
- B4030/Middleton Stoney Road roundabout - upgrade the mini roundabout to a 28m ICD roundabout;
- A41/Gravenhill Road/B4100/A4421 roundabout - widen and signalise the roundabout to both improve capacity and the pedestrian/ cycle environment; and
- A41/Pioneer Road - upgrade the priority junction to a roundabout.

108. The assessment has found capacity issues at Junction 9 of the M40 with the Phase 2 improvement scheme in place in the 2031 without development scenario. It is concluded that further discussion is required with the highway

PLANNING STATEMENT SEPTEMBER 2011

authorities to identify a longer term scheme to enable the planned growth at Bicester to come forward.

109. A partial dualling scheme on the A41 between the A41/B4030 roundabout and the A41/Gravenhill Road/B4100/A4421 roundabout has also been identified which uses the existing carriageway space but provides two lanes on the approaches to the respective roundabouts. It is proposed that the speed limit on the route is reduced to 40mph. Please see map at Appendix 7.

110. Vehicles accessing the southern part of the site would not pass through the residential development as access would be gained via the A41/Pioneer Road access point. There would be no through access for any vehicle other than the bus between the southern employment areas and the northern residential areas.

111. The required local improvements to the transport network can be accommodated on MOD or Local Authority/Highway Agency owner land.

112. A Transport Assessment accompanies this application.

Indicative Phasing of Development

Phase 1

Employment land uses

Construction of approximately 2.8ha of B2 light industrial units (depending on demand) and/or rental of existing industrial units (2015-2018)

Residential land uses

300 dwellings (2015/2016 to 2016/2017)

Other land uses

Upgrade of the A41/Graven Hill Rd/B41001/A4421 roundabout (2015)

Local centre (2015-2016)

Opening up of Graven Hill woodland, hill top open spaces and provision of sports/allotments provision (2015-2016).

Initial bus link via the new gateway and Circular Road.

Primary school

Phase 2

Employment land uses

Construction of approximately 11.7ha of B2 light industrial units and B8 warehousing (2018 - 2023)

Residential land uses

Eastern neighbourhood area - 840 dwellings (2016/2017 to 2021/2022)

Other land uses

Upgrade of A41/Pioneer Road junction

Phase 3

Employment land uses

PLANNING STATEMENT SEPTEMBER 2011

Construction of remaining B8 warehousing (2023 - 2027)

Residential land uses

Western neighbourhood area - 760 dwellings (2021/2022 – 2027/2028)

Other land uses

Potential Peripheral Road connectivity in place on Graven Hill

Circular Graven Hill bus route in place.

113. Following outline planning consent, DIO would work with industry to secure a developer. The developers would then progress the Reserved Matters applications, which would be subject to full public participation, to discharge any conditions attached to the outline planning application. These applications are intended to be concluded with permissions granted to enable development to commence in 2015.

Planning Policy

114. The role of land use planning is to set the framework for the development and use of land, taking full account of economic, social and environmental issues. Land use planning has a role in supporting all the strategies of Government which relate to the use and sustainable development of land. It contributes to economic development, to the conservation of natural assets and to the health, well being and quality of life of individuals and communities.

115. The Development Plan for Cherwell District Council (CDC) consists of the South East Plan (SE Plan) and the relevant saved policies in the Local Plan, adopted in 1996, until superseded by the Local Development Framework (LDF).

116. Although not part of the statutory development plan, the non-statutory Local Plan has been approved as interim planning policy for development control purposes, and is a material consideration, although as it never went through an Examination, limited weight only can be afforded to it.

117. As the draft Core Strategy has been subject to one period of public consultation, it can be used as a material consideration in the assessment of applications for planning permission, however, limited weight only can be afforded to it, as it has not been submitted for examination and significant objections to its content have been received by the Council.

118. National Planning Policies (PPS', PPGs) are material considerations to which significant weight must be afforded as it is from the national level that local policies should be drawn, unless local issues outweigh them.

119. The Plan for Growth is a publication of Her Majesty's Treasury and is a material consideration in the assessment of this application and significant weight must be afforded to it.

120. The National Planning Policy Framework has been published in draft and is expected to be adopted by the end of financial year 2011. As such it is a material consideration in the assessment of this application which must be given significant weight as it provides a strong indication of the intent of the Government.

121. The Localism Bill is currently in the House of Lords and is expected to be made law by the end of 2011 or in the New Year. It provides for the abolition of the Regional Spatial Strategies. It also proposes the New Homes Bonus, and enables Local Planning Authorities to use this extra funding to mitigate the potential detrimental impact of proposed developments. Significant weight should be afforded to the consideration of this document as it provides a strong indication of the intent of the Government.

South East Plan

122. Cherwell is within the South East area of England and is covered by the South East Plan. The Secretary of State has announced the Governments' intention to abolish the RSS. However, a subsequent High Court ruling found that the SoS had acted unlawfully in attempting to abolish the RSS without changing primary legislation (in this case the Localism Bill), it has since been established that Local Planning Authorities (LPAs) can treat the intention to abolish the RSS as a material consideration. As such, LPAs need to have regard to the policies contained within the RSS' but can treat the intention to abolish as a material consideration.

123. The South East (SE) Plan proposes to accommodate the majority of the growth identified for Central Oxfordshire at the four main county towns namely: Bicester, Didcot, Wantage and Grove. This follows from a key policy objective of the plan which seeks to maintain the existing Green Belt around Oxford, focussing some limited development in Oxford on previously developed land and as a result managing and restricting the level of new development in Oxford.

124. The SE Plan allocates 4,300 dwellings to Bicester over the plan period. Prior to abandoning work on the Cherwell Local Plan, the Council identified provision for 4,200 houses between 1996 and 2011. Of that, it was estimated that 1,800 could be accommodated on previous developed land with the remainder to be accommodated in the form of greenfield urban extensions.

125. The SE Plan sets separate housing requirements for that part of Cherwell that lies within the 'Central Oxfordshire sub-region' around Oxford; and for the rest of the district. The Central Oxfordshire area covers an area of south Cherwell including Bicester. The South East Plan states that 6,400 new dwellings should be provided for this part of the district including 'about' 4,900 dwellings at Bicester (paragraph 22.13 of the South East Plan, May 2009). The South East Plan provides for 7,000 new dwellings to be provided for North Cherwell and Banbury; however no specific figure is allocated to Banbury.

126. The proposed development has been assessed against the relevant policies as set out below:

- a. Policy SP3: Urban Focus and Urban Renaissance
The prime focus for development in the South East should be urban areas, in order to foster accessibility to employment, housing, retail and other services, and avoid unnecessary travel.
- b. Local planning authorities would formulate policies to:
 - (1) concentrate development within or adjacent to the region's urban areas
 - (2) seek to achieve at least 60% of all new development across the South East on previously developed land and through conversions of existing buildings

PLANNING STATEMENT SEPTEMBER 2011

(3) ensure that developments in and around urban areas, including urban infill/intensification and new urban extensions are well designed and consistent with the principles of urban renaissance and sustainable development.

(4) use strategic land availability assessments to identify the scope for redevelopment and intensification of urban areas, seeking opportunities for intensification around transport hubs and interchanges.

127. The proposed development complies fully with this policy in that it would make efficient use of previously developed land.

Policy CC1: Sustainable Development

128. The principal objective of the Plan is to achieve and to maintain sustainable development in the region. Sustainable development priorities for the South East are identified as:

- a. achieving sustainable levels of resource use
- b. ensuring the physical and natural environment of the South East is conserved and enhanced
- c. reducing greenhouse gas emissions associated with the region
- d. ensuring that the South East is prepared for the inevitable impacts of climate change
- e. achieving safe, secure and socially inclusive communities across the region, and ensuring that the most deprived people also have an equal opportunity to benefit from and contribute to a better quality of life.

129. All authorities, agencies and individuals responsible for delivering the policies in this Plan shall ensure that their actions contribute to meeting the objectives set out in this policy and in the Regional Sustainability Framework.

130. The proposed development complies fully with this policy in that it comprises sustainable development.

131. Policy CC6: Sustainable Communities and Character of the Environment

Actions and decisions associated with the development and use of land would actively promote the creation of sustainable and distinctive communities. This would be achieved by developing and implementing a local shared vision which:

- a. respects, and where appropriate enhances, the character and distinctiveness of settlements and landscapes throughout the region

PLANNING STATEMENT SEPTEMBER 2011

b. uses innovative design processes to create a high quality built environment which promotes a sense of place. This would include consideration of accessibility, social inclusion, the need for environmentally sensitive development and crime reduction

132. The proposed development complies fully with this policy in that it would result in a high quality environment that would enhance the character of the area.

Policy H5: Housing Design and Density

133. Positive measures to raise the quality of new housing, reduce its environmental impact and facilitate future adaptation to meet changes in accommodation needs would be encouraged. Local authorities would prepare guidelines for the design of new housing in their areas that encourage the use of sustainable construction methods and address the implications of changing lifestyles for new housing design. In conjunction with the delivery of high quality design and in order to make good use of available land and encourage more sustainable patterns of development and services, higher housing densities would be encouraged, with an overall regional target of 40 dwellings per hectare over the Plan period. Local authorities would reflect this target with appropriate local variations in their local development documents.

134. The proposal has an average density of 34 dph. However, this is in response to the character and landscape of the site, with higher densities of 40dph near to the local centre.

Policy NRM12: Combined Heat and Power

135. Local development documents and other policies should encourage the integration of combined heat and power (CHP), including mini and micro-CHP, in all developments and district heating infrastructure in large scale developments in mixed use. The use of biomass fuel should be investigated and promoted where possible. Local authorities using their wider powers should promote awareness of the benefits of mini and micro-CHP in the existing build stock.

136. The proposed development includes a 400m² Energy Centre collocated with the local centre and a safeguarded area for another such centre in the employment area to the south of the hill. The proposal complies fully with this policy.

137. The proposed application is in full conformity with the policies and objectives set out in the South East Plan.

Adopted Local Plan 1996

138. Existing planning policy for the district is contained in the saved policies of the Cherwell Local Plan, adopted 1996. These are the policies used when making planning decisions.

PLANNING STATEMENT SEPTEMBER 2011

139. The saved policies can continue to be used until they are replaced by the Local Development Framework.

140. H1 Residential development would be permitted on the sites shown on the proposals map, subject to the other relevant policies in the Plan.

141. The Graven Hill site is not identified on the proposals map as the map was drawn up pre 1996. The decision of the MOD to dispose of the site was not made until 2009.

142. H4 The provision of housing schemes for the elderly and people with disabilities would be encouraged on sites within convenient reach of shops, community facilities and public transport. Proposals that do not meet these criteria would normally be resisted.

143. The proposed development complies fully with this policy by offering 5% of the affordable housing element as Extra Care Homes.

144. H5 Where there is a demonstrable lack of affordable housing to meet local needs, the district council would negotiate with developers to secure an element of affordable housing in substantial new residential development schemes. The district council would need to be satisfied that such affordable housing:-

- a. is economically viable in terms of its ability to meet the need identified
- b. would be available to meet local needs long term through secure arrangements being made to restrict the occupancy of the development
- c. is compatible with the other policies in this plan.

145. The proposal offers up to 20% affordable housing. This is due to the overall financial viability of the programme.

146. H18 Planning permission would only be granted for the construction of new dwellings beyond the built-up limits of settlements other than those identified under Policy H1 when:

- a. it is essential for agriculture or other existing undertakings, or
- b. the proposal meets the criteria set out in Policy H6; and
- c. the proposal would not conflict with other policies in this plan.

146. The proposal does not comply with this policy, however, it is significantly out of date and does not consider that the growth required by Bicester must be accommodated outside the settlement boundary, as shown by the recent Kingsmere development.

PLANNING STATEMENT SEPTEMBER 2011

147. S25 With the exception of those developments which accord with policies S26, S27 and S28, all new proposals for retail development would generally be resisted.

148. S26 Proposals for small-scale retail outlets which are ancillary to existing acceptable land uses would normally be permitted subject to the other policies in the plan.

149. *Please see S28 below.*

150. S28 Favourable consideration would be given to proposals for small shops or extensions to existing shops required to serve local needs, subject to the other policies in the plan.

151. *The retail element offered by the proposal is part of the approach to delivering a sustainable community to serve the new populations needs, therefore, the proposal fully complies with this policy.*

152. TR1 Before proposals for development are permitted the council would require to be satisfied that new highways, highway improvement works, traffic-management measures, additional public transport facilities or other transport measures that would be required as a consequence of allowing the development to proceed would be provided.

153. *The proposed development complies fully with this policy. Please refer to the accompanying Transport Assessment for full details.*

154. TR7 Development that would regularly attract large commercial vehicles or large numbers of cars onto unsuitable minor roads would not normally be permitted.

155. *The proposed development complies fully with this policy. Please refer to the accompanying Transport Assessment for full details.*

156. TR10 Development that would generate frequent heavy-goods vehicle movements through residential areas or on unsuitable urban or rural roads would not be permitted. The council would resist proposals for the establishment of heavy-goods-vehicle operating centres where they would create traffic problems or adversely affect the amenity of residential areas or villages.

157. *The proposed development complies fully with this policy. Please refer to the accompanying Transport Assessment for full details.*

158. T5 Beyond the built up limits of a settlement the provision of new hotels, motels, guest houses and restaurants would generally only be approved when such proposals would:-

- a. be largely accommodated within existing buildings which are suitable for conversion or for such use; or

PLANNING STATEMENT SEPTEMBER 2011

b. totally replaces an existing commercial use on an existing acceptably located commercial site. Proposals to extend existing hotels, motels, guest houses and restaurants would be acceptable provided they conform to the other relevant policies in this plan.

c. Proposals for development in the green belt would be considered against the appropriate green belt policies in the plan.

159. *The proposal includes a pub/restaurant/hotel. It is predicted that a hotel use, on its own, in this location would not be viable and is attached to the pub/restaurant use, required to serve the new community, merely to enable the maximum diversification of such a use to improve its marketability and viability.*

160. C1 The council would seek to promote the interests of nature conservation. development which would result in damage to or loss of sites of special scientific interest or other areas of designated wildlife or scientific importance would not normally be permitted. Furthermore, the council would seek to ensure the protection of sites of local nature conservation value. The potential adverse affect of development on such sites would be a material consideration in determining planning applications.

161. *The proposed development complies fully with this policy. Please refer to the accompanying Environmental statement for full details.*

162. C2 Development which would adversely affect any species protected by schedule 1, schedule 5 and schedule 8 of the 1981 Wildlife and Countryside Act, and by the E.C. habitats directive 1992 would not normally be permitted.

163. *The proposed development complies fully with this policy. Please refer to the accompanying Environmental statement for full details.*

164. C4 The Council would seek to promote the creation of new habitats. In urban areas the council would promote the interests of nature conservation within the context of new development and would establish or assist with the establishment of ecological and nature conservation areas, where such areas would further the opportunity for environmental education and recreation and would not conflict with other policies in the plan.

165. *The proposed development complies fully with this policy. Please refer to the accompanying Environmental statement for full details.*

166. C7 Development would not normally be permitted if it would cause demonstrable harm to the topography and character of the landscape.

167. *The proposed development would improve the visual impact and enhance the character of the site from the present. The Design and Access Statement sets out the steps that have been taken to ensure that the proposal has a positive impact upon the visual amenity of the area, therefore, the proposal fully complies with this policy.*

PLANNING STATEMENT SEPTEMBER 2011

168. C28 Control would be exercised over all new development, including conversions and extensions, to ensure that the standards of layout, design and external appearance, including the choice of external-finish materials, are sympathetic to the character of the urban or rural context of that development. In sensitive areas such as Conservation Areas, the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and areas of high landscape value, development would be required to be of a high standard and the use of traditional local Building materials would normally be required.

169. The Design and Access Statement sets out the design approach that has been taken. The final design and materials shall be determined at Reserved Matters stage.

170. C30 Design control would be exercised to ensure:

- a. that new housing development is compatible with the appearance, character, layout, scale and density of existing dwellings in the vicinity;
- b. that any proposal to extend an existing dwelling (in cases where planning permission is required) is compatible with the scale of the existing dwelling, its curtilage and the character Of the street scene;
- c. that new housing development or any proposal for the extension (in cases where planning permission is required) or conversion of an existing dwelling provides standards of amenity and privacy acceptable to the local planning authority.

171. The Design and Access Statement sets out the design approach that has been taken. The final design and materials shall be determined at Reserved Matters stage.

172. C15 The council would prevent the coalescence of settlements by resisting development in areas of open land, which are important in distinguishing them.

173. The proposed development would form a sustainable urban extension to Bicester on previously developed land thereby protecting greenfield land and have no impact upon coalescence of settlements.

174. C17 The Council would seek opportunities to secure the enhancement of the urban fringe through tree and woodland planting on land within its ownership and on other land by negotiation or in connection with new development.

175. The proposed development complies fully with this policy. Please refer to the accompanying Environmental Statement for full details. A full Landscape Strategy shall be determined at Reserved Matters stage.

176. ENV1 Development which is likely to cause materially detrimental levels of noise, vibration, smell, smoke, fumes or other type of environmental pollution would not normally be permitted.

PLANNING STATEMENT SEPTEMBER 2011

177. *The proposed development at C Site has the potential to cause an adverse impact upon some existing residents due to an increase in traffic noise outside the site associated with shift change over times. C Site does not currently operate on a regular basis after 10pm. Activity would largely be contained within the building at night. However, the existing buildings and hard standing areas on the site could be used to full capacity, twenty four hours per day, seven days per week, without the requirement for any further permissions, under Crown permitted development rights.*

178. *The proposed development at Graven Hill would not have any detrimental impact environmental pollution.*

179. ENV7 Development which would adversely affect to a material level, the water quality of surface or underground water bodies, including rivers, canals, lakes and reservoirs, as a result of directly attributable factors, would not be permitted.

180. *The proposed development complies fully with this policy.*

181. ENV12 Development on land which is known or suspected to be contaminated would only be permitted if:

- a. adequate measures can be taken to remove any threat of contamination to future occupiers of the site
- b. the development is not likely to result in contamination of surface or underground water resources
- c. the proposed use does not conflict with the other policies in the plan.

182. *Phase Two Land Quality Assessments for both C Site and Graven Hill accompany this application.*

183. *The assessment at C Site found only localised levels of contamination present in the investigated areas. All concentrations were below the screening criteria for a commercial/industrial end use.*

184. *At Graven Hill, the Assessment concluded that the localised areas of contamination would not significantly constrain future development and as such is considered suitable for redevelopment for a residential (with gardens) end use and further commercial /industrial use.*

185. Policy R12 of the adopted Local Plan states that the district council would normally require in connection with all new housing developments the minimum provision of 2.43 Hectares (6 acres) of public open space per 1,000 population. The on-site open space requirement can be broken down into the following component parts:

- a. amenity open space: 0.4-0.5 ha (1-1.25 acres).

PLANNING STATEMENT SEPTEMBER 2011

- b. children's playspace: 0.2-0.3 ha (0.5-0.75 acres).
- c. sports grounds: 1.6-1.8 ha (4-4.5 acres).

186. Generally, the council would require the open space to be provided within the development area and would not allow the provision to be made up of fragmented areas that are of little recreational Use and which are expensive to maintain.

187. *The proposed development would be expected to have a population of 4617 people (based on a calculation of 2.43 persons per household).*

188. *Under this policy, the proposed development should provide:*

*Amenity open space: 1.8 – 2.3ha
Children's playspace: 0.9 – 1.3ha
Sports grounds: 7.3 – 8.3ha*

189. *A total of 62.41 ha of public open space is provided including allotments provision on two sites totalling 4 ha. Public parks are comprised of accessible woodland at 25.21 ha, playing pitches at 5.87 ha, playspace at 3.6 ha and Natural Green Space at 23.73 ha*

190. *The proposed development would provide significantly more amenity open space and children's playspace than that required under this policy. The proposed sports ground provision is lower, however, this policy is outdated and the provision has been designed with the requirements of the draft Core Strategy which are achieved.*

Non Statutory Cherwell Local Plan 2011

191. The Non Statutory Cherwell Local Plan 2011 was intended to review and update the local plan adopted in 1996. Due to changes to the planning system introduced by the Government, work on this plan was discontinued prior to adoption.

192. The Non Statutory Local Plan 2011 is not part of the statutory development plan but it has been approved as interim planning policy for development control purposes.

193. Policy H1A Sets out the criteria against which applications for new housing should be considered. The applicable criteria are as follows:

- a. the availability of previously-developed sites and empty or under-used buildings and their suitability for housing use;
- b. the location and accessibility of the proposal to jobs, shops and services by modes other than the car, and the potential for improving such accessibility;

c. the capacity of existing and potential infrastructure, including public transport, water and sewerage, other utilities and social facilities (such as schools and healthcare facilities) to absorb further development and the cost of adding further infrastructure;

d. the ability to build communities to support new physical and social infrastructure and to provide sufficient demand to sustain appropriate local services and facilities.

194. Graven Hill is the only large brownfield site in the environs of Bicester. It is 0.9 miles from the town centre and subject to the improvements specified within this proposal, would have excellent accessibility via means other than the private car. Utilities and Drainage Strategies accompany this application and demonstrate that any infrastructure constraints can be adequately addressed. The proposed redevelopment of Graven Hill would be of a sufficient size to enable a high level of self containment and reduce out commuting. The proposed development complies fully with this policy.

195. H3 In order to make efficient use of land the council would require new residential development to be built at an average net density of not less than 30 dwellings per hectare.

196. The proposal has an average density of 34 dph. However, this is in response to the character and landscape of the site, with higher densities of 40dph near to the local centre.

197. H19 Planning permission would only be granted for the construction of new dwellings beyond the built-up limits of settlements other than those identified under policy H1b when:

a. it is essential for agriculture or other existing undertakings in accordance with policy H20; or

b. the proposal meets the criteria set out in policy h8 (affordable housing)

198. This policy was drafted pre 1997 and does not allow for the growth of Bicester which can only be accommodated outside of the current settlement boundary.

199. S1 Proposals that are likely to generate an increased demand for travel should be located in accordance with a sequential approach. First preference would be for a town centre location where suitable sites or buildings suitable for conversion are available, followed by an edge-of-centre site, and finally an out-of-centre location can be considered, but only if it is accessible by a choice of means of transport.

200. The facilities and services are proposed as part of a sustainable community and are to serve the new residents and employees of the development. The proposal fully complies with this policy.

PLANNING STATEMENT SEPTEMBER 2011

201. TR1 All traffic generating development must contribute to achieving the objectives of the local transport plan

202. The proposed development complies fully with this policy. Please refer to the accompanying Transport Assessment for full details.

203. TR2 Major generators of travel demand should be located in existing centres which are highly accessible by means other than the private car.

204. The proposed development complies fully with this policy. Please refer to the accompanying Transport Assessment for full details.

205. TR4 Before proposals for development are permitted the council would need to be satisfied that all appropriate mitigation measures required to support that development are identified within an implementation programme. Such measures would include highway improvements, traffic management measures, improved public transport and/or facilities, and measures to improve pedestrian and cycle accessibility.

206. The proposed development complies fully with this policy. Please refer to the accompanying Transport Assessment for full details.

207. EMP4 proposals for employment generating development, including redevelopment, would be permitted within an existing acceptable employment site provided that:-

- a. the proposal and any associated employment activities can be carried out without undue detriment to residential amenity, the highway network, village character, the appearance and character of the landscape and the environment generally including any buildings or features of designated importance;
- b. the proposal is for small firms (up to about 500 square metres) or for firms whose source of supply, commercial linkages, labour supply and markets make a specific location necessary for them; and
- c. the proposal would not give rise to excessive or inappropriate traffic and would wherever possible contribute to the general aim of reducing the need to travel by private car.

208. A minor extension to an existing acceptable employment site within or immediately adjoining a village would be permitted provided the proposals comply with criteria a. to c. above.

209. This application is accompanied by an Environmental Statement. It concludes that no detrimental impact would arise from the proposed development at Graven Hill. The proposed development at C Site has the potential to cause an adverse impact upon some existing residents due to an increase in traffic noise outside the site associated with shift change over times. C Site does not

currently operate on a regular basis after 10pm. Activity would largely be contained within the building at night. However, the existing buildings and hard standing areas on the site could be used to full capacity, twenty four hours per day, seven days per week, without the requirement for any further permissions, under Crown permitted development rights.

Cherwell District Council Draft Core Strategy

210. The draft Core Strategy has been subject to multiple rounds of consultation. There is no current published date for it to be submitted to the Planning Inspectorate and as such no date for an Examination in Public.

211. CDC resolved to reduce the housing numbers from 13,400 identified within the RSS, to 12,751 dwellings at a Committee meeting in March 2011. Consultation shall have to take place on these proposed changes and no date has yet been set for this consultation. The figure may have to change again as the draft National Planning Policy Framework requires Local Planning Authorities to identify and maintain a rolling supply of specific deliverable sites sufficient to provide five years worth of housing against their housing requirements, and that this supply should include an additional allowance of at least 20 per cent to ensure choice and competition in the market for land.

212. The application has been produced with full regard to the pertinent objectives and policies contained within the draft Core Strategy, which are set out below.

213. The draft Core Strategy sets out a Vision for Bicester.

214. The proposed development would contribute towards making Bicester a more attractive place to live and work and significantly more self-sustaining both economically and socially.

215. The proposed employment floorspace would provide a location for higher-technology businesses to help Bicester's economy become more knowledge based and new services and facilities would be provided, along with recreation opportunities.

216. The proposal offers sustainable homes and substantial infrastructure of benefit to the whole town. The provision of high quality employment floorspace as well as the anchoring effects of the retention of the MODs logistics operations would be an economic driver and the development as a whole would deliver environmental gains. By helping to improve Bicester's economic position and by the provision of new services and facilities, the proposal would contribute to reducing deprivation in the town.

217. The draft Core Strategy sets out the proposed Spatial Strategy for Bicester.

218. *The proposed development would contribute to the achievement of this vision by:*

- *establishing a new self-contained sustainable community, integrated with, and for the benefit of, the whole of Bicester;*
- *deliver development that would increase Bicester's self-containment, providing 'higher-value' job-opportunities and reduce the proportion of out commuting;*
- *provide for new development in an accessible location that maximises opportunities for providing sustainable transport choices, for reducing traffic congestion and for reducing the proportion of out-commuting;*
- *provide services, facilities and new infrastructure required to accommodate major growth and help reduce deprivation;*
- *improve the attractiveness of existing employment areas and provide for new employment space that would be attractive to knowledge and higher-technology businesses; and*
- *deliver strategic open space and recreation opportunities to address existing deficiencies and meet the future needs of development.*

219. The draft Core Strategy sets out the proposed Economic Objectives for Bicester.

220. *The proposed development could contribute to the achievement of these objectives by providing 95,398m² of new employment floorspace, excluding the new two form entry primary school, which could provide accommodation for at least 2,070 non MOD jobs at Graven Hill, the retention of the existing 420 MOD jobs and a further 200 MOD jobs at C Site. This would:*

- *Provide employment opportunities, for higher value and knowledge based businesses, which would contribute to reducing the proportion of out-commuting and to improving Bicester's self-containment;*
- *Provide employment and education facilities for existing as well as new residents; and*
- *Deliver attractive employment space to meet modern business needs and to improve the image of the town as a place to work.*

221. The draft Core Strategy sets out the proposed Community Objectives for Bicester.

222. *The proposed development would contribute to the achievement of these objectives by:*

- *Delivering growth which improves the self-sufficiency of Bicester as a place to live and which addresses identified deficiencies in the provision of services, facilities and infrastructure; and*
- *Improving social cohesion by ensuring the new development integrates and interacts with existing neighbourhoods, is accessible from those neighbourhoods by non-car modes of transport, and provides for a range*

PLANNING STATEMENT SEPTEMBER 2011

of uses and dwellings that would contribute to delivering mixed communities.

223. *The proposed development is within 0.9 miles of the existing town centre. The development has been designed to prioritise pedestrians and cyclists over the private car and a new bus service running at 15-20 minute intervals is proposed between the site, the town centre and the railway stations.*

224. The draft Core Strategy sets out the proposed Environmental Objectives for Bicester.

225. *The proposed development would contribute to the achievement of these objectives by:*

- *Ensuring that the new development is delivered to the highest environmental standards to help improve the image and attractiveness of the town;*
- *Maximising the opportunities for improving and integrating with Bicester's existing built environment; and*
- *Enhancing Bicester's biodiversity and providing new 'green' infrastructure of benefit to the whole town and which would contribute in sustainably accommodating rapid growth*

226. *The proposed development would have a green infrastructure proportion of 47%. The new dwellings would be constructed to the appropriate standards, which is currently the Code for Sustainable Homes. The predicted Code that would be required by 2016 is Level 6 (zero carbon). The new primary school would be zero carbon and the new employment buildings would be built to the relevant standards, which currently predict that zero carbon construction standards would be required by 2018.*

227. The proposed development contributes to the aims of draft Policy SD 1 Mitigating and Adapting to Climate Change by:

- Providing development in the most sustainable location for Bicester;
- Delivering development that reduces the need to travel and which encourages walking, cycling and public transport; and
- Reducing carbon emissions and using resources more efficiently by promoting the use of decentralised and renewable or low carbon energy.

228. *The proposed development would have excellent accessibility to Bicester town centre and prioritises means of transport other than the private car. It would provide a 400m² Energy Centre and safeguard land for the location of another.*

229. *The known physical and environmental constraints have been considered as have design approaches resilient to climate change impacts including the use of passive solar design approaches for heating and cooling, minimising the risk of flooding and making use of sustainable drainage methods, and reducing urban*

PLANNING STATEMENT SEPTEMBER 2011

heat island effects (by the provision of open space and water and planting). Please refer to the Environmental Statement.

230. The proposed development complies with the aims of draft Policy SD 2 Energy Hierarchy Policy SD 3 Assessing Renewable Energy Proposals. Please refer to the Energy Statement which accompanies this application.

231. The Energy Statement which accompanies this application complies fully with the aims of draft Policy SD 4 Combined Heat and Power and District Heating.

232. The proposed development complies fully with draft Policy SD5 Sustainable Construction. Please refer to the Energy Statement and Environment Statement which accompany this application. The detailed design of the development shall be fully considered and assessed at Reserved Matters stage.

233. The proposed development fully complies with draft Policy SD 6 Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS). Please refer to the Drainage Strategies which accompany this application.

234. The proposed development complies with the aims of draft Policy SD 11 Local Landscape Protection and Enhancement by enhancing the character and appearance of the landscape, through the management and enhancement of existing landscapes, features and habitats and the creation of new ones, including the planting of woodlands, trees and hedgerows. The proposed development would result in the loss of 1.4km of species poor hedgerow at Graven Hill but would be replaced with 1.4km of species rich hedgerow (so although the amount / length of hedgerow would stay the same the quality for biodiversity would improve).

235. The proposed development would respect and enhance local landscape character, securing appropriate mitigation where damage to local landscape character cannot be avoided. The proposals do not:

- Cause undue visual intrusion into the open countryside*
- Cause undue harm to important natural landscape features and topography*
- Harm the setting of settlements, buildings, structures or other landmark features, or*
- Harm the historic value of the landscape and*
- Are not inconsistent with local character.*

236. The proposed development complies with the aims of draft Policy SD 13 The Built Environment by complementing and enhancing the character of its context through sensitive siting, layout and high quality design. The proposed development would:

PLANNING STATEMENT SEPTEMBER 2011

- *Respect local topography and landscape features, including skylines, valley floors, significant trees, historic boundaries, landmarks, features or views, and their setting.*
- *Preserve and enhance designated historic assets, features, areas and their settings, and ensure new development is sensitively sited and integrated*
- *Respect the traditional pattern of routes, spaces, blocks, plots, enclosures and the form, scale and massing of buildings*
- *Reflect or, in a contemporary design response, re-interpret local distinctiveness, including elements of construction, elevational detailing, windows and doors, building and surfacing materials and colour palette*
- *Demonstrate an holistic approach to the design of the public realm following the principles set out in The Manual For Streets*
- *Be compatible with up to date urban design and Secured By Design principles and*
- *Incorporate energy efficient design, whilst ensuring that the aesthetic implications of green technology are appropriate to the context.*

237. *The Design and Access Statement which accompanies this application sets out how the proposed development has been informed by an analysis of the context, together with an explanation and justification of the principles that have informed the design rationale. It is anticipated that Design Codes would be prepared in conjunction with the Council and local stakeholders to ensure appropriate character and that co-ordinated high quality design is delivered throughout, at Reserved Matters stage.*

238. *The proposed development complies with the aims of draft Policy I 3 Open Space, Sport and Recreation Provision by ensuring that an appropriate quantity and quality of open space, sport and recreation provision is secured.*

239. *The proposed development complies with the aims of draft Policy I 4 Local Standards of Provision by contributing to the provision of open space, sport and recreation, together with secure arrangements for its management and maintenance (please see draft Heads of Terms at Appendix 8). The amount, type and form of open space has been determined having regard to the nature and size of development proposed and the community needs likely to be generated by it. Provision at Graven Hill would be as follows:*

240. *A total of 62.41 ha of public open space is provided including allotments provision on two sites totalling 4 ha. Public parks are comprised of accessible woodland at 25.21 ha, playing pitches at 5.87 ha, playspace at 3.6 ha and Natural Green Space at 23.73 ha.; and*

241. *This exceeds the amount required by the draft policy, which requires:*

*General Green Space: 6.97ha
Playspace: 3.6ha
Outdoor Sports: 5.2ha
Allotments: 1.43ha*

242. *The proposed development does not comply with Draft Policy H2 Ensuring Sustainable Housing Delivery as it is not an allocated site. DIO have attempted to progress the site through representations made to the draft Core Strategy, and the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment. However, the draft Core Strategy has not yet considered the site as a reasonable alternative to the proposed allocated sites or as an extra site. This must be properly considered to enable the draft plan to be found sound an Examination in Public.*

243. Draft Policy H3 states:

The priority would be the re-use of previously developed land within urban areas and within villages that have been identified as suitable places for additional residential development. Elsewhere the advantages of re-using previously developed land would be weighed against other sustainability considerations.

244. The density of housing development would be expected to reflect the character and appearance of individual localities but new homes would not be provided at less than 30 dwellings per hectare.

245. *Graven Hill is not within the existing settlement boundary of Bicester but is urban in its nature as a previously developed site adjacent to the existing settlement boundary, with excellent accessibility. The average density would be 34dph. The sustainable attributes of the site are numerous, there is nothing about the proposed development of the Graven Hill site for mixed uses that is unsustainable, either in its location or proposed make up. The required level of growth at Bicester necessitates growth outside of the current settlement boundary.*

246. The proposed Spatial Strategy states that "Development in the open countryside would be strictly controlled." Paragraph A.138 states "It is important that 'greenfield' land is not developed unnecessarily and that we make effective and efficient use of all land." The redevelopment of Graven Hill would enable the effective protection of greenfield land.

247. Draft Policy BIC 5 Meeting the Need for Open Space, Sport and Recreation in Bicester states:

As part of measures to address current and future deficiencies in open space, sport and recreation provision in the town we would:

Seek to establish an urban edge park around the outskirts of the town, linking existing green spaces with public footpaths/cycleways to create a circular route with connections to the town centre and the countryside beyond. Development that would prejudice this objective would not be permitted.

PLANNING STATEMENT SEPTEMBER 2011

248. *The proposed development would enable the opening up of the majority of Graven Hill as a public park, linked to the rest of the development and wider Bicester by a system of green links prioritising pedestrians and cyclists.*

249. Draft Policy H 1 Housing Distribution states:

250. Cherwell district would provide for 13,400 additional homes to be provided between 1 April 2006 and 31 March 2026 as follows:

- Bicester 5,500
- Rest of Central Oxfordshire 1,140
- Bicester and Central Oxfordshire Total 6,640
- Banbury 4,800
- Rest of North Cherwell 1,960
- Banbury and North Cherwell Total 6,760
- Total for Cherwell district 13,400

251. A further 500 homes would be provided from 1 April 2026 to 31 December 2026.

252. *CDC resolved to reduce the housing numbers from 13,400 identified within the RSS, to 12,751 dwellings at a Committee meeting in March 2011. Consultation shall have to take place on these proposed changes and no date has yet been set for this consultation. The figure may have to change again as the draft National Planning Policy Framework requires Local Planning Authorities to identify and maintain a rolling supply of specific deliverable sites sufficient to provide five years worth of housing against their housing requirements, and that this supply should include an additional allowance of at least 20 per cent to ensure choice and competition in the market for land.*

253. Draft Policy H 5 Affordable Housing Requirements states:

At Banbury and Bicester, all proposed developments that include 10 or more dwellings (gross), or which would be provided on sites suitable for 10 or more dwellings (gross), would be expected to provide at least 30% as affordable homes on site.

254. *It is accepted that the site is not within the existing settlement boundary of Bicester, however, the policy does not state that anything outside the settlement boundary would require more than 30% affordable housing. The Graven Hill site is clearly not rural in character and is adjacent to the settlement boundary of Bicester town, within 0.9 miles of the town centre itself. The proposed development would therefore be expected to provide at least 30% affordable housing on site.*

255. *70% of the affordable housing would be provided as social rented dwellings and 30% as other forms of intermediate affordable homes to be agreed with Cherwell District Council.*

PLANNING STATEMENT SEPTEMBER 2011

256. Should the promoters of development consider that individual proposals would be unviable with the above requirements, 'open-book' financial analysis of proposed developments would be expected so that an economic viability assessment can be undertaken. Please see Draft Heads of Terms at Appendix 8.

257. Where development is proven to be unviable with the above requirements, negotiations with the promoters of development would take place. These negotiations would include consideration of: the mix and type of housing, the split between social rented and intermediate housing, the availability of social housing grant and the percentage of affordable housing to be provided. Please see Draft Heads of Terms at Appendix 8.

258. Draft Policy H6 Housing Mix sets out the mix that Cherwell District Council would use to guide decision making. The draft policy states that the following mix would be used to guide decision making:

Size & Type of Dwelling	Percentage of Housing Stock Required
1 bed flats	4%
2 bed upsizing flats	8%
2 bed houses	19%
3 bed houses & larger	35%
3 bed flats / cluster homes	2%
2 bed retirement / downsizing homes	23%
1 / 2 bed extra care homes	9%

259. *The proposed affordable housing element would comply with this proposed mix. The proposed mix for the market housing element has been informed by market demand to maximise the total value achievable. This is intended to assist with overall viability and therefore potential for developer contributions.*

260. *The proposed market housing mix is as follows:*

Size & Type of Dwelling	Percentage of Housing Stock
1 bed flats	5%
2 bed flats	5%
2 bed houses	5%

PLANNING STATEMENT SEPTEMBER 2011

3 bed houses	34%
4 bed homes	19%
5 bed homes	32%

261. Draft Policy H7 Extra Care Housing states that all developments of 400 homes or more would be required to provide 5% of all proposed dwellings as affordable extra care homes as part of the affordable housing requirement under Policy H5. 4% would be required to be extra care homes for market sale, as per the bottom line of the table above.

262. *5% of the affordable element would be offered as extra care homes. The market housing mix does not propose extra care home specifically, however, however, 1 and 2 bed flats are included in the private mix which could be converted should market demand exist.*

263. *The proposed development would comply with draft Policy E 1 Employment Development in that it would retain and enhance the MOD logistics base while providing up to 95,398m² of new employment land excluding the new primary school.*

264. *The proposed development would comply with draft Policy E 2 Supporting Urban Centres in that the retail and office uses proposed would:*

- be provided to reduce the need to travel by private car as the development would be genuinely accessible and well served by a choice of means of transport, especially public transport, walking and cycling as well as by car;*
- not have a significant adverse impact on the vitality and viability of urban and existing local centres; and*
- be part of a new local centre.*

265. *The proposed development does not comply with draft Policy MON 1 Housing Land Supply - Bicester which states:*

266. Housing development at Bicester would be monitored to ensure the delivery of at least 500 new homes at the North West Bicester Eco-Development by 31 March 2016 and the delivery of at least 1750 new homes by 31 March 2021. In the event that these targets are not met, reserve land at South West Bicester Phase 2 would be released for a maximum of 750 new homes. Release of the land may be phased to ensure that the number of homes developed reflects the level of shortfall in housing delivery.

267. *The proposed development has not been considered as a strategic allocation in the draft Core Strategy. Representations have been made to it and the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment at the appropriate times. The proposed development and the proposed Eco Town are not mutually exclusive;*

PLANNING STATEMENT SEPTEMBER 2011

Bicester could accommodate both, during and beyond the plan period. The proposed development is a previously developed site, consisting of surplus public sector land. There are no physical constraints to its development.

Eco Bicester One Shared Vision

268. The proposed development complies fully with the Vision in that it would contribute to forming a nationally recognised hub for the low carbon economy and the location of choice for business and inward investment and jobs. The proposal would also encourage walking and cycling as the first choice for travel and is adaptive to environmental challenges. The proposal would provide significant green infrastructure, enhance biodiversity and create habitat.

National Planning Guidance

269. National planning guidance relevant to the proposal is as follows:

- Planning Policy Statement (PPS) 1: Delivering Sustainable Development;
- Planning Policy Statement (PPS) 3 : Housing;
- Planning Policy Statement (PPS) 4 (Draft): Planning for Sustainable Development;
- Planning Policy Statement (PPS) 5: Planning for the Historic Environment;
- Planning Policy Statement (PPS) 9: Biodiversity and Geological Conservation;
- Planning Policy Guidance (PPG) 13: Transport;
- PPG17: Planning for Open Space, Sport and Recreation;
- PPG22: Planning and Renewable Energy;
- Planning Policy Statement (PPS) 23: Planning and Pollution Control; and
- Planning Policy Statement (PPS) 25: Development and Flood Risk.

Planning Policy Statement (PPS) 1: Delivering Sustainable Development (2005).

270. The main aim of this PPS is to promote high quality development through good and inclusive design and the efficient use of resources.

271. To promote sustainable economic development, PPS1 states that LPAs should actively promote and facilitate good quality development, which is sustainable and consistent with their plans.

272. Applicants for planning permission for substantial new development should through their Design and Access Statement demonstrate in broad terms how the proposed development would comply with the target carbon emission rate applicable through Building Regulations. In particular, applicants should explain the contribution to be secured through decentralised energy supply systems including from on-site renewable sources.

273. In preparing development plans, planning authorities should seek to bring forward sufficient land of a suitable quality in appropriate locations to meet the expected needs for housing, for industrial development, for the exploitation of raw materials such as minerals, for retail and commercial development, and for leisure and recreation - taking into account issues such as accessibility and sustainable transport needs, the provision of essential infrastructure, including for sustainable waste management, and the need to avoid flood risk and other natural hazards.

274. *The proposed development complies fully with the aims of PPS1. Please refer to the accompanying Environmental Statement and Energy Statement.*

Planning Policy Statement (PPS 3): Housing

275. Reflecting policy in PPS1, good design should contribute positively to making places better for people. Design which is inappropriate in its context, or which fails to take the opportunities available for improving the character and quality of an area and the way it functions, should not be accepted.

276. PPS3 states: "In support of its objective of creating mixed and sustainable communities, the Government's policy is to ensure that housing is developed in suitable locations which offer a range of community facilities and with good access to jobs, key services and infrastructure. This should be achieved by making effective use of land, existing infrastructure and available public and private investment, and include consideration of the opportunity for housing provision on surplus public sector land (including land owned by Central Government and its bodies or Local Authorities) to create mixed use developments. The priority for development should be previously developed land, in particular vacant and derelict sites and buildings."

277. PPS3 does go on to state that "There is no presumption that land that is previously-developed is necessarily suitable for housing development nor that the whole of the curtilage should be developed." However, the site is well located for housing development, being within walking distance of the existing settlement of Bicester and the mixed use of the whole development reflects this.

278. PPS3 states that at the local level, Local Development Documents should include strategies for bringing previously developed land into housing use, and PPS12 states that when devising its strategy, the LPA should be consistent with national policy. It is noted that due to the general make-up of Cherwell that there is a lack of large, previously developed sites suitable for redevelopment, and that a 40% target for new dwellings to be sited on previously developed land may be appropriate, however, to be consistent with national and regional policy, a large, sustainably located previously developed site, such as Graven Hill, that can deliver a good quality residential environment, should be allocated as a strategic housing site to make the proposed core strategy compliant with national and regional policy.

279. The site constitutes previously developed land which would assist Cherwell District Council in meeting its brownfield targets of 40% of new dwellings on previously developed land.

280. The redevelopment of the Graven Hill site as a mixed use residential and employment site would not involve the loss of agricultural land or Greenfield land and would significantly reduce pressure on Greenfield land, not only around Bicester but also within the surrounding villages.

281. PPS3 states that the matters to consider when assessing design quality include the extent to which the proposed development:

PLANNING STATEMENT SEPTEMBER 2011

- Is easily accessible and well-connected to public transport and community facilities and services, and is well laid out so that all the space is used efficiently, is safe, accessible and user-friendly.
- Provides, or enables good access to, community and green and open amenity and recreational space (including play space) as well as private outdoor space such as residential gardens, patios and balconies.
- Is well integrated with, and complements, the neighbouring buildings and the local area more generally in terms of scale, density, layout and access.
- Facilitates the efficient use of resources, during construction and in use, and seeks to adapt to and reduce the impact of, and on, climate change.
- Takes a design-led approach to the provision of car-parking space, that is well integrated with a high quality public realm and streets that are pedestrian, cycle and vehicle friendly.
- Creates, or enhances, a distinctive character that relates well to the surroundings and supports a sense of local pride and civic identity.
- Provides for the retention or re-establishment of the biodiversity within residential environments.

282. *The proposed development has evolved with full consideration to these matters.*

283. PPS 3 states:

In developing their previously-developed land strategies, Local Planning Authorities should consider a range of incentives or interventions that could help to ensure that previously developed land is developed in line with the trajectory/ies. This should include:

- Planning to address obstacles to the development of vacant and derelict sites and buildings, for example, use of compulsory purchase powers where that would help resolve land ownership or assembly issues.
- Considering whether sites that are currently allocated for industrial or commercial use could be more appropriately re-allocated for housing development.
- Encouraging innovative housing schemes that make effective use of public sector previously-developed land.

284. *Cherwell District Council have not, to date, fulfilled this obligation.*

285. The site is not within the existing settlement boundary but does adjoin the settlement of Bicester. PPS3 states: "In support of its objective of creating mixed and sustainable communities, the Government's policy is to ensure that housing is developed in suitable locations which offer a range of community facilities and with good access to jobs, key services and infrastructure. This should be achieved by making effective use of land, existing infrastructure and available public and private investment, and include consideration of the opportunity for housing provision on surplus public sector land (including land owned by Central Government and its bodies or Local Authorities) to create mixed use

developments. The priority for development should be previously developed land, in particular vacant and derelict sites and buildings.”

286. There is no presumption that land that is previously-developed is necessarily suitable for housing development nor that the whole of the curtilage should be developed, however, the sustainable qualities of the Graven Hill site and the potential to enable the retention of the MOD Logistics operations comply fully with the aims of this PPS.

Planning Policy Statement (PPS) 4 (Draft): Planning for Sustainable Development.

287. PPS4 states that LPAs should encourage new development in locations which:

- minimise the length and number of trips, especially by motor vehicles;
- encourage new development in locations that can be served by more energy efficient modes of transport (this is particularly important in the case of offices, light industrial development, and campus style developments such as science and business parks likely to have large numbers of employees);
- discourage new development where it would be likely to add unacceptably to congestion;
- locate development requiring access mainly to local roads away from trunk roads, to avoid unnecessary congestion on roads designed for longer distance movement.

288. For office (B1a) development, the statement advises LPAs to give preference to the identification of sites in or on the edge of town centres for larger office development, consistent with the sequential approach in Planning Policy Statement 6, whilst recognising that market demand would influence office location.

289. The PPS states that development plans should be flexible enough to be responsive to a changing economy or new business requirements.

290. The proposed development complies fully with the aims of this PPS.

Planning Policy Statement (PPS) 5: Planning and the Historic Environment

291. PPS 5 states that the Government’s overarching aim is that the historic environment and its heritage assets should be conserved and enjoyed for the quality of life they bring to this and future generations. To achieve this, the Government’s objectives for planning for the historic environment are:

- to deliver sustainable development by ensuring that policies and decisions concerning the historic environment:
 - recognise that heritage assets are a non-renewable resource
 - take account of the wider social, cultural, economic and environmental benefits of heritage conservation; and

PLANNING STATEMENT SEPTEMBER 2011

— recognise that intelligently managed change may sometimes be necessary if heritage assets are to be maintained for the long term.

- to conserve England's heritage assets in a manner appropriate to their significance by ensuring that:

- decisions are based on the nature, extent and level of that significance, investigated to a degree proportionate to the importance of the heritage asset

- wherever possible, heritage assets are put to an appropriate and viable use that is consistent with their conservation

- the positive contribution of such heritage assets to local character and sense of place is recognised and valued; and

- consideration of the historic environment is integrated into planning policies, promoting place-shaping.

- to contribute to our knowledge and understanding of our past by ensuring that opportunities are taken to capture evidence from the historic environment and to make this publicly available, particularly where a heritage asset is to be lost.

292. *The proposed development complies fully with the aims of this PPS.*

Planning Policy Statement (PPS) 9: Biodiversity and Geological Conservation

293. The Government's objectives for planning are:

- to promote sustainable development
- to conserve, enhance and restore the diversity of England's wildlife and geology
- to contribute to rural renewal and urban renaissance

294. The re-use of previously developed land for new development makes a major contribution to sustainable development by reducing the amount of countryside and undeveloped land that needs to be used.

295. Development proposals provide many opportunities for building-in beneficial biodiversity or geological features as part of good design. When considering proposals, local planning authorities should maximise such opportunities in and around developments, using planning obligations where appropriate.

296. *The proposed development would provide biodiversity gain. Please refer to accompanying Environmental Statement. The proposal complies fully with the aims of this PPS.*

Planning Policy Guidance (PPG) 13: Transport

297. PPG13 provides the Government's guidance on the transport planning aspects of new development. The key stated objectives of PPG13 are to:

- promote more sustainable transport choices for individuals;
- promote accessibility to jobs, shopping, leisure and other activities by public transport, walking and cycling; and
- reduce the need to travel, especially by car.

PLANNING STATEMENT SEPTEMBER 2011

298. PPG13 guides Local Authorities to take into account these overall policies when considering planning applications. In the context of all significant development, there are clear requirements to:

- ensure that there is a realistic choice of access by public transport, walking and cycling;
- use parking policies, alongside other measures, to influence the demand for travel by car;
- ensure that the needs of disabled people, pedestrians, public transport users and motorists are taken into account in the design of developments; and
- provide designs for highway and other transport infrastructure that maximise the safety of their users.

299. *The proposed development complies fully with the aims of this PPS.*

Plan for Growth

300. The Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government made a Written Ministerial Statement on 23 March 2011, setting clear expectations that local planning authorities and other bodies involved in granting development consents should prioritise growth and jobs.

301. The plan states that where local authorities do not have plans for development, or they are silent, out of date or indeterminate, this policy would mean that local authorities should start from the presumption that applications for development and job creation would be accepted, for example, in relation to disused commercial premises or former Ministry of Defence sites.

302. *The adopted Local Plan is significantly out of date and silent on the requirement for Bicester to accommodate the necessary growth outside its settlement boundary, and the need to rationalise the MOD logistics estate. The site is surplus MOD land. Therefore, to be in conformity with the Plan for Growth, CDC must start their assessment from the assumption that the application is acceptable.*

303. The Plan removes the nationally imposed targets for building on brownfield land included within PPS3, but expects that a very significant proportion of development would continue to take place on previously developed land.

304. *The site represents the only large previously developed site in the Bicester area.*

305. The Plan states that the Government is committed to ensuring that the planning system does everything it can to support growth; this statement became a material consideration in local planning decisions with immediate effect.

306. *The proposal would deliver significant economic benefits to Bicester and the wider environs with the delivery of high quality employment land and the creation and retention of 2,690 jobs.*

PLANNING STATEMENT SEPTEMBER 2011

307. The Plan states:

When deciding whether to grant planning permission, local planning authorities should support enterprise and facilitate housing, economic and other forms of sustainable development. Where relevant - and consistent with their statutory obligations - they should therefore:

- (i) consider fully the importance of national planning policies aimed at fostering economic growth and employment, given the need to ensure a return to robust growth after the recent recession
- (ii) take into account the need to maintain a flexible and responsive supply of land for key sectors, including housing
- (iii) consider the range of likely economic, environmental and social benefits of proposals; including long term or indirect benefits such as increased consumer choice, more viable communities and more robust local economies (which may, where relevant, include matters such as job creation and business productivity)
- (iv) be sensitive to the fact that local economies are subject to change and so take a positive approach to development where new economic data suggest that prior assessments of needs are no longer up-to-date
- (v) ensure that they do not impose unnecessary burdens on development.

308. The positive assessment of the proposed development fully complies with the Plan for Growth, which specifically states that benefits to the economy should, where relevant, be an important consideration...particular weight (should be placed) on the potential economic benefits offered by an application.

Localism Bill

309. The Localism Bill is passing through the legislative process and is currently in the House of Lords. It is likely to be made law late 2011 or early in the New Year.

310. One of the most significant actions of the Localism Bill is its stated intention to revoke Regional Spatial Strategies.

311. The Localism Bill includes a 'general power of competence'. It would give local authorities the legal capacity to do anything that an individual can do that is not specifically prohibited; they would not, for example, be able to impose new taxes, as an individual has no power to tax.

312. The Bill states that there are some significant flaws in the planning system as it stands and that planning does not give members of the public enough influence over decisions that make a big difference to their lives. The Localism Bill contains proposals to make the planning system clearer, more democratic, and more effective.

313. The Bill states that as well as being able to influence planning decisions; local people should be able to feel the benefits of new development in their neighbourhood. It proposes changes to the manner in which developer

PLANNING STATEMENT SEPTEMBER 2011

contributions are handled to make the system more flexible. It would allow the money raised to be spent on maintaining infrastructure, as well as building new infrastructure.

314. The Bill is specific in proposing that extra money available from the new homes bonus is able to be invested to mitigate potentially detrimental impacts of a proposed development, for example, highways infrastructure.

315. *A high level assessment has been carried out regarding the potential benefits of the proposed development for Bicester, and is as follows:*

New Homes Bonus Calculation and Methodology:

Total of 1,900 new homes

Total of 1,520 private homes (80%) assumed to pay Council Tax

Majority of properties assumed to be Band G Bicester, paying approximately £2,500 pa Council Tax

Council Tax matched by Central Government for the first 6 years

*= 1,520 homes x £2,500pa x 2 (match funding) x 6 years = **£45.6 million in Council Tax paid over a period of 6 years** assuming all properties are built and occupied and New Homes Bonus granted.*

316. *The proposal would deliver significant economic benefits to Bicester and its environs and transform an under-utilised site in need of inward investment.*

317. Case law already suggests that planning authorities may take such local finance considerations into account in making their planning decisions. However, there has been some confusion on this point. The Bill makes clear that if local finance considerations, including the community infrastructure levy and the new homes bonus, are relevant to local planning decisions then they must be taken into account. This provides reassurance to decision-makers, and clarity to local communities about how decisions are being taken on their behalf. Payments must be relevant to the planning application being considered otherwise they cannot be taken into account.

318. In summary, the Bill would:

- Place significantly more influence in the hands of local people over issues that make a big difference to their lives;
- Provide appropriate support and recognition to communities who welcome new development;
- Reduce red tape, making it easier for authorities to get on with the job of working with local people to draw up a vision for their area's future; and
- Reinforce the democratic nature of the planning system - passing power from bodies not directly answerable to the public, to democratically accountable ministers.

319. *The proposed development complies fully with the aims of the Localism Bill.*

Draft National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

320. The draft NPPF underlines the need for Councils to work closely with communities and businesses and actively seek opportunities for sustainable growth to rebuild the economy; helping to deliver the homes, jobs and infrastructure needed for a growing population whilst protecting the environment.

321. Sustainable Development is defined as that which meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

322. The draft NPPF states:

For the planning system delivering sustainable development means:

- planning for prosperity (an economic role) – using the planning system to build a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right type, and in the right places, is available to allow growth and innovation; and by identifying and coordinating development requirements, including the provision of infrastructure
- planning for people (a social role) – using the planning system to promote strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by providing an increased supply of housing to meet the needs of present and future generations; and by creating a good quality built environment, with accessible local services that reflect the community's needs and supports its health and well-being; and
- planning for places (an environmental role) – using the planning system to protect and enhance our natural, built and historic environment, to use natural resources prudently and to mitigate and adapt to climate change, including moving to a low-carbon economy.

323. *The proposed development is a perfect example of planning for prosperity, people and places.*

324. The Government is committed to ensuring that the planning system does everything it can to support sustainable economic growth. A positive planning system is essential because, without growth, a sustainable future cannot be achieved. Planning must operate to encourage growth and not act as an impediment. Therefore, significant weight should be placed on the need to support economic growth through the planning system.

325. *The proposed development could provide accommodation for 2,070 new civilian sector jobs, with excellent accessibility to Bicester town centre and its strategic transport network links. The employment uses proposed would contribute to the viability and vitality of the town and broaden its employment base.*

326. The draft NPPF states that at the heart of the planning system is a presumption in favour of sustainable development, which should be seen as a

golden thread running through both plan making and decision taking. Local planning authorities should plan positively for new development, and approve all individual proposals wherever possible.

327. One of the most significant statements in the draft NPPF regarding the proposed development is that local planning authorities should grant permission where the plan is absent, silent, indeterminate or where relevant policies are out of date, and that this policy should apply unless the adverse impacts of allowing development would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in the draft NPPF taken as a whole.

328. The adopted Local Plan is significantly out of date and silent on the requirement for Bicester to accommodate the necessary growth outside its settlement boundary, and the need to rationalise the MOD logistics estate. The site is surplus MOD land. Therefore, to be in conformity with the Plan for Growth, CDC must start their assessment from the assumption that the application is acceptable.

329. The draft NPPF states that national incentives and relevant local charges would help ensure local communities benefit directly from the increase in development that this Framework seeks to achieve. The revenue generated from development would help sustain local services, fund infrastructure and deliver environmental enhancement.

330. The New Homes Bonus would contribute to the significant economic benefits that the proposal would bring to Bicester and its wider environs.

331. The draft NPPF states that planning should proactively drive and support the development that this country needs. Every effort should be made to identify and meet the housing, business, and other development needs of an area, and respond positively to wider opportunities for growth. Decision-takers at every level should assume that the default answer to development proposals is “yes”, except where this would compromise the key sustainable development principles set out in this Framework.

332. The proposed development would comply with the key sustainable development principles in the draft NPPF.

333. Planning policies and decisions should take into account local circumstances and market signals such as land prices, commercial rents and housing affordability. Plans should set out a clear strategy for allocating sufficient land which is suitable for development in their area, taking account of the needs of the residential and business community

334. The draft NPPF states that where practical and consistent with other objectives, allocations of land for development should prefer land of lesser environmental value. Graven Hill is previously developed land.

335. The proposed development would enable the active management of patterns of growth to make the fullest use of public transport, walking and cycling, and focus significant development in a location is sustainable.

PLANNING STATEMENT SEPTEMBER 2011

336. The draft NPPF states that planning applications should be determined in accord with the draft NPPF, including its presumption in favour of sustainable development.

337. The proposed development is in full conformity with the draft NPPF.

338. It also states that local planning authorities should have a clear understanding of business needs within the economic markets operating in and across their area and that they should work closely with the business community to understand their changing needs and identify and address barriers to investment, including a lack of housing, infrastructure or viability.

339. The draft NPPF specifically states that local planning authorities should work with the Ministry of Defence's Strategic Planning Team to ensure that they have and take into account the most up-to-date information about defence and security needs in their area.

340. The proposal stems from the requirement to rationalise and modernise the MOD logistics operation.

341. The draft NPPF states that to ensure viability, the costs of any requirements likely to be applied to development, such as requirements for affordable housing, local standards, infrastructure contributions or other requirements should, when taking account of the normal cost of development and on-site mitigation, provide acceptable returns to a land owner/developer to enable the development to be deliverable.

342. A draft Heads of Terms has been submitted with this application detailing the level of financial contributions that are possible in regard to the proposal.

343. The primary objective of development management is to foster the delivery of sustainable development, not to hinder or prevent development. To proactively fulfil their planning role, and to actively promote sustainable development, local planning authorities need to:

- approach development management decisions positively – looking for solutions rather than problems so that applications can be approved wherever it is practical to do so
- attach significant weight to the benefits of economic and housing growth
- influence development proposals to achieve quality outcomes; and
- enable the delivery of sustainable development proposals.

344. The assessment of the application must be positive to comply with the draft NPPF.

345. The draft NPPF states that in considering applications for planning permission, local planning authorities should apply the presumption in favour of sustainable development and seek to find solutions to overcome any substantial planning objections where practical and consistent with the Framework.

346. *The proposed development at Graven Hill would be served by super fast broadband, as advanced, high quality communications infrastructure is essential for economic growth.*

347. The Government's key housing objective is to increase significantly the delivery of new homes. To enable this, the planning system should aim to deliver a sufficient quantity, quality and range of housing consistent with the land use principles and other policies of this Framework.

348. The draft NPPF states that to boost the supply of housing, local planning authorities should:

- use an evidence-base to ensure that their Local Plan meets the full requirements for market and affordable housing in the housing market area, including identifying key sites which are critical to the delivery of the housing strategy over the plan period
- identify and maintain a rolling supply of specific deliverable sites sufficient to provide five years worth of housing against their housing requirements. The supply should include an additional allowance of at least 20 per cent to ensure choice and competition in the market for land
- identify a supply of specific, developable sites or broad locations for growth, for years 6-10 and, where possible, for years 11-15.

349. *The indicative remaining requirement for the years 2011-2016, based on the figures presented to, and agreed at, the Committee meeting of the 24/03/11 is 10,407. An extra 20% on top of this figure would equate to an extra 2081 houses to be identified.*

350. Planning permission should be granted where relevant policies are out of date, for example where a local authority cannot demonstrate an up-to-date five-year supply of deliverable housing sites.

351. *The proposed development would function well and add to the overall quality of the area, not just for the short term but over the lifetime of the development and optimises the potential of the site to accommodate development, create and sustain an appropriate mix of uses (including the incorporation of green and Graven Hill woodland park) and support local facilities and transport networks.*

352. *The mixed use nature of the Graven Hill site would provide opportunities for meetings between members of the community who might not otherwise come into contact with each other, through the proposed uses which bring together those who work, live and play in the vicinity. It would provide a safe and accessible environment where crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine quality of life or community cohesion and be accessible, containing clear and legible pedestrian routes, and high quality public space, which encourage the active and continual use of public areas.*

353. *The proposed development would ensure that housing is developed in a suitable location which offers a range of community facilities and good access to key services and infrastructure.*

354. The proposed development is appropriate for its location, having regard to the effects of pollution on health, the natural environment and general amenity, taking account of the potential sensitivity of the area. The site is suitable for the proposed uses taking account of ground conditions and potential pollution arising from the previous uses.

Economic Strategy

355. The need for an economic strategy to enable sustainable, robust development of the Bicester economy is well understood. The key aim of both the district & county councils is to deliver 'jobs-led growth' with the resultant benefits of less out-commuting and greater viability of Bicester as a town, surrounding a thriving town centre. The need for jobs-led growth is mirrored across the UK making it essential that any strategy for Bicester plays on all of its strengths.

356. One Shared Vision for Bicester states that:

"One of the most important aspects of our plans for the future of Bicester are our plans to bring more and varied jobs to the town to remove the need for residents to travel out of Bicester to work. While we want to see new employers coming to the town the retention and expansion of our current employers is just as important."

357. In order to achieve this, there is a need for available space for new employers to move into and existing employers to expand into. However, Bicester does not currently have a supply of space to allow growth on the scale that is needed, and this would usually come with the need for significant up-front investment in buildings and infrastructure that would not be forthcoming in the prevailing market conditions. Indeed, the MOD has received requests from local, national and international companies seeking to lease space in the area. With its current, dispersed layout the MOD and consequently Bicester is unable to meet these local demands. However, in the right conditions, the proposed development could be fundamental to the strategy for the economic growth of Bicester.

358. The first phase of growth relates directly to the redevelopment of C site, which sees the rationalisation of the MOD's logistics footprint onto a single site realising significant efficiencies without any job loss. Moreover, the transformed operation anticipates a further 200 jobs. This would require the MOD to work with a small number of significant tenants who currently occupy MOD buildings on C site. A transition plan would be drawn up with a view to these tenants moving onto surplus land, thus retaining their presence in Bicester.

359. Vacation of buildings at Graven Hill for lease would provide the next phase of growth. There are buildings of different sizes on a serviced site, where the infrastructure (such as roads) already exists and improvement to the wider transport network is catalysed by the residential development. This variety of buildings provides opportunities not only for the 'big players' but could provide start-up accommodation for small business owners who want to make the next step into commercial premises.

360. The commitment of the MOD to a core logistics location would also create a draw for suppliers to defence, which is reflected by the longstanding relationship between the engineering firm, Barrus, and the MOD in Bicester, with many similar examples in other key MOD locations. The rental income from

leasing out these buildings provides an important income stream, which helps the site to be viable for the owner while the residential part is developed out and the market for the redeveloped commercial land is established.

361. The third phase of growth sees the exploitation of a well-located, rail-connected site, with its development for a variety of uses. As the growth takes hold, new speculative or purpose-built facilities can be developed on a large site with scope for a variety of different uses and occupants.

362. Coupled with improved rail-connectivity provided by Evergreen 3 and road-connectivity from the second phase of M40 junction 9 improvements, the scheme would help Bicester establish itself as a location of choice. With easy access on foot or by bike to the ancient woodland on the hilltop, the local centre to the North of the development, Bicester Town railway station or the town centre, Graven Hill would provide a desirable working environment for employees too.

363. In order for this vision to be realised the scheme must be viable, which is why the application does not simply seek planning consent for a commercial development covering the whole of Graven Hill. The residential element of the scheme allows the MOD to realise the value from the site that creates a viable proposition and enables Graven Hill to be vacated. The New Homes Bonus that would be released to the local authority of at least £43.5m over the first 6 years of development, plus the increase in business rates would also play a key part in providing the infrastructure that supports this growth.

364. In summary, this scheme offers a sustainable approach to growth in Bicester. The strands of the strategy work together to create an environment for growth that is robust enough to cope with the economic climate as it is at the moment and benefit from the upturn when it comes.

Conclusion

365. The Ministry of Defence is charged with increasing the efficiency and intensity of its use of its estate. It is necessary to reduce the capital cost of the estate, reduce future operational costs, increase efficiency and avoid unplanned expenditure.

366. The MODs logistics operation must be rationalized and modernized to achieve these aims. Such a programme must be self funded, and the residential element of the proposed development is required to deliver the new Fulfilment Centre at C Site.

367. The most likely alternative to the redevelopment of C Site, funded by the sale of Graven Hill, is for the MOD to withdraw its logistics functions entirely, which would reduce the number of jobs in the area, and remove the attraction for MOD suppliers planning to locate next to the defence gateway, bringing with them additional jobs.

368. The proposed development complies with National Planning Policy in the form of Planning Policy Guidance Notes/Statements. It also fully complies with the Plan for Growth, the draft National Planning Policy Framework and the draft Localism Bill.

369. At the local level, the adopted Local Plan is significantly out of date. This document is supplemented by the Non Statutory Local plan which is also out of date. Both plans are silent on the requirement to expand outside the existing settlement boundary of Bicester in order to accommodate necessary growth.

370. The draft Core Strategy has been subject to consultation, however, significant objections have been received by the Council to its contents. DIO contend that only limited weight can be afforded to this document due to the significant objections received and that reasonable alternatives to the proposed allocated sites have not been properly considered. This document is still in draft and requires further consultation. Without the proper consideration of the site, the draft Core Strategy could not be deemed sound. The opportunity for the Graven Hill site to be included remains.

371. The Graven Hill site is deliverable, in single ownership, previously developed land in walking distance of the town centre. The accessibility of the site is excellent, with improved pedestrian and cycle routes and a new high frequency bus service. The site can provide 1900 new zero carbon homes and 95,398 of high quality commercial floorspace, a zero carbon two form entry primary school, with space to extend if required, a new Woodland Park and playing fields (to include approximately seven sports pitches which can be configured to accommodate football, rugby or cricket. The sizes of the areas to receive pitches are quite large and would allow flexibility for a variety of playing pitch configurations as required, incorporated in the 62.41ha of new public open space.

PLANNING STATEMENT SEPTEMBER 2011

372. The proposed development is well designed and consistent with the principles of urban renaissance and sustainable development. It would provide a safe, secure, socially inclusive and distinctive community.

373. The proposal reflects and enhances the character and distinctiveness of the landscape and surrounding settlements. It has fully considered the accessibility, social inclusion and need for environmentally sensitive development.

374. There would be good access to jobs, key services, infrastructural and a range of community facilities, while making effective use of land and existing infrastructure.

375. In terms of housing growth required, Cherwell District Council resolved to reduce the housing numbers from 13,400 identified within the RSS, to 12,751 dwellings at a Committee meeting in March 2011. Consultation shall have to take place on these proposed changes and no date has yet been set for this consultation. The figure may have to change again as the draft National Planning Policy Framework requires Local Planning Authorities to identify and maintain a rolling supply of specific deliverable sites sufficient to provide five years worth of housing against their housing requirements, and that this supply should include an additional allowance of at least 20 per cent to ensure choice and competition in the market for land.

376. Based on the latest figures, Cherwell District Council would have to find between 1,340 dwellings (based on the RSS figures) and 1,270 dwellings (based on the March Committee figures) to meet this 20% additional allowance. This is assuming that all the proposed allocated sites come forward at the predicted times, with no slippage.

377. The proposed development would provide 1,650 zero carbon dwellings within the plan period, with a total of 1,900 by end of financial year 2027/28.

378. The proposed development would address this shortfall.