

RESERVED MATTERS APPLICATION FOR THE ERECTION OF 60 DWELLINGS AND PUBLIC OPEN SPACE WITH ASSOCIATED WORKS

**DORCHESTER PHASE 5, HEYFORD PARK, CAMP
ROAD, UPPER HEYFORD**

PLANNING, HERITAGE AND DESIGN STATEMENT

ON BEHALF OF DORCHESTER GROUP

**TOWN & COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1990 (AS AMENDED)
PLANNING AND COMPULSORY PURCHASE ACT 2004**

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1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This Planning, Heritage and Design Statement has been prepared by Pegasus Group on behalf of Dorchester Group (“the Applicant”).
- 1.2 The Statement is in support of a Reserved Matters application for the erection of 60 dwellings at Dorchester Phase 5 of the Heyford Park development (“the application site”) on land at the Former RAF Upper Heyford airbase, Upper Heyford, Oxfordshire.
- 1.3 The Reserved Matters submission is submitted pursuant to outline planning permission ref. 13/01811/OUT. The application represents the provision of 60 dwellings with associated car parking, infrastructure, associated works and public open space.
- 1.4 Detailed matters of access, appearance, landscaping, layout and scale for these phases are provided by this submission.
- 1.5 This Planning Statement considers the relevant National and Local Planning Policy against which the application should be determined with particular reference to: the adopted policies contained within the Cherwell Local Plan (2011-2031); and the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).
- 1.6 This Statement is not intended to duplicate matters referred to elsewhere, rather it provides a comprehensive overview of the land use and planning merits of the development, to be considered against the relevant planning policies and other material considerations pertinent to this application.

2. SITE AND SURROUNDING AREA

- 2.1 The application site forms of part of the Former RAF Upper Heyford, its military use having ceased in 1994. The Heyford base extends to approximately 520 hectares in total and the location of the application site is identified on the Location Plan that accompanies the application.
- 2.2 The former airbase base is located approximately 7km north-west of Bicester, 13km south-east of Banbury and 3km south-west of Junction 10 of the M4 Motorway, in Oxfordshire.
- 2.3 The airbase as a whole was designated as a Conservation Area in 2006, reflecting the key role that the airbase played in the Cold War years, and the distinctive architecture and layouts which arose from that use. The Trident layout at the centre of Heyford Park and the Parade Ground just south of Camp Road are just two of the significant elements of the original plans, and represent military and airfield layouts typical of their era.
- 2.4 The application site comprises 2.43 hectares of brownfield land which lies immediately to the south of Camp Road and is located within the Conservation Area. The site was previously designated for use as a primary school as part of a comprehensive masterplan for a new settlement of 1,075 dwellings. Proposals for a Free School elsewhere at Heyford Park have since been approved and the site designation was considered surplus to requirements and as such an alternative use for the brownfield land for residential purposes has been approved. The planning history of the site and Heyford Park as a whole is discussed in Section 3 of this Statement.
- 2.5 The site is currently occupied by a series of former military buildings lying to the west and south-west of a former Parade Ground. The western boundary of the site is formed by a narrow service road which provides access to two storey residential properties on the eastern side of Carswell Circle. All of the existing buildings on the site have Conservation Area Consent for their removal.
- 2.6 Immediately to the west of the site lie an attractive series of two storey terrace dwellings dating from 1920s aligned north-south around an open green area known as Carswell Circle. Further to the south and west of these properties are a larger number of single storey bungalows constructed at a later date. All these residential properties were previously occupied by service personnel. More

recently planning permission has been granted for permanent non-military residential occupation of the residential properties as part of the re-use and regeneration of the former Military Base.

- 2.7 Further to the north of the application site lies Camp Road an east-west thoroughfare which splits the former Military Base into two parts. To the north of Camp Road is a continuation of some residential properties together with an area referred to as the Technical Area with larger buildings servicing the flying activities. Further to the north again lies the wider Flying Field which has a series of Hardened Aircraft Shelters and other associated buildings and structures around a long east-west runway.

3. PLANNING HISTORY

- 3.1 The former RAF Upper Heyford Air Base has an extensive planning history although little of this is of direct relevance to the current proposals which only affect a small part of the Base. The most significant applications affecting the site are two recent decisions involving the redevelopment of the whole of the Upper Heyford Air Base. The first of these decisions followed an appeal to the Secretary of State and was issued in January 2010 (application ref: 08/00716/OUT), known as the 'Lead Appeal'. This scheme involved a proposed new settlement of 1,075 dwellings, together with associated works and facilities, including employment uses, community uses, a primary school, playing fields and other physical and social infrastructure. This application was accompanied by a large number of documents including an Illustrative Master Plan which identified the application site as a 2.2 hectare site with a 1FE Primary School.
- 3.2 Following the purchase of the site by the Dorchester Group, a revised scheme for the redevelopment of the New Settlement Area, comprising 1,075 dwellings including the retention and change of use of 267 existing military dwellings to residential Class C3 and the change of use of other specified buildings, together with associated works and facilities, including employment uses, a school, playing fields and other physical and social infrastructure, was submitted to, and approved by the District Council in December 2011 (application ref: 10/01642/OUT). This involved a fundamentally different concept from that set out in the masterplan accompanying the 2010 approval, insofar as it retained virtually all of the existing residential properties within the base with an additional 764 new dwellings being introduced on various parts of the site. The application site on this revised masterplan was again occupied by a 1FE Primary School capable of being expanded to a 2FE should the need arise.
- 3.3 Both applications/permissions were accompanied by Design and Access Statements and Environmental Statements. These both show the proposed Primary School located on the current application site with the proposed school building being located at the northern end of the site with open areas and pitch provision on the southern part of the site.
- 3.4 More recently, planning permission has been granted for a "Free School" at Heyford Park incorporating both Primary and Secondary provision. Permission was granted in June 2014 for the retention and change of Use of Building 583 and associated open space to Class D1/D2 use (application ref: 13/00343/F) and the

change of use of Building 74 and associated open space to Class D1 (application ref: 13/00740/F).

- 3.5 In light of these permissions for the Free School, the identification of the application site for a new Primary School became redundant, hence the submission on an outline planning application for residential development of the site for, inter alia, up to 60 dwellings (application ref: 13/01811/OUT). The outline application was approved in March 2016 and this Reserved Matters application is made pursuant to that permission.
- 3.6 In terms of the wider site, the development of the New Settlement Area is now underway, with the first phases of Reserved Matters applications being implemented by both the Dorchester Group and Bovis Homes as set out below:

	LPA Reference	Date Approved
Dorchester Phase 1	13/01394/REM	19 th Feb 2014
Dorchester Phase 2 (was Phase 5)	14/01500/REM	9 th Dec 2014
Dorchester Phase 3 (was Phase 2)	14/01366/REM	26 th Nov 2014
Dorchester Phase 4 & 5B	15/01612/REM	11 th Jan 2016
Bovis Phase B1	13/00711/REM	19 th Feb 2014
Bovis Phase B2a	13/01584/REM	19 th Feb 2014
Bovis Phase B2b/B5	14/01740/REM	20 th Jan 2015

4. APPLICATION PROPOSAL

- 4.1 This application relates to a Reserved Matters submission made pursuant to outline planning permission ref. 13/01811/OUT.
- 4.2 The proposed development comprises the erection of 60 dwellings with associated car parking, infrastructure, associated works and public open space.
- 4.3 The dwellings proposed by the application comprise:

Market Housing	
No. of Beds	No. of Units
3	3
4	20
5	19
Sub-Total	42
Affordable Housing - Rented	
No. of Beds	No. of Units
2	10
3	3
4	2
Sub-Total	15
Affordable Housing - Intermediate	
No. of Beds	No. of Units
2	2
3	1
Sub-Total	3
Total Market Housing	42
Total Affordable Housing	18
GRAND TOTAL	60

- 4.4 A significant element of affordable housing is been provided, 18 units of the proposed 60 which represents a provision of 30%. The location of the affordable housing is displayed on the Planning Layout drawing that accompanies the application. The application is also accompanied by an Affordable Housing Statement, prepared by Pegasus Group, which sets out the approach to affordable housing in more detail.
- 4.5 The proposed development will provide 2, 3, 4 and 5 bedroom properties which will consist of a range of property types including detached, semi-detached and terraced properties.

5. NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY

National Planning Policy Framework

5.1 The **National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)** was published and came into effect on 27th March 2012 replacing existing planning policy statements and guidance.

5.2 Paragraph 14 of the NPPF sets out a presumption in favour of sustainable development, which for decision taking means:

“approving development proposals that accord with the development plan without delay; and where the development plan is absent, silent or relevant policies are out-of-date, granting planning permission unless:

- **Any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole; or**
- **Specific policies in this Framework indicate development should be restricted.”**

5.3 It is a Core Planning Principle set out in the NPPF that planning should:

“Proactively drive and support sustainable economic development to deliver the homes, business and industrial, infrastructure and thriving local place that the county needs.”

5.4 To this end, for decision-taking the NPPF states that:

“Local authorities should approach decision making in a positive way to foster the delivery of sustainable development. LPAs should look for solutions rather than problems, and decision-takers at every level should seek to approve applications for sustainable development where possible.”

5.5 The NPPF gives a strong emphasis towards delivering good design, but also recognises that policies should avoid being unnecessarily prescriptive in respect of detail. Policies should not impose particular styles or tastes and the NPPF encourages authorities to promote or reinforce local distinctiveness.

5.6 LPAs should consider using design codes where they could help deliver high quality outcomes. However, design policies should avoid unnecessary prescription or detail and should concentrate on guiding the overall scale, density, massing, height, landscape, layout, materials and access of new development in relation to neighbouring buildings and the local area more generally.

- 5.7 It goes on to say that planning policies and decisions should not attempt to impose architectural styles or particular tastes and they should not stifle innovation, originality or initiative through unsubstantiated requirements to conform to certain development forms or styles. It is, however, proper to seek to promote or reinforce local distinctiveness.
- 5.8 Applicants are encouraged to work closely with those directly affected by their proposals to evolve designs that take account of the views of the community. Proposals that can demonstrate this in developing the design of the new development should be looked on more favourably.
- 5.9 With regard to the historic environment, as a general principle, the NPPF requires applicants to describe the significance of any heritage asset and the contribution made by their setting; however, the NPPF guides that this should be to the level of detail proportionate to the asset's importance and no more than is sufficient to inform the understanding of the potential effects of the Proposed Development upon their significance.

Planning Practice Guidance

- 5.10 On 6th March 2014 the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) launched the **Planning Practice Guidance (PPG)** web-based resource.
- 5.11 In terms of design, the PPG largely reflects the policies set out in the NPPF. It again reiterates that pre-application discussions are an opportunity to discuss the design policies, requirements and parameters that will be applied to a site whereby the Local Authority can explain the design issues they feel are most important and the developer can explain their own objectives and aspirations.
- 5.12 With regard to Design Codes, it is recommended that LPAs should consider using one to help deliver high quality outcomes where for example they wish to ensure consistency across large sites which may be in multiple ownership and/or where development is to be phased and more than one developer and design team is likely to be involved. It goes on to say that design codes should wherever possible avoid overly prescriptive detail and encourage sense of place and variety (unless local circumstances can clearly justify a different approach).
- 5.13 Matters relating to the historic environment are addressed within the section entitled 'Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment'. The PPG confirms that the consideration of 'significance' in decision taking is important and states

that heritage assets may be affected by direct physical change or by change in their setting. It goes on to say that being able to properly assess the nature, extent and importance of the significance of a heritage asset, and the contribution of its setting, is very important to understanding the potential impact and acceptability of development proposals.

- 5.14 The PPG also provides guidance in respect of non-designated heritage assets such as buildings, monuments, sites, places, areas or landscapes identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions but which are not formally designated heritage assets.

6. LOCAL PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

6.1 The determination of a planning application is to be made pursuant to Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, which is to be read in conjunction with Section 70(2) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990. Section 38(6) requires LPAs to determine planning applications in accordance with the Development Plan, unless there are material considerations which indicate otherwise. Section 70(2) provides that in determining planning applications the Local Planning Authority (LPA):-

“shall have regard to the provisions of the Development Plan, so far as material to the application and to any other material considerations”.

Cherwell Local Plan

6.2 The Development Plan comprises the policies of the adopted **Cherwell Local Plan 2011-2031**, adopted 20th July 2015. The relevant policies from the adopted Local Plan are considered below.

6.3 The Executive Summary to the Local Plan confirms that an objective of the Plan is to boost significantly the supply of housing and meet the objectively assessed need for Cherwell identified in the Oxfordshire Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) 2014 – some 1,140 dwellings per annum or a total of 22,800 from 2011 to 2031.

6.4 **Paragraph B.96** sets out that the Local Plan seeks to deliver growth in accordance with the NPPF’s Core Planning Policies including, inter alia, seeking to secure high quality design and a good standard of amenity by developing new neighbourhoods and achieving regeneration and redevelopment of key sites, and encouraging the effective re-use of existing land and buildings and bring forward sites that contain land of lesser environmental value such as at the Former RAF Upper Heyford.

6.5 With regard to the former airbase, **paragraph C.288** indicates that the site was previously subject to a policy from the Oxfordshire Structure Plan 2016 (Policy H2) which was saved by the South East Plan and retained upon the South East Plan’s revocation. However, Policy Village 5, discussed below, replaces Policy H2 in guiding future redevelopment of the site, as Policy H2 has now been superseded by the adoption of the Local Plan and therefore carries no weight.

6.6 **Policy Villages 5 (Former RAF Upper Heyford)** allocates this 520 hectare site for, inter alia, a settlement of approximately 1,600 dwellings (in addition to the 761 dwellings (net) already permitted). Policy Villages 5 sets out the position in respect of housing as follows:

"Housing

- **Number of homes – approximately 1,600 (in addition to the 761 (net) already permitted**
- **Affordable housing – at least 30%"**

6.7 The policy also sets out 'Key site specific design and place shaping principles', and in respect of housing these are:

- **New development should reflect high quality design that responds to the established character of the distinct character areas where this would preserve or enhance the appearance of the Former RAF Upper Heyford Conservation Area; and**
- **The scale and massing of new buildings should respect their context. Building materials should reflect the locally distinctive colour palette and respond to the materials of the retained buildings within their character area, without this resulting in pastiche design solutions.**

6.8 Other policies contained within the adopted Local Plan of relevance to this application are summarised below.

6.9 **Policy BSC 3 (Affordable Housing)** advises that all developments at Banbury and Bicester that include 11 or more dwellings (gross), or which would be provided on sites suitable for 11 or more dwellings (gross), will be expected to provide at least 30% of new housing as affordable homes on site. Whilst at Kidlington and elsewhere, all proposed developments of the same thresholds will be expected to provide at least 35% of new housing as affordable homes on site. Furthermore, all qualifying developments will be expected to provide 70% of the affordable housing as affordable/social rented dwellings and 30% as other forms of intermediate affordable homes.

6.10 **Policy BSC4 (Housing Mix)** continues that the Council will not only aim to increase the supply of housing but to encourage a mix that can help improve the functioning of the housing market system, make it more fluid, and enable households to more easily find and move to housing which they can afford and which better suits their circumstances.

- 6.11 Further analysis and discussion of these two policies is set out in full in the Affordable Housing Statement, prepared by Pegasus Group, which accompanies the application.
- 6.12 **Policy ESD 13 (Local Landscape Protection and Enhancement)** advises that development proposals will be expected to respect and enhance the local landscape character, with appropriate mitigation where damage to local landscape character cannot be avoided. Proposals will not be permitted where they would, inter alia, be inconsistent with local character.
- 6.13 **Policy ESD 15 (The character of the built and historic environment)** advises that where development is in the vicinity of any of the District's natural or historical assets the delivery of a high quality design that complements the asset will be essential. The policy requirements set out in ESD 15 apply to all types of development, including housing. **Paragraph B.268** highlights the appearance of new development and its relationship with its surrounding built and natural environment as potential having a significant effect on the character and appearance of an area. The need to secure new development that can positively contribute to the character of its local environment is of key importance and reflects the approach and significant criteria listed under Policy ESD 15.
- 6.14 The approach to design is discussed in Section 8 of this Statement and in more detail in the Statement of Compliance, prepared by Focus On Design, which accompanies the application.
- Cherwell Local Plan 1996
- 6.15 The following saved policies of the **Cherwell Local Plan**, adopted November 1996, remain extant and relevant to the proposed development following the adoption of the Cherwell Local Plan 2011-2031:-
- 6.16 **Policy C23 (Retention of features contributing to character or appearance of a Conservation Area)** states that there will be a presumption in favour of retaining buildings, walls, trees or other features which make a positive contribution to the character or appearance of a Conservation Area.
- 6.17 Whilst **Policy C28 (Layout, design and external appearance of new development)** advises that control will 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 will be required to be of a high standard and the use of traditional local building materials will normally be required.

Statement of Common Ground

6.18 During the Examination Hearings for the now adopted Local Plan, a **Statement of Common Ground (SoCG)** was agreed between the Dorchester Group and Cherwell District Council. The signed SoCG represents the most up-to-date position of the District Council and was presented to the Examination to clarify the Council's position and interpretation of Policy Villages 5 and its implementation.

6.19 The SoCG confirms that:

"Both the Dorchester Group and Cherwell District Council believe that the Proposed Modifications to allocate additional development through Policy Villages 5 represents an appropriate response to the uplift in housing requirements necessary to ensure that the Local Plan addresses the objectively assessed housing need."
(Paragraph 3.2)

"That the provision of additional growth at Former RAF Upper Heyford can be accommodate so that it consolidates and complements the on-going creation of a distinctive new community. Growth at Upper Heyford is being supported by the delivery of new affordable housing and new services and facilities" (Point 2 under the matters that the Parties agree)

"The implementation of the approved scheme and the development of identified brownfield land in particular should not be delayed." (Point 9 under the matters that the Parties agree)

6.20 In terms of the longer term opportunities for development at the Upper Heyford site the SoCG states:

"The parties agree that to secure a high quality development (for housing and employment) there will be a need for a comprehensive review of the proposed development at the site that considers the important heritage landscape setting of the site and how additional development can be successfully integrated within existing consented development. This will provide the means to secure development incorporating high quality design that relates closely to the history of the site".
(Paragraph 6)

6.21 There is therefore consensus with the District Council that the Upper Heyford site has an important role to play both in terms of meeting identified housing needs, and to accommodate significant additional employment.

7. HERITAGE ASSESSMENT

- 7.1 Section 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, as amended, sets out the general duty of LPAs to respect Conservation Areas in the exercise of planning functions, stating that:

“In the exercise, with respect to any buildings or other land in a conservation area, of any [functions under or by virtue of] any of the provisions mentioned in subsection (2), special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area”.

- 7.2 Accordingly, it is a statutory duty of the LPA in the determination of planning applications to ensure that any proposals preserve or enhance the character and appearance of Conservation Areas.

Heritage Context

- 7.3 As set out in Section 2 of this Statement, the application site is located within the former RAF Upper Heyford military site. The site was initially constructed in 1916 for use as an airfield during the First World War and remained operational for military use (with some minor periods of cessation) by the Royal Air Force (RAF) until circa 1950. At this time, whilst remaining a Ministry of Defence (MoD) site, its occupation was transferred to the United States Air Force (USAF) as part of the Cold War strategic defence. The USAF remained in occupation until 1994 when the site was handed back to the MoD and its military use ended.
- 7.4 The former RAF Upper Heyford military site was designated as a Conservation Area by Cherwell District Council (CDC) in 2006. The Former RAF Upper Heyford Conservation Area Appraisal (CDC, April 2006) indicates that the application site is located in the Residential Zone with the site within Sub Category 10B ‘RAF Domestic and Residential Section’ which is described as:

“The 1920s, red brick, RAF buildings to the south of Camp Road are laid out around and orientated towards the parade ground. The style of the buildings within the area is again British Military and because of their grid-like orientation the area has a strong ‘campus’ character distinct from the Technical Site to the north on the other side of the road. The area immediately south of the parade ground was developed during the period of RAF expansion in the 1930s. The area is dominated by the Institute (488) and Hblocks (489, 498 and 500) set around it. This area has a coherent character distinct from the 1920s buildings. The general ‘military architect’

character of the area has been diluted by post-war alterations.”

- 7.5 The Landscape Character Assessment of the Airbase South of the Cold War Zone (ACTA, March 2006) subdivides these areas and notes the application site as being located within Character Areas 4A (Store/Petrol Station), 4B (Parade Ground Buildings) and 4C (West Barracks). These are described as:

4A (Store/Petrol Station)

“This is an open area consisting mainly of hard surface around the Store (492), Petrol Station (4983) and building 442. It is defined by Camp Road to the north and the edge of the petrol station tarmac in the east, which is currently marked by a Heras fence. In the south the boundary extend past the north front of 442. It is characterised by:

- **Openness and dominance of hard surface;**
- **Built-up edges.”**

4B (Parade Ground Buildings)

“This area is defined by Camp Road to the north, the East Huts and a line of mature trees on the east edge, the change to the late 1930s layout to the south and Carswell Circle to the west. Its framework is formed by the 1925-6 layout of the Sergeant’s Mess (457), Institution (455), Cookhouse (474) and barrack blocks around the parade square. But all of the barrack blocks except 485 have been substantially altered or completely rebuilt and no longer have a 1920s character.

Within this framework there have been post-war changes, including the conversion of 440 into a large, rambling structure dominated by its balconies and the construction of the Open Mess and Recreation Centre (472) on the south part of the parade ground. There are also small prefabricated buildings which are generally white or cream with dark roofs such as 468, 449 and 484. The additions to the 1920s buildings such as the brick structures on the south, west and north elevations of the Institute (455) and the north and west of the Sergeants’ Mess (457) add to the clutter. In the land between 471/466 and Carswell Circle there are prefabricated buildings in varied materials but also the 1930s Central Heating Plant (467) and the Decontamination Centre (465). There are many semi-mature trees particularly in the north where there is abundant Red Horse Chestnut (*Aesculus x carnea*) set out around the parade ground, but there are also random groups of conifers. The overall characteristics are thus:

- **confusing mixture of buildings in varying styles, materials and quality;**

- **1920s buildings usually in dark brick with pitched slate roofs surrounded by later structures;**
- **very varied tree cover;**
- **scattered prefabricated buildings in several different materials."**

4C (West Barracks)

"This area (Photo 40) consists of four barrack blocks (598, 594, 593 and 596) in widely differing materials with their long axes north-south and separated by large car parks. At the edge, the single-storey building 502 is in strange, almost pink materials. The characteristics are:

- **dominance of rectangular barrack blocks of purely functional design;**
- **large areas of hard surface;**
- **absence of tree cover in contrast to adjacent areas."**

7.6 The significance of the respective areas is considered within the Archaeology and Cultural Heritage Chapter of the Environmental Statement produced in support of the 'Lead Appeal' (application ref. 08/00716/OUT). The overall significance of Areas 12A (Store/Petrol Station), 12B (Parade Ground Buildings) and 12C (West Barracks) was determined as 'Low' with the areas described as:

12A (Store/Petrol Station)

"This small open area is dominated by open hard surfaces and built up edges, with Camp Road to the north and the edge of the petrol station tarmac to the east. This Character Area is interesting from a social history point of view, in depicting life on the Airbase and the creation of 'Little America', but the individual structures are not of significance..."

12B (Parade Ground Buildings)

"A confusing mixture of building in various period, styles, material and quality with considerable infill characterise this area. The primary 1920s layout is formed around the Parade Square with a Sergeants' Mess, Institution, Cookhouse and Barrack Blocks. Some of these structures have been subject to additions, and the barracks have been substantially altered/rebuilt except building no. 485. Those that have been rebuilt may be of negligible significance but have been valued at low because they have group value, and add to value of the Character Area. The western parameters of this area include Post-War structures such as a Thrift Shop and Store. These structures have been less well maintained than the 1920s buildings to the north of Camp Road, are

presently empty, and some have considerable external vegetation, particularly the Sergeants' Mess (OA12B.2).

The 1920s structures facing Camp Road (OA12B.1-OA12B.3) are of particular interest and are architecturally impressive structures, which add value to the core 1920s landscape opposite (Area 14E)..."

12C (West Barracks)

"This area is dominated by functional Post-War rectangular, long barracks, with large areas of hardstanding for car-parking. These structures are of little value and may be of negligible significance, but their number and location mean that they have some group value. All elements of this Character Area are listed in the Gazetteer."

- 7.7 These assessments of significance for the 'Store/Petrol Station', 'Parade Ground Building' and 'West Barracks' areas above were reiterated in the subsequent Archaeology and Cultural Heritage Chapter of the Environmental Statement (respectively referenced as Areas 3A, 3B and 3C) produced in support of the New Settlement Area proposals which was granted planning permission under 'The Outline Consent' (application ref. 10/01642/OUT).
- 7.8 There are no statutory protected designated heritage assets (Scheduled Monuments or Listed Buildings) within the application site; the nearest being the Hardened Telephone Exchange Scheduled Monument (Building 129) and the Battle Command Centre Scheduled Monument (Building 126) which are both located to the north of the application site on the northern side of Camp Road.
- 7.9 Within close proximity to the application site to the eastern and western boundaries are a number of buildings identified as 'Non-Listed Building of Local Significance', including:
- Carswell Circle north buildings (Buildings 535-540);
 - Decontamination Centre (Building 465)
 - Barrack Block Type C (Building 471)
- 7.10 Some of the Carswell Circle south buildings (Buildings 530-534) also adjoin the application site to the south-western corner and these buildings are identified as 'Other buildings that make a contribution to be retained'.

- 7.11 These are as identified in the Former RAF Upper Heyford Conservation Area Appraisal (CDC, April 2006). All of these buildings are physically separated from the application site.
- 7.12 The Conservation Area Consents have now been implemented such that this site is now in a cleared state ready for development. It therefore presently contributes little value, if any, to the character and appearance of this part of the Conservation Area.
- 7.13 In summary, notwithstanding the location of the application site within the Former RAF Upper Heyford Conservation Area the overall heritage significance of the respective character areas within the application site has consistently been assessed as being 'low'. The area of the application site does not make a particularly strong or positive contribution to the Conservation Area as a whole, although it is recognised that there are nearby non-statutory, non-designated heritage assets.

Heritage Assessment

- 7.14 The preceding paragraphs provide a description of the heritage context relevant to the application site and therefore complies with the requirement of the NPPF (paragraph 128) and Policy ESD15 of the adopted Cherwell Local Plan Part 1, for an Applicant to describe the significance of any heritage asset and the contribution made by its setting. This has been provided to a level of detail considered proportionate to its importance, in this instance the location of the application site within a Conservation Area.
- 7.15 The application site comprises several former military buildings and structures that are subject to an implemented permission for their demolition (application ref. 10/01619/CAC) and the subsequent redevelopment of the land for residential use (application ref. 13/01811/OUT).
- 7.16 Given the low significance of the 'Store/Petrol Station', 'Parade Ground Building' and 'West Barracks' areas and that they did not make a particularly strong or positive contribution to the Conservation Area as a whole, it is concluded that the proposed residential development would be of no detriment or harm to the function, setting or historic interpretation of the Conservation Area. It is therefore considered that the proposed development accords with the general principles of the NPPF and Policy ESD15 of the Cherwell Local Plan 2011-2031 with regard to the conservation and enhancement of Conservation Areas.

- 7.17 Furthermore, the proposed development is necessary to help facilitate the delivery of a new settlement at Heyford, which in turn will provide for environmental enhancements to the localised area through bringing vacant and degrading land back into use, and delivering new landscaping and open green space, which will have a positive effect on the Conservation Area as a whole. In this respect the NPPF (paragraph 131) guides LPAs to take into account the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to the local character and distinctiveness.
- 7.18 There would be no direct effects on the Hardened Telephone Exchange Scheduled Monument (Building 129) or Battle Command Centre (Building 126), nor their setting or interpretation, given the degree of separation and intervening development. Accordingly, the proposed residential development would not have a detrimental effect or harm the interpretation or historic context of the Scheduled Monuments, and therefore accords with the with the general principles of the NPPF with regard to adverse effects on designated heritage assets and Policy ESD15 of the Cherwell Local Plan 2011-2031.
- 7.19 The Carswell Circle north buildings (Building 535-540) are identified within the Former RAF Upper Heyford Conservation Area Appraisal as being 'Non Listed Buildings of Local Significance' and lies to the western boundary of the application site. The buildings will however be physically separated from the application site by a public footpath, public open space and rear boundaries of residential properties. Similarly, the same applies to the buildings in the Carswell Circle south which adjoin the south-western corner of the application site and is separate from the built development by a footpath and public open space. The Decontamination Centre (Building 465) and a Barrack Block Type C (Building 471) are also identified as being 'Non Listed Buildings of Local Significance'. However, these buildings will not be retained given that Conservation Area Consent has previously been granted for their demolition and would in any event be separated from the application site by a road. Accordingly, the proposed residential development would not have an adverse effect on the setting or historic interpretation of these buildings being retained and the implementation of development within the Residential Zone would further reinforce the physical and contextual separation with these non-statutory non-designated heritage assets. Accordingly, the proposed residential development will accord with the general principles of the NPPF and Policy ESD15 of the Cherwell Local Plan 2011-2031 with regard to effects on non-designated heritage assets.

8. PLANNING AND DESIGN ASSESSMENT

8.1 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act requires proposals to be determined in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. This section initially provides an analysis of the principle of the development and then provides a discussion on the design approach and evaluation of the proposed scheme as proposed.

Principle of the development

8.2 The principle of residential development on this parcel of land has already been established by the granting of outline planning permission.

8.3 The Development Plan for the area consists of the recently adopted Cherwell Local Plan (2011-2031) and is the starting point for decision-making purposes for applications in the District. The proposed development therefore needs to demonstrate compliance with the relevant policies of the Development Plan.

8.4 In terms of the principle of the development, it is considered that the application proposals do not conflict with the adopted Local Plan, as the proposals are consistent with, and will reinforce, the strategic housing function of the former RAF Upper Heyford Site as defined by Policy Villages 5.

8.5 The Upper Heyford Site is a strategic allocation within the adopted Local Plan (Policy Villages 5) and the Plan confirms the importance of this brownfield site, as a location for a significant increase in housing provision over the plan period, i.e. an increase of 1,600 dwellings. This is in addition to the 761 (net) dwellings already permitted. The principle of the development has already been established and therefore the Reserved Matters application is principally concerned with matters of design.

8.6 Furthermore, the signed SoCG also reiterates the on-going creation of a distinctive new community at Former RAF Upper Heyford and that the implementation of the approved scheme should not be delayed. There can therefore be no objection to bringing forward the residential development on land at Dorchester Phase 5.

8.7 The remainder of this section will therefore consider the design approach and evolution of the scheme that has led to the development as now proposed.

Design

- 8.8 The District Council granted outline planning permission in 2011 for the development of part of the former RAF Upper Heyford camp for 1,075 dwellings in total, plus associated commercial uses. The outline permission defined the development form and principle of development in a series of parameter plans, identifying the use of the application site for a primary school. This was however superseded by the granting of a recent outline planning permission in 2016 for residential development on the land following the approval of a Free School in two of the existing buildings at Heyford Park (Buildings 74 and 583), thereby making the need for a primary school on the application site redundant.
- 8.9 Under the terms of the 2011 planning permission, the requirement for a Design Code was a condition of the outline permission and this document was approved by the District Council in November 2013. However, the proposed development is subject to a separate outline permission and not subject of the approved Design Code. The proposed development will instead be judged against the performance criteria set out in the Design and Access Statement (DAS) that accompanied that the outline application (document ref: D.0345_03-1; dated November 2013) and prepared with regard to the Design Code to ensure a comprehensive design for Heyford Park. Where certain design principles are not set out in the approved DAS, compliancy is demonstrated against the approved Design Code.
- 8.10 Accordingly, prior to the submission of this Reserved Matters application the Applicant approached and engaged with the District Council in ongoing discussions on the design of the development with reference to the DAS and the Design Code where applicable.
- 8.11 A summary of the design evolution of the scheme is set out below in order to understand the rationale for the approach proposed.

Rationale for the design approach

- 8.12 The Applicant has actively worked with the District Council in the preparation of the development as now proposed. The application as now submitted has taken account of the advice received and has responded positively with amendments to address the concerns raised at various stages of the pre-application discussions.

8.13 In particular it is pertinent to highlight the following points which have influenced the design of the proposed development:

Layout and Scale:

- The height and massing of the proposed development varies across the site according to the nature of the public realm. 2 storey units will be located close to the existing, retained building with 2.5 and 3 storey dwellings focussed around the village green and key spaces and location to provide some local distinctiveness;
- 60 no. dwelling will be provided which equates to a gross density of 25 dph;
- There will be a range of sizes and tenures across the site including detached, semi-detached and terraced properties in both open market and affordable units;
- Buildings are arranged for the most part in perimeter blocks;
- Landmark buildings comprising variation in materials, colour, frontage treatment and architectural style have been included in certain locations to aid legibility of the development; and
- Particular attention has been paid to the key frontages such as those overlooking the Village Green. These have been designed as a cohesive composition with particular attention paid to massing and architectural style, contributing positively to the quality and character of the place.

Materials:

- A limited palette of materials which reflect the early 20th century Arts and Crafts architecture and generally will consist of a maximum of 3-4 finishes in a single elevational composition;
- Change of materials used to express geometry of the building rather than just for variety; and
- Where buildings form a focus or marker, their main architectural elements such as entrances or projecting elements will be emphasised to create a feature.

Parking:

- Overall, parking has been designed in line with Manual for Streets with a balanced approach between unallocated and allocation parking.
- The majority of allocated parking will be provided on-plot either as a parking bay or garage and courtyard parking has been designed to serve a limited number of properties only;
- Visitor parking will be provided on street in the form of parallel parking spaces in accordance with Oxfordshire County Council Parking Guidance; and
- In total, 180 parking spaces will be provided for the residential properties along with 10 visitor spaces giving rise to a total parking allocation of 190 spaces across the proposed development.

Recycling and Refuse Collection:

- The Refuse Plan that accompanies the application identifies the location of areas for the storage of refuse and recycling; and
- The layout of the development allows for rear access to each dwelling so that residents can store containers away from frontages and within the dwelling curtilage.

Public Open Space and Landscaping:

- The proposed development contains an area of 0.35ha of public open space and will form a key area of green containing a Local Area of Play (LAP) with a number of small, pocket parks;
- Open space both within the site and surrounding environs helps to create a relatively soft setting to the scheme, the large area of open space to the village green has a relatively formal character and helps unify the overall development proposals;
- Robust yet simple landscaping planting will be implemented which encapsulates a green structure of low native hedgerows, through which larger yet generally small canopied street trees will be implemented;

- All of the retained trees will be made safe and managed appropriately; and
- Physical planting to individual plots is relatively tight so the key landscape strategy taken for planting is to create belts of colour to house frontages.

Compliance with the DAS/Design Code

8.14 As noted previously, the proposed development has been designed to accord with the performance criteria of the approved DAS which itself has had regard to the approved Design Code for Heyford Park. In particular the planning application demonstrates:

Character Area 1 (Village Green)¹:

- Set piece housing that fronts onto the new Village Green; and
- A Maximum height of 3 storey, detached and semi-detached dwellings laid out in a formal approach with common building lines and regularised spaces between buildings.

Character Area 2 (Core Family Housing)²:

- Simple, formal housing set in a perimeter block format which promotes a strong sense of public and private realm;
- Housing will be a maximum of 2.5 storeys;
- The character of the area has been inspired by the simple Arts and Crafts form found in Carswell Circle and the Officers' Housing; and
- Eaves and ridge lines will typically be consistent between groups of buildings but may vary along length of a street.

Compliance with the Development Plan

8.15 Through the discussion of the approach to design and the evolution of the scheme it is clear that special consideration has been given to the design of the development in view of the approved DAS in conjunction with the Design Code and the specific characteristics of the site. The proposed residential development will respect the local landscape character to ensure that there is no adverse

¹ Design Code ref: CA5 Village Green

² Design Code ref: CA8 Core Housing East

impact, therefore complying with the provisions of Policy ESD13 of the adopted Local Plan. Furthermore, the appearance of the proposed development and its relationship with its surrounding built and natural environment has been shown to be an integral part of the design evolution. This has served to ensure that the new residential properties positively contribute to the character of the local environment in accordance with the provisions of Policy ESD16 of the adopted Local Plan and saved policy C28 of the earlier Local Plan.

9. CONCLUSIONS

- 9.1 The principle of residential at Dorchester Phases 5 has already been established through the outline planning permission and the 60 dwellings proposed will remain consistent with the Strategic Allocation (Policy Villages 5) of the recently adopted Local Plan.
- 9.2 The proposed development itself will make a positive contribution to Heyford Park, conserving and enhancing the character of the area creating an attractive and legible residential development. The design has been carefully considered which promotes strong relationship and distinction between private and public realms and responds well to its surrounding context.
- 9.3 Special consideration has been given to how the proposed designs accord with the approved DAS in conjunction with the approved Design Code for Heyford Park, specifically in terms of the layout, character areas and frontage treatments.
- 9.4 Furthermore, notwithstanding the location of the application site within the Former RAF Upper Heyford Conservation Area the overall heritage significance of the respective character areas within the application site has consistently been assessed as being 'low'. The site is now cleared and did not, and does not, make a particularly strong or positive contribution to the Conservation Area as a whole and the proposed development will not adversely affect the setting or historical significance of any statutory or non-statutory heritage assets.
- 9.5 It has therefore been demonstrated within this and preceding sections that the development proposals are suitable and appropriate within these land parcels and that there are no reasons why the development should be resisted.