

# **PLANNING APPLICATION FOR CHANGE OF USE OF BUILDINGS 103 AND 315**

**HEYFORD PARK, CAMP ROAD, UPPER HEYFORD,  
OXFORDSHIRE, OX25 5HD**

## **PLANNING, DESIGN & ACCESS STATEMENT**

**ON BEHALF OF THE DORCHESTER GROUP**

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## **CONTENTS:**

Page No:

1.	INTRODUCTION	1
2.	CONTEXT	3
	Planning History and Background to Proposals	3
	The Application Site and Surrounding Context	5
3.	PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT	10
	Heritage Centre (Building 103)	10
	Storage and Distribution (Building 315)	11
4.	DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT	12
	Heritage Centre (Building 103)	12
	Storage and Distribution (Building 315)	13
5.	PLANNING FRAMEWORK	14
	National Planning Policy Framework	15
	National Planning Practice Guidance	19
	The Cherwell Local Plan 2011-2031 Part 1	23
	Cherwell Local Plan 1996	25
6.	PLANNING ASSESSMENT	27
	Principle of the Development	27
	Transport and Access	29
	Drainage	30
	Design	30
	Cultural Heritage	31
	The Principle of Sustainable Development and Planning Balance	32
7.	SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS	34
	APPENDIX 1: HERITAGE CENTRE MANAGEMENT PLAN	35

## 1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 This Planning, Design and Access Statement has been prepared by Pegasus Group on behalf of the Dorchester Group (the Applicant) to accompany an application for Planning Permission with regards the change of use of Building 103 to a Heritage Centre (Use Class D1) and Building 315 for storage and distribution (Use Class B8) and associated works (the Proposed Development) on land within Heyford Park, Camp Road, Upper Heyford, Oxfordshire OX25 5HD (the Application Site).

1.2 The Site Location Plan (see **Drawing D.0341\_107**) identifies the Application Site which extends to an area of 0.7 hectares.

1.3 The Planning Application submission comprises:

- 1APP Application Form and certificates;
- Planning, Design and Access Statement (this document); and
- Planning Application Drawings:

<b>Drawing Title:</b>	<b>Drawing Number:</b>
Site Location Plan	D.0341_107
Tree Survey and Protection Plan with schedule	D.0341_105
Building 103 Existing Plans, Elevations and Sections	6002.01
Building 103 Proposed Plans, Elevations and Sections	6002.02 D
Building 315 Floor Plans	UPP/85/315/AB1
Buildings 103 and 315: Tracking Layout	HEYF-5-SK280 (in relation to Building 103 Heritage Centre only)
Buildings 103 and 315: Surface Finishes and Drainage	HEYF-5-SK281 (in relation to Building 103 Heritage Centre only)

1.4 *Pre-application Discussions* – The Applicant has engaged in informal pre-application discussion with regards the Proposed Development during general Heyford Park planning-related meetings attended by Mr Andrew Lewis.

1.5 *Structure* – This Planning Statement is structured as follows:

- **Chapter 1: Introduction** (this Chapter) – Introduces the planning application, Application Site and Proposed Development;

- **Chapter 2: Context** – Provides the background to the Proposed Development and an overview of the relevant planning history with brief description of the Application Site and its immediate surrounding context;
- **Chapter 3: Proposed Development** – Describes the Proposed Development, scale and materials etc.;
- **Chapter 4: Design and Access Statement** – Provides the rationale to the Proposed Development;
- **Chapter 5: Planning Framework** – Provides a summary of the key relevant planning and heritage legislation, policy and guidance at a national and local level that comprise the Development Plan and material planning considerations;
- **Chapter 6: Planning Assessment** - Assesses the Proposed Development in the context of the extant planning policy of the Development Plan and other material considerations; and
- **Chapter 7: Summary and Conclusions** – Provides a summary of the key findings from this Planning Statement.

## 2. CONTEXT

### **Planning History and Background to Proposals**

- 2.1 The former RAF Upper Heyford military base has an extensive planning history. The most notable planning applications with the regards the Application Site are two relatively recent decisions involving the comprehensive redevelopment of the former RAF Upper Heyford military base as a whole or part thereof.
- 2.2 The first of these decisions, referred to as the 'Lead Appeal', relates to an outline planning application (08/00716/OUT) for the formation of a new settlement of 1,075 dwellings, together with associated works and facilities, including employment uses, community uses, a school, playing fields and other physical and social infrastructure, across the entire former military base. The scheme was allowed at appeal (APP/C3105/A/08/2080594) dated 11 January 2010.
- 2.3 The second of these decisions, referred to as the 'Outline Consent', relates to a subsequent outline planning application (10/01642/OUT) concerned only with that part of the military base referred to as the 'New Settlement Area'. This application sought consent for a proposed new settlement of 1,075 dwellings including the retention and change of use of 267 existing military dwellings to residential use 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. The scheme was approved by Cherwell District Council on 22 December 2011.
- 2.4 Both the Lead Appeal and Outline Consent applications were accompanied by Design and Access Statements and Environmental Statements.
- 2.5 The Application Site falls within the application site for both the Lead Appeal and Outline Consent.
- 2.6 As part of the Lead Appeal, a Heritage Centre Management Plan (HCMP) was prepared and agreed with English Heritage in December 2008 and formed a commitment under the S106 Unilateral Undertaking (dated 23 January 2009 with supplemental 13 November 2009). This requirement was subsequently incorporated into the S106 Agreement with regards the Outline Consent dated 22 December 2011 (Schedule 14 and Appendix 17). The HCMP is included at Appendix 1.

## APPENDIX 1 – HERITAGE CENTRE MANAGEMENT PLAN

- 2.7 The HCMP identified that Building 315 would be the location for the Heritage Centre, although the required agreed Action HC1 made specific provision “... **(or for whichever Building may be agreed with the District Council (in consultation with English Heritage) as being more suitable) ...**” Thus there was explicit flexibility with regards which building was to be used as the Heritage Centre.
- 2.8 Subsequent discussions were held involving officers of Cherwell District Council, English Heritage<sup>1</sup> and potential Trust partners. These discussions considered the scale of the potential collection available for display, the requirements of the facility set out in paragraph 2.2 of the HCMP and its likely operation, and concluded that Building 103 would offer a more suitable space for accommodating the Heritage Centre.
- 2.9 Building 103 has the advantage that it is located close to Camp Road and the proposed local centre, which will assist visitors in finding their way to the Heritage Centre whilst also being readily accessible to the Scheduled Monuments at Buildings 126 and 129.
- 2.10 Building 103 also represents a more attractive and convenient building for its intended function as a Heritage Centre than the large open A-Frame structure of Building 315. There is ample exhibition space, and the proposed lecture room offers a better quality environment than that which would have been achievable in the A-Frame hanger. The ability for larger artefacts to be stored/displayed would not be precluded by virtue of the two Hardened Aircraft shelters within the QRA (Buildings 3008 and 3009) which are also shown within the HCMP as being within the ‘Heritage Centre Area’.
- 2.11 Furthermore, the running costs of Building 103 would be more sustainable with greater prospect of maintaining the building in a good state of repair.
- 2.12 In September 2011 a planning application was submitted to Cherwell District Council (reference 11/01428/F) for the ‘Change of use to heritage centre (class D1) – Building 103. Change of use to storage and distribution (Class B8) – Building 315’. The planning application was granted planning permission on 16 March 2012, subject to 12 conditions. In accordance with Section 91 of the Town

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<sup>1</sup> The regulatory arm of English Heritage now forms part of Historic England.

and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) the implementation of the planning permission was time limited (Condition 1) to three years from the date of the permission. Implementation had not been commenced as at 16 March 2014 and therefore the planning permission lapsed.

- 2.13 This planning application seeks planning permission for the change of use of Building 103 to a Heritage Centre (Use Class D1) and Building 315 for storage and distribution (Use Class B8), and associated works, and is in accord with the previously consented scheme, providing additional details where known to address matters previously subject to condition.

### **The Application Site and Surrounding Context**

- 2.14 The Application Site is situated within Heyford Park, Oxfordshire, approximately 7km north-west of Bicester, 13km south-east of Banbury and 3km south-west of Junction 10 of the M4 Motorway. Local public transport services include bus services with bus stops along Camp Road and rail services stopping at Lower Heyford Station. The Application Site is located approximately midway along and to the north of Camp Road which passes through the centre of Heyford Park.
- 2.15 The Application Site comprises circa 0.7 hectares of brownfield land within the former military base, comprising Buildings 103 and 315, the immediate hardstanding/car parking areas, some amenity grassland with trees.
- 2.16 Building 103 comprises a single storey brick building to the north of Camp Road. Building 315 is a single storey A-Frame Hanger to the north of Camp Road, constructed of brick end walls and piers, rendered infill panels with roller shutter doors and parapet to flat roof. Details of the existing floor plans, elevations and sections for Buildings 103 and 315 are given on the following drawings:

<b>Drawing Title:</b>	<b>Drawing Number:</b>
Building 103 Existing Plans, Elevations and Sections	6002.01
Building 315 Floor Plans	UPP/85/315/AB1

- 2.17 The former RAF Upper Heyford military base as a whole was designated as a Conservation Area in 2006 reflecting the key role the military base played in the Cold War years and its distinctive military architecture and layout. The Former RAF Upper Heyford Conservation Area Appraisal (CDC, April 2006) describes the 'Technical Site, within which the Application Site is located, as:

**“This area is characterised by the ‘campus’ layout of deliberately sited, mix function buildings, in an open setting with organised tree planting. The variation in building type is both a function of their differing use and the fact that there has been continual construction within the site as part of the different phases of development within the airbase. The setting of the 1930s aircraft hangers in an arc on the northern edge of the site provides a visual and physical edge to the site. The access to the Technical Site is dominated by Guardroom (100) and Station Office (52). To the east of these is the impressive 1920s Officers’ Mess (74) set within its own lawns. The style of these 1920s, red brick, RAF buildings is British Military.”**

- 2.18 Both Buildings 103 and 315 are identified as ‘Non-Listed Buildings of Local Significance’; whilst there is no specific description of Building 103, Building 315 is described as:

**“Aircraft hangers (Shed Type ‘A’) (Buildings 172, 320, 345, 350, 151 & 315) date stones ‘1926’ on annexes facing the technical site. These were the first permanent end-opening aeroplane sheds for RAF stations in the interwar period. A total of 34 were built at 17 sites between 1925 and 1940. Upper Heyford is unique in having six, the largest collection of Type ‘A’ hangers in the country.”**

- 2.19 Similarly, the Landscape Character Assessment of the Airbase South of the Cold War Zone (ACTA, March 2006) indicates that Building 103 falls within the Service Area (Area 6B) and Building 315 falls within the Aircraft Sheds (Area 6A). These are described as:

**“6B. Service Area [Relevant to Building 103]**

**3.8.4 This is the most complex part of area 6. In contrast to the adjacent areas there are no major buildings or uniformity of style and materials. The main visual structure is given by the avenues. Leading off the avenues, many of the buildings are arranged as clusters around yards or parking areas. The characteristics are therefore:**

- **very wide mixture of building materials and types;**
- **in contrast to adjacent area no major buildings to dominate the area;**
- **building layout apparently haphazard, but largely a collection of yards/parking areas surrounded by single-storey buildings;**
- **clusters of minor 1920s buildings in red brick;**



- **water towers are not dominant features within the character area, but are prominent in some views from adjacent areas."**

**"6A. Aircraft Sheds** [Relevant to Building 315]

**3.8.3 Despite being modified and painted in USAF colours (Photo 1) and having service buildings placed in between them, these sheds largely convey their original character and they dominate much of the site. Their grouping creates enclosed spaces which are broken by the long vistas along the radiating avenues. The Battle Command Centre (126) and Hardened Telephone Exchange (129) lie at the edge of this character area, but they do not make a significant contribution to its landscape. The characteristics are:**

- **dominance of the size, colour and form of the sheds;**
- **contrast between very enclosed spaces around the quadrant from west to north and long views between the buildings along the radial roads;**
- **boundary with Cold War airfield sharply defined by sheds."**

2.20 Building 315 is further described as:

**"Type A Aeroplane Sheds (151, 172, 315, 320, 345, 350)**

**4.10.1 The construction and use of these is described by Francis as follows:**

***'Main stanchions at 38ft.-4in. centres and intermediate stanchions supported steelframed roof girders with cantilever gable trusses (ridge and valley) running longitudinally. Wall in-filling consisted of 14in. reinforced concrete up to a height of 12ft, then 9in. thick reinforced concrete for another eight feet. Natural light into the shed was achieved through rows of (wall and roof) patent "Mellows" wired glazing panels. Above the wall glazing panels were horizontal RSJs bolted to the stanchions which supported gable end brickwork.***

***Hangars were constructed in pairs with one shed having a minimum of office accommodation and the other having both office and workshop annexes. Office and workshop facilities on the side elevation facing the airfield were in the form of singlepitch, single-storey annexes either side of a two-storey central section with a flat roof.***

***While, on the elevation facing the technical site, only single-storey annexes were provided. Rooms included separate crew and locker rooms, ground equipment stores, flight equipment store, heating chamber and gun cleaning room. Upstairs in the central section were offices for Adjutant, Squadron Commander and clerks.***

***Steel doors in four leaves opened full width along door guides supported by braced trestles at either end of the shed.***

***Hangar No. 3 (315) was converted in c. 1985 into a Hospital Reception Station where wounded personnel arriving by aircraft could be received and given treatment prior to going by ambulance to the USAF Hospital at Bicester.***

***Comments: this is the largest collection of Type "A" hangars in the country, all survive and generally they have been well looked after. Modern annexe extensions have been built onto the side of Shed No. 5 (12). Only two still retain the door guide rails and supporting trestles. Date stones showing 1926 were noted on the annexes facing the technical site.<sup>9</sup> [whereby reference<sup>9</sup> is Frances 'Bicester', p26]***

- 2.21 The significance of the area is considered within the Archaeology and Cultural Heritage Chapter of the Environmental Statement produced in support of the 'The Lead Appeal' and described as:

**"16.5.144 A14 AREA 14 TECHNICAL AREA**

**Significance: Medium/ Low**

**This area contains a wide range of high-density building types, but with clusters of structures of similar materials that are defined within five components. The area has been subject to infilling but the character of the 1920s landscape has been retained reflecting the Trenchard layout, with six dominant A-Frame aircraft sheds, and the survival of the major buildings in prominent positions. The Character Area is divided into five components. All elements of this Character Area are listed in the Gazetteer.**

**OA14A Area 14A Aircraft Sheds [Relevant to Building 315]**

**Significance: Medium**

**This area is dominated by the aircraft sheds which despite being modified and painted in USAF colours, and despite infilling of buildings around them, retain their original character. This is emphasised by the plan form with enclosed spaces, broken by long vistas along the radiating avenues. The Character Area also includes the Scheduled Monument of the Battle Command Centre, which is a hardened Cold War structure. Key elements of this Character Area are tabulated below, and all elements are listed in the Gazetteer.**

[The Aircraft sheds, including Building 315, are assigned a significance of 'medium']

**16.5.146 OA14B Area 14B Service Area** [Relevant to Building 103]

**Significance: Low**

**This is a complex area with a wide range of building materials and types, but does not contain any major dominating structures. It consists largely of yards/parking areas and single storey buildings and clusters of minor 1920s red brick structures, with Post-War (mainly office) structures to the east. A prominent characteristic is the plan form and radiating avenues which is considered to be of medium significance. This Character Area includes the Scheduled Monument of the Telephone Exchange, which is a Hardened Cold War structure.**

**16.5.147 Although the Armoury and Lecture building (OA14B.1) is of medium value, it is considered to be of medium-low value and is not as architecturally impressive as the 1920s structures within Character Area 14E. Key elements of this Character Area are tabulated below, and all elements are listed in the Gazetteer.**

[Building 103 is assigned a significance of 'medium']"

- 2.22 This assessment of significance for the Technical Area and Buildings 103 and 315 was reiterated in the subsequent Archaeology and Cultural Heritage Chapter of the Environmental Statement produced in support of the new settlement area, 'The Outline Consent'.

### 3. PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

3.1 A summary of the key elements is provided below:-

#### **Heritage Centre (Building 103)**

3.2 It is proposed that Building 103 be used as the Heritage Centre (Use Class D1). Details of the proposed works to Building 103 are shown on **Drawing 6002.02 D**.

3.3 In summary, the works would involve the demolition of the Rest Room and Toilet block which formed a later extension to the building on its northern elevation, the removal of the chimney, the installation of new glazing to the western elevation and new main entrance to the northern elevation. The remainder of external works would generally comprise general repairs (e.g. fixing/replacing gutters, doors, windows etc. as appropriate) and the refurbishment of the fabric of the building to ensure structurally sound and water-tight.

3.4 It is noted that the scheme as proposed (as opposed to that previously consented) excludes the rooflight to which the expired planning permission (11/01428/F) Condition 12 sought to exclude; accordingly, these matters have been addressed and therefore a similar Condition would not be necessary.

3.5 Internally, modifications would involve the creation of new openings and the blocking up of existing openings to create functional space, new staircase to an upper archive space in the roof void, and the installation of new toilets and a kitchen, as well as general refurbishment and decoration to bring the building to a functional and aesthetically pleasing standard.

3.6 Vehicular access is proposed via the main entrance to Heyford Park via Camp Road. Pedestrian access will also be available utilising this route and once the new settlement area is implemented there will be several additional pedestrian routes off Camp Road.

3.7 Parking is provided to the north and west of Building 103 as shown on Drawing HEYF-5-SK280 in an area of predominantly existing hardstanding/car parking. A total of 20 car parking, including 3 disabled spaces, and 20 cycle stand spaces would be provided, the precise location to be confirmed. Surfacing and drainage details are provided on Drawing HEYF-5-SK281. These drawings address matters identified within the expired planning permission (11/01428/F) Condition 3;

accordingly, these matters have been addressed and therefore a similar Condition would not be necessary.

- 3.8 The HCMP Action AC3 requires that the Heritage Centre be operational for the hours of 10.00 to 16.00 for a minimum of 4 days per month and by prior notice with regards additional request from school parties and other visitor groups. This planning application seeks permission that is flexible with regards opening hours to enable the facility to respond to any increases in use.

### **Storage and Distribution (Building 315)**

- 3.9 It is proposed that Building 315 be used for storage and distribution (Use Class B8).
- 3.10 No physical alterations to the building are proposed, although minor general repair works may be undertaken.
- 3.11 Vehicular access is proposed from the approved one-way circulatory system which runs around the Flying Field.
- 3.12 Parking is provided to the west of Building 315 as shown on **Drawing D.0341\_107** in an area of existing hardstanding following the previous demolition of a building. A total of 17 car parking, including 1 disabled space, and 10 cycle stand spaces would be provided; the precise details of the car parking and cycle stand provision is not yet determined. Surfacing and drainage details with regards the storage/distribution facility are unchanged. It is proposed that these matters be addressed through a suitably worded planning condition, similar to the expired planning permission (11/01428/F) Condition 3.
- 3.13 The hours of operation are not determined at this stage and subject to the requirements of the future occupier; accordingly this planning application seeks permission that is flexible with regards opening hours, providing for 24/7 operation.

#### 4. DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT

##### Heritage Centre (Building 103)

- 4.1 *Use* - The building is proposed for Use Class D1 (Heritage Centre).
- 4.2 *Amount* - The proposed change of use to the existing Building 103 would require minor demolition works, and minor external and internal modifications, and general repair works; minor external works, i.e. reinstating kerbs, resurfacing, delineation of parking bays and drainage etc. may be required.
- 4.3 *Layout* - The proposed change of use would not result in changes to the external layout; details of the internal layout changes are shown on **Drawing 6002.02 D**.
- 4.4 *Scale* - The overall footprint of the Building 103 would reduce by circa 13m<sup>2</sup> following the demolition of the Rest Room/Toilet Block; the height of the building would not change.
- 4.5 *Landscaping* - No landscaping works are proposed; trees within/adjacent to the site would be retained and protected during works. There may be minor external works as stated above.
- 4.6 *Appearance* - The external works are minor amounting to the demolition of the later extension on the northern elevation, the removal of the chimney, installation of new glazing and a new main entrance to the northern elevation, and general repairs etc.; works would be carried out in materials to match the existing building.
- 4.7 *Access* - Vehicle parking is provided to the north and west of the proposed Heritage Centre and comprises 20 spaces including 3 disabled access spaces. Vehicle access would be from Camp Road via the main entrance using the existing road network. 20 cycle stand spaces would also be provided. Pedestrian and cycle access is also proposed from Camp Road via the main entrance using the existing path and road network. It is proposed that a further access may be available in the future to the west of the Heritage Centre as development of Heyford Park evolves; this does not form part of this planning application. The modifications to Building 103 to provide a new main entrance and external doors would be constructed in accordance with Building Regulations and thereby provide for disabled access.

### **Storage and Distribution (Building 315)**

- 4.8 *Use* - The building is proposed for Use Class B8 (Storage and distribution).
- 4.9 *Amount* - The proposed change of use to the existing Building 315 would amount to general repair works only; minor external works, i.e. reinstating kerbs, resurfacing, delineation of parking bays and drainage etc. may be required.
- 4.10 *Layout* - The proposed change of use would not result in changes to the external layout other than the formalisation of car parking.
- 4.11 *Scale* - There would be no change to the scale of the existing building.
- 4.12 *Landscaping* - No landscaping works are proposed; trees within/adjacent to the site would be retained and protected during works. There may be minor external works as stated above.
- 4.13 *Appearance* - No physical alterations to Building 315 are proposed other than general repairs.
- 4.14 *Access* - Vehicle parking is proposed to the west of Building 315 and comprises 17 spaces including 1 disabled access space. Vehicle access would be from Camp Road via the approved one-way circulatory system which runs around the Flying Field using the existing road network. 10 cycle stand spaces would also be provided. Pedestrian and cycle access is also proposed from Camp Road via existing path and road network. There are no proposed modifications to Building 315 and therefore building access would be unchanged.

## 5. PLANNING FRAMEWORK

5.1 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that all planning applications be determined in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

5.2 In addition to the above, Section 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, as amended, places a statutory duty on Local Planning Authorities to ensure that any proposals preserve or enhance the character and appearance of Conservation Areas. The Act sets out the general duty of Local Planning Authorities as respects conservation areas in the exercise of their 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”.**

5.3 Accordingly, the statutory requirements of Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 should be considered in conjunction with the requirements of Section 70(2) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 in the determination of a planning application.

5.4 The extant Development Plan comprises the:

- Cherwell Local Plan 2011-2031 Part 1, adopted 20 July 2015; and
- Cherwell Local Plan, adopted November 1996 (only those policies saved by the saving direction issued by the Secretary of State and which have not been subsequently superseded by the adoption of the Cherwell Local Plan 2011-2031 Part 1).

5.5 Other material planning considerations include national legislation, policy and guidance, comprising the:

- National Planning Policy Framework (March 2012); and
- National Planning Practice Guidance (various).

5.6 This chapter identifies the key relevant planning matters contained within the Development Plan and other material planning considerations pertinent to the determination of the planning application.



## **National Planning Policy Framework**

5.7 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was published on 27 March 2012. The NPPF sets out the Government's overarching planning policies for England. 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."**

5.8 The NPPF translates these sustainable development dimensions into a series of 12 core planning principles. For the purposes of this application, regard should be had to the following principles:

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

**... always seek to secure high quality design and a good standard of amenity for all existing and future occupants of land and buildings ...**

**conserve heritage assets in a manner appropriate to their significance, so that they can be enjoyed for their contribution to the quality of life of this and future generations**

**actively manage patterns of growth to make the fullest possible use of public transport, walking and cycling, and focus significant development in locations which are or can be made sustainable; and**

**take account of and support local strategies to improve health, social and cultural wellbeing for all, and deliver sufficient community and cultural facilities and services to meet local needs" (paragraph 17).**

5.9 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” (paragraph 187).**

- 5.10 **Section 1 ‘Building a Strong, Competitive Economy’** seeks to secure economic growth to create jobs and prosperity, such that the planning system should do everything it can to support sustainable economic growth.
- 5.11 **Section 4 ‘Promoting Sustainable Transport’** seeks to facilitate sustainable development whilst contributing to the wider sustainability and health objectives, reducing the need to travel and balancing favour towards sustainable modes of transport. Decisions should consider: the opportunities for sustainable transport modes; safe and suitable access for all people; and whether improvements can be undertaken that cost effectively limit the significant impacts of a development where they exist. Local authorities are guided to improve the quality of parking in town centres so that it is convenient, safe and secure, including appropriate provision for motorcycles.
- 5.12 **Section 7 ‘Requiring Good Design’** attaches great importance to the design of the built environment, seeking to achieve high quality and inclusive design for all development including individual buildings, public and private spaces and wider area development schemes.
- 5.13 Planning decisions should aim to ensure that developments: function well and add to the overall quality of an area for their lifetime; establish a strong sense of place, using streetscapes and buildings to create attractive and comfortable places to live, work and visit; optimise the potential of a site to accommodate development and create and sustain an appropriate mix of uses, support local facilities and transport networks; respond to local character and history, reflecting the identity of local surroundings and materials; create safe and accessible environments where crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine the quality of life or community cohesion; and are visually attractive as a result of good architecture and appropriate landscaping (Paragraph 58).
- 5.14 **Section 12 ‘Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment’** directs local planning authorities to take a positive strategy to the conservation and enjoyment of the historic environment and specifically that they should “... **recognise that heritage assets are an irreplaceable resource and conserve them in a manner appropriate to their significance**” and that in doing so they should take into account “... **the desirability of sustaining and**

**enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation ...” (paragraph 126)**

5.15 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 (paragraph 128).

5.16 Accordingly, the NPPF requires that:

**“Local planning authorities should identify and assess the particular significance of any heritage asset that may be affected by a proposal (including by development affecting the setting of a heritage asset) taking account of the available evidence and any necessary expertise. They should take this assessment into account when considering the impact of a proposal on a heritage asset, to avoid or minimise conflict between the heritage asset’s conservation and any aspect of the proposal”**  
(paragraph 129)

5.17 In the determination of planning applications, local planning authorities are directed to take account of:

- The desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation;**
- The positive contribution that conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities including their economic vitality; and**
- The desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.”**  
(paragraph 131)

5.18 Furthermore, with regard to the impact of development proposals on the significance (sensitivity) of the heritage asset, the NPPF states that:-

**“When considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset’s conservation. The more important the asset, the greater the weight should be. ... As heritage assets are irreplaceable, any harm or loss should require clear and convincing justification. Substantial harm to or loss of a grade II listed building, park or garden should be exceptional. Substantial harm to or loss of designated heritage assets of the highest significance, notably**

**scheduled monuments, protected wreck sites, battlefields, grade I and II\* listed buildings, grade I and II\* registered parks and gardens, and World Heritage Sites, should be wholly exceptional.”** (paragraph 132)

5.19 The NPPF clearly guides the degree to which harm should be considered with respect to the sensitivity and importance of the heritage asset, such that: -

**“Where a proposed development will lead to substantial harm to or total loss of significance of a designated heritage asset, local planning authorities should refuse consent, unless it can be demonstrated that the substantial harm or loss is necessary to achieve substantial public benefits that outweigh that harm or loss, or all of the following apply:**

- **the nature of the heritage asset prevents all reasonable uses of the site; and**
- **no viable use of the heritage asset itself can be found in the medium term through appropriate marketing that will enable its conservation; and**
- **conservation by grant-funding or some form of charitable or public ownership is demonstrably not possible; and**
- **the harm or loss is outweighed by the benefit of bringing the site back into use”** (paragraph 133)

**“Where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal, including securing its optimum viable use”** (paragraph 134)

**“The effect of an application on the significance of a non-designated heritage asset should be taken into account in determining the application. In weighing applications that affect directly or indirectly non-designated heritage assets, a balanced judgement will be required having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset”** (paragraph 135)

**“Local planning authorities should not permit loss of the whole or part of a heritage asset without taking all reasonable steps to ensure the new development will proceed after the loss has occurred”** (paragraph 136)

5.20 The NPPF asserts that not all elements (buildings, structures etc.) will necessarily contribute to the significance of a Conservation Area and that proposals that

preserve those elements of the setting that make a positive contribution to or better reveal the significance of the asset should be treated favourably, whilst proposals that would result in the loss of a building or element that does make a positive contribution should be treated as either substantial harm (under paragraph 133) or less than substantial harm (under paragraph 134) taking into account the relevant significance of the element affected and its contribution to the Conservation Area as a whole.

### **National Planning Practice Guidance**

5.21 The National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG) was launched on-line in March 2014 and is dynamically updated on a paragraph-by-paragraph basis. The NPPG provides further information and guidance on the implementation of the NPPF policy as set out above. Of relevance to the planning application are the NPPG sections on 'Design' and 'Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment', which are summarised below.

#### Design

5.22 The NPPG largely reflects the policies set out in the NPPF. It 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.

5.23 In terms of achieving the planning objectives of good design, the NPPG describes these under the headings, as summarised below:-

- *Local Character* - to promote character in townscape and landscape by responding to and reinforcing locally distinctive patterns of development, local man-made and natural heritage and culture, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation;
- *Safe Connected and Efficient Streets* - to create streets that support the character and use of the area, promote accessibility and safe local routes, are attractive and well-connected to encourage more walking and cycling;
- *Network of Greenspaces and Public Spaces* - to promote public spaces and routes that are attractive, accessible, safe, uncluttered and work effectively for all users - including families, disabled people and elderly people;
- *Address Crime Prevention and Security* - to design out crime (and the fear of crime) and design in community safety, and (as appropriate) terrorism;
- *Promote Access and Inclusion* - to promote an environment that can be accessed and used by everyone by recognising and accommodating differences in the way people use the built environment, considering proximity and links to

- public transport, parking spaces and setting down areas in proximity to entrances, positioning and visual contrast of street furniture and spaces around them, and identification of buildings and level approach;
- *Promote Efficient Use of Natural Resources* – to deliver a structure, layout and design that reduces the resource requirements in terms of energy demands, water and land take, and helps to sustain natural ecosystems, as well as providing a mix of uses and facilities within a neighbourhood to reduce travel and energy demands; and
  - *Promote Cohesive and Vibrant Neighbourhoods* – to promote health, wellbeing and quality of life of those and the cohesion and vitality of a neighbourhood.
- 5.24 The NPPG defines what is well designed in terms of the criteria set out within the NPPF, i.e. functional, mixed uses and tenures, successful public spaces, adaptable and resilient, attractive and encourages ease of movement.
- 5.25 With regard to Design Codes, the NPPG recommends that local authorities consider their use to help deliver high quality outcomes, for example where 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. Furthermore, design codes should wherever possible avoid being overly prescriptive in detail and encourage a sense of place and variety (unless local circumstances can clearly justify a different approach).

#### Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment

- 5.26 The NPPG confirms that the consideration of 'significance' in decision taking is important and states:

**“Heritage assets may be affected by direct physical change or by change in their setting. 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”** (paragraph 009<sup>2</sup>)

- 5.27 The NPPG provides detailed information on the approach to decision-taking.
- 5.28 In terms of guidance on how the setting of a heritage asset should be taken into account the NPPG states:-

**A thorough assessment of the impact on setting needs to take into account, and be proportionate to, the significance of the heritage asset under consideration and the degree to which proposed changes enhance or**

<sup>2</sup> NPPG Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment, Paragraph: 009 Reference ID: 18a-009-20140306, last revised 06/03/2014 (searched August 2015)

detract from that significance and the ability to appreciate it.

Setting is the surroundings in which an asset is experienced, and may therefore be more extensive than its curtilage. All heritage assets have a setting, irrespective of the form in which they survive and whether they are designated or not.

The extent and importance of setting is often expressed by reference to visual considerations. Although views of or from an asset will play an important part, the way in which we experience an asset in its setting is also influenced by other environmental factors such as noise, dust and vibration from other land uses in the vicinity, and by our understanding of the historic relationship between places. For example, buildings that are in close proximity but are not visible from each other may have a historic or aesthetic connection that amplifies the experience of the significance of each.

The contribution that setting makes to the significance of the heritage asset does not depend on there being public rights or an ability to access or experience that setting. This will vary over time and according to circumstance.

When assessing any application for development which may affect the setting of a heritage asset, local planning authorities may need to consider the implications of cumulative change. They may also need to consider the fact that developments which materially detract from the asset's significance may also damage its economic viability now, or in the future, thereby threatening its ongoing conservation (paragraph 013<sup>3</sup>),

- 5.29 In terms of guidance on how to assess if there is there is substantial harm, the NPPG states:-

**“What matters in assessing if a proposal causes substantial harm is the impact on the significance of the heritage asset. As the National Planning Policy Framework makes clear, significance derives not only from a heritage asset's physical presence, but also from its setting.**

**Whether a proposal causes substantial harm will be a judgment for the decision taker, having regard to the circumstances of the case and the policy in the National Planning Policy Framework. In general terms, substantial harm is a high test, so it may not arise in many cases. For example, in determining whether works to a listed building constitute substantial harm, an important consideration would be whether the adverse impact seriously affects a key element of its special**

<sup>3</sup> NPPG Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment, Paragraph: 013 Reference ID: 18a-013-20140306, last revised 06/03/2014 (searched August 2015)

**architectural or historic interest. It is the degree of harm to the asset's significance rather than the scale of the development that is to be assessed. The harm may arise from works to the asset or from development within its setting. While the impact of total destruction is obvious, partial destruction is likely to have a considerable impact but, depending on the circumstances, it may still be less than substantial harm or conceivably not harmful at all, for example, when removing later inappropriate additions to historic buildings which harm their significance. Similarly, works that are moderate or minor in scale are likely to cause less than substantial harm or no harm at all. However, even minor works have the potential to cause substantial harm.**

**Policy on substantial harm to designated heritage assets is set out in paragraphs 132 and 133 to the National Planning Policy Framework.” (paragraph 017<sup>4</sup>, emphasis added)**

5.30 With regards unlisted buildings in a Conservation Area, the NPPG states:

**“An unlisted building that makes a positive contribution to a conservation area is individually of lesser importance than a listed building (paragraph 132 of the National Planning Policy Framework). If the building is important or integral to the character or appearance of the conservation area then its demolition is more likely to amount to substantial harm to the conservation area, engaging the tests in paragraph 133 of the National Planning Policy Framework. However, the justification for its demolition will still be proportionate to the relative significance of the building and its contribution to the significance of the conservation area as a whole” (paragraph 018<sup>5</sup>, emphasis added)**

5.31 The NPPG states that non-designated heritage assets may comprise **“... 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. In some areas, local authorities identify some non-designated heritage assets as ‘locally listed’”** (paragraph 039<sup>6</sup>)

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<sup>4</sup> NPPG Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment, Paragraph: 017 Reference ID: 18a-017-20140306, last revised 06/03/2014 (searched August 2015)

<sup>5</sup> NPPG Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment, Paragraph: 018 Reference ID: 18a-018-20140306, last revised 06/03/2014 (searched August 2015)

<sup>6</sup> NPPG Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment, Paragraph: 039 Reference ID: 18a-039-20140306, last revised 06/03/2014 (searched August 2015)



### **The Cherwell Local Plan 2011-2031 Part 1**

5.32 The Cherwell Local Plan 2011-2031 Part 1 was adopted by Cherwell District Council on 20 July 2015. The key relevant policies to the Proposed Development comprise are summarised below.

5.33 **Policy PSD1: Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development** echoes the NPPF in that the Council will take a proactive approach to reflect the presumption in favour of sustainable development as contained in the NPPF, work proactively with applicants to jointly find a solution and to secure development that improves the economic, social and environmental conditions of the area. Furthermore, that the Council will approve applications that accord with the policies of the statutory Development Plan without delay unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

5.34 **Policy Villages 5: Former RAF Upper Heyford** relates specifically to development at Heyford Park, identifying the military site as comprising 520 hectares of land for which **“This site will provide for a settlement of approximately 1,600 dwellings (in addition to the 761 dwellings (net) already permitted) and necessary supporting infrastructure, including primary and secondary education provision and appropriate community, recreational and employment opportunities, enabling environmental improvements and the heritage interest of the site as a military base with Cold War associations to be conserved, compatible with achieving a satisfactory living environment. A comprehensive integrated approach will be expected.”** In terms of employment uses, it is noted that **“Any additional employment opportunities further to existing consent to be accommodated primarily within existing buildings with the overall site where appropriate or on limited greenfield land to the south of Camp Road.”**

5.35 Policy Villages 5 also sets a range of ‘key site specific design and place shaping principles’; of those most relevant to the design of the Proposed Development are:

**“...• Proposals must demonstrate that the conservation of heritage resources, landscape, restoration, enhancement of biodiversity and other environmental improvements will be achieved across the whole of the site identified as Policy Villages 5 ...**

- **The settlement should be designed to encourage walking, cycling and use of public transport rather than travel by private car, with the provision 258 Cherwell Local Plan 2011-2031 Part 1 Section C - Policies for Cherwell's Places of footpaths and cycleways that link to existing networks. Improved access to public transport will be required ...**
- • **Development will provide for good accessibility to public transport services and a plan for public transport provision will accompany any planning application ...**
- **The construction of the settlement on the former technical core and residential areas should retain buildings, structures, spaces and trees that contribute to the character and appearance of the site and integrate them into a high quality place that creates a satisfactory living environment ...**
- **Visitor access, controlled where necessary, to (and providing for interpretation of) the historic and ecological assets of the site ...**
- **New and retained employment buildings should make a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the area and should be located and laid out to integrate into the structure of the settlement ...**
- **A neighbourhood centre or hub should be established at the heart of the settlement to comprise a community hall, place of worship, shops, public house, restaurant, and social and health care facilities. Proposals should also provide for a heritage centre given the historic interest and Cold War associations of the site ..."**  
(emphasis added)

5.36 **Policy ESD 7: Sustainable Urban Drainage** requires the implementation of surface water drainage system (SUDS) to manage surface water run-off. Such systems should also protect ground water quality. SUDS solutions will require the approval of the Oxfordshire County Council as the Local Lead Flood Authority (LLFA) and SUDS Approval Body.

5.37 **ESD15: The Character of the Built and Historic Environment**, which reads requires that **"New development will be expected to complement and enhance the character of its context through sensitive siting, layout and high quality design. All new development will be required to meet high design standards. Where development is in the vicinity of any of the District's distinctive natural or historic assets, delivering high quality design that complements the asset will be essential."** Furthermore, Policy ESD15 sets criteria for the consideration of new development, which should:-

“• ... Contribute positively to an area’s character and identity by creating or reinforcing local distinctiveness and respecting local topography and landscape features, including skylines, valley floors, significant trees, historic boundaries, landmarks, features or views, in particular within designated landscapes, within the Cherwell Valley and within conservation areas and their setting

• Conserve, sustain and enhance designated and non designated ‘heritage assets’ (as defined in the NPPF) including buildings, features, archaeology, conservation areas and their settings, and ensure new development is sensitively sited and integrated in accordance with advice in the NPPF and NPPG. Proposals for development that affect non-designated heritage assets will be considered taking account of the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset as set out in the NPPF and NPPG. Regeneration proposals that make sensitive use of heritage assets, particularly where these bring redundant or under used buildings or areas, especially any on English Heritage’s At Risk Register, into appropriate use will be encouraged

• Include information on heritage assets sufficient to assess the potential impact of the proposal on their significance. Where archaeological potential is identified this should include an appropriate desk based assessment and, where necessary, a field evaluation. ...

• Reflect or, in a contemporary design response, re-interpret local distinctiveness, including elements of construction, elevational detailing, windows and doors, building and surfacing materials, mass, scale and colour palette

• Promote permeable, accessible and easily understandable places by creating spaces that connect with each other, are easy to move through and have recognisable landmark features

• Demonstrate a holistic approach to the design of the public realm to create high quality and multi-functional streets and places that promotes pedestrian movement and integrates different modes of transport, parking and servicing. The principles set out in The Manual for Streets should be followed ...”

### **Cherwell Local Plan 1996**

5.38 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:-

5.39 **Policy C23: Retention of features contributing to character or appearance of a conservation area**, which states:

**“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.”**

5.40 **Policy C28: Layout, design and external appearance of new development,**  
which states:

**“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.”**

## 6. PLANNING ASSESSMENT

- 6.1 This Chapter addresses the planning matters that may be considered material to the determination of the planning application, set in the context of the statutory Development Plan and other material considerations (see **Chapter 5**).
- 6.2 The Applicant considers that in the context of Proposed Development the relevant planning matters comprise:
- The Principle of Development;
  - Transport and Access;
  - Drainage;
  - Design;
  - Cultural Heritage; and
  - The Principle of Sustainable Development and Planning Balance.

### **Principle of the Development**

- 6.3 The requirement for a Heritage Centre at Heyford Park is by virtue of a S106 obligation, initially with regards the Lead Appeal Unilateral Undertaking and subsequently incorporated into the S106 Agreement with regards the Outline Consent. Both these agreements required the implementation of the Heritage Centre Management Plan (HCMP) which identified Building 315 as an appropriate location for the Heritage Centre, albeit HCMP Action HC1 provided flexibility for an alternative building to be used where considered more suitable. Building 103 has been assessed as being more suitable for a number of reasons, including:
- Building 103 is of a more appropriate size to accommodate the scale of potential collection available for display;
  - Building 103 can readily accommodate the requirements set out within paragraph 2.2 of the HCMP, i.e. space for exhibition boards, artefacts, provision of a lecture room/video presentation room, archive room, reading room/study area, a refreshment area/gift shop and toilets;
  - Building 103 is in close proximity to Camp Road and the proposed local centre to assist visitors in finding their way to the Heritage Centre;
  - Building 103 is also readily accessible to the Scheduled Monuments at Buildings 126 and 129;
  - Building 103 is a more attractive and convenient building for its intended function and offers a better quality environment than that which would be achievable in the A-Frame hanger;
  - The ability for larger artefacts to be stored/displaced would not be prejudiced by virtue of the opportunities presented by the two Hardened Aircraft shelters within the QRA (Buildings 3008 and 3009) which are also shown within the HCMP as being within the 'Heritage Centre Area'.

- Building 103 would be more sustainable with lower runner costs and thereby greater prospect of maintaining the building in a good state of repair; and
  - Building 103 would provide an appropriate and fitting re-use for this 'Non-Listed Building of Local Significance'.
- 6.4 Such considerations were the subject of discussions involving officers of Cherwell District Council, English Heritage and potential Trust partners.
- 6.5 The re-use of Building 103 as an alternative and more appropriate location for the Heritage Centre provides an opportunity for the appropriate re-use of Building 315 to provide employment purposes in the form of storage and distribution, without alteration or modification to the existing building.
- 6.6 The principle of the proposed change in use for both Buildings 103 and 315 has previously be accepted through the granting of planning permission (reference 11/01428/F) dated 16 March 2012, which has subsequently lapsed. This planning application seeks planning permission in accord with the previously consented scheme, providing additional details where known to address matters previously subject to condition.
- 6.7 The adopted **Local Plan (Policy Villages 5)**, which allocates the former RAF Upper Heyford military site for the provision of a new settlement, seeks “... **enabling environmental improvements and the heritage interest of the site as a military base with Cold War associations ...**” and for “**Any additional employment opportunities further to existing consent to be accommodated primarily within existing buildings with the overall site where appropriate ...**”. Accordingly, the proposed change of use for both Building 103 as the Heritage Centre and Building 315 for employment use is in accord with the broad principles set out within Policy Villages 5.
- 6.8 Site specific design and place shaping criteria identifies that, inter alia:
- **“Proposals must demonstrate that the conservation of heritage resources ...**
  - **The construction of the settlement on the former technical core and residential areas should retain buildings, ... contribute to the character and appearance of the site and integrate them into a high quality place that creates a satisfactory living environment ...**
  - **Visitor access, controlled where necessary, to (and providing for interpretation of) the historic and ecological assets of the site ...**

- **A neighbourhood centre or hub should be established at the heart of the settlement to comprise ... Proposals should also provide for a heritage centre given the historic interest and Cold War associations of the site”.**

6.9 Accordingly, the principle of the proposed change of use of Buildings 103 and 315 as being appropriate and acceptable has been previously established through the earlier consent and is in accord with both the requirements of the extant S106 Agreement. Furthermore, the re-use of Building 315 for employment purposes is consistent with the **NPPF (Section 1)** in providing opportunity to support economic growth, with the change of use for both Buildings 103 and 315 consistent with the recently adopted Local Plan, specifically **Policy Villages 5**.

### **Transport and Access**

6.10 The proposed vehicle and pedestrian access would utilise existing roads/paths within the Heyford Park settlement. Vehicular access to the proposed Heritage Centre (Building 103) is proposed from Camp Road via the Heyford Park main entrance. Pedestrian access will also be available utilising this route. As the new settlement area evolves, it is anticipated there will several additional vehicle and pedestrian routes from Camp Road available, including the existing gated access (currently locked) to the west of Building 103. Vehicular access to the proposed storage/distribution facility (Building 315) is proposed from the approved one-way circulatory system which runs around the Flying Field.

6.11 Details of the proposed parking with regards the Heritage Centres is shown on **Drawing HEYF-5-SK280** to the north and west of Building 103 on land that is existing hardstanding/car parking. A total of 20 car parking, including 3 disabled spaces, and 20 cycle stand spaces will be provided. With regards Building 315 car parking is proposed to the west of the building in an area of existing hardstanding following the previous demolition of a building. A total of 17 car parking, including 1 disabled space, and 10 cycle stand spaces will be provided.

6.12 The location of both the proposed Heritage Centre and the storage/distribution facility is to the west of the proposed the Heyford Park Village Centre and will benefit from existing public transport links along Camp Road immediately to the south, as well as nearby rail services from Upper Heyford. The Heyford Park settlement continues evolve providing a high degree of pedestrian and cycle permeability with connections extending beyond the immediate environs towards

the Village Centre and throughout the residential areas and would therefore provide opportunities for employees and visitors to visit by foot/cycle.

- 6.13 Accordingly, the Proposed Development is consistent with the **NPPF (Section 4)** in promoting sustainable development and the **NPPF (Section 7)** by supporting the use of local transport networks, as well as thereby the relevant principles set out in the **NPPG (Design)**, including the promotion of accessible and safe local routes, accessibility compliant car parking located in close proximity to the facilities being provided. At a local level, the location and permeability of the layout, alongside the provision of cycle parking is consistent with the relevant criteria of extant **Local Plan (Policy Villages 5)** by encouraging alternative modes of transport than by private car.

### **Drainage**

- 6.14 Surfacing and drainage details with regards the proposed Heritage Centre are provided on **Drawing HEYF-5-SK281** and would connect into existing surface water drainage infrastructure within Camp Road; surfacing and drainage details with regards the storage/distribution facility are unchanged. Accordingly, the Proposed Development is consistent with the **NPPF (Section 10)** as well as the principles set out within the **Local Plan (Policy ESD7)**.

### **Design**

- 6.15 The Proposed Development will provide for the retention and re-use of Buildings 103 and 315 as a Heritage Centre and storage/distribution facility respectively. The physical works would be minimal to bring the buildings to a functional and aesthetically pleasing standard. With regards Building 103 works would comprise only the demolition of a later extension (Rest Room and Toilet block); removal of the chimney; installation of new glazing; new main entrance; internal alterations to create new functional spaces; installation of staircase to create an archive space in the roof void; and installation of new toilets and a kitchen. The external works are minor and would be carried out in materials to match the existing building. Other works to both Building 103 and/or 315 would amount to general repairs to ensure the buildings are structurally sound and water-tight, as well as general decoration internally.
- 6.16 In this respect the Proposed Development is consistent with the principles of the **NPPF (Section 7)**, specifically in responding to the local character and history of



the area, reflecting the identity of the local surroundings and materials, and thereby the principles of good design. Similarly, the Proposed Development is consistent with the **NPPG (Design)** in responding to and reinforcing the local man-made heritage, including by the retention and refurbishment of the relevant elements of the locally designated heritage assets.

- 6.17 At the local level the Proposed Development is also consistent with the principles of the **Local Plan (Policy Villages 5)** by retaining and refurbishing the existing buildings that provide some contribution to the character and appearance of Heyford Park.

### **Cultural Heritage**

- 6.18 A description of the existing buildings and their heritage context has been provided within **Chapter 2**. Accordingly, the requirement of the **NPPF (Section 12)** and **Local Plan (Policy ESD15)** 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 its location with the Former RAF Upper Heyford Conservation Area and the two non-designated heritage assets.
- 6.19 Section 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, sets the statutory duty on Local Planning Authorities to ensure that any proposals preserve or enhance the character and appearance of Conservation Areas. The Village Centre is located within the Former RAF Upper Heyford Conservation Area and therefore regard is required to be paid to the details of the application and their effect (positive or negative) on the Conservation Area as a whole.
- 6.20 As set out above (see **Design**) the Proposed Development will provide for the retention and re-use of Buildings 103 and 315 with limited physical works to Building 103 to create a functional and aesthetically pleasing Heritage Centre; no physical works are proposed to Building 315. General repairs and decoration may be carried out to both buildings.
- 6.21 It is therefore determined that the Proposed Development would not result in any significant changes to the individual buildings and nor thereby the overall character of the Application Site. Accordingly, these changes would have a negligible effect on the Conservation Area as a whole. Conversely, the retention and refurbishment of features of local historic interest, the opportunities for

experience, education, interpretation and public access, and the bringing back to a viable use and the long-term maintenance that this supports would be considered beneficial and would deliver an overall, albeit minor, enhancement to the Conservation Area when considered as a whole.

- 6.22 Accordingly, the Proposed Development would enhance the character and appearance of Conservation Area in accordance with the statutory duty under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, and also be in compliance with the principles of the **NPPF (Section 12)** and those of **Local Plan (Policy Villages 5)** in retaining the historic buildings and providing them with viable uses and so makes a positive contribution to the conservation of historic assets on the site and the maintenance of historic character on the site, and similarly the associated guidance contained in the **NPPG (Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment)**. At a local level, the proposals would also be consistent with the relevant criteria of **Local Plan (Policy ESD15)** and **Local Plan 1996 (Policy C23)**, in delivering a scheme that is sensitive to the heritage context and would bring a redundant non-designated heritage asset back into use.

#### **The Principle of Sustainable Development and Planning Balance**

- 6.23 The **NPPF (paragraph 2)** reiterates that planning law requires that applications for planning permission should be determined in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Furthermore, the **NPPF (paragraph 7)** states that the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development which is set in the context of the economic, social and environmental roles.
- 6.24 In this respect, it has been demonstrated that the Proposed Development would:
- Economic:
    - Provide opportunity for employment use, primarily within Building 315;
    - Provide economic viability to the long-term maintenance of Building 103 through it's appropriate re-use;
  - Social:
    - Provide further employment opportunities that may be filled by residents of Heyford Park;
    - Be accessible by and maximises opportunities for walking, cycling and public transport, encouraging alternatives modes of transport than private car;

- Provide the Heritage Centre as required under the S106 Agreement;
- Retain the locally valued historic buildings thereby enable their experience, and support interpretation and education;
- Environmental:
  - Re-use of existing vacant buildings and bring them back into use;
  - Provide an overall improvement in the appearance and function of the area, with opportunities for experience, education, and interpretation of the wider historic context of the Conservation Area as a whole; and
  - Safeguard the locally valued historic buildings by their refurbishment and bringing them back into use, and thereby secure their longer term management and maintenance.

6.25 Accordingly, the Proposed Development is demonstrably in accord with the principles of sustainable development.

6.26 Furthermore, this planning appraisal has demonstrated that the Proposed Development is in accord with the relevant policies of the Development Plan, and other material considerations, including the overarching S106 obligation to provide a Heritage Centre, the Outline Consent and its associated Design Code, and the principle of sustainable development.

6.27 With this regard, the **NPPF (paragraph 14)** and the **Local Plan (Policy PSD1)** places a 'presumption in favour of sustainable development' such that decision-takers are required to approve without delay development that is in accord with the development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

## **7. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS**

- 7.1 This Planning, Design and Access Statement has been prepared by Pegasus Group on behalf of the Dorchester Group (the Applicant) to accompany an application for Full Planning Permission with regards the 'Change of use of Building 103 to a Heritage Centre (Use Class D1) and Building 315 for storage and distribution (Use Class B8) and associated works' (the Proposed Development) on land within Heyford Park, Camp Road, Upper Heyford, Oxfordshire OX25 5HD (the Application Site).
- 7.2 The requirement for a Heritage Centre at Heyford Park is by virtue of a S106 obligation that requires the implementation of the Heritage Centre Management Plan (HCMP). The HCMP identified Building 315 as an appropriate location for the Heritage Centre, although HCMP Action HC1 provided flexibility for an alternative building to be used where considered more suitable. However, Building 103 has been assessed, involving discussions with officers of Cherwell District Council, English Heritage and potential Trust partners, as being more suitable as a Heritage Centre. The re-use of Building 103 as an alternative and more appropriate location for the Heritage Centre provides an opportunity for the appropriate re-use of Building 315 to provide employment purposes in the form of storage and distribution. Works required are limited, involving a number of minor modifications externally and internally to Building 103, and the general repair and decoration to both buildings.
- 7.3 The planning appraisal demonstrated that the Proposed Development is in accord with the relevant policies of the Development Plan, and other material considerations, including the principle of sustainable development.
- 7.4 With this regard, the NPPF (paragraph 14) and the Local Plan (Policy PSD1) places a 'presumption in favour of sustainable development' such that decision-takers are required to approve without delay development that is in accord with the development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

## **APPENDIX 1: HERITAGE CENTRE MANAGEMENT PLAN**