

HEYFORD MASTERPLAN

GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE STRATEGY

PREPARED BY PEGASUS DESIGN
P16-0631_83A | MARCH 2020



DORCHESTER
LIVING



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APPENDIX 1 - MANAGEMENT & MAINTENANCE STRATEGY



Pegasus Design
Pegasus House
Querns Business Centre
Whitworth Road
Cirencester
GL7 1RT
www.pegasusgroup.co.uk | T 01285 641717

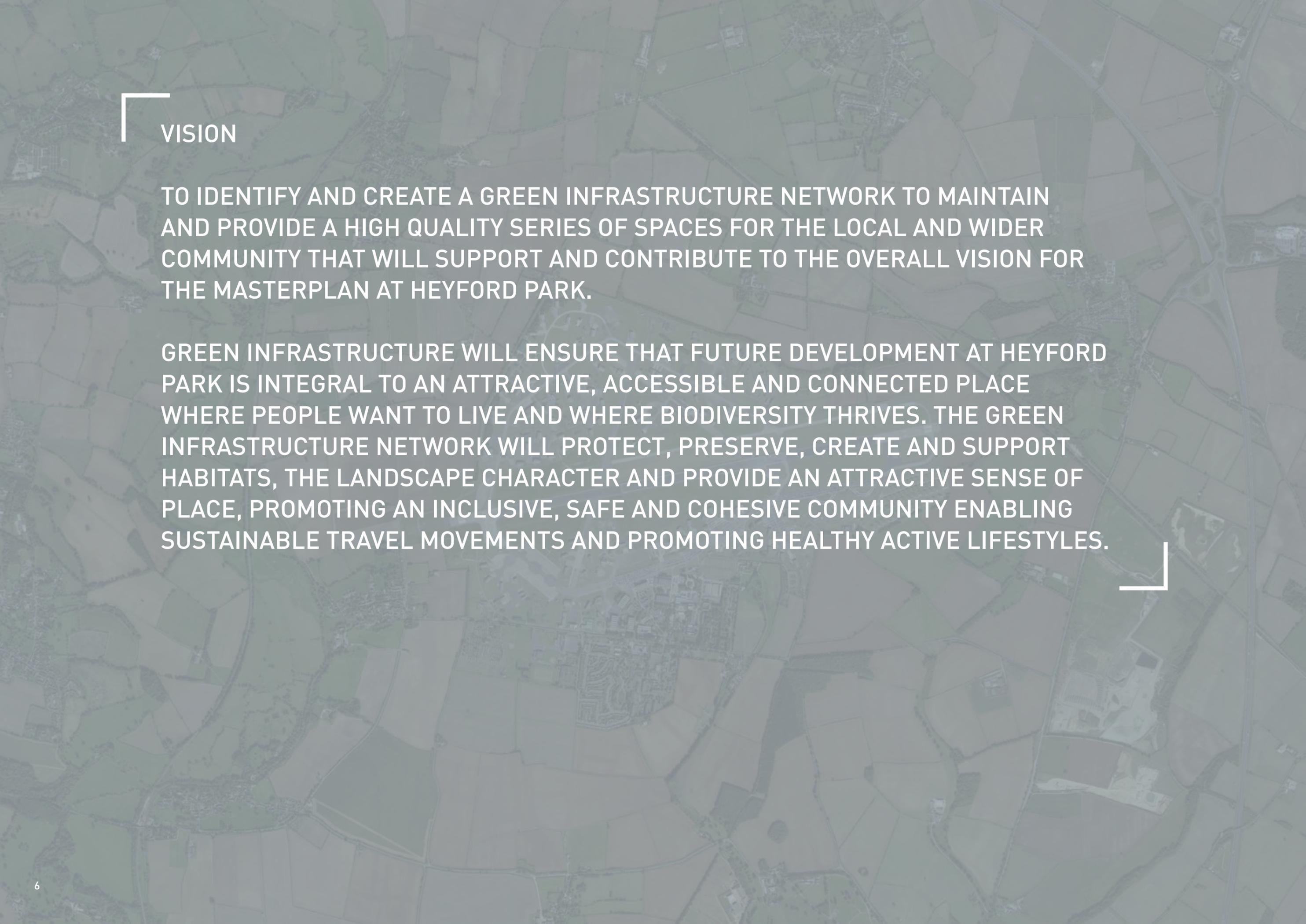
Prepared by Pegasus Design
Pegasus Design is part of Pegasus Group Ltd
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An aerial photograph of a rural landscape. A paved road runs diagonally from the top left towards the center. To the right of the road is a large, organized residential or institutional building complex with many small, uniform structures. The surrounding area consists of large, flat agricultural fields in various shades of brown and green, interspersed with patches of dense green trees. A dark blue rectangular box is overlaid on the center of the image, containing white text. Two white L-shaped corner brackets are positioned on the left and right sides of the box.

SECTION 1 INTRODUCTION



VISION

TO IDENTIFY AND CREATE A GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE NETWORK TO MAINTAIN AND PROVIDE A HIGH QUALITY SERIES OF SPACES FOR THE LOCAL AND WIDER COMMUNITY THAT WILL SUPPORT AND CONTRIBUTE TO THE OVERALL VISION FOR THE MASTERPLAN AT HEYFORD PARK.

GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE WILL ENSURE THAT FUTURE DEVELOPMENT AT HEYFORD PARK IS INTEGRAL TO AN ATTRACTIVE, ACCESSIBLE AND CONNECTED PLACE WHERE PEOPLE WANT TO LIVE AND WHERE BIODIVERSITY THRIVES. THE GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE NETWORK WILL PROTECT, PRESERVE, CREATE AND SUPPORT HABITATS, THE LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AND PROVIDE AN ATTRACTIVE SENSE OF PLACE, PROMOTING AN INCLUSIVE, SAFE AND COHESIVE COMMUNITY ENABLING SUSTAINABLE TRAVEL MOVEMENTS AND PROMOTING HEALTHY ACTIVE LIFESTYLES.

SECTION 1 | INTRODUCTION

THE VISION FOR FUTURE DEVELOPMENT AT UPPER HEYFORD

- 1.1 Heyford Park has an extensive history rooted in its use as a military airbase and its recent re-development to meet local housing needs, as allocated in the Cherwell Local Plan 2011-2031 under Policy Villages 5. Recent development and the transformation of the site have acknowledged the need for an overall comprehensive masterplan for the site going forward to guide and shape proposals for further development. Part of the masterplanning process is to understand, and consider the different elements of the site, one of which is Green Infrastructure.
- 1.2 Green Infrastructure (GI) will help to ensure that the Masterplan for Heyford Park is an attractive, accessible and connected place where people want to live and where biodiversity thrives within the cultural and heritage setting of the former Air Base. The Green Infrastructure Masterplan will help to deliver a cohesive and high quality Green Infrastructure network and shape the on-going development across the site and will help to:
- Protect, preserve, create and support habitats that enable biodiversity, habitats and species to survive and thrive.
 - Encourage and promote healthy active lifestyles through the provision of high quality, safe and accessible open space for leisure, recreation, sport and play;
 - Consider and support the local landscape character to provide an attractive sense of place, recognising the cultural heritage assets that help to define Heyford Park;
 - Create and support inclusive, safe and cohesive communities;
 - Protect and enhance existing Green Infrastructure assets to be enjoyed and valued by everyone including future generations;
 - Protect and support the setting of cultural and heritage assets;
 - Enhance connectivity to promote and facilitate sustainable travel movements; and
 - Is resilient and adaptive in the face of climate change.

PURPOSE OF THE GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE STRATEGY

- 1.3 This Green Infrastructure (GI) Strategy has been prepared by Pegasus Group on behalf of the Dorchester Living Limited to accompany the Heyford Park Masterplan for the Application Site and has been submitted as part of the hybrid planning application for the Proposed Development.
- 1.4 This GI Strategy should be read in conjunction with the Masterplan and the Design and Access Statement (DAS) and the relevant chapters of the Environmental Statement (ES) that it has drawn upon.
- 1.5 The purpose of the GI Strategy is to illustrate how GI has been integrated into the design proposals to form part of a strategic approach that would realise a range of environmental, social and economic benefits and enhancements. To support and contribute to the vision for Heyford Park Masterplan, a Green Infrastructure Network will be created and maintained to provide a high quality of spaces for the local and wider community.
- 1.6 This strategy has been produced to ensure that the development facilitates the multi-functionality and connectivity of GI assets in line with the principles of GI and those of sustainable development.
- 1.7 The GI Strategy refers to the GI and landscape planning policy documents produced by Cherwell District Council, as the Local Planning Authority within which the site lies and considers best practice guidance for Green Infrastructure.

PLANNING HISTORY OF UPPER HEYFORD

- 1.8 Heyford Park has an extensive planning history, the most notable planning applications with regards the Site are the two relatively recent decisions involving the comprehensive redevelopment of the former RAF Upper Heyford Air Base as a whole or part thereof. This is discussed in detailed within the Planning Statement and within the ES.



DEFINING GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE

- 1.9 Green Infrastructure principles represent an approach to development that has a critical role in meeting environmental, social and economic challenges. For GI to be effective it needs to be planned through a spatial network of interconnected and integrated features.
- 1.10 Natural England's Green Infrastructure Guidance (2009) defines GI as... **'A strategically planned and delivered network comprising the broadest range of high quality green spaces and other environmental features.'**
- 1.11 Green Infrastructure is embedded within national and local landscape planning policy and guidance, refer to Section 2 for analysis of relevant policy.

TYPES OF GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE

- 1.12 Typical Green Infrastructure assets include:
- Parks and Gardens – urban parks, Country and Regional Parks, formal gardens;
 - Amenity Greenspace – informal recreation spaces, playing fields, housing green spaces, domestic gardens, village greens, urban commons, other incidental space, green roofs;
 - Natural and semi-natural urban green spaces – woodland and scrub, grassland (e.g. downland and meadow), heath or moor, wetlands, open and running water, waste lands and disturbed ground, bare rock habitats (e.g. cliffs and quarries);
 - Green corridors – rivers and canals including their banks, road and rail corridors, cycling routes, pedestrian paths, and rights of way;
 - Sports playing fields – sport and recreation including football pitches, cricket pitches, tennis courts etc; and
 - Other – allotments, community gardens & orchards, city farms, cemeteries, churchyards and natural burial grounds, canals, Registered Commons, village and town greens and heritage sites.

- 1.13 Each Green Infrastructure asset provides a range of existing functions and has the potential, through a considered and planned approach, to provide additional targeted functions to provide multi-functionality. The functions that Green Infrastructure assets perform provide multiple benefits for local communities and these are summarised below.

BENEFITS OF GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE

- 1.14 Typical Green Infrastructure benefits can include:
- Improving quality of place by using the natural environment to create high quality living and recreational environments for where we live and work;
 - Improving physical and mental health and social well-being by creating good quality green space and opportunities for relaxation and healthy physical activity as well as providing the infrastructure necessary to encourage people to walk, run, cycle and play;
 - Investment in GI can provide multi-functional open spaces and parks bringing benefit to people, wildlife and the environment;
 - Protecting and enhancing landscape character and biodiversity by using land improvements and management to deliver biodiversity gain and overall landscape enhancement;
 - Sustaining economic growth and investment. High quality environments offer comparative location advantages to attract and retain business and a skilled labour pool;
 - Increasing land and property values by creating attractive environments around new and existing residential, commercial and employment areas;
 - Flood Alleviation and Water Management: installing Sustainable Urban Drainage systems, permeable surfaces and open spaces in urban areas;
 - Improving skills and educational attainment by providing an 'outdoor classroom' to learn new skills or understand more about the way we live;
 - Obtaining products from the land by using natural assets sourced locally in favour of imported goods; and
 - Climate Change Adaption and Mitigation: tree planting for natural air cooling, amelioration of the micro-climate, reduce the energy demands of a development and CO² absorption.

PRINCIPLES OF GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE

- 1.15 Typical principles of Green Infrastructure include:
- Multi-functionality - an ecosystem services¹ led approach to integrate with, contribute to and enhance natural systems;
 - Interconnectivity, through the connection of urban and countryside areas whilst creating new recreational and amenity facilities;
 - Connectivity - avoid fragmentation of existing habitats, and natural features, to increase potential for natural regeneration and migration of species of flora and fauna associated with the effects of climate change;
 - Contribute to protection, conservation and long term management of the local landscape;
 - Maintain and enhance biodiversity, ensuring that development results in a net gain of Biodiversity assets;
 - Provide a focus for social inclusion, community development and lifelong learning; and
 - Be designed and managed to a high standard of quality to deliver social, economic and environmental benefits.

BLUE INFRASTRUCTURE

- 1.16 Blue Infrastructure is a term used in relation to Green Infrastructure for natural and semi-natural 'blue' elements eg. ponds, streams and SuDs features. There are a number of functions and benefits associated with Blue Infrastructure elements such as alleviating flooding, controlling water run-off as well as providing habitat for wildlife. Within this GI Strategy, elements of Blue Infrastructure are considered and require integration within the GI Masterplan.

Footnote¹ - The term 'ecosystem services' is defined by the UK National Ecosystem Assessment as "The benefits provided by ecosystems that contribute to making human life both possible and worth living."



SECTION 2
GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE
POLICY CONTEXT

SECTION 2 | GI POLICY CONTEXT

POLICY OVERVIEW

- 2.1 As a term, GI means different things to different people depending on the context in which it is applied, with many definitions. In this way, support for GI has grown within the UK following policy guidance with drivers at the national and local level.

INTERNATIONAL POLICY

European Landscape Convention (ELC)

- 2.2 The European Landscape Convention (ELC) specifically addresses the requirement to protect, manage and create landscapes. It applies to all landscapes, towns and villages as well as the open countryside, the coast and inland areas.

NATIONAL POLICY

- 2.3 At a national level the key policy and guidance documents that underpin the provision of GI are the:

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

- 2.4 The NPPF (2019) aims to protect the environment and to promote sustainable growth stating and providing access to high quality open spaces and opportunities for sport and recreation can make an important contribution to the health and wellbeing of communities. It states in paragraph 171 that:

“Plans should(...)take a strategic approach to maintaining and enhancing networks of habitats and green infrastructure”

- 2.5 In paragraph 96 it states that:

“Access to a network of high quality open spaces and opportunities for sport and physical activity is important for the health and well-being of communities.”

A Green Future – Our 25 year Plan to Improve the Environment (2018)

- 2.6 The 25 year environment plan sets a number of goals including to achieve “enhanced beauty, heritage and engagement with the natural environment”. It recognises the actions required to help focus policy on the environment in order to safeguard natural assets and managed environmental pressures in order to experience the many benefits.

The Natural Environment White Paper – The Natural Choice: Securing the Value of Nature (2011)

- 2.7 This statement outlines the Government’s vision for the natural environment over the next 50 years. It recognises the need for...

“Urban Green Infrastructure to complete links in our national ecological network. Urban green space allows species to move around within, and between, towns and countryside.”

Biodiversity 2020: A Strategy for England’s Wildlife and Ecosystem Services (2011)

- 2.8 This strategy sets out the strategic direction for biodiversity policy for the next decade on land (including rivers and lakes) and at sea and how implementing biodiversity policy con-tributes to our international and EU commitments.

Open Space Strategies - Best Practice Guidance (2009)

- 2.9 This guidance updates and replaces CABE Space’s Green Space Strategies: A Good Practice Guide (2004). Here, the Mayor of London and CABE Space advises local planning authorities and their stakeholders on how to prepare open space strategies and provides a variety of case studies.

Natural England: Green Infrastructure Guidance (2009)

- 2.10 Natural England’s GI guidelines states that GI:

“Should be designed and managed as a multifunctional resource capable of delivering those ecological services and quality of life benefits required by the communities it serves and needed to underpin sustainability. Its design and management should also respect and enhance the character and distinctiveness of an area with regard to habitats and landscape types...”



LOCAL POLICY

- 2.11 At a local level the key policy and guidance documents that underpin the provision of GI for the Application Site include:

Cherwell District Council, Adopted Cherwell Local Plan 2011-2031 (2015)

- 2.12 Cherwell Local Plan 2011-2031 was adopted on 20th July 2015. A review of policies has been carried out with policies relevant to the GI Strategy identified below.
- Policy BSC10: Open Space, Outdoor Sport and Recreation Provision;
 - Policy BSC11: Local Standards of Provision - Outdoor Recreation;
 - Policy BSC12: Indoor Sport, Recreation and Community Facilities;
 - Policy ESD7: Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS);
 - Policy ESD10: Protection and Enhancement of Biodiversity and the Natural Environment;
 - Policy ESD13: Local Landscape Protection and Enhancement;
 - Policy ESD 15: The Character of the Built and Historic Environment; and
 - Policy ESD 17: Green Infrastructure.

Policy BSC10: Open Space, Outdoor Sport and Recreation Provision

2.13 Policy BSC 10 seeks to ensure that sufficient quantity and quality of, and access, to open space, sport and recreation is provided for through the protection of existing sites; addressing deficiencies in provision through enhancement of existing provision; improving access to facilities; and, securing new provision.

Policy BSC 11: Local Standards of Provision – Outdoor Recreation

2.14 Policy BSC11 notes that “Development proposals will be required to contribute to the provision of open space, sport and recreation, together with secure arrangements for its management and maintenance. The amount, type and form of open space will be determined having regard to the nature and size of development proposed and the community needs likely to be generated by it.”

2.15 Provision should usually be made on site in accordance with the minimum standards of provision as set out in ‘Local Standards of Provision - Outdoor Recreation.

2.16 Table 1 below shows the open space requirements according to the type of provision as per local standards. It categorises open space into four main typologies; general green space, play space, outdoor sports and allotments. Each open space type has an accessibility standard relating to the travel distance and time to open space as well as the minimum size of provision. The Application Site is deemed to be rural in line with Policy Villages 5.

BSC12: Indoor Sport, Recreation and Community Facilities

2.17 Policy BSC12 notes the requirements for indoor sport, recreation and community facilities provision “to encourage the provision of community facilities to enhance the sustainability of communities”.

2.18 Policy BSC12 states that provision should be maintained in accordance with the local standards of provision by protecting and enhancing the existing facilities, improving access to existing facilities and ensuring that development contributes to the provision of new/improved facilities.

Table 1 – Local Standards of Provision – Outdoor Recreation within the Cherwell Local Plan 2011-2031 (Extract of table 7, page 77-78)

| Type of Provision | Quantitive Standard | Accessibility Standard | Minimum size of provision | Threshold for on-site provision |
|---|--|---|--|--|
| General Green Space (parks and gardens / natural and semi-natural / amenity green space) | 2.4 ha per 1000 urban dwellers 2.74ha per 1000 rural/ urban edge dwellers | 5 minute walk (amenity open space) 400m 15 minutes walk other (1200m) | 200m2 | 10 urban dwellings 6 rural / urban edge dwellings |
| Play Space (combining provision for younger and older children including MUGAs) | 0.78ha per 1000 people | 5 minutes walk (400m) except for NEAPs 15m walk (1200m) | LAP - 100m2 activity zone; 400m2 including buffer LEAP- 400m2 activity zone; 3600m2 including buffer NEAP- 1000m2 activity zone; 8500m2 including buffer NB: In some cases a combined all-age area of play will be preferable to provision of LAPs/LEAPs/NEAPs. | 10 dwellings (for a LAP) 50 dwellings (for a LEAP and LAP) 100 dwellings for a NEAP and LEAPs/LAPs |
| Outdoor Sports (combining tennis courts / bowling greens / golf courses / playing pitches) to be accompanied by changing facilities where appropriate. | 1.13ha per 1000 people | Football, rugby, cricket; 10 minute walk (800m) urban areas, 10 minute travel time (8km) rural areas. Tennis courts: 15 minute walk (1200m) urban areas, 15 minute travel time (12 km) rural areas Bowling greens, golf courses: 15 minute travel time (12km) | 0.12ha | 65 dwellings |
| Allotments | 0.37 ha per 1000 people | 10 minute walk (800m) | 0.2ha | 275 dwellings |

2.19 The policy suggests that provision can be achieved through dual use access agreements with schools. The provision is set as:

- Sports Hall - 0.315 badminton courts (per 1000 population)
- Swimming Pool - 9.31m2 swimming water area (per 1000 population)
- Squash Courts - 0.059 courts (per 1000 population)
- Health and Fitness - 5.28 stations (per 1000 population)
- Indoor Bowls - 0.045 rinks (per 1000 population)
- Synthetic Turf Pitches (STPs) - 0.046 pitches (per 1000 population)
- Athletics Tracks - 0.0012 8 lane facility (per 1000 population)

Policy ESD7: Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS)

2.20 Policy ESD7 notes how SuDS solutions should be integrated within developments to protect ground water resources, and surface water run-off, with suitable SuDS features used to help reduce pollution and provide landscape and wildlife benefits. Provision for their future management and maintenance should also be considered.

Policy ESD10: Protection and Enhancement of Biodiversity and the Natural Environment

- 2.21 Policy ESD10 aims to protect and enhance the biodiversity of the natural environment in a number of ways, this includes:
- “In considering proposals for development, a net gain in biodiversity will be sought by protecting, managing, enhancing and extending existing resources, and by creating new resources
 - The protection of trees will be encouraged, with the aim to increase numbers
 - Relevant habitat and species surveys and associated reports will be required to accompany planning applications which may affect a site, habitat or species of known or potential ecological value
 - Planning conditions/obligations will be used to secure net gains in biodiversity by helping to deliver Biodiversity Action Plan targets and/or meeting the aims of Conservation Target Areas. Developments for which these are the principal aims will be viewed favourably
 - Development proposals will be expected to incorporate features to encourage biodiversity, and retain and where possible enhance existing features of nature conservation value within the site. Existing ecological networks should be identified and maintained to avoid habitat fragmentation, and ecological corridors should form an essential component of green infrastructure provision in association with new development to ensure habitat connectivity
 - A monitoring and management plan will be required for biodiversity features on site to ensure their long term suitable management.”
- 2.22 Other points seek to ensure that any harmful impacts of development are mitigated and compensated, with demonstration that the effects are mitigated, in addition soils will be encouraged to be reused within the developments.
- 2.23 The policy recognises designated sites such as SSSIs, species and habitat of principal importance would require mitigation to achieve a net gain in biodiversity/geodiversity should loss or damage occur through development.

Policy ESD13: Local Landscape Protection and Enhancement

- 2.24 Policy ESD13 states that a states that the Council “seeks to conserve and enhance the distinctive and highly valued local character of the entire District” paragraph B.248.
- 2.25 The policy also notes that: “Opportunities will be sought to secure the enhancement of the character and appearance of the landscape, particularly in urban fringe locations, through the restoration, management or enhancement of existing landscapes, features or habitats and where appropriate the creation of new ones, including the planting of woodlands, trees and hedgerows.”
- 2.26 It notes that “development will be expected to respect and enhance local landscape character, securing appropriate mitigation where damage to local landscape character cannot be avoided. Proposals will not be permitted if they would:
- Cause undue visual intrusion into the open countryside
 - Cause undue harm to important natural landscape features and topography
 - Be inconsistent with local character
 - Impact on areas judged to have a high level of tranquility
 - Harm the setting of settlements, buildings, structures or other landmark features, or
 - Harm the historic value of the landscape.”
- 2.27 Further local landscape character guidance is included within the baseline section of this GI Strategy.
- 2.28 In paragraph B.252, the setting of the River Cherwell is identified as one of the most important elements of the landscape that can add to the character and identity of an area.
- 2.29 Paragraph B.253 continues that the Council will seek retention of woodland, trees, hedges, ponds, walls and any other features deemed “important to the character or appearance of local landscape as a result of their ecological, historic or amenity value” and it concludes that: “Proposals which would result in the loss of such features will not be permitted unless their loss can be justified by appropriate mitigation and/or compensatory measures to the satisfaction of the Council.”

Policy ESD 15: The Character of the Built and Historic Environment

- 2.30 Policy ESD 15 states that “successful design is founded upon an understanding and respect for an area’s unique built, natural and cultural context. New development will be expected to complement and enhance the character of its context through sensitive siting, layout and high quality design.”
- 2.31 The policy states that new development should provide information on the potential impact on heritage assets as well as:
- Be designed to deliver high quality safe, attractive, durable and healthy places to live and work in. Development of all scales should be designed to improve the quality and appearance of an area and the way it functions.
 - Deliver buildings, places and spaces that can adapt to changing social, technological, economic and environmental conditions.
 - Support the efficient use of land and infrastructure, through appropriate land uses, mix and density/ development intensity.
 - 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’ 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 National Planning Policy Guidance (NPPG)....
 - Respect the traditional pattern of routes, spaces, blocks, plots, enclosures and the form, scale and massing of buildings. Development should be designed to integrate with existing streets and public spaces, and buildings configured to create clearly defined active public frontages .

- 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.
 - Consider the amenity of both existing and future development, including matters of privacy, outlook, natural lighting, ventilation, and indoor and outdoor space
 - Integrate and enhance green infrastructure and incorporate biodiversity enhancement features where possible. Well designed landscape schemes should be an integral part of development proposals to support improvements to biodiversity, the micro climate, and air pollution and provide attractive places that improve people's health and sense of vitality
- 2.32 The policy also seeks to implement best practice such as the Manual for Streets and urban design principles including Secured by Design as well as incorporating energy efficient design, limit the impact of light pollution and use locally sourced sustainable materials where possible.

Policy ESD 17: Green Infrastructure

- 2.33 Policy ESD17 notes the importance of Green Infrastructure in "securing adequate green infrastructure [as] an important component of achieving sustainable communities". It highlights components such as PRow, the River Cherwell as important GI components for health and well-being and biodiversity.
- 2.34 The District's green infrastructure network will be maintained and enhanced through the following measures:
- Pursuing opportunities for joint working to maintain and improve the green infrastructure network, whilst protecting sites of importance for nature conservation
 - Protecting and enhancing existing sites and features forming part of the green infrastructure network and improving sustainable connectivity between sites in accordance with policies on supporting a modal shift in transport, open space, sport and recreation, adapting to climate change, Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS), biodiversity and the natural environment, Conservation Target Areas, heritage assets, and the Oxford Canal.
 - Ensuring that green infrastructure network considerations are integral to the planning of new development. Proposals should maximise the opportunity to maintain and extend green infrastructure links to form a multi-functional network of open space, providing opportunities for walking and cycling, and connecting the towns to the urban fringe and the wider countryside beyond
 - All strategic development sites (Section C: 'Policies for Cherwell's Places') will be required to incorporate green infrastructure provision and proposals should include details for future management and maintenance.

- Management of the flying field should preserve the Cold War character of this part of the site, and allow for public access. New built development on the flying field will be resisted to preserve the character of the area.
- Landscape Visual and Heritage Impact Assessments should be undertaken as part of development proposals and inform the design principles for the site.
- Proposals should demonstrate an overall management approach for the whole site.
- 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.
- 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.
- Public open space should be provided to form a well connected network of green areas, suitable for formal and informal recreation.
- Provision of Green Infrastructure links to the wider development area and open countryside.”

2.38 Policy Villages 5 also sets out the requirement for the provision of SuDS in line with the aforementioned Policy ESD7 and the Council’s Strategic Flood Risk and states that a full Arboricultural Survey should be undertaken to inform the masterplan, incorporating as many trees as possible and reinforcing the planting structure where required. In addition, it suggests that an archaeological field evaluation to assess the impact of the development on archaeological features would be required with proposals requiring to be subject to local plan development policies.

2.39 It notes that Public Art should also be provided. Other components of GI such as climate change mitigation and adaption is also referenced

2.40 Policy Villages 5 is accompanied by the policy map which sets out the extent of Upper Heyford and annotates ‘Areas with potential for additional development identified under Policy Villages 5’, refer to Fig 1.

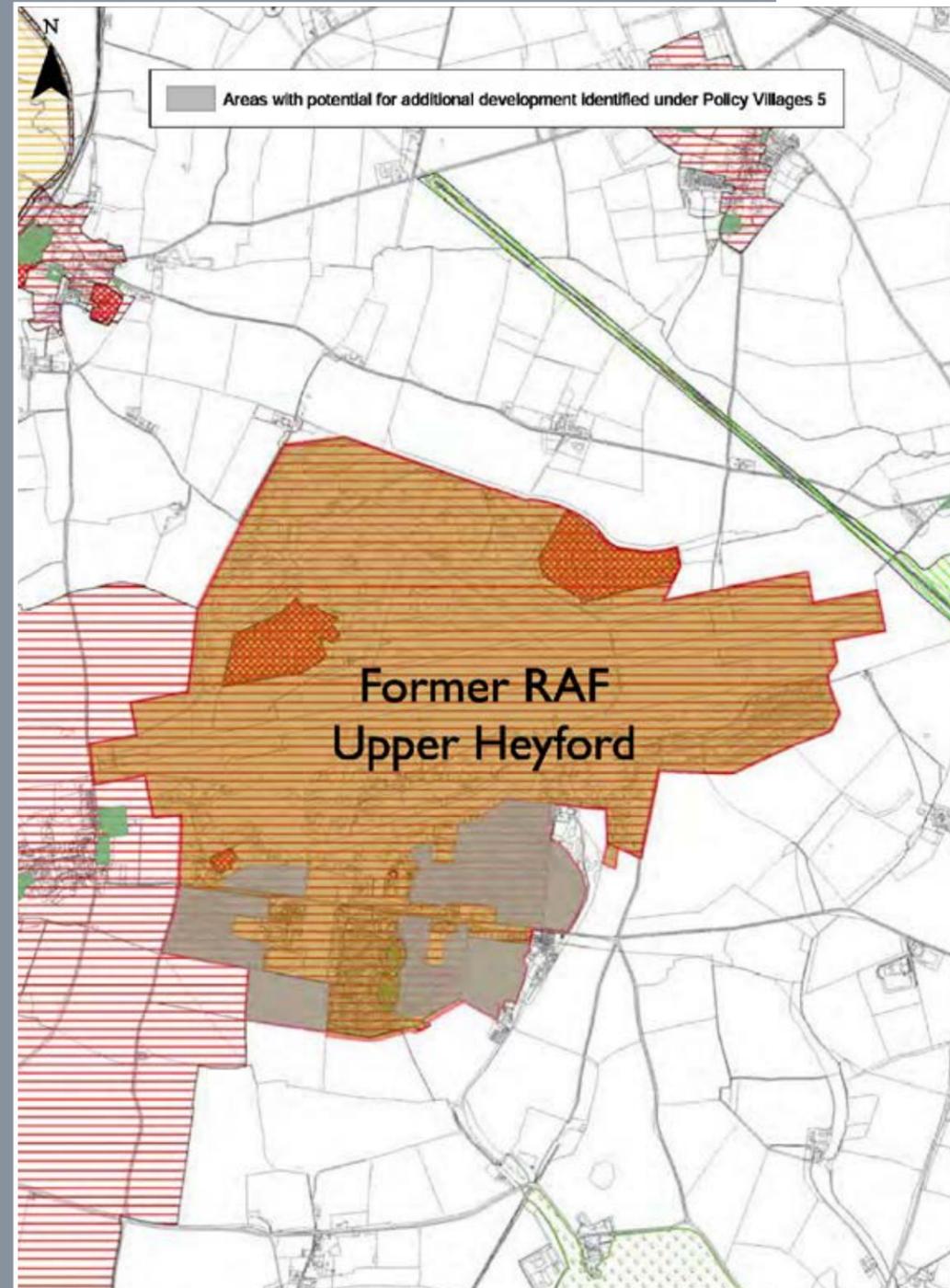


FIGURE 1. EXTRACT OF POLICY VILLAGES 5 PLAN



GUIDANCE AND CHERWELL DISTRICT COUNCIL'S PUBLISHED DOCUMENTS RELEVANT TO GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE AT UPPER HEYFORD

Developer Contributions Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) (February 2018)

- 2.41 The recently published SPD sets out the developer contributions in relation to Section 106 planning obligations in the absence of a Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) charging schedule within the District. The document seeks to detail how planning obligations can help to ensure provision is met should the developer not be able to meet the required provision on-site or with improvements to existing provision.
- 2.42 The SPD recognises the 'Healthy New Towns' programme which promotes **“innovative ways to encourage people to live more healthy lives and the many opportunities for the built environment to support this objective.”**
- 2.43 It notes that Bicester was successful in being selected as an exemplar healthy new town, and that the **“built environment has a role to play in promoting health and well-being of communities in the whole of the Cherwell District and it is a Council priority to ensure new developments support this aim.”**
- 2.44 The SPD sets out thresholds and contributions for a number of elements (in conjunction with the specific local plan policies) including cemeteries, community hall facilities, health and well-being, heritage, nature conservation, biodiversity, indoor sport, open space, play facilities, outdoor sport, recreation and public art.
- 2.45 The section of open space, play facilities, outdoor sport and recreation recognises the local standards of provision as set out within the adopted Local Plan.

Site Specific Guidance Documents

- 2.46 The Proposed Development falls within the site of the former Air Base and the Council has published a number of documents outlining the vision for this site and guidance in relation to the requirements for developments within it.
 - 2.47 These are discussed within the LVIA which forms part of the ES and highlighted here, as to mark their relevance to the character of the Cold War landscape at the former Air Base.
 - 2.48 It is important to note that, broadly speaking the information contained within the published documents such as the RAF Upper Heyford Conservation Area Appraisal (2006) and the RAF Upper Heyford Revised Comprehensive Planning Brief (2007) relates to the former Air Base as a heritage asset as an example of a Cold War landscape. These documents also discuss the issue of landscape character assessment within the Air Base and in the wider countryside, including Rousham Park.
- RAF Upper Heyford Conservation Area Appraisal (2006)**
- 2.49 The 'RAF Upper Heyford Conservation Area Appraisal' (2006) discusses the character of the former Air Base in landscape terms and considers the inter-visibility of the airfield from the surrounding countryside.
- RAF Upper Heyford Revised Comprehensive Planning Brief (2007)**
- 2.50 The 'RAF Upper Heyford Revised Comprehensive Planning Brief' (2007) adopted as a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) by the Council provides further information in relation to the former Air Base and the surrounding landscape. Of particular interest is the policy quoted in paragraph 4.4.5 which states: **“New development should respond to the established character of distinct character areas where this would preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the conservation area.”**
 - 2.51 However, the SPD focuses on the heritage value of the site and discusses the site of the former Air Base in the context of the Policy H2 of the Oxfordshire Structure Plan 2016 rather than in general landscape and visual terms.



ADDITIONAL GUIDANCE

Guidance for Outdoor Sport and Play Beyond the Six Acre Standard (England, 2015)

- 2.52 The Guidance for Outdoor Sport and Play Beyond the Six Acre Standard by Fields in Trust reflects policy changes including the National Planning Policy Framework and includes recommendations on the provision of amenity and natural green space. The publication offers guidance for practitioners on open space provision and design known as the Six Acre Standard.
- 2.53 The guidance discusses benchmarks such as walking distances to play, sport and amenity greenspace, as well as setting out recommendations for provision for different scales of development as shown in the adjacent extract.

Extract of Table 2 – Recommended Application of Quantity Benchmark Guidelines - Equipped / Designated Play Space in Guidance for Outdoor Sport and Play Beyond the Six Acre Standard (England, 2015) page 7.

| Scale of Development | Local Area for Play (LAP) | Locally Equipped Area for Play (LEAP) | Neighbourhood Equipped Area for Play (NEAP) | Multi-Use Games Area (MUGA) |
|----------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------------------|---|-----------------------------|
| 5-10 dwellings | ✓ | | | |
| 10-200 dwellings | ✓ | ✓ | | Contribution |
| 201-500 dwellings | ✓ | ✓ | Contribution | ✓ |
| 501+ dwellings | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |

| Open Space Typology | QUANTITY GUIDELINE ¹ (hectares per 1,000 population) | WALKING GUIDELINE (walking distance: metres from dwellings) | QUALITY GUIDELINE |
|--------------------------|--|---|--|
| Parks and Gardens | 0.80 | 710m | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Parks to be of Green Flag status. ■ Appropriately landscaped. |
| Amenity Green Space | 0.60 | 480m | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Positive management. ■ Provision of footpaths. |
| Natural and Semi-Natural | 1.80 | 720m | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Designed so as to be free of the fear of harm or crime. |

¹ Quantity guidelines are provided as minimum guidelines and should not be interpreted as maximum levels of provision, and it is recommended that they are adjusted to take account of local circumstances.





SECTION 3
THE SITE &
SITE CONTEXT

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THE SITE

- 3.1 The former RAF Upper Heyford airbase (the Former Air Base) is located approximately 5.3km north-west of Bicester, and 1.7km south-west of Junction 10 of the M40 Motorway, in Oxfordshire. The site is located within the administrative area of Cherwell District Council and the parishes of Upper Heyford, Somerton and Ardley.
- 3.2 The Application Site covers circa 457 hectares of land occupying much of 505 hectares the former Air Base site, but excludes areas of completed and ongoing residential and associated development within Heyford Park or areas subject to separate planning applications yet to be determined such as Land South of Camp Road and Village Centre North.
- 3.3 The Application Site is located largely to the north of Camp Road and includes the section of Camp Road that lies between Kirtlington Road/Port Way to the west and Chilgrove Drive to the east, but includes other parcels of land to the south of Camp Road as shown on Figure 2.
- 3.4 Upper Heyford is the closest settlement and is separated from the south-west corner of the former runway by Somerton Road.

Recent History

- 3.5 The former Air Base was owned by the Ministry of Defence and was leased to the United States Air Force (USAF) from the 1960s until 1994. The Air Base had a number of land uses, with a residential area for personnel, an area that provided ancillary facilities and services such as a hospital, supermarket, petrol station, school and sport facilities for the military personnel and their families.
- 3.6 There are many features within the Application Site that remain from the military use of the site, the former Air Base boundary is marked by a barbed-wire topped chain link security fences, beyond which lies open countryside to the north, east, and west. The southern boundary in part lies adjacent to open countryside, former Air Base structures, or new build development within Heyford Park. The boundaries and neighbouring land uses of individual development parcels within the Application Site varies according to its relationship with existing built form or open land.

- 3.7 Most of the buildings are of a utilitarian military nature including hardened aircraft shelters, and other hardened buildings including the Avionics buildings (refer to Photograph 1), telephone exchange, battle command centre and special weapons stores, which form the Scheduled Ancient Monument dating from the Cold War period.
- 3.8 Other buildings from this period include iconic structures such as nose docking sheds, the control tower and the former squadron headquarters building, which are, or are to be, Grade 2 listed.
- 3.9 The former Air Base site was divided into three main character areas relating to the military land uses: the main Flying Field and Technical Area, north of Camp Road and the Residential Area to the south of Camp Road. The residential areas each comprise their own character areas that reflect the date of construction and their function.

Land Use

- 3.10 The Application Site encompasses, broadly speaking, the irregular-shaped land parcel of the former Air Base to the north and south of Camp Road, but excludes areas of completed and ongoing residential and associated development within Heyford Park.
- 3.11 A number of commercial companies have offices/units within the buildings within the flying field, notably British Car Auctions (BCA) uses parts of the runway for vehicle storage and processing (refer to Photograph 2).
- 3.12 Two parcels of 'greenfield' agricultural land beyond the former Air Base boundary are also included within the Application Site in accordance with Policy 5 Villages of the CDC Local Plan. These are located to the west of Tait Drive/ east of Port Way, with the second located to the west of Heyford Leys Farm, within the southeast of the Application Site.
- 3.13 Heyford Park Free School also has a campus within the Application Site, comprising classrooms, sports and recreation facilities. There are a number of community facilities that have been developed as part of the military base and it's inhabitants, notably the Heyford Park Chapel and Community Centre.

Access

- 3.14 Camp Road dissects the site and provides a connection to Upper Heyford to the west and east towards the B430. Residential roads reach south from Camp Road with roads leading to the previous Technical Area to the south, with some residential roads to recent parcels of development including Larsden Road and Soden Road.
- 3.15 The blue infrastructure of the River Cherwell and Oxford Canal provides an additional layer of connectivity, which are located to the west of the Application Site.

Public Rights of Way

- 3.16 No Public Rights of Way (PRoW) lie within the Application Site, however, several footpaths and bridleways terminate at or follow the boundary, having been severed or diverted by construction of the former Air Base. Notably, these include two historic long-distance routes comprising Aves Ditch at the east along Chilgrove Drive, and Port Way to the west of the former runway.

Topography and Drainage

- 3.17 The Flying Field occupies a plateau east of the Cherwell Valley and comprises convex high ground, with landform falling away locally to the north and south (refer to Figure 3). Topographically there are subtle variations in levels across the Flying Field, undulating locally to the north, south, east and west, although the former runway is slightly elevated above neighbouring land uses for much of its c.3km length at between 135m AOD and 130m AOD (the western end slopes down to c.112m at Somerton Road). The northern part of the Flying Field reaches approximately 130m to 135m Above Ordnance Datum (AOD) and gently slopes to the south at Camp Road which lies at c.125m AOD toward the western edge of the Application Site, and at c. 120m AOD at Chilgrove Drive junction.
- 3.18 To the south of Camp Road, parcel 16 occupies land that slopes generally to the south at c.122m AOD although a ditch that forms the boundary between the two parcels forms a shallow 'valley' at less than 120m AOD.
- 3.19 Landform within parcel 17 and parcel 18 slopes gently south-eastward from c.120m at its northern edge toward the Sewage Works which lies at about 115m AOD.



FIGURE 2. AERIAL PLAN



Photograph 1 - Avionics Building



Photograph 2 - British Car Auctions use of the Application Site



Photograph 3 - Southern Bomb Stores



Photograph 4 - Security fence around the Flying Field



Photograph 5 - Control Tower



Photograph 6 - Rousham Park & Gardens

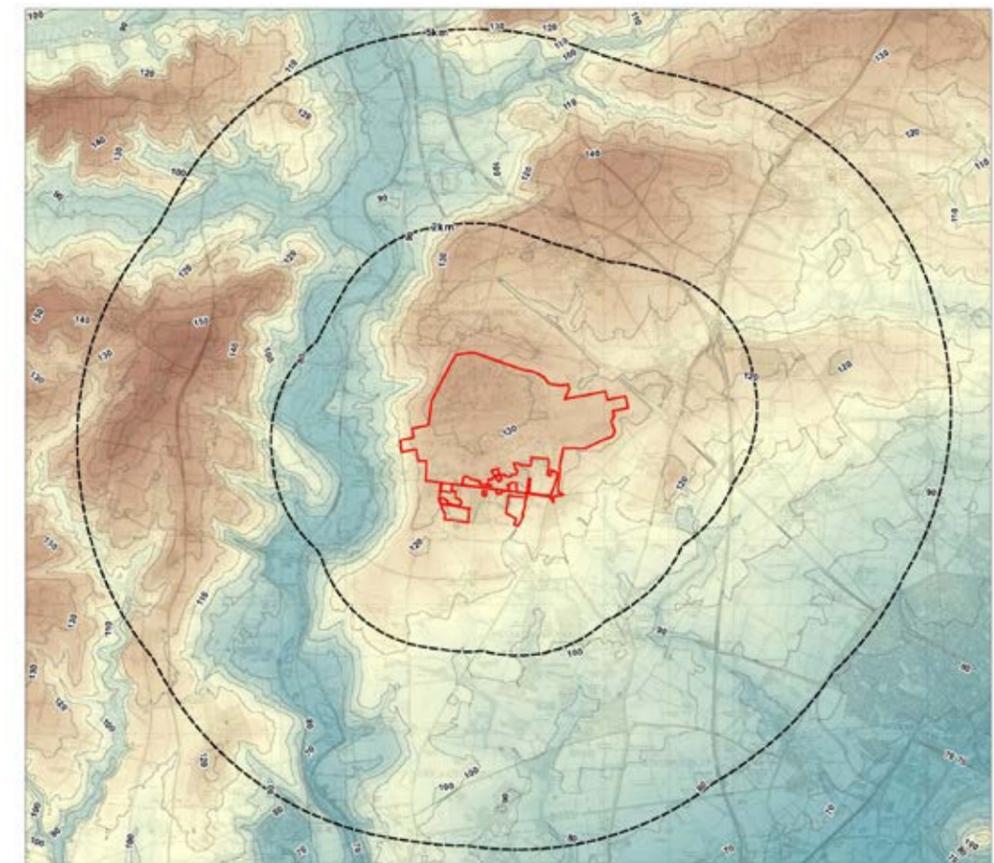
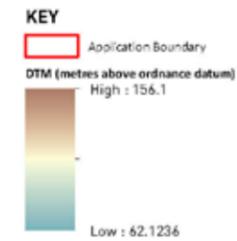


FIGURE 3. TOPOGRAPHY PLAN



- 3.20 The ditch drains southward from the Land South of Camp Road to the west of parcel 16. No natural water bodies occur on site, but several water storage and drainage features are present within the Flying Field, historically used during the Air Base operation for firefighting.
- 3.21 Recent development includes SuDs features, such as the linked corridor of attenuation basins located south of Camp Road between Bovis parcels B2A, B2B and B5, to the north of Parcel 16.
- 3.22 The Application Site is located within Flood Zone Risk 1, and at low / negligible risk of flooding.

Built Form

- 3.23 Due to its scale and former functions, the built form within the Application Site is varied in form, size and architectural style.
- 3.24 The built form to the north of Camp Road is complex and large in scale comprising utilitarian military structures of the technical area and Flying Field. However, buildings such as Heyford Park Free School are more domestic in scale, in addition to the residential properties off Larsden Road and Soden Road.
- 3.25 To the south of Camp Road, the greenfield parcels (no. 16 and 18) comprise arable land with no built form or paved access. Parcel 16 and 18 both abut the existing residential uses within Heyford Park, with parcel 18 located between the recent development off Wellington Road and the sewage works to the south-east.

Vegetation

- 3.26 Across the Application Site, north of Camp Road tree and shrub planting appears to be planted in a haphazard manner with areas of grassland separating built form and areas of hard standing, with a large number of mature trees within the technical and domestic site and some peripheral planting undertaken in the 1980s.
- 3.27 To the south of Camp Road, within the residential areas, vegetation is domestic in nature, with areas of public open space. This comprises mature trees, amenity grass with recent planting in newly developed green spaces.

- 3.28 Species are varied across the site with a mix of native and ornamental species, with the planting perceived to provide a specific function such as screening, highway trees or domestic landscaping. Past management of amenity grass has been regimented to present a well maintained appearance in line with the military use of the site.
- 3.29 Notable vegetation includes tree, hedgerow and/or shrub planting along the south-western and north-western boundary of the Flying Field. The southern boundary of the Southern Bomb Stores (refer to Photograph 3) includes blocks of tree planting; vegetation also flanks Chilgrove Drive. A dense tree belt lies outside of but adjacent to the northern boundary of the Flying Field.

Boundaries

- 3.30 A c.2.25m high chain link (refer to Photograph 4) and barbed wire security fence surrounds the former Air Base and defines and encloses much of the external boundaries (and occasional internal boundaries) of the Application Site.
- 3.31 The former Air Base security fence has been removed in a number of sections to help facilitate recent development. In places, boundaries have been replaced with timber post and rail fencing and hedgerow planting where adjacent to residential properties. Boundaries are still required to maintain secure boundaries across the Application Site in line with the planning obligations.
- 3.32 Along the northern and western boundaries of parcel 17 west of Heyford Leys Farm, it has been replaced by timber post and rail fencing with hedge planting adjacent to existing housing; the eastern boundary of this parcel is formed by existing hedgerows and/or tall chain link fencing of the Sewage Works, and the southern boundary is marked by a gappy hedgerow separating parcel 17 and 18 from open countryside.

Statutory and Non-Statutory Designations

- 3.33 Due to the site's unique past a number of features, buildings and areas have been designated at varying levels of importance. These cover both cultural heritage and ecological assets within the Application Site.

Cultural Heritage

- 3.34 The Flying Field represents the historic core of the former Air Base and is of national, regional and local significance due to its Cold War associations.
- 3.35 The former Air Base 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 its military architecture and layout with the Flying Field comprising approximately 10km of runways.
- 3.36 Key Cold War structures scheduled under the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act of 1979 include:
- The Hardened Telephone Exchange;
 - The Battle Command Centre;
 - The Quick Reaction Alert Area (QRAA): this includes hardened aircraft shelters, security fence, watch tower, fuel supply point and hardened crew buildings;
 - The Northern Bomb Store and Special Weapons Area: this is contained within a security fence and includes 'special' and conventional bomb stores; and,
 - The Avionics Maintenance Facility.
- 3.37 In addition, several structures within the Application Site are covered by a Grade II listing, these include three Nose Docking Sheds, the Squadron Headquarters, and the Control Tower (refer to Photograph 5).
- 3.38 There are also a number of non-designated heritage assets within the Application Site which together help form the cultural heritage of the site.
- 3.39 Within the vicinity of the Application Site there are further designations, including the Registered Park and Gardens at Middleton Park, and Rousham Hall to the south west of the Application Site. The Rousham Conservation Area includes the historic cores of both Upper Heyford and Lower Heyford and lies just to the west, adjoining the Application Site.



| KEY | |
|-----------------------------|---|
| HERITAGE | |
| | AREA OF LOCAL SIGNIFICANCE SOURCE: RAF UPPER HEYFORD REVISED COMPREHENSIVE PLANNING BRIEF 2007 SPD 'SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANCES' DRAWING REF. 10 |
| | AREA OF REGIONAL SIGNIFICANCE SOURCE: RAF UPPER HEYFORD REVISED COMPREHENSIVE PLANNING BRIEF 2007 SPD 'SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANCES' DRAWING REF. 10 |
| | AREA OF NATIONAL SIGNIFICANCE SOURCE: RAF UPPER HEYFORD REVISED COMPREHENSIVE PLANNING BRIEF 2007 SPD 'SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANCES' DRAWING REF. 10 |
| | AREA OF INTERNATIONAL SIGNIFICANCE SOURCE: RAF UPPER HEYFORD REVISED COMPREHENSIVE PLANNING BRIEF 2007 SPD 'SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANCES' DRAWING REF. 10 |
| | NON LISTED BUILDINGS OF LOCAL SIGNIFICANCE SOURCE: RAF UPPER HEYFORD CONSERVATION AREA APPRAISAL APRIL 2016 FIGURE 7 |
| | NON LISTED BUILDINGS OF NATIONAL SIGNIFICANCE SOURCE: RAF UPPER HEYFORD CONSERVATION AREA APPRAISAL APRIL 2016 FIGURE 7 |
| | LISTED BUILDINGS SOURCE: DRAWING BY PUSCUS REF. 03/04_11 'CONSTRANTS PLAN' MARCH 2014 |
| | SCHEDULED MONUMENTS SOURCE: DRAWING BY PUSCUS REF. 03/04_14 'SCHEDULED MONUMENTS' REF. JULY 2014 |
| | HISTORIC ROUTES SOURCE: RAF UPPER HEYFORD REVISED COMPREHENSIVE PLANNING BRIEF 2007 SPD 'PUB. & CULTURAL CONTEXT' DRAWING 01A |
| LANDSCAPE/ECOLOGY | |
| | LOCAL WILDLIFE SITE SOURCE: RAF UPPER HEYFORD REVISED COMPREHENSIVE PLANNING BRIEF 2007 SPD 'PRIORITY AREAS' DRAWING REF. 12 |
| | ROUSHAM CONSERVATION AREA SOURCE: CHERWELL DISTRICT COUNCIL |
| | AREA OF ECOLOGICAL IMPORTANCE SOURCE: RAF UPPER HEYFORD REVISED COMPREHENSIVE PLANNING BRIEF 2007 SPD 'PRIORITY AREAS' DRAWING REF. 12 |
| | VIEWS FROM ROUSHAM PARK & HOUSE TO FORMER RAF UPPER HEYFORD AIRBASE SOURCE: RAF UPPER HEYFORD REVISED COMPREHENSIVE PLANNING BRIEF 2007 SPD 'ROUSHAM PARK & CONSERVATION AREA' DRAWING 01C |
| | SITES WHERE GREAT CRESTED NEWT IS CONFIRMED SOURCE: RAF UPPER HEYFORD REVISED COMPREHENSIVE PLANNING BRIEF 2007 SPD 'PRIORITY AREAS' DRAWING REF. 12 |
| | SENSITIVE LANDSCAPE EDGE EDGE DEFINED BY TOP OF CHERWELL VALLEY |
| | EXISTING VEGETATION SUBJECT TO DETAILED TREE SURVEY |
| PUBLIC RIGHTS OF WAY | |
| | EXISTING FOOTPATHS SOURCE: 2008/09/04/05/06/07/08/09/10/11/12/13/14/15/16/17/18/19/20/21/22/23/24/25/26/27/28/29/30/31/32/33/34/35/36/37/38/39/40/41/42/43/44/45/46/47/48/49/50/51/52/53/54/55/56/57/58/59/60/61/62/63/64/65/66/67/68/69/70/71/72/73/74/75/76/77/78/79/80/81/82/83/84/85/86/87/88/89/90/91/92/93/94/95/96/97/98/99/100/101/102/103/104/105/106/107/108/109/110/111/112/113/114/115/116/117/118/119/120/121/122/123/124/125/126/127/128/129/130/131/132/133/134/135/136/137/138/139/140/141/142/143/144/145/146/147/148/149/150/151/152/153/154/155/156/157/158/159/160/161/162/163/164/165/166/167/168/169/170/171/172/173/174/175/176/177/178/179/180/181/182/183/184/185/186/187/188/189/190/191/192/193/194/195/196/197/198/199/200/201/202/203/204/205/206/207/208/209/210/211/212/213/214/215/216/217/218/219/220/221/222/223/224/225/226/227/228/229/230/231/232/233/234/235/236/237/238/239/240/241/242/243/244/245/246/247/248/249/250/251/252/253/254/255/256/257/258/259/260/261/262/263/264/265/266/267/268/269/270/271/272/273/274/275/276/277/278/279/280/281/282/283/284/285/286/287/288/289/290/291/292/293/294/295/296/297/298/299/300/301/302/303/304/305/306/307/308/309/310/311/312/313/314/315/316/317/318/319/320/321/322/323/324/325/326/327/328/329/330/331/332/333/334/335/336/337/338/339/340/341/342/343/344/345/346/347/348/349/350/351/352/353/354/355/356/357/358/359/360/361/362/363/364/365/366/367/368/369/370/371/372/373/374/375/376/377/378/379/380/381/382/383/384/385/386/387/388/389/390/391/392/393/394/395/396/397/398/399/400/401/402/403/404/405/406/407/408/409/410/411/412/413/414/415/416/417/418/419/420/421/422/423/424/425/426/427/428/429/430/431/432/433/434/435/436/437/438/439/440/441/442/443/444/445/446/447/448/449/450/451/452/453/454/455/456/457/458/459/460/461/462/463/464/465/466/467/468/469/470/471/472/473/474/475/476/477/478/479/480/481/482/483/484/485/486/487/488/489/490/491/492/493/494/495/496/497/498/499/500/501/502/503/504/505/506/507/508/509/510/511/512/513/514/515/516/517/518/519/520/521/522/523/524/525/526/527/528/529/530/531/532/533/534/535/536/537/538/539/540/541/542/543/544/545/546/547/548/549/550/551/552/553/554/555/556/557/558/559/560/561/562/563/564/565/566/567/568/569/570/571/572/573/574/575/576/577/578/579/580/581/582/583/584/585/586/587/588/589/590/591/592/593/594/595/596/597/598/599/600/601/602/603/604/605/606/607/608/609/610/611/612/613/614/615/616/617/618/619/620/621/622/623/624/625/626/627/628/629/630/631/632/633/634/635/636/637/638/639/640/641/642/643/644/645/646/647/648/649/650/651/652/653/654/655/656/657/658/659/660/661/662/663/664/665/666/667/668/669/670/671/672/673/674/675/676/677/678/679/680/681/682/683/684/685/686/687/688/689/690/691/692/693/694/695/696/697/698/699/700/701/702/703/704/705/706/707/708/709/710/711/712/713/714/715/716/717/718/719/720/721/722/723/724/725/726/727/728/729/730/731/732/733/734/735/736/737/738/739/740/741/742/743/744/745/746/747/748/749/750/751/752/753/754/755/756/757/758/759/760/761/762/763/764/765/766/767/768/769/770/771/772/773/774/775/776/777/778/779/780/781/782/783/784/785/786/787/788/789/790/791/792/793/794/795/796/797/798/799/800/801/802/803/804/805/806/807/808/809/810/811/812/813/814/815/816/817/818/819/820/821/822/823/824/825/826/827/828/829/830/831/832/833/834/835/836/837/838/839/840/841/842/843/844/845/846/847/848/849/850/851/852/853/854/855/856/857/858/859/860/861/862/863/864/865/866/867/868/869/870/871/872/873/874/875/876/877/878/879/880/881/882/883/884/885/886/887/888/889/890/891/892/893/894/895/896/897/898/899/900/901/902/903/904/905/906/907/908/909/910/911/912/913/914/915/916/917/918/919/920/921/922/923/924/925/926/927/928/929/930/931/932/933/934/935/936/937/938/939/940/941/942/943/944/945/946/947/948/949/950/951/952/953/954/955/956/957/958/959/960/961/962/963/964/965/966/967/968/969/970/971/972/973/974/975/976/977/978/979/980/981/982/983/984/985/986/987/988/989/990/991/992/993/994/995/996/997/998/999/1000 |
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| | OTHER |
| | RESIDENTIAL EDGE |

FIGURE 4. CONSTRAINTS PLAN



Ecology

- 3.40 A Local Wildlife Site (LWS) has been designated to protect the calcareous grassland in the eastern end of the site, but other areas are recognised as ecological assets on account of the habitat for ground nesting birds.
- 5.1 There are no internationally designated statutory sites within 5km of the site, whilst there is statutory designation within 2km of the site; the Ardley Cutting and Quarry Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI). This SSSI is approx. 130m from the Application Site boundary at its closest point and runs in a linear shape from northwest to southwest. It is sited for its biological interest (as well as geological) which include limestone grassland.
- 5.2 There are four non-statutory designated sites and areas identified for future biodiversity enhancement within 2km of the Application Site. These include:
- Upper Cherwell Valley Conservation Target Area (CTA);
 - Tusmore and Shelswell Parks CTA;
 - Rush Spinney Local Wildlife Site (LWS); and
 - Upper Heyford Airfield LWS - This site measures 74.41 ha and is enclosed in the Application Site boundary. It covers much of the eastern part of the Application Site and includes an area of grassland which ranges in diversity and includes some species-rich areas which are strongly calcareous in character, areas on thicker soils which are more neutral in character. These are contiguous to areas of grassland within the Application Site of similar character which are not within the designated site. The southern part of this LWS includes a series of water tanks known to support a large population of great crested newts. A range of other protected and notable species are associated with LWS, including 14 species of butterfly, skylark, linnet, corn bunting, tree sparrow and grey partridge. This ecological feature is considered to be of County value.

SURROUNDING LANDSCAPE CONTEXT

Surrounding Landscape and Settlements

- 5.3 The Application Site is largely surrounded by agricultural land within its immediate surroundings, with the existing residential development bordering the south of the Application Site, to the south of Camp Road.
- 3.41 Predominantly rural in character, and under agricultural use the site's surroundings are interspersed with villages including Fritwell 1.4km to the north, Ardley with Fewcott 0.7km to the northeast, Middleton Stoney 2.2km to the southeast, Caulcott 0.8km to the south, Lower Heyford 1.1km to the southwest, Steeple Aston 2.1km to the west, Middle Aston 2.2km to the west, North Aston (2.7km) and Somerton (0.9km) to the northwest.
- 3.42 In addition, a number of individual houses, farmsteads and hamlets occur between the settlements within approximately a 1km radius of the Application Site, including clockwise from the north: Troy Farm and Troy Cottages, Crossroads Farm, Upton Cottage, Ashgrove Farm, Manor Farm (Middleton Stoney), Lime Hollow/The Gorse, Cheesman's Barn, Mudginwell Farm, Village Farm (Somerton) and Portway Cottage.

Land Uses

- 3.43 Other notable land uses and built form within vicinity of the Application Site includes Cherwell Valley Motorway Service Area 1.7km to the northeast and Ardley Quarry/ Ardley Energy Recovery Facility (ERF) about 1.2km to the southeast.
- 3.44 The River Cherwell, Oxford Canal and the Birmingham to Oxford rail line lie to the west of the Application Site as they pass by the settlements of Upper and Lower Heyford.

Public Rights of Way (PRoW)

- 3.45 There is a network of public footpaths and bridleways to the north of the perimeter of Heyford Park linking Fritwell and Somerton. There are also a number of existing PRoW's providing links to Caulcott and Lower Heyford to the south, Upper Heyford and Steeple Ashton to the west and Ardley to the north east of the Application Site.

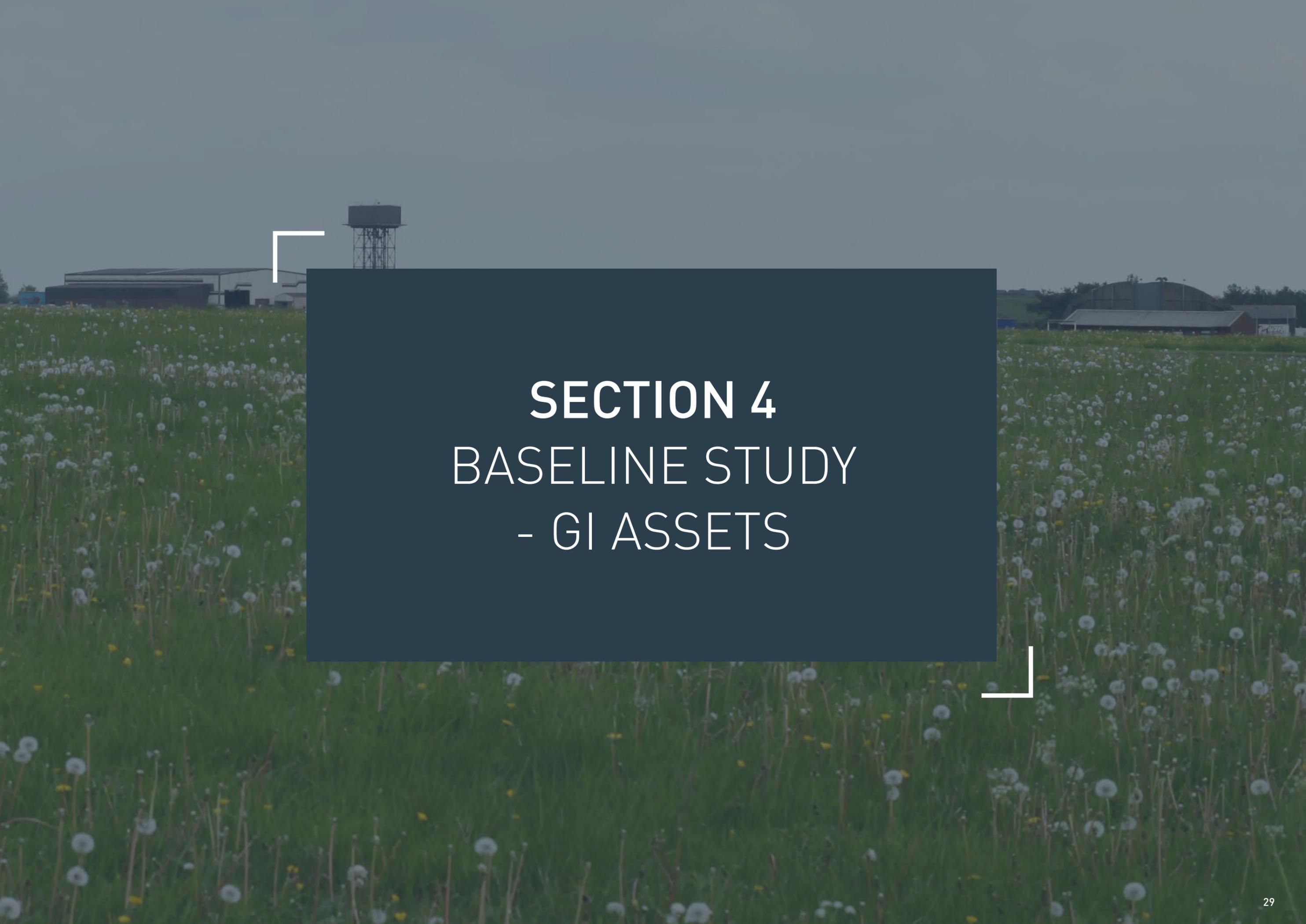
Topography

- 3.46 Topographically, the landscape gently slopes to the southeast toward Gagle Brook and south toward Gallos Brook. To the west, the valley of River Cherwell creates a strong landform and separates the Application Site from the higher ground located further west. The A4260 marks that higher ground but is not perceptible due to the distance and intervening vegetative screening; it is approximately 3.7km away at its closest point near Hopcrofts Holt.

Cultural Heritage

- 3.47 Four Registered Parks and Gardens occur within the wider context of the Application Site including Aynho 3.8km to the north, Middleton Stoney 650m to the southeast, Kirtlington 3.6km to the south and Rousham 2km to the southwest (refer to Photograph 6).
- 3.48 The Application Site is sited on a plateau location east of the Cherwell Valley that contains not only Rousham Park, Grade 1 Listed Park and Garden and several other Conservation Areas (CA) that adjoin the site including the Rousham, Lower Heyford and Upper Heyford CA.
- 3.49 There are further Scheduled Monuments and Listed Buildings within the vicinity of the site, for a full description, refer to the Cultural Heritage chapter within the ES.



A photograph of a field of dandelions in the foreground, with a water tower and farm buildings in the background. The image is overlaid with a dark blue semi-transparent rectangle containing white text. The text is centered within the rectangle. There are white L-shaped corner brackets on the top-left and bottom-right corners of the dark blue rectangle.

SECTION 4
BASELINE STUDY
- GI ASSETS

SECTION 4 | BASELINE STUDY - LANDSCAPE CHARACTER

LANDSCAPE CHARACTER

4.1 The landscape character of the Application Site and its surroundings is defined by a number of published guidance documents.

National Landscape Character

4.2 Natural England's National Landscape Character Area (NCA) guidance (2015) locates the Application Site within NCA107 Cotswolds. Whilst the NCAs provide a recognised, national spatial framework the scale of the mapping and information makes it of limited use at the local scale. With the NCA's having a 'broad brush' strategic approach it is not considered appropriate for the purpose of this a GI Strategy nor does it mention the former RAF Upper Heyford Air base as a notable feature.

Local Landscape Character

4.3 The local landscape character studies that refer to the Application Site are summarised below:

- Oxfordshire Wildlife and Landscape Study (undated); and
- Cherwell District Landscape Assessment (1995).

Oxfordshire Wildlife and Landscape Study (undated)

4.4 The current Landscape Character Assessment (LCA) for Oxfordshire is the Oxfordshire Wildlife and Landscape Study (OWLS). The OWLS assessment classifies four landscape character types within the vicinity of the Application Site:

- Farmland Plateau – including the former Air Base;
- Wooded Estatelands – encompassing land to the southeast of Caulcott centred on Middleton Park;
- Farmland Slopes and Valley Sides – comprising land lying broadly between Station Road/Somerton Road and the River Cherwell flood plain; and
- River Meadowlands – encompassing the flood plain and valley floor of the River Cherwell.

4.5 The study area is located within the Farmland Plateau landscape type. Key characteristics are listed as:

- "Level or gently rolling open ridges dissected by narrow valleys and broader vales.
- Large, regular arable fields enclosed by low thorn hedges and limestone walls.



Public footpath 289/4/10 north of Caulcott, looking northwest (Upper Heyford Plateau LCA)

- Rectilinear plantations and shelterbelts.
- Sparsely settled landscape with a few nucleated settlements.
- Long, straight roads running along the ridge summits."

4.6 A number of local character areas are described within the overall Farmland Plateau landscape type, including ref. H Fritwell, in which the Application Site lies, for which the landscape character is described as:

"This area is characterised by large, regularly-shaped arable fields and medium-sized mixed plantations. There are small fields of semi-improved grassland surrounding villages. There are also a few large blocks of ancient semi-natural woodland, including Stoke Wood and Stoke Little Wood, which add to the wooded character of this area. The field boundaries are dominated by hawthorn and blackthorn hedges with scattered hedgerow trees, although the latter are almost totally absent to the south of Upper Heyford airfield. Hedges are generally low in height, except around Fritwell and Ardley where they are taller and more species-rich."

4.7 The former Air Base is referenced under 'forces for change', which states: **"...the open plateau landscapes are very exposed and agricultural buildings and other large structures, such as the industrial units at Enstone Airfield, are particularly prominent. Similarly, the structures associated with Upper Heyford airfield are very visible across the Cherwell Valley..."**

4.8 In response to the 'forces for change', a number of Landscape Strategy guidelines are also noted to "conserve the open and remote character of the landscape, and maintain the large-scale field pattern." Relevant guidelines include:

- "Conserve the open, spacious character of the landscape by limiting woodland planting on the more exposed ridge tops. Locate new planting in the dips and folds of the landscape and establish tree belts around airfields, quarries and other large structures to reduce their visual impact using locally characteristic native tree and shrub species such as ash, oak and beech.
- Strengthen the field pattern by planting up gappy hedges using locally characteristic species such as hawthorn and blackthorn.
- Promote environmentally-sensitive maintenance of hedgerows, including coppicing and layering when necessary, to maintain a height and width appropriate to the landscape type...
- Maintain the sparsely settled rural character of the landscape by concentrating new development in and around existing settlements. The exposed character of the plateau is particularly sensitive to visually intrusive development, large buildings and communication masts..."

4.9 Key recommendations conclude the Farmland Plateau landscape type as to **"safeguard and enhance the open, sparsely settled character of the landscape whilst maintaining and strengthening its pattern of hedgerows, stone walls, small woodlands and tree belts."**



View from East Street, Fritwell, from the bridge footway over the M40, looking south (within the Upper Heyford Plateau LCA).



Somerton Road, Fewcott at bridge over the railway line, from the grass verge near the bridge, looking south.



Bridleway 109/29/30, south of the Application Site, on the approach from Camp Road near the junction with bridleways 109/28/10 and 109/30/10, looking northwest.

Cherwell District Landscape Assessment (1995)

- 4.10 The OWLS notes that it should be read in conjunction with LCA's available at district level, which for the Application Site comprises the Cherwell District Landscape Assessment and provides an analysis of the character of the landscape at a local level. However, it should be noted that subsequent to the Cherwell District Landscape Assessment published in November 1995, the former Air Base has been designated as RAF Upper Heyford Conservation Area, and some areas and buildings within it have been designated as Scheduled Monuments.
- 4.11 The Applicate Site is located within the Upper Heyford Plateau LCA which continues further north and south. The Cherwell Valley LCA is adjacent to the west with the Oxfordshire Estate Farmlands LCA located to the south east at the eastern end of Camp Road and stretches further north east, and south.

Upper Heyford Plateau LCA

- 4.12 The Upper Heyford Plateau LCA is, broadly speaking, located to the east of Cherwell River. It reaches the surroundings of the Croughton Airfield and Tusmore Park to the north-east and encompasses the settlement of Souldern to the north. It includes a short section of the M40 motorway and the settlements of Fritwell, and Ardley. The London Marylebone to Birmingham Snowhill railway line separates the northern part of this LCA from its central part which encompasses the former Air Base. To the south of the former Air Base the LCA forms a narrow triangular area between Middleton Park to the east; Kirtlington and Kirtlington Park to the south; and a break of the plateau with the valley of the River Cherwell to the west.
- 4.13 Broadly speaking this LCA is characterised by an elevated topography and is described in para 3.57 of the 'Cherwell District Landscape Assessment' as **"...an exposed, level, open plateau, which dips very gently into rolling hills to the south-east. Upper Heyford Airbase comprises about a third of this character area and dominates the landscape."**
- 4.14 Gentle undulations characterise this LCA with the topography falling to the west into the River Cherwell valley. The former Air Base is surrounded by countryside. Smaller

enclosed pastoral fields are generally located around villages and intensive arable cultivation tends to be located in open and level or gently rolling large fields.

- 4.15 The southernmost and northernmost parts of this LCA share a similar weak field pattern and landscape condition (para 3.60 and 3.61) and are describes and having **"...few hedges and virtually no trees."** and **"...fields of arable land tend to run into one another with no visual or physical interruption."**
- 4.16 Beyond the former Air Base, the development pattern is of small settlements with those located in the northern part of this LCA generally positioned on an elevated ground. The assessment also notes the night time light pollution with the street and security lighting on the former Air Base visible over long distances.
- 4.17 Two ancient routes, the Portway and Aves Ditch, are also noted as special features; the former following the alignment of Kirtlington Road which forms the western boundary of the Application Site. Aves Ditch lies to the east and is separated from the Application Site by existing buildings with the former Air Base.
- 4.18 The presence of the M40 has a strong influence over the character of the northern part of this LCA. Traffic and noise is discernible from the surrounding area and from the eastern part of the former Air Base. Views of the large scale built form within the former RAF Upper Heyford influence the way this LCA is perceived. The repetitive pattern of buildings and their strongly geometric form are evident from a number of locations within the surrounding landscape.
- 4.19 The Upper Heyford Plateau LCA does not attract a statutory landscape designation. However, the former Air Base is subject to heritage designation as the RAF Upper Heyford Conservation Area. Further, land immediately to the south and west of the Application Site falls within Rousham Conservation Area.

Cherwell Valley LCA

- 4.20 This LCA is associated with the valley of River Cherwell which is located to the west of the Application Site. It stretches as a relatively narrow corridor between Banbury to the north to Kirtlington to the south. The western boundary of this LCA is defined by a higher ground marked by the presence of the A4260. The higher ground of the Heyford Plateau defines the extent of the eastern boundary with a number of local roads following the edge of the plateau.
- 4.21 The changes in the local topography are evident with the roads following the sloping ground and often running along the higher ground. A number of settlements, such as Steeple Aston or Middle Aston are located on the upper slopes of the valley.
- 4.22 The valley floor is characterised by the meandering course of River Cherwell with pastoral fields located either side. Riparian vegetation and mature trees line the course of the river and the Oxford Canal. Isolated trees, groups of trees, and hedgerow trees are frequent. Tree vegetation is also frequent along the railway line, which runs to the west of the River Cherwell before crossing to the east of the River northwest of Upper Heyford village. The field pattern along the river is mostly of medium to small scale pastoral fields. Arable fields are predominantly localised on the valley sides and are of medium to large scale. The openness of the fields allows for distant views across the valley: "...more open and unstructured, with long views across the valley."
- 4.23 The Council's aforementioned assessment mentions a number of special features associated with the Cherwell Valley LCA. Notably, Rousham Park, is located on the edge of this LCA with the Cherwell Valley forming a backdrop to the views gained from the park.
- 4.24 A broad swathe of the Cherwell Valley LCA to the northeast of Rousham Park, to the west of the former Air Base and the Application Site, designated within the Rousham Conservation Area. A number of settlements and its vernacular architecture are also mentioned in the published document.
- 4.25 The Cherwell Valley LCA does not attract a statutory landscape designation.
- 4.26 Refer to Figure 5 for the Landscape Character Areas Plan.



View from Public footpath 296/8/10, Middle Aston, leading from Middle Aston to Somerton, looking southeast (across the Cherwell Valley LCA towards the Upper Heyford Plateau LCA).



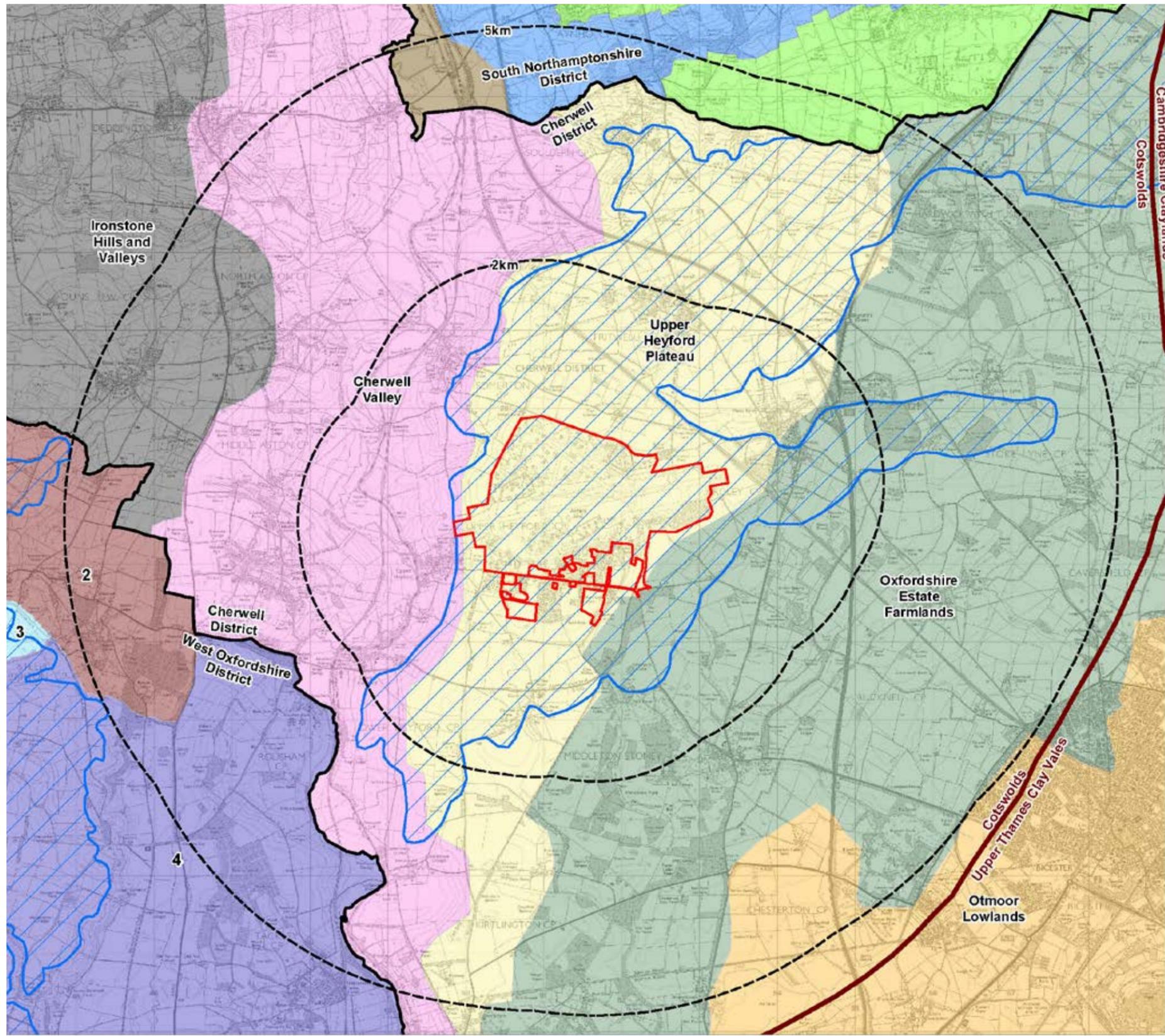
Rousham Park - Grade I Registered Park



Public footpath 364/6/20, Steeple Aston, near Cow Lane and the 'Eyecatcher', looking east.



Bridleway 109/30/10 near the B430, from the higher ground along the initial section of the bridleway, looking west (within the Upper Heyford Plateau LCA)



- KEY**
- Application Boundary
 - Local Authority Boundary
 - National Character Areas
- Oxfordshire Wildlife and Landscape Study (2004)**
- Landscape Character Types**
- Farmland Plateau
- Northamptonshire Landscape Character Assessment (2010)**
- Landscape Character Areas:**
- 10a: Croughton, Aynho and Farthinghoe Plateau
 - 13a: Middleton Cheyney and Woodford Halse
 - 17a: River Cherwell Floodplain
- West Oxfordshire Landscape Assessment (1998)**
- Landscape Character Areas**
- 2. Ironstone Valleys & Ridges
 - 3. Enstone Uplands
 - 4. Eastern Parks & Valleys
- Cherwell Landscape Assessment (1995)**
- Landscape Character Areas**
- Cherwell Valley
 - Ironstone Hills and Valleys
 - Otmoor Lowlands
 - Oxfordshire Estate Farmlands
 - Upper Heyford Plateau

FIGURE 5. LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AREAS PLAN

SECTION 4 | BASELINE STUDY - GI ASSETS

KEY EXISTING GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE ASSETS

4.27 The existing GI assets within the Application Site and the surrounding area are summarised in this section under the themes:

- Cultural Heritage
- Biodiversity and Ecology
- Sustainable Movement
- Sports, Play and Recreation
- Social Infrastructure including Community Involvement

CULTURAL HERITAGE

4.28 As discussed within the Cultural Heritage chapter of the Environmental Statement, and Section 3, there has been a number of heritage surveys carried out in relation to the structures and artefacts at the former Air Base. These cover three main themes; archaeology, built heritage and the historic landscape and key points are discussed in the following section.

Designations

4.29 The Application Site includes a number of designations, from the RAF Upper Heyford Conservation Area, Listed Buildings, Scheduled Monuments and non-designated archaeological and historic landscape features within the Application Site and the surrounding vicinity. These are referenced in Section 3 - the Site and Site Context. Their retention is key to the baseline conditions of the Application Site with the cultural heritage assets forming a layer which helps define the Cold War landscape at Upper Heyford. These assets require preservation and safeguarding in line with the responsibilities of the custodians of the features and require consideration within the GI masterplan.

Archaeology

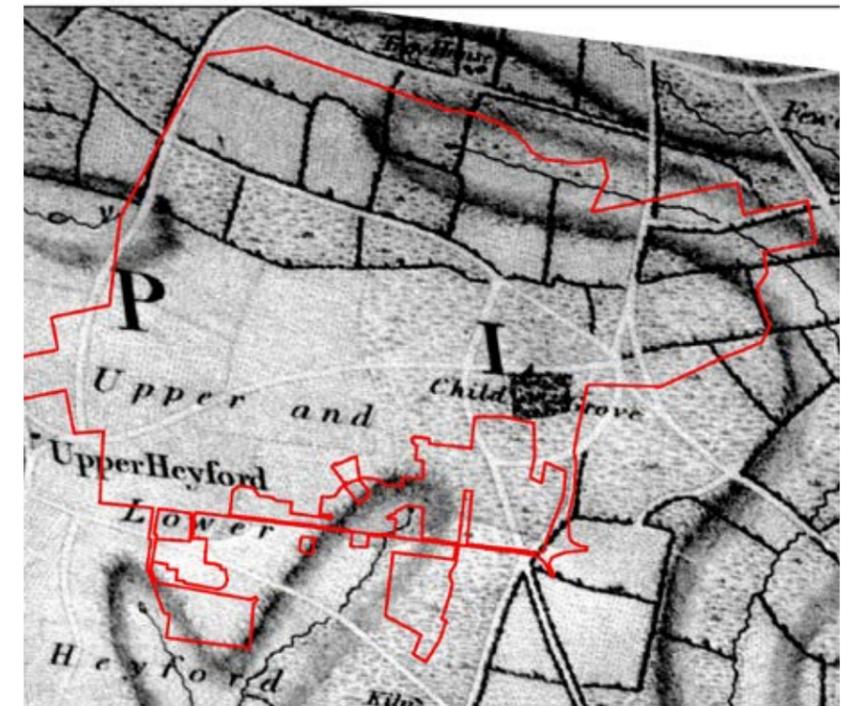
4.30 Assessments undertaken as part of the ES have identified that the Application Site has the potential to contain archaeological features from all periods, especially those dating to the Iron Age and Roman Periods.

4.31 Key aspects, in relation to the GI baseline of the Application Site relate to historic routes, enclosure and features that are visible today. Port Way which forms part of the Application site boundary dates from the Roman period and may have attracted settlement and burial along its length. In addition, the presence of an Anglo-Saxon cemetery just to the south of the Application Site and the continuing use of Aves Ditch (to the east) as a boundary and possible routeway may suggest a presence during this period.

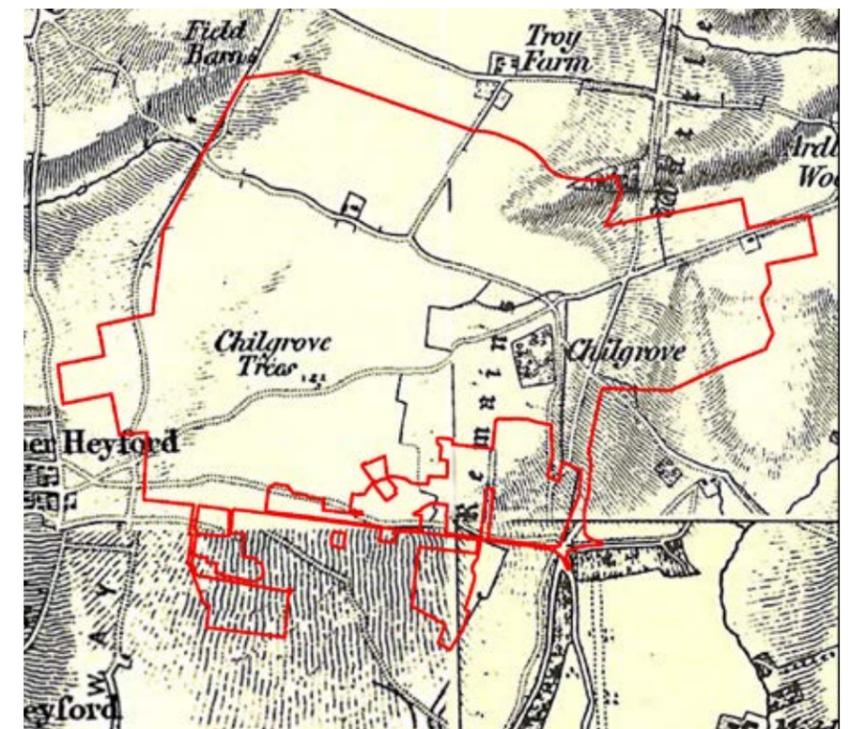
4.32 The 1833 map does not show details such as field boundaries but does show the structure of the landscape and shows that the roads had been formalised into the pattern seen today. The map shows the earthwork to the west of the current Aves Ditch ('Remains') and also shows that Child Grove is now known as Chilgrove. Camp Road is not in existence during this period, although a road runs from Upper Heyford village to Middleton Stoney, to the south of what would become Camp Road.

4.33 As part of the Cultural Heritage studies, a number of the hedgerows have been assessed in relation to the Hedgerow Regulations (1997) in terms of their sensitivity or constraint as a historic hedgerow and their links to archaeological features. Notably, a number of the Historic Hedgerows are located in conjunction with historic routes that dissect the site, including Port Way and Aves Ditch along Chilgrove Drive.

4.34 It is noted within the ES chapter that previous activity at the Airbase may have impacted and affected the survival of artefacts both above and below the ground.



Map of Oxfordshire, Davis 1797



1833 Ordnance Survey Map



The Built Heritage and the Cold War Landscape

- 4.35 The Former RAF Upper Heyford has a plethora of history relating to military activity over the years and the activities and social history of those based at Upper Heyford.
- 4.36 The Application Site has a high concentration of buildings dating from the First World War to the end of the Cold War. In general, those relating to its Cold War history are situated within the landscape of the Flying Field to the north. Features relating to the First, Second and Inter-war periods were within the landscape to the south of the Flying Field, to the north and south of Camp Road. However, many of these structures have recently been demolished to facilitate development of the area.
- 4.37 Sir Hugh Trenchard (Chief of Air Staff between 1919-1930) heavily influenced the selection of bases, and to some extent their layout. This influence is reflected in the plan at RAF Upper Heyford, and was the model on which other airfields of its type were based in the period 1925-1934. For example the radial road pattern of the Trenchard layout has survived despite later infill, and provides clear structure to the southern area of the landscape.
- 4.38 To the south of Camp Road the landscape has been extensively redeveloped for residential housing, key surviving structures considered to be of interest are the Institute (building no. 455), Sergeants' Mess (building no. 457) and six rows of residential building comprising Carswell Circle North (building nos. 535-540).
- 4.39 The most substantial alteration was within what later became the Cold War landscape, with the replacement of grass runways with a concrete runway in 1943/4 by John Laing. In addition, work began on the construction of the eastern division of the Northern Bomb Store (now a Scheduled Monument).
- 4.40 The primary historical and archaeological interest of the former Air Base is its role during the Cold War, in particular the substantial 'Cold War landscape' of the Flying Field. The core of this landscape is considered to be of international significance and comprises both the open landscape and built form.

- 4.41 During the period 1950-1963 there was a influx of activity at Upper Heyford, with the British Government approving the formation of permanent USAF bases in Britain. A number of buildings were erected during this period including a number within the Southern Bomb Stores, the Squadron Headquarters, Northern Bomb Store, Control Tower and three Nose Docking Sheds (all now covered by designations). Within the area to the south of Camp Road, the USAF occupation of the airbase saw the beginnings of expansion of the residential areas and the development of 'Little America'.
- 4.42 Hardened Aircraft Shelters (HAS) were provided between 1977 and 1980 due to the vulnerability of aircraft at the base. These structures are considered to be of national significance and dominate the site's character today.
- 4.43 The coherent Cold War landscape of the Flying Field is largely unaltered from its original form and it is of principally of significance due to it being able to illustrate different periods of the strategic defence during the Cold War.
- 4.44 The size and components of the landscape symbolises the very real threat posed by the Cold War, the US's commitment to the defence of Western Europe and the strong international relationships within NATO. The key significance of former RAF Upper Heyford lies in the high level of survival of the Cold War landscape. This includes individual buildings, and the space between these; all of which play a role in the function and coherency of the landscape, and provide material evidence of the evolving operation of a Cold War fast jet airfield.



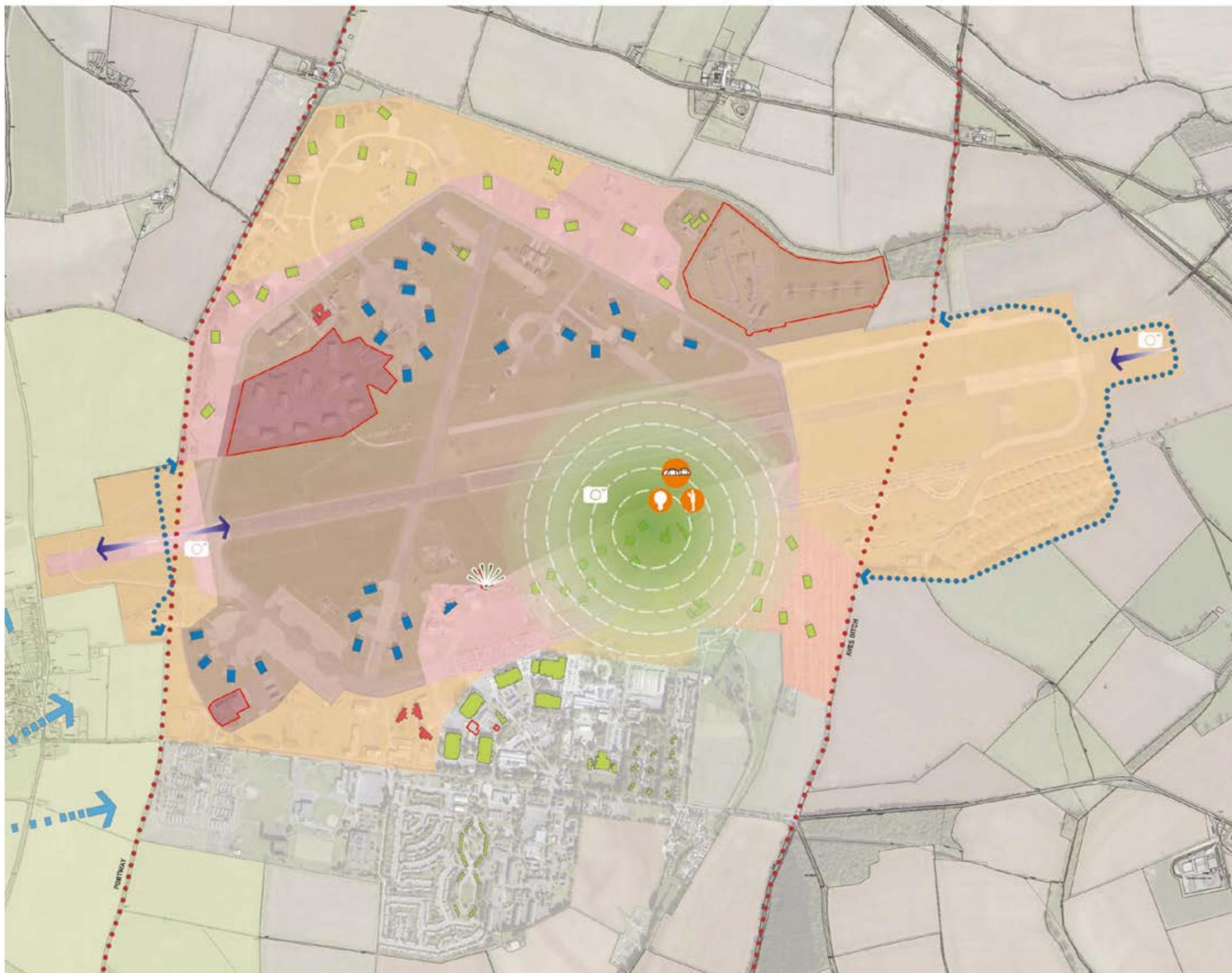
View across the runway - a Cold War landscape



View across the runway towards the Control Tower and Water Tower



Hardened Aircraft Shelter (HAS)



- Area of Local Significance
- Area of Regional Significance
- Area of National Significance
- Area of International Significance
- Rousham Conservation Area
- Scheduled Monuments
- Non Listed Buildings of Local Significance
- Non Listed Buildings of National Significance
- Listed Buildings
- Historic Routes
- Opportunity to Reinstate Historic Routes
- Creation of a Destination at the heart of the Application Site
- Opportunity for site users and tourism visitors to see the Cold War Landscape
- Destination to aid the interpretation of the Cold War landscape and the cultural heritage assets within the site, making the built form legible and sharing the social history of the site. Opportunity for interpretation boards to highlight key features for users to see and use as an educational resource.
- Potential to use innovative ways to showcase the site's cultural heritage.
- Utilising key buildings such as the Control Tower to show users views across the Cold War Landscape.
- Views from Rousham Park & House to Former RAF Upper Heyford Airbase
- Key views to be accessed via the reinstatement of historic routes to enable views to be experienced

FIGURE 6. CULTURAL HERITAGE: OPPORTUNITIES & CONSTRAINTS PLAN



Cultural Heritage - Constraints & Opportunities

4.45 As previously discussed, the cultural heritage assets within the Application Site result in a number of archaeological, built heritage and Cold War landscape features that are both constraints and opportunities to be integrated into the GI Masterplan.

Constraints

4.46 The key constraints are:

- **Built Heritage** - enabling the interpretation of the built form within the Cold War landscape, consideration of views to key buildings without conflicting preservation of heritage assets.
- **Designations** - consider the impact on designated structures and artefacts including Scheduled Monuments, Listed Buildings and the Conservation Area. Historic hedgerows - retain where possible or re-create where removal is required due to development.
- **Setting** - consider the character around the retained structures with the aim to preserve the setting of the asset; which plays a key role in the function and coherency of the landscape and connectivity between assets where applicable. Limit the impacts of the proposed development / demolition on key structures / features through considered mitigation.
- **Management and maintenance** - consider the future requirements in terms of management of structures in terms of securing their future use/survival.

Opportunities

4.47 The key opportunities for Cultural Heritage are:

- **Built Heritage** - retain and preserve structures and artefacts, undertake works where necessary in line with necessary permissions.
- **Legibility** - provide information to local people and visitors about the past activities at Upper Heyford through key interventions eg. heritage tourism events and facilities or interpretation boards, walking trails and tours. To enable a wider audience to use the landscape as an education resource and provide facilities for interpretation of the site's Cultural Heritage e.g. museum or visitor centre.
- **Access** - enable access (free and/or managed) so users can experience the key features within the site e.g. experience the Cold War landscape.

- **Character & Setting** - Retain the austere character of the Cold War landscape to be experienced by all. Consider views to highlight the Cold War landscape to allow interpretation of the site's cultural heritage. Consider screening structures to reduce conflicts between land uses and retain setting and character around key buildings/areas.
- **Multi-functionality** - consider temporary development/ land use to limit impacts on assets eg. filming around buildings. Potential change of uses provides opportunities for buildings to be retained and maintained for use to secure their long term future.
- **Precedents** - consider other relevant sites with heritage assets, their use of the built form and how it is interpreted by users. Consider how assets are used within GI to form destinations for recreation and tourism.

4.48 The constraints and opportunities for cultural heritage are shown on Figure 6.

BIODIVERSITY AND ECOLOGY

4.49 As highlighted within the Section 3 and the Ecology chapter of the Environmental Statement, there are a number of ecological features within to the Application Site including habitat that support a number of key species. The ecological elements are to be considered and integrated within the GI Masterplan and key points are discussed in the following section.

Designations

- 4.50 As previously discussed there are a number of designated sites within the Application Site's vicinity, with part of the grassland adjacent to the runway designated as a Local Wildlife Site.
- 4.51 The Upper Heyford Airfield LWS covers much of the eastern part of the Application Site and includes an area of grassland which ranges in diversity and includes some species-rich areas which are strongly calcareous in character, areas on thicker soils which are more neutral in character.
- 4.52 The southern part of this LWS includes a series of water tanks known to support a large population of great-crested newts. A range of other protected and notable species are associated with LWS, including 14 species of butterfly, skylark, linnet, corn bunting, tree sparrow and grey partridge. This ecological feature is considered to be of County value and requires consideration within the GI Masterplan as a key feature of the ecology layer which helps to define the former Air Base and contribute to the previously discussed Cold War landscape.

Habitats

- 4.53 Overall the Application Site is dominated by neutral and calcareous grassland, interspersed with areas of hard standing, and isolated woodland plots, refer to Figure 7.
- 4.54 The majority of the Application Site is dominated by poor semi-improved neutral grassland. In the central and eastern sections of the Application Site unimproved neutral and calcareous grasslands are present (much of which is located within the Upper Heyford Airfield LWS). Standing water is present within concrete water tanks, these are predominately located in the south and east of the Application Site.
- 4.55 Three parcels (parcels 16, 17, 18) of disconnected land are present to the south the Application Site and are occupied by arable and amenity grassland.
- 4.56 The southern part of the Application Site largely consists of more densely packed buildings with areas of amenity grass and scattered tree planting.
- 4.57 As discussed within the cultural heritage section, there are important hedgerows within the site, valued from both a heritage and ecology perspective. Two hedgerows either side of Chilgrove Drive have been assessed as being important under the Hedgerow Regulations (1997).



Unimproved neutral grassland



Amenity grassland with conifer plantation in the southwest of the Application Site



Unimproved and semi-improved calcareous grassland in the Southern Bomb Stores (the light brown areas are unimproved calcareous)





Typical on site waterbody - manmade storage tanks



Curlew



Skylark

Protected / Notable Species

4.58 The baseline with regards to species was obtained through field surveys, reviews of recent monitoring reports and are summarised below:

- **Bats** - The habitats within the Application Site offer foraging habitats for a range of bat species. Overall these are relatively common and widespread species with the exception of barbastelle. Whilst some of the trees within the site are considered to have roosting potential, no evidence of roosting has been found to date. It is noted that it is possible that bats use the Chilgrove Drive linear feature for foraging and then proceed or arrive from the linear features formed by plantation woodland blocks along the eastern edge of the Application Site or continue onto the offsite habitats.
- **Badgers** - There are records of badger within 2km of the Application Site, with the site itself supporting a number of setts, mostly located along its periphery.
- **Other mammals** - Suitable habitat for brown hare is deemed to be the open grassland within the Application Site, especially those at the centre, east and west of the Flying Fields. No records showed this species, however there were several observations whilst other surveys were undertaken within the Application Site. Hedgehogs were recorded within the Application Site. Whilst other records were recorded locally, the habitats within the Application Site were not considered to support polecat, water vole and otter. The small areas of woodland and scrub within the Application Site are considered too small and isolated to support dormouse.
- **Reptiles** - The Application Site as a whole supports a population of common lizard and a small population of grass snake.
- **Great crested newts (GCN) and amphibians** - The Application Site supports gcn with the majority of species found within the concrete-lined water storage tanks and a number of more natural-looking ponds, albeit artificially created. In addition, common toad was found to be breeding in pond LF5, however the species was not recorded within the other habitat or water bodies within the Application Site.
- **Birds** - The Application Site supports a number of bird species, with a number of species known to occur within the Upper Heyford Airfield LWS. A number of which are either Red or Amber listed Birds of Conservation Concern. Species found include, skylark, corn bunting, curlew and yellowhammer. The ecological surveys have shown that parts of the Application Site notably the grassland, scrub and hedgerows support a breeding bird community. In addition, the central airfield which

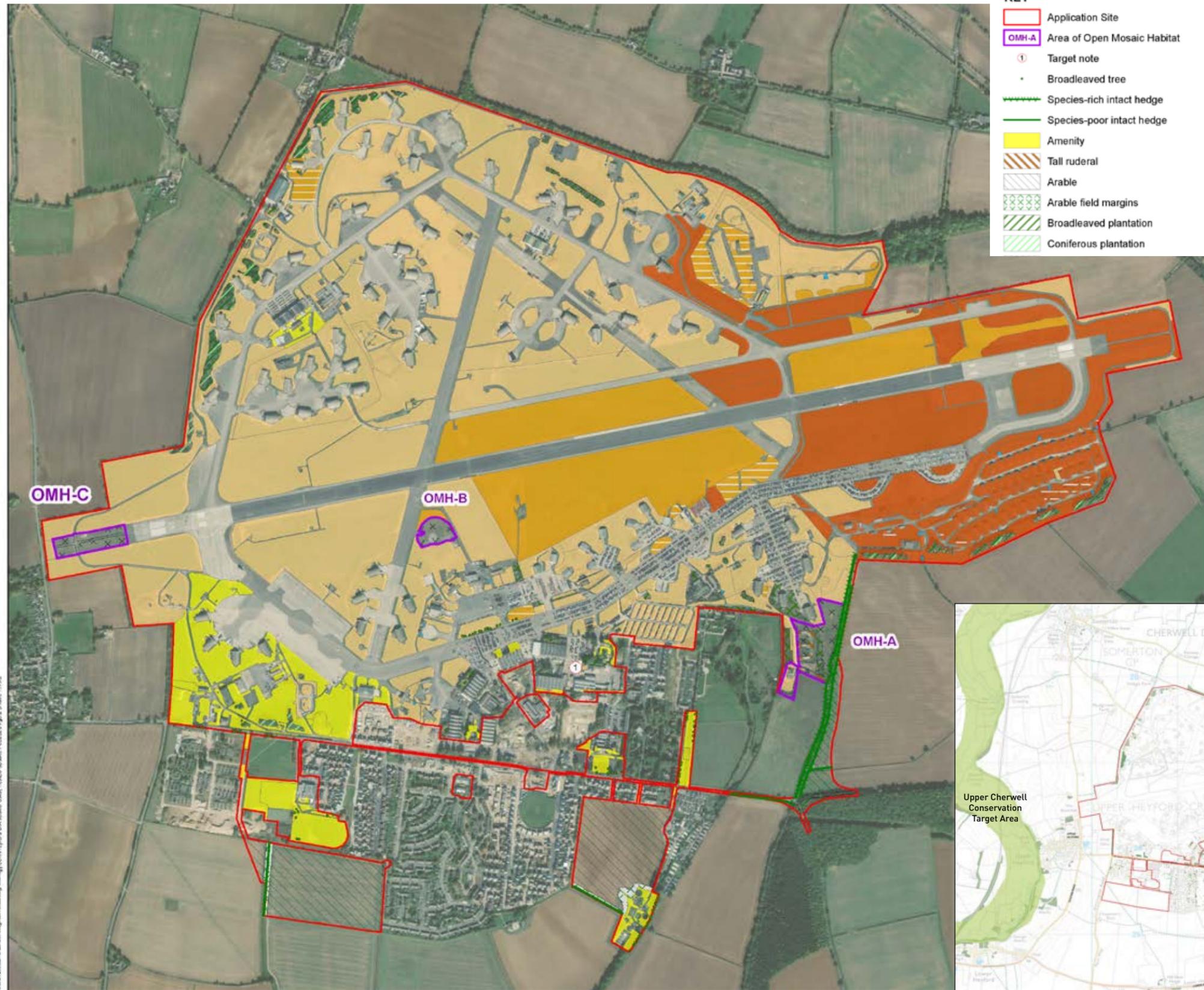
offers open grassland associated with hard standing offers suitable habitats for breeding and foraging. The winter assemblage of the Application Site is likely to be centered on the use of open grassland within the Airfield as these offer suitable foraging areas for wintering birds.

- **Terrestrial invertebrates** - invertebrates found within the Application Site are likely to be associated with the unimproved calcareous and unimproved neutral grasslands. Further interest is likely to arise from the presence of mosaics of habitats.

Biodiversity Impact Assessment Calculator

4.59 The Biodiversity Impact Assessment Calculator (Warwickshire, Coventry and Solihull, 2014) has been used as a tool to calculate the biodiversity value of the Application Site before and after development to determine whether the Proposed Development as a whole is likely to be compliant with government policy. It also helps to determine whether the Proposed Development is likely to result in no net loss, loss or gain in biodiversity credits.

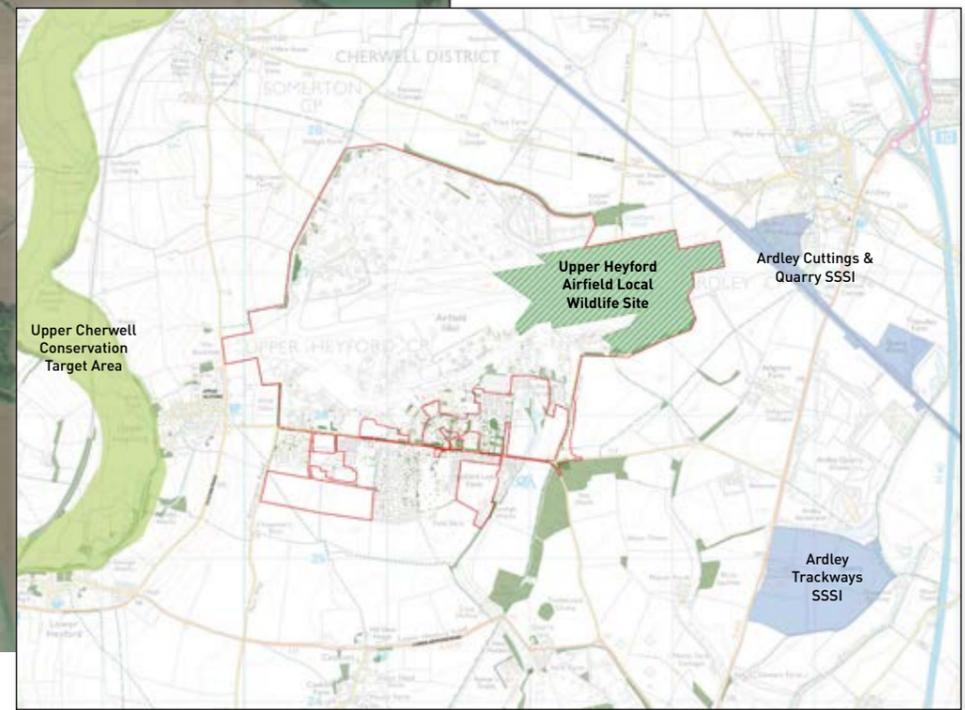
4.60 The metric is limited in that the location of ecological features is not a factor thus the connectivity of the ecological features will also need to be considered in the development of the GI Masterplan in accordance with ecological design principles.



- KEY**
- Application Site
 - OMH-A
 - 1 Target note
 - Broadleaved tree
 - Species-rich intact hedge
 - Species-poor intact hedge
 - Amenity
 - Tall ruderal
 - Arable
 - Arable field margins
 - Broadleaved plantation
 - Coniferous plantation
 - Mixed plantation
 - Dense scrub
 - Ephemeral / short perennial
 - Species-poor semi-improved grassland
 - Unimproved neutral grassland
 - Semi-improved neutral grassland
 - Unimproved calcareous grassland
 - Semi-improved calcareous grassland
 - Pond

FIGURE 7. (LEFT) PHASE 1 HABITAT MAP (BY BSG ECOLOGY)

FIGURE 8. (BELOW) ECOLOGICAL DESIGNATIONS PLAN





Grassland adjacent to the runway to the north of the Control Tower.
 (Species-poor semi-improved grassland with areas of unimproved neutral grassland, refer to Phase 1 Habitat Map)



Short ephemeral/ruderal vegetation in the east of the Application Site



Dry ditch in the east of the Application Site



Arable land in the South of the Application Site



Grassland within the Northern Bomb Stores
 (Species-poor semi-improved grassland with areas of semi-improved neutral grassland, refer to Phase 1 Habitat Map)

Biodiversity and Ecology - Constraints & Opportunities

4.61 As previously discussed, the ecological assets within the Application Site are a key layer of the site's character and provide both constraints and opportunities to be integrated into the GI Masterplan.

Constraints

4.62 The key constraints are:

- **Designations** - consider the impact on designations, safeguarding and expansion of the LWS.
- **Habitat** - protection to ensure habitats are unaffected, limit deterioration of habitat within the GI proposals.
- **Species** - timing constraints eg. no vegetation suitable for nesting birds will be removed during the breeding season (March to September inclusive); or demolition of buildings which offer habitat for nesting birds to be undertaken outside the nesting bird season. Should removal of suitable vegetation or demolition become necessary during the nesting bird season, checks can be carried out by a suitably experienced ecologist. Similarly licences may be required, or works undertaken or supervised by an ecologist to ensure no legislation is breached. Consider the timing of maintenance activities to limit impacts on key species.
- **Responsibility to protect** - protection of species through mitigation measures eg. translocation, cat & dog proof fence, or limited access, control of activities to limit detrimental impacts.
- **Lighting** - requirement to control artificial lighting to avoid impacting habitat and species.
- **Biodiversity** - limit development proposals that would result in a loss of biodiversity, with the aim to improve biodiversity across the site to achieve a net gain.
- **Management and maintenance** - consider the future requirements in terms of the management and maintenance of habitat and species through the production of a Landscape and Ecology Management Plan (LEMP) to include management of non-native invasive species.

Opportunities

4.63 The key opportunities for Biodiversity and Ecology are:

- **Designations** - consider connectivity of habitats to designated sites such as Ardley Cutting and Quarry SSSI from the Upper Heyford Airfield LWS.
- **Habitat and species** - creation of habitat using native species to mitigate habitat loss, notably through the creation of strategic landscape buffers planting (scrub and tree planting). Improve connectivity between habitat to enable movement and foraging for key species.
- **Responsibility to protect** - protect species and preserve habitat through mitigation measures eg. limited access, cat & dog proof fence.
- **Enhancement** - Areas of species-poor semi-improved grassland will be enhanced to increase their floral and structural diversity and their value for protected species
- **Access** - enable access (free and/or managed) so users can use greenspaces without causing a conflict to ecological features. Consider timing of access, amount and control of activities e.g. dog walking.
- **Character & Setting** - maintain character of ecological features including sparse open grassland with periphery planting around the Application Site's boundaries. Where necessary replicate existing features with similar species and composition.
- **Multi-functionality** - consider the function of mitigation planting from a landscape and ecological perspective in terms of species choice, composition of planting eg. strategic buffer planting and the role the planting has for foraging, shelter and movement. Consider conflicting uses of the site and how this may affect the function of the ecological features eg. limiting access, potentially damaging activities eg. vehicular access to the grassland habitats.
- **Mitigation Hierarchy: Avoid, Mitigate & Compensate** - consider mitigation planting to limit affects of development proposals including, careful lighting design, cat & dog proof fencing, creation of habitat including ponds to support GCN.
- **Biodiversity** - improvement of existing habitat to support enhancement to biodiversity across the site to provide a net gain. Consider offsetting options to achieve biodiversity net gain in line with the character and the setting of the Application Site.

- **Management and maintenance** - consider the most appropriate long term management for the species and habitat, include monitoring where necessary. Management aims and prescriptions to be detailed within LEMP.

4.64 The constraints and opportunities for biodiversity and ecology are shown on Figure 9.



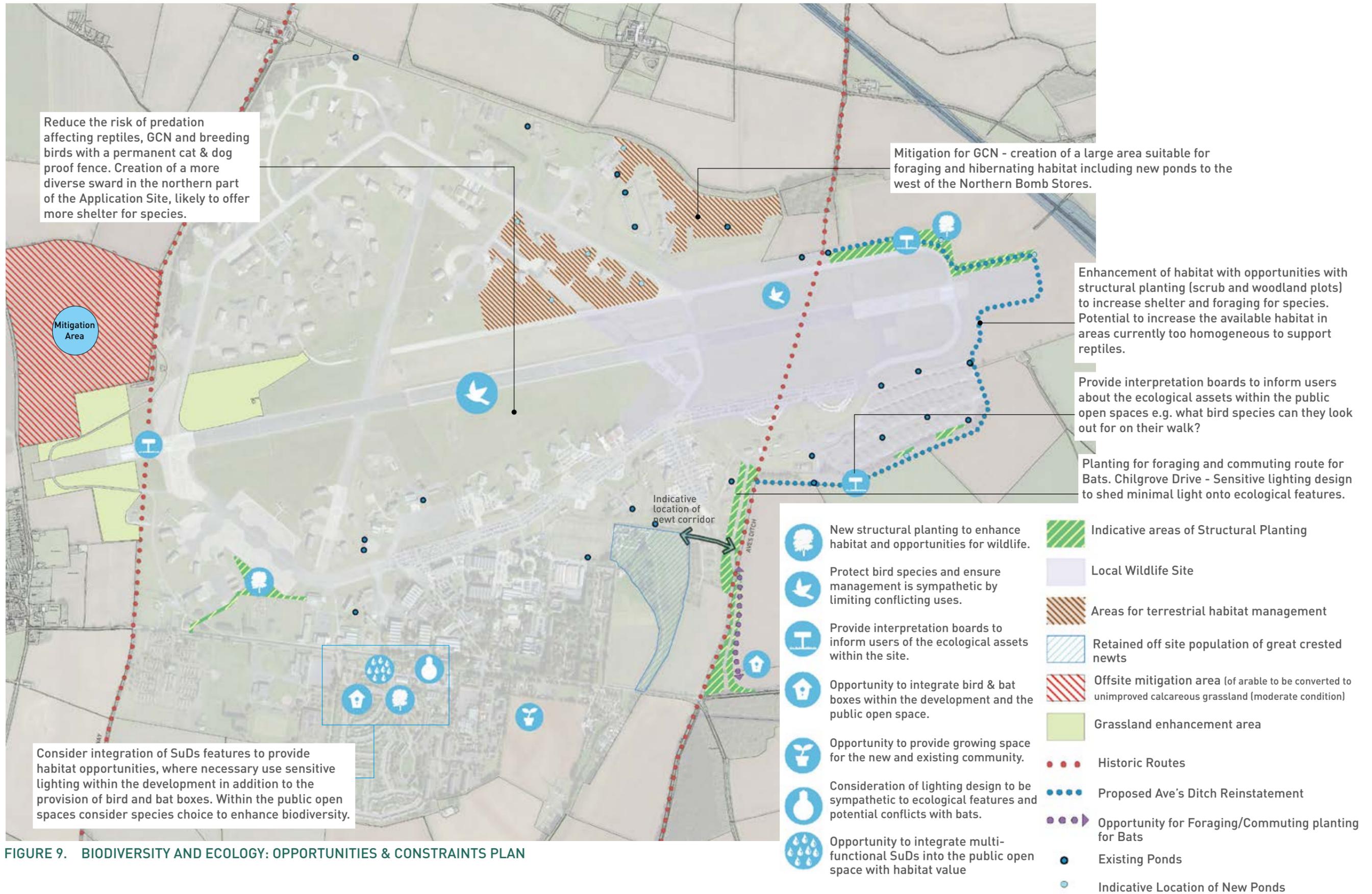


FIGURE 9. BIODIVERSITY AND ECOLOGY: OPPORTUNITIES & CONSTRAINTS PLAN

SUSTAINABLE MOVEMENT

4.65 As discussed within the Transport and Access chapter of the Environmental Statement (ES), there are a number of existing highways and footpaths within the Application Site and access issues to be considered in the development of the GI Masterplan. The Travel Plans (residential and commercial) included within the ES set out measures to increase sustainable movement for users by helping to reduce parking pressures, providing support and alternatives to car use and helping to improve health and well-being by promoting cycling, walking and use of public transport helping to reduce congestion and pollution.

Context

- 4.66 Former RAF Upper Heyford is located within a network of predominately rural roads, with the M40 motorway to the northeast of the Application Site, and the A4260 Banbury to Oxford road situated to the west. Within the Application Site, Camp Road forms the arterial route east to west, and provides walking and cycle access across the Application Site.
- 4.67 As detailed within the site description, there are several footpaths and bridleways that terminate at or follow the Application Site boundary. The historic routes of Portway and Aves Ditch are currently severed by the Flying Field.
- 4.68 Heyford Park is currently served by an hourly bus service (no. 250, Mon-Sat) that runs between Bicester and Oxford via Heyford and Kirtlington, with bus stops located on Camp Road.
- 4.69 There are no dedicated cycleways in the local area, other than that proposed along to the south side of Camp Road as part of the original consented scheme. The closest National Cycle Network route is NCN 5, the West Midlands Cycle Route that connects Reading to Bangor through Oxford. The route is accessed off the A4260 Banbury Road, about 7.5km west of the Application Site.
- 4.70 Within the existing residential areas there are a number of footpaths providing access around the Application Site and the recent residential parcels and associated public open space.

Sustainable Movement- Constraints & Opportunities

4.71 There are a number of constraints and opportunities for sustainable movement to be considered and integrated into the GI Masterplan.

Constraints

4.72 The key constraints are:

- **Accessibility** - existing access to be integrated within the proposals. Requirements of commercial, HGV loads across the Flying Field and along Camp Road. Potential conflicts between users and vehicles.
- **Access Infrastructure** - constraints of existing built form and road/footpath network.
- **Adoption & Maintenance** - constraints of maintaining existing adopted highways and access points.

Opportunities

4.73 The key opportunities are:

- **Accessibility** - improve accessibility across the Application Site and into the wider area - consideration of PRoW within/around the Application Site. Consider the provision of sustainable travel options, and new/improved bus services that connect to other transport nodes. Improve existing highways. Opportunity to create a bike-pool or cycle hire scheme (with associated bicycle user group) to encourage use of sustainable methods of transport to, from and around Heyford Park. Consider routes of HGV access to prioritise safe routes for other users. Opportunity to prioritise sustainable models of transport with the creation of safe, green and legible walking routes.
- **Legibility & Permeability** - opportunity to improve legibility across the site along key access routes integrating waymarker signs to direct walkers and cyclists to key GI spaces. Opportunity to create permeable links across the Application Site with an integrated footpath and cycle network. Consideration of precedents to aid interpretation of routes to aid health and well-being.
- **Access Infrastructure** - opportunity to improve access through the Proposed Development, including reinstatement of Portway and Aves Ditch and provision of footpath and cycle routes. Provision of cycle parking to help encourage use and the consideration of other services to improve public transport services to/from Heyford Park. Provision of circular routes around the Application Site for informal recreation and dog walking.
- **Adoption & Maintenance** - consider long term management of road network ie. which highways are to be adopted and how footpaths need to be maintained, including PRoWs.



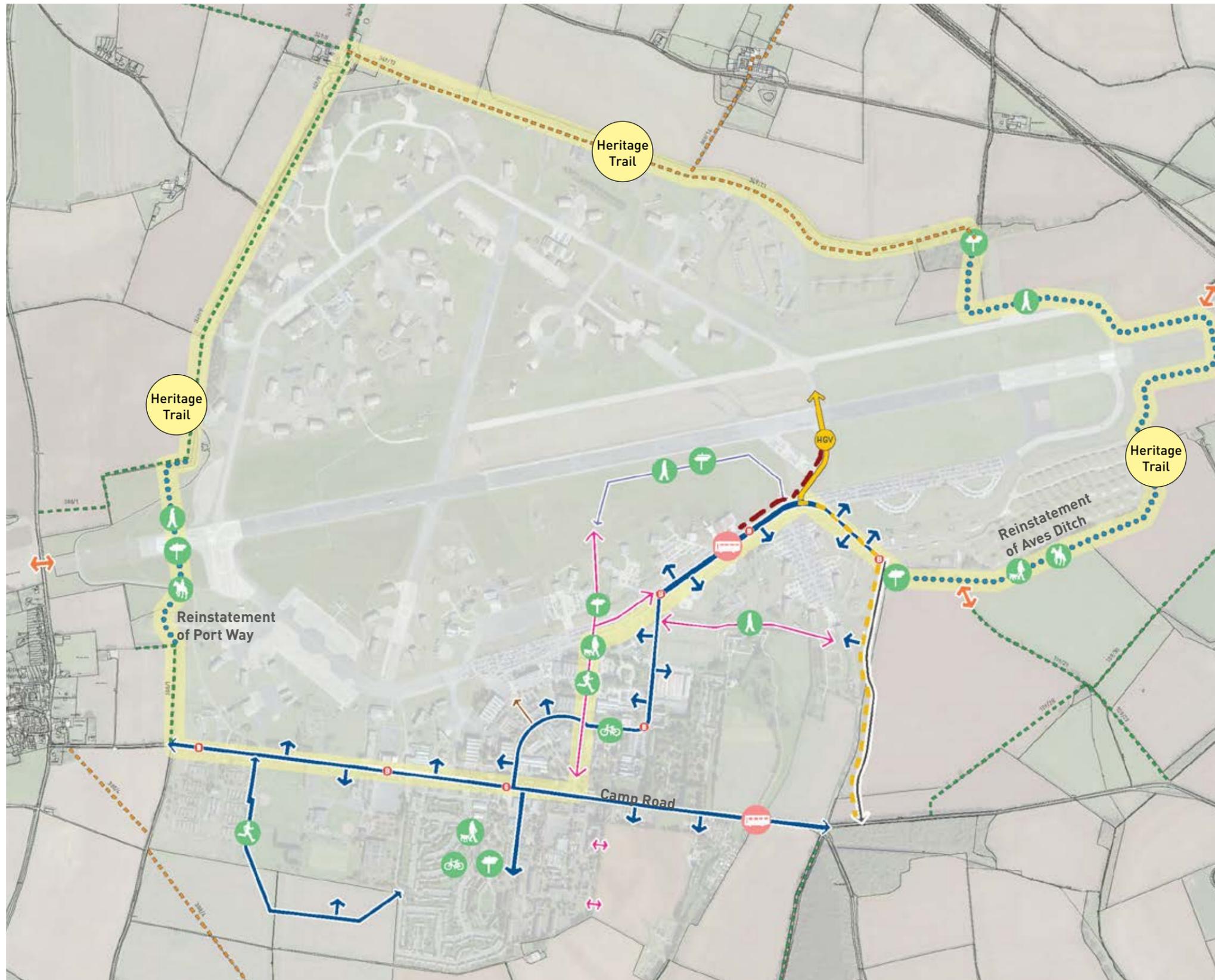
Opportunity to provide cycleways through green corridor



Green lane / bridleway 388/1 between Camp Road and the security fence - looking north

4.74 The constraints and opportunities for sustainable movement are shown on Figure 10.

4.75 As a part of the sustainable movement for the proposed development, the next section looks in detail at the historic routes of Portway and Aves Ditch and how the GI Masterplan needs to consider them and sensitively design their reinstatement for future use and enjoyment.



-   Improve access for walking and informal recreation eg. dog walking for the local community as well as providing safe, green links for running.
-  Reinstatement of Aves Ditch to include bridleway
-  Provide and promote safe links for cyclists.
-  Use waymarkers to promote links into the wider PRow network.
-  Enhance the existing bus provision with route around the site with bus stops
-  Promote safe links across the site for all users, existing and new
-  Improve connectivity from Camp Road
-  Potential to improve links into the wider PRow network with new connections
-  Reduce conflicts between users, whilst ensuring functional route for HGVs across the site
-  Implementation of Heritage Trail around the site

FIGURE 10. SUSTAINABLE MOVEMENT OPPORTUNITIES & CONSTRAINTS PLAN

HISTORIC ROUTES

4.76 This section of the GI Strategy looks at the constraints and opportunities for the retention and enhancement of the Aves Ditch and the reinstatement of the historic Portway route, in order to inform the GI Masterplan.

Background

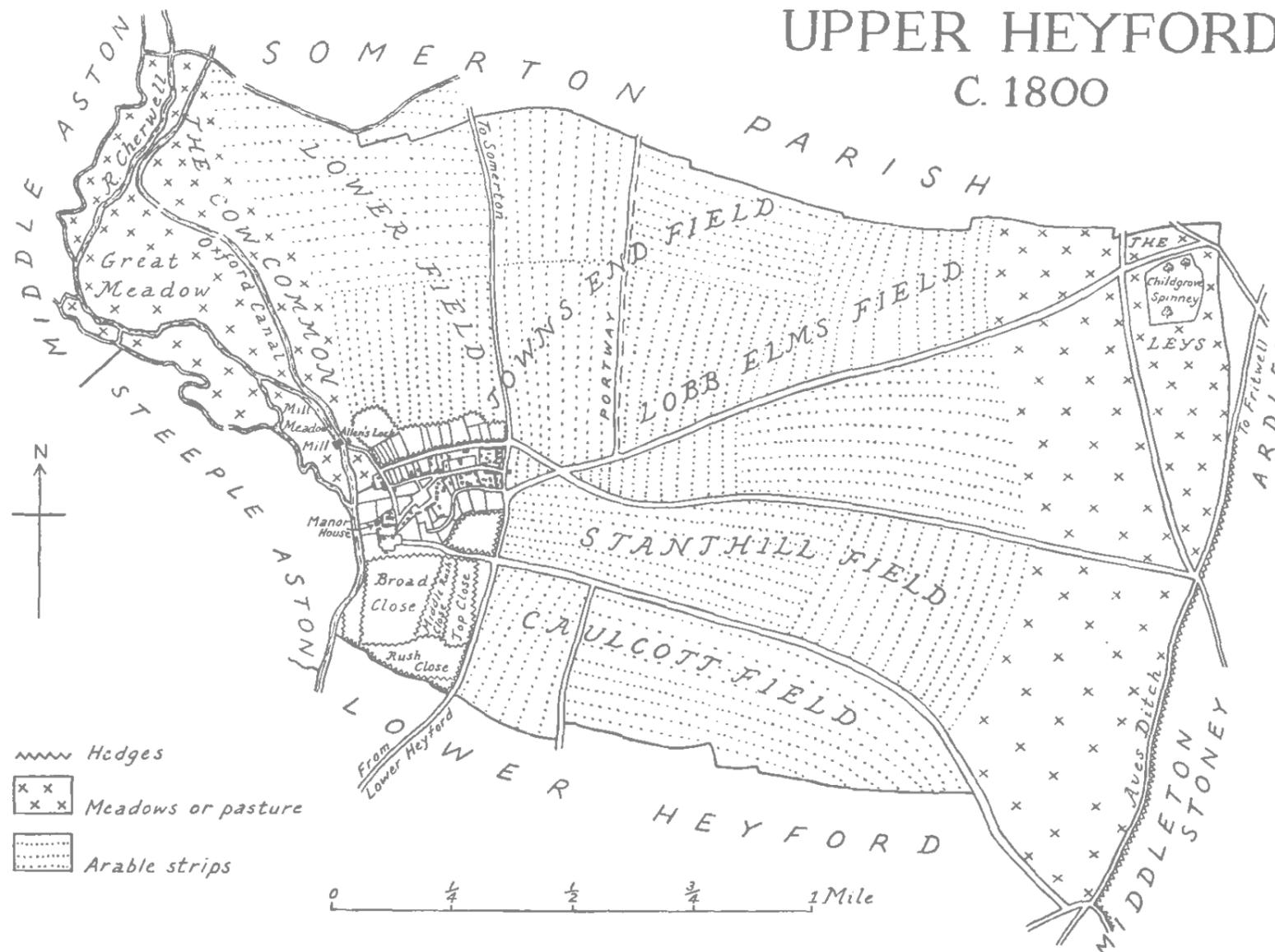
4.77 An ancient route, the Portway (or Port Way), is noted as a special feature within the 'Cherwell District Landscape Assessment'. Portway follows the alignment of the Port Way/Kirtlington Road adjacent to the western boundary (in part) of Heyford Park, comprising public highway with a short section (c. 430m) of bridleway (route 388/1) to the north of Camp Road forming an extension to this route. 'Port' refers to its destination, the market, at Oxford, Margary (1967) describes the road "as far as Heyford a road follows it and is somewhat raised, and then green lanes, sometimes showing agger, mark it".

4.78 The Portway route was truncated by the expansion of the former Air Base. The southern section of bridleway 388/1 therefore stops at the chain link security fence that encompasses the former airbase, before resuming to the north of the former runway (still as bridleway 388/1), beyond the security fence. At present, there is no alternative PRow within or without the security fence connecting the southern and northern sections of bridleway 388/1.

4.79 The central point along the runway occupies locally occurring high ground on the Heyford plateau. Landform therefore falls away to the north, east, south and west, with the most marked change in topography occurring to the west as the plateau meets the scarp of the Cherwell Valley. Portway lies to between the 'crown' of the runway and the lower lying land to the west.

4.80 The Victoria County History (VCH) makes reference to Aves Ditch and the description of Ardley records that:

"Part of the eastern boundary [of Ardley] is also a natural one, the Gagle Brook or the Saxon Sexig Broc, and on the west it is the ancient pre-Roman dyke, Ashbank or Aves Ditch. A late 10th century charter granted by Ethelred II shows that the Saxon boundaries corresponded closely with those of the 19th century.



Ardley Wood (40 a.) and Ballard's Copse (called Chilgrove in the 17th century, Child Grove in 1797, and probably to be identified with the 'lytle Ciltene' of a 10th-century charter) are the remains of more extensive woodland" ref. VCH Oxon, vol 6, 7-8.

4.81 Policy Villages 5 notes the "retention and enhancement of existing PRow, and the provision of links from the development to the wider PRow network, including the reinstatement of the historic Portway route across the western end of the extended former main runway as a public right of way on its original alignment.

Portway Reinstatement

4.82 A Portway Views Study was commissioned by Dorchester Living Limited to provide a visual appraisal in respect of the committed reinstatement of the ancient Portway long distance trackway as it traverses the Flying Field.

4.83 The appraisal considered and recorded the extent and context of sequential views gained from the Portway route across the airbase to the east, and the Cherwell Valley to the west. The appraisal sought to guide the location, extent and nature of any mitigation measures that may be required to screen users of the Portway from visual detractors and/or sensitive land uses within Heyford Park, particularly those relating to British Car Auctions (BCA) car processing activities.





Port Way view from the northern end of the realigned route, close to the security fence, looking west towards the Cherwell Valley.



Aves Ditch - View within the green corridor south of the Southern Bom Stores



Northern boundary - route of proposed reinstatement



Northern boundary - route of proposed reinstatement

Aves Ditch Reinstatement

- 4.84 The reinstatement of Aves Ditch is to be considered in conjunction with the proposals for improvements to Chilgrove Drive and the GI Masterplan in terms of utilising existing GI assets such as the green corridor to the south of the Southern Bomb Stores.
- 4.85 Refer to Table 2 and Figure 11 for the historic route opportunities and constraints.

Historic Routes- Constraints & Opportunities

Table 2 – Constraints, Opportunities and recommendations for reinstatement of the Historic Routes

| | Portway | Aves Ditch | General Considerations for the Historic Routes |
|-----------------|---|---|--|
| Constraints | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Views -The visual appraisal within the Portway Views Study identifies that without mitigation, much of the reinstated Portway route would gain, to varying degrees, views of stored vehicles that would detract from the experience and interpretation of the former Flying Field. • The experience and interpretation of the Portway route and the Flying Field influenced according to the location of the view, elevation of the viewpoint and intervening landform and intervening built form. • Consideration regarding the prejudicing the amenity of Portway users through careful design and mitigation. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Considerations of the amenity value of views from Aves Ditch in relation to the PRow users including horse riders along the bridleway. • Limitations of retaining secure boundaries with the Flying Field and Southern Bomb Stores | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Requirement to resolve potential conflicts between users and assets, e.g. ecologically sensitive habitats and species. • Requirement to maintain a secure perimeter to the site and to certain existing land uses eg. BCA and the eastern part of the runway by the Local Wildlife Site to prevent access. |
| Opportunities | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The extent of the BCA area that is visible from Portway may be controlled through mitigation. Three general forms of mitigation, or a combination thereof, have been identified: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (1) Control or limitation of views from the route to selected vantage points by introduction of physical screens or barriers (tree, shrub and/or hedgerow planting; walls or fences; bunds; or a combination of methods) adjacent to or in close proximity to the viewpoint. In this way the experience of the receptor could be orchestrated. (2) Introduction of physical screens or barriers (tree, shrub and/or hedgerow planting; walls or fences; bunds or a combination of methods) between the viewpoint and the vehicle storage area, which may be adjacent to or in close proximity to the vehicles. Engineered structures could be designed to be in keeping with those already present on the Flying Field. (3) Creation of sub areas within the storage areas within which vehicles are graded or restricted to a maximum height, subject to operational BCA constraints. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consideration of key views for interpretation of cultural heritage and the Cold War landscape. • Experience of the route to be enhanced through provision of views and multi-functional route including interpretation boards for ecological assets. • Consider retention and enhancement of existing vegetation where possible, potential to include structural planting within new route to enhance and enclose the route. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consideration of access into the wider PRow network • Designs of the reinstated historic routes to deliver a pleasant and varied pathway, potential to create drama along the Portway route by permitting selected views to features of interest, including a Raised Vista with sightlines to the Control Tower, the runway and northern part of the Flying Field. Potential to provide interpretation of key views along Aves Ditch. • Design to consider relevant best practice for PRow in terms of stakeholder requirements and material choices due to setting. Consideration of the construction methods to protect existing landscape features. • Management to be sensitive to ecological assets and meet the requirements of the PRow. |
| Recommendations | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide a combination of mitigation options be adopted to manage and orchestrate the experience gained by receptors travelling along the Portway route. Limit views to the areas of stored vehicles which would detract from the experience and interpretation of the former Flying Field, • Solid barriers in the form of steel crib walling or free-standing concrete wall units could flank the path as it crosses the runway, with strategic openings created to contrast with the enclosed character of the green lane, revealing expansive views and the scale of the runway to the east. Wing walls (in combination with screens closer to the BCA areas) could be positioned to restrict views toward the BCA storage areas. • Screening to mitigate views to be considered in relation to the existing screening structures within the Application Site. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider how Aves Ditch can be integrated into green corridor to balance requirements of ecology mitigation, users and secure boundaries. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Positively manage views to aid the experience and interpretation of the former Flying Field and the Cold War landscape. • Manage views to key buildings and features of interest whilst effectively screening and providing a secure boundary where required. • Mitigation options to consider control of viewpoints, view cones and direction of vistas; introduction of physical screens and barriers including tree and shrub planting, earth bunds and free standing structures in keeping with those |



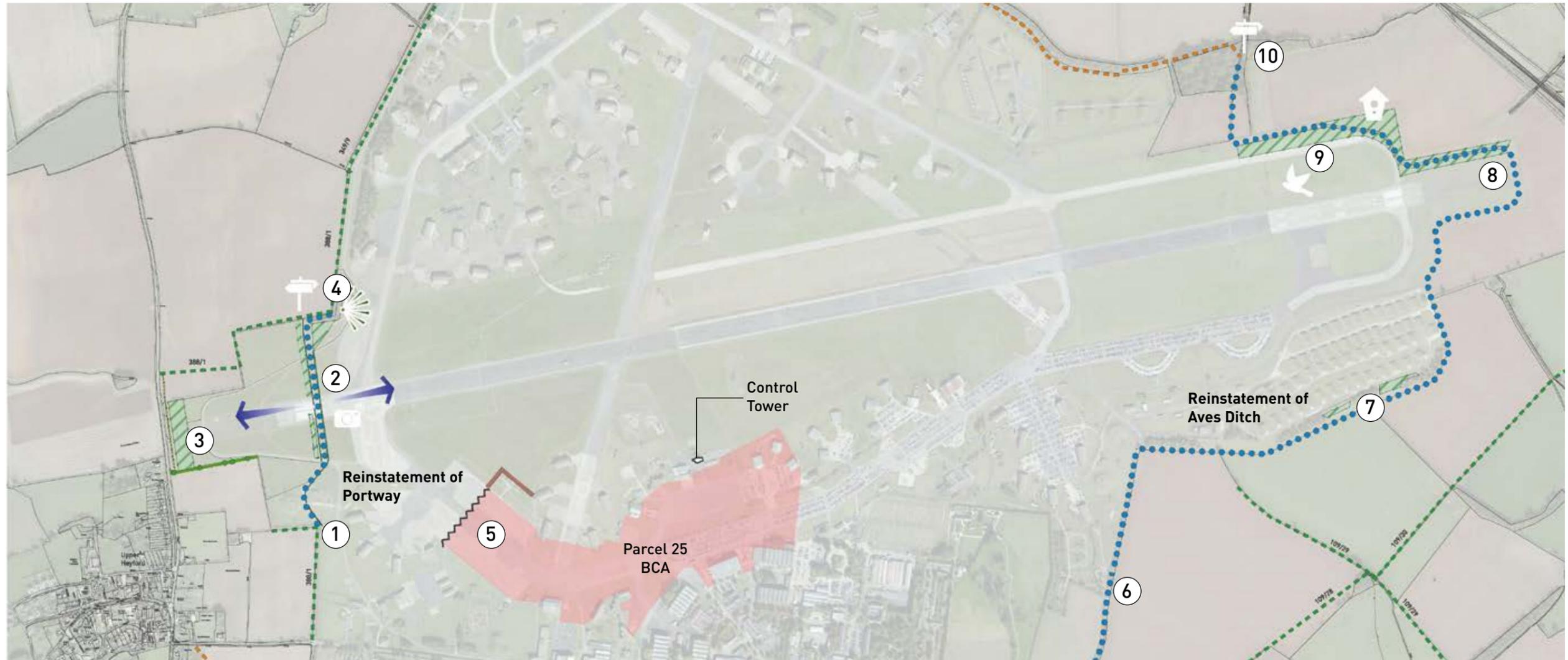


FIGURE 11. HISTORIC ROUTES (REINSTATEMENT) OPPORTUNITIES AND CONSTRAINTS PLAN

- ① Reinstatement of Portway route where the path is currently severed.
- ② The route through to the south and north of the runway could be enclosed, with designed breaks in flanking vegetation that permit and control glimpses of the southwest area of the Flying Field (i.e. building 299 and POL24), without enabling views to the BCA areas. The strategic openings will help to reveal expansive views and the scale of the runway to the east to enable interpretation of the Cold War Landscape.
- ③ Views to the west, towards the Cherwell Valley to be experienced from the centre of the runway to contrast the view to the east. Strategic buffer planting along Somerton Road to enhance the view.
- ④ Opportunity for a raised vista with sightlines to the Control Tower, the runway and northern part of the Flying Field on the existing mound. Potential to provide interpretation of key views along Aves Ditch to highlight Cold War landscape. Links to provide a connection into the wider PRoW network.

- ⑤ Opportunity to screen BCA and vehicles within processing/storage area to provide secure boundary and retain and respect Cold War character and the setting of cultural heritage assets.
- ⑥ Alignment of Aves Ditch to be integrated with the Chilgrove Drive improvements.
- ⑦ Reinstatement of Aves Ditch within the existing green corridor to the south to the Southern Bomb Stores. Additional planting to repeat the existing vegetation within this green corridor and provide a buffer to the route.
- ⑧ Views to be afforded across the runway to from Aves Ditch towards the west, boundary of Aves Ditch to be secure to prevent access onto the Flying Field to protect ecological features.
- ⑨ Opportunity to integrate Aves Ditch into green corridor with potential to integrate ecological features as well as interpretation boards to highlight multi-functional route.
- ⑩ Integration within the existing PRoW network to the north.

| | | | |
|---|--|---|---|
|  | Location enable views of the Cold War Landscape |  | Key view across the runway |
|  | Route to be multi-functional and aid wildlife enhancements |  | Viewpoint to aid interpretation of Cold War Landscape |
|  | Links to provide connection into wider PRoW network |  | Indicative areas of Structural Planting |
|  | Integration of ecological features into green corridor of the reinstated Aves Ditch corridor |  | Reinstatement of Historic Routes |
|  | Consideration of screening elements to help provide secure boundary and screen BCA land use whilst retaining and resetting the Cold War setting. |  | Existing Public Rights of Ways |

SPORTS, PLAY AND RECREATION

- 4.86 Across the existing and recently developed residential areas of Heyford Park there are a series of play areas, sports pitches and amenity spaces for recreation for the existing community.
- 4.87 These GI assets are primarily located south of Camp Road (as part of the residential area of the Former Air Base) or located in relation with the Heyford Park Free School. A number of the sports pitches are dual use in this way and provide opportunities for both the school and the community.

Sports and Recreation

- 4.88 The original masterplan included sports pitches to meet the required provision for the residential development, notably the Village Green which offers informal amenity, a cricket pitch and play opportunities at the heart of the community, located south of Camp Road.
- 4.89 In addition an area of public open space south of Camp Road within the Residential Area has been transformed into a Community Garden by the local residents. It is maintained by the Heyford Park Residents and Community Development Association.
- 4.90 There a number of existing recreational assets within Heyford Park including those implemented as part of the outline consent. Sporting events are also hosted at Heyford Park with the "Race at the Base" inviting local runners to experience running at the base further integrating the Application Site within the local and wider community.

Play Provision

- 4.91 A Play Strategy (see page 84-85) was previously developed with the aim to provide a range of play and sports provision for a variety of ages, within walking distance of all residents as part of the wider network of green spaces throughout Heyford Park. This was shared with the local community when discussing improvements to the existing spaces, this included new play equipment, planting and street furniture, the locations of the existing play provision are shown on Figure 12.



Play space within previously developed phase at Heyford Park



Artist impression of the cricket pitch on the Village Green



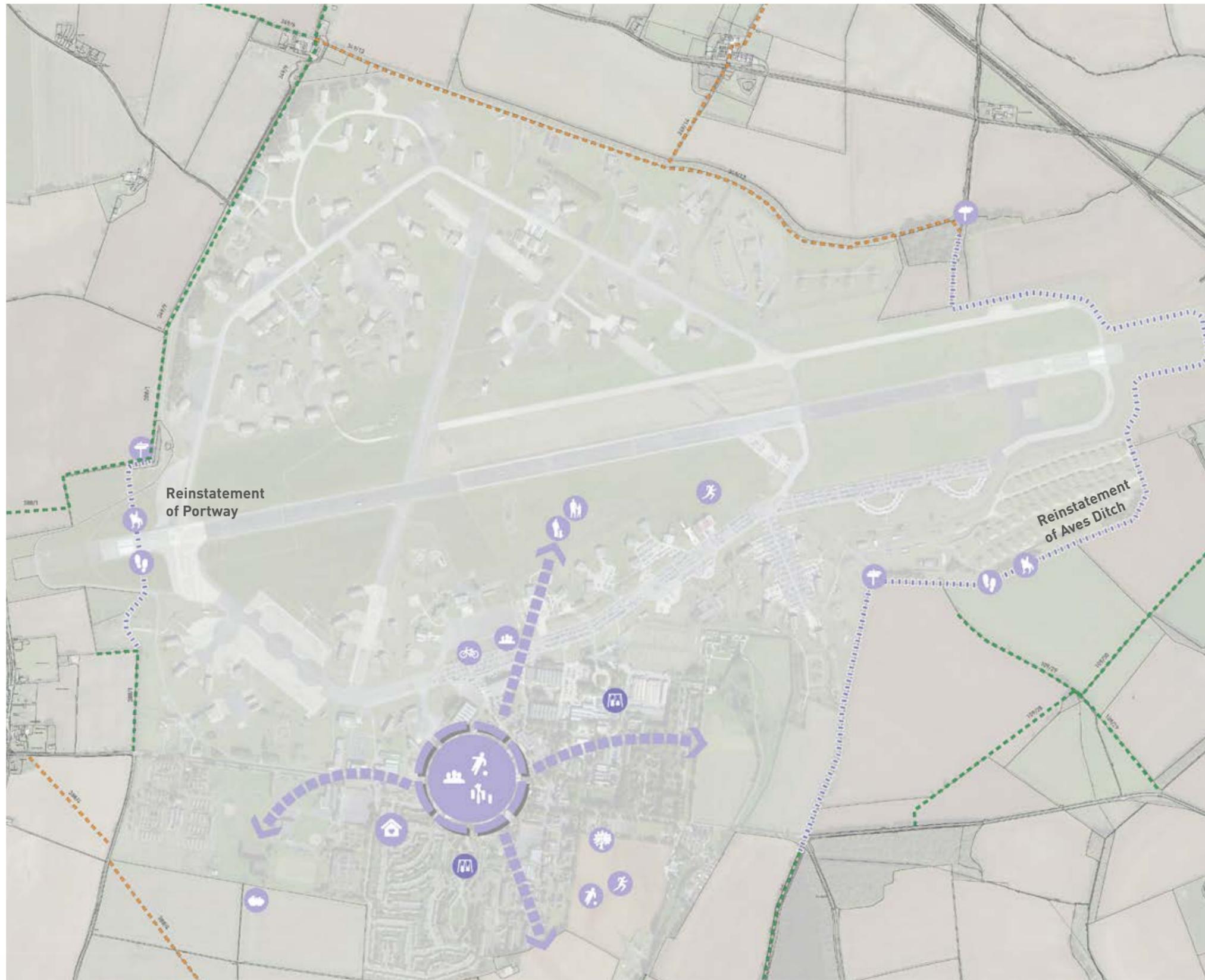
Race at the Base





- Sports Provision
- General Green Space
- Community Garden
- Allotments (Off-site)
- ✱ Play Provision (On-Site)
- ✱ Play Provision (Off-Site)

FIGURE 12. EXISTING/COMMITTED PROVISION FOR SPORT, PLAY AND RECREATION



-   Opportunity to provide the community with a productive landscape with allotments / orchard.
-   Waymarkers to promote routes to encourage active lifestyles with links to the wider PRoW network
-   Create a hub of community recreation assets for all
-   Provision of play opportunities to enhance existing provision
-   Provision of sport and informal recreation opportunities to be accessible for all
-   Legible routes to improve access across the site
-   Improve access to recreation for all to enjoy and experience

FIGURE 13. SPORT, PLAY AND RECREATION OPPORTUNITIES & CONSTRAINTS PLAN



Sports, Play and Recreation - Constraints & Opportunities

4.92 The previous pages discussed the existing baseline sport, play and recreation features at Heyford Park, there are a number of constraints and opportunities for this theme to be integrated into the GI Masterplan.

Constraints

4.93 The key constraints are:

- **Provision** - consider the distribution and typologies of the provision in terms of the accessibility across the Application Site and relationship with existing provision.
- **Multi-functionality** - Consider the existing network of spaces and their function and their role within the site.
- **Accessibility** - consider how the spaces can be accessible for the whole community enabling integration into the existing PRoW network and paths within the site enabling safe, green links for users. Consider potential conflicts between users through the sport, play and recreational spaces.

Opportunities

4.94 The key opportunities are:

- **Provision** - consider how the spaces can provide opportunities for all, be inclusive and accessible. Promoting health and well-being for the new and existing community. Opportunity to create a hub for community recreation assets at key locations within the site. Consider and integrate existing provision as baseline GI network and the creation of a destination space to help define the site providing a variety of opportunities.
- **Multi-functionality** - Aim to create multi-functional spaces integrating links and waymarkers to cultural heritage and ecological features where appropriate. Opportunity to provide the community with productive landscape and spaces for seasonal events and activities.
- **Accessibility** - consider access into and around the spaces (and in relation to the PRoW network), in terms of play equipment consider inclusivity of informal and formal provision and accessibility to the community and wider user groups eg. tourist visitors. Provide legible routes to improve access around the site and between recreation and sport assets.

4.95 The constraints and opportunities for the sports, play and recreation are shown on Figure 13.



Destination space to provide informal recreation and education resource



Opportunity to install interpretation boards to highlight cultural heritage



Opportunity for play to be integrated within public open spaces

SOCIAL INFRASTRUCTURE

4.96 There are a wide range of social and economic issues that exist today and those which will be affected by the Proposed Development within the Application Site. Both themes have impacts on the GI in terms of providing connectivity between services and users which will help to ensure GI is integrated into the everyday work and life of the community. This section briefly looks at the existing socio-economic baseline and the opportunities for future growth in relation to GI.

4.97 There are a variety of consented local facilities at Heyford Park with higher order services located in the nearby towns of Bicester, Oxford and Banbury. There are currently no consented healthcare facilities on site.

Retail

4.98 There are a range of food and non-food retail opportunities consented at Heyford Park in the Village Centre.

Education

4.99 There is an existing and operational school on the Heyford Park site serving both primary and secondary students, known as Heyford Park Free School. A nursery is also operational within the site, located to the north of Camp Road on the western edge of the development area.

4.100 The Free School is located on two campuses; one to the north of Camp Road, to the east of the Village Centre and one to the south of Camp Road, east of Phase 9 development area.

Leisure

4.101 There are several consented leisure facilities at Heyford Park as follows:

- An existing community centre located on Brice Road;
- A sports centre/gym with sports pitches which are located at the school campus to the south of Camp Road;
- A cricket pitch which is located to the south of the Village Centre;
- A boutique hotel (18 beds) with associated space, bowling alley which is located to the south of Camp Road as part of the Village Centre;

- A pub/restaurant which is located to the south of Camp Road as part of the Village Centre; and
- A heritage facility which is located to the north of Camp Road as part of the Village Centre.

Employment

4.102 There are 1,700 jobs currently at Heyford Park, the majority of these are located on the Flying Field located to the north of the Application Site and accessed via a gate at the western edge of the development area. Some of the jobs are located in the development area to the north of the Village Centre.

Community Involvement

4.103 Dorchester Living Limited already seek the benefits of community involvement at Heyford Park and understand the advantages of involving the “local community to help facilitate empowering planning”. They have played an active role in the set up, operation and activities of the Heyford Park Free School including the time capsule project for the Village Green. Community events are also planned, which has included seasonal fetes, running events and they also support the community garden located on Brice Road, south of Camp Road. Residents are also invited to participate in consultation events with the Heyford Park Residents and Community Development Association playing an active role in community life.

Socio-economic Infrastructure and GI

4.104 There is potential for the GI proposals to offer a wide range of social benefits for the existing and new community at Heyford Park. This as well as the proposed development would have a beneficial impact on the local economy with increased visitors, social facilities and employment land use bringing additional employment to Heyford Park.

Constraints

4.105 The key constraints are:

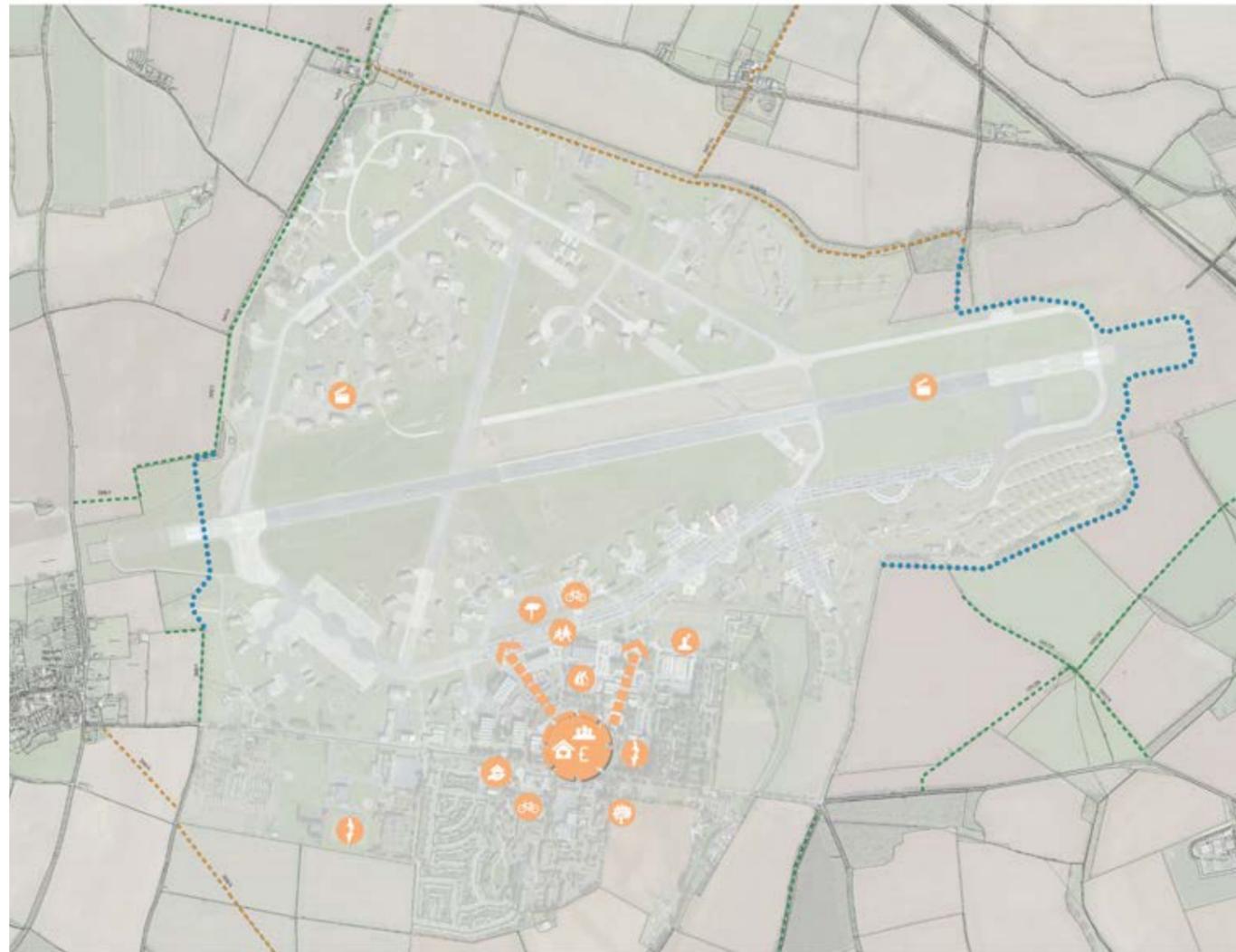
- **Provision** - consider the potential conflicts between public and private users and those of the existing community including consultation to help encourage involvement to discuss and help shape the elements of proposed development within the Application Site. Consider and manage the requirements of the existing community and the future provision to improve social infrastructure for all.
- **Designations & Assets** - Potential conflicts with cultural heritage and ecological designations and features. Protection and safeguarding to be considered when providing access near important features.

Opportunities

4.106 There are a number of opportunities for integration including:

- **Legibility** - opportunity to provide interpretation boards at key entrances and waymarkers to provide an aid to key public open spaces to help highlight information regarding the space in terms of landscape and ecological benefits to the site. Also, consider the distribution and legibility of GI proposals with links to community facilities.
- **Access** - ensure sufficient access to social infrastructure using GI elements to improve connectivity/inclusivity.
- **Multi-functionality** - Community groups could be encouraged to get involved in education utilising the cultural heritage and ecology resources eg. by organising seasonal / wildlife specific walks and talks Continued links with Heyford Park Free School so the GI can provide students with a learning and play resource. Consider the health and well-being benefits. Continue to provide opportunities for filming within the site as well as providing employment land for job creation.
- **Community Involvement** - Opportunity to establish a local wildlife group of volunteers to help maintain specific areas of public open space eg. help to maintain an orchard to help establish a sense of ownership. Involve community groups and schools with key events during development of Heyford Park.

4.107 The constraints and opportunities for the social infrastructure theme are shown on Figure 14.



-  Continued links with Heyford Park Free School enabling the school to utilise the GI assets within the site .
-  Ensuring all users are considered and GI assets are inclusive and accessible.
-  Encourage community involvement to help create a sense of place and community. Provide links to the Local Centre (north & south) to create a destination at the heart of the site in which the community grows and thrives.
-  Opportunity to provide legible links to social infrastructure assets. Locations of assets to be along key routes to enhance access through the site and link GI assets so they can be experienced during everyday activities including on the walk to school.
-  Opportunity to enhance community assets through productive landscape eg. allotments / community orchard.
-  Opportunities to create jobs.
-  Continue to utilise site for filming activities.
-  Help to define the heart of the community with accessible social infrastructure for all.

FIGURE 14. SOCIAL INFRASTRUCTURE OPPORTUNITIES & CONSTRAINTS PLAN



Heyford Park Free School



Village Centre - artist's impression of new market and brasserie



Times capsule project undertaken with children from Heyford Park Free School.

BLUE INFRASTRUCTURE

4.108 The blue infrastructure in relation to the Application Site is discussed within the Hydrology and Flood Risk chapter of the ES. This section identifies the blue infrastructure issues that need to be considered in the development of the GI Masterplan.

Context

- 4.109 The closest watercourse, of note, to the Application Site is the River Cherwell which is approximately 0.6km beyond the western boundary of the site. There are a number of small streams close to the Application Site's boundaries and flow away from the site.
- 4.110 Currently, the Application Site is served by an extensive surface water drainage system, with a private waste water treatment plant (Upper Heyford Sewage Treatment Works) located in the southeast corner of the Application Site to deal with foulwater before being discharged.
- 4.111 The development at Land South of Camp Road includes proposals for rain gardens within the public open space as an element of blue infrastructure to help within the SuDs strategy.



Extract of rain gardens within Land South of Camp Road proposals.

Blue Infrastructure - Constraints & Opportunities

- 4.112 A drainage strategy would be integrated within the proposed parcels of development and GI Masterplan to create a fully integrated layer of blue infrastructure.
- 4.113 The drainage strategy includes the implementation for the Sustainable Urban Drainage System (SuDs) that will (subject to detailed design) will introduce source control measures as well as swales and attenuation basins to help control and manage surface run-off.

Constraints

- 4.114 The key constraints are:
- **Change in land use** - development to increase impermeable surfacing within the Application Site with the construction of buildings, highways and other hard surfaces, opportunity to intercept and manage rainfall run-off.
 - **Multi-functionality** - consider impact on existing drainage system and consider if upgrades are required.
 - **Pollution and Contaminants** - Avoid and mitigate to prevent any potential pollution/contaminants issues.

Opportunities

- 4.115 The key opportunities are:
- **Sustainable Urban Drainage System** - Opportunity to develop SuDs strategy intercept and manage rainfall run-off and discharge surface water to the surrounding streams. Incorporate pollution controls into the SuDs strategy.
 - **Multi-functionality** - SuDs elements e.g. attenuation basins and swales have the potential to be 'natural' in character and form part of a multi-functional open space.
 - **Pollution and Contaminants** - potential to upgrade the existing waste water treatment plant to maintain/improve water quality. Incorporate management of potential pollutants eg. hydrocarbons and sediment from the proposed highways and other surfaces.
 - **Mitigation by Design** - consider measures (upgrades, location of SuDs features, control of pollutants) as part of the design and layout of the Proposed Development (at the detailed design stage) and integrate within the GI Masterplan. Implement 'standard' measures into the construction and detailed design of the Proposed Development as part of mitigation.



Multi-functionality - SuDs features within public open space



Indicative swale within green corridor



Indicative attenuation basin - multi-functional to form habitat for wildlife



SECTION 5
LANDSCAPE STRATEGY &
DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS

SECTION 5 | LANDSCAPE STRATEGY & DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS

LANDSCAPE STRATEGY

- 5.1 The Landscape Strategy sets the foundations for the GI Masterplan to be able to create a successful and cohesive development at Heyford Park.
- 5.2 The development of the Landscape Strategy has included consideration of the issues relating to the GI baseline for the Application Site notably the cultural heritage and ecological constraints and opportunities. In addition it has considered how to integrate the existing GI framework within the GI proposals to enable the overall masterplan to be accessible, distinct and legible.
- 5.3 Key objectives (illustrated on Figure 15) of the landscape strategy are as follows:

Cultural Heritage

- Create a distinctive sense of place incorporating the cultural heritage assets that help to define the Cold War landscape;
- Retain, preserve and enhance the cultural heritage assets within the landscape;
- Respect the setting of key cultural heritage assets, including those of significance and/or designated;
- Consideration of views to key buildings and those that allow the perception of the Cold War landscape; and
- Improve access and connectivity between the cultural heritage assets and their legibility within the landscape.

Biodiversity and Ecology

- Retention and enhancement of key habitat features;
- Incorporation of GI to ensure ecological connectivity and functionality within the site;
- Promote opportunities to improve and enhance biodiversity to achieve a biodiversity net gain;
- Consideration of planting species for habitat creation to enhance biodiversity and maintain the site's character;
- Retention and enhancement of key habitat features (including existing woodland, scrub and hedgerows where possible);
- Retention of badger setts and foraging/dispersal corridors where possible;
- Creation of habitat / ecological features suitable for species where there are impacts from the development proposals;
- Promote opportunities for new habitat creation through integration of drainage and landscape proposals;
- Consideration of plant species for habitat creation to improve and enhance biodiversity; and
- Consider management requirements to protect key habitat and species.

Sustainable Movement

- Improvement of access throughout the site to improve the pedestrian and cycle network and links into the wider area;
- Provision of new pedestrian and cycle links through the site with appropriate surfacing, signage and crossing points of roads to create and promote safe walking and cycling links through the development;
- Promote sustainable movement methods through the creation of safe, green and legible routes;
- Integrate waymarkers and signage to promote sustainable movement to improve the health and well-being of the community;
- Retention and integration of existing Public Rights of Way; and
- Incorporation of the existing PRowS and provide links into the wider area including the reinstatement of Aves Ditch and Portway.

Sports, Play and Recreation

- Create a variety of play and education opportunities with both informal and formal provision;
- Create a sense of place within the public open spaces to represent the local identity of Upper Heyford to enhance the place making of Heyford Park;
- Create a diverse range of open spaces which successfully combine functions, ecology, character and existing GI assets;
- Create a variety of play opportunities across the development (utilising connections to the existing spaces) with a number of informal and formal play spaces with a wide range of play opportunities for all ages and abilities;
- Create visually attractive spaces for both formal and informal amenity and recreation recognising key visual amenity elements;
- Provide safe links between spaces to ensure usability of public open spaces with clear signage where appropriate to maximise legibility; and
- Provide sports provision for the whole community to benefit from.

