Daniel Scharf 2018 07 14

For the attention of Mr A Lewis

Dear Sir or Madam

**HEYFORD PARK CAMP ROAD UPPER HEYFORD BICESTER OX25 5HD**

**Application No. 18/00825/HYBRID**

Thank you for supplying a copy of the comments of Historic England (“HE”) on the above planning application. The pre-eminent importance of the site as the best preserved remains from the Cold War is confirmed – and it must be assumed that extraordinary significance of the site will now be reflected in the way the owners and the Council deal with all future developments. HE has confirmed that the masterplan neither minimizes the harm (ie the first requirement of the NPPF) nor provides adequate public benefits, and there is a ‘long way to go’ before the application could be supported. Remembering that the conservation of the airbase (rather than its clearance) was the original justification for the re- development of the site, it would be reasonable to expect there to be greater concern about the impacts that some of the buildings and uses (eg the school, recreational park, zip wire, car storage) would have on the setting of Listed Buildings/Scheduled Monuments and the bare functionality of the air base and its bleak and chilling character.

HE has given a number of good reasons why the application does not accord with Local Plan Policy V5 but CDC should also note the requirement in V5 that, ‘**Heritage Impact Assessments** **should be undertaken as part of development proposals and inform the design principles for the site**.’ The need for HIAs has been known since the approval of the Structure Plan in 2005 but the ‘design principles’ adopted by the applicant seem to have been informed by an unattributed Heritage Offer/Strategy that lacks any of the necessary expert research and analysis of how the best preserved site from the Cold War could and should be presented to an international audience. Dorchester Group made a sensible proposal to hold a conference at which the heritage potential of the site could be explored. This might assist the Council in the performance of its duties in accordance with the three international conventions (and the 2016 Culture White Paper) that are relevant in preparing and assessing the adequacy of the conservation of and access arrangements to this unique site.

While there is no masterplan approved under Policy V5 no planning applications should be approved at Upper Heyford (eg HE has referred to traffic issues, to the encroachment of inappropriate housing into the Cold War landscape, and implications for residential densities across the whole site) and clearly the failure of Dorchester Group to prepare an acceptable masterplan will now cause delay to the progress of the neighbourhood plan that relies so much on the re-development of the former air base.

I look forward to being advised of how the Council intends to now deal with the application.

Yours sincerely, Daniel Scharf

Copy Historic England, DHCLG