

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 INTRODUCTION

1.1.1 Dorchester Living Limited (the "Applicant") is seeking planning permission for a hybrid planning application for development (the "Proposed Development") on land at the Former RAF Upper Heyford air base and adjacent land lying to the north and south of Camp Road, Upper Heyford and centred on OX25 5HD (the "Application Site").

1.1.2 The planning application seeks outline planning permission for the new build components of the Proposed Development, and seeks detailed permission for demolition of buildings and structures, and the changes of use. The layout of Chilgrove Drive (to the east of the proposal) and all matters of landscaping, layout, scale, access, and appearance of the residential, commercial/industrial, retail, medical facilities, education, heritage, community and sport facilities are to be reserved for future determination.

1.1.3 The Application Site is situated within the administrative area of Cherwell District Council (CDC). The location of the Application Site is shown on **Figure 1.1** and the extent of the Application Site is shown on **Figure 1.2**.

1.1.4 This Environmental Statement has been prepared to accompany the planning application described thus:

"Planning permission is sought for a hybrid planning application consisting of:

- **demolition of buildings and structures as listed in Schedule 1;**
- **outline planning permission for up to:**
 - > **1,175 new dwellings (Class C3);**
 - > **60 close care dwellings (Class C2/C3);**
 - > **929 m2 of retail (Class A1);**
 - > **670 m2 comprising a new medical centre (Class D1);**
 - > **35,175 m2 of new employment buildings, (comprising up to 6,330 m2 Class B1a, 13,635 m2 B1b/c, 9,250 m2 Class B2, and 5,960 m2 B8);**
 - > **2.4 ha site for a new school (Class D1);**
 - > **925 m2 of community use buildings (Class D2); and 515 m2 of indoor sports, if provided on-site (Class D2);**
 - > **30m in height observation tower with zip-wire with ancillary visitor facilities of up to 100 m2 (Class D1/A1/A3);**
 - > **1,000 m2 energy facility/infrastructure with a stack height of up to 24m (sui generis);**
 - > **2,520 m2 additional education facilities (buildings and associated external infrastructure) at Buildings 73, 74 and 583 for education use (Class D1);**

- > creation of areas of Open Space, Sports Facilities, Public Park and other green infrastructure.
- the change of use of the following buildings and areas:
 - > Buildings 357 and 370 for office use (Class B1a);
 - > Buildings 3036, 3037, 3038, 3039, 3040, 3041, and 3042 for employment use (Class B1b/c, B2, B8);
 - > Buildings 217, 3102, 3136, 3052, 3053, 3054, and 3055 for employment use (Class B8);
 - > Buildings 2010, 3008, and 3009 for filming and heritage activities (Sui Generis/Class D1);
 - > Buildings 2004, 2005 and 2006 for education use (Class D1);
 - > Buildings 366, 391, 1368, 1443, 2007, 2008 and 2009 (Class D1/D2 with ancillary A1-A5 use);
 - > Building 340 (Class D1, D2, A3);
 - > 20.3ha of hardstanding for car processing (Sui Generis); and
 - > 76.6ha for filming activities (Sui Generis).
- the continuation of use of areas, buildings and structures already benefiting from previous planning permissions, as specified in Schedule 2.
- associated infrastructure works, including surface water attenuation provision and upgrading Chilgrove Drive and the junction with Camp Road."

1.1.5 The planning application description and accompanying Schedule 1 and Schedule 2 form part of the parameters that describe and define the Proposed Development that is subject to EIA as reported in this ES. The parameters are set out in full within **Chapter 4: The Proposed Development**.

1.2 EIA REGULATIONS AND PROCEDURES

1.2.1 An Environmental Statement (ES) is a document that sets out the findings of an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA). An EIA is a process for identifying the likely significance of environmental effects (beneficial or adverse) arising from a Proposed Development, by comparing the existing environmental conditions prior to development (the baseline) with the environmental conditions during/following the construction, operational and decommissioning phases of a development should it proceed. The EIA is carried out prior to the submission of a planning application.

1.2.2 The statutory requirements for carrying out an EIA, the contents of the ES and the procedures for determining planning applications for 'EIA Development' are set out

within the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017 (the "EIA Regulations"), which came into force in May 2017.

1.2.3 Where an application is made for planning permission for EIA development, the local planning authority (LPA) is not permitted under the EIA Regulations to grant planning permission unless they have first taken the relevant environmental information into consideration.

Screening

1.2.4 In order to determine if it is necessary to undertake an EIA to accompany a planning application, Regulation 6 of the EIA Regulations makes discretionary provision for an applicant to apply to a LPA for a 'Screening Opinion'. However, Regulation 9(1)(b) makes provision for the relevant planning authority to consider applications that have not previously been subject to a Screening Opinion request under Regulation 6, but which are accompanied by environmental information referred to by the applicant as an Environmental Statement. In such a scenario, the relevant planning authority must take that environmental information into consideration in their decision for subsequent consent under Regulation 9(2).

1.2.5 Further, the EIA Regulations require that any proposed development falling within the categories set out within Schedule 2 should be considered as 'EIA Development' where the development is considered likely to have significant effects on the environment by virtue of such factors as its nature, size or location (Regulation 2).

1.2.6 The Proposed Development falls within the category of " Infrastructure Projects" under Schedule 2, paragraph 10(b). Given that the Application Site:

a) includes two scheduled monuments which fall within the definition of a 'sensitive area' set out at Regulation 2; and

b) proposes a development area in excess of 455 hectares with over 1,000 new dwellings. This proposed urban development exceeds the 1 hectare guidance within the Regulations, and so the Proposed Development exceeds all three "*acceptable thresholds and criteria*" outlined against 10(b).

1.2.7 It was therefore determined by the Applicant that the Proposed Development comprises EIA Development under Schedule 2 of the EIA Regulations and so an EIA would be required to be undertaken, and is duly presented in this Environmental Statement in accordance with Regulation 9(1)(b). Accordingly, no formal request for a Screening Opinion was made to Cherwell District Council.

Scoping

1.2.8 In order to determine the scope of an EIA, the EIA Regulations make provision for, but do not statutorily require, an applicant to request that the LPA provide a written opinion as to the information to be provided within the ES.

1.2.9 Due to the lengthy pre-planning discussions that have been undertaken on this proposal over several years with the LPA, Oxfordshire County Council, and Statutory Consultees, and guided by the scope of Environmental Statements submitted for other planning applications within the former Air Base, no formal scoping exercise was undertaken to determine the Assessment Scope of Methodology for this EIA. The pre-planning consultation process and any agreements that were discussed and reached on methodology are discussed in specific technical chapters within the EIA.

1.3 STRUCTURE OF ENVIRONMENTAL STATEMENT

1.3.1 This ES comprises studies on each of the aspects of the environment identified as likely to be significantly affected by the Proposed Development (the 'technical chapters'), which are supported with figures and technical appendices where appropriate.

1.3.2 This ES is structured as follows:

- **Environmental Statement: Main Report** - Comprises the main volume of the ES, including 'general chapters' that describe the EIA context, provide a description of the Application Site and Proposed Development, and set out the scope of the ES, followed by the 'technical chapters' for each environmental theme with the associated figures and appendices and concluding with a summary.
- **Environmental Statement: Non-Technical Summary (NTS)** – this provides a concise summary of the ES identifying the likely significant environmental effects and the measures proposed to mitigate or to avoid adverse effects of the Proposed Development.

1.3.3 The content of the ES Main Report comprises:

- Chapter 1 Introduction
- Chapter 2 Assessment Scope and Methodology
- Chapter 3 The Application Site
- Chapter 4 The Proposed Development and Alternatives Considered
- Chapter 5 Socio Economic Issues
- Chapter 6 Transport and Access
- Chapter 7 Landscape and Visual Impact
- Chapter 8 Ecology
- Chapter 9 Archaeology and Cultural Heritage
- Chapter 10 Hydrology and Flood Risk
- Chapter 11 Ground Conditions and Geology
- Chapter 12 Air Quality
- Chapter 13 Noise and Vibration
- Chapter 14 Summary

1.3.4 For continuity, the figures and appendices are arranged and presented using the same reference numbers as the chapters as a means of providing supportive background and technical information.

The EIA Consultant Team

1.3.5 The ES has been coordinated and managed by Pegasus Group Limited. The consultancies that have contributed to the preparation of this ES are referenced in the project directory at the front of this document, which also includes a Statement of Competence for each in accordance with the EIA Regulations 2017.

1.4 OTHER DOCUMENTS

1.4.1 A number of other documents have been submitted to CDC as part of, and accompanying, the planning application. These are set out in the covering letter to the planning application and summarised below:

- Planning Application Forms;
- Planning Application Drawings;

- Description of Development (including Schedules 1 and 2);
- Planning Statement including:
 - Affordable Housing Statement;
 - School Feasibility Studies;
 - S.106 Heads of Terms;
 - Economic Impact Report;
- Design and Access Statement;
- Green Infrastructure Strategy;
- Heritage Vision Statement;
- Odour Statement;
- Sustainability and Energy Statement; and
- Community Consultation Statement.

1.4.2 The Transport Assessment and Travel Plans are appended to the ES.

1.5 ENVIRONMENTAL STATEMENT AVAILABILITY AND COMMENTS

Availability

1.5.1 This ES should be made available by Cherwell District Council for public viewing during normal office hours. For details of where they can be viewed and the times they are available will be available from Cherwell District Council's Development Management Department, who can be contacted by:

- Telephone: (01295) 227006
- Email: planning@cherwell-dc.gov.uk

1.5.2 The ES and planning application documents may also be available via the Council's website once the planning application has been registered:

- Website: www.cherwell.gov.uk/planning

1.5.3 Alternatively, the ES may be purchased, the costs for which are set out below:

- Main Report - £125
- Non-Technical Summary (NTS) - Free of charge
- Digital copies of the above documents on a CD - £10

1.5.4 For copies of any of the above please contact Pegasus Group (quoting reference P16-0631) at the following address:

Pegasus Group Limited
Pegasus House
Querns Business Centre
Whitworth Road
Cirencester
Gloucestershire
GL7 1RT

Tel: 01285 641717
Fax: 01285 642348

Email: Cirencester@pegasuspg.co.uk

Comments

1.5.5 Comments on the planning application should be forwarded to the Cherwell District Council's Development Management Department located at:

Cherwell District Council
Development Management
Bodicote House
Bodicote
Banbury
Oxfordshire
OX15 4AA

Telephone: (01295) 227001
Email: planning@cherwell-dc.gov.uk
Website: www.cherwell.gov.uk/planning

Figure 1.1

Site Location Plan

Figure 1.2

Application Boundary

