# EDGARS

# **Planning Statement**

Change of use of Building 89 to offices (B1) Building 89, Bicester Heritage, Oxfordshire, OX27 8AL Prepared for: Bicester Heritage Ltd. Date: May 2019

Prepared by: Checked by: Authorised by: Samuel Biles William Sparling Jonty Ashworth (Bicester Heritage) Project Ref: Issue: LPA:

689/010

1

Cherwell District Council

The Old Bank 39 Market Square Witney OX 28 6AD 01865 731700 enquiries@edgarslimited.co.uk edgarslimited.co.uk





## Contents

1	Introduction	. 4
2	Site and Surrounding Area	. 5
3	Relevant Planning History	. 7
4	Relevant Planning Policy	. 8
5	Planning Considerations	12
6	Conclusion	14



# List of Appendices

Appendix 1. Historic England – Building 89 List Description



## 1 Introduction

- 1.1 This Planning Statement has been prepared by Edgars on behalf of Bicester Heritage Limited for the change of use of Building 89 to offices (B1) within the technical site at Bicester Heritage, Bicester, Oxfordshire, OX27 8AL.
- 1.2 The planning application is comprised of the following documents
  - Location plan; and
  - Block Plan.
- 1.3 The following sections of this planning statement will consider:
  - The site and surrounding area;
  - Relevant planning policy including the Development Plan, NPPF and other key documents;
  - Key planning considerations including the principle of development and heritage.
- 1.4 Within that context, the statement concludes that the proposed change of use is acceptable in planning terms and is in accordance with the Development Plan and wider presumption in favour of sustainable development.



## 2 Site and Surrounding Area

2.1 The application site is Building 89 within the existing technical site at Bicester Heritage (Former RAF Bicester). Bicester Heritage is 2.4km (1 ½ miles) north / north east of the centre of the market town of Bicester.



Figure 1: Site Location Plan

#### Bicester

- 2.2 Bicester is identified in the 2011 Census as having a population of 32,642 having grown rapidly during the previous 50 years. The town is identified as being less sensitive in landscape terms than other towns in the district and is a focus for economic growth.
- 2.3 Bicester's economy is focused on storage and distribution, food processing, and motorsport engineering. Most of the employment in Bicester is in the distribution and manufacturing sectors. Previously, before closure, MOD activities at Former RAF Bicester also contributed to the economy of the town.
- 2.4 The town is well-connected by road and rail. It has good infrastructure and significant investment is either being delivered or planned. Bicester is approximately 14 miles from Oxford. The good connectivity, close-proximity and relationship with Oxford helps Bicester by creating opportunities for economic development. Bicester is also well-connected to and influenced by the Chilterns, M25 corridor and London markets.



- 2.5 The Economic Development Strategy for Cherwell identifies opportunities for Bicester to develop a knowledge economy around existing and new employers, sectors and clusters to create a centre of expertise and competitive advantage. Bicester Heritage has made a significant contribution to the economy of the town and wider district since its inception in 2013.
- 2.6 Bicester is located at the focal point of a corridor of motorsport engineering expertise with 7 Formula 1 teams, and 7 tier 1 motorsport teams and suppliers located within 30 miles. Approximately 15 centres of motor manufacturing excellence are also located within 40 miles.

#### **Bicester Heritage**

- 2.7 Bicester Heritage is a business park dedicated to historic motoring excellence (UK's 1st) comprising a hub of successful highly specialist businesses. Bicester Heritage Ltd. purchased the technical site and flying field in 2013 and since then have embarked on a meticulous, detailed and carefully considered redevelopment of the site. This is reflected in the planning history for the site that demonstrates the high quality of development.
- 2.8 A combination of careful management and development of the historic site and an 8-figure investment has led to the success of the site to date that has attracted national and local media interest.
- 2.9 Development has been delivered through a collaborative planning approach with Cherwell District Council, Oxfordshire County Council and Historic England. This relationship advanced and the parties worked together to create the second only Heritage Partnership Agreement in the UK. Development delivered through the HPA at Bicester Heritage has been consistently of high quality and the site was removed from the Heritage at Risk Register in 2015.

#### **Application Site**

- 2.10 The site is located adjacent to the main gate and was the Guard and Fire House when an active military base. Building 89, along with the Station Offices (building 147), occupy a prominent position at the entrance to the technical site, adjacent to the main axial route that leads to the hangars and flying field.
- 2.11 Building 89 is a Grade II Listed Building. The building is a rectangular building housing a guardhouse and office, with a bell turret centred over the unenclosed veranda to the front. There are cells and a walled exercise yard to the rear. It is built from dark red brick and pointing of grey mortar.
- 2.12 The Historic England entry for Building 89 outlines the history of the building. The building is dated 1926 and forms part of the Technical Site at Bicester. It formed part of the first phase of buildings on site and comprises one of the first permanent designs for RAF. It is a good example of a larger version of guardhouses from this period, thought to be the only extant example. The List description is attached in Appendix 1.
- 2.13 The site comprises Previously Developed Land. The site is in Flood Zone 1 with a low probability of flooding. The site is adjacent to a Local Wildlife Site (LWS) to the east. A Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) is approximately 875m to the north east. The site is not in Green Belt. The site is not in an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB).



# 3 Relevant Planning History

- 3.1 Having reviewed the online records held by Cherwell District Council, the most relevant planning history to the development is outlined in the table below.
- 3.2 It is noted that the site has an extensive planning history since the disposal from military use and ownership took effect.

Reference	Description	Decision
15/02340/LB	Extension, alteration and change of use of Building 89 (The Guardhouse) from sui generis MOD use to A3 restaurant	Application Withdrawn
		08/05/2019
15/02339/F	Extension, alteration and change of use of Building 89 (The Guardhouse) from sui generis MOD use to A3 restaurant.	Application Withdrawn
		08/05/2019

- 3.3 The planning history for Building 89 can be summarised as follows:
  - Two recent planning applications were recently withdrawn by the applicant.
  - The planning history indicates the use of the building is that associated with the former military use.
- 3.4 Bicester Heritage is in frequent dialogue with officers from Cherwell District Council (CDC) regarding development at the site and this has established a positive relationship with the Council.
- 3.5 Officers have been supportive of the vision at Bicester Heritage and have overall been supportive of change of use proposals on the site.



## 4 Relevant Planning Policy

- 4.1 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act (2004) requires that planning applications be determined in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
- 4.2 The relevant document of the Development Plan comprises the Cherwell Local Plan 2011 2031: Part 1. The Bicester Heritage Heritage Partnership agreement, RAF Bicester Conservation Area Appraisal and Former RAF Bicester Planning brief are identified as material considerations. These documents are considered in turn below.

#### National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) February 2019

- 4.3 The NPPF sets out the Government's planning policies for England. The chapters and paragraphs of the NPPF identified as of particular relevance to this proposal are identified in this section below.
- 4.4 **Paragraph 7** states that the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. At a very high level, the objective of sustainable development can be summarised as meeting the needs of the present without comprising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.
- 4.5 **Paragraph 8** states that achieving sustainable development means that the planning system has three overarching objectives:
  - Economic: building a strong, responsive and competitive economy by ensuring that sufficient land of the right type is available in the right places and at the right time to support growth and innovation.
  - Social: supporting strong, vibrant and healthy communities by meeting the needs of present and future generations.
  - Environmental: contributing to the protection and enhancement of natural, built and historic environments.
- 4.6 **Paragraph 11** states that plans and decisions should apply a presumption in favour of sustainable development. For decision-taking this means approving development proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan without delay.
- 4.7 **Paragraph 47** states that planning law requires that applications for planning permission be determined in accordance with the development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Decisions on applications should be made as quickly as possible, and within statutory timescales unless a longer period has been agreed by the applicant in writing.
- 4.8 **Chapter 6** (Building a strong, competitive economy) outlines how policies and decisions should support economic growth.
- 4.9 **Paragraph 80** states that planning policies and decisions should help create conditions in which businesses can invest, expand and adapt. Significant weight should be placed on the need to support economic growth and productivity, taking into account both local business needs and wider opportunities for development.
- 4.10 **Paragraph 82** states that planning policies and decisions should recognise and address the specific locational requirements of different sectors.



- 4.11 **Paragraph 87** states that when considering edge of centre and out of centre proposals, preference should be given to accessible sites which are well connect to the town centre.
- 4.12 Chapter 11 (Making effective use of land) requires proposals to make effective use of land.
- 4.13 **Paragraph 117** states that planning decisions should promote an effective use of land in meeting the need for homes and other uses, while safeguarding and improving the environment.
- 4.14 **Paragraph 118** states that planning decisions should encourage multiple benefits from both urban and rural land, give substantial weight to the value of using suitable brownfield land, support appropriate opportunities to remediate despoiled, degraded or derelict land, and support the development of under-utilised land and buildings.
- 4.15 **Chapter 16** (conserving and enhancing the historic environment) outlines how heritage assets range from sites and buildings of local historic value to those of the highest significance. These assets are an irreplaceable resource and should be conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance.
- 4.16 **Paragraph 189** states that when determining applications, local planning authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting.
- 4.17 **Paragraph 190** states that local planning authorities should identify and assess the particular significance of any heritage assets that may be affected by a proposal (including by development affecting the setting of a heritage asset), taking into account the available evidence and any necessary expertise.
- 4.18 Paragraph 192 states that in determining applications, local planning authorities should take account of:
  - The desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation;
  - The positive contribution that conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities including their economic vitality; and
  - The desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.
- 4.19 **Paragraph 193** states that when considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation. This is irrespective of whether any potential harm amounts to substantial harm, total loss or less than substantial harm to its significance.
- 4.20 **Paragraph 194** states that any harm to, or loss of, the significance of a designated heritage should require clear and convincing justification.
- 4.21 **Paragraph 196** states that where are development will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use.
- 4.22 **Paragraph 197** states that the effect of an application on the significance of a non-designated heritage asset should be taken into account in determining the application.

#### Cherwell Local Plan 2011 - 2031: Part 1

4.23 The Cherwell Local Plan 2011-2031: Part 1 aims to link three themes together; the economy, communities, and sustainable development and seeks provide a proactive, positive set of policies to help places thrive, to deliver essential and longer-term infrastructure and achieve development that will improve the quality of life in the District.



- 4.24 The plan states the Council is seeking to achieve sustainable economic growth and aim to create jobs; to significantly boost housing supply in targeted, sustainable locations. The most relevant policies to this application are identified and summarised below.
- 4.25 **Policy PSD1** (Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development) is a continuation of the NPPF and outlines a presumption in favour of sustainable development.
- 4.26 **Policy Bicester 8** (Former RAF Bicester) allocates the former RAF Bicester (including the Technical Site, Flying Field and Domestic Site) for heritage tourism, leisure, recreation, employment and community uses.
- 4.27 Bicester 8 also states that proposals must maintain and enhance the character and appearance of the conservation area, protect listed, scheduled and other important buildings, their setting, and protect the sensitive historic fabric of the buildings and preserve the openness of the airfield.
- 4.28 Bicester 8 aims to establish uses that will be complementary to, and help enhance, the character and appearance of the conservation area and the nationally important heritage value of the site. It seeks to encourage a mix of uses that will best preserve the sensitive historic fabric and layout of the buildings and the openness of the grass airfield. However, the need to allow some flexibility in the interests of securing an economically viable future for the site is recognised.
- 4.29 Bicester 8 supporting text indicates that the Planning Brief indicates that employment uses on the technical site could be appropriate and identifies a range of other uses including aviation, museum, cultural, sport and community uses.
- 4.30 **Policy SLE1** (Employment Development) focuses employment development on sites at Banbury, Bicester, Kidlington. It also outlines a set of criteria to support employment proposals. Support shall be given to proposals that make efficient use of previously developed land wherever possible, make efficient use of existing and underused sites and premises increasing the intensity of use on site and meets high design standards, using sustainable construction and of an appropriate scale and respects the character of its surroundings.
- 4.31 **Policy SLE2** (Securing Dynamic Town Centres) states retail and other 'Main Town Centre Uses' will be directed to the town centres of Banbury and Bicester and the village centre of Kidlington. When considering edge of centre and out of centre proposals, preference will be given to accessible sites that are well connected to the town centres.
- 4.32 **Policy SLE3** (Supporting Tourism Growth) states that the Council will support proposals for new or improved tourist facilities in sustainable locations, where they accord with other policies in the plan, to increase overnight stays and visitor numbers within the District.
- 4.33 **Policy ESD15** (The Character of the Built and Historic Environment) states that, within the vicinity of any of the district's distinctive natural or historic assets, delivering high quality design that complements the asset will be essential. It goes on to outline criteria for proposals to meet.

#### Bicester Heritage – Heritage Partnership Agreement (October 2014)

- 4.34 The document aims to provide a blanket vision for the site acquired by Bicester Heritage. The document identifies that Bicester Heritage is the most appropriate user possible and the combination of a historic site and historic vehicles is a natural fit.
- 4.35 It is also identified that change will need to take place to make the new use for the site sustainable. The HPA considers the history of the site, site constraints and opportunities, the Bicester Heritage business plan, and economic considerations. Given the historic and protected nature of the site the agreement provides an agreed baseline amongst all stakeholders as to the nature of the repair works and interventions that are possible.



- 4.36 The HPA sets out a conservation framework, which is largely based on the character identified in the Conservation Area Appraisal, and identifies the following capacity for change (many of which have taken place under the custodianship of Bicester Heritage):
  - Changes of use, as many of the important buildings are domestic in scale and architectural style, and appear to lend themselves to a variety of new tenants;
  - In those parts of the layout and setting which have been altered since 1939, including barriers and boundary treatments;
  - In those buildings whose form and detailing have been altered since 1939;
  - To those existing areas of unimproved grasslands, where there is an opportunity to ensure both ecological and historic conservation;
  - To those services or buildings which do not meet current health and safety requirements, building and/or fire regulations, or where upgrading cannot be avoided by law; and
  - To all existing buildings and landscaping, provided any new works pass the tests set out in PPG15 and preserve or enhance the character of the CA.
- 4.37 The HPA sets out Specifically Agreed Refurbishment Works, Specifically Agreed External Works, and more detailed requirements such as paint colours, materials and construction methods.

#### **RAF Bicester Conservation Area Appraisal**

4.38 The RAF Bicester Conservation Area was designated in 2002 and reviewed in 2008. The 2008 review led to the boundary being extended. The appraisal identifies that an English Heritage study published in 2000 concluded that "*RAF Bicester retains, better than any other military airbase in Britain, the layout and fabric relating to pre- 1930s military aviation*".

#### Former RAF Bicester Planning brief

4.39 Notwithstanding that the brief is not a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD), the document is identified as a material planning consideration. The brief contains informal development principles drafted prior to the disposal of the site by the MOD.



## 5 Planning Considerations

- 5.1 The proposed development is for the change of use of Building 89 to offices (B1). Existing access and parking will be retained. Internal and external alterations are not being proposed by this application.
- 5.2 With regard to the planning history the current use of the site is considered to be sui generis. Whilst previous applications to change the use of the building to a restaurant have been submitted, they were withdrawn prior to the determination of the application.
- 5.3 Having regard to planning policy, planning history and continuing discussions with Cherwell District Council, the key planning considerations in respect of this application are considered to be:
  - Principle of development;
  - Employment and economic benefits;
  - Access and Car Parking; and,
  - Impact on Heritage Assets.

#### Principle of development

- 5.4 Policy Bicester 8 allocates the site for development and seeks to secure a long-lasting, economically viable future for the Former RAF Bicester site.
- 5.5 The policy recognises the need to allow some flexibility in the interests of securing that economically viable future and therefore encourages a mix of uses that will best preserve the sensitive historic fabric and layout. It is supportive of heritage tourism uses, leisure, recreation, employment and community use.
- 5.6 The proposed development will allow the building to be used for offices in association with other buildings within the site (covered under a separate planning application). The proposed use along with the use of building 113 for storage and car auctions will attract a new tenant securing the long term viable use of the building and which supports the long term vision of the applicant for the site.
- 5.7 The proposed development will make efficient use of Previously Developed Land and make efficient use of an existing and underused site and premises, in accordance with Policy SLE1 (Employment Development).
- 5.8 In conclusion, the principle of development is accepted for the following reasons:
  - The change of use of building 89 to offices (B1), is supported by Policy Bicester 8 as it is an employment use;
  - The proposed development will attract a new tenant to Bicester Heritage which will secure the long-term future for Building 89. This will contribute to securing an economically viable future for the Bicester Heritage site.
  - The proposed development is in accordance with other policies in the Development Plan, including Policy SLE1 (Employment Development).



#### **Employment and Economic Benefits**

- 5.9 Policy SLE1 (Employment Development) highlights Bicester as a key area for employment and supports proposals that make efficient use of existing and underused sites including increasing the intensity of use on site.
- 5.10 The proposed development utilises an existing building, currently vacant, by bringing it back into use so it can be used as an office (B1) in association with other uses located on the site. This will secure an additional long-term tenant to the site which will directly support jobs and make a contribution towards an already economically successful site.
- 5.11 Paragraph 80 of the NPPF, which states that significant weight should be placed on the need to support economic growth while creating conditions in which businesses can invest, expand and adapt. Paragraph 82 of the NPPF builds upon this, stating that decisions should recognise and address the specific locational requirements of different sectors.
- 5.12 Bicester Heritage is a cluster of automotive businesses, attracting a wide range of people to enjoy the multitude of events and sights that are available. The proposed development is located in centre of this cluster, making it well located to take full advantage of the economic opportunities that are available and further promoting Bicester Heritage as a destination.
- 5.13 This will help to secure a long-term vision for the site as a robust and dynamic future for motoring past, present and future, the businesses that serve this market, the people who work in those businesses and the owners and enthusiasts who enjoy their specialist vehicles.

#### Access and Car Parking

- 5.14 The site is within 1.5 miles of Bicester Town Centre, with access being provided by the main gate (A4421). Existing access and car parking at the site will be utilised for this proposal.
- 5.15 The site provides excellent links to sustainable transport including buses and the railway stations in Bicester. There are good connections for pedestrians to Bicester town centre and other nearby attractions.
- 5.16 Policy SLE 2 states that, when considering edge of centre and out of centre proposals, preference will be given to accessible sites that are well connected to the town centre.

#### Impact on Heritage Asset

- 5.17 Building 89 is a Grade II Listed Building, which the List description describes as being a Guard House dating from 1926 and forming part of the Technical Site. Its significance lies in it being one of the first permanent designs for the RAF and as an example of a larger guardhouse constructed as part of a first phase of buildings at RAF Bicester.
- 5.18 The proposed development is for only the change of use of Building 89 to offices (B1) and no alterations are being proposed. The proposed development will conserve and sustain the designated heritage assets of the site including Grade II Listed Building 89 and Conservation Area and its setting in accordance with Policy ESD15 (Character of the Built and Historic Environment).
- 5.19 The proposed development due to the nature of the use and lack of any internal or external changes, will not impact upon the significance of the heritage assets on site, in accordance with paragraph 193 of the NPPF.



## 6 Conclusion

- 6.1 This has been prepared by Edgars on behalf of Bicester Heritage Limited for the change of use of Building 89 to offices (B1) at Bicester Heritage, Bicester.
- 6.2 As supported by Policy Bicester 8 (Former RAF Bicester), the proposed development will have an employment use and will maintain the character and appearance of the conservation area. The proposed development will have economic benefits by allowing an office use, in support of other uses at the site, to take place in a sustainable location while promoting the Bicester Heritage destination.
- 6.3 The proposal is in accordance with Policy Bicester 8, which allocates the site for employment and leisure uses. The proposed development is in accordance with other policies in the Development Plan, including Policy SLE1 (Employment Development).
- 6.4 The proposed development will make more efficient use of an existing building to deliver economic benefits, in accordance with Policy SLE1 (Employment Development). The proposal incorporates the provision of an additional use that will (in conjunction with a change of use to building 113) secure an additional long-term tenant to the site. This will support additional jobs at the site, contributing to an already economically successful site.
- 6.5 Existing access and car parking at the site will be utilised for this proposal. The site provides excellent links to sustainable transport including buses and the railway stations in Bicester. There are good connections for pedestrians to Bicester town centre and other nearby attractions.
- 6.6 In accordance with Policy ESD15 (The Character of the Built and Historic Environment) and paragraph 193 of the NPPF, will conserve and sustain the designated heritage assets of the site, including the Grade II Listed Building 89 and the Conservation Area and its setting.
- 6.7 Having regard to the key planning considerations the proposal is considered to be in accordance with the Development Plan for the district of Cherwell and national planning policy. Therefore, in accordance with Policy PSD1 (Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development) and having regard to paragraph 11 of the NPPF the proposed development should be approved without delay.

# Appendices



# Appendix 1

# Historic England—Building 89 List Description





🗮 Historic England

# BUILDING NO 89 (GUARD AND FIRE PARTY HOUSE)

# Overview

Heritage Category: Listed Building

Grade: II

List Entry Number: 1393037

Date first listed: 01-Dec-2005

Statutory Address: BUILDING NO 89 (GUARD AND FIRE PARTY HOUSE), A 421 (SOUTH-EAST SIDE)

# Мар



© Crown Copyright and database right 2019. All rights reserved. Ordnance Survey Licence number 100024900. © British Crown and SeaZone Solutions Limited 2019. All rights reserved. Licence number 102006.006. Use of this data is subject to **Terms and Conditions**.

The above map is for quick reference purposes only and may not be to scale. For a copy of the full scale map, please see the attached PDF - **1393037**.pdf

The PDF will be generated from our live systems and may take a few minutes to download depending on how busy our servers are. We apologise for this delay.

This copy shows the entry on 29-May-2019 at 16:49:58.

# Location

Statutory Address: BUILDING NO 89 (GUARD AND FIRE PARTY HOUSE), A 421 (SOUTH-EAST SIDE)

The building or site itself may lie within the boundary of more than one authority. County: Oxfordshire

District: Cherwell (District Authority)

Parish: Launton National Grid Reference: SP 59056 24427

# Details

LAUNTON

SP5924 A 421 (SOUTH-EAST SIDE) 1714/0/10052 RAF Bicester: Technical Site 01-DEC-05 Building No 89 (Guard and Fire Party H ouse)

GV II

Guardhouse with exercise yard and accommodation for fire party. Dated 1926. By the Air Ministry's Directorate of Works and Buildings, to drawing number 959/25. Dark brick in Flemish bond, but some stretcher bond, slate gambrel roof, some flat concrete extensions, brick stack.

PLAN: A long rectangular building containing guardhouse and office, with cells; roof sweeps down over non-enclosed verandah to the front, and at the rear is a walled exercise yard.

EXTERIOR: Verandah on four square chamfered concrete posts to stone pads and with broad impost blocks set to shallow concrete platform; sloping soffit is boarded. Steel casements set to flush chamfered concrete lintels and stooled sills, one doorway with second blocked, and in flat-roofed bay at each end a further plank door with over-light. Large double casements to rear. Centred over the verandah at the ridge a square bell-turret in timber with clad skirt, small metal cupola. The walled rear enclosure in stretcher bond, rising to parapet at mains eaves level. Metal vents to rear cells.

INTERIOR: Retains original joinery. Wooden cell doors with original fittings.

HISTORY: The Technical Site at Bicester, separated from the Domestic Site, still has many of the original buildings, mostly of 1926 but with others added during successive phases of the 1930's Expansion Period. As part of the first phase of buildings on this uniquely important site, this comprises one of the first permanent designs for Britain's independent air force. It is a good example of the larger version of guardhouse of its period, thought to be the only extant example (Francis, 1996, 23). It is also prominently sited at the main gate, facing the Station Offices (qv) across the main axial route that bisects the technical site and leads to the hangars and flying field.

Bicester is the best-preserved of the bomber bases constructed as the principal arm of Sir Hugh Trenchard's expansion of the RAF from 1923, which was based on the philosophy of offensive deterrence. It retains, better than any other military airbase in Britain, the layout and fabric relating to both pre-1930s military aviation and the development of Britain's strategic bomber force - and the manner in which its expansion reflected domestic political pressures as well as events on the world stage - in the period up to 1939. It was this policy of offensive deterrence that essentially dominated British air power and the RAF's existence as an independent arm of the military in the inter-war period, and continued to determine its shape and direction in the Second World War and afterwards during the Cold War. The grass flying field still survives with its 1939 boundaries largely intact, bounded by a group of bomb stores built in 1938/9 and airfield defences built in the early stages of the Second World War. For much of the Second World War RAF Bicester functioned as an Operational Training Unit, training Canadians, Australians and New Zealanders as well as British air crews for service in Bomber Command. These OTUs, of which Bicester now forms the premier surviving example, fulfilled the critical requirement of enabling bomber crews - once individual members had trained in flying, bombing, gunnery and navigation - to form and train as units. For further historical details see Buildings Nos 79 and 137 (Type 'A' Hangars).



The contents of this record have been generated from a legacy data system. Legacy System number:

497525

Legacy System: LBS

# Sources

Books and journals Dobinson, C, Airfield Themes, (1997) Francis, P, British Military Airfield Architecture From Airships To The Jet Age, (1996) Francis, P , RAF Bicester, (1996)

# Legal

This building is listed under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 as amended for its special architectural or historic interest.

End of official listing

There aren't currently any contributions

© Historic England 2019

# EDGARS

The Old Bank, 39 Market Square, Witney, Oxon, OX28 6AD 01865 731700 www.edgarslimited.co.uk enquiries@edgarslimited.co.uk