

**Case Officer:** Andrew Lewis**Recommendation:** Permit**Applicant:** Heyford Park Settlements LP

**Proposal:** Reserved matters to 10/01642/OUT - Dorchester Phase 5C, comprising the provision of 13 residential units (5 open market and 8 affordable) with associated landscaping, car parking, infrastructure and external works.

**Expiry Date:** 19 July 2019**Extension of Time:** 13<sup>th</sup> September 2019

## **1. APPLICATION SITE AND LOCALITY**

- 1.1. This application site is a parcel of land fronting Camp Road on the former RAF/USAF Upper Heyford base measuring 0.27 hectares in total. In terms of the uses on Upper Heyford, the military use ceased in 1994.
- 1.2. Since 1998 the site as a whole has accommodated a number of uses in existing buildings, first under temporary planning permissions and latterly under a permanent permission granted on appeal and subsequent applications. Please refer to the planning history section of this report for further detail.
- 1.3. The base was designated a conservation area in 2006, its primary architectural and social historic interest being its role during the Cold War. The nature of the site is defined by the historic landscape character of the distinct zones within the base. The designation also acknowledges the special architectural interest – and as a conservation area – the character of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance and provides the context and framework to ensure the setting and appearance of sections of the Cold War landscape are preserved. The base was divided into three main functional character areas: Flying Field, Technical and Settlement.
- 1.4. This application comes within the “Residential Zone 10B: RAF Domestic and Residential Section” character zone of the Settlement Area as classified in the Conservation Appraisal which can be summarised below:

“Residential Zone 10B: RAF Domestic and Residential Section:

The 1920s, red brick, RAF buildings to the south of Camp Road are laid out around and orientated towards the parade ground. The style of the buildings within the area is again British Military and because of their grid-like orientation the area has a strong ‘campus’ character distinct from the Technical Site to the north on the other side of the road. The area immediately south of the parade ground was developed during the period of RAF expansion in the 1930s. The area is dominated by the Institute (488) and H blocks (489, 498 and 500) set around it. This area has a coherent character distinct from the 1920s buildings. The general ‘military architect’ character of the area has been diluted by post-war alterations.”

- 1.5. In addition to its designation as a Conservation Area, the wider RAF Upper Heyford site also contains a number of Scheduled Monuments identified as ‘Cold War Structures’ and five listed buildings as noted in the ‘RAF Upper Heyford Conservation Area Appraisal’ produced by the council (CDC) in 2006. None of these

designated structures are located within the boundary of the application site or in proximity to it. The buildings on this part of the site have all been demolished and consisted of a mix of non-residential uses primarily the main settlement bus stop and turning area plus part of the former petrol station and retail shop. The land has been levelled and is ready for development.

- 1.6. Construction is already underway to the east on the Village Centre South and to the south on residential housing surrounding the village green and on land previously proposed in the earlier masterplan (10/01642/OUT) for a primary school but subsequently approved for housing (ref 13/01811/OUT). This site has been approved for residential use in that masterplan and also in detail under reserved matters 17/00973/REM as part of the applicant's phase 5.

## 2. DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

- 2.1. This application has been submitted as part of a series of amended schemes that seek to provide additional housing in line with the Growth Deal for Oxfordshire. As a result the Council has received 4 amended reserved matters applications that provide the requisite number of units to comply with the original outline planning permission (ref: 13/01811/OUT) and s106 agreement for social housing, together with a detailed application (ref 19/00446/F) for 57 units that amends the number of units around Trenchard Circle and provides a net uplift of 41 additional units above what was originally approved. This is explained later in this report but in far more detail in Section 5 of the Planning Report submitted as part of the documentation to accompany this application.
- 2.2. This application proposes 13 residential units in effectively three buildings fronting Camp Road and a new secondary street that provides access to the wider residential settlement to the south. The type of dwellings proposed are:

<b>Market Housing</b>	
No. of Beds	No. of Units
4	5
Sub-Total	5
<b>Affordable Housing - Rented</b>	
No. of Beds	No. of Units
1	4
2	4
Sub-Total	8
<b>Total Market Housing</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Total Affordable Housing</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>GRAND TOTAL</b>	<b>13</b>

- 2.3. This includes one pair of 3 storey, semi-detached dwellings, one terrace of three, 3 storey dwellings, and eight flats/maisonettes contained within a three-storey block. Facing materials will be primarily the previously approved Ibstock Audley Red facing brick and roof of Marley rivendale slate.
- 2.4. Car parking is provided for each of the units, including the erection of garages associated with two of the units and communal parking for the flat block with separate cycle parking and bin storage. Access to the parking areas will be taken directly from Camp Road by way of three new access points serving the parking areas. The treatment of the two road frontages includes layout details already approved previously with cycle/footpath to Camp Road and verges to both roads including soft landscaping. One additional building on this site is the erection of a substation to the standard design.
- 2.5. As can be seen from the table above, this phase includes affordable housing, with 8 of the 13 proposed units to be rented affordable housing (62%). An Affordable Housing Statement with the submitted documents sets out the overall approach for this revised phase of development at Heyford Park. The proposed affordable accommodation includes a dedicated wheelchair friendly, 2 bed four-person ground floor maisonette.

### **3. RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY**

- 3.1. The following planning history is considered relevant to the current proposal.
- 3.2. In terms of the uses on Upper Heyford, the military use ceased in 1994. Since 1998 the site has accommodated a number of uses in existing buildings, first under temporary planning permissions latterly under a permanent permission granted on appeal and subsequent applications.
- 3.3. Numerous applications have been made seeking permission over the last 20 years or so to either develop the base or large parts of it and numerous of them have gone to appeal. The most significant was application ref 08/00716/OUT. This was subject to a major public inquiry that commenced in September 2008. The Council received the appeal decision in January 2010 that allowed *"A new settlement of 1075 dwellings, together with associated works and facilities including employment uses, community uses, school, playing fields and other physical and social infrastructure (as amended by plans and information received 26.06.08)."*
- 3.4. On policy, the Secretary of State (SoS) thought the development was in general conformity with the Oxfordshire Structure Plan policy H2 (the relevant development plan policy at the time) which sought to provide a community of about 1000 dwellings with schools and employment opportunities, and that it would enable environmental improvements, conserve heritage interests and provide appropriate level of employment.
- 3.5. The SoS concluded the proposal would substantially accord with the development plan, meaning Structure Plan policy H2. A sustainable and reasonable balance was secured between retaining the built and natural heritage and providing an appropriate and proportionate level of employment in the context of the site's location and access to services. The grant of planning permission authorised many of the uses being undertaken at the site and sets out the template for future development.

- 3.6. The development of the settlement and technical areas was delayed as the site was acquired by new owners who decided to refine the approved scheme. As a result, a new masterplan was drawn up and submitted as part of an outline application for:

*“Proposed new settlement for 1075 dwellings, together with associated works and facilities, including employment uses, a school, playing fields and other physical and social infrastructure”* and was granted permission on 22nd December 2011 (ref 10/01642/OUT).

- 3.7. The planning permission included a number of plans with which compliance was required including a masterplan, retained buildings plans and other plans showing layouts all of which included the demolition of all buildings on this site. A number of reserved matters have been submitted, approved and implemented for permission 10/01642/OUT. This includes permissions for the current parcels subject of the current applications. As a result of this the new settlement is starting to take shape.
- 3.8. Furthermore, the whole base is currently subject of a further masterplan application (reference 18/00825/HYBRID) seeking to implement the Cherwell Local Plan policy Villages 5. Below is a list of the most relevant applications referred to above and relevant to the current proposal:

<u>Application Ref.</u>	<u>Proposal</u>	<u>Decision</u>
08/00716/OUT	OUTLINE application for new settlement of 1075 dwellings, together with associated works and facilities including employment uses, community uses, school, playing fields and other physical and social infrastructure (as amended by plans and information received 26.06.08).	REF but permitted at appeal
10/01642/OUT	Outline - Proposed new settlement of 1075 dwellings including the retention and change of use of 267 existing military dwellings to residential use Class C3 and the change of use of other specified buildings, together with associated works and facilities, including employment uses, a school, playing fields and other physical and social infrastructure	PER
10/01619/CAC	Demolition of existing structures (as per Conservation Area Consent Schedule and Drawing No. D.0291 38-1)	PER
13/01811/OUT	OUTLINE - Up to 60 dwellings and public open space with associated works	PER
13/00153/DISC	Discharge of Condition 8 of 10/01642/OUT (Design Codes)	PER
16/00627/REM	Reserved Matters to 13/01811/OUT - Erection of 60 dwellings and public open space with associated works	PER
16/00196/F	Demolition of existing bungalows and	PER

	erection of 13 dwellings with associated car parking and landscaping	
16/00864/REM	Reserved Matters Application for 10/01642/OUT - Dorchester Phase 8 (Trident) only. The application represents the provision of 91 residential units of mixed type (dwellings and apartments) and tenure (open market and affordable) with associated gardens, access roads, car parking, landscaping, a local area of play (LAP), utilities and infrastructure.	Application Permitted
17/00663/F	Construction of roads with associated infrastructure within the Heyford Park development	Application Permitted
17/00973/REM	Reserved Matters application to 10/01642/OUT - Dorchester Phase 5C, comprising the provision of 17 residential units of mixed type (dwelling houses and flats) and tenure (open market and affordable) with associated landscaping, car parking, infrastructure and external works	Application Permitted
17/00983/REM	Reserved matters application to 10/01642/OUT - In respect of Bovis Parcel B4A and B4B to provide 29 open market and 71 affordable dwellings	Application Permitted
18/00825/HYBRID	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 of 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; Change of Use of the following buildings and areas: Buildings 357 and 370 for office use (Class B1a); Buildings 3036, 3037, 3038, 3039, 3040,	Pending Consideration

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

19/00339/REM	Reserved matters to 10/01642/OUT - Dorchester Phase 7A, comprising the provision of eleven, two bed affordable dwellings with associated landscaping, car parking, infrastructure and external works.	Pending Consideration
19/00440/REM	Reserved Matters to 10/01642/OUT - Dorchester Phase 8A, comprising the provision of twenty four affordable residential units with associated landscaping, car parking, infrastructure and external works	Pending Consideration
19/00441/REM	Reserved Matters to 13/01811/OUT - Dorchester Phase 5, comprising the provision of seven open market dwellings with associated landscaping, car parking, infrastructure and external works.	Permitted

#### 4. PRE-APPLICATION DISCUSSIONS

4.1. The following informal pre-application discussions have taken place with regard to this proposal:

- The principle of increasing the density and changing the mix on this part of the site was acceptable
- There is a need to look closely at some of the details to make sure they enhance/preserve the character/appearance of the conservation area, there is adequate parking, design/landscaping is acceptable, etc.
- The Landscape Officer asked if there is a service/foul and surface water drainage layout available, to ensure that there is no conflict with the proposed trees/tree pit. It was advised that tree pit details should be submitted.
- In conclusion the principle of the scheme is one that can be supported.

## 5. RESPONSE TO PUBLICITY

- 5.1. This application has been publicised by way of a site notice displayed near the site, by advertisement in the local newspaper, and by letters sent to all properties immediately adjoining the application site that the Council has been able to identify from its records. The final date for comments was **25 April 2019**.
- 5.2. No comments have been raised by third parties

## 6. RESPONSE TO CONSULTATION

- 6.1. Below is a summary of the consultation responses received at the time of writing this report. Responses are available to view in full on the Council's website, via the online Planning Register.

### PARISH/TOWN COUNCIL AND NEIGHBOURHOOD FORUMS

- 6.2. MID CHERWELL NEIGHBOURHOOD FORUM: **No comment**
- 6.3. HEYFORD PARISH COUNCIL: **No comment** received

### NON-STATUTORY CONSULTEES

- 6.4. ENVIRONMENT AGENCY: **No comment**
- 6.5. OXFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL-(Highways)
- **Object** to absence of refuse vehicle swept path
  - Intensification of residential use at Heyford Park above the already permitted quotas will require the need for further transport impact analysis.
  - In the event that permission is to be given, the following planning conditions should be attached:
    - D5 Vision Splay.
    - D10 Estate Accesses, Driveways and Turning Areas.
    - D19 Cycle Parking Provision.
- 6.6. CRIME PREVENTION DESIGN OFFICER: **No objection** but suggests secured by crime accreditation is sought and changes made to the scheme to achieve it.
- 6.7. CDC (Arboricultural Officer): **No objection**
- 6.8. CDC (Strategic Housing): **No objection**. Expect that 100% of the affordable rented units are built to the government's Nationally Described Space Standard (Technical Housing Standards), and 50% of the affordable rented units would meet the Building Regulations Requirement M4(2) Category 2: Accessible and Adaptable Dwellings requirement. The parking provision is adequate and happy that Heyford Regeneration in its role of Registered Provider will take on the affordable units.

## 7. RELEVANT PLANNING POLICY AND GUIDANCE

- 7.1. Planning law requires that applications for planning permission must be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
- 7.2. The Cherwell Local Plan 2011-2031 - Part 1 was formally adopted by Cherwell District Council on 20th July 2015 and provides the strategic planning policy

framework for the District to 2031. The Local Plan 2011-2031 – Part 1 replaced a number of the ‘saved’ policies of the adopted Cherwell Local Plan 1996 though many of its policies are retained and remain part of the development plan. The relevant planning policies of Cherwell District’s statutory Development Plan are set out below:

#### CHERWELL LOCAL PLAN 2011 - 2031 PART 1 (CLP 2031 Part 1)

- ESD15 - The Character of the Built and Historic Environment
- VIL5 - Former RAF Upper Heyford
- PSD1 - Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development
- BSC1 - District Wide Housing distribution
- BSC2 - The Effective and Efficient Use of Land
- BSC3 - Affordable Housing
- BSC4 - Housing Mix
- BSC7 - Meeting Education Needs
- BSC8 - Securing Health and Well Being
- BSC9 - Public Services and Utilities
- BSC10 - Open Space, Outdoor Sport & Recreation Provision
- BSC11 - Local Standards of Provision - Outdoor Recreation
- BSC12 - Indoor Sport, Recreation and Community Facilities
- ESD1 - Mitigating and Adapting to Climate Change
- ESD2 - Energy Hierarchy
- ESD3 - Sustainable Construction
- ESD5 - Renewable Energy
- ESD6 - Sustainable Flood Risk Management
- ESD7 - Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS)
- ESD10 - Protection and Enhancement of Biodiversity and the Natural Environment
- ESD13 - Local Landscape Protection and Enhancement
- ESD15 - The Character of the Built Environment
- ESD17 - Green Infrastructure
- INF1 - Infrastructure
- SLE4 - Improved Transport and Connections

#### CHERWELL LOCAL PLAN 1996 SAVED POLICIES (CLP 1996)

- C28 - Layout, design and external appearance of new development
- C23 - Retention of features contributing to character or appearance of a conservation area
- C30 - Design of new residential development
- TR1-Transportation Funding
- ENV1: Pollution
- ENV12: Contaminated Land

Under Section 38 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, a Neighbourhood Plan that has been approved at referendum also forms part of the statutory development plan for the area. In this case, the application site falls within the Mid-Cherwell Neighbourhood Plan area, and the following Policies of the Neighbourhood Plan are considered relevant:

- PD4: Protection of important views and vistas

### 7.3. Other Material Planning Considerations



- National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)
- Planning Practice Guidance (PPG)
- Cherwell Residential Design Guide (2018)
- RAF Upper Heyford Conservation Appraisal 2006 (UHCA)

In addition, a design code was approved in October 2013 in order to comply with Condition 8 of planning permission 10/010642/F. This was required “to ensure that the subsequent reserved matters applications are considered and determined by the Local Planning Authority in the context of an overall approach for the site consistent with the requirement to achieve a high quality design as set out in the Environmental Statement, the Revised Comprehensive Planning Brief for the site, and Policies UH4 of the Non Statutory Cherwell Local Plan, H2 of the Oxfordshire Structure Plan 2016 and to comply with Policies CC6, CC7 and H5 of the South East Plan 2009.”

#### 7.4. Council Corporate Priorities:

Cherwell District Council’s Business Plan for 2019-20 sets out the Council’s three strategic priorities which form our overarching business strategy. Below these are the key actions for the year 2019–20. This is a strategy which looks to the future taking into account the priorities and aspirations of the communities who live and work in the district.

The three corporate priorities are to ensure the District is “Clean, Green and Safe”, that it supports “Thriving Communities & Wellbeing”, and is a District of “Opportunity & Growth”. All three priorities are of significance to the determination of planning applications and appeals. Below these priorities, the key actions which are of most relevance to planning applications and appeals are: (1) deliver the Local Plan; (2) increase tourism and increase employment at strategic sites; (3) develop our town centres; (4) protect our built heritage; (5) protect our natural environment; (6) promote environmental sustainability; (7) promote healthy place shaping; (8) deliver the Growth Deal; (9) delivery innovative and effective housing schemes; and (10) deliver affordable housing.

The remaining key actions may also be of significance to the determination of planning applications and appeals depending on the issues raised.

The above corporate priorities are considered to be fully compliant with the policy and guidance contained within the National Planning Policy Framework and National Planning Practice Guidance.

## 8. APPRAISAL

### Relevant Background

- 8.1. An outline application that proposed: “A new settlement of 1075 dwellings, together with associated works and facilities including employment uses, community uses, school, playing fields and other physical and social infrastructure (as amended by plans and information received 26.06.08).” was granted planning permission in 2010 following a major public inquiry (ref 08/00716/OUT).
- 8.2. The permission with regard to the flying field was implemented but a subsequent second application was submitted for the settlement area. That permission for a new settlement was granted in December 2011 (ref 10/01642/OUT). The permission was

in outline so details of layout, scale, appearance, landscaping and access (the reserved matters) had to be submitted within a period of six years.

- 8.3. The appeal and subsequent planning decisions have already been taken into account by the Council as part of its Local Plan and the development of former RAF Upper Heyford is seen as the major single location for growth in the District away from Banbury and Bicester. Furthermore, in the CLP 2031 Part 1, additional sites were allocated for development in and around Heyford. Since then much work has been undertaken by the applicants to create a masterplan for Heyford Park in line with Policy Villages 5 of the CLP 2031 and an application (ref 18/00825/HYBRID) has now been submitted to achieve that.
- 8.4. Extensive discussions have been had earlier in the process for the design codes and pre app advice has been given about the architectural form and detail of the parcels subject of this application. As the site is located within the RAF Upper Heyford Conservation Area it is critical that the development reinforces and enhances the character of this area. Many of the residential buildings across the wider Heyford site were built in the early 20th century and have a character that can be best described as a simple / pared back Arts and Crafts character and that has been the main theme for the housing on phase 5.
- 8.5. It is repeated that this application site, together with the other three being dealt with concurrently at Heyford Park, already benefits from a current permission but as the applicant states in their Planning Statement: “The key difference is not therefore the use to which the land is put, but rather the manner and form in which the use is brought forward. The application proposals enable the ability to procure a more efficient use of these identified brownfield sites and to provide additional growth and housing delivery therein. Through the use of more efficient layouts and higher densities, the principle of additional development at this location fully accords with the identification of Heyford Park as a sustainable settlement within Policy Villages 5 and the desire to achieve the most efficient use of land as set out in Policy BSC 2 and NPPF paragraph 117. Alongside this development plan compliance, the taking of opportunities to provide additional growth and advanced housing delivery across a range of tenures within sustainable settlements and locations, fully embraces the objectives of the Oxfordshire Housing and Growth Deal (OHGD).”
- 8.6. The OHGD is the allocation by the Government in 2017 of £215 million of funding in order to support the planned delivery of 100,000 more houses in Oxfordshire, the funding contributing to affordable housing, accelerated housing delivery and infrastructure provision. In this case the application is one of four submitted as reserved matters to comply with the outline planning permission and provides in conjunction with other modifications to schemes at Heyford, including one full application ref 19/00446/F, an additional 41 units as part of the growth deal.
- 8.7. Turning to the detail of this application, Officers’ consider the following matters to be relevant to the determination of this application:
  - Planning Policy and Principle of Development;
  - Design, Layout. Density and Appearance;
  - Impact on Heritage Assets;
  - Affordable Housing;
  - Landscape Impact;
  - Accessibility, Highway Safety and Parking

## **Planning Policy and Principle of the Development**

- 8.8. This application seeks approval of reserved matters for a permission that predates the current NPPF and the adopted Cherwell Local Plan 2011-2031. Nevertheless, current policy considerations should be applied, and these are set out below.
- 8.9. Paragraph 11 of the NPPF makes it clear that there is a presumption in favour of sustainable development and that permission should be granted unless any adverse impact of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits when assessed against policies in the Framework taken as a whole. There remains a need to undertake a balancing exercise to examine any adverse impacts of a development that would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits of it and also the harm that would be caused by a particular scheme in order to see whether it can be justified. In carrying out the balancing exercise it is, therefore, necessary to take into account policies in the development plan as well as those in the Framework. It is also necessary to recognise that Section 38 of the Act continues to require decisions to be made in accordance with the development plan and the Framework highlights the importance of the plan led system as a whole.
- 8.10. The Development Plan for Cherwell District comprises the saved policies in the adopted Cherwell Local Plan 1996 and the adopted Cherwell Local Plan 2011-2031. The Mid-Cherwell Neighbourhood Plan also forms part of the Development Plan for the area. Section 70(2) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 provides that in dealing with applications for planning permission the local planning authority shall have regards to the provisions of the development plan in so far as is material to the application and to any material considerations. Section 38 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that if regard is to be had to the development plan for the purpose of any determination to be made under the Planning Acts, the determination shall be made in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. This is also reflected in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) at paragraph 12 which makes it clear that the starting point for decision making is the development plan.
- 8.11. Policy Villages 5 of the CLP identifies the former military base as a strategic site in the rural area for a new settlement. The land subject of this application is identified within that policy as part of a potential development area. The policy seeks to achieve a settlement of approximately 1600 dwellings in addition to those already approved. The policy also goes on to lay down specific design and place making principles including avoiding development on more sensitive and historically significant sites, retain features that are important for the character and appearance of the site, encourage biodiversity enhancement, environmentally improve areas, integrate the new and existing communities and remove structures that do not make a positive contribution to the site's special character.
- 8.12. The plans and supporting documentation demonstrate its conformity with the development plan. The significant elements are:
- Provision of further housing in order to meet the housing target and trajectory
  - Provision of over 30% affordable housing on the additional housing
  - A satisfactory mix of dwellings including smaller units
  - The environmental improvement of the locality
  - A commitment to quality design and finishes reflective of the style seen at RAF Heyford
  - Scale and massing of new buildings to reflect their context
  - Integration and connectivity to the surrounding development
  - Retention and reinforcement of the main hedging and trees

- 8.13. The main issues will be discussed in more detail below but in principle the application is seen to conform to Policy Villages 5.

### **Design, Layout, Density and Appearance**

- 8.14. In the supporting documentation submitted to accompany the application, the scheme is assessed against the approved Design Code in order to ensure the design is consistent, compliant and sympathetic to the Design Code's objectives. Within the Design Code, Phase 5C falls within Character Area 2 – Village Centre Residential (CA2). It requires:

“High/medium density housing generally facing Camp Road in short terraces and semi-detached houses, providing a transition between the greater massing of the Village Centre (CA1) and Village Green and the lower density Camp Road to the east and west (CA4). Design objectives include:

- greater presence along Camp Road, providing a clear transition to the Village Centre area;
- provide wide verges and mature tree planting, which provide scale to Camp Road and perpetuate the tree lined character;
- The area provides an interface to a number of existing built areas, including the opportunity of providing a new more attractive entrance to Carswell Circle;
- To the north west of the character area, new development will take full account of the scale of the existing hangars.”

- 8.15. The layout of the proposed development complies with the indicative Building Density Plan for CA2 as well as the Indicative Building Heights Plan, with 3 storey proposed to Camp Road, dropping to 2 storey on the side road. A density of 48dph is provided which is slightly above the upper target densities for CA2 but factors for this are a significant number of apartments, the absence of POS and play areas on this parcel, and the need to balance the density of this small parcel with those of the surrounding area. It is in any case local plan compliant.
- 8.16. The three storey units fronting Camp Road together with the corner apartment building, provide a strong presence and visual continuity with the adjacent Phase 5 proposals and to the village green, enhanced by the use of parking to the rear and with the step down to two storeys on the side road. There are active street frontages through movement at building entrances and visibility through fenestration. The design code for this area required taller buildings to emphasise its scale and character which is transitional between the commercial centre and the surrounding residential estate.
- 8.17. The building heights plan suggests 2 to 3 storeys but predominantly 2.5 storeys. The scale is broken to some extent by the gable end of roof facing the road. Although this does not appear in the design assessment it definitely appears that the architect has done this to reflect the appearance of the nearby A frame hangars with their crocodile teeth roof structure.
- 8.18. In terms of design, the houses fronting Camp Road appear rather plain but this reflects the pared down military style that existed previously on the wider site. The flatted building on the corner is a different style completely with a strong vertical emphasis created by use of fenestration and contrasting materials.

- 8.19. The only discordant note in the street scene is the sub station adjacent the entrance to the apartment's courtyard car park. It is being constructed to a previously agreed format, using sympathetic materials and in the previously agreed position, indeed it is difficult to find a more suitably accessible location. Other ancillary outbuildings are limited to cycle shed and refuse store for the apartment block. The Refuse Plan identifies that each house will be provided with dedicated refuse and recycling storage areas, positioned to the rear of each unit; this arrangement will allow residents to store refuse containers away from public frontages, thereby enhancing the street scene.
- 8.20. The buildings materials are drawn from a simple palette of red brick (Ibstock Audley Red or similar) and grey slate (Marley 'Rivendale' or similar). This limited palette of materials reflects the 20th Century Art and Crafts Architecture with a maximum of 3-4 finishes on a single elevational composition.
- 8.21. The majority of the frontages are open in line with its previous military character. Details of boundary treatment are generally satisfactory. On Camp Road there are verges with formal tree planting, again, in line with the design code.
- 8.22. Having carefully considered the proposals Officers are content that the above assessment is correct and that the design approach proposed, including density, is compliant with the Design Code for Heyford. The proposals will safeguard the character and appearance of the Conservation Area and they comply with the principles set down in Policy Villages 5 and ESD 15, and CLP96 policies C28 and C30 for design and place shaping.

### **Impact on Heritage Assets**

- 8.23. Phase 5C is on the southern side of Camp Road at the heart of the Conservation Area. On the application site the existing buildings have been demolished.
- 8.24. It can be seen from the plan below, copied from the Conservation Appraisal, that no heritage assets on Phase 5C are listed or scheduled. However, in the Technical Area but outside the application site are a number of buildings that whilst not listed are of local significance, namely Buildings 74, 52, 100, 103, 125 and 151. Beyond the semi-circulatory road to the west are the scheduled Hardened Telephone Exchange (129) and beyond that, the Battle Command Centre (126).
- 8.25. Turning to the guidance to Planning Authority's contained in the Framework and the NPPG on the historic environment, the applicants have assessed the site's heritage assets and their significance. The applicants have submitted supporting documentation to assess the heritage assets affected by this application. They conclude the site is..."cleared of any of the former buildings and has the character of a brownfield development parcel." And "the proposed layout and associated works would preserve the character and appearance of the Conservation Area as a whole in accordance with legislation, and national and local planning guidance."
- 8.26. The assessment of the site in its broader context and impact on the Conservation Area also goes back to the 2006 Landscape Assessment which considered the area to be of low significance, a view reinforced by the Environmental Statements submitted with the two outline applications approved at appeal in 2010 and subsequently consented in 2011. The main elements of significance were for Phase 5C the trees but these are not on this part of Phase 5C. For information these are maintained and reinforced as part of other applications thus preserving and enhancing the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.



- 8.27. Section 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (as amended) states that in carrying out its functions as the Local Planning Authority in respect of development in a conservation area: special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area. Para 192 (formerly 131) of the Framework advises: “In determining planning 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”.
- 8.28. Para 193 and 194 (formerly para 132) go on to advise: “When considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset’s conservation. The more important the asset, the greater the weight should be. Significance can be harmed or lost through alteration or destruction of the heritage asset or development within its setting. As heritage assets are irreplaceable, any harm or loss should require clear and convincing justification. Substantial harm to or loss of a grade II listed building, park or garden should be exceptional. Substantial harm to or loss of designated heritage assets of the highest significance, notably scheduled monuments, protected wreck sites, battlefields, grade I and II\* listed buildings, grade I and II\* registered parks and gardens, and World Heritage Sites, should be wholly exceptional.”
- 8.29. These views have already been tested at appeal albeit under a slightly different scenario, and also when application 17/00973/REM for reserved matters was previously submitted for the parcel, and by the Council when it drew up development guidelines for the former base. In all cases it was considered that it is not only the built form that contributes to the special character of the conservation area, but the significant spaces and the relationships of buildings that frame them. These often functional relationships also assist with an understanding of how the air base worked. The retention of such spaces not only retains a link with the past, it will assist with creating a legible place and one with a sense of distinctiveness. These

key spaces have been retained and incorporated into the master plan for the new settlement including the trident road layout that forms the basis of the layout of the technical core fanning out from the main entrance. This road layout was the mainstay of Sir Hugh Trenchard's plan for the development of the site in the 1920s. It reinforces the importance of the Guard House and Station Offices, provides an instantly legible movement pattern amidst a disparate collection of buildings, enjoys substantial avenue tree planting within a campus style layout and was considered to be easy to integrate into the new settlement. These main assets are retained and enhanced in the current schemes and it is the spaces in between that were seen as suitable for development, none of the remaining physical structures being so significant to be worthy of retention.

- 8.30. Furthermore, under para 195 (formerly para 133) of the Framework, the Authority also has to consider if there is substantial harm or loss of an asset whether “substantial public benefits are achieved; the nature of the heritage asset prevents all reasonable uses of the site; and no viable use of the heritage asset itself can be found in the medium term through appropriate marketing that will enable its conservation; and conservation by grant-funding or some form of charitable or public ownership is demonstrably not possible; and the harm or loss is outweighed by the benefit of bringing the site back into use.” In this case the applicants have not been asked to look at alternative uses for the buildings as their loss is not considered to cause significant harm. It is also considered the development of housing at Heyford provides substantial public benefit both in terms of securing optimum viable use of the site, meeting the five-year housing land supply and the provision of affordable accommodation.
- 8.31. The Framework goes on to say a balanced judgement will be required by the Planning Authority having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of heritage assets and in this case Officers have concluded that what is proposed still provides an opportunity for an appropriate level of new development that overall makes a positive contribution to preserve and enhance the character of the Conservation Area and does not cause harm to any individual asset listed on site. It is concluded the proposal complies with the parameters of the outline permission, the relevant details of the Design Code and the policies of the development plan relating to the historic environment.

### **Affordable Housing**

- 8.32. This application seeks full permission for the erection of 13 residential units of which 8 would be for affordable rent provided by way of the following mix:

<b>Affordable Housing - Rented</b>	
<b>No. of Beds</b>	<b>No. of Units</b>
1	4
2	4
Sub-Total	8
<b>Total Market Housing</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Total Affordable Housing</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>GRAND TOTAL</b>	<b>13</b>

- 8.33. During processing of the application, following representations by the Strategic Housing Officer, revised plans have been produced to incorporate a M4 Category 3 – Wheelchair unit at Plot 26 in line with Officer comments.

- 8.34. The Council's policy for affordable housing is set out in CLP Policy BSC3. Policy Villages 5 for Heyford sets out a requirement for at least 30% provision. This site actually provides 62% and is therefore compliant with the CLP. This is of course not a stand-alone application and the provision of the affordable apartment block skews the overall calculation which should be borne in mind when considering other applications when they are considered.
- 8.35. The proposed development has been designed to not only be policy compliant in its own right but also to complement the overall number, type and range of sizes of affordable units within the Heyford Park development in line with Local Plan Policies BSC3, BSC4 and Policy Villages 5. Notwithstanding this predominant development plan compliance, the level of affordable housing provision exceeds policy requirements, bringing forward additional and tangible opportunities to deliver increased levels of affordable housing, thereby providing additionality in direct accordance with the overarching aims and objectives of the Oxfordshire Housing and Growth Deal, advanced by the Government. The proposed development will therefore assist in delivering an inclusive and mixed community in accordance with central Government and local objectives and, accordingly, is considered acceptable in this regard.

### **Landscape Impact**

- 8.36. The landscape setting is an important part of the proposed character of the area. There are no important trees within site but the principle has been established which this scheme follows to continue the verge and significant trees along Camp Road with further planting along the rear boundary. These should form an attractive feature framing of the site. Further landscaping is provided through the layout. The applicant has set up a management company responsible for maintenance of the landscaping at Heyford Park. This keeps control of some of the hedging and trees out of the domain of the individual householder and an adoption plan illustrates this.

### **Traffic, Access and Parking**

- 8.37. The development follows the masterplan and the Design Code in terms of the access arrangements from Camp Road with shared accesses between properties. The aim of the design code is to promote a greater continuity of frontage and considers rear parking acceptable here. Each house has two parking spaces. The flats have access to thirteen parking spaces. Visitor parking is provided to the rear within the courtyard. Plans of the tracking have been submitted and although objected to by the County Council they are similar to before. The County recommend the use of conditions if the scheme is approved.
- 8.38. The site will benefit from being adjacent to the primary route for the bus service. It is also close or adjacent to the proposed village centre, school and other services are reasonably close and therefore this part of the development site is an accessible and sustainable one as required by Policy Villages 5. The layout and level of parking reflects the standard set out in the Design Code. Cycle parking is provided in stores for the flats and sheds for the houses.

## **9. PLANNING BALANCE AND CONCLUSION**

- 9.1. The NPPF states that the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. Paragraph 8 requires that the three dimensions to sustainable development (economic, social and environmental) are not undertaken in isolation, but are sought jointly and simultaneously.



- 9.2. It is considered this scheme will now form an area of a distinct character broadly reflecting the design coding for the site. The houses have a variety of designs reflecting the arts and crafts style and military style seen elsewhere and reflecting the character of Heyford. Taken together they form an appropriate form of development. They provide a decent standard of amenity inside and outside the dwellings. The scheme will provide a significant number of affordable units as well as more housing in total. Whilst the objection from OCC Highways is noted, the proposed arrangement is similar to that previously approved and the level of potential harm identified is not considered significant enough to justify refusing consent. It is therefore recommended these reserved matters are approved.

#### **10. RECOMMENDATION**

That reserved matters consent is granted, subject to conditions.

Case Officer: Andrew Lewis

DATE: 2.09.2019.

Checked By: Alex Keen

DATE: 13.09.2019

---