

**BICESTER HERITAGE
(FORMER RAF BICESTER)**

CONSTRUCTION OF NEW BIN STORE



**DESIGN AND ACCESS
STATEMENT**

Incorporating Heritage Statement

February 2019

**NICK COX ARCHITECTS
77 HEYFORD PARK UPPER HEYFORD OXON OX25 5HD**

CONTENTS

| | |
|---------------------------------|---|
| Introduction | 2 |
| Understanding | 2 |
| General Description | |
| Outline History of RAF Bicester | |
| Statutory Listing | |
| Ecological | |
| Planning Policies | |
| Relevant Planning History | |
| Consultation | |
| Design | 4 |
| Access | 5 |
| Summary | 5 |
| Heritage Statement | 6 |

Appendix A - Listing Description for Buildings 146 and 147

Appendix B - List of Relevant Planning History

INTRODUCTION

The following Design and Access Statement has been prepared to accompany the Listed Building Consent Application for the “*creation of 1 no bin store adjacent to Building 146*” located at Bicester Heritage, Buckingham Road, Bicester, OX26 5HA.

UNDERSTANDING

General Description

RAF Bicester is located to the north of Bicester in Oxfordshire. The site, as a whole, is considered to be a prime example of a military airbase reflecting pre-1930s military aviation and comprises the best-preserved bomber airfield representative of the bomber stations built as part of Sir Hugh Trenchard’s Home Defence Expansion Scheme in the 1920s.

Since acquiring the airbase in 2013, Bicester Heritage have already successfully implemented several phases of works to convert many of the existing buildings into usable workshops for businesses to create a Centre for Motoring and Aviation Excellence.

This application seeks permission to create an enclosed bin store adjacent and alter the existing WCs adjacent to Building 146 and 147.

Outline History of RAF Bicester

1918-1919: The airfield at Bicester was originally used as a training station for the Royal Flying Corps. Following closure shortly after opening, it re-opened on 1 October 1918 as home of 44 Training Depot Service, where pilots were prepared for service on the front line in France. The squadron returned in February 1919 and was disbanded; the 44 Training Depot Squadron was also disbanded in January 1920. The station closed in March 1920, following which, the entire camp was demolished.

1924-1934: Under Sir Hugh Trenchard, the country’s defensive structure was reviewed and in 1925, the ‘Air Defence of Great Britain’ strategy was introduced. Work was started on the reconstruction of the abandoned bases at Bicester and Upper Heyford, located 7 miles to the west of Bicester. Whilst proposals at Upper Heyford were fully implemented, the development at Bicester was reduced following deceleration of military development and a review of Trenchard’s proposals in 1930; subsequently only two of the six proposed type-C hangers were built.

1934-1939: Following the collapse of the Geneva disarmament talks in 1933, the RAF expansion scheme got underway. RAF Bicester saw extensive alterations to many of the existing buildings along with the construction of several new types, including Petrol Tanker Sheds, an Ambulance garage, two large type-C aircraft hangers, Watch office and Tower and bomb stores. It is likely that it was during this period that Building 103 was built, to the standardised plans produced by the Air Ministry.

1940-1945: Following the outbreak of World War II, the station’s role changed its focus

towards training. The outset of the conflict saw the construction of many pillboxes and trenches for close defence of the airfield and the airfield was enlarged. Due to the compact nature of RAF Bicester and lack of concrete runways, it was unsuitable for night flying and occasionally became the subject of unserviceability. Alternative landing grounds at Hinton-in-the-Hedges and Croughton were brought into use. The airbase continued its use for training and in 1943 primarily became used for storing vital equipment necessary for the invasion of north-west Europe.

2013-today: Bicester Heritage purchased the site in 2013. In 2015, following significant restoration works, the site's designation of 'at risk' was removed under the ownership of Bicester Heritage. Bicester Heritage currently operates as a centre of excellence for historic vehicles and is home to over 40 businesses and over 200 skilled workers.

Statutory Listing

- The Technical site, domestic site and airfield are all designated as a conservation area - RAF Bicester.
- A number of the buildings located about Bicester Heritage are listed at Grade II.
- Building 146 and 147 are listed Grade II (English Heritage ref: 1393034); the listing entry can be found in Appendix A.

Planning policies

The proposal aligns with the following policies adopted by Cherwell District Council.

Relevant Local policies identified in the Non-statutory Cherwell Local Plan 2011:

- EN40
- EN44
- EN45A
- EN48
- EN49A
- EN51

Relevant policies listed within the Adopted Local Plan 2011-2031:

- Policy Bicester 8: Former RAF Bicester
- Paragraphs C.89 - C.93

Relevant Planning History

Having reviewed the online records held by Cherwell District Council, the most relevant planning history to the development proposal is outlined in the table in Appendix B.

The approved permissions that have been implemented have been delivered to a high standard. It is noted that the site has an extensive planning history since disposal from military use and ownership took effect.

Consultation

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.

Discussions prior to the submission of this application have taken place with officers during 2018. All were generally supportive of the opportunity to find a suitable reuse of the various structures and buildings, subject to the proposed level of intervention required.

DESIGN

This application is in regard to the following works:

- The addition of a new brick enclosure adjacent to Building 146 (listed Grade II) to create bin storage and alteration to an existing door and window to create access to an accessible WC.

New bin storage between Buildings 146 and 147 (Operations Block)

Proposal: the construction of a new brick enclosure along an existing wall with timber louvered doors to provide storage for commercial wheelie bins; alteration of an existing window and door to create access to a proposed accessible WC in the existing WC block.

Buildings 146 and 147 are listed Grade II, however, both are in need of significant repair. The buildings are not currently used. There are no works being proposed to these buildings as part of this application.

The bin store enclosure is to be of red brick construction, to match the aesthetics of the bricks around the site, with two pairs of green painted timber louvered doors to provide access; the doors will provide natural ventilation to the internal space. Additional air bricks are to be integrated into the new enclosing walls. A bitumen roof is to be constructed over the new enclosure; this is to be built in connection to the replacement of the existing roof over the adjoining currently unused WC.

The easternmost window, in the adjoining WC block, is to be removed and the existing opening altered to create a 1m wide doorway and a narrower window. A new painted timber door and frame is to be fitted into the altered door opening; a new metal casement window, to match the details of the existing, is to be fitted into the reformed window opening; the window is to contain privacy glass. The existing adjacent timber door (leading to additional WC's) is to be replaced on a like-for-like basis. New sanitaryware and walls and floor finishes are to be installed.

The palette of materials and scale of the proposed bin enclosure is considered to be in keeping with the existing fabric and result in minimal impact to the overall aesthetics of listed buildings 146 and 147; the overall presentation of the area by concealing bins, which are currently stored in this location, will be greatly improved.

ACCESS

The site has existing level vehicular access and external parking spaces. The proposals will utilise the existing access to and around the Technical Site and will not increase or decrease the number of parking spaces available.

Generally, the proposals seek to create level access internally to all buildings and structures.

SUMMARY

The proposed development is in accordance with Policy Bicester 8. It is sensitive to, and will help to preserve, the historic fabric and layout of the existing building and wider site.

The proposed development is in accordance with other policies of the Development Plan, including, Policy SLE1 (Employment Development) BSC7

The proposed development will facilitate the proposed use and the alterations are considered to be of an appropriate scale and to respect the character of the area in accordance with Policy SLE1 (Employment Development).

The proposed development will deliver high quality design that complements the asset and is in accordance with Policy ESD15 (Character of Built and Historic Environment).

Therefore, in accordance with Policy PSD1 (Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development) and having regard to paragraph 14 of the NPPF the proposed development should be approved without delay.

The space between buildings 146 and 147 is currently used for the storing of commercial bins; their presence results in the area looking untidy. The proposed alterations will allow for concealing the bins, enhancing the appearance of the area, in addition to providing new facilities for staff and visitors to use as part of the continuing growth of Bicester Heritage.

The proposals have been developed so that their various proposed uses fit well with the historic setting of the wider site, whilst also meeting the physical and functional requirements set by the client.

HERITAGE STATEMENT (for bin store between buildings I46 & I47)

Buildings I46 and I47 are both in a derelict condition. No works are being proposed to these buildings within this application.

The proposed bin store is located on the north side of a large masonry blast wall which is located between (but not attached to) the two listed buildings.

The existing WC block is unused and in a derelict condition. The space to the east of the WC's is currently open and used for the locating of a number of large commercial wheelie bins.

There is evidence of a former half brick wall and roof at the east end of the blast wall. The new end wall of the proposed bin store is to be built in the same location of the former wall. The new roof is to be a continuation of the existing WC block.

The large dividing blast wall could be considered to contribute to the setting of the adjacent buildings, however is itself of low significance. The WC block is also of low significance and is currently boarded up and unused.

The proposals seek to rejuvenate the WC block and tidy up the presentation of the rest of the elevation. The proposed materials are sympathetic to the existing palette of materials around the site.

Whilst the alteration of the existing window, to form a door and narrow window, in addition to building a new enclosure, will result in the loss of a small amount of fabric and alter the appearance of the blast wall; it is considered that the benefit brought about by tidying up the presentation of the area and providing usable facilities on site, outweighs any harm to the significance of the adjacent buildings.

APPENDIX A

Listing Description for Buildings 146 and 147 (Station Offices and Operation Block)

SP5924 A 421 (SOUTH-EAST SIDE) 1714/0/10061 RAF Bicester: Technical Site 01-DEC-05
Building Nos 146 and 147 (Station offices and Operation Block)

GV II

Station administrative offices (147) with attached Operations Block. Dated 1926. By the Air Ministry's Directorate of Works and Buildings, to drawing number 1443/24 (147) and 1161/24 (146). Dark red brickwork in English bond, hipped asbestos-cement slate roofs.

PLAN: The forward office building, in 2 storeys with part basement, is a long rectangular range with slightly brought forward hipped pavilion ends to a central entrance leading to entrance hall, with transverse internal corridor, and taken through with a link passageway, to the separate operations range in one storey, set parallel with the main building across narrow courtyards. The traversed brick wall around the operations block has been removed.

EXTERIOR: Main front in 2+3+2 bays, with steel casements in 2 lights with transom and mullion, to flush concrete lintels with slight stopped chamfer, and stooled sills. The recessed centre has 2/2-panel doors and over-light flanked by casements, and under a verandah with later corrugated asbestos-cement roof to hipped returns carried on 4 square concrete slightly chamfered posts to bases and wide impost heads. Above this a central bulls-eye light flanked by small casements; this section has a flat roof at eaves level. The right return has 3 and the left 2 casements at each floor, and the plain rear has regular close-set windows. To the right of the door is a small ridge stack. All quoins have brick rustication.

A simple low corridor with pitched roof connects to the long hipped operations building, in 10 bays with tall casements, and 2 on each return. There is some later infill between the blocks. Both ranges have exposed rafters to open eaves.

INTERIOR: Retains original joinery including panelled doors, circular aperture to camera obscura. Dog-leg stairs with iron balusters and wreathed handrail.

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. Sited at the main gate, facing the Guardhouse (qv) across the main avenue, this building fulfilled both a key operational and administrative function - one that lent it a degree of architectural treatment only also afforded to the Guardhouse. It comprises one of the first examples of permanent designs for Britain's independent air force, part of a uniquely important site.

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).

Heritage Category:

Listing

List Entry No :

1393034

Grade:

II

County: Oxfordshire**District:** Cherwell**Parish:** Launton

For all entries pre-dating 4 April 2011 maps and national grid references do not form part of the official record of a listed building. In such cases the map here and the national grid reference are generated from the list entry in the official record and added later to aid identification of the principal listed building or buildings.

For all list entries made on or after 4 April 2011 the map here and the national grid reference do form part of the official record. In such cases the map and the national grid reference are to aid identification of the principal listed building or buildings only and must be read in conjunction with other information in the record.

Any object or structure fixed to the principal building or buildings and any object or structure within the curtilage of the building, which, although not fixed to the building, forms part of the land and has done so since before 1st July, 1948 is by law to be treated as part of the listed building.

This map was delivered electronically and when printed may not be to scale and may be subject to distortions.

List Entry NGR:

SP 59066 24382

Map Scale:

1:2500

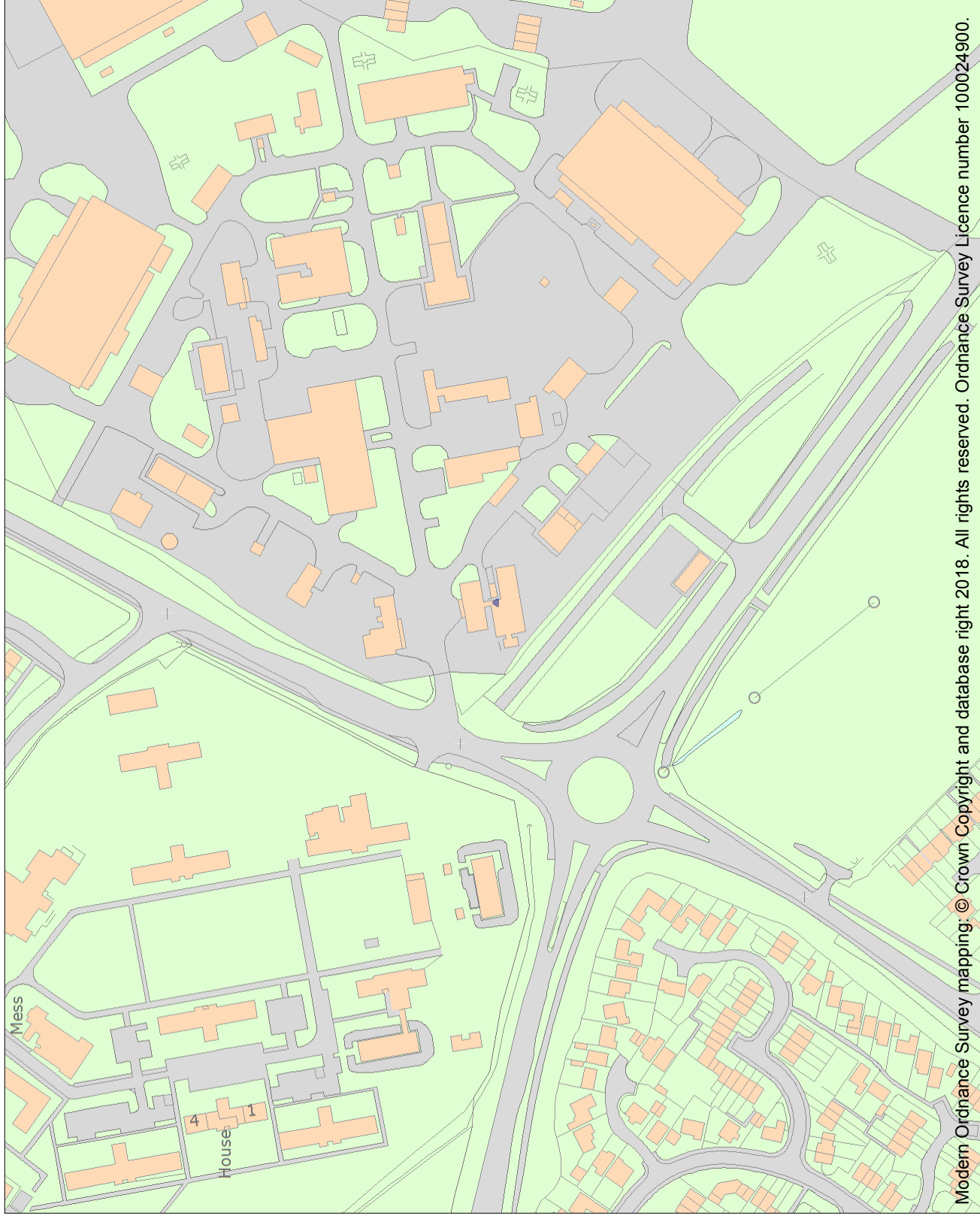
Print Date:

17 January 2019



Historic England

HistoricEngland.org.uk



Modern Ordnance Survey mapping: © Crown Copyright and database right 2018. All rights reserved. Ordnance Survey Licence number 100024900.

This is an A4 sized map and should be printed full size at A4 with no page scaling set.

Name: BUILDING NOS 146 AND 147 (STATION OFFICES AND OPERATION BLOCK)

APPENDIX B

List of Relevant Planning History

| Reference | Description | Decision |
|------------------|--|-------------------------------------|
| 18/01333/F | Extension to existing Technical Site to provide new employment units comprising flexible B1(c) light industrial, B2 (general industrial), B8 (storage or distribution) uses with ancillary offices, storage, display and sales, together with associated access, parking and landscaping. | Awaiting Decision |
| 18/01253/F | Erection of hotel and conference facility with associated access, parking, and landscaping. | Awaiting Decision |
| 17/00541/DISC | Discharge of Condition 4 (plans for buildings 129 and 131) of 16/01806/LB. | Application Permitted 21/12/2017 |
| 17/00540/DISC | Discharge of Condition 4 (plans for buildings 129 and 131) of 16/01805/F | Application Permitted 21/12/2017 |
| 17/02490/F | Variation of condition 8 (permitted uses) to include B1c (light industrial use), sui generis (showroom/workshop use) and ancillary A3 use to building 129 (retrospective); and variation of conditions 16 and 17 (to revise the timeframe for the installation of the new access) of planning permission 17/02312/F. | Application Permitted 04/05/2018 |
| 17/02312/F | Variation of Condition 14 of 16/01805/F - For Buildings 131 and 135 only. | Application Permitted 09/02/2018 |
| 16/01805/F | Change of use of buildings from sui generis MOD use to various commercial uses as detailed in accompanying Planning Statement with associated physical works and demolition of buildings 101 and 104 and erection of replacement structures. | Application Permitted 25/09/2017 |
| 16/01806/LB | Physical works to buildings 79, 108, 113, 123, 129, 130, 131, 135 and 137 to enable restoration and conversion to commercial use. | Application Permitted 25/09/2017 |
| 15/00820/F | Change of use of building 105 from sui generis MOD use to class B1 workshops and offices, class B8 storage and ancillary class A1 use for the sale of heritage motoring and aviation goods to include associated equipment, supplies, sundries, memorabilia and literature. | Application Permitted 25/02/2016 |

| | | |
|-------------|---|-------------------------------------|
| 15/00616/F | Variation of Condition 2 of 14/00772/F to allow for Minor Material Amendments to approved scheme and variation of Condition 8 to enable the building to be used for BI purposes and/or vehicle sales with ancillary residential accommodation. | Application Permitted 25/02/2016 |
| 15/00611/F | Change of use of building 92 from MOD use (sui generis) to class B1 (office) and B8 (storage use), change of use of building 93 from MOD use to vehicle showroom (sui generis) and change of use of building 94 from MOD use to class B1 workshops and offices, class B8 storage and ancillary class A1 use for the sale of heritage motoring and aviation goods to include associated equipment, supplies, sundries, memorabilia and literature. | Application Permitted 25/02/2016 |
| 15/00612/LB | Internal and external alterations to building 92. | Application Permitted 25/02/2016 |
| 15/00523/F | Change of use of building from sui generis Ministry of Defence use to B1(c) light industrial use with associated internal and external alterations and landscaping. | Application Permitted 29/06/2015 |
| 14/02065/LB | Change of use from Ministry of Defence to B1/A1 including structural repairs and alterations. | Application Permitted 20/02/2015 |
| 14/01759/F | Change of use from Ministry of Defence to B1/A1 including structural repairs and alterations. | Application Permitted 30/12/2014 |
| 14/01430/F | Material change of use from Ministry of Defence use to B1 use, including minor structural alterations and a new build extension. | Application Permitted 24/10/2014 |
| 14/01448/F | Change of use from Ministry of Defence use to B1 including minor structural repairs. | Application Permitted 21/10/2014 |
| 14/00454/F | Material change of use of Ministry of Defence workshop use to office and workshop use. | Application Permitted 13/05/2014 |