

Cherwell District Council

Planning Committee

1 September 2016

Heritage Partnership Agreement (HPA) - RAF Bicester

Report of Head of Development Management

This report is public

Purpose of Report

The present the HPA for the agreement of Planning Committee

Recommendations

The meeting is recommended:

- (1) To recommend that the Executive approve the HPA

Executive Summary

Introduction

- 1.1 The Enterprise and Regulatory Reform Act 2013 sets out the option for a local planning authority to make an agreement (Heritage Partnership Agreement ("HPA")) with any owner of a listed building under Section 26A of the amended Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.
- 1.2 It was envisaged that this type of agreement would make provision for the granting of listed building consent ("LBC") as well as specifying any conditions to which the consent is subject.
- 1.3 The idea behind the introduction of HPAs was to streamline the often time-consuming and sometime expensive process of obtaining LBCs, especially when the listed buildings are part of a group of similar structures where it might reasonably be anticipated that similar works of repair, for example, would be required.

Background Information

- 1.4 The military airbase at RAF Bicester is the quintessential airfield of its age; almost better than any other site it typifies the public perception of the World War II airfield.
- 1.5 The site began life as a Flying Corps aerodrome towards the end of the First World War. Construction of the RAF station we see today began in earnest in 1925. Construction continued through the inter-war years and was still underway at the outbreak of hostilities in 1939.

- 1.6 RAF Bicester was decommissioned in 1994 when the offices and military hospital in use by the United States Air Force in Europe closed its operations.
- 1.7 In 2002 Cherwell District Council (“CDC”) designated the airbase as a conservation area. This area was extended in 2008 to include: the domestic site (west of Buckingham Road); the pre-war married airmen’s housing (adjacent to the domestic site); the former officers’ mess (Cherwood House on the Buckingham Road); the technical site (east of Buckingham Road); the flying field; defence structures (east of the airfield).
- 1.8 In March 2013 the technical site, the flying field and the defence structures were acquired by Bicester Heritage with a view to their conversion into a national centre for historic motoring and aviation excellence.

Operational Details and Impact

- 1.9 The aim of the HPA is to facilitate the work of restoring the original RAF buildings.
- 1.10 This HPA has been prepared in order to provide a blanket vision for the technical site and flying field. Given that there are more than 60 existing buildings and structures on the technical site alone (of which more than 30 are listed, or designated SAMs) it will provide an agreed baseline among all stakeholders as to the nature of the repair works and interventions that are possible without the need for a series of LBC applications, which would prove time-consuming for all parties concerned and which, without the HPA, would otherwise be required for each proposal.

Implementation Options

- 1.11 Once approved the details within this HPA will be used as the guide to all future building and structure repairs thus alleviating the need for a series of applications thereby freeing up manpower within both CDC and providing Bicester Heritage with an unhindered opportunity to restore the buildings and structures on the site.

Key Issues for Consideration/Reasons for Decision and Options

- 2.1 To approve the HPA.

The following options have been identified. The approach in the recommendation is believed to be the best way forward

Option One To approve the HPA.

Option Two Not to approve the HPA.

Consultations

Consultation.

None / There has been consultation with other Local Planning Authorities to ascertain how other authorities have implemented similar programmes.

Implications

- Financial:** None arising directly from this report.
- Comments checked by:
George Hill, Corporate Finance Manager, 01295 221731
george.hill@cherwellandsouthnorthants.gov.uk
- Legal:** There are no additional legal implications arising for the Council from accepting this recommendation. The document has been prepared and completed in conjunction with Bicester Heritage.
- Comments checked by:
Chris Mace, Solicitor, 01327 322125, email:
Christopher.mace@cherwellandsouthnorthants.gov.uk
- Risk Management:** Lack of heritage guidance undermines the reputation of the Council as the Planning Authority for Cherwell District seeking high design and conservation standards. Without the HPA in place there is a risk of future unsympathetic alteration to the heritage asset.
- These risks will be monitored within the service operational risk register and escalated to the corporate risk register as and when necessary.
- Comments checked by Louise Tustian, Senior Performance & Improvement Officer 01295 221786.

Wards Affected

Launton & Otmoor

Corporate Plan Themes

Corporate Theme 6: Protect and enhance the local environment

Lead Member

Councillor Colin Clarke - Lead Member for Planning

Document Information

Annex No	Title
None	
Background Papers	
None	
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