

Dalton Barracks

Green Belt Review: Exceptional Circumstances Assessment; Dalton Barracks

by

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for

Vale of White Horse District Council

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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Instructions

1.1.1 Hankinson Duckett Associates has been appointed by the Vale of White Horse District Council to review the Green Belt criteria as set out in the NPPF that support the exceptional circumstances for development of a new settlement at Dalton Barracks, as a housing allocation within Local Plan Part 2 (See plan HDA 1). The assessment considers the following:

1. The National Planning Policy Framework, which sets out the guidance for revision to the Green Belt.
2. To summarise the exceptional circumstances to support the review of the Oxford Green Belt within the Vale of White Horse District.
3. The promotion of a sustainable pattern of development within the District, through the allocation of the Dalton Barracks site.
4. How the proposals comply with the National Planning Policy Framework and Planning Practice Guidance.
5. How the proposed amendment to the Green Belt boundary complies the guidance within the National Planning Policy Framework.

2 GREEN BELT POLICY

2.1 National Green Belt Policy

2.1.1 National Green Belt Policy is set out in National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF – Ref 1), ‘Protecting Green Belt Land’. The key paragraphs relevant to Local Councils when considering the removal of land from the Green Belt as part of the Local plan process are 79, 80, 83, 84 and 85. Paragraphs 81, and 87 – 89 are also relevant and are referenced within the report where appropriate.

2.1.2 Paragraph 79 of the NPPF states that: *‘The fundamental aim of Green Belt policy is to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open; the essential characteristics of Green Belts are their openness and their permanence.’* (Paragraph 79 of the National Planning Policy Framework – Ref 1). Chapter 9 of the NPPF sets out policies for ‘Protecting Green Belt Land’.

2.1.3 Paragraph 80 lists the five purposes of the Green Belt. These are:

1. *To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas;*
2. *To prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another;*
3. *To assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment;*
4. *To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns; and*
5. *To assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land.*

- 2.1.4 The Dalton Barracks allocation is assessed against the aims and purposes of the Green Belt in order to ascertain whether the proposed development has the potential to harm the wider Green belt designation. The performance of the site, in terms of the purposes and aims of the Green Belt is also compared with that of other potential Green Belt sites within the District.
- 2.1.5 Paragraph 83 states that:
'Local planning authorities with Green Belts in their area should establish Green Belt boundaries in their Local Plans which set the framework for Green Belt and settlement policy. Once established, Green Belt boundaries should only be altered in exceptional circumstances, through the preparation or review of the Local Plan. At that time, authorities should consider the Green Belt boundaries having regard to their intended permanence in the long term, so that they should be capable of enduring beyond the plan period.'
- 2.1.6 The Vale of White Horse District Council is in the process of drafting its Local Plan Part 2, which accords with paragraph 83. This report sets out the District Council's assessment of the exceptional circumstances, which pertain to the proposed Dalton Barracks allocation.
- 2.1.7 Paragraph 84 , states that:
'When drawing up or reviewing Green Belt boundaries local authorities should take account of the need to promote sustainable patterns of development.'
- 2.1.8 Paragraph 85 of the NPPF sets out the parameters for setting new Green Belt boundaries:
'When defining boundaries, local planning authorities should:
- ensure consistency with the Local Plan strategy for meeting identified requirements for sustainable development;*
 - not include land which it is unnecessary to keep permanently open;*
 - where necessary, identify in their plans areas of 'safeguarded land' between the urban area and the Green Belt, in order to meet longer-term development needs stretching well beyond the plan period;*
 - make clear that the safeguarded land is not allocated for development at the present time. Planning permission for the permanent development of safeguarded land should only be granted following a Local Plan review which proposes the development;*
 - satisfy themselves that Green Belt boundaries will not need to be altered at the end of the development plan period; and*

- *define boundaries clearly, using physical features that are readily recognisable and likely to be permanent.'*

2.2 Local Green Belt Policy

2.2.1 The Vale of White Horse District Green Belt policy is set out within the Local Plan Part 1 in chapter 5, Core Policy 13: The Oxford Green Belt (Ref 3). The policy states that:
*'The Oxford Green Belt area in the Vale, as amended following the local Green Belt Review, will continue to be protected to maintain its openness and permanence...
 ...Proposals for inappropriate development will not be approved except in very special circumstances*...
 ...* 'Very special circumstances' will not exist unless the potential harm, is clearly outweighed by other considerations (NPPF, Paragraph 88).'*

2.2.2 Paragraph 5.43 of the Local Plan Part 1 states that:
'The local Green Belt Review undertaken does not preclude, and would inform any future Green Belt Review, should this be needed, to contribute to meeting any identified unmet housing need within the Oxfordshire Housing Market Area...'

3 SUMMARY OF GREEN BELT REVIEWS UNDERTAKEN WITHIN THE VALE OF WHITE HORSE DISTRICT

3.1 (Paragraph 83 of the NPPF)

3.1.1 The Planning Inspectors 'Report on the Examination into Vale of White Horse Local Plan Part 1' (November 2016 – Ref 2) recognised the need to provide sustainable housing development within the Oxford Green Belt, within the Abingdon-on-Thames / Oxford Fringe Sub Area:

'Within this Sub-Area there is very limited potential for housing development within the main settlements themselves and the built-up areas of Botley, Radley and Kennington are very closely bounded by Green Belt, as are the eastern, northern and western sides of Abingdon. Whilst land to the south of Abingdon is outside the Green Belt, access difficulties and potential flooding render its development for housing highly problematic. Moreover, whilst some new housing is appropriate to support the villages in the south and western parts of the Abingdon-on-Thames and Oxford Fringe sub-area (which lie beyond the Green Belt), given their distance from, and limited public transport links with, Abingdon, Botley and Oxford they would not be a sustainable location to provide for the majority of the sub-area's housing requirement, much of which is likely to arise from people currently living in Abingdon and Botley.'

This rationale remains relevant for the allocations within Local Plan Part 2, particularly with regard to Oxford's unmet need.

3.1.2 Paragraph 83 of the NPPF states that '*Green Belt boundaries should only be altered in exceptional circumstances, through the preparation or review of the Local Plan*'. Through the submission of the Vale of White Horse Local Plan Part 2, the District Council are proposing to allocate the proposed Dalton Barracks site, for the provision of a new settlement and seek to inset the proposed allocation from the Green Belt. This general approach was supported by the Inspector when reviewing the proposed changes to the Green Belt within Local Plan Part 1 (Ref 2).

3.1.3 The Inspector's report stated that:
'It is the case that the NPPF identifies Green Belt as a constraint which may prevent an authority from meeting its objectively assessed needs for housing. However, national policy does not prohibit an authority from revising Green Belt boundaries subject to it being done in exceptional circumstances, through a local plan and having regard to the need to promote sustainable patterns of development. I therefore do not accept the argument that a revision of the Green belt boundaries is inherently unsustainable. Moreover, whilst a Ministerial Written Statement has indicated that unmet housing needs are unlikely to represent the very special circumstances necessary to justify inappropriate development in the Green Belt, the very special circumstances test concerns planning applications, not the removal of land from the Green Belt in a local plan.' (para85, Ref 2).

3.1.4 Within the Local Plan Part 1 submission, Vale of White Horse District Council had proposed to remove further areas of land from the Green Belt, to allow for housing to come forward as Part 2 of the Local Plan or within Neighbourhood Plans. Whilst this strategy was not endorsed by the Inspector, it is made clear in the Inspector's report that '*Retaining these parcels of land in the Green Belt now would not prevent their deletion from Green Belt through the 'Part 2' plan or any other local plan or local plan review, if the necessary exceptional circumstances were to be demonstrated.*' (Para 91 – Ref 5). This statement supports the District Council's decision to consider further sustainable development options, within the Green Belt, including the Dalton Barracks allocation, as part of Local Plan Part 2.

4. THE EXCEPTIONAL CIRCUMSTANCES SUPPORTING A REVIEW OF THE GREEN BELT

4.1.1 The Vale of White Horse District Council have set out the exceptional circumstances that apply to the Dalton Barracks allocation on the Local Plan Part 2:

"Para 2.75. The 'exceptional circumstances' to justify the amendment to the Green Belt boundary at Dalton Barracks are:

· The availability of a highly sustainable and significant site for development, not previously available, and so not previously considered either by the Oxfordshire Growth

Board as a potential site to accommodate unmet housing need for Oxford, or by the Vale of White Horse through preparation of the Local Plan 2031: Part 1. This change is considered to be a 'major change in circumstances'.

· assessment work, including a Green Belt Study of the potential development sites considered in preparation of the Part 2 plan, including for Dalton Barracks and the surrounding land, which demonstrates that its removal from the Green Belt for development would have limited impact on the function of the Green Belt.

· the site is close to Oxford and has the potential to be developed as a highly sustainable new community with excellent public transport, walking and cycling connectivity to Oxford and Abingdon-on-Thames and is considered to be compatible with the Spatial Strategy set out in the Part 1 plan, and;

· the site contains a large area of brownfield (previously developed land)”

- 4.1.2 A major factor in revisiting the Local Plan Part 1 Green Belt review has been the recent decision by the DIO to release the Dalton Barracks site from their estate and to offer the site for redevelopment. The site represents an extensive brown field site in close proximity to Oxford and Abingdon, which has the potential to provide a highly sustainable new settlement. Such a new settlement would make a significant contribution to the housing needs of the District and address, in part, the unmet need of Oxford city. The District Council have therefore undertaken a further Green Belt study and assessed the sustainability of the Dalton Barracks site.

5 GREEN BELT ANALYSIS OF THE SITE (Paragraphs 79 and 80 of the NPPF)

5.1 Introduction

- 5.1.1 The proposed allocation at Dalton Barracks has been assessed against the aims and purposes of the Green Belt, as set out within NPPF paragraphs 79 and 80, to assess the potential for the proposed new settlement to impact on the Oxford Green Belt.
- 5.1.2 The site and it's surrounding landscape is referenced within two existing Green Belt Studies. One is a high level assessment, which considers the whole of the Oxford Green Belt (Ref 6). The second is a study commissioned by the Vale of White Horse District Council (Ref 7), produced as part of the evidence base for Local Plan Part 1. This assessment focusses on the Green Belt Land within the Vale of White Horse District. Both studies have divided the Green Belt into parcels for assessment (see plan HDA 4). The site contributes towards the purposes of the Green Belt as part of a larger parcel

within the Oxford and Vale of White Horse Green Belt reviews are summarised in the following table:

Table 1

Study	Parcel	Purpose 1 - to check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas	Purpose 2 - to prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another	Purpose 3 - to assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment	Purpose 4 - to preserve the setting and special character of historic towns
Oxford Green Belt Study	Broad Area 10	N/C	Medium	High	Low
Vale of White Horse District Green Belt Review	P9	N/a	Important in preventing the merging of Wootton and Abingdon	Heavily influenced by development at Shippon, the airfield and Whitecross	N/A

5.1.3 A further Green Belt Study has been carried out by the Vale of White Horse for sites put forward for consideration within Local Plan part 2 (Ref 8). The Dalton Barracks site (Site 11) is one of the 18 sites considered within this study. A further, more detailed study has also been produced for the land surrounding Dalton Barracks (Ref 9), which includes an in-depth analysis of the site's contributions to the aims and purposes of the Green Belt.

5.2 Performance of the Dalton Barracks site against the purposes of the Green Belt

5.2.1 The site as a whole has been tested against the purposes of the Green Belt within the Vale of White Horse District: Green Belt Study of Local Plan Part 2 Sites (Ref 8). The sites within this study are only tested against Purposes 1-4 of the Green Belt. No assessment has been made against Purpose 5 – *'to assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land'*.

5.2.2 The Planning Advisory Service, in their article 'Planning on the Doorstep: The Big Issues – Green Belt' (Ref 10) has advised that when considering Purpose 5 *'it must be the case that the amount of land within urban areas that could be developed will already have been factored in before identifying Green Belt land. If Green Belt achieves this purpose, then all Green Belt does so to the same extent and hence the value of various land parcels is unlikely to be distinguished by the application of this purpose.'*

On this basis the Green Belt Studies undertaken by LUC and KLP for the Local Plan Part 1 valued all GB sites equally. Further work on the Local Plan Part 2 has adopted a similar approach to the performance of the site(s) against Purpose 5.

5.2.3 The judgements set out within the Part 2 Green Belt Study (Ref 8) for Site 11 Dalton Barracks are as follows:

Purpose 1 – to check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas

The site is not associated with the large built-up area (Oxford conurbation). The contribution to Purpose 1 has been assessed as **Very Low / None**.

Purpose 2 – to prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another

In this study neighbouring towns have been defined as Abingdon and Oxford. *‘Development of the site would not directly reduce the separation between Oxford and Abingdon (neighbouring towns), however the site forms a substantial part of the gap between Abingdon and Wootton. If the whole site were to be developed, the separation between Abingdon and Wootton would substantially reduce, which would subsequently affect the extent of open land between Abingdon and Botley (Oxford). This is particularly relevant for the open land within the airfield and for the land to the north-east of the site, which occupies the gap between the hamlet of Whitecross (to the east of the site) and Wootton (to the north). There is the potential for cumulative impacts of developments within the north-eastern part of this site and the development of Site 10 (Land to the north of Honeybottom Lane). The developed barracks area of the site could be redeveloped without any change to the contributions to this purpose of the Green Belt.’*

The contribution to Purpose 2 has been assessed as **Medium** for the airfield (approx. 240ha) and **Very Low / None** for the developed barracks area (approx. 50ha).

Purpose 3 – to assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment

‘While the barracks and airfield have a distinctive character that is atypical of the surrounding countryside, areas of the site, particularly to the west, do contribute to the rural landscape. In addition, the airfield is a large and open area of land, which appears as grassland in views from the high ground to the north and south. In these distant views, the airfield contributes to the flat and open character of the clay vale. In contrast, the developed barracks area of the site is currently a large scale military feature in an otherwise rural landscape. The large aircraft hangars are visually dominant in views from the surrounding landscape and have a negative influence on the character of the adjacent airfield.’

The contribution to Purpose 3 has been assessed as **Medium** for the airfield (approx. 240ha) and **Very Low / None** for the developed barracks area (approx. 50ha).

Purpose 4 – to preserve the setting and special character of historic towns

For the purposes of this study, historic towns have been defined as Abingdon and Oxford.

'The site has no relation to the historic core of Oxford or Abingdon and is not one of the landscape features considered to play an important role in the setting to either settlement.' The contribution to Purpose 4 has been assessed as **Very Low / None**.

5.2.4 The conclusion of the assessment is that the site makes little or no contribution to Purposes 1 and 4 and that the developed area of the site makes little or no contribution to Purposes 2 or 3. The airfield makes a higher contribution towards Purposes 2 and 3. The land to the north-east of the site forms part of the critical separation between Whitecross and Wootton, which has an indirect effect on the separation between Abingdon and Botley (Oxford).

5.2.5 The more detailed study for the land surrounding Dalton Barracks (Ref 9), subdivided the site into parcels. Parcel boundaries were based on landscape character and followed easily recognised features. The parcel names and descriptions are as follows:

- Parcel 1A - The existing built development of the barracks, including the large hangers, areas of hardstanding and storage to the north and recreation facilities to the south.
- Parcel 1B – A large area of hardstanding to the south of the barracks, with Shippon village to the east and Barrow Road to the south.
- Parcel 1C – The sports ground within Shippon Village, to the east of Dalton Barracks.
- Parcel 1D – The mixed-use area to the north of the barracks including huts and dispersed ancillary buildings, surrounded by hardstanding and connected to the main barracks by a series of roads. The westernmost road forms the boundary to the parcel.
- Parcel 1E – The north-eastern corner of Dalton Barracks, which is separated from the main site by a belt of trees and a road. The Parcel is part of a training facility, which consists of modified landform and bunding in rough grass, with areas of woodland and scrub. The Parcel still contains hard surfacing and ancillary buildings, but has fewer urban influences than Parcel 1D.
- Parcel 1F – The airfield and runways.
- Parcel 1G – The north-western edge of Dalton Barracks, with connections to Sandford Brook. The area contains areas of woodland and scrub, is used for off-road vehicles and has a similar modified landform to Parcel 1E.

5.2.6 The study has identified that there are large areas within the site that contribute little to the Purposes of the Green Belt and have the potential to be developed and removed from the Green Belt without harm to the overall aims and objectives of the designation. Parcel 1A (the barracks) could be redeveloped in accordance with paragraph 89 of the NPPF, without alteration to the existing Green Belt boundary. Parcels 1B, 1C and the

southern part of Parcel 1D also have potential for sensitive development without harm to the wider Green Belt, due to their limited contribution to the Purposes of the Green Belt.

5.2.7 Parcel 1E, in combination with the northern parts of 1F and 1D, form the separation between the barracks and Honeybottom Lane. This land and the land to the north of Honeybottom Lane (and the southern edge of Wootton) forms the critical separation between Whitecross, Wootton and any potential development at Dalton Barracks. These parts of the site have the highest contribution to Purpose 2 of the Green Belt.

5.2.8 Parcels 1E, 1F and 1G have the highest contribution to Purpose 3 of the Green Belt. Parcels 1E and 1G are rural and naturalistic in character and contribute to local character. Parcel 1F is not characteristic of the surrounding countryside, but is a large area, which contributes to the openness of the Green Belt and is important when considering the intervisibility between the site and the surrounding hills.

5.3 Comparison with Alternative Sites

5.3.1 The Vale of White Horse District: Green Belt Study of Local Plan Part 2 Sites (Ref 8) looked at 18 sites promoted for development within the Oxford Green Belt. Of these, only 3 sites (2. North of Botley, 6. South of Cumnor and 14. North-east of Abingdon) were considered suitable for removal from the Green Belt in their entirety as part of a housing allocation.

5.3.2 A further 4 sites (including Dalton Barracks) were considered to have some potential for development, but that only part of the sites could be developed without some harm to the wider Green Belt. This included land to the north of Kennington (Site 1), small parcels to the north and south of Wootton (Sites 7 and 9) and part of Site 11 Dalton Barracks (including the whole of the existing built development at the barracks).

5.3.3 Of the developable areas within the 7 sites assessed as being suitable for development, only Dalton Barracks is of a sufficient size to be considered a strategic allocation and only Dalton Barracks has the potential capacity to provide for the housing needs of the district beyond the plan period. All 6 other green field Green Belt sites would need to be developed in order to provide an equivalent housing allocation to that available at Dalton Barracks. Importantly, Dalton Barracks is the only site that contains a substantial area of brownfield land with existing development and a surrounding area of open land that is distinct in character from the surrounding local landscape. The overall assessment of the Green Belt review is that the sensitive development of the Dalton Barracks site would have a limited effect on the function of the Green Belt and that a single large brown field site should be preferred to the alternative Green Belt sites assessed alongside the Dalton Barracks allocation.

6. THE SITE AS A SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

6.1 (Paragraphs 84, 14 and 81 of the NPPF)

6.1 Paragraph 84 of the NPPF states that:

'When drawing up or reviewing Green Belt boundaries local planning authorities should take account of the need to promote sustainable patterns of development.' The District Council have considered the issue of sustainability and sustainable patterns of development in the wider evidence base (Ref 11).

6.1.1 The NPPF sets out a *'Presumption in favour of sustainable development'* (para 14, Ref 1) and the three dimensions of sustainable development are defined within the NPPF as *'economic, social and environmental'*.

6.1.2 The proposed allocation lies within the land ownership of Dalton Barracks, a military installation to the west of Abingdon and to the south-west of Oxford. The airfield and barracks are closely associated with the village of Shippon, one of the smaller villages within the district, washed over by Green Belt.

6.1.3 The proposed allocation site is 289ha in area and has an allocation for 1200 homes up to 2031, with the potential for significantly more development in the longer term without a further review of the Green Belt boundary. Appendix 1 contains the Site allocation template for further details. For the purposes of this report;

- The 'Site' represents the whole allocation area within the Dalton Barracks Land ownership.
- The 'proposed development area' is the portion of the site proposed for built development. This would include the proposed housing allocation along with schools, business use, facilities and infrastructure.
- The 'barracks' is the part of the site that is already developed and includes the army barracks buildings and large aircraft hangars.
- The 'airfield' refers to the large open airfield and runways within the site. It also includes areas of open space at the edges of the site used for military training.

6.1.4 The site is well located in relation to Abingdon and Oxford, with access to the jobs market and facilities within both settlements. The site is spatially well-related to Oxford, especially given the proposal to provide a public transport and cycle link connecting the site to the proposed Lodge Hill Public Transport Interchange to support a larger scale of development in the longer term. Such a link will connect the site to Oxfordshire County Council's proposed Rapid Transit Line 3 (LTP4), a high frequency public transport corridor, which will connect the area to the key employment sites to the east of Oxford. Lodge Hill already has excellent public transport connections with Oxford City Centre and Abingdon with an hourly bus service which would operate at an increased frequency in

the future. The site will also benefit from additional slip roads onto the A34 at the north Abingdon junction.

- 6.1.5 Abingdon is within acceptable cycling distance and there are opportunities to extend routes through the development of the site. The quantum of development proposed has the potential to deliver a sustainable new settlement, which could also provide additional services and facilities for the existing residents of Shippon and the surrounding villages. The location of the site has the potential to meet the social and economic dimensions of sustainable development.
- 6.1.6 In respect of the environmental dimension of sustainable development the District Council have had regard to the potential impact of development on the countryside. The landscape capacity of the site has been considered within the Local Plan Part 2: Landscape Capacity Study (Ref 5, Appendix 2 of this report). A significant portion of the site already contains development (the barracks) and could be redeveloped without harm to the wider landscape. The remainder of the site (the airfield) is not typical of the wider rural landscape and whilst this part of the site contains some key characteristics of the low-lying vale landscape, including the large scale and open nature of the local landscape and intervisibility with high ground to the north and south, the site remains distinct from the adjacent countryside. There is therefore, scope for significant development within the site, without unacceptable harm to the wider landscape.
- 6.1.7 The masterplanning process to date has identified the key constraints and opportunities that relate to the development of the site and has identified the likely quantum of development that the site could accommodate. To ensure that the principles of sustainable development are maintained throughout the masterplan process the District Council will draft a development SPD for the site. The SPD would cover the allocation in it's entirety and provide for housing, employment and community facilities well beyond the plan period. It is envisaged that the new settlement at Dalton Barracks would be inset from the Green Belt along with Shippon.
- 6.1.8 The retention of 111ha of the site as open space within the Green Belt would maintain the function of the Green Belt and provide sufficient land to mitigate the potential impacts of new development. The open space also creates the opportunity for the proposed development to enhance the beneficial use of the Green Belt, which is encouraged within Paragraph 81 of the NPPF, which states that:
'Once Green Belts have been defined, local planning authorities should plan positively to enhance the beneficial use of the Green Belt, such as looking for opportunities to provide access; to provide opportunities for outdoor sport and recreation; to retain and enhance landscapes, visual amenity and biodiversity; or to improve damaged and derelict land.'

6.1.9 The whole site, as a military installation, has very restricted access. The allocation will provide public access into the site and provide links to the wider footpath network along with the provision of on-site formal and informal recreation.

6.1.10 In respect of Para 84 the Dalton Barracks allocation is well placed to provide a sustainable new settlement to serve the needs of the District. To ensure that the principles of sustainable development are maintained throughout the masterplan process the District Council will draft a development SPD for the site.

7 A NEW GREEN BELT BOUNDARY

7.1 Paragraph 85 of the NPPF sets out the parameters for setting new Green Belt boundaries:

7.1.1 *'When defining boundaries, local planning authorities should:*

- ensure consistency with the Local Plan strategy for meeting identified requirements for sustainable development;*
- not include land which it is unnecessary to keep permanently open;*
- where necessary, identify in their plans areas of 'safeguarded land' between the urban area and the Green Belt, in order to meet longer-term development needs stretching well beyond the plan period;*
- make clear that the safeguarded land is not allocated for development at the present time. Planning permission for the permanent development of safeguarded land should only be granted following a Local Plan review which proposes the development;*
- satisfy themselves that Green Belt boundaries will not need to be altered at the end of the development plan period; and*
- define boundaries clearly, using physical features that are readily recognisable and likely to be permanent.'*

The Local Plan Strategy

7.1.2 There is consistency with the Local Plan Strategy as set out in the spatial vision, objectives strategy in the Local Plan 2031 Part 1, which includes:

"Building on our strengths"

"The Vale's villages will continue to provide thriving rural communities where appropriate growth has supported local facilities" (p.33)

"New development will have respected the local character of the Vale, protecting its outstanding and distinctive historic, natural and built environment. The important historic heritage of the Vale will have been, and will continue to be, conserved and enhanced. High design and environmental standards will have been achieved through new

development, which will be resilient to the likely impacts of climate change”. (p.33). The masterplan SPD will encapsulate the spatial vision document as an overarching parameter for the new settlement.

7.1.3 **Strategic Objectives of the Local Plan**

“Strategic Objective 1 *Provide for a range of homes across the district to deliver choice and competition in the housing market and to meet the identified needs including affordable housing.” (p.34) – Dalton Barracks will deliver new homes for the district.*

“Strategic Objective 3 *Direct growth to the most sustainable locations in the district, ensuring development is integrated with and respects the built, natural and historic heritage and creates attractive places in which people will want to live, as well as being supported by a sufficient range of services and facilities.” (p.34) - Dalton Barracks will respect the historic heritage of Shippon village. Natural heritage such as Cothill Fen and a number of SSSIs in the area will be protected. The allocation will also provide new services and facilities including a new local centre along with facilities including primary and secondary education.*

“Strategic Objective 8 *Reduce the need to travel and promote sustainable modes of transport”. – Dalton Barracks has a proposal to provide a public transport and cycle link to the proposed park and ride at Lodge Hill and the Rapid Bus Transit to Oxford. It will also enhance connectivity with Abingdon and Oxford with an enhancement of the existing Oxford to Abingdon bus service.*

“Strategic Objective 9 *Seek to ensure new development is accompanied by appropriate and timely infrastructure delivery to secure effective sustainable transport choices for new residents and businesses.” (p.35) – Dalton Barracks will, as identified above, provide a variety of new infrastructure including a new link road.*

7.1.4. *“Promoting thriving villages and rural communities whilst safeguarding the countryside and village character” (p.39) – Dalton Barracks makes efficient reuse of previously developed land in the Green Belt, while providing a range of new services and facilities in the local area (Shippon).*

7.2 **Permanently open land**

7.2.1 The detailed Green Belt Assessment has evaluated the contribution each parcel of land within the Dalton Barracks site makes to the purposes of the Green Belt. Land excluded from the revised Green Belt is either land that has been previously developed or does not make a meaningful contribution to the openness of the Green Belt.

7.3 Safeguarded Land

- 7.3.1 Land, for future development, beyond the current plan period, could be safeguarded in order to meet longer-term development needs stretching beyond the plan period. However, the District Council intend to release the land, in full, now and undertake detailed masterplanning (via a SPD) and set a comprehensive policy framework for the site. Delivery of this site would ensure the long-term permanence of the Green Belt and will assist in the protection of the Oxford Green Belt elsewhere in the District.

7.4 Permanent Defined Boundaries to the Green Belt

- 7.4.1 Whilst there are few existing features available to provide the basis for a robust Green Belt boundary the proposed settlement will be masterplan led and will have a settlement edge defined by the constraints and opportunities of the site. The new settlement edge would form the new boundary to the Green Belt, and once the development was complete, will form a robust and easily recognisable boundary that would continue well beyond the plan period.

8 CONCLUSIONS

- 8.1 A major factor in revisiting the Local Plan Part 1 Green Belt review has been the recent decision by the DIO to release the Dalton Barracks site from their estate and to offer the site for redevelopment. The site represents an extensive brown field site, in close proximity to Oxford and Abingdon, which has the potential to provide a highly sustainable new settlement. Such a new settlement would make a significant contribution to the housing needs of the District and address, in part, the unmet need of Oxford city. This change is considered to be a 'major change in circumstances' and an exceptional circumstance in support of the review of the Green Belt as part of the Local Plan Part 2 process.
- 8.2 The contribution the proposed allocation makes to the Green Belt has been assessed in a number of Green Belt studies, including a detailed analysis of the Dalton Barracks site. The site, as a whole, makes little / no contribution to Purposes 1 and 4 and the existing developed area of the barracks makes little or no contribution to Purposes 2 or 3. Land in the north-east of the site forms part of the critical separation between Whitecross and Wootton (Purpose 2), which has an indirect effect on the separation between Abingdon and Botley (Oxford). The land to the north-east and north-west of the site (adjacent to Sandford Brook) are more typical of the surrounding landscape and contributes to local character and the countryside (Purpose 3). The airfield contributes to the openness of the Green Belt and is important when considering the intervisibility between the site and the surrounding hills. Development as proposed in the outline masterplan would be restricted to areas which do not contribute significantly to the function of the Green Belt.

- 8.3 The allocation will comply with the Local Plan Strategy and its Strategic Objectives. The site is well located in relation to Abingdon and Oxford, with access to the jobs market and facilities within both settlements. The site is spatially well-related to Oxford, reinforced by the requirement to provide a public transport and cycle link connecting the site to the proposed Lodge Hill Public Transport Interchange to support a larger scale of development in the longer term. Such a link will connect the site to the Rapid Transit Line 3, a high frequency public transport corridor, which will connect the area to the key employment sites to the east of Oxford. Lodge Hill already has excellent public transport connections with Oxford City Centre and Abingdon.
- 8.4 Masterplanning of the site, to provide a sustainable pattern of development, has to date identified the key constraints and opportunities that relate to the development of the site and has identified the likely quantum of development that the site could accommodate. To ensure that the principles of sustainable development are maintained throughout the masterplan process the Council will draft a development SPD for the site. The SPD would cover the allocation in its entirety and provide for housing, employment and community facilities well beyond the plan period.
- 8.5 There are few, if any, existing features available to provide the basis for a robust Green Belt boundary. The proposed settlement being masterplan led, will have a settlement edge defined by the constraints and opportunities of the site. The new settlement edge would form the new boundary to the Green Belt, and once the development was complete, should form a robust and easily recognisable boundary that would continue beyond the plan period.
- 8.6 Areas of the site that have been identified as contributing most to the aims and purposes of the Green Belt have been retained as open space within the initial masterplan and would remain within the revised Green Belt. The potential loss of openness resulting from the development of part of the airfield, has been considered alongside the potential benefits resulting from the proposed settlement; the relative merits of the site as previously developed land; and the comparative benefits of developing the site in preference to other green field sites within the Green Belt. The site compares favourably against other potential development sites located within the Green Belt, both in terms of development potential, sustainability and landscape capacity. Dalton Barracks is the only site that contains a substantial area of brownfield land with existing development and a surrounding area of open land that is distinct in character from the surrounding local landscape. The overall assessment of the Green Belt review is that the Dalton Barracks site would have a limited effect on the function of the Green Belt and that a single large brown field site should be preferred to the alternative Green Belt sites assessed alongside the Dalton Barracks allocation.

8.7 The area proposed does not extend beyond the Dalton Barracks site as the site is large enough to accommodate a substantial sustainable settlement in its own right. This approach ensures that the potential for development is maximised and that further changes to the Green Belt will not be required in the future. The openness of the Green Belt between Abingdon and Shippon, Shippon and Wootton, the proposed new development and Whitecross and would be maintained.

REFERENCES

- Ref 1 -** Department for Communities and Local Government (March 2012), '*National Planning Policy Framework*'.
- Ref 2 -** The Planning Inspectorate (November 2016 – Ref 5); '*Report on the Examination into Vale of White Horse Local Plan 2031: Part 1*' ref: PiNS/V3120/429/5
- Ref 3 -** Vale of White Horse District Council (2016), '*Vale of White Horse Local Plan 2031 Part 1*'
- Ref 4 -** Vale of White Horse District Council (September 2017), '*Vale of White Horse District Landscape Character Assessment*'
- Ref 5 -** Vale of White Horse District Council (March 2017), '*Vale of White Horse District Local Plan Part 2: Landscape Capacity Study*'
- Ref 6 -** LUC on behalf of Oxfordshire County Council (October 2015), '*Oxford Green Belt Study*'
- Ref 7 -** Kirkham Landscape Planning LTD / Terra Firma Consultancy on behalf of Vale of White Horse District Council (February 2014), '*Green Belt Review*'.
- Ref 8 -** Vale of White Horse District Council (August 2017), '*Vale of White Horse District: Green Belt Study of Local Plan Part 2 Sites*'.
- Ref 9 -** Vale of White Horse District Council (February 2017), '*Green Belt Study for Land Surrounding Dalton Barracks*'.
- Ref 10 -** Planning Advisory Service (Feb 2015), '*Planning on the Doorstep: The Big Issues – Green Belt*'.

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	Personnel	Position
Author	Tanya Morris	Principal Landscape Architect
Approved for issue	Brian Duckett	Director

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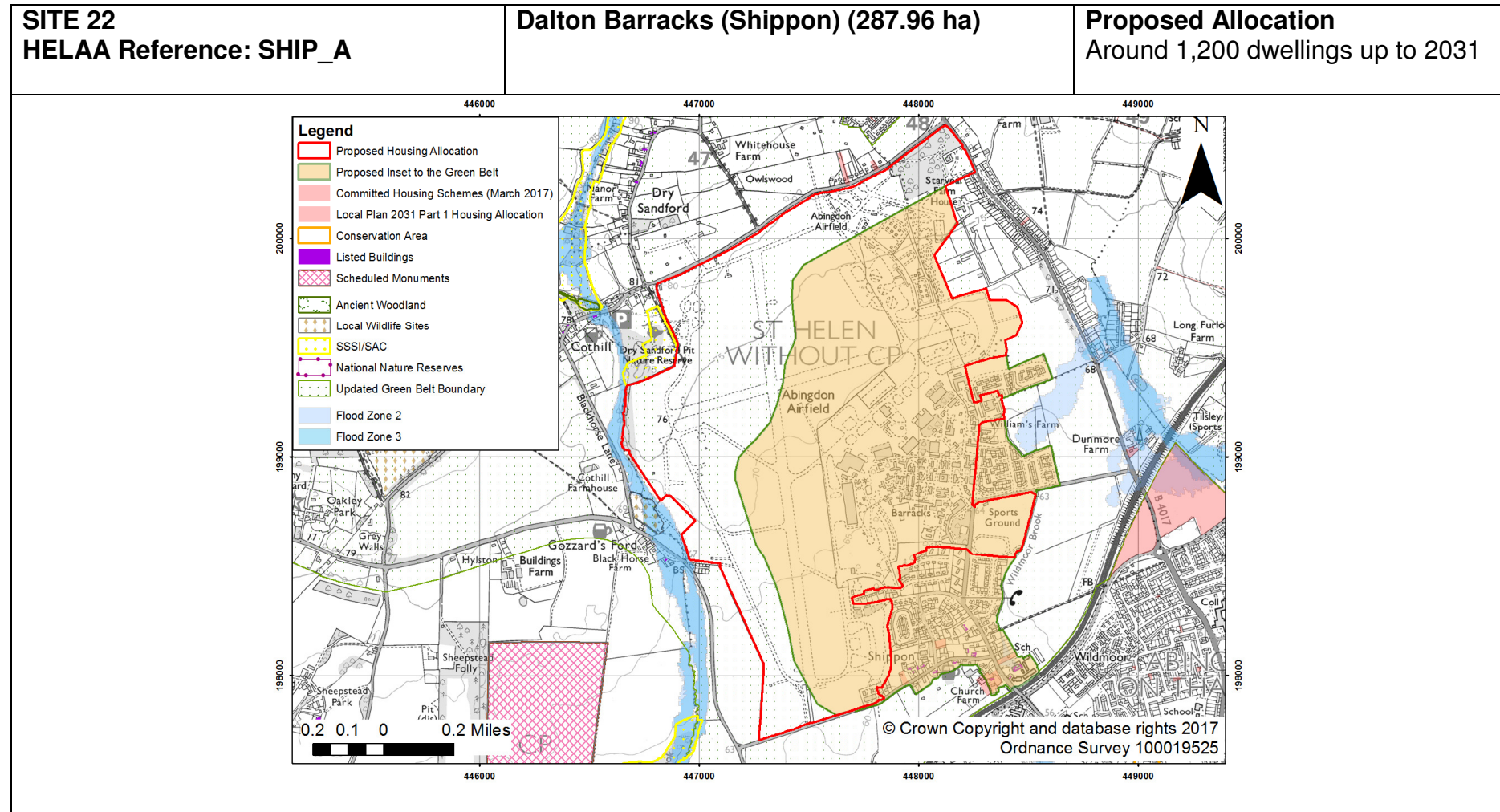
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APPENDIX 1 – DALTON BARRACKS - SITE TEMPLATE

4. Abingdon On Thames and Oxford Fringe Sub Area

In addition to the general requirements set out in section two, development will be required to meet the following infrastructure requirements.



SITE 22 HELAA Reference: SHIP_A	Dalton Barracks (Shippon)
<p>Site Specific Requirements:</p> <p>Key objectives</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To deliver an exemplar, sustainable, mixed use community that reflects ‘Garden Village’ principles and follows a comprehensive development framework approach in accordance with Core Policy 8b: Dalton Barracks Comprehensive Development Framework. • To make effective use of land, by materialising the re-use of land that has been previously developed upon (brownfield). • To avoid all direct and indirect impacts to Cothill Fen SAC, Dry Sandford Pit SSSI, Barrow Farm Fen SSSI and Frilford Heath ponds and fen SSSI. <p>Urban design principles</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The site’s masterplan should be developed in accordance with Core Policy 8b and follow a comprehensive development framework approach and to be in accordance with the supplementary planning document. • The masterplan should give consideration to the development potential of the entire site and ensure infrastructure requirements, including green infrastructure, are considered from the outset. • The overall development potential of the site will be informed by the masterplanning through preparation of the supplementary planning document and be contingent on appropriate infrastructure delivery. • The masterplan should ensure any development on land that is retained within the Oxford Green Belt, are compatible uses within the Green Belt, in accordance with Core Policy 13 and 13a: Oxford Green Belt, from Local Plan 2031 Part 1 and 2. • Proposals for buildings and structures will not unacceptably harm the character and appearance of the surrounding area, taking into account their location, scale, bulk and height. <p>Utilities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Upgrade the sewer network. 	

Access and highways

- The development should be in accordance with and meet the requirements of a travel plan for the whole site to make necessary contributions in order to implement sustainable transport initiatives, including minimising car usage and increasing the use of public transport, walking and cycling.
- Access to the A34 should be investigated, along with cycle/ pedestrian access to proposed Park and Ride sites at Lodge Hill and Cumnor.
- Significant new cycle and walking routes needed including substantial improvements along Faringdon road in Abingdon, Fox lane and Foxcombe road and b4017 between Abingdon, Wootton and Cumnor (eg new cycle tracks, shared-use paths or equivalent)
- Contribute to infrastructure improvements as required through a transport assessment which may include proposed park and ride sites, a bus lane on the A34, cycle bridges and measures to reduce the impact of vehicle traffic in villages.
- To provide a direct bus and cycle connection to the proposed Lodge Hill Transports interchange before higher growth beyond 2031 can be accommodated.
- Contribute to bus frequency enhancements through the site to premium route standard with associated infrastructure enhancements ensuring high frequency services to Abingdon-on-Thames and Oxford.
- Contribute towards new high quality bus services to major employment sites at Milton Park, Harwell Campus and Culham Science Centre.
- Retain, improve and/or appropriately divert existing public footpaths, and byways, unless otherwise specifically agreed.
- Consider provision of new access, including cycle routes and a bridlepath within the country park
- Undertake project level HRA to include transport and air quality assessments to consider the impact on Cothill Fen SAC.

Social and Community

- Contribute towards improved healthcare provision for the area.
- A new 'two form entry' primary school will be required on site for the first 1200 dwellings. This should be provided on 2.2 ha of land. Further primary schools may be required for the overall development of the site and the requirements should be considered through the masterplanning of the first 1200 dwellings.
- Contributions will be sought for a new secondary school which will be required to accommodate high growth beyond 2031 and should be incorporated with the masterplanning for this site. This should be provided on 10.55ha of land.

Environmental Health

- Undertake contaminated land investigations and set out proposals to adequately mitigate the issues that arise to ensure that the land is safe and suitable for the intended use.
- Ensure there are no adverse impacts on the water quality or quantity entering Cothill Fen SAC which is located a short distance to the west.

Landscape Considerations

- The development should be in accordance with and make necessary contributions to a comprehensive landscape plan for the whole site, informed by a Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment, and incorporating a Country Park of at least 80 hectares to be located between Dry Sandford Pitt SSSI and the rest of the development.
- Retain, where possible, onsite mature trees.

Biodiversity and green infrastructure

- Proposals should demonstrate that there would be no adverse impact on Cothill Fen SAC, Dry Sandford Pit SSSI, Barrow Farm Fen SSSI and Frilford Heath ponds and fen SSSI.
- Recreational impacts on Cothill Fen SAC and neighbouring SSSIs should be assessed and used to inform on-site mitigation through the provision of significant alternative natural greenspace (in the form of a Country Park of at least 80 hectares). This mitigation should be considered alongside potential infrastructural improvements within the SAC.
- Ensure there are no adverse impacts on Dry Sandford Pits, SSSI.
- Ensure there are no adverse effects in relation to water quality of two nearby sites, situated along Sandford Brook (downstream): Barrow Farm Fen SSSI; and Gozzards Ford Fen Local Wildlife Site.
- Consideration should be taken of the Priority Habitat – Deciduous Woodland along Sandford Brook and in the north-west corner when designing the connected GI for the site.
- Ensure there is a wildlife buffer between the Sandford brook and the development of at least 10 metres
- Consideration will be taken, where appropriate, to mitigate against any adverse effects on other priority habitat species, as identified through survey work and provide an additional plan to address invasive non-native species.

APPENDIX 2 - LANDSCAPE CAPACITY OF THE SITE

3.1 Landscape context

3.1.1 The majority of the Dalton Barracks site lies within the 'Former Airfield' landscape type, of the VoWH District Landscape Character Assessment 2017 (Ref 4), with the north-eastern corner lying within the 'Corallian Limestone Ridge with Woodland' and parts of the western boundary falling within the 'River Floodplain'. The south-eastern part of the site (the barracks) has been considered as settlement. The key characteristics the 'Former Airfield' landscape type include:

- The Airfield consists of a flat open area, with significant lengths of runway, hardstandings, hangars and associated buildings.
- The site is a former Royal Air Force base. Buildings are currently still used by the Royal Logistic Corps as part of Dalton Barracks.
- The site has the characteristics of a military installation, with security fencing and perimeter warning notices.
- The large scale open aspect across the airfield allows wide ranging views north towards the Corallian Limescale Ridge, including Boars Hill, and more distant views south of the North Wessex Downs on the southern horizon.

3.1.2 The character within the site varies with land use. Approximately 37ha of the site is already developed, with a further 48ha (approximately) of hardstanding and small ancillary buildings. The accommodation buildings within the barracks are generally two storey brick buildings arranged in blocks of flats, with office blocks on the western edge of the barracks. The buildings are arranged on streets lined with mature trees. To the immediate north and west of the barracks are the large hangars, which are industrial buildings, approximately 3 storeys high with a minimum floorspace of approximately 3500m². The hangars are surrounded by large areas of hardstanding, which are used for storage. Further north again are smaller huts and dispersed ancillary buildings, surrounded by hardstanding and connected to the main barracks by a series of roads. The land to the north and east of these buildings is part of a training facility, which consists of modified landform and bunding in rough grass, with areas of woodland and scrub.

3.1.3 The central and western areas of the site make up the airfield, which comprises open expanses of grassland bisected by two runways, connected by a perimeter road. The airfield is open and expansive, with no internal boundaries or landscape features. The open nature of this part of the site affords long views to the south, where the escarpment of the North Wessex Downs is visible on the skyline. Views to the east are of vegetation to the north-east of the site and the large hangars at the edge of the barracks, with views of the high ground at Boars Hill beyond. Views to the west are contained by tree belts lining the Sandford Brook and views to the north are also contained by vegetation beyond Honeybottom Lane.

- 3.1.4 The north-western edge of the site lies adjacent to Sandford Brook and contains areas of woodland and scrub. This area is also used for military training and has a similar modified landform to the north-eastern part of the site. This area is more enclosed than the land within the airfield to the east.

3.2 Site suitability for development in landscape terms

- 3.2.1 The landscape capacity of the site has been considered within the Local Plan Part 2: Landscape Capacity Study (Ref 5). Within the study, the site falls within Area F as Site 22: Dalton Barracks. The landscape capacity of the site was assessed as Medium / High and the summary text provided the following rationale:

'The site is large and the capacity for development within the site varies across the site, with a high capacity within the existing development and a lower capacity within the open airfield and more naturalistic areas at the site boundaries.'

- 3.2.2 There are open and panoramic views across the airfield through open gaps in the boundary vegetation of Honeybottom Lane (to the north), Barrow Road (to the south) and from Faringdon Road (including the properties adjacent to the road). The site is visible from the high ground of Boars Hill to the north and there are distant glimpses of the site from the Ridgeway National Trail to the south. The existing barracks is noticeable within these views. The visibility of the proposals will be a key consideration for a proposed housing development within the site.

- 3.2.3 The site is well located for access to Abingdon and Oxford, along with the jobs and facilities available within these two settlements. A large portion of the site already contains development (the barracks) and could be redeveloped without harm to the wider landscape. The remainder of the site (the airfield) is atypical of the wider rural landscape and while this part of the site contains some key characteristics of the low-lying vale landscape, including the large scale and open nature of the site, along with intervisibility with high ground to the north and south, the site remains distinct from adjacent countryside. There is scope for a significant development within the site, which could deliver housing beyond the plan period in addition to services and facilities along with contributions to local infrastructure.

Land at Dalton Barracks and Marcham - Area F

- Area F - Settlement Analysis

1.1

Area F lies to the south-west of Oxford and to the immediate north-west of Abingdon. The majority of the study area is washed over by Green Belt. The Market Town of Abingdon is the largest settlement within the Area and is one of the largest towns in the district, located on the River Thames. To the west and north-west, Abingdon is contained by the A34 dual Carriageway. To the north, the town is enclosed by a local ridgeline, beyond which lies Kennington and the southern extents of Oxford. Potential sites surrounding Abingdon are shown on the maps for Areas C and D and are covered by different chapters within this report.

1.2

Site 22: Dalton Barracks is a military installation to the west of Abingdon, with a barracks closely associated with the village of Shippon. Shippon is one of the smaller villages within the district and consists of a nucleated settlement, located to the north-west of Abingdon with the A34 dual carriageway separating the two settlements. The historic core of Shippon lies to the south of the village, where there are numerous listed buildings. The accommodation within the barracks extends the settlement edge of the village to the north. Immediately beyond the barracks to the north and west are large hangers and storage areas, with huts and dispersed ancillary buildings beyond to the north. The western side of Dalton Barracks (also within Site 22) comprises an airfield with two runways.

1.3

Marcham is a larger nucleated village located to the south-west of Area F and is connected to Abingdon via the A415 Marcham Road. The historic core of the village is defined by a Conservation Area, which is located to the west of the village and includes the listed church and listed building Denman College. More modern housing areas lie to the north-east and new development has been permitted to the north and south of the village. The village is constrained to the west and south by floodplain. A small area of Ancient Woodland is located to the north-east of the village and a scheduled monument lies to the north of Orchard Farm, to the north-east of Site 25A. Marcham lies outside the Green Belt.

1.4

Wootton is a large village located to the north of Dalton Barracks and to the north-west of Abingdon. The village consists of a nucleated settlement centred on the B4017 and extending south and west along Besselsleigh Road and Lashford Lane. The B4017 connects Wootton to Abingdon. Whitecross, a ribbon development, extends along the majority of the road between Wootton and Abingdon. Potential cumulative impacts of the sites in Wootton will be considered alongside the sites within this chapter.

1.5

Other constraints to development within this area include three Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), which are all associated with Sandford Brook, to the west of the Dalton Barracks and east of Marcham. One lies to the west of Lashford Lane, one is located to the immediate north-west of Site 22 at Dry Sandford Pit Nature Reserve and one lies to the west of Barrow Farm, to the south-west of Site 22. The SSSI to the west of Lashford Lane is also designated as a Special Area of Conservation (SAC).

1.6

Area F is well served by public rights of way, particularly around Boars Hill to the east and to the

west of the Area, beyond the hamlet of Cothill. A bridleway runs to the immediate north of Site 25A, however there are no rights of way associated with sites 22 or 25B.

Sites covered within Area F:

22. Dalton Barracks
- 25A. North of Marcham - east
- 25B. North of Marcham - west

See Figure F1 for site locations.

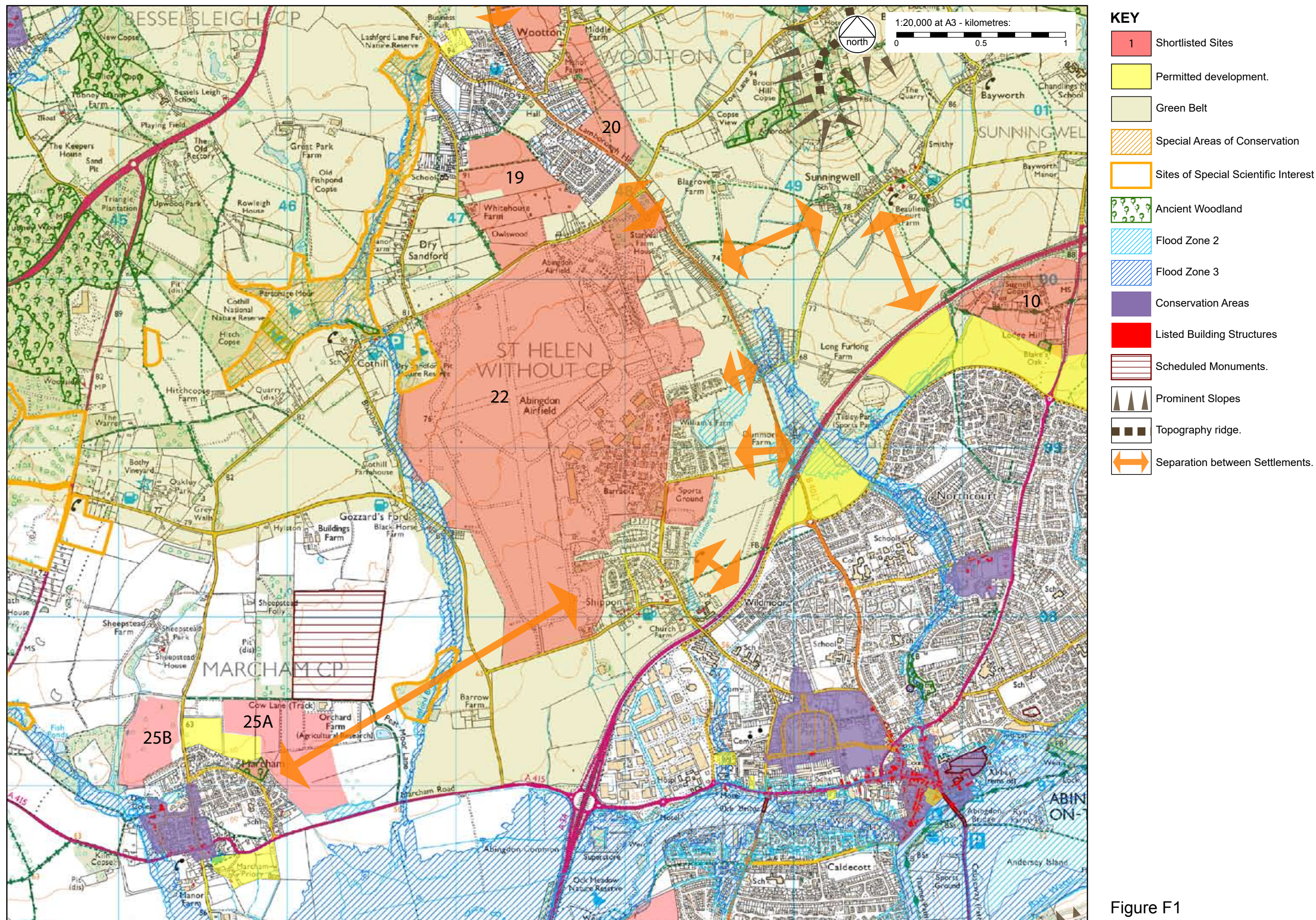


Figure F1

Area F - Landscape Character

- 1.1 The sites within Area F sit within two different Landscape Types and three separate Character Areas. The vast majority of Site 22: Dalton Barracks site lies within the 'Former Airfield' landscape type, with the north-eastern corner lying within the 'Corallian Limestone Ridge with Woodland' and parts of the western boundary falling within the 'River Floodplain'. The south-eastern part of the site (the barracks) has been considered as settlement. The key characteristics the 'Former Airfield' landscape type include:
- The Airfield consists of a flat open area, with significant lengths of runway, hardstandings, hangers and associated buildings.
 - The site is a former Royal Air Force base. Buildings are currently still used by the Royal Logistic Corps as part of Dalton Barracks.
 - The site has the characteristics of a military installation, with security fencing and perimeter warning notices.
 - The large scale open aspect across the airfield allows wide ranging views towards the North Wessex Downs on the southern horizon.
- 1.2 The character within Site 22: Dalton Barracks varies with land use. The accommodation buildings within the barracks are generally two storey brick buildings arranged in blocks of flats, with office blocks on the western edge of the barracks. The buildings are arranged on streets lined with mature trees. To the immediate north and west of the barracks are the large hangers, which are surrounded by large areas of hardstanding, used for storage. Further north again are smaller huts and dispersed ancillary buildings, surrounded by hardstanding and connected to the main barracks by a series of roads. The land to the north and east of these buildings is part of a training facility which consists of modified landform and bunding in rough grass, with areas of woodland and scrub.
- 1.3 The central and western areas within Site 22 make up the airfield, which comprises a large open area of grassland bisected by two runways, connected by a perimeter road. The airfield is open and expansive, with no internal boundaries or landscape features. The open nature of this part of the site affords long views to the south, where the escarpment of the North Wessex Downs is visible on the skyline. The north-western edge of the site lies adjacent to Sandford Brook and contains areas of woodland and scrub. This area is also used for military training and has a similar modified landform to the north-eastern part of the site. This area is more enclosed than the land within the airfield to the east.
- 1.4 The remaining two sites within Area F (25A and 25B) fall within the 'Corallian Limestone Ridge with Woodland' (LM) landscape type. The key characteristics of this type include:
- Undulating farm and estate land focused on ridge predominantly underlain by limestone.
 - Relatively steep north facing slopes, gentler south facing slopes forming transition to Upper Vale to the south.
 - Dispersed blocks of significant woodland, including areas of ancient woodland.
- 1.5 Within the landscape type, each site falls within a different local Character Areas. Site 25A: North of Marcham - East lies within LM15: Marcham Limestone Ridge with Woodland, and covers a small part of the Character Area located to the west of Sandford Brook. This character area is bisected by the River Floodplain Landscape Character Type, which follows the line of the brook. The Character area is located on the gentle southern slopes of the Limestone Ridge, falling south and east towards watercourses, consisting mainly of arable farmland with medium, and occasionally large, field sizes.

Field boundaries vary but are often well vegetated and the Character Area includes occasional small blocks of woodland. The site consists of medium to large regular arable and pasture fields with strong hedgerow boundaries. The northern area of fields are smaller in scale than the remainder of the Character Area. Small blocks of woodland lie to the south-west and south-east. A tree belt associated with Sheepstead Folly lies to the north of the site.

- 1.6 Site 25B: North of Marcham - West lies within Character Area LM14: Sheepstead Limestone Ridge with Woodland, which consists of Sheepstead House, Denman College and associated parkland, originally associated with Marcham Park. The site lies within the grounds of Denman College and remains a parkland landscape. Mature tree belts at the boundaries of the site, are consistent with historic maps of the parkland and the northern and eastern site boundary is defined by a traditional stone wall. Recent semi-mature tree planting within the site replicates the planting design apparent on the 1875 OS map.

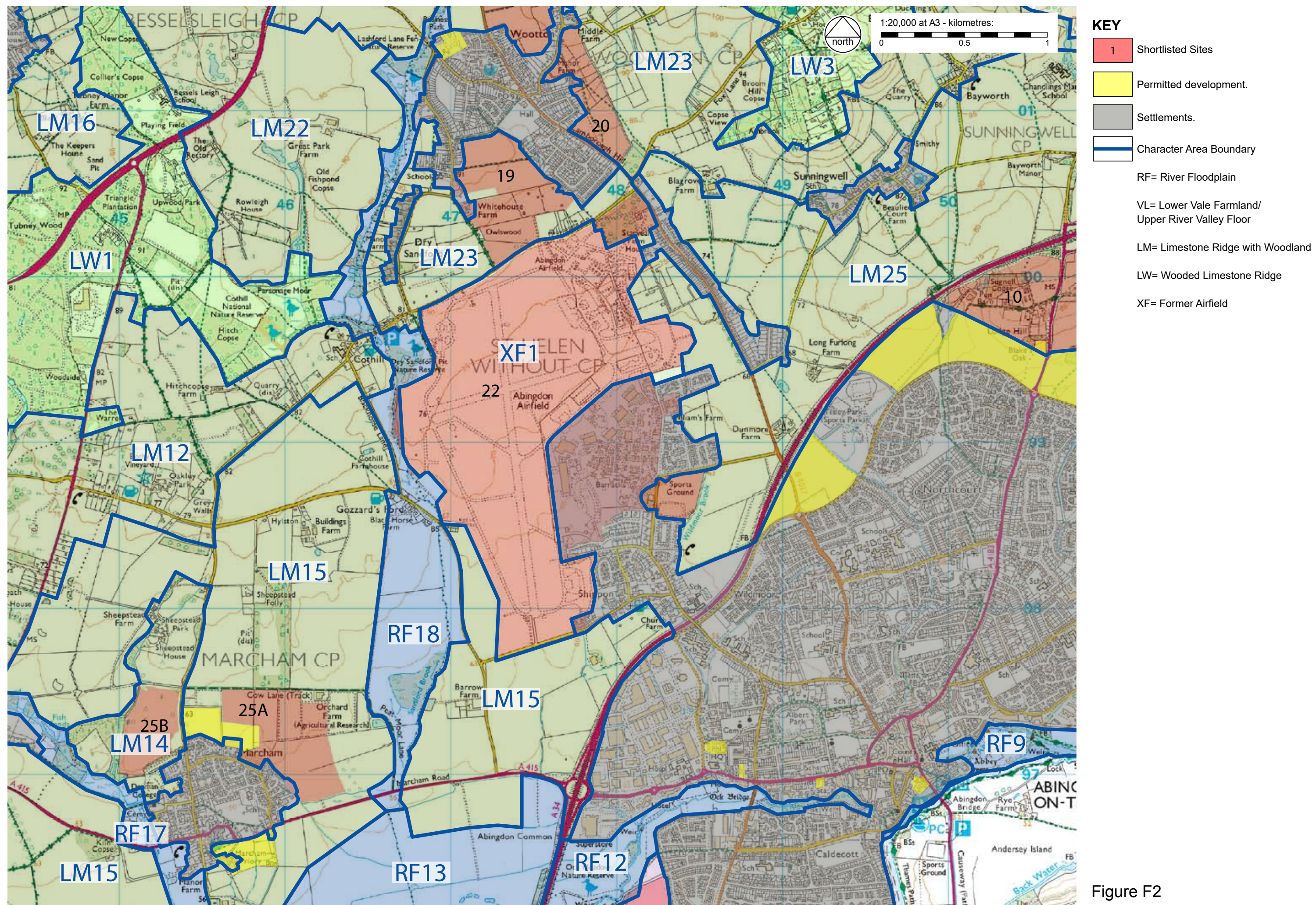
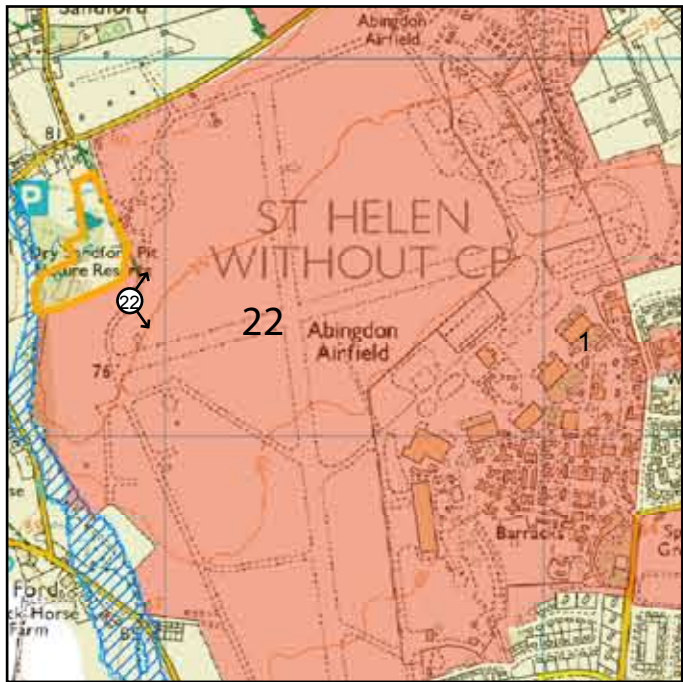


Figure F2

22: Dalton Barracks



Photograph 22: Looking east across the site, from the peripheral road to the north-west of the site.



Plan not to scale
See plan on page 90 for wider context and key to symbols

Site Description

- 1.1 The site consists of an army barracks and airfield. The built form of the barracks is concentrated to the south-east of the site, immediately abutting the settlement edge of Shippon and consisting of residential buildings and large hangars. To the north of the main barracks are smaller huts and dispersed ancillary buildings, surrounded by hardstanding and connected to the main barracks by a series of roads. The land to the north-east and far west of the site consists of modified landform and bunding in rough grass, with areas of woodland and scrub. The airfield covers the central and western parts of the site and comprises flat, open expanses of grassland bisected by two runways and connected by a perimeter road. The site is inconsistent with the wider rural landscape and has a distinct character associated with its use.

Site Visibility (see accompanying photograph above):

- 2.1 There are open and panoramic views across the airfield through gaps in the boundary vegetation on Honeybottom Lane to the north, which consist of the airfield, hangars and ancillary buildings within the site, with Didcot Power Station and the North Wessex Downs escarpment visible in the distance. There are also open views of the site from Barrow Road, to the immediate south, through gaps in the vegetation lining Faringdon Road to the west and from the properties adjacent to Faringdon Road. Views consist of the large open airfield, the hangars visible to the east and housing visible to the south-east.
- 2.3 There are open views of the recreation ground and barracks from Cholswell Road, to the immediate east of the site. The western-most

dwelling on Rookery Close (south-east of the site) have open views of the airfield and the properties lining Sycamore Close and Hawthorn Avenue have open views of the Barracks. There are distant views of the site from the high ground of Boars Hill, to the east of the site. Glimpses of the site can be seen through gaps in the vegetation within Dry Sandford Nature Reserve. Views from Blackhorse Lane to the north-west are blocked by hedgerows lining the road and tree belts on the boundary of the site.

Landscape Capacity:

- 3.1 The overall landscape capacity for development of the site for housing is as follows:
- Moderate** sensitivity x **Slight** value = **Medium/ High** landscape capacity
- 3.2 The site is large and the capacity for development within the site varies across the site, with a high capacity within the existing development at the barracks and a lower capacity within the open airfield and more naturalistic areas at the site boundaries. The site lies within Green Belt. The previously developed land within the barracks could be developed in compliance with National Green Belt policy. The remainder of the site should be assessed in greater detail to test the contribution of the site to the purposes of the Green Belt and the potential harm to the integrity of the Green Belt.

Landscape Sensitivity:

Site 22 - Dalton Barracks

Inherent landscape quality (intactness and condition)					Inconsistency with existing settlement form/ pattern					Contribution to separation between settlements					Contribution to the setting of surrounding landscape/settlement					Views (visual sensitivity)					Potential for mitigation (inverse score i.e. high potential for mitigation = low sensitivity, therefore low score)					Overall sensitivity judgement 01-06 = Negligible 07-12 = Slight 13-18 = Moderate 19-24 = Substantial 25-30 = Major				
	2						3						4			2							3							17				
The character of the site is defined by its land use as an airfield and barracks. The site contains built form, some of which is large and prominent in views from the local landscape. The original field pattern and land use of the site has been eradicated. Boundary vegetation remains intact.					The built form of the barracks within the site merges into the northern settlement edge of Shippon. The western part of the site is more open and is not contiguous with existing settlement.					The site is large and covers much of the area between Abingdon and Wootton. Shippon lies to the south-east of the site and connects to abingdon via Faringdon Road. The site also contributes to the separation between Shippon, Whitcross and Wootton. Areas within the site could be developed without compromising the separation between these settlements.					The site currently has a negative contribution to the setting of Shippon, particularly when viewed from the west. The contribution of the site to local landscape character is low and could be improved.					There are open views of the site from local roads and properties to the immediate south, west and north of the site. The open nature of the airfield allows long views across the site. There are also glimpsed views from the high ground on Boars Hill, to the east of the site. Other long distance views of the site are uncommon.					Potential to mitigate development within the site varies dramatically across the site. Redevelopment of the existing built-up areas within the site would be possible to mitigate and could improve the overall character of the site. In contrast, development within the large open expanse of the Airfield would be difficult to mitigate.					MODERATE				

Landscape Value:

Landscape designations					Ecological and other designations (eg. heritage, flood zone etc)					Local distinctiveness					Any historic/cultural/ literary associations					Contribution to setting of 'outstanding assets'					Recreation and public access/ locally valued spaces					Perceptual aspects (eg. scenic quality, tranquillity, and remoteness)					Overall value judgement 01-07 = Negligible 08-14 = Slight 15-21 = Moderate 22-28 = Substantial 29-35 = Major							
1									5		2					2				1						1						2						14				
N/a					The site is washed over by Green Belt. The north-eastern corner of the site lies adjacent to a SSSI and the south-eastern corner lies in close proximity to another SSSI.					The airfield and barracks are locally distinctive but are detrimental to the appreciation of the surrounding rural landscape.					The site is a former RAF base, built in 1932.					N/a					There is no public access within the site. Recreational facilities are for residents within the Barracks.					The site contains a large area of development and is atypical of the local landscape character. The site is urban in character and generally has a high level of activity. The open and expansive nature of the airfield has a higher scenic quality than the remainder of the site, due to the panoramic views afforded and the visual links with local landmarks including Boars Hill to the east and the escarpment to the south.					SLIGHT							

Potential Cumulative Impacts

- 1.1 The cumulative effects of development within each of the three shortlisted sites in Area F are limited. Development of sites 25A (North of Marcham - East) and 25B (North of Marcham - West) in their entirety would significantly increase the settlement size of Marcham.
- 1.2 Development of Site 22 in combination with Site 19: South of Wootton to the immediate north (considered within section E of the report), would have cumulative impacts on the separation between Wootton and Abingdon in addition to Wootton and Shippon. Development of sites 22 and 25A would marginally decrease the separation between Marcham and Shippon.

Potential Sites for development

- 1.1 The capacity sites that are judged to be suitable for development in landscape terms are shown in Green on Figure F3. These include the south-eastern part of Site 22 (Dalton Barracks) and the north-western part of Site 25A (North of Marcham - East). The remaining land within these two sites are shown in yellow and could have some potential for development, provided that the heightened sensitivity of this part of the site is addressed through a comprehensive mitigation strategy. Site 25B North of Marcham - West has been judged as unsuitable for development in landscape terms, due to the high quality of the features within it and it's close associations with a heritage asset.

KEY

Suitable Site

Potential site
(requires further detailed analysis)

Unsuitable Site

Permitted developments

Figure F3

