Salisbury Plain Training Area Army Basing Programme
Larkhill SFA Phase 4

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The Army Basing Plan, announced on 5th March 2013, confirmed Salisbury Plain as a major focus of the Reaction Force element of Army 2020. The Government has committed up to £800 million to be invested in the Salisbury Plain area. In total there will be approximately 7,700 people moving to the Salisbury Plain area comprising 4,300 additional service personnel plus their families.

In 2014 the Salisbury Plain Masterplan was prepared to illustrate the necessary changes to existing infrastructure to serve the needs of this larger community of Army personnel and service families. The Masterplan, together with the supporting Environmental Report, sets the planning framework for the development of each site identified.

Proposals for a number of sites identified in the Masterplan - Ludgershall, Bulford and Larkhill - have been developed with a hybrid applications comprising of a detailed application for approximately 100 dwellings with the balance submitted in outline. These applications were approved (with conditions) on 26 July 2016.

This Design and Access Statement supports an application for full planning permission for 160 dwellings on land north of The Packway, Larkhill. This application follows the most recent Phase 3 application for 94 homes, which was registered by the council in July 2017 (ref 17/06370/FUL). This follows an application for Phases 1 and 2 for 196 homes which was submitted in April 2017 and approved in September 2017 (ref 17/03959/FUL) as well as previous approval of outline planning permission for the site (ref 15/05540/FUL), which included 444 homes, a new primary school and detailed access arrangements.

The site is located between Durrington and Larkhill. Durrington is located to the east and Larkhill is located to the west. The site is accessed from The Packway via the approved main road of the development.

This Design and Access Statement sets out: (i) an appraisal of the site and its context (Section 2); (ii) the planning policy framework that has guided the development proposals for the site (Section 3); (iii) how the community has been involved in the development of the site proposals (Section 4); (iv) the design process through which the proposals for the site have been prepared (Section 5); and (v) the design rationale behind the proposals (Section 6).

The current planning application seeks permission for phase 4 of the site comprising the development of 160 homes for Service Family Accommodation, public open space, landscaping, internal roads and all associated infrastructure works.

The proposed layout responds in a planned way to the constraints and opportunities of the site. In particular, the layout has been developed to be sensitive to archaeological remains discovered across the site and respects existing by-ways that pass near the site to the south and west.

The site proposals have been developed to reflect local character and promote local distinctiveness. This has been done through the design of the houses and the selection of materials that reflect local character; the preparation of a landscape strategy that retains key existing landscape features and supplements these with additional tree and shrub planting that strengthens the landscape pattern of the area; and the design of the layout, which responds to the shape and topography of the site.
1 Introduction

1.1 Background

The Army Basing Plan

The Army Basing Plan, announced on 5th March 2013, confirmed Salisbury Plain as a major focus of the Reaction Force element of Army 2020. The Government has committed up to £800 million to be invested in the Salisbury Plain area. In total there will be approximately 7,700 people moving to the Salisbury Plain area comprising 4,300 additional service personnel plus their families. To provide the necessary infrastructure, the key elements of the Masterplan for the Army Basing Programme are:

- Extensive new construction and refurbishment of existing buildings within the existing base perimeter for:
  - Single living accommodation (SLA), with dining, catering, recreational and welfare facilities; and
  - Technical accommodation, including workshops, garages, armouries, stores and offices.
- Outside the existing base perimeter there will be changes to the training area; and
- 1,017 new houses for Service Family Accommodation (SFA); 450 in Larkhill; 242 in Ludgershall; 225 in Bulford; and 100 purchased in Tidworth.

The Salisbury Plain Masterplan

In 2014 the Salisbury Plain Masterplan was prepared to illustrate the necessary changes to existing infrastructure to serve the needs of this larger community of Army personnel and service families. The Masterplan, together with the supporting Environmental Report, sets the planning framework for the development of each site identified. Proposals for a number of sites identified in the Masterplan - Ludgershall, Bulford and Larkhill - have been developed with a hybrid applications comprising of a detailed application for approximately 100 dwellings with the balance submitted in outline. These applications were approved (with conditions) on 26 July 2016.

The previous application for Larkhill (15/05540/FUL) comprised a detailed application of 89 homes with the remainder of 355 homes detailed in outline. However recent on-site Archaeological evaluation trenching uncovered significant prehistoric remains that necessitated a redesign of the layout. A revised layout was developed to take into account these remains and Phases 1 and 2 were submitted in April 2017 and approved in September 2017 (ref: 17/03959/FUL). Following this, Phase 3 was registered by the council in July 2017 (ref 17/06370/FUL).

Permission has also been secured for the access to the site shown as part of this application, through planning permission ref. 16/12479/FUL which secured permission for "construction of roundabout (minor amendments to roundabout approved under planning permission Ref: 15/05540/FUL) and highways improvement works on land at the Packway, Larkhill”.

1.2 The applicant

The applicant is the Secretary of State for Defence and the Defence Infrastructure Organisation (DIO).

1.3 Description of the development

Development of the site will involve the following:

Erection of 160 no. dwellings to provide Service Families Accommodation (SFA), public open space, landscaping, internal roads and all associated infrastructure works.

1.4 The application site

The proposed site is located north of The Packway, east of Larkhill and west of the village of Durrington. The site is bounded by open grassland and arable fields to the north and arable fields to the east, The Packway to the south and by Larkhill Camp and existing SFA to the west.

The application site is south east of Phases 1 and 2 and south of Phase 3 and shares a common primary access road. It is located on the former golf driving range surrounded by trees.

1.5 Land ownership

The site is owned by the Ministry of Defence (MoD).
1.6 Purpose of the Design and Access Statement

This Design and Access Statement forms a key part of the planning application for development on land north of The Packway and to the west of Larkhill. This report sets out an appraisal of the site and its context, and explains the design rationale behind the proposals.

This report has been prepared in accordance with the following:

• Town and Country Planning (General Development Procedure) Order 1995.
• Department of Communities and Local Government circular 01/2006.
• CABE (2006) Design and Access Statements: How to write, read and use them
• DCLG (2006) Guidance on changes to the development system
• Local planning policy as detailed in Section 3.

1.7 Report structure

The remainder of this report is structured as follows:

Chapter 2: Site and Context Appraisal - sets out the existing character of the site and its wider context, including a summary of the opportunities and constraints;

Chapter 3: The Planning Policy Framework - outlines the Planning Policy Framework for the site;

Chapter 4: Community Involvement - outlines the consultation and engagement process that has been followed to establish the development proposals set out in this report;

Chapter 5: Design Process - describes the process through which the design proposals were prepared;

Chapter 6: Development Proposals - sets out the detail of the proposed development proposals, including the urban design principles that underpin them; and

Chapter 7: Summary - sets out a summary of the Design and Access Statement.
Site boundary plan

Topographic data for phases 4 from WYG survey dated 09.05.17

Key

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<tr>
<th>Color</th>
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<tr>
<td>Red</td>
<td>Application boundary</td>
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<td>Other land in applicant's ownership</td>
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2 Site and Context Appraisal

2.1 Introduction

This chapter provides an appraisal of the site area and its immediate context, focusing on its topography, landscape character, ecology, ground conditions, cultural heritage, flood risk and drainage. An analysis of the movement network and transportation issues is also detailed. The opportunities and constraints that have arisen out of the detailed analysis of the area are highlighted at the end of the chapter.

2.2 Location, size and land-use

The site is located immediately to the west of Durrington, a village and civil parish in Wiltshire. The Larkhill Camp army base, which is separate from the village but within the parish, is located to the west. The site comprises 13.0 hectares of land.

2.3 Context of adjacent areas

The development site is located in the civil parish of Durrington. It is on the eastern portion of Salisbury Plain, the largest remaining area of chalk grassland in northwest Europe. The site is situated to the north of The Packway, east of Larkhill and west of Durrington village. The village of Bulford and Bulford Camp are located further east of Durrington village. Amesbury is located south-east of the site, to the south of the A303. Stonehenge is located to the south-west of the site, to the north of the A303. The site is in the Upper Avon Valley, with the River Avon running to the north and east of Durrington village. There are a number of local facilities and amenities within easy reach of the site - including a Post Office, shops, cafe, schools, public houses, library, local supermarket, leisure centre - located in Larkhill and Durrington village.

Architectural reference points

Generally the architectural style of the built form in the locality is varied, contributing very little to a specific identity or sense of place that roots it to this part of Wiltshire. However, from a review of the existing SFA in Larkhill and housing in Durrington village a series of architectural references can be made in relation to the style, layout and form of the buildings. These can be used as design cues for new house designs. They are discussed in turn below:

Building height and form - older dwellings are often semi-detached or terraced, are built to a common building line (often constructed with a generous set back from pavement), and up to two storeys in height. Development north of The Packway follows a formal layout with long lengths (up to six units) of two storey terraced dwellings lining noticeably wide (circa 30 metres) streets.

In contrast, recent development of Avon Fields (east of Netheravon Road) differs from its immediate context, the street pattern is informal; plots are narrower with some three storey dwellings interspersed. Streets have varied roofscapes, characterised by street facing gables, some hipped though predominately simple pitched roofs with the ridge line...
running parallel to the street and parapets sitting alongside each other (in rows of terraced houses, rooflines sometimes vary slightly to accommodate changes in ground level).

Common house types - the house types found in the area vary, depending on their age and construction period. The oldest properties, dating from the 16th – 17th Century are located along Church Street and High Street and tend to be terraced cottages or larger more substantial detached houses on what would have been, at one time, the edge of the village. However, dwellings built from 1950 (including housing north of The Packway, and the recently constructed Avon Fields development) onwards tend to be semi-detached or terraced.

Fenestration and proportions - the oldest buildings have small square casement windows, whilst the few Edwardian and Victorian buildings in the locality have more complex vertically proportioned sash windows. Modern properties have an array of casement types and window openings, with greater emphasis on horizontal window openings and fewer subdivisions by window panes.

Frontage/enclosure - older properties tend to feature well defined boundaries, primarily consist of brick walls and well attended hedgerows. Examples are particularly evident along Church Street. In places, set backs are minimal and properties open directly onto the street, with no form of 'defensible' space. Recent development east of Netheravon Road is more akin to the historic core, with an informal arrangement and small setbacks with boundary treatments limited to flower beds or hedges to create a semi-private space between the public realm and the privacy of the dwelling. 1950's houses in the more peripheral areas (off Bulford Road) often have their boundaries defined by a low dwarf wall and are set on wide roads with larger set backs to allow the parking of cars.

Plot widths - the width of plots varies greatly within surrounding areas, depending on the location and age of the building. Generally, dwellings are often wider than they are tall in proportion giving them an overall horizontal emphasis.

Roof form - there are essentially two types of pitched roof found: the more common is a gable roof, found on most terraces and detached properties. Hipped roofs can be found on a few older dwellings along Hackthorne Road and Church Street.

Prevalent materials - owing to the variety in the building construction periods found in the locality, a number of different building materials are used. Generally red brickwork features strongly regardless of the period in which the property was constructed. This same material is also the dominant building material for garden and boundary walling. The oldest properties tend to be constructed from flint paired with red brick lacing and quoining (along Church Street) providing a level of local distinctiveness. Few buildings are constructed exclusively from stone, except for the oldest of building which feature limestone quoining and dressing. Modern post-war buildings generally favour brickwork, render or a combination of the two.
Ridge - generally, the ridge detail is consistent throughout the settlement with plain clay ridge tiles to match the main roof colour.

Eaves - detailing is generally simple with minimal overhang. Some dwellings within the Avon Fields development feature exposed rafter tails.

Verges - a mixture of clipped and slightly over-hanging verges can be found within the surrounding area. Where overhangs do occur, detailing is generally minimal. Where verges overhang barge boards they are, on the whole, simple boards painted in white or a colour which complements the walling material.

Chimneys - red brickwork chimney stacks are a prominent feature throughout the area and feature on most dwellings regardless of age or construction material. Generally, detailing is simple and is limited to corbeling in most instances.

Heads/cills - arched red brick lintels are common throughout Larkhill and Durrington regardless of age or facade material. Window cills vary within the surrounding area, depending on the location and age of the property. Within areas of more recent development (Avon Fields), cills are predominately reconstituted stone though brick cills have been used to add variation. Older properties tend to feature stone cills of varying depths.

Bay windows - bay windows seem relatively uncommon throughout the surrounding area. Where they do feature they tend to be cantilevered in form with a hipped roof and large vertical lights.

Recent development (Avon Fields)
Porches - porches are common throughout the area and contribute to its character and quality. On older buildings, these are generally little more than a simple open structure or canopy over the threshold, tiled with slate or pantiles. Durrington Manor differs and features a decorative stone portico. Within areas of more recent development porches are predominately face fixed gable with tiled roof or flat membrane.

2.4 Topography and views

Much of the land in the surrounding area is typical of the “largely uninhabited landscape of unenclosed rough grassland, criss-crossed by army tracks” which forms the Larkhill Chalk Downland Character Area. This area includes “extensive areas of unenclosed and uninhabited chalk grassland and scrub, upon which, a layer of scattered mixed copses and plantations are visible features.”[1] The site lies within an area of such scattered plantation woodland, enclosed between the garrison at Larkhill and the permitted SFA development and school site to the west and settlement at Durrington to the east. The garrison at Larkhill provides an abrupt built edge to the adjacent open land and its location on a high point within the area makes it a prominent feature in the wider landscape to the north and east. The permitted SFA development within the main Larkhill site and the school site currently under construction are also visible in wider views to the north and east.

Landform to the east of the site descends towards Durrington and the Avon Valley. Settlement at Amesbury also lies within the Avon valley to the southeast. Land to the north of the site is more open and typical of the chalk downland character, rising to the northwest towards Netheravon Down. Valley tributaries of the Avon to the south of Larkhill provide gentle undulations in the landform which screens views of the garrison and the site from Stonehenge to the south.

Views from the north are available from the public byways to the north of the site, including Martinbushes Road on the northern site boundary and more distant views from the public by way to the west of Alton, where relative elevation and lack of intervening vegetation allows for views south towards the site. Intervening vegetation along the River Avon and settlement at Figheldean and Durrington helps to break up these views.

Views of the site are available to the immediate south of the boundary, from The Packway, and byway 31, while views from the World Heritage Site to the south of The Packway are obscured by existing vegetation. More open, but distant views are possible from the ridge of higher ground to the south-west of Bulford settlement, which provides opportunities for views out towards the site and the wider landscape to the north. A number of distinctive barrows which are scheduled monuments form distinctive features upon the landform in this area.

To the east, the site can be seen from open, elevated locations, for example from the byway near Milston Farm; although the ground surface of the site is screened by the boundary vegetation. Other views from the east are available

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from higher ground to the south of Bulford and the higher ridge line of land formed by Beacon Hill and Stephens Mound, which provide expansive views out over the wider Salisbury Plain Training Area. Bulford Camp and settlement at Durrington form prominent built features within these views, along with development along the A3 corridor.

Views from the west are available from the byway within the permitted SFA site to the east of Larkhill Garrison. A view from The Packway also looks towards the site across the permitted school site. Further away, intervening buildings, vegetation and settlement limit the opportunities for views of the proposed development.

2.5 Access, transport and movement

Local highway network

The proposed development is accessed from the approved main road connecting to The Packway, a county highway that forms a link between Durrington village and the B3086 to the west of Larkhill Camp. The Packway is a lit, single carriageway road, subject to 40mph speed limit, with a footway on the northern side of the carriageway and a grass verge on the southern side.

The wider highway network within the Transport Assessment (TA) study area comprises the A303 Trunk Road, which is the responsibility of Highways England (HE); the A345, The Packway and the B3086 which are all the responsibility of Wiltshire Council. There are also several lower category highways within the study area providing access to existing SFA to the south of The Packway opposite Larkhill Camp and to the south of The Packway opposite the proposed SFA.

With the exceptions of the built up areas of Larkhill and Countess Road the study area is predominantly rural in nature with the majority of roads being single carriageway ‘country’ roads subject to the national speed limit.

Pedestrian infrastructure

Pedestrian access is currently available from the site frontage onto The Packway via the approved main road. To the west of the main site access onto The Packway, there is an existing footway on the northern side of The Packway providing a pedestrian link to Larkhill Camp and local facilities. The footway has a width of approximately 2m (although this varies) and there are street lighting columns at regular intervals along the route. Approximately 1km to the west of the site there are footways on both sides of the carriageway along The Packway.

To the east of the main site access there is a footway to the north of The Packway that provides a pedestrian link towards Durrington village. This footway is segregated from the carriageway by a wide grass verge and there are no street lighting facilities along this section of The Packway. In Durrington village there is a footway along the northern side of the A3028 Larkhill Road and footways on both sides of Stonehenge Road. These routes are both subject to 30mph speed limits and there is street lighting in place.

There are existing byways that pass through the proposed SFA site; byway DURR31 runs north-south through the site to The Packway and byways DURR29 and DURR6 run along the western boundary of the proposed site. There is also a public footpath route (DURR15) that runs parallel with The Packway between the proposed SFA access and the A345 Netheravon Road.

Pedestrian accessibility

Within a reasonable walking distance (2km) from the centre of the SFA site existing local facilities and amenities include; a large proportion of Larkhill Camp to the west, the parade of shops on The Packway in Larkhill which include; a Post Office, Indian, Chinese and Italian food takeaways, hair salon and barbers, pet shop, two convenience stores, off-licence and café. Larkhill Primary School and The Packhorse public house fall just outside of the 2km catchment (by a few metres) to the west of the site.

To the east the 2km walking catchment includes an area of Durrington village including; The Stonehenge Inn public house, the Stonehenge Snooker and Social Centre and a Sainsbury’s Local supermarket. Durrington Junior School and a veterinary hospital fall just outside of the 2km catchment (by a few metres) to the east of the site.

There is, therefore, good potential for personnel living at the proposed new SFA to walk to work at Larkhill Camp and for children to be escorted to/from the existing primary and junior school facilities in the local area.
Design and Access Statement

The development proposals include the provision of new bus stops on The Packway close to the proposed site access junction. The site will, therefore, be within reasonable walking distance of bus stops served by the X5 bus service which runs between Salisbury and Swindon. This operates about every hour Mondays to Saturdays with an hourly service on Sundays and Bank Holidays. The route of the X5 provides a convenient link between the site and Durrington (including a stop at Avon Valley College), Bulford, Amesbury and Salisbury to the south and Upavon, Pewsey, Marlborough, Chiseldon and Swindon to the north.

The development masterplan makes space available for the provision of a new two-form entry (420 place) primary school and community facilities. As mentioned above, two existing schools (Larkhill Primary School and Durrington Junior School) are also located just outside of the 2km catchment (by a few metres). The nearest secondary school (Avon Valley College) is located at the northern edge of Durrington (approximately 2.2km away) and is just outside of reasonable walking distance. However, as mentioned above this is served by the X5 bus service which stops on The Packway, a short walk from the site.

The proposed SFA site is, therefore, considered to be sustainably located with regards to accessibility to military employment, public transport and education facilities.

**Cycle routes**

Although there is currently no dedicated cycle infrastructure linking the proposed SFA site and Larkhill Camp, there are three National Cycle Routes in the wider area which are summarised as follows:

- Wiltshire Cycleway (National Cycle Route 254) – runs between Amesbury and Everleigh through the study area using quiet, lightly trafficked roads.
- National Cycle Route 45 (NCR 45) - links Chester with Salisbury and passes close to Larkhill, Bulford and Ludgershall using on-road routes.
- National Cycle Route 481 – is a spur off NCR 45 which runs around Salisbury Plain linking Larkhill at its southern end to the NCR 45 west of Upavon using off-road routes.

The Packway between its junctions with Willoughby Road in Larkhill and the A435 roundabout junction west of Durrington is designated as an ‘on-street’ cycle route; although there are no specific cycle lanes defined on-street. The plan also depicts a cycle route on part of the A435 to the south of its roundabout junction with The Packway, although there is no dedicated cycle provision (i.e. cyclists would need to share the existing carriageway or footpath).

The existing byway DURR31 running northwards through the centre of the proposed site provides a rural link north to Figheldean. A further rural link is available leading south along Willoughby Road to the A344 at Stonehenge. Fargo Road to the south of Larkhill is designated as a ‘quiet street’ and provides a parallel route to The Packway.

A direct walking/cycling route will be provided between the proposed SFA and Larkhill Camp to the west (along the route of public byway DURR29) which will link to a pedestrian gate in the Camp security fence with keypad entry. The site access road will include a shared-use cycle/footway connection onto The Packway and possible improvements are being investigated by DIO to the existing footway on the northern side of The Packway between its junctions with Ross Road (to the west of Larkhill Camp) and its junction with the A345 roundabout at Durrington to create a 3.0m wide shared use cycle/footway. The improved route will allow convenient cycle access into Larkhill and Durrington.

**Cycle accessibility**

The following local amenities and facilities are within a reasonable (4km) cycling distance of the proposed development: all of Larkhill Camp, Durrington and Bulford villages, part of Bulford Camp and part of Amesbury town to the south. Therefore, there is excellent potential for personnel living on the proposed SFA site to cycle to work at Larkhill and to use cycle travel as a realistic alternative to the private car to access local facilities in the surrounding areas.

**Public transport (bus)**

The site is located on the X5 bus route which passes on The Packway. The X5 bus service runs between Salisbury and Swindon. This operates about every hour Mondays to Saturdays with an hourly service on Sundays and Bank Holidays. The route of the X5 provides a convenient link between the site and Durrington (including a stop at Avon Valley College).
Pedestrian and cycle routes plan

Key
- Garrison Boundary
- Developed areas
- DIO Proposed cycleways
- PROW - Footpath
- PROW - Byway
- PROW - Bridleway
- Bus route
- Bus stops around proposed site

Walking times are based on a walking speed of 5km/h.
Bus stops are shown in approximate locations.

Walking times:
- 6 mins walk 500m
- 12 mins walk 1000m
- 18 mins walk 1500m

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2.6 Public rights of way

The principal attractions for informal outdoor recreation in the area include walking the network of public footpaths, byways and minor roads, cycling and horse riding. A public byway (byway 31) runs north south through the centre of the site connecting The Packway to a series of byways across the plain to the north. The northern site boundary is defined by byway 6 (Martinbushes Road), while the western boundary is largely defined by byway 29. To the east of the site near the junction with The Packway, public footpath 15 connects byway 31 with Netheravon Road to the east. In addition to the public byways within the site; a wider network of public byways provide connections into the wider landscape, heading north from the site towards Netheravon Down, and from the south of Larkhill garrison towards Stonehenge.

National Cycle Route 45 which links Chester to Salisbury runs along Milton Road to the east of Durrington. The public byway which runs north-south through the site is identified as a local cycle route.

2.7 Landscape character

The site is located to the east of Larkhill garrison and the permitted housing and school site and to the west of the village of Durrington. The site is an open, relatively flat area of land, formerly occupied by a golf driving range, surrounded by mature trees and woodland planting to the north, east south and west. A gap in the planting to the west allows access into the site from public byway 31 which in the past provided access to the former golf centre.

The area to the north and west of the site is currently undergoing earthworks and construction as part of permitted development 17/06370/FUL.

To the north of the permitted site the typical rolling and exposed grassland of the Salisbury Plain can be seen, punctuated by small woodland blocks. Arable fields and Netheravon Road separate the site from the village of Durrington to the east. Woodland and landform filter views towards the village of Durrington to the east and the woodland surrounding the sites obscure views of the ground surface of the site from the north, south and west.

The site boundaries are formed by the existing woodland and tree planting which surrounded the former golf centre. The site was originally formed by importation of fill to create an area of sports fields in the early 1940s. A ring of trees were planted around the outside in the early 1950s. These trees are mainly beech and sycamore and form an internal ring of trees of a greater age, with the woodland planting towards the outside being planted at a later date. The change in level formed by the fill to the adjacent areas is hidden within this woodland planting.

The outer area of the site forms one of the occasional blocks of woodland which characterise the otherwise open Salisbury Plain. The area to the immediate north and west of the site is currently characterised by earthworks and construction activities which form part of the permitted Larkhill SFA site and school site.
Further north, the landcover is typical of the horizontal open nature of the Salisbury Plain, with scattered buildings and blocks of woodland and plantation creating the only occasional vertical features. The field pattern is large scale and typically consists of post and wire fencing with very occasional hedgerow boundaries, resulting in clear views across the plateau which creates a feeling of expansiveness and tranquillity in the wider landscape.

Settlement in the area is sparse and generally concentrated in the valleys, with the exception of the Larkhill garrison on higher ground which creates a dominant built feature within the area. The permitted Larkhill housing site will be viewed adjacent to the garrison, separated by an area of open space supporting chalk grassland and woodland areas.

To the east, Netheravon Road forms the western built edge of Durrington, along with Larkhill Road forming the southern built edge. These roads provide noticeable and distinctive hard built interfaces within in the landscape, often viewed in stark contrast to the wider soft and undulating forms present. The permitted development has been designed to avoid such hard built edges, with the development framed by woodland planting to the east, and groups of tree planting to the north.

Paths and military tracks which cross the landscape create further linear features across the open undulating grassed landscape. The landscape also provides views towards the numerous archaeological landscape features, of the area, which include distinctive barrows, often visible, sited on higher ridgelines; along with views towards the distinctive landmark of Stonehenge. Two archaeological features within the permitted development site have been preserved in-situ: a causwayed enclosure to the east will be retained framed by hedgerow and woodland planting; and a hengiform to the east has been retained within the open space of the site, with tree planting to the west of this feature designed to frame views out to the wider landscape towards Durrington and beyond.

2.8 Cultural heritage

The proposed development site at Larkhill has been subject to a desk-top archaeological appraisal, geophysical survey and archaeological evaluation trenching leading to archaeological mitigation intended to, as far as possible, resolve outstanding archaeological issues prior to commencement of construction works. This mitigation has taken the form of an archaeological site, map and record exercise across the whole of Larkhill East and West, including the new school site. On Larkhill West and the school site the archaeological works were completed in April 2017. Similar site, map and record works commenced on Larkhill East in March 2017. These works followed geophysical survey and evaluation excavations as well as two open area excavations in 2015, leading to the discovery of a previously unidentified prehistoric monument. All archaeological works have been discussed with the Wiltshire Council Archaeology Service, governed by Written Schemes of Investigation, agreed with them and subject to their regular monitoring.

Prior to archaeological evaluations, the archaeological appraisal had identified a number of designated heritage assets close to the site; however, no heritage assets were identified within the proposed development site at that stage. Within the surrounding landscape there is extensive evidence of prehistoric activity, principally of Neolithic and Bronze Age origin. This activity includes not only the monuments within the Stonehenge World Heritage Site, such as Stonehenge itself, the Durrington Walls henge and settlement, Woodhenge and the Cursus, but also a significant number of other ritual and religious sites. The most obvious of these sites are the large numbers of later Neolithic and earlier Bronze Age round barrows that still survive as earthworks in the modern landscape. Nearby designated assets include the Larkhill Long Barrow (1363128) and Durrington Walls henge (1009133). The only Conservation Area close to the proposed development is at Durrington. It is at the north end of the modern settlement and includes the historic core based around the medieval village.

The appraisal identified the large number of significant prehistoric monuments identified within the World Heritage Site and in the landscape to the north. In addition to sites identified in the archaeological appraisal, recent, extensive geophysical survey within the World Heritage Site has identified significant numbers of prehistoric sites that were previously unidentified. Later human activity in the area is identified from the medieval period onwards, though this is primarily agricultural in character until the arrival of the Army at the very end of the 19th century. Twentieth century
archaeology in the surrounding Salisbury Plain landscape includes remains from over a century of military training.

At Larkhill expansion of the Army and of attendant military training following the outbreak of war in 1914, saw the development of semi-permanent hutted camps, associated civilian and semi official buildings (YMCA, Church Army, small shops) and numerous networks of practice trenches, as well as the military railway line serving the camps, and pioneer military aviation. The large camps of wooden huts were replaced in the inter-war years and during the Second World War, when the large Officers’ Mess to the west of the site was constructed.

Archaeological evaluation of the site, including both geophysical survey and trial trenching across the proposed development area, has been undertaken by WYG and Wessex Archaeology. The geophysical survey was undertaken across the entire proposed development area, both east and west of the byway leading northwards from The Packway to Martinbushes Lane and included land north of the current development boundary. Within the eastern area, the survey identified few potential archaeological remains within the proposed development area but two features thought likely to be a prehistoric ring ditch and a possible Neolithic long barrow were identified within the area originally considered for ecological mitigation to the north of the current proposed development. This area is now no longer proposed for development and is outside the scope of this application. Following geophysical survey, archaeological evaluation trenching was undertaken across the proposed development area to give a 5% sample. The only area not trenched was a penning to the east of the north-south track, which included an extensive badger sett, and a modification to the Written Scheme of Investigation was agreed with the Wiltshire Council Archaeology Service to reflect this. Trial trenches on the western side of the track were principally characterised by the presence of extensive remains of a network of military trenches of First World War date. Nevertheless, other remains were identified, including pits and ditches considered likely to be prehistoric in origin. One prehistoric, crouched burial was identified. A playing card shaped enclosure was also shown to have late prehistoric origins. Similar trenches in the eastern portion of the site revealed no trace of military training works and few other remains identified as more ancient archaeology. However, a ring ditch surrounded by a ring of large postholes was identified close to the north-east corner of the golf driving range. This feature has been identified as a small henge-like feature, consistent with the wider Stonehenge ritual landscape.

An archaeological strip, map and record exercise was undertaken within the western part of the proposed development following the evaluation excavations. The purpose of this work was to ensure, as far as reasonably possible, that all archaeological features and deposits had been investigated and reported ahead of the commencement of development and to an agreed professional standard and in accordance with a Written Scheme of Investigation agreed with Wiltshire Council’s Archaeology Service. As a result of this work, significant prehistoric remains including burials, houses and part of a previously unknown Neolithic causewayed enclosure have been identified and recorded. In addition, the remains of military activity, including internationally significant remains of First World War training features have been recorded, resulting in the single largest investigation of a site of this type anywhere in the world.

The proposed phase 4 development includes a significant area of cut and fill introduced as part of the creation of sports fields between the World Wars. Aerial photographs of the site taken before the construction of the pitches and a 2017 geophysical survey east of phase 4 indicate the presence of infilled ring and linear ditches; as a result, there is considered to be potential for prehistoric archaeological remains to be present within the proposed development area and an archaeological evaluation strategy has been agreed with the Wiltshire Council Archaeology Service. There is no evidence of military archaeology being present in this area, apart from three pistol/miniature rifle ranges located to the west edge of the phase 4 area.
2.9 Ecology

A preliminary ecological appraisal was carried out for the Larkhill Phase 4 site in April 2017 to identify any potential ecological constraints with regards to protected species and habitats. Following this, further protected species surveys for bats, reptiles, breeding birds and badgers were completed across the 2017 survey season. The site is dominated by species-poor grassland, that was previously highly managed as part of the Stonehenge Golf Centre pitch 9 hole play-and-pay golf course and driving range, with surrounding mixed plantation woodland. Small areas of calcareous grassland are present to the south west of the site.

The protected species surveys highlighted that trees within the development area were largely of low or negligible potential for roosting bats with a range of common bat species recorded commuting and foraging within the development site. The key areas utilised for bat commuting and foraging comprised the tree lines surrounding the Stonehenge Golf Centre however these were largely limited to relatively low numbers of common species. Reptile surveys highlighted no reptiles within the site. Breeding bird surveys recorded a range of common breeding bird species within the site and three small outlier badger setts were recorded within the site boundaries associated with the mixed woodland plantation.

2.10 Ground conditions

A desk top study, site walkover survey and ground investigation have been completed for the site. The site is covered by British Geological Survey (BGS) 1:50,000 (solid and drift) map number 298, Salisbury. The BGS geology mapping indicates that there are no superficial deposits beneath the site though Head deposits are indicated to be present to the north and east of the site. The BGS describe Head deposits as poorly sorted and poorly stratified deposits formed mostly by solifluction (soil wash) and / or hillwash and soil creep. These typically consist of fragments of different rock types deposited down-gradient from an upslope source.

The site is underlain by the Seaford Chalk Formation which is classified as a Principal Aquifer of regional importance. The Environment Agency mapping indicates that the south-eastern portion of the site is located within a Zone 1 (Inner Zone) groundwater Source Protection Zone (SPZ) whilst the remainder of the site is within a Zone 2 (Outer Zone) associated with three boreholes located 1km to the south-east. The site is, therefore, considered to be in a location where groundwater sensitivity is high.

The results of the desk based assessment and site walkover inspection have identified potential for ground contamination to be present. The site and immediately surrounding area have been used for military training purposes including a rifle range, possible grenade ranges and possible trenches located on or adjacent to the site. By 1939 a raised and levelled landform of fill covered the site, presumably to enable the use of the site as a recreational sports ground. The date of conversion to the recent site use as a golf course is unknown, but has occurred by 2001.

Ground investigation works encountered Topsoil across the site which is in turn underlain by Made Ground consisting predominantly of reworked chalk in many locations. It has been interpreted that the Made Ground is resultant from a cut and fill of a historic topographic high ground of chalk at the approximate centre of the site. Evidence for this comes from the absence of relict topsoil in many exploratory positions, and a flattened plateau of competent chalk. In general, Made Ground is situated in the north-eastern, western and eastern edges of the site. Thicknesses are greatest in the east, where it has been formed into steep banks following the fringe of the tree line. Towards the centre of the site no Made Ground was encountered.

The Seaford Chalk Formation bedrock was encountered beneath the Made Ground in all exploratory hole positions. Two divisions have been made within the bedrock from the recovered material. The upper portion of the formation is a white, structureless chalk composed of gravel, clay and silt. The lower division is a white and grey, structureless chalk composed of gravel and cobbles interspersed within damp chalk putty. Groundwater was not encountered in any of the exploratory positions.

Laboratory analysis of soil samples has not identified the presence of any significantly elevated contaminants which would represent a risk for a residential redevelopment.