



Defence  
Infrastructure  
Organisation

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## **Planning Statement**

**Larkhill SFA Phase 4**

**Land north of The Packway and east of Larkhill**

**Date : January 2018**



## **Planning Statement - Contents**

	<i>Page</i>
<b>Executive Summary</b>	01
<b>Part 1 – The Proposal</b>	
1.0 Introduction	04
2.0 Background	06
3.0 The Proposed Development	14
<b>Part 2 – The Site</b>	
4.0 Site Description and Locality	17
<b>Part 3 – Technical Considerations</b>	
5.0 Highways and Transport	19
6.0 Ecology	24
7.0 Heritage and Archaeology	25
8.0 Flood Risk and Drainage	27
9.0 Landscape and Visual Impact	28
10.0 Infrastructure Provision	31
<b>Part 4 – Planning Considerations</b>	
11.0 Planning Policy Context	33
<b>Part 5 – Evaluation</b>	
12.0 Evaluation	49
<b>Part 6 – Conclusions</b>	
13.0 Conclusions	57
<b>Appendix A</b>	
Community Engagement	



## **Executive Summary**

The application proposals form part of the Army Basing Programme (ABP), which has been introduced to allow better optimisation of the UK estate and a greater concentration of the Army on Salisbury Plain Training Area (SPTA) as units move back from Germany. As a result, an extra 4,300 troops and their families will move to the Salisbury Plain area by 2020.

Since mid 2012, DIO have been liaising closely with Wiltshire Council as part of the planned increase in the unit numbers rebasing to the Salisbury Plain Training Area (SPTA). As part of this process, the Salisbury Plain Masterplan has been developed under the Wiltshire Core Strategy to support individual planning applications. The masterplan was the subject of extensive stakeholder and community consultation and the feedback from the consultation process helped to inform the selection of sites for Service Families accommodation.

The application site occupies an area of approximately 11.997 hectares and is located on the former Stonehenge Golf Driving Range site, which closed in May 2017. The site falls adjacent to but outside the red line area of the approved 2016 masterplan for the Larkhill site. This masterplan (ref. 15/05540/FUL) granted permission for 444 no. dwellings, a school and community facility, open space and a range of supporting infrastructure. This masterplan incorporated a number of phases.

Since the grant of this permission further archaeological investigation has identified that the original masterplan area was used far more extensively for military training than was originally envisaged, specifically for trench warfare training. This has resulted in requirements for an extensive programme of UXO clearance. Shallow sub-surface soils were stripped across the original masterplan site, cleared for the presence of UXO and placed in a large stockpile. Additionally, an extensive network of WWI trenches have been excavated, examined and loosely backfilled. In light of these findings together with further engineering assessments and ground investigations, it was revealed that the previously consented scheme could not be fully implemented.

As a result of the above findings the masterplan was redesigned and application was made for Phases 1 and 2 (ref. 17/03959/FUL), which will provide 196 dwellings and Phase 3 (ref. 17/06370/FUL) which will provide 94 dwellings. Planning permission was granted for the Phase 1 and 2 application on 27 September 2017. Planning permission was granted for the Phase 3 application on 27 November 2017.

The schemes prepared for Phases 1 & 2 and Phase 3 thus far have not been able to provide the required number of SFA housing units. This is due to constraints of the site as discussed above. The Phase 4



development will provide the balance of 160 SFA housing units. The housing units to be delivered will be a mixture of house types, including semi-detached and detached houses.

The description of the full planning application proposal is:

**“Erection of 160 no. dwellings to provide Service Families Accommodation (SFA), land for public open space, landscaping, internal roads and associated infrastructure works and drainage improvements.”**

The previous Larkhill masterplan application as consented was subject to a Screening Opinion from Wiltshire Council which confirmed that an Environmental Impact Assessment was not required. The amount of development remains largely as previously consented, as such we consider that the previous screening of the site is applicable to the revised scheme. Therefore, all the environmental surveys and assessment work has been carried out for the application site. The environmental impacts were also assessed as part of the July 2016 permission for the original Larkhill masterplan and it was deemed that there were no unacceptable environmental impacts. The scale of the proposed development has not changed since this time; as such, it is our view that the environmental impacts of the proposed development are no greater than those assessed as part of the previous scheme.

This Planning Statement explores the key planning considerations influencing the chosen design solution for the development and evaluates the planning merits of the proposal. This statement should be read in conjunction with the accompanying drawings, technical reports & update notes and other supporting documents. Where appropriate, mitigation measures are identified. The conclusion is that there are no overriding reasons why the development proposals should not proceed.

The proposed development has been evaluated against the provisions of the Development Plan at local level and all other material considerations and those set out in national planning policy.

The introduction of additional Army personnel is part of a long tradition of the British Army's presence on Salisbury Plain. The proposals for Salisbury Plain provide a unique opportunity to balance the military and civilian communities. The integration of both the existing and incoming military communities with the existing civilian population is a key component underpinning the Army Basing proposals, whilst recognising the advantages of locating service personnel close to their places of work.



# **Part 1**

## **The Proposal**



## **1.0 Introduction**

- 1.1 WYG Planning has been instructed by the Defence Infrastructure Organisation (DIO) and Lovell to prepare and submit a planning application for the development of land north of the Packway and east of Larkhill, to provide new Service Family Accommodation (SFA) for military personnel and their dependents, comprising 160 new dwellings for SFA Housing. This application forms one part of a multi-phase comprehensive development.
- 1.2 The application proposals form part of the Army Basing Programme (ABP), which has been introduced to allow better optimisation of the UK estate and a greater concentration of the Army on Salisbury Plain Training Area (SPTA) as units move back from Germany. As a result, an extra 4,300 troops plus their families will move to the Salisbury Plain area by 2020.
- 1.3 In 2016, three planning permissions for SFA dwellings were granted in the Salisbury Plain Area at Ludgershall (15/02770/FUL – 246 dwellings), Bulford (15/04006/FUL – 227 dwellings) and Larkhill (15/05540/FUL – 444 dwellings). Since planning permission was granted for the development at Larkhill, the findings of further archaeological investigations, engineering assessments and ground investigations have meant the previously consented scheme at Larkhill could not be implemented fully. Revised schemes have been prepared for Phases 1 & 2 and Phase 3 which cover the previous masterplan site. Planning permission for Phases 1 & 2 was granted in September 2017. Planning permission for Phase 3 was granted in November 2017. Development approved at Phases 1, 2 and 3 total 290 SFA dwellings. The Phase 4 development is required to provide the balance of SFA dwellings required for the Larkhill development.
- 1.4 Overall, development approved at Phases 1, 2 and 3 and the development proposed at Phase 4 totals 450 SFA dwellings, an increase of 6 SFA dwellings. The additional 6 SFA dwellings are to accommodate numbers lost at the Bulford and Ludgershall sites as bungalows were also required to be provided on these sites to provide accommodation suitable for those service personnel with disabilities. The proposed bungalows are all single storey and therefore take up more space and have a greater footprint than the previously proposed terrace, semi-detached and detached two-storey dwellings previously approved.
- 1.5 As such, the description of the proposals for full planning permission is as follows:



**“Erection of 160 no. dwellings to provide Service Families Accommodation (SFA), land for public open space, landscaping, internal roads and all infrastructure works and drainage improvements.”**

1.6 This Planning Statement explores the key planning considerations influencing the chosen design solution for the development and evaluates the planning merits of the proposal. This statement should be read in conjunction with the following suite of supporting documents:

- Application Drawings
- Design and Access Statement
- Larkhill SFA Transport Assessment & Update Note
- Larkhill SFA Residential Travel Plan & Update Note
- Flood Risk Assessment and Drainage Strategy & Update Note
- Ecological Assessment
- Archaeology and Cultural Heritage Statement & Update Note
- Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment

1.7 This statement is arranged in 5 parts:

- Part 1 explains the development proposals
- Part 2 deals with the application site
- Part 3 addresses the Technical Considerations
- Part 4 addresses the Planning Considerations and
- Part 5 sets out the Conclusions

1.8 The Defence Infrastructure Organisation (DIO) has been liaising closely with Wiltshire Council since mid 2012 on preparing and planning for this increase in unit numbers and for the associated unit moves.

1.9 Further pre-application discussions relating to this Phase 4 planning application were held with Morgan Jones (Planning Officer, Wiltshire Council) in October and December 2017.

1.10 The scheme was also presented to John Todd and Sarah Tucker from Durrington Town Council and Wiltshire Council Councillor, Councillor Graham Wright on 28<sup>th</sup> November 2017. The feedback received during this meeting was supportive of the scheme.

1.11 In accordance with Wiltshire Council’s Statement of Community Involvement, we intend to complete public consultation on the proposed scheme during the planning application determination period.



## **2.0 Background**

### **Army Basing Programme**

- 2.1 In July 2012, the outcome of the Army 2020 Study was announced. It said that the Army would be made up of an integrated force of 112,000 personnel; 82,000 Regular soldiers and 30,000 Reserve soldiers. The Army 2020 structure will be made up of a Reaction Force capable of undertaking short notice operational tasks, and an Adaptable Force used for a wide range of tasks including providing HQ's and units for ongoing operations, Defence Engagement and homeland resilience. Support to both these forces would be provided by Force Troops with a wide range of capabilities such as artillery, logistics, military intelligence and signals.
- 2.2 In March 2013, the Secretary of State for Defence announced the Regular Army Basing Plan to support the implementation of the Army 2020 plan and its future operating model. This sets out the location changes for the Army and confirmed the drawdown of all units from Germany by 2020. The Army Basing Plan has transitioned into a delivery Programme, known as the Army Basing Programme (ABP). More than 100 units will either relocate, re-role, convert or disband over the next 3 years.
- 2.3 Assessment Studies have been undertaken to identify potential infrastructure options to deliver the Army lay down and analysis of these options in terms of operational and financial viability. Additional capacity will be provided where required, but in the majority of cases existing facilities and infrastructure will be used.

### **Salisbury Plain Masterplan**

- 2.4 Salisbury Plain is the largest military training area in the UK and consists of around 390 square kilometres of land owned by the MoD. As part of the Army Basing Programme (ABP), a total of around 4,300 extra personnel and their dependents will be rebased in Salisbury Plain.
- 2.5 Since mid-2012, DIO have been liaising closely with Wiltshire Council as part of the planned increase in the unit numbers rebasing to the Salisbury Plain Training Area (SPTA). As part of this process, the Salisbury Plain Masterplan has been developed under the Wiltshire Core Strategy in order to support individual planning applications.
- 2.6 The key deliverables of the ABP in Salisbury Plain are:



- Extensive new build for single living accommodation (SLA)
- Conversion of existing SLA blocks
- Additional messing facilities
- Extensive new build and some conversion of existing technical accommodation, including workshops, garages, armouries, stores and offices, and
- Approximately 1,000 new houses for military personnel and their dependents, referred henceforth as Service Families Accommodation (SFA)

- 2.7 Service Families Accommodation (SFA) is considered to be the most significant feature of the Army Basing Programme. The total number of SFA required is 1,017, (including 100 units to be purchased off the open market), to be divided between Ludgershall, Bulford and Larkhill.
- 2.8 The Masterplan brings together the key conclusions of the Assessment Studies for each Garrison and the Training Estate and the detailed technical work undertaken, which included an Overarching Environmental Appraisal (OEA), Outline Transport Assessment (OTA), Planning Context Report, and Statement of Community Involvement (SCI). Together, these identified the constraints and opportunities for new development, provided an overview of where development will take place and essentially informed the site selection exercise and the final proposals in the Masterplan. This included expansion of current army bases, additional training facilities and new housing for service families and new housing for service families.
- 2.9 One of the underlying objectives of the Masterplan is to facilitate the integration of military and civilian communities within the Salisbury Plain Training Area and it is envisaged that the scale of incoming personnel will provide significant benefits in reinvigorating existing communities.
- 2.10 The Masterplan informed the individual planning applications for Army Basing development and was taken into account in the original planning application decision making process, as the degree of community engagement was at a similar level to that for a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD).
- 2.11 The Masterplan remains a material consideration in the determination of future planning applications for Army Basing development in Salisbury Plain. The application site falls just outside the red line boundary of the original Larkhill Masterplan. However, the scheme has been designed in accordance with the general principles of the Masterplan and integrates with the three phases of development within the revised masterplan area.



## **Overarching Environmental Appraisal**

2.12 The Overarching Environmental Appraisal (OEA) provides a high-level appraisal of a large number of sites. In the case of the development of Service Families Accommodation sites, this involved preliminary environmental assessment work to a level of detail which could be used to determine the likelihood of significant environmental effects. This approach has been adopted:

- to ensure that the site selection process, described in this Planning Context Report and underpinning the Masterplan, is appropriately informed and influenced by environmental considerations;
- to identify the need for further survey work or early mitigation;
- to provide a robust foundation for supporting the planning applications at each of the preferred sites; and
- to predict the likelihood of significant environmental effects at each of the sites based on the information available.

2.13 The elements covered by the OEA included ecology and nature conservation, cultural heritage, ground conditions and drainage and landscape and visual impact. As part of this process, an Environment Sub Group was formed under the Army Basing Steering Group to address issues specific to environmental matters. DIO and Wiltshire Council also arranged workshops for statutory consultees, including the Environment Agency and Natural England.

2.14 Key issues identified were impacts upon:

- River Avon Special Area of Conservation (SAC)
- Salisbury Plain SAC;
- Salisbury Plain Special Protection Area (SPA);
- The landscape and visual impact of 540 SFA to the east of Larkhill Camp;
- Priority habitats across the SPTA, including calcareous grassland;
- Landscape sensitivity and views of development site to the west of Bulford Camp from Double Hedges Road;
- Potential ecological and landscape constraints related to woodland in Bulford;
- Recreational disturbance on the Stone Curlew;
- Water Supply;
- Groundwater hydrology; and
- Sewage treatment capacity.



2.15 The various technical documents accompanying this planning application provide the specific detail on how these environmental issues are resolved.

### **Outline Transport Assessment**

2.16 An Outline Transport Assessment (OTA) was prepared in support of the Masterplan, examining the transport implications at a 'high level'. It identifies the new/improved strategic transport infrastructure required to mitigate transport impacts due to the ABP. An accompanying Overarching Travel Plan (OTP) was also prepared setting out strategies and measures to influence modal choice with a view to reducing dependency on the private car for all journeys associated with the rebasing proposals.

2.17 Potential highway improvements have been identified at 8 junctions on the county highway network and schemes were indicated in preliminary form. The junctions in question are:

- Junction 13D - Porton Road/ Solstice Park Ave/London Road
- Junction 14 - A345 Countess Road/A3028 Larkhill Road/The Packway
- Junction 15 - A3028 High Street/Orchard End
- Junction 16 - A3028 High Street/Salisbury Road/Double Hedges
- Junction 19A - A303(T)/A338 (priority junction onto A338)
- Junction 20 - A338 Park Road/Station Road
- Junction 21 - A338 Pennings Road/Meerut Road
- Junction 22 - A338 Pennings Road/A3026 Ludgershall Road

2.18 Separate site specific Transport Assessments and Travel Plans were subsequently prepared in support of each SFA planning application, which identify the new/improved transport infrastructure required to effectively integrate each site into its surroundings.

### **Planning Context Report**

2.19 The purpose of the Planning Context Report was to present the detailed technical work which was undertaken to inform the final proposals contained within the Masterplan, and specifically sets out the findings of the SFA selection exercise. It was prepared in a number of phases as described below.

2.20 Phase 1 was completed in October 2013 and comprised of the preliminary scoping and brief development for the Planning Context Report and Masterplan. This included a review of the



planning policy context, establishment of the key inputs and considerations to the Masterplan and identification of key stakeholders.

- 2.21 The Phase 2 report used GIS to identify the potential constraints on development, including planning policy constraints, site designations and protected species, heritage assets, landscape and visual impact, flood risk and water resource information and existing highway and access constraints.
- 2.22 Indicative numbers of SFA were provided relative to military unit location together with the plans showing the areas of search for SFA sites, together with all external constraints to help inform future stages. The Phase 2 report included a draft engagement plan, and was used as a basis for an initial public consultation in December 2013.
- 2.23 Under Phase 3, the long list of sites identified in Phase 2 was assessed to rule out heavily constrained sites. The remaining sites were evaluated against a set of weighted criteria to assess their suitability for SFA, and rated using a scoring system. Low scoring parcels of land were largely discounted and a schedule of preferred and potential SFA sites for further investigation was drawn up. This schedule was also informed by feedback from Wiltshire Council, statutory authorities and the local community following the initial public consultation.
- 2.24 The draft Planning Context Report contained the following plans:
- SFA plans showing preferred/potential options at each settlement (Larkhill, Bulford, Tidworth and Perham Down/Ludgershall).
  - Army Camps - Plans showing proposed development zones within military bases. These were revisited as necessary, informed by the Assessment Studies and the Outline Environmental Appraisal following key completion stages.
  - Emerging proposals for new training facilities within the Defence Training Estate (on SPTA).
- 2.25 The plans identified were adjusted as necessary by the outputs of the Assessment Studies and Outline Environmental Appraisal as they progressed in tandem with the production of the Masterplan.

### **Statement of Community Involvement**

- 2.26 In accordance with Wiltshire Council's guidance, a Statement of Community Involvement was prepared and submitted as part of the Masterplan. It explains the sequence of engagement



undertaken to shape and inform the preparation of the Salisbury Plain Masterplan and demonstrates that a thorough and intensive consultation process has been carried out.

2.26 A three stage consultation process was followed:

- An initial public consultation which ran between 27<sup>th</sup> November and 6<sup>th</sup> December 2013
- A formal public consultation which ran from 19<sup>th</sup> February to 1<sup>st</sup> April 2014
- A final comment stage on the Draft Masterplan and the suite of associated documents took place between 20<sup>th</sup> May and 17<sup>th</sup> June 2014

2.27 The comments and feedback received and any issues raised were given serious consideration by DIO at each stage of the engagement process and further informed the SFA site selection process.

The main issues were identified as:

- Sufficient social infrastructure such as schools and retail facilities needs to be delivered in conjunction with the new SFA;
- Impact on the A303, exacerbating the issue with 'rat running' on local roads;
- Concerns about the coalescence between Larkhill and Durrington and that a green buffer between the two should be maintained;
- Threat of development to the sun gap view from Stonehenge at Larkhill; and
- Retention of woodland north of sites in Bulford would be desirable.

2.28 It is considered that the resultant Masterplan proposals represented a balanced reflection of the views expressed through the consultation process.

### **The Larkhill SFA Site**

2.29 The proposed development plan included in the Salisbury Plain Masterplan document is shown on the following page. This Masterplan has been used as a basis for the subsequent planning application proposals for Phases 1, 2 and 3.

2.30 It is estimated that there will be a net increase of 2,053 service personnel at Larkhill Camp as a result of the Army Basing Programme. Overall, 450 new SFA dwellings will be provided for the requirements of the Larkhill Camp over a number of phases. This Phase 4 application is required to provide the balance of SFA dwellings that cannot be accommodated within the original masterplan area (Phase 1, 2 and 3).



2.31 Following the preparation of the Masterplan, a hybrid outline planning application for 444 no. dwellings, a school and community facility, open space and a range of supporting infrastructure was prepared for the Larkhill site. This application, alongside those at Ludgershall and Bulford were approved in July 2016. However, following the grant of that permission archaeological investigation, engineering assessments and ground investigation works have been undertaken, which revealed that the consented scheme could not be implemented. As a result of these findings, the scheme was redesigned in three phases. However, the required 444 new SFA dwellings cannot be accommodated within the red line boundary of the originally approved masterplan. As such, the application site which adjoins the red like boundary of the original masterplan is proposed to accommodate the balance of required SFA dwellings. In addition, six additional dwellings are proposed to be incorporated within the Larkhill site to allow for bungalows to be provided on the Bulford and Ludgershall sites for disabled users. Over the Larkhill, Bulford and Ludgershall sites there is no net increase in dwellings to be overall. Provision of bungalows on Bulford and Ludgershall resulted in the decrease of units on these two sites by 6, which will be made up as part of the Phase 4 development at Larkhill.

*Salisbury Plain Masterplan – Proposed Development*





- 2.32 A further planning permission has been secured for the access to the site shown as part of this application, through planning permission ref. 16/12479/FUL which sought 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"*.
- 2.33 This new access has now been fully constructed allowing construction of the new school and SFA dwellings to commence.



## **3.0 The Proposed Development**

3.1 The planning application for Phase 4 includes the following:

- 160 Service Family Accommodation (SFA) dwellings comprising a mix of unit types
- Public open space
- Landscaping
- Internal roads, infrastructure and ancillary works
- Drainage improvements

3.2 The proposals seek full planning permission for the proposed development.

### **Appearance**

3.3 Details of the 160 homes to be built on the site, including an accommodation schedule can be found in Appendix B of the Design and Access Statement. The new dwellings will be two storeys in height, which reflects the height of existing residential development adjacent to the site.

3.4 House types and materials have been selected to reflect local character and develop local distinctiveness. The proposed materials are illustrated on the Finishes Plan. The aim is to use traditional built forms – for example, houses with rectangular plan forms and simple pitch roofs (40 degree pitch) – and materials. The materials proposed comprise brick or rendered dwellings (of various colours) with red or slate roof tiles. Further details of the proposed house types can be found within the Design and Access Statement including number of bedrooms.

### **Access**

3.5 Vehicular access to the site is provided via a new roundabout junction onto The Packway. The roundabout junction was approved under permission ref. 16/12479/FUL which granted permission for "*construction of roundabout (minor amendments to roundabout approved under planning permission Ref: 15/05540/FUL) and highway improvement works on land at the Packway, Larkhill*".

3.6 This permission also involved the existing road to the north of the roundabout being upgraded to a 7.3m wide Distributor Road standard with a 3.0m shared cycle footway on one side and a 2.0m wide footway on the other. Residential access roads with a carriageway width of 5.5m with 2m footways on one/both sides of the carriageway will loop around the site providing access to a network of 20 mph shared surface roads and private drives providing access to individual dwellings.



### **Open Space**

- 3.7 Within the Phase 4 site there are a number of open spaces proposed. The scheme will incorporate (i) amenity green space; (ii) play space (for children); and (iii) teenage facilities, as follows:
- i. A total area of 9.337 hectares of amenity green space is proposed in Phase 4, 2.567 hectares in Phase 3 and 5.614 hectares in Phase 1 and 2
  - ii. Two play spaces (for children) have been incorporated into the Phase 4 development, which overlaps the Phase 1 & 2 development
  - iii. One area for teenage facilities (0.653hectares) has been identified in Phase 4, which also overlaps with Phase 1 and 2. This provision includes a hard surface Multi-Use Games Area.

### **Drainage Improvements**

- 3.8 It is proposed to install a surface water drainage network and discharge the site run-off to a soakaway located north of the Phase 3 development, but also within the red line boundary of the application site. This network is proposed to receive flows from roofs, driveways and roads. Only impermeable areas will contribute to the system.

### **Primary School/Community Facility**

- 3.9 An area of 2.1 hectares has been provided directly to the south of the phase 1 & 2 application site boundary for a new primary school and community facility. 1.8 hectares of this site will be available immediately for the development of a new 2 form entry primary school to accommodate 420 pupils, which will be needed to serve SFA development at Larkhill.
- 3.10 The proposed new primary school will be designed and constructed in accordance with Wiltshire Council's Standard Primary School Brief document. The school will provide additional sporting facilities including playing pitches for community use.
- 3.11 In response to the requirements of Wiltshire Council, 0.3 hectares of this site will also be provided for a new community facility.



## **Part 2**

# **The Site**



## **4.0 Site Description and Locality**

- 4.1 The application site is located on the former Stonehenge Golf Driving Range which 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.
- 4.2 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. The site comprises 11.997 hectares of land. 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.
- 4.3 The site is on the eastern portion of Salisbury Plain, the largest remaining area of chalk grassland in northwest Europe.
- 4.4 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.
- 4.5 The settlement has a long association with the British military and originally grew from military camps. It is now one of the main garrisons on Salisbury Plain, along with Tidworth Camp, Bulford Camp and Warminster. The first permanent huts were built at Larkhill in 1914, and thereafter 34 battalion sized hutted garrisons were built for use by a range of military forces. The Royal School of Artillery is located at Larkhill and the Royal Artillery moved its barracks there from Woolwich in 2008.
- 4.6 Much of the settlement of Larkhill sits within the Stonehenge World Heritage Site, and is therefore an area rich in Neolithic and Bronze Age monuments.
- 4.7 Larkhill Camp is located to the west of the application site and includes a parade of shops on The Packway with 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 approximately 2km to the west of the site. 2km to the east 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 are also located within this area of Durrington.



# **Part 3**

## **Technical Considerations**



## **5.0 Highways and Transport**

- 5.1 A Transport Assessment (TA) dated June 2015 and Residential Travel Plan (RTP) were submitted as part of the original Larkhill SFA planning application. These followed the Outline Transport Assessment and Overarching Travel Plan documents that were produced in support of the overall Salisbury Plain Masterplan.
- 5.2 Whilst the TA and RTP cover the original Larkhill masterplan area, we consider that the data and analysis of the report is still applicable given the Phase 4 site lies just outside the red line boundary of the original masterplan.
- 5.3 The transport modelling has been undertaken on the SFA development as a whole, across the three sites at Larkhill, Bulford and Ludgershall. The cumulative total of units provided through the four phases of development at Larkhill will total 450, compared with the 444 modelled within the Transport Assessment. However, this increase in six SFA dwellings has resulted from the loss of 6 SFA dwellings at the Bulford and Ludgershall sites to allow for bungalows to be incorporated into those developments. Overall, there is no increase in unit numbers across the three sites. We therefore consider the modelling within the 2015 Transport Assessment to still be accurate. This is confirmed by the TA and TP Updated Notes submitted in support of this application.
- 5.4 The Original TA and RTP reports, alongside Update Notes for the respective TA and TP reports, are submitted in support of this application.
- 5.5 The TA and RTP have been prepared in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) Planning Practice Guidance 'Transport Evidence Bases in plan Making' which formerly superseded the joint Department for Transport (DfT) and the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) document, 'Guidance for Transport Assessments' (GTA) in October 2014.
- 5.6 For the purposes of this transport assessment it has been assumed that the three proposed SFA developments at Larkhill, Bulford and Ludgershall are delivered simultaneously together with the proposed personnel increases at Larkhill, Bulford, Tidworth and Perham Down Camps. The developments at Bulford and Ludgershall have already been approved, including the reserved matters. It should also be noted that the site access roundabout was approved under planning permission ref. 16/12479/FUL on 10 March 2017.



## **Transport Assessment**

- 5.7 To advise the preparation of the TA for Larkhill, the following data was collected and methodology adopted:
- Revised AM/PM peak period traffic surveys undertaken at key junctions across the study area in March and October 2014.
  - Accident data from the Highway Authority for the past 5-year period.
  - Research conducted into committed transport and land use developments within the area
  - SFA trip generation estimated based on the traffic survey results and agreed with the Highway Authority and Wiltshire Council for use.
- 5.8 Existing sustainable travel opportunities (walking, cycling, bus and rail) have also been reviewed in the vicinity of the proposed SFA site and it is considered that there are a range of facilities available within easy walking/cycling distance of the site. Plans of existing bus services, footways and cycleways are included within the Appendices to the Larkhill SFA Travel Plan.
- 5.9 SFA trip generation has been estimated based on the results of traffic surveys undertaken at 6 existing SFA sites within the local area. Bespoke SFA trip generation rates were calculated from the survey results. The resultant trip rates are higher than TRICS trip generation rates for privately owned residential dwellings and are therefore considered to be robust.
- 5.10 No traffic flow reductions have been applied in the TA to take into account sustainable travel strategies and the assessments can therefore be considered to represent a 'worst case'.
- 5.11 All junctions are forecast to operate satisfactorily in both peaks at 2026 with the addition of development traffic. No highway improvement works are therefore considered necessary at off-site junctions and the proposed site access roundabout onto The Packway is considered acceptable to accommodate the forecast design flows.
- 5.12 It is worth noting that no material impacts are forecast on the single carriageway section of the A303(T) past Stonehenge. The proposed rebasing programme is therefore not anticipated to materially affect existing traffic conditions on this link and as a result is not expected to contribute towards any potential 'knock-on' traffic issues on adjacent local roads when this section of the Trunk Road is close to its operational link capacity during the busier summer months.
- 5.13 The approved new roundabout junction on The Packway will offer road safety benefits by acting as a physical traffic calming measure, helping to slow westbound traffic as it enters Larkhill. It is



therefore proposed that the existing 40mph speed limit that currently starts just to the east of the junction between The Packway and Wood Road be extended approximately 100m to the east to incorporate the proposed new roundabout junction.

- 5.14 Throughout the construction phase of the SFA the development will generate traffic associated with the transportation of construction plant and materials to and from the site. It is likely that these operations will involve the use of heavy good vehicles. A Construction Traffic Management Plan (CTMP) and Construction Environment Management Plan (CEMP) pursuant to conditions 14 and 28 of the original Larkhill permission (15/05540/FUL) was approved on 22 August 2017.
- 5.15 Subject to delivery of the identified improvement, in conjunction with an effective strategy to reduce dependency upon the private car for journeys associated with the proposed SFA and the wider rebasing proposals, it is considered that the proposed SFA development is acceptable on transport grounds.

### **Residential Travel Plan**

- 5.16 The RTP has been prepared to support this planning application for 450 SFA at Larkhill. Given the close proximity of the application site to the approved masterplan boundary its contents are still considered to be accurate. The RTP sets out the site strategies and measures that will be introduced to influence modal choice with a view to reducing dependency upon the private car, thereby helping to reduce adverse traffic impacts on the local highway network.
- 5.17 The RTP should be read in conjunction with the Overarching Travel Plan (OTP). The OTP identifies a package measures to encourage sustainable travel between SFA (existing and proposed) and the Camps covered by the OTP. The sustainable travel measures proposed in the OTP focus on increasing the use of:
- Walking and running for short distance trips.
  - Cycling for short/medium distance trips.
  - Bus use for medium distance trips (e.g. inter-Barracks).
  - Car sharing for longer distance commuter trips.
- 5.18 The sustainable travel measures and initiatives identified in the RTP are complementary to those identified in the OTP, which focus on increasing the use of walking and running for short distance trips, cycling for short/medium distance trips, bus use and car sharing for longer distance trips.



- 5.19 An audit of the existing pedestrian, cycling and public transport facilities in the area has been carried out which indicates that sustainable travel opportunities for residents and visitors to the proposed development are reasonable. There is therefore good potential for personnel living at the 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.
- 5.20 A number of specific measures have been put forward to encourage residents and visitors to use sustainable modes and to ensure that they have sufficient information to make an informed choice on their mode of travel. It is proposed that an initial target of a car driver mode share of 54% within 3 years of the first occupation is adopted for the proposed development and a monitoring strategy has been suggested.
- 5.21 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.
- 5.22 As mentioned earlier 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 extend along the existing footway on northern side of The Packway between its junctions with Ross Road (to the west of Larkhill Camp) and its junction with 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.
- 5.23 Improving the permeability of the Camp in this manner will help to encourage travel on foot/cycle. The following improvements are also proposed as part of the offsite highway works to be delivered under the section 106 agreement:
- Improvements to the existing footway
    - on northern side of The Packway between its junctions with Bingham Road/Ross Road to its junction with Northern Terrace to create a 3.0m wide shared use cycle/footway.
    - on northern side of The Packway between its junctions with Northern Terrace to its junction with Tombs Road to create a 3.0m wide shared use cycle/footway.
    - on northern side of The Packway between its junctions with Tombs Road and the A345 roundabout at Durrington to create a shared use cycle/footway.



- Improvements to Gate A (Main gate, currently manned 24 hrs) - Appropriate package of signage and road markings to integrate with proposed shared use cycle path to assist cyclists accessing the camp via this gate
- Improvements to Gate B - provide Simplex keypad lock and make access available between 0700 - 2200 hrs to minimise journey distance between the SFA and Camp. Improvements likely to include introduction of Simplex lock and CCTV with a link to the guardroom.

5.24 The Travel Plan Coordinator (TPC) be a Ministry of Defence representative and will have responsibility for development and delivery of the RTP and its ongoing monitoring and reporting. Their duties will include provision of travel information to new residents, and liaison with other TPC's in the area and Wiltshire Council. It is proposed that new residents will be provided with a 'New Household Local Sustainable Travel Pack' which will include maps of local walking and cycling routes, details local bus routes, bus stop locations and timetables, details of local car share schemes.

5.25 The package of measures outlined in this report is considered to be robust and appropriate to the development proposals and the site location. This RTP is therefore considered suitable for future development of the site.



## **6.0 Ecology**

- 6.1 A Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) has been prepared in support of this planning application. The PEA provides a summary of the existing information on statutory and non-statutory sites of nature conservation interest and relevant records of protected/notable species within the site and its zone of influence. The PEA makes a number of recommendations with regards to ecological mitigation and compensation.
- 6.2 Three outlier badger setts were recorded onsite. In addition, the site was assessed to have potential for reptiles, bats and breeding birds.
- 6.3 An extended Phase 1 habitat survey was undertaken on the site on 28<sup>th</sup> April 2017. The weather conditions were dry and cloudy. The site was inspected for evidence of, and its potential to support, protected or notable species.

### **Bat Surveys**

- 6.4 Bat activity surveys and automated detectors were conducted by URS (December 2014) across Phase 1,2 and 3 of the development. The surveys were completed once a month from May to September 2014 and identified the site offers foraging and commuting habitat for seven species of bat (common pipistrelle, soprano pipistrelle, serotine, noctule, Myotis sp, Nartusius' pipistrelle and brown-long eared). The survey identified key areas utilised for commuting and foraging comprised the tree line surrounding the Stonehenge Golf Driving Range (within the Phase 4 site), the central track passing south to north through the site and the western and northern site boundaries.
- 6.5 An initial bat roost potential inspection was also conducted in April 2017.
- 6.6 The site was considered to have low and negligible suitability for roosting bats. No signs of roosting bats were recorded during the survey. The site is also considered to have low suitability for foraging/commuting bats.

### **Reptile Surveys**

- 6.7 The mixed woodland, scrub and tall ruderal habitat that border the site offers potential refuge and foraging opportunities for reptiles, such as slow worm and viviparous lizard. The grassland habitat on site is managed at a very low sward height of approximately two-three inches, which is



considered sub optimal for reptiles to forage and bask within. However, since the closure of the golf course, it was noted on subsequent species survey visits that the grass had been left mostly unmanaged and had grown longer offering further suitable habitat. In addition, there are areas of bare ground and rough grassland refuges that offer some suitability. Overall the site is considered to have low potential to support common reptiles, albeit in low numbers.

- 6.8 Seven site visits were also undertaken to establish the presence of likely absence of reptile species. Survey visits were undertaken between 18<sup>th</sup> April and 8<sup>th</sup> May 2017. No reptiles were recorded during any of the surveys and therefore reptiles are considered likely to be absent from the site.
- 6.9 As no reptiles were found on site during the survey, the proposed development is considered unlikely to have an adverse impact on reptiles. As such, no specific mitigation is recommended.

#### **Great Crested Newt**

- 6.10 No waterbodies were noted on site to hold suitability for great crested newt. Habitats onsite provide terrestrial habitat for GCN in their terrestrial phase however due to the lack of suitable aquatic habitat linked to the site it is considered to have negligible potential to support GCN.

#### **Invertebrate Survey**

- 6.11 The habitats on site largely comprises managed amenity grassland and mixed plantation woodland of low potential for notable invertebrate species within 2km of the site.

#### **Botanical Survey**

- 6.12 Mixed planted woodland is present along all boundaries of the site likely planted during the 1920's to provide screening for the golf driving range area (formerly used as playing fields). The woodland comprises a range of species comprising both coniferous and broadleaved species at a range of life stages (largely up to semi-mature). Species present include oak, horse chestnut, yew, hawthorn, silver birch, ash, elder, Scot's pine, beech, alder, quelder rose and whitebeam. The woodland has limited understorey and associated woodland ground flora largely being dominated by open moss and leaf litter.
- 6.13 The site comprises mostly of managed amenity grassland that was subject to high levels of mechanical cutting and herbicide/fertiliser due to its use as a golf course and driving range. Dominant species comprise perennial rye-grass and cock's foot with herb species limited but



including dandelion, creeping buttercup, daisy and ribwort plantain. Areas of grassland have been left to form rough grassland in places as part of the golf course, species present were similar to the amenity grassland.

- 6.14 Tall ruderal is present along the edge of the woodland and within the understory of the mixed planted woodland. Dominant species within this area comprised stinging nettle.
- 6.15 Located on the south-east corner are a linear belt of planted semi mature trees. Species comprise horse chestnut, birch and scots pine.
- 6.16 Dense scrub borders the woodland with a matrix of semi-mature woodland/scrub with open moss and leaf litter covering the floor. Species comprise of blackthorn, hawthorn, bramble, nettle, cleavers, hart's tongue fern, Corsican pine, ash and field maple. Dense scrub is also present within a corner towards the east of the site.
- 6.17 No notable plants were recorded during the survey, with the site mainly comprising managed amenity grassland and mixed plantation woodland of low potential for notable plants.

### **Breeding Bird Survey**

- 6.18 Breeding bird surveys conducted during May to June 2014 by WYG (January 2015) recorded a total of thirty-one bird species from the surveyed areas (Phases 1 to 3), of this total, twenty-three species were considered to be breeding. Breeding birds included four red list Birds of Conservation Concern (BoCC), three amber BoCC and sixteen green BoCC. Notable species which may utilise the site comprise yellowhammer, mistle thrush, redwing, fieldfare, skylark, cuckoo, grey wagtail, hen harrier, hobby, red kite, grey partridge and barn owl.
- 6.19 It is likely that the dense scrub, mixed plantation woodland and scattered trees provide nesting opportunities for a common bird species during the breeding season and offer high potential. In addition nesting buzzard was noted utilising the site as well as multiple birds holding territories during the ecological appraisal.

### **Badger**

- 6.20 Habitats within the site boundary offer potential for foraging badgers and sett construction within the mixed woodland bordering the site. Active setts have been noted in the wider area and three active outlier setts are located on site as detailed below:



- Outlier 1 – single hole sett with larger spoil heap, containing badger hair, and signs of current use located to north east of site within mixed woodland;
- Outlier 2 – two hole sett with large spoil heaps, containing badger hair, and signs of current use located north west of the site within mixed woodland;
- Outlier 3 – single hole sett with large spoil heap, containing badger hair, and signs of current use located west of site within mixed woodland.

6.21 During the ecological appraisal, a latrine was also noted present as well as mammal pathways.

### **Hazel Dormice**

6.22 No evidence of dormice was recorded during the survey. The plantation woodland and dense scrub within the site boundary does offer some suitable foraging habitat for dormouse, albeit the woodland is isolated and not of sufficient size to maintain a viable population and therefore the site is considered to have negligible potential to support dormice.

### **Mitigation**

6.23 The loss of woodland habitat has been directly compensated through ecological input into the proposed landscape design, which includes the provision of over 0.5ha of native woodland planting to strengthen existing woodland areas and provide a new link to the north boundary of the site. Additional areas of species-rich grassland have been included to enhance the sites biodiversity value.



## **7.0 Heritage and Archaeology**

- 7.1 A Cultural Heritage Appraisal, Archaeological Evaluation & Watching Brief Report and Geophysical Survey Report were submitted as part of the original Larkhill planning application (15/05540/FUL).
- 7.2 The proposed development site at Larkhill Phase 4 has been subject to similar archaeological assessment as the previous three phases of development, with desktop assessment and evaluation excavations undertaken.
- 7.3 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.
- 7.4 The proposed development has been subject to a desk-top archaeological appraisal, with both historic map research from online sources, and an aerial photographic search were undertaken. Air photos were obtained from the Historic England archive in Swindon. The earliest photo (1924) showed the landscape prior to the construction of the sports pitches and with small arms ranges terraced into the hillside on the west side of the site. One small area of possible military trenching was also shown. No evidence of archaeological remains was identified on or around the site. An undated photo taken a short time after the construction of the sports pitches, demonstrated by the lack of trees around the boundary, shows a series of features consistent with probable Prehistoric ring ditches and in-filled linear earthworks immediately to the east of the site. By 1943, a USAF air photo shows a well-established sports pitch that is clearly terraced into the hill on its southern side and built up with fill materials to the north. By 1954, a photo shows that the trees around the site are maturing along their present lines. The historic maps consulted show open downland on the 1887 Ordnance Survey 6" First Edition, which is how it remains until the 1923 revision (published



1941) which shows the "Recreation Ground". Neither maps shows any record of antiquities on the site.

- 7.5 An archaeological watching brief was undertaken by Wessex Archaeology during geotechnical investigations (Wessex Archaeology report 11598.1.01). This demonstrated that the whole hilltop had not been truncated during construction works and that a cut and fill method had been employed to level the playing fields, prior to the conversion into the Golf Centre. However, no archaeological features or deposits were identified during the watching brief.
- 7.6 To inform the planning application, an archaeological evaluation was requested by the Wiltshire Council Archaeology Service. The evaluation was to include trial trenching, equal to a 5% sample of the site area.
- 7.7 The archaeological evaluation was undertaken in December 2017. While no evidence for archaeological finds, deposits or features were identified across the greater part of the site, one trench, in the north-east corner of the site, revealed a large posthole and section of curved ditch. The trench was extended and revealed remains indicative of a hengiform similar to that seen in Phase 3, and this was confirmed by a further trench that showed more of the arrangement of ditch and attendant postholes very similar to that recorded in Phase 3.
- 7.8 Discussions with the Wiltshire Council Archaeology Service have indicated that either full excavation or preservation by design would be acceptable but that the latter option would entail more evaluation to better characterise the monument prior to its reburial. Full excavation has potential provide extra information relating to the Phase 3 hengiform, which was lacking any datable material, and to the relationship between these two, similar monuments.
- 7.9 A Written Scheme of Investigation for the excavation has been prepared by Wessex Archaeology and submitted to Wiltshire Council for approval. This proposes further investigation works on site.



## **8.0 Flood Risk and Drainage**

- 8.1 A Flood Risk Assessment and Drainage Strategy was prepared by WYG in support of the original Larkhill SFA application proposals. A Flood Risk Assessment Update Note has been submitted alongside the FRA and Drainage Strategy to support this planning application.
- 8.2 The site is located entirely within Flood zone 1. This zone is defined as an area where there is less than 0.1% (1 in 1000 year) probability of flooding from rivers or sea.
- 8.3 The Environment Agency (EA) surface water map shows there is no surface water flows onto the site from exterior roads or adjacent sites and therefore there is no current risk of flooding from surface water. Flood risk to the site has not increased since the time of writing the original FRA.
- 8.4 It is proposed to install a surface water drainage network and discharge the site run-off to a soakaway located north of the Phase 3 development. This network will receive flows from roofs, driveways and roads. Only impermeable areas will contribute to the system.
- 8.5 Wessex Water is the Statutory Undertaker for waste water on the development. Foul water will be pumped via rising main Southbound to the Wessex Water owned Raftyn Sewerage Treatment Works (STW), to the north of Amesbury. Wessex Water has confirmed that it can accept all foul flows from the development within its existing permitted headroom. Raftyn STW incorporates phosphate stripping technology which will reduce the total phosphate concentration in the discharge effluent to less than 1.0ppm.
- 8.6 The permeability of the fractured chalk is very high, such that the water is draining away faster than it can be pumped into the pit. This is not an unusual occurrence within the chalk on Salisbury Plain.



## **9.0 Landscape & Visual Impact**

- 9.1 A Landscape and Visual Impact Appraisal (LVIA) has been undertaken in support of this planning application. Landscaping proposals, including details of hard landscaping and planting details, have also been submitted as part of the planning application.
- 9.2 The scheme will change the character of the site from its former use to a residential landscape. The layout of the development has been carefully designed to retain important vegetation within the site and around the site boundary where possible. The proposed development will compensate in the long term for the loss of vegetation during the construction period with proposed tree planting along the northern boundary and woodland planting within the consented open space.
- 9.3 There will be a moderate-major to minor adverse impact on the setting of public footpaths within the study area, dependent on the dominance of the development in relation to the setting of the path. The effects on roads within the study area will be minor adverse. Adverse effect would only occur where the construction activities are a perceptible element in the setting of the public rights of way.
- 9.4 Effects on the landscape context of the residential properties would include effects on residential amenity on a prolonged and sustained basis, and therefore are regarded as major adverse for the nearest properties within the consented SFA development during construction; reducing to minor adverse following occupation. Properties within the permitted SFA site would experience a minor change to their setting with the increase in built development. For other properties where the development is not an important element in the setting of the development, the effect will be negligible.
- 9.5 There will be no effect on the landscape setting of nearby listed buildings, and no effect on nearby Conservation Areas. The effect on the landscape setting of the Stonehenge WHS is considered to be none. There would be no effect on the setting of the Cranborne Chase and West Wiltshire Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

### **Visual Assessment**

- 9.6 Visual effects of the proposed development will be limited due to the surrounding topography, blocks of planting and the existing garrison, which limit views to the north and west of the site. Views from the south are also limited by landform. There are views towards the site from the immediate north



while views in the wider area are limited by surrounding vegetation and landform, with the exception of the higher ridges of ground to the north east at Figheldean; and the south-east at Beacon Hill, where the site is viewed in the context of Bulford Camp and other military development on the Salisbury Plain.

- 9.7 Where there are visual effects, these are generally adverse due to the close proximity of the view and scale of the changes proposed. There are opportunities to mitigate visual effects by screening or filtering views of the development which have been incorporated into the landscape strategy, which aims to mitigate effects on the open character of the land in the surrounding area by creating an appropriate edge to the settlement.
- 9.8 A key feature of the landscape strategy is the planting proposed along the northern extent of the housing which is key to creating the landscape structure in which the development will sit. An avenue of horse chestnut trees is proposed which reflects the avenue along the opposite site of the open space in the permitted development. Properties along the northern boundary face into the permitted Larkhill SFA development open space and this planted avenue, creating a positive edge to this open space by fronting onto it, and the Salisbury Plain beyond. This planting aims to soften and filter views of the development, and create a separate identity for the settlement. Bands of native structure planting are proposed on the new bank to the north of the site to increase biodiversity and provide connections to the proposed planting to the east and the existing woodland to the southwest.
- 9.9 The assessment identified residential adverse, short-term visual effects for the five selected assessment views ranging from minor adverse to moderate-major adverse during the immediately following construction works. This effect would be maintained for the construction period but following the establishment of planting over a 15 year period the long-term visual effect would reduce to minor adverse to negligible effect as the development becomes integrated with the consented Larkhill SFA development. Proposed planting within the consented development and additional tree and woodland planting within the site will provide screening and better integrate the development into its landscape context.

### **Cumulative assessment**

- 9.10 Overall combined/sequential views of the Larkhill SFA development, combined with other proposed developments are considered to be minor adverse-negligible. Overall, cumulative effects on



landscape and visual amenity resulting from the proposed developments at Larkhill and other developments within the area are considered to be minor adverse-negligible.



## **10.0 Infrastructure Provision**

10.1 The MoD is committed to delivering the infrastructure required as part of the Army Rebasing Masterplan. As part of the previous permission, a S.106 agreement was approved in support of the application to cover the necessary infrastructure provision. The S.106 agreement covers:

- Off-site highway works
- Sustainable transport measures – including footway and cycleway improvements and bus stop works
- Implementation of Travel Plan
- Provision of land for a primary school and contributions for provision of additional school places for early years, primary and secondary school pupils
- Healthcare provision
- Provision of new open space
- Areas of formal and informal play for children
- Provision of new sporting facilities within the new school for community use
- Enabling wider use of the MoD sports facilities when not in use for military purposes
- Provision of land for community facilities
- Waste and recycling provision

10.2 The approved S.106 agreement will be subject to a deed of variation in due course.



# **Part 4**

## **Planning Considerations**



## **11.0 Planning Policy Context**

- 11.1 The application site lies within the administrative area of Wiltshire Council, a unitary authority.
- 11.2 The starting point for considering development proposals is the Development Plan. Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 states: *"If regard is to be had to the Development Plan for the purpose of any determination to be made under the Planning Acts, the determination must be made in accordance with the Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise."* Development Plan documents can include adopted Local Plans and neighbourhood plans.
- 11.3 The National Planning Policy Framework is also relevant, in particular paragraph 74 relates to existing open space, sports and recreational buildings and land, including playing fields and states that they should not be built on unless:
- An assessment has been undertaken which has clearly shown the open space, buildings or land to be surplus to requirements; or
  - The loss resulting from the proposed development would be replaced by equivalent or better provision in terms of quantity or quality in a suitable location; or
  - The development is for alternative sports and recreation provision, the needs for which clearly outweigh the loss.
- 11.4 The justification for the redevelopment of the former golf centre is set out in the principle of development in Part 5 below.
- 11.5 The current Development Plan for Wiltshire consists of the Wiltshire Core Strategy which was adopted in January 2015. It replaces the South Wiltshire Core Strategy as well as a number of policies from the former District Councils' Local Plans; including some of the 'saved' policies of the Salisbury District Local Plan, which covers the settlement of Larkhill. The policies contained within these documents currently form part of the development plan for Wiltshire and will remain in place until replaced by policies in new Development Plan Documents (DPDs).
- 11.6 Relevant planning policies are noted below.



## **Relevant Policies on Spatial Strategy**

### **Wiltshire Core Strategy**

- 11.7 The Core Strategy covers the period to 2026. It sets out a number of strategic objectives, some of which include reference to MoD land and activities. Strategic objective 1 of the Wiltshire Core Strategy concerns "Delivering a Thriving Economy" and a key outcome is stated as *"sustainable growth...including defence-related employment"*. Another key outcome is that *"redundant MoD land will, as far as possible, have been brought within the overall pattern of development"*.
- 11.8 One of the key outcomes of *"strategic objective 3: providing everyone with access to a decent, affordable home"* is that *"changes in the accommodation of military personnel will have enabled better integration with the wider community"*.
- 11.9 Strategic objective 6 is *"to ensure that infrastructure is in place to support communities"*; it states that one of the key outcomes is: *"provision of essential infrastructure, including, transport, water, energy, flood alleviation, sustainable urban drainage (SUDs), telecommunications, affordable housing, education, healthcare, emergency services and waste and recycling, will have been coordinated and provided in timely manner within all new development"*.
- 11.10 The previous permission was subject to an agreed s106 agreement which included details of infrastructure delivery plan. The purpose of the IDP is to provide a costed schedule of the infrastructure that will be required to support the incoming army personnel and their families moving into the Salisbury Plain Training Area as part of the Army Basing Programme 2020. DIO/MOD is committed to ensuring that the necessary infrastructure is provided to support the Army Basing Programme. The s106 agreement was approved on 19 July 2016 and will be subject to a deed of variation application, which will be made further into detailed discussion between Wiltshire Council, WYG and DIO in due course.
- 11.11 Core Policy 1 of the Wiltshire Core Strategy provides a "Settlement Strategy" with a hierarchy of "Principal Settlements", "Market Towns", "Local Service Centres" and "Villages". Villages will be expected to meet local growth needs, and there is a general presumption against development elsewhere (Core Policy 2).
- 11.12 The proposed development is situated in a sustainable location adjacent to Larkhill Camp. The proposed development will assist with meeting the objectives of Core Policy 1; the additional population will contribute by supporting local shops, facilities and services.



11.13 Core Policy 2 Delivery Strategy of the Wiltshire Core Strategy makes provision for at least 42,000 dwellings in Wiltshire between 2006 and 2026. It should be noted that this dwelling requirement does not include the housing required for military personnel as a result of the Army Basing Programme. Thus, this application for SFA does not contribute to the housing provision set out in the Core Strategy.

11.14 Core Policy 3 of the Wiltshire Core Strategy relates to the infrastructure requirements of new development and states that:

*"All new development will be required to provide for the necessary on-site and, where appropriate, off-site infrastructure requirements arising from the proposal. Infrastructure requirements will be delivered directly by the developer and / or through an appropriate financial contribution prior to, or in conjunction with, new development. In ensuring the timely delivery of infrastructure, development proposals must demonstrate that full regard has been paid to the council's Infrastructure Delivery Plan and Schedule and all other relevant policies of this plan."*

11.15 Core Policy 3 identifies the following infrastructure priority themes:

*Infrastructure priority theme 1:*

*Essential infrastructure including but not limited to:*

- *Sustainable transport measures*
- *Water, sewerage and electrical utilities and connecting services, including low carbon and renewable energy*
- *Flood alleviation and sustainable urban drainage schemes*
- *Telecommunications facilities including fibre optic super-fast broadband connectivity services to serve local communities and the business community*
- *Education healthcare facilities emergency services*
- *Waste management services such as recycling and collection facilities*
- *Specific projects needed to ensure compliance with the Habitats Regulations.*

*Infrastructure priority theme 2:*

*Place-shaping infrastructure including but not limited to:*

- *Community safety in the public realm*
- *Maintenance and improvement of the Wiltshire's heritage assets, including the storage of archaeological remains*
- *Leisure and recreation provision*



- *Open space and green infrastructure*
- *Town centre management schemes*
- *Employer engagement and training schemes*
- *Cultural and community facilities*
- *Libraries*
- *Public art and streetscape feature*
- *Cemetery provision.*

11.16 The agreed s106 agreement makes provision for infrastructure required by or because of the wider Larkhill development.

Amesbury Area Strategy

11.17 Core Strategy Policy 4 sets out the spatial strategy for the Community Area of Amesbury, within which the proposed site is located. Paragraph 5.18 notes that the strategy for Amesbury seeks to make the town a more self-supporting community thus reducing the need to travel to larger urban centres. The additional military personnel and their families will contribute positively to this strategy by creating increased customer for local goods and services.

11.18 Paragraph 5.19 notes that *"The MoD is one of the most significant employers in Wiltshire and makes an important contribution to its economy and to many communities across the county. The development of Britain's first 'Super Garrison' around the Salisbury Plain area is having far reaching implications for local communities and is attracting multi-million pound investment into the county. Although the Super-Garrison project will be supported overall, specific proposal sites will be assessed through a subsequent planning document."*

11.19 Paragraph 5.19 also sets out key considerations that will need to be addressed in planning for the Amesbury Community Area. These include:

- There is a challenge to improve public transport, pedestrian and cycle linkages to ensure that the residential growth areas have easy, convenient and safe access to town centre facilities and to improve the number of the surrounding villages which are well served by public transport choice to the main service centre at Amesbury.
- Development with the potential to increase recreational pressure upon the Salisbury Plan Special Protection Area will be required to provide proportionate contributions towards the maintenance of the Stone Curlew Management Strategy designed to avoid adverse effects



upon the integrity of the stone curlew population as a designated feature of the Special Protection Area.

- There is a shortage of amenity space in the area, especially Amesbury East and this shortfall needs to be addressed and contributions will be sought from the planned growth through provision of new amenity space and commuted payments under saved policy R2.
- The A303 corridor runs through the area and is a main arterial route from London to the south west. It suffers from problems, with intermittent stretches of single lane carriageway causing large delays at peak times. This has a knock-on effect on the attractiveness of the area for business and tourism investment. Studies have confirmed the need to overcome these problems by dualling the A303 along its length. Wiltshire Council will work collaboratively with agencies, such as the Highways Agency, the Department of Transport and English Heritage to try and achieve an acceptable solution to the dualling of the A303 that does not adversely affect the Stonehenge World Heritage Site and its setting.
- The World Heritage Site will be protected from inappropriate development both within the Site and in its setting so as to sustain its OUV in accordance with Core Policy 59.

11.20 These matters are addressed as appropriate in this statement and/or within the technical documents supporting this application.

#### Military Establishments

11.21 Core Policy 37 of the Core Strategy relates to Military Establishments. It states:

*"New development and changes of use at operational facilities that help enhance or sustain their operational capability will be supported. Redevelopment, conversion or change of use of redundant MoD sites and buildings will be supported provided they are well related to an existing settlement in terms of both location and scale. Sites that are remote from settlements should only be considered where the existing buildings and infrastructure on the site are suitable for redevelopment, conversion or change of use. Redevelopment proposals will not exceed the existing building footprint and floorspace unless they are well located to an existing settlement. The focus will be on employment-led development and other uses should be determined through a masterplanning approach with the local community.*

*"Development at operational or redundant sites should enhance the overall character of the site. All development at operational or redundant sites should mitigate any adverse impacts on local*



*infrastructure, and not erode the character of the surrounding area. All proposals must ensure that the cultural and historical significance of the military facilities located on the site are understood and inform the scope of future development of that site."*

- 11.22 Paragraph 6.21 acknowledges that large areas of Wiltshire have been used by the military for over a century, and that this presence has brought many benefits; environmentally and economically. Paragraph 6.23 states that *"During the Plan period, provision of new housing on MOD land to accommodate military personnel including service family accommodation and other operational facilities will be required as a result of the Army Rebasing on Salisbury Plan (Army 2020). A single master plan should be developed with the council including front loaded consultation and partnership working with the local community and other stakeholders. The master plan should address these requirements and ensure that infrastructure needs arising from the proposed development is an integral part of any planned development in accordance with Core Policy 37, as well as other policy requirements within the Plan."*
- 11.23 Further information on the Masterplan referred to in paragraph 6.23 and its current status is set out in latter sections of this document.
- 11.24 CP37 provides the main policy basis for the development proposals arising as a result the Army Basing Programme of which this application forms a part.

### **Other relevant policies**

- 11.25 Core Policy 41 relates to sustainable construction and low carbon energy identifies how sustainable construction and low-carbon energy will be integral to all new development in Wiltshire. In doing so this policy sets the framework for meeting a number of national and local priorities (for example Part L of the current Building Regulations) that seek to achieve sustainable development and conserve natural resources, and includes the following measures:

#### Climate change adaptation

- New development will be encouraged to incorporate design measures to reduce energy demand. Development will be well insulated and designed to take advantage of natural light and heat from the sun and use air movement for ventilation, whilst maximising cooling in the summer.

#### Renewable and low-carbon energy



- All proposals for major development will be required to submit a Sustainable Energy Strategy alongside the planning application outlining the low-carbon strategy for the proposal.

- 11.26 As indicated in the Design and Access Statement, all dwellings will comply with MoD standards for this type of accommodation and will meet or exceed current Building Regulations.
- 11.27 Core Policy 43 relates to the provision and tenure of affordable housing within Wiltshire. It has been agreed with Wiltshire Council that the MoD should be exempt from the provision of affordable housing as part of the SFA development, but will enter into appropriate, legally binding agreements to cover payments / obligations in the event that the houses become surplus to MoD requirements in the future resulting in their release onto the open market. In such circumstances, affordable housing will be secured in line with prevailing policies at the time. A clause is to be included to this effect within the previously agreed Section 106 Agreement, which will in time be subject to a deed of variation.
- 11.28 Core Policies 45 and 46 relate to meeting housing need within Wiltshire, in terms of provision of the right type, size and tenure of new dwellings and more specifically the needs of the vulnerable and elderly. As previously stated, the SFA housing resulting from the Army Basing Programme falls outside Wiltshire's housing requirement as set out within the Core Strategy. It is therefore also outside the remit of Core Policy 45 and is required to be designed in direct response to the needs of incoming military personnel.
- 11.29 Core Policy 50 contains Wiltshire Council's policy on biodiversity and geodiversity, and states that development proposals must demonstrate how they protect features of natural conservation and geological values as part of the design rationale. There is an expectation that such features shall be retained, buffered, and managed favourably in order to maintain their ecological value, connectivity and functionality in the long-term. Where it has been demonstrated that such features cannot be retained, removal or damage shall only be acceptable in circumstances where the anticipated ecological impacts have been mitigated as far as possible and appropriate compensatory measures can be secured to ensure no net loss of the local biodiversity resource, and secure the integrity of local ecological networks and provision of ecosystem services.



11.30 Core Policy 50 sets out the following requirements:

Biodiversity enhancement

- All development should seek opportunities to enhance biodiversity. Major development in particular must include measures to deliver biodiversity gains through opportunities to restore, enhance and create valuable habitats, ecological networks and ecosystem services.

Local sites

- Sustainable development will avoid direct and indirect impacts upon local sites through sensitive site location and layout, and by maintaining sufficient buffers and ecological connectivity with the wider environment.

11.31 Supporting documents submitted with this application (see Section 6 – Ecology) demonstrate that all necessary ecological surveys have been undertaken, their findings have been assessed and an Ecological Mitigation Strategy has been produced. Section 4 of this report identifies the avoidance, mitigation and enhancement measures proposed in compliance with Core Policy 50.

11.32 Core Policy 51 deals with Landscape. The main requirements set out in the policy are:

- Development should protect, conserve and where possible enhance landscape character and must not have a harmful impact upon landscape character, while any negative impacts must be mitigated as far as possible through sensitive design and landscape measures.
- Proposals should be informed by and sympathetic to the distinctive character areas identified in the relevant Landscape Character Assessment(s) and any other relevant assessments and studies.
- Proposals for development within or affecting the Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONBs), New Forest National Park (NFNP) or Stonehenge and Avebury World Heritage Site (WHS) shall demonstrate that they have taken account of the objectives, policies and actions set out in the relevant Management Plans for these areas. Proposals for development outside of an AONB that is sufficiently prominent (in terms of its siting or scale) to have an impact on the area's special qualities (as set out in the relevant management plan), must also demonstrate that it would not adversely affect its setting.

11.33 A Landscape Strategy forms an integral part of the masterplan for the proposed development. It aims to retain features identified as important, and to develop a landscape structure that will provide an appropriate setting for the proposed development. The proposed development will compensate in the long term for the loss of vegetation during the construction period with proposed tree planting



along the northern boundary and woodland planting within the consented open space. Further details are set out in the Design and Access Statement in compliance with Core Policy 51.

- 11.34 Core Policy 52 encourages the retention and enhancement of Wiltshire's Green Infrastructure network and shall ensure that suitable links to the network are provided and maintained. Where development is permitted, developers will be required to make provision for accessible open spaces in accordance with the requirements of the adopted Wiltshire Open Space Standards and put measures in place to ensure appropriate long-term management of any green infrastructure directly related to the development.
- 11.35 Section 6 of the Design and Access Statement demonstrates how the proposals comply with this policy.
- 11.36 Core Policy 55 is concerned with Air Quality. Its purpose is to seek to maintain the good air quality in the County and to strive to seek improvements in areas where air quality fails national objectives. The key issue in relation to the proposed application affecting air quality has been identified as dust occurring during the construction phase of the development.
- 11.37 Core Policy 56 considers development proposals which are likely to be on, or adjacent to, land which may have been subject to contamination. Development proposals will need to demonstrate that measures can be taken to effectively mitigate the impacts of land contamination on public health, environmental quality, the built environment and amenity.
- 11.38 Core Policy 57 sets out the Council's expectations with regard to design and place shaping. Planning applications must demonstrate how the proposals make a positive contribution to the character of Wiltshire. The Design and Access Statement, (see, for example, section 6), and associated plans and drawings show how the proposals have taken account of the Council's expectations set out in this policy.
- 11.39 Core Policy 58 aims to ensure that Wiltshire's important monuments, sites and landscapes and areas of historic and built heritage significance are protected and enhanced in order that they continue to make an important contribution to Wiltshire's environment and quality of life. Designated heritage assets, most notably nationally significant archaeological remains and World Heritage Sites within Wiltshire, and their settings will be conserved, and where appropriate enhanced in a manner appropriate to their significance. Distinctive elements of Wiltshire's historic environment, including non-designated heritage assets, which contribute to a sense of local character and identity will be conserved, and where possible enhanced.



- 11.40 Evaluation trenching has been undertaken across the proposed development area to give a 5% sample. These works were agreed with the Wiltshire Council Archaeology Service. While no evidence for archaeological finds, deposits or features was identified across the greater part of the site, one trench, in the north-east corner of the site, revealed a large posthole and section of curved ditch. The trench was extended and revealed remains indicative of a hengiform similar to that seen in Phase 3, and this was confirmed by a further trench that showed more of the arrangement of ditch and attendant postholes very similar to that recorded in Phase 3. This is discussed at greater detail within the preceding section.
- 11.41 Within the wider landscape, the proposed development is not considered to have the potential to impact upon the setting of designated assets: Durrington Walls, although close by, is separated from the site by the ridge along which the Packway runs and both identified long barrows (Knighton and Larkhill) are at some remove, while the Larkhill long barrow is separated from the site by both terrain and modern development. This Packway ridge also means that the wider Stonehenge World Heritage Site will not have its setting impacted by the proposed development. The approved three arm roundabout has been designed so that it does not impact upon the World Heritage Site immediately to its south.
- 11.42 Core Policies 60-66 cover transport and highway issues associated with new development. One of the key objectives of these policies is to help reduce the need to travel particularly by private car, and support and encourage the sustainable, safe and efficient movement of people and goods within and through Wiltshire. This will be achieved by:
- Planning developments in accessible locations
  - Promoting sustainable transport alternatives to the use of the private car
  - Maintaining and selectively improving the local transport network in accordance with its functional importance and in partnership with other transport planning bodies, service providers and the business community
  - Promoting appropriate demand management measures
  - Influencing the routing of freight within and through the county
  - Assessing and where necessary mitigating the impact of developments on transport users, local communities and the environment.
- 11.43 The Transport Assessment and Residential Travel Plan submitted with the application demonstrate how these policies have been addressed.



- 11.44 Core Policy 67 relates to flood risk and states that, *"all new development will include measures to reduce the rate of rainwater run-off and improve rainwater infiltration to soil and ground (sustainable urban drainage) unless site or environmental conditions make these measures unsuitable."*
- 11.45 The submitted Flood Risk Assessment and Drainage Strategy report addresses the requirements of CP 67, the NPPF and other issues which are deemed relevant to flood risk. It concludes that the proposed development will not be at risk of flooding from any source and the drainage strategy ensures that off site flood risk does not increase as a result.
- 11.46 Core Policy 68 concerns water resources and states that *"Development proposals within a Source Protection Zone, Safeguard Zone or Water Protection Zone must assess any risk to groundwater resources, and groundwater quality and demonstrate that these would be protected throughout the construction and operational phases of development."*
- 11.47 It should be noted that Policies 36, 43, 45 and 46 have been reviewed and are not considered to be relevant to this application. The SFA that is to be provided to meet the identified requirements of the Army Basing Programme does not contribute to meeting Wiltshire's general housing needs. It is for occupation by military personnel and their families returning from overseas. WC has recognised that SFA directly provided by the MoD bears some similarities to affordable housing provided by a Registered Provider. In both instances, there is an element of subsidy, which sets it apart from housing that is either sold or rented, without restriction, through the open market. The Council's policies regarding housing size, type and mix, affordable housing and housing for older and vulnerable people therefore do not apply.

### **Salisbury District Local Plan**

- 11.48 On 26th September, 2007, the Secretary of State issued a direction setting out the policies within the Salisbury District Local Plan 2011 that can be 'saved' beyond 26th September, 2007. These saved policies will remain relevant unless superseded by national guidance or until the adoption of the Wiltshire Core Strategy. Appendix D of the adopted Wiltshire Core Strategy sets out saved policies from the former Salisbury District Local Plan which sit alongside the policies within the Core Strategy. Although a considerable number of policies remain in force, only two are relevant to the circumstances of this application.
- 11.49 Saved Policy R2 and Appendix IV set out the requirements for open space provision in new residential developments. The application proposals incorporate provision of children's play space,



youth play space and amenity green space in accordance with the Wiltshire Open Space Standards, as suggested by Wiltshire Council.

- 11.50 Saved Policy R4 deals with Indoor Community and Leisure provision. It advises that where proposed development, either individually or cumulatively with other developments within the settlement, is of a sufficient size to generate an identifiable need for indoor community or leisure facilities, developers will be expected to provide a suitable facility within the site or make a contribution towards improving facilities within the settlement.
- 11.51 The s106 agreement which will be subject to a deed of variation contains details of open space provision.

### **National Planning Policy Framework**

- 11.52 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) sets out the government's planning policies for England and replaces all former PPGs and PPSs. The NPPF is a material consideration in planning decisions.
- 11.53 The NPPF advises that the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development (paragraph 6). This is a golden 'thread' which runs throughout the document. Paragraph 14 states that there is a presumption in favour of sustainable development at the heart of the NPPF.
- 11.54 It explains that: "*for decision making this means:*
- *Where the development plan is absent, silent or relevant policies are out of date, granting planning permission unless:*
    - *Any adverse effects of doing so would significant and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this framework taken as a whole; or:*
    - *Specific policies in this framework indicate development should be restricted."*
- 11.55 This positive approach is reflected in paragraph 187 which states that "*Local Planning Authorities should look for solutions rather than problems and decision-takers at every level should seek to approve applications for sustainable development where possible."*
- 11.56 Relevant paragraphs which relate to this application are noted below:



- The NPPF recognises the need for local authorities to boost significantly the supply of housing in order to deliver a wide choice of high quality homes, widen opportunities for home ownership and create sustainable, inclusive and mixed communities. Local authorities should *"plan for a mix of housing based on the needs of different groups in the community (such as...service families)"* (paragraph 50).
- Requiring good design is a key facet of the NPPF; paragraphs 56, 57, 58, 60, 61 and 66 are considered to be particularly relevant to this application and are addressed in the Design and Access Statement.
- The NPPF prioritises the reuse of previously developed (brownfield) land over greenfield and green belt land (paragraph 111).
- The NPPF refers specifically to Defence issues at paragraph 164 which encourages Local Planning Authorities to *"work with the MoD's Strategic Planning Team to ensure that they have and take into account the up-to-date information about defence and security needs in their area"*.
- Creating healthy and inclusive communities through an integrated approach to housing, economic uses and community facilities/services (paragraphs 69 and 70).
- Paragraph 74 relates to sports land and states it should not be built on unless an assessment has been undertaken which has clearly shown the open space, buildings or land to be surplus to requirements; or the loss resulting from the proposed development would be replaced by equivalent or better provision in terms of quantity and quality in a suitable location; or the development is for alternative sports and recreation provision, the needs for which clearly outweigh the loss.
- In terms of transport, one of the core planning principles is to actively manage patterns of growth to make the fullest possible use of public transport, walking and cycling, and focus significant development in locations which are or can be made sustainable (paragraph 34).
- The NPPF states that all developments which generate significant amounts of movement should be supported by a Transport Statement or Transport Assessment and that developments should be located where the need to travel will be minimised and the use of sustainable transport modes can be maximised. The document also states that development



should only be prevented or refused on transport grounds where the residual cumulative impacts of development are severe (paragraph 32).

- Paragraph 118 states that proposed development on land within or outside a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) that is likely to have an adverse effect on a SSSI should not normally be permitted. Exceptions should only be made where the benefits of the development outweigh the impacts that it is likely to have on the features of the SSSI and any broader impact on the national network of SSSIs.
- Substantial harm or loss of designated heritage assets of the highest significance such as scheduled monuments, and World Heritage Sites should be wholly exceptional (paragraph 132).
- The planning system should play a role in preventing both new and existing development from contributing to or being put at unacceptable risk from unacceptable levels of soil, air, water or noise pollution or land instability (paragraph 109).
- The NPPF also provides guidance on flood risk (paragraphs 100 to 104), the natural environment (paragraphs 109 to 125) and heritage (paragraphs 126 to 141).

11.57 It is considered that full regard has been had to the guidance set out in NPPF during the preparation of this application. The accompanying reports provide details of how the various technical matters noted above.

11.58 The NPPF is supported by Planning Policy Guidance (NPPG). This web based guidance was launched in March 2014 by the Department for Communities and Local Government. It supports and amplifies advice in the NPPF and replaces a raft of previous planning guidance documents. Regard has been had to the principles and guidance on technical matters set out in NPPG during the course of preparation of this application and accompanying supporting technical documents.

### **Summary**

11.59 Full regard has been given to the planning policy context within which this application is being brought forward. The Wiltshire Core Strategy, through Core Policy 37: Military Establishments allows new development at “operational” facilities. Paragraph 6.23 clarifies and refers to the Army 2020 rebasing project, and indicates that operational facilities include SFA. Particular emphasis is placed on the infrastructure needs arising from the proposed development to be an integral part of the



planning development. This paragraph also sets out the need for the Masterplan and that this accommodation is over and above that set out in Core Policy 2 of the Wiltshire Core Strategy.

- 11.60 The application complies with the relevant development plan policies comprising the Wiltshire Core Strategy and the Salisbury District Local Plan. It also complies with the relevant parts of the NPPF.



# **Part 5**

## **Evaluation**



## **12.0 Evaluation**

### **Principle of development**

- 12.1 The Wiltshire Core Strategy recognises that military operations and establishments have occupied large areas of Wiltshire for over a century, shaping the environment and character of the County and contributing significantly towards the economy. Core Policy 37 of the adopted Wiltshire Core Strategy specifically refers to the Army Rebasing Programme and accepts the principle of providing new housing on MoD land to accommodate the incoming military personnel and their families. Policy 37 states that major development of MoD sites within Wiltshire should be determined through the preparation of masterplan documents, therefore setting the planning policy context within which the Salisbury Plain Masterplan has been brought forward.
- 12.2 As part of the preparation of the Salisbury Plain Masterplan, specific sites selected for new SFA within Salisbury Plain went through a rigorous site selection process, which included assessment of the planning and site constraints, the requirements contained within Core Policy 37 and other policies within the Core Strategy, and the Army's preference that they should be located as close as practical to the Camp where the soldiers will be based.
- 12.3 The Masterplan process is also supported within the context of the National Planning Policy Framework. Paragraph 164 encourages Local Planning Authorities to "work with the MoD's Strategic Planning Team to ensure that they have and take into account the up-to-date information about defence and security needs in their area".
- 12.4 Following a number of consultation exercises, the Salisbury Plain Masterplan was presented to Wiltshire Council Strategic Planning Committee on 30th July 2014, and a further report addressing outstanding matters was presented at a subsequent meeting on 22nd October 2014. At that meeting, the Army Basing Planning Manager reported that this outstanding work had been completed and the Masterplan had now been finalised, thus providing a sound basis upon which forthcoming development could be planned in a comprehensive manner with the necessary infrastructure.
- 12.5 Core Strategy Policy 4 sets out the spatial strategy for the Community Area of Amesbury, within which the proposed site is located. Paragraph 5.18 notes that the strategy for Amesbury seeks to make the town a more self-supporting community thus reducing the need to travel to larger urban



centres. The additional military personnel and their families will contribute positively to this strategy by creating increased customers for local goods and services.

- 12.6 The principle of development has therefore been established through the Salisbury Plain Masterplan and is supported by the Wiltshire Core Strategy and the NPPF.

### **Loss of Former Golf Centre**

- 12.7 The redevelopment of the former Stonehenge Golf Driving Range, would result in the loss of an area of green infrastructure. Green infrastructure is used to characterise spaces such as parks and gardens; amenity green space; urban green space; woodland, downland and meadows; wetlands, open and running water, quarries; green corridors, cycling routes, pedestrian paths, and rights of way; allotments, cemeteries, and churchyards within the Core Strategy.
- 12.8 Core Strategy Policy 52 relates to green infrastructure and states that development shall make provision for the retention and enhancement of Wiltshire's green infrastructure. If damage or loss of existing green infrastructure is unavoidable, the creation of new or replacement green infrastructure equal to or above its current value and quality, that maintains the integrity and functionality of the green infrastructure network, will be required.
- 12.9 The NPPF also makes reference to sports land at paragraph 74 and states that sports land should not be built on unless:
- An assessment has been undertaken which has clearly shown the open space, buildings or land to be surplus to requirements; or
  - The loss resulting from the proposed development would be replaced by equivalent or better provision in terms of quantity and quality in a suitable location; or
  - The development is for alternative sports and recreation provision, the needs for which clearly outweigh the loss.
- 12.10 The former Stonehenge golf driving range was a private recreation space, which was not publicly accessible without paying a fee. Additionally, the driving range was only accessible for a limited number of hours per day. These two factors limited the level of accessibility of the site for residents within the surrounding area. Whilst the scheme to which this application relates proposes to build upon the former golf driving range, there will be an increase in the provision of publicly accessible greenspace as a result of the development which is discussed further below.



- 12.11 There is a range of alternative golf facilities on Salisbury Plain and in the wider area. For example, a golf course can be found at Tidworth which is less than 7 miles from the application site. This golf course is also owned by the MoD (the applicant) and is let out on a long lease. In addition to the applicant owned golf course, there are three additional golf courses within 10 miles of the site. As such, we consider that there are sufficient alternative facilities available in the local area. We therefore consider that the redevelopment of the former golf driving range meets the requirement of bullet point one of paragraph 74 of the NPPF in that it is surplus to requirements for the local area.
- 12.12 Additionally, the loss of the golf driving range will be replaced by a wealth of new public open space throughout the site including play areas and the wooded areas to the south and south-west. These wooded areas are currently inaccessible by the public. Overall, the Larkhill masterplan Sports and Recreation Strategy concludes that there will be an overall net gain in recreational space.
- 12.13 The 2016 outline masterplan permission provided for 2.812 hectares of public open space. The public open space provided for thus far as part of Phases 1 & 2 and Phase 3 provides 9.218 hectares. The public open space provided as part of Phase 4 (without overlap with previous phases) is 4.25 hectares. Overall, across all four phases of development 13.470 hectares of public open space is provided. The revised scheme for Larkhill across a wider site area achieves significantly more public open space overall.
- 12.14 The area of recreation for the former golf driving range, which is considered the green area which is not under any canopy, is 6.011 hectares. As such, the development overall would not result in the loss of any public open space with an increase of 4.647 hectares achieved. However, as set out above the nature of public open space would change to a mixture of formal and informal open space, which would be open to the public at all times and at no cost.
- 12.15 The public open space provided through the new Larkhill development will meet the communities aspirations for recreation provision in the form of both formal and informal public open space. We consider this approach more appropriate with wider community benefits than recreating the former driving range.

### **Loss of Trees**

- 12.16 The layout of the site has been informed in line with the landscape strategy. The landscape strategy is based around the retention of the existing site vegetation, which forms a prominent feature of the area. The woodland area comprises an inner ring of mature beech and sycamore trees, with a band of younger native woodland forming the outer vegetation.



- 12.17 Vegetation within the site boundary has been retained where possible to screen potential views of the development and provide maturity to the development. The layout and form of the development allows for their future growth, with properties fronting out onto the woodland and a perimeter road in front, allowing for maintenance; and for the existing woodland to become an amenity resource for the site.
- 12.18 A key feature of the landscape strategy is the planting strategy along the northern boundary which is an important feature in creating the landscape structure in which the development will sit. An avenue of horse chestnut trees is proposed which reflects the avenue along the opposite site of the open space in the permitted development in Phase 3 to the north.
- 12.19 Properties along the northern boundary face out onto the approved Phase 3 SFA development open space and this planted avenue, creating a positive edge to this open space by fronting onto, and the Salisbury Plain beyond. This planting aims to soften and filter the views of the development, especially from Durrington to the north-east.
- 12.20 Bands of native structure planting are also proposed on the new bank to the north of the site to increase biodiversity and provide connections to the proposed planting to the east and the existing woodland to the southwest.
- 12.21 As set out in the preceding section, the retention of most of the existing trees on site and the additional planting proposed will soften and filter the views of the development and we do not consider that the tree lost proposed would harm the character of the surrounding area or significantly impact upon the views from Durrington.

### **Socio Economic Impacts**

- 12.22 The Core Strategy recognises the important contribution that the military play to Wiltshire's economy, both as a major employer and in supporting the viability of existing local services and facilities.
- 12.23 One of the key objectives underpinning the Army Basing proposals and therefore the Masterplan is to provide more opportunities for the integration of military and civilian communities. The Planning Context Report submitted with the Masterplan identified that the proposed SFA development site in Larkhill would provide a very good opportunity for military and civilian integration through physical coalescence with the existing civilian community. The proposed site layout provides links to the



existing housing areas on the boundary of the site to ensure integration with the rest of the community of Larkhill.

- 12.24 The additional population will also create demand for social and economic infrastructure. This has been examined in considerable detail as part of the preparation of the SFA planning applications. In accordance with Strategic Objective 6 of the Core Strategy and Policy 3, the new SFA development will provide for the necessary on site and off-site infrastructure required to support the incoming population.
- 12.25 The previously agreed S.106 obligation, which will be subject to a deed of variation, will provide a mechanism for the delivery of required infrastructure. DIO has liaised closely with Wiltshire Council and other service providers such as the NHS, Wiltshire Police and Wiltshire Fire and Rescue Service to ensure that all necessary infrastructure requirements were included.

### **Highways and Transport**

- 12.26 A series of off-site improvements are proposed to the existing highway network and sustainable transport measures put forward with the proposed development in Larkhill, as part of the s106 agreement and these are fully detailed within the submitted Transport Assessment. These new and improved strategic transport infrastructures are required to mitigate transport impacts due to the rebasing. The off-site improvements were subsequently agreed as part of the S.106 agreement linked to the previous permission which was approved on 19 July 2016. As mentioned previously, the S106 will be subject to a deed of variation application, which will be made further to a detailed discussion with the LPA/WYG/DIO in due course.

### **Education**

- 12.27 In accordance with requirements identified by Wiltshire Council, a new 2FE primary school providing 420 pupil places will be provided on a 1.8-hectare parcel of land within the wider development site at Larkhill to serve the incoming population. However, whilst linked to this application, the school site falls outside the ambit of this application. Details of the school have been approved as part of subsequent applications and construction of the school is well-underway.
- 12.28 As part of the wider ABP, the existing early years provision at the Haig Centre in Bulford will be will be closed and replaced by two new facilities; one in Bulford; and one in Tidworth. In addition, further places will be provided at Noah's Ark Nursery at The Beeches in Bulford. The new facilities will serve the increased population, and provide an additional 40 early years' places overall. Any



further new early years' places will be provided within the existing and proposed new schools and provision for financial contributions is included in the approved S.106 obligation.

- 12.29 Larkhill falls within the catchment area of Avon Valley College secondary school in Durrington. The SFA development at wider Larkhill site will generate a requirement for an additional 216 secondary school places. A financial contribution towards the provision of additional secondary pupil places at the college has been made by the DIO.

### **Healthcare**

- 12.30 A new Medical and Dental facility is to be built which was granted planning permission on 21<sup>st</sup> of December 2017 (ref. 17/06373/FUL). The capacity of the new facility will be greater than the current provision (2,351 sq m) to ensure that it can accommodate an additional GP(s) to serve the needs of incoming personnel and their families. Discussions are continuing between MoD and NHS to agree the terms of a long lease to cater for the incoming service families.

### **Leisure and Sport**

- 12.31 New sports and leisure facilities are being developed as part of the proposals to accommodate the needs of the service personnel and their families. This is contained within the approved Recreational Area Access Plan (RAAP). The RAAP was prepared to support the masterplans across the three SFA sites at Larkhill, Ludgershall and Bulford and was approved for all three sites in September 2017.
- 12.32 The RAAP sets out details of a network of formal and informal recreational walking and running routes within a 3km radius around the SFA. These routes will offer direct circular walking opportunities, linking with existing and proposed areas of green space. The purpose of the RAAP is to create a series of local walks of various lengths that will allow for daily dog walking and exercise.
- 12.33 The proposed network lies entirely on MoD land. The network at each site will be completed and available for use prior to the 131<sup>st</sup> occupancy at that site. In addition to improving, formalising and creating new pathways through the SFA the RAAP also proposes to create and improve access to open space. This includes sports pitches on pasture land to the east of Tombs Road as part of the Larkhill SFA development. It has also been agreed that an area of open space to the north of the Larkhill site will be converted from former farmland to an area of informal open space. Overall, the SFA will greatly improve the level of provision for formal and informal open space available to the public within the local area. This includes areas such as the wooded landscape to the south of the application site which will be available for public use.



12.34 All formal sports facilities across the Garrison sites are open to use by service families and staff working on the sites. Investment in these facilities is continuing. The MoD is working to identify where additional capacity in these facilities can be generated and spare capacity made available to the wider community. It has committed to work jointly with Wiltshire Council's leisure services team to review provision and the scope for joint use of facilities. A 'Soft-Infrastructure Sub-Group' comprising the Leader of the Council and senior Army, DIO and WC officers, has been established to progress these matters and discussions are on-going.

### **Open Space**

12.35 The proposed site layout incorporates various elements of formal and informal open space in the form of children's play areas, youth play areas and amenity green space. The scheme involves making a large wooded area to the south and south-west of the site available to the public for informal recreation. Currently the open space standards are set out within Policy R2, however provision levels are also set out within the Wiltshire Open Space Study 2015-2026. The development has been designed to meet both requirements.

### **Community Facilities**

12.36 The local community and civilian population will benefit from the provision of the services and facilities outlined above, as well as those proposed within the wider Salisbury Plain area as part of the Masterplan Infrastructure Delivery Plan.

12.37 One of the key objectives underpinning the Army Basing proposals and therefore the Masterplan is to provide more opportunities for the integration of military and civilian communities. The provision of shared facilities will also encourage the integration of military and civilian communities, a key objective contained within the Masterplan. This objective has been carried through and is central to the planning applications that have been approved by Wiltshire Council.

### **Sustainability**

12.38 Sustainable development is the golden thread underpinning the National Planning Policy Framework, and has also been a core consideration in the proposed SFA development at Larkhill.

- The proposed SFA is sustainably located with regards accessibility to employment, public transport and education facilities. New footway and cycle links are planned with the development and a Residential Travel Plan has been prepared and agreed with Wiltshire Council. This outlines measures to encourage walking and cycling as opposed to the private car.



- The SPTA Masterplan and this specific planning application contribute towards the aim of creating healthy and inclusive communities through an integrated approach to housing and provision of community facilities and services, including schools, shared open space and sports pitches. In particular, it will assist with the objective of closer integration between the military and civilian communities.
- As outlined in the socio-economic section above, the SFA development will support and strengthen the local economy by creating increased local spending on goods and services in the locality.
- All dwellings will comply with MoD standards for this type of accommodation and will meet or exceed current Building Regulations.



# **Part 6**

## **Conclusions**



## **13.0 Conclusions**

- 13.1 This Planning Statement has been prepared in support of a planning application for the residential development of land to the east of Larkhill, to provide Service Family Accommodation (SFA) for military personnel and their dependents, comprising 160 new dwellings (within Phase 4), public open space, landscaping, internal roads and all associated infrastructure works including drainage improvements.
- 13.2 The application site is one of three proposed for Service Families Accommodation (SFA) on Salisbury Plain. It comprises an area of approximately 12 hectares and is located on the former Stonehenge Golf Driving Range site, which closed in May 2017. The site falls adjacent to but outside the red line area of the approved 2016 masterplan for the Larkhill site. This masterplan (ref. 15/05540/FUL) granted planning permission for 444 no. dwellings, a school and community facility, open space and a range of supporting infrastructure.
- 13.3 Since the grant of this permission further archaeological investigation has identified that the original masterplan area was used far more extensively for military training than was originally envisaged, specifically for trench warfare training. This has resulted in requirements for an extensive programme of UXO clearance. Shallow sub-surface soils were stripped across the original masterplan site, cleared for the presence of UXO and placed in a large stockpile. Additionally, an extensive network of WWI trenches have been excavated, examined and loosely backfilled. In light of these findings together with other engineering assessments and ground investigations, it was decided that the previously approved scheme could not be fully implemented.
- 13.4 As a result of the above findings the masterplan was redesigned and application was made for Phases 1 and 2 (ref. 17/03959/FUL), which will provide 196 dwellings and Phase 3 (ref. 17/06370/FUL) which will provide 94 dwellings. Planning permission was granted for the Phase 1 and 2 application on 27 September 2017. Planning permission was granted for the Phase 3 application on 27 November 2017.
- 13.5 The schemes prepared for Phases 1 & 2 and Phase 3 thus far have not been able to provide the total required number of SFA housing units. This is due to constraints of the site as discussed above. The Phase 4 development will provide the balance of 160 SFA housing units. The housing units to be delivered will be a mixture of house types, including semi-detached and detached houses.



- 13.6 The proposed development works have been evaluated against the provisions of the Development Plan at local level and all other material considerations including the Salisbury Plain Masterplan and those set out in national planning policy.
- 13.7 Under the provisions of Core Strategy Policy 37: Military Establishments, new development at “operational” facilities are considered to be acceptable in principle. Paragraph 6.23 clarifies and refers to the Army 2020 rebasing project, and indicates that operational facilities include SFA. This paragraph also sets out the need for the Masterplan and that this accommodation is over and above that set out in Core Policy 2 of the Wiltshire Core Strategy.
- 13.8 One of the underlying objectives of the Masterplan is to facilitate the integration of military and civilian communities within the Salisbury Plain Training Area and it is envisaged that the scale of incoming personnel will provide significant benefits in reinvigorating existing communities. This application will assist in furthering this objective.
- 13.9 The application proposals will provide a number of socio economic benefits for Larkhill and the surrounding area. The Core Strategy places particular emphasis on the infrastructure needs arising from the proposed development to be an integral part of the planning development, and the previously agreed S.106 agreement provides details of contributions the development will make to the local highway network, education and healthcare provision and local leisure, sports and community facilities. This S.106 agreement will be subject to a deed of variation in due course.
- 13.10 The application proposals will inevitably have some environmental impacts. However, these are minimised by robust mitigation measures put forward as part of the proposals, such as landscaping and open space strategies. Any adverse impacts are outweighed by the economic and environmental benefits to Larkhill and the surrounding area.
- 13.11 It is considered that the development proposals comply with the relevant planning policies and will deliver both economic and environmental benefits to Larkhill and the surrounding area. We therefore respectfully request that planning permission is granted for this development.



## **Appendix A**



## **Community Engagement**

### **Consultation on the Salisbury Plain Masterplan (2014)**

- 1.0 The Defence Infrastructure Organisation (DIO) has been liaising closely with Wiltshire Council since mid 2012 on preparing and planning for the increase in unit numbers and for the associated unit moves arising from the Army Basing Programme. As required under the then emerging Wiltshire Core Strategy (which has since been adopted), the Salisbury Plain Masterplan was prepared to set out, in one document, an overview of the proposed changes to the SPTA.
- 2.0 In accordance with Wiltshire Council's Statement of Community Involvement, the Masterplan underwent a series of public consultation exercises during 2014. Wiltshire Council's Strategic Planning Committee received an update report on the Salisbury Plain Masterplan from the Council's Army Basing Planning Manager on 22nd October 2014. This followed an earlier report to Members on 24th July 2014. The Army Basing Manager reported that outstanding work had been completed and the Masterplan had been finalised, thus providing a sound basis upon which forthcoming development could be planned in a comprehensive manner with the necessary infrastructure. The Committee resolved to note the contents of the report.

### **Consultation on planning applications for Service Families Accommodation (2015)**

- 3.0 A Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) was been produced to document the consultation process undertaken in respect of three individual planning applications for the redevelopment of land in Ludgershall, Bulford and Larkhill approved in July 2016 to provide Service Families Accommodation (SFA) for military personnel and their dependents.
- 4.0 It is intended to undertake further consultation on the revised proposal at Larkhill shortly following submission of this application during the determination period.

### **Consultation on this 'Phase 4' application (2017)**

- 5.0 Pre-application discussions relating to this Phase 4 planning application were held with Morgan Jones (Senior Planning Officer, Wiltshire Council) during a site visit on 4<sup>th</sup> October 2017. Following this pre-application site meeting responses were received from the Environment Agency, WCC Highway Authority and WCC Archaeologist. The responses are summarised below:



- 6.0 Environment Agency: the site falls wholly in a Source Protection Zone 2 (SPZ2) and partly in SPZ1, which is the most vulnerable zone. Therefore careful consideration must be taken when designing and constructing the development.

Any development proposed for the site would need to address the issues and recommendations given in the agreed Water Management Strategy produced for the Salisbury Plain Army Basing project. It must be ensured that there is adequate capacity for water supply and wastewater treatment from the proposed development and that any requirements are in line with this Water Management Strategy.

- 7.0 WCC Highways: there is no highways or transport objection in principle to the proposals, subject to access being taken from the approved road with access to the new Packway roundabout. There will be no requirement for a TA or TS in relation to the proposals subject to overall housing on the SFA site being at or around 444 dwellings, as envisaged in the original masterplan for the wider site.

However, attention will need to be given to the point of access to the site, because the access road is to be made on an embankment. The permanent access point into this proposed housing area should be considered at a point where road and ground levels are reasonable compatible, and where the road junction will not conflict with the school access road junction (a 'cross roads' situation should be avoided).

Consideration should be given to amending the layout of the consented adjacent phase to provide for an access into the site.

Due regard should be given to the surface water drainage facilities approved under previous consents; new development should not prejudice the operational or access aspects of the SuDs measures.

- 8.0 Additional WCC Highways Comments: additional comments were received from WCC Highways on 13/12/2017 which stated that it was unclear why there are shared surface roads served from shared surface roads. The shared surface roads also appear to be unnecessarily straight over lengths which can only encourage traffic speeds to be higher than the sub-20pmh target maximum speeds.

There appears to be no formal pedestrian and cycle route connecting the Phase 4 development with the previously submitted phase to the north and north west of the site. These two parts of the community should be formally linked to accommodate convenient desire-line routes for internal



movement. Stopping sight distances where dwellings are proposed immediately adjacent sharpish bends on carriageways will need to be checked to ensure that minimum standards are achieved.

Final design should bear in mind the requirement to access the soakway to the south west of the site. A row of trees appears to be proposed in the highway verge (embankment) to the east side of the main access road. There is a presumption against providing trees in the highway where they might have adverse consequences for maintenance and/or structural integrity of the highway.

9.0 WCC Archaeologist: The site that is the subject of this pre-application is also of archaeological interest as significant remains, including prehistoric henges, and burial mounds, have been identified directly adjacent to the site. The site is also in the immediate vicinity of the Stonehenge part of the Stonehenge and Avebury and associated monuments World Heritage Site, along with scheduled monuments such as Durrington Walls.

10.0 The Phase 4 scheme was also presented to John Todd and Sarah Tucker from Durrington Town Council and Wiltshire Council Councillor, Councillor Graham Wright on 28 November 2017. The feedback received during this meeting was generally supportive of the scheme. Some concern was raised with the loss of the former golf driving range, however the provision of replacement public open space was welcomed.

#### Further Public Consultation and Engagement

11.0 A further public engagement event has been arranged to occur at Durrington Village Hall on 23 January 2018 from 3pm until 8pm. The format of this engagement will be an initial staffed drop in session with a 30 minute presentation and 30 minute dedicated Q&A session allowing members of the public to ask questions.

12.0 Display boards will also be made available within the Durrington Village Hall in the lead up to the event to publicise the event and provide initial information on the scheme.