



## Greenham Business Park LDO, Landscape and Visual Appraisal

On Behalf of Greenham Common Trust

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## **1 Introduction**

- 1.1 Following the instruction from Greenham Trust in March 2017 to prepare a Landscape and Visual Appraisal (LVA) for the purpose of supporting the preparation of a Local Development Order (LDO), an initial assessment of the park and its surrounds has been carried out in May and June 2017.
- 1.2 The LVA Report provides feedback to the West Berkshire Council, the client and project team of the likely landscape and visual impacts and factors that will influence the building parameters including on the sensitive northern edge of the business park.
- 1.3 The LDO is being prepared by West Berkshire Council in partnership with Greenham Trust, the majority landowner of the business park. The LDO is intended to remove the need for planning permission for appropriate land uses in an effort to help to catalyse the regeneration of the business park.
- 1.4 The business park is focused on the former Technical Area of the military airbase, which was disposed of in the mid-1990s. Regeneration of this area for predominantly employment uses was identified in the Greenham Common Airbase Planning Brief (1994) as well as restoration of the undeveloped Common land. Restoration of the Common and its return to public ownership has since been undertaken, and the former Technical Area is now an established business park but with capacity for more redevelopment.
- 1.5 The business park benefits from an extant planning permission for comprehensive redevelopment of the site to achieve the objectives of the Planning Brief, including an approved master plan which has been implemented in part. This permission included the creation of a strategic landscape bund on the northern boundary of the business park to screen views of the built-up area from the open Common land. This bund has been implemented and the planting is maturing. The relationship between the Common and the business park has therefore largely been established through this planning history since the closure of the airbase. In this context, the LDO is intended to help bring forward further regeneration of the former Technical Area.

### **Methodology**

- 1.6 The methodology for the LVA is derived from the Landscape Institute Guidance for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment 3rd Edition 2013. The methodology also draws from: Landscape Character Assessment – Guidance for England and Scotland Swanwick C and LUC 2002. The report is based on a combination of desk based research and field survey work. Normally a Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) reports on a fixed design and known set of parameters. In the case of this LDO the parameters are rather more fluid and so a broader approach must be taken.

## 2 Site context

2.1 The business park site lies on the southern edge of the elongated ridge/plateau that was formerly occupied by the Greenham Common Air Base runway, taxi ways and facilities. The nature of the landform can be seen on Figure 2 Photo Locations. The landform around the plateau falls away in a series of narrow, mostly wooded valleys.

2.2 Settlement around the plateau is sparse with few properties overlooking Greenham Common. The exception is at Bury's Bank which comprises a number of properties including a golf club, that are north of Bury's Bank Road and which have some views of the Common. Newbury lies to the north west of the Common. A scattering of properties also lies to the south east of the business park, set within a wooded context.

2.3 The Business Park outline is shown on Figures 1 and 2.

### Topography and Vegetation

2.4 The topography is a key element in assessing the site's impact on landscape character and visual amenity. The site lies between approximately 120m Above Ordnance Datum (AOD) at its northern edge to around 105m AOD at its southern boundary. To the north of the Common, the land falls away to the River Kennet and its valley at around 70m AOD. The site around the business park is well wooded and comprises woodland dominated by alder, birch and pine. Some of the woodland coincides with local valley features.

### Designations (Figure 1)

2.5 The site has two listed buildings located at the north west end of the Park. Both of these are Grade II\*. The former missile silos to the west of the Park comprises a Scheduled Monument. The former control tower is also listed.

- Building 273
- Building 274

Both are listed Grade II\*

Non-designated heritage assets included in the West Berkshire Heritage Environment Record (WBHER) comprise:

- Building 163 (former USAAF supermarket)
- 188 former Interdenominational Chapel of (1953)
- Building 302 (former hangar)
- Other buildings included in the WBHER have already been demolished.

In addition to assets recorded by the WBHER, the following have been considered as potential

heritage assets for the purpose of this report:

- Building 300 (former hangar)
- Main Street, Albury Way and Communications Road (remains of the historic road pattern across the Commons)
- Peace Garden
- “Changes” sculpture by Gudron Nielsen FRBS
- “Broken Symmetry” sculpture by Michael Kenny RA

The whole of the Common is designated a SSSI.

2.6 Taken from the Greenham Common Commission’s website: ....*West Berkshire Council decided to promote a Bill to enable them to control and manage the two commons as a single entity. Shortly after gaining ownership of the commons a bill was drafted and presented to parliament by the then M.P. David Rendel in 1997. This was to set up a Commission consisting of appointed representatives from bodies with direct interest in the commons and of elected commoners that would manage the commons on behalf of W.B.C. This was finally passed in 2002.*

2.7 The introduction chapter of the Act is a concise explanation of its purpose:-

2.8 *An Act to restore land at and in the vicinity of the Greenham and Crookham Commons as common land open to the public; to make provision for the conservation of the natural beauty of that land; to grant public access over that land in perpetuity and to make provision with that public access; to restore and extend commoners rights over that land; to constitute the Greenham and Crookham Common Commission for the management of that land; to confer powers on the West Berkshire District Council and on that Commission with respect to that land; and for connected and other purposes.*

2.9 In terms of management, the Commons are managed by the local wildlife Trust (BBOWT in conjunction with a number of volunteer organisations. This is undertaken as part of West Berkshire’s Living Landscapes project: an exciting 5-year project (2013-2018) to connect local people with the extraordinary natural heritage of the West Berkshire Living Landscape, and to link up and strengthen its threatened wildlife habitats.

### **Land Use**

2.10 The land surrounding the site to the west, south and east is well wooded with a limited amount of residential. Greenham and Crookham Commons comprises heathland open to the public and is used for animal grazing.

### **Public Rights of Way (PRoW) (Figure 1)**

2.11 The Commons are open access and well used as a recreational resource by walkers and cyclists. There are no public rights of way through the business park. There are a number of PRoWs extending away from the ridge landscape to the north and a number within the valley landscape

to the south of the site. None of these are thought to have any significant impacts as a result of the ongoing development within the business park.

### 3 Landscape Planning Context

Policy	How the proposal complies with policy
<b>NPPF July2018</b>	
<b>11. Making effective use of land</b>	
<p>117. Planning policies and decisions should promote an effective use of land in meeting the need for homes and other uses, while safeguarding and improving the environment and ensuring safe and healthy living conditions. Strategic policies should set out a clear strategy for accommodating objectively assessed needs, in a way that makes as much use as possible of previously-developed or ‘brownfield’ land.</p>	<p>An environmental role to use a Brownfield site and to respect the landscape, historic and biodiversity attributes and assets of the site and its surrounds through careful planning and design within an agreed set of parameters.</p>
<p>118. Planning policies and decisions should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) encourage multiple benefits from both urban and rural land, including through mixed use schemes and taking opportunities to achieve net environmental gains – such as developments that would enable new habitat creation or improve public access to the countryside;</li> <li>b) recognise that some undeveloped land can perform many functions, such as for wildlife, recreation, flood risk mitigation, cooling/shading, carbon storage or food production;</li> <li>c) give substantial weight to the value of using suitable brownfield land within settlements for homes and other identified needs, and support appropriate opportunities to remediate despoiled, degraded, derelict, contaminated or unstable land;</li> <li>d) promote and support the development of under-utilised land and buildings, especially if this would help to meet identified needs for housing where land supply is constrained and available sites could be used more effectively (for example converting space above shops, and building on or above service yards, car parks, lock-ups and railway infrastructure)<sup>45</sup>; and</li> <li>e) support opportunities to use the airspace above existing residential and commercial premises for new homes. In particular, they should allow upward extensions where the development would be consistent with the prevailing height and form of neighbouring properties and the overall street scene, is well- designed (including complying with any local design policies and standards), and can maintain safe access and egress for occupiers.</li> </ul>	<p>The business park development is making use of appropriate brownfield land within an appropriate context. The LDO is enabling future development to be undertaken within an agreed set of parameters that will support this policy.</p>
<p>119. Local planning authorities, and other plan-making bodies, should take a proactive role in identifying and helping to bring forward land that may be suitable for meeting development needs, including suitable sites on brownfield registers or held in public ownership, using the full range of powers available to them. This should include identifying opportunities to</p>	<p>The Development should take account of the intrinsic attributes of the site. The site is Brownfield and is therefore of lesser environmental value.</p>



<p>facilitate land assembly, supported where necessary by compulsory purchase powers, where this can help to bring more land forward for meeting development needs and/or secure better development outcomes.</p>	
<h2>12. Achieving well-designed places</h2>	
<p>124. The creation of high quality buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve. Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, creates better places in which to live and work and helps make development acceptable to communities. Being clear about design expectations, and how these will be tested, is essential for achieving this. So too is effective engagement between applicants, communities, local planning authorities and other interests throughout the process.</p>	<p>Design Guidance for developments has been prepared as part of the LDO to set out principles of layout and a hierarchy of roads, a Landscape Strategy, architectural aspirations, materials, sustainability, zoning and building height parameters.</p>
<p>127 Planning policies and decisions should ensure that developments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) will function well and add to the overall quality of the area, not just for the short term but over the lifetime of the development;</li> <li>b) are visually attractive as a result of good architecture, layout and appropriate and effective landscaping;</li> <li>c) are sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation or change (such as increased densities);</li> <li>d) establish or maintain a strong sense of place, using the arrangement of streets, spaces, building types and materials to create attractive, welcoming and distinctive places to live, work and visit;</li> <li>e) optimise the potential of the site to accommodate and sustain an appropriate amount and mix of development (including green and other public space) and support local facilities and transport networks; and</li> <li>f) create places that are safe, inclusive and accessible and which promote health and well-being, with a high standard of amenity for existing and future users<sup>46</sup>; and where crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine the quality of life or community cohesion and resilience.</li> </ul>	<p>Design Guidance for developments has been prepared as part of the LDO to set out principles of layout and a hierarchy of roads, a Landscape Strategy, architectural aspirations, materials, sustainability, zoning and building height parameters.</p>
<p>128. Design quality should be considered throughout the evolution and assessment of individual proposals. Early discussion between applicants, the local planning authority and local community about the design and style of emerging schemes is important for clarifying expectations and reconciling local and commercial interests. Applicants should work closely with those affected by their proposals to evolve designs that take account of the views of the community. Applications that can demonstrate early, proactive and effective engagement with the community should be looked on more favourably than those that cannot.</p>	<p>Design Guidance for developments has been prepared as part of the LDO to set out principles of layout and a hierarchy of roads, a Landscape Strategy, architectural aspirations, materials, sustainability, zoning and building height parameters.</p>
<p>129. Local planning authorities should ensure that they have access to, and make appropriate use of, tools and processes for assessing and improving the design of development. These include workshops to engage the local community, design advice and review arrangements, and assessment frameworks such as Building for Life. These are of most</p>	<p>Public consultation has been carried out on the LDO proposals.</p>

<p>benefit if used as early as possible in the evolution of schemes, and are particularly important for significant projects such as large scale housing and mixed use developments. In assessing applications, local planning authorities should have regard to the outcome from these processes, including any recommendations made by design review panels.</p>	
<p>130. Permission should be refused for development of poor design that fails to take the opportunities available for improving the character and quality of an area and the way it functions, taking into account any local design standards or style guides in plans or supplementary planning documents. Conversely, where the design of a development accords with clear expectations in plan policies, design should not be used by the decision-maker as a valid reason to object to development. Local planning authorities should also seek to ensure that the quality of approved development is not materially diminished between permission and completion, as a result of changes being made to the permitted scheme (for example through changes to approved details such as the materials used).</p>	<p>Building designs and site layout will be undertaken within a broad set of building parameters as set out in the LDO and Design Guide.</p>
<p>131. In determining applications, great weight should be given to outstanding or innovative designs which promote high levels of sustainability, or help raise the standard of design more generally in an area, so long as they fit in with the overall form and layout of their surroundings.</p>	<p>Building designs and site layout will be undertaken within a broad set of building parameters as set out in the LDO and Design Guide.</p>
<p><b>15 Conserving and enhancing the natural environment</b></p>	
<p>170. Planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) protecting and enhancing valued landscapes, sites of biodiversity or geological value and soils (in a manner commensurate with their statutory status or identified quality in the development plan);</li> <li>b) recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside, and the wider benefits from natural capital and ecosystem services – including the economic and other benefits of the best and most versatile agricultural land, and of trees and woodland;</li> <li>c) maintaining the character of the undeveloped coast, while improving public access to it where appropriate;</li> <li>d) minimising impacts on and providing net gains for biodiversity, including by establishing coherent ecological networks that are more resilient to current and future pressures;</li> <li>e) preventing new and existing development from contributing to, being put at unacceptable risk from, or being adversely affected by, unacceptable levels of soil, air, water or noise pollution or land instability. Development should, wherever possible, help to improve local environmental conditions such as air and water quality, taking into account relevant information such as river basin management plans; and</li> </ul>	<p>The Landscape and Visual Appraisal has identified key aspects of sensitivity of the local landscape and of visual receptors. The findings of this report have fed into the development process for the LDO and have informed the conclusion by which the broad design parameters have been set.</p> <p>The site is well contained by boundary screening, but further new planting will be carried out along the new roads within the site and within any new developments to add further layers of tree cover and to provide additional local amenity for the users of the business park.</p>
<p>171. Plans should: distinguish between the hierarchy of international, national and locally designated sites; allocate land with the least environmental or amenity value, where consistent with other policies in this Framework; take a strategic approach to maintaining and enhancing networks of habitats and green infrastructure; and plan for the enhancement of natural capital at a catchment or landscape scale across local authority boundaries.</p>	<p>Boundary screening and habitats are retained. Additional landscape will be provided within the site, as described within the design guide.</p>

<p>Habitats and biodiversity</p>	
<p>174. To protect and enhance biodiversity and geodiversity, plans should:</p> <p>a) Identify, map and safeguard components of local wildlife-rich habitats and wider ecological networks, including the hierarchy of international, national and locally designated sites of importance for biodiversity; wildlife corridors and stepping stones that connect them; and areas identified by national and local partnerships for habitat management, enhancement, restoration or creation; and</p> <p>b) promote the conservation, restoration and enhancement of priority habitats, ecological networks and the protection and recovery of priority species; and identify and pursue opportunities for securing measurable net gains for biodiversity.</p>	<p>Boundary screening and habitats are retained. Additional landscape will be provided within the site, as described within the design guide. Habitat along the northern bund is important as a receptor site for reptiles.</p>
<p>175. When determining planning applications, local planning authorities should apply the following principles:</p> <p>a) if significant harm to biodiversity resulting from a development cannot be avoided (through locating on an alternative site with less harmful impacts), adequately mitigated, or, as a last resort, compensated for, then planning permission should be refused;</p> <p>b) development on land within or outside a Site of Special Scientific Interest, and which is likely to have an adverse effect on it (either individually or in combination with other developments), should not normally be permitted. The only exception is where the benefits of the development in the location proposed clearly outweigh both its likely impact on the features of the site that make it of special scientific interest, and any broader impacts on the national network of Sites of Special Scientific Interest;</p>	<p>No significant harm will result as part of the LDO proposals, though individual development sites may need bespoke surveys to verify this from time to time.</p> <p>There will be no significant effects on the Greenham Common SSSI.</p>
<p><b>16. Conserving and enhancing the historic environment</b></p>	
<p>184. Heritage assets range from sites and buildings of local historic value to those of the highest significance, such as World Heritage Sites which are internationally recognised to be of Outstanding Universal Value. These assets are an irreplaceable resource, and should be conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance, so that they can be enjoyed for their contribution to the quality of life of existing and future generations.</p>	<p>The site has two listed buildings located at the north west end of the Park. Both of these are Grade II*. The former missile silos to the west of the Park comprises a Scheduled Monument. The former control tower is also listed. There are no significant impacts predicted on these assets.</p>
<p>185. Plans should set out a positive strategy for the conservation and enjoyment of the historic environment, including heritage assets most at risk through neglect, decay or other threats. This strategy should take into account:</p> <p>a) the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets, and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation;</p> <p>b) the wider social, cultural, economic and environmental benefits that conservation of the historic environment can bring;</p>	<p>The site has two listed buildings located at the north west end of the Park. Both of these are Grade II*. The former missile silos to the west of the Park comprises a Scheduled Monument. The former control tower is also listed. There are no significant impacts predicted on these assets.</p>

<p>c) the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness; and</p> <p>d) opportunities to draw on the contribution made by the historic environment to the character of a place.</p>	
<p>Considering potential impacts:</p>	
<p>193. When considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset’s conservation (and the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be). This is irrespective of whether any potential harm amounts to substantial harm, total loss or less than substantial harm to its significance</p>	<p>This subject is dealt with in more detail within the separate Heritage Statement prepared by ProVision. The site has two listed buildings located at the north west end of the Park. Both of these are Grade II*. The former missile silos to the west of the Park comprises a Scheduled Monument. The former control tower is also listed. There are no significant impacts predicted on these assets.</p>
<p>Tailoring planning controls to local circumstances</p>	
<p>51. Local planning authorities are encouraged to use Local Development Orders to set the planning framework for particular areas or categories of development where the impacts would be acceptable, and in particular where this would promote economic, social or environmental gains for the area</p>	<p>The NPPF encourages the LDO as an appropriate vehicle to achieve the relevant gains where impact is acceptable which it has been demonstrated that, in landscape and visual terms, this can be achieved within an agreed set of parameters.</p>
<p><b>West Berkshire Core Strategy</b></p>	
<p><b>Policy CS 19</b> <b>Historic Environment and Landscape Character</b></p> <p>In order to ensure that the diversity and local distinctiveness of the landscape character of the District is conserved and enhanced, the natural, cultural, and functional components of its character will be considered as a whole. In adopting this holistic approach, particular regard will be given to:</p> <p>a) The sensitivity of the area to change.</p> <p>b) Ensuring that new development is appropriate in terms of location, scale and design in the context of the existing settlement form, pattern and character.</p> <p>c) The conservation and, where appropriate, enhancement of heritage assets and their settings (including those designations identified in Box 1).</p> <p>d) Accessibility to and participation in the historic environment by the local community.</p> <p>Proposals for development should be informed by and respond to:</p> <p>a) The distinctive character areas and key characteristics identified in relevant landscape character assessments including Historic Landscape Characterisation for West Berkshire and Historic Environment Character Zoning for West Berkshire.</p> <p>b) Features identified in various settlement character studies including Quality Design - West Berkshire Supplementary Planning Document, the Newbury Historic Character Study, Conservation Area Appraisals and community planning documents which have been adopted by the Council such as Parish Plans and Town and Village Design Statements.</p>	<p>This subject is dealt with in more detail within the separate Heritage Statement prepared by ProVision. Extract provided below:</p> <p>Significance:</p> <p>Main Street, Albury Way, and Communications Road are part of the historic pattern of main roads radiating south-eastwards across the Common from Newbury. The Peace Garden commemorates the long campaign by the various women’s Peace Camps against the stationing of nuclear weapons in the UK. The Memorial to the Fallen commemorates all servicemen who died whilst based at Greenham. The Changes sculpture, made from steel recovered from the base, is particularly poignant, as it now forms a significant part of the setting of Building 273, a very specialist building central to nuclear warfare and defence. Broken Symmetry and Welcome Figure also symbolically mark the new era for Greenham.</p> <p>Direct Effect</p>

<p>c) The nature of and the potential for heritage assets identified through the Historic Environment Record for West Berkshire and the extent of their significance.</p>	<p>5.24 Redevelopment could potentially affect the historic road layout, the Peace Garden, or the setting of the Memorial to the Fallen, 'Changes', Broken Symmetry' or 'Welcome Figure'.</p> <p>Mitigation</p> <p>5 On consideration of the significance, historical associations and visual quality of the other heritage assets on site, the LDO should :</p> <p>a) require the alignment of Main Street, Albury Way and Communications Road to be retained;</p> <p>b) exclude from potential redevelopment areas the Peace Garden, 'Changes' and Memorial to the Fallen; and</p> <p>c) require that if the locations of 'Broken symmetry' or 'Welcome Figure' are redeveloped, they should be re-located to an appropriate setting.</p> <p>For the same reason, new buildings along the northern boundary of the LDO:</p> <p>a) should be no closer to the former runway than Building 400 and former Hangar 301; and b) may include large plain buildings with plain skylines, reflecting the hangars and similar buildings which are (or were) located here.</p>
<p><b>Policy CS 14 Design Principles</b></p> <p>New development must demonstrate high quality and sustainable design that respects and enhances the character and appearance of the area, and makes a positive contribution to the quality of life in West Berkshire. Good design relates not only to the appearance of a development, but the way in which it functions. Considerations of design and layout must be informed by the wider context, having regard not just to the immediate area, but to the wider locality. Development shall contribute positively to local distinctiveness and sense of place.</p> <p>Development proposals will be expected to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create safe environments, addressing crime prevention and community safety. Make good provision for access by all transport modes.</li> <li>• Ensure environments are accessible to all and give priority to pedestrian and cycle access providing linkages and integration with surrounding uses and open spaces.</li> <li>• Make efficient use of land whilst respecting the density, character, landscape and biodiversity of the surrounding area.</li> <li>• Consider opportunities for a mix of uses, buildings and landscaping. Consider opportunities for public art.</li> <li>• Conserve and enhance the historic and cultural assets of West Berkshire.</li> <li>• Provide, conserve and enhance biodiversity and create linkages between green spaces and wildlife corridors.</li> </ul>	<p>Design Guidance for developments will be formulated as part of the LDO</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Make a clear distinction between public and private spaces and enhance the public realm. Consider opportunities for including Home Zones (71) where practicable.</li> <li>• All development proposals will be expected to seek to minimise carbon dioxide emissions through sustainable design and construction, energy efficiency, and the incorporation of renewable energy technology as appropriate and in accordance with Policy CS15: Sustainable Construction and Energy Efficiency.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Policy CS 17 Biodiversity and Geodiversity</b></p> <p>Biodiversity and geodiversity assets across West Berkshire will be conserved and enhanced.</p> <p>Habitats designated or proposed for designation as important for biodiversity or geodiversity at an international or national level or which support protected, rare or endangered species, will be protected and enhanced. The degree of protection given will be appropriate to the status of the site or species in terms of its international or national importance.</p> <p>Development which may harm, either directly or indirectly, locally designated sites (Local Wildlife Sites and Local Geological Sites), or habitats or species of principal importance for the purpose of conserving biodiversity, or the integrity or continuity of landscape features of major importance for wild flora and fauna will only be permitted if there are no reasonable alternatives and there are clear demonstrable social or economic benefits of regional or national importance that outweigh the need to safeguard the site or species and that adequate compensation and mitigation measures are provided when damage to biodiversity/geodiversity interests are unavoidable.</p> <p>In order to conserve and enhance the environmental capacity of the District, all new development should maximise opportunities to achieve net gains in biodiversity and geodiversity in accordance with the Berkshire Biodiversity Action Plan and the Berkshire Local Geodiversity Action Plan. Opportunities will be taken to create links between natural habitats and, in particular, strategic opportunities for biodiversity improvement will be actively pursued within the Biodiversity Opportunity Areas identified on the Proposals Map in accordance with the Berkshire Biodiversity Action Plan.</p>	<p>There will no direct effect on the SSSI</p>
<p><b>West Berks District Local Plan Saved Policy ECON6</b></p> <p>Within the area defined on inset map (1) on the former Greenham Common Airbase and in accordance with the provisions of the adopted planning brief, proposals for industrial, distribution and storage space will be permitted, provided:</p> <p>(a) such uses do not impinge upon the agreed space to be made available for sporting and waste processing facilities; and</p> <p>b) there is no demonstrable harm to the amenities and features of the surrounding area, especially the nearby SSSI; and</p> <p>(c) where relevant, practicable, and necessary, appropriate developer contributions will be sought to improve the infrastructure of the area (sports facilities, highways and transportation infrastructure as identified in Policy TRANS.2 and services) and the restoration of the nearby open areas of the Airbase, for nature conservation and public access purposes; and</p> <p>(d) that apart from the enterprise centre proposed by the Council, B1(a) office content will be restricted to no more than 15% of the overall</p>	<p>This policy allocated the former Airbase site for its current use. The proposed LDO is intended to assist in delivering the economic regeneration supported by this policy.</p>

<p>floorspace permitted on the site in addition to that which is ancillary to other business use. Small scale starter industrial units will be encouraged, subject to the above criteria with the exception of (c); and (e) provision is made for comprehensive drainage as part of the new development to mitigate potential risks posed by contaminated land.</p>	
<p><b>West Berkshire Historic Environment Plan – the West Berkshire Heritage Forum 2011</b></p>	
<p>The WBHEP section on “Establishing Priorities” includes the following relevant paragraphs:</p> <p>“Management of Commons West Berkshire is fortunate in having some unique areas of common land, ranging from Hungerford Port Down Common and Bucklebury Common to the restored landscape of the former USAF airfield at Greenham and Crookham Commons. Not all are managed effectively or appropriately; forestry, development and neglect threaten these landscapes.”</p> <p>“Conservation of Surviving Elements of Military Remains West Berkshire contains some unique elements of 20th century military history that need conservation. These include: Second World War defensive stop line features along the Kennet and Avon Canal and in the Sulham Gap; Second World War airfields; Cold War sites, especially the Cruise Missile facilities at Greenham Common; and the facilities for the manufacture of Britain’s nuclear deterrent at Aldermaston and Burghfield”</p> <p>4.6 The Action Plan forming part of the WBHEP includes the following which are also relevant:</p> <p>C.2.1 – Ensure heritage significance is fully considered in the development management process.</p> <p>C.2.4 – Ensure that the most significant elements of the historic environment are protected from inappropriate development.</p> <p>F.3 – Ensure that the district’s military heritage is fully recognised and protected as an important heritage asset.</p> <p>F.3.1 – Improve the management of surviving military features</p> <p>F.4 - Promote West Berkshire’s Commons as important components of the historic environment</p> <p>F.4.1 – Support the management of commons for community benefit</p> <p>F.4.2 – Ensure that commons are recognised as heritage assets in their own right.</p>	<p>See Heritage Statement by ProVision</p>

<b>Greenham Common Airbase Planning Brief</b>	
<p>Adopted in 1994 at the time the airbase was closed, the Planning Brief identifies aspirations and objectives for the future of the site. The Common land was to be returned to public ownership. The former 'Technical Area/Area E' was identified for regeneration to support the local economy, making use of the existing developed area and its infrastructure. It was recognised that many of the existing military buildings could be redeveloped as they were unlikely to be fit-for-purpose in the longer term.</p> <p>The Planning objectives at that time were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To seek a sustainable development</li> <li>• To protect and enhance the nature conservation interest of the site and surrounding area.</li> <li>• To protect Commoners' rights</li> <li>• To pursue recreational potential of the site to take into account local and regional needs.</li> <li>• To explore the potential of the site to accommodate residential or employment generating development</li> <li>• To pursue with respect to further employment provision, an approach that expands the local employment base by exploring the local specialized employment needs.</li> <li>• To retain, reuse, or relocate buildings and facilities that are of a standard in terms of design and construction to be worthy of retention</li> <li>• To promote the recycling of redundant materials i.e. concrete</li> <li>• To protect the site from illegal encampments</li> </ul>	<p>This brief allocated the former Airbase site for its current use. The proposed LDO is intended to assist in delivering economic regeneration.</p>

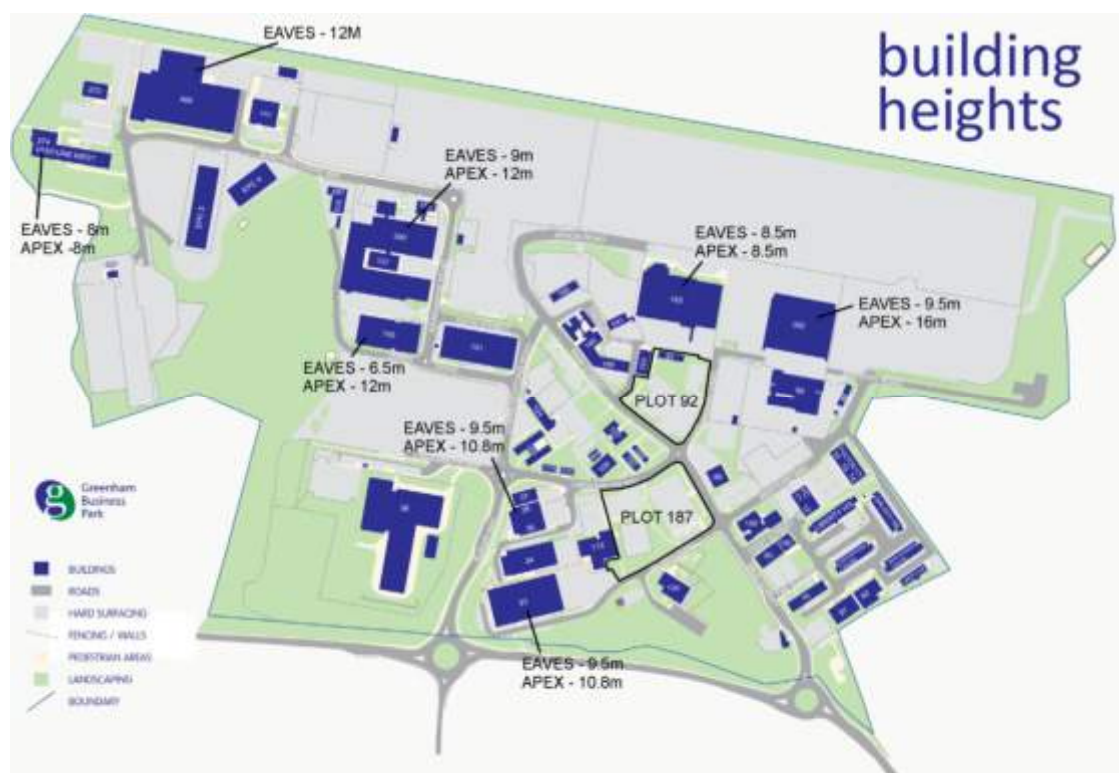


## 4 Proposed Development

### Description of Development

- 4.1 The LDO is expected to allow a mix of B1, B2 and B8 as primary uses with other permitted secondary uses such as small scale industrial, car sales etc. The existing Business Park has a broad mixture of commercial businesses contained with a wide range of building types, scales and sizes. The proposed site will be developed within a set of parameters that will broadly define how the characteristics of the park. The Park will have several zones (See Land Use Plan LDO Plan 2) based on various criteria, but influenced by landscape and visual criteria and the sensitivities of adjacent receptors. The most sensitive of these is Greenham Common.
- 4.2 The LDO is expected to include design guidance to inform specific development proposals as they come forward. This guidance will help to manage the visual and other impacts of development. This will also cover the use of appropriate materials and quality of design, with an appropriate level of landscape design that will provide a suitable setting and context to the site infrastructure, the individual sites and the environment for occupiers and visitors.
- 4.3 An iterative process has being undertaken to establish the height parameters for the business park. This LVIA report has fed into this process and has provided part of the evidence base to inform the LDO process of the key landscape and visual elements and sensitive receptors that will influence the potential development constraints.
- 4.4 Of material importance are the findings and recommendations from the Heritage Consultant with regard to the heritage assets on and near to the site and how these may be affected by new development.
- 4.5 The building height parameters plan indicates buildings heights ranging from a maximum height of any building on the site will be approximately 16m to the ridge. The existing building stock ranges from 2 storey buildings to larger 2 and 3 storey offices, up to large hanger-style buildings and a factory (The English Provender Company [EPC] – Building 400). The existing buildings heights are indicated on the plan below.
- 4.6 The business park is located on the southern slopes of the ridge/plateau that is occupied by the Common. The slopes are mostly densely wooded and incised by characteristic steep sided gullies

characteristic of this landscape type.



**Mitigation (See Design Guidance Document – To be done)**

Also refer to buildings LDO heights parameters plan.

- 4.7 The existing boundaries to the south, west and east of the business park are well screened by existing mature woodland.
- 4.8 The north boundary is screened by a man-man bund some 20m wide, with tree and shrub planting and which is establishing into a good screen. This was a requirement of the planning permission for development of the former Technical Area. This bund is now an established landscape feature and has in the last two years been identified and used for a receptor site for reptiles.
- 4.9 New planting will be undertaken as part of all new developments within a broad set design guidance as part of the LDO.
- 4.10 The LDO includes design guidance within a separate document (ASA-534-RP-901 Greenham Business Park LDO Appendix C Design Guidance). This design guidance supports the Local Development Order (LDO) to be adopted by the Local Planning Authority (LPA), West Berkshire Council. This document is intended to guide the design of the permitted development whilst allowing flexibility to respond appropriately to market demands and to enable use of emerging technologies. There will also be a condition for new developments to provide a Design Statement to demonstrate how the proposed development has responded to the guidance.

## 5 Landscape Assessment

### National (Joint) Character Area

- 5.1 The National (Joint) Character Areas were first developed in the mid 1990's by Natural England and divide England into 159 Character Areas. This study places the site in the *Thames Basin Heaths National Character Area* (NCA 129). The NCAs provide a broad brush description of the landscape: Major river valleys cut down to the London Clay to define a large eastern plateau and several smaller plateaux in the west. Into these main valleys, minor streams drain off the plateau slopes – often in steep 'gulleys' which, in places such as Greenham Common, support wet alder woodland and county rarities. Greenham Common heathland area is by far the largest.
- 5.2 At a more relevant local level the landscape characteristics are defined within the Berkshire Landscape Character Assessment Final Report by Land Use Consultants in 2003 (County level). There is also a district level report for Newbury District dating from 1993, but this was completed just after the Airbase was decommissioned and before the landscape of the Common had been restored.
- 5.3 The landscape characteristics are defined within the Berkshire Landscape Character Assessment.
- 5.4 London Basin: Woodland and Heathland Mosaic LCT and H2 Greenham LCA
- 5.5 Woodland and Heathland Mosaic is located in the south west of Berkshire on the lower slopes surrounding the Kennet Upper and Lower Valley Floors (A1 and B1). The western and northern parts of this landscape type are within the North Wessex Downs AONB. Areas H2 and H5 lie to the south of the River Kennet. The boundaries are principally determined by geology and relate to the drift deposits of sand and gravel resting on a base of London Clay. To the north the boundary coincides with the rising chalk bedrock of the North Wessex Downs
- 5.6 The largest heathland in the county, Greenham Common (SSSI) is recorded in the Berkshire Heathland BAP as covering 60ha and supporting a good variety of heathland species. It is thought that an additional 100ha of heathland has been created following publication of the BAP. Greenham and Crookham Commons, are noted for their specialist butterfly in addition to their breeding bird and reptile populations.
- 5.7 Landscape characteristics
- Topographically varied with undulating hills and small valleys rising to mounded ridges.
  - Intimate lowland rural landscape with small traditional villages and farmsteads.
  - Mixed sand, clay and gravel geological substrate creating a mosaic of landcover
  - including arable fields, damp pasture, paddocks, woodland and heathland.
  - Strong wooded context taking a variety of woodland forms including large swathes of mixed, coniferous and deciduous woodland along the ridges, small farm woodlands,

wooded 'valleys' and copses.

- Arable land and pastures divided by a varied field pattern of small irregular fields.
- Network of hidden streams and ponds.
- Winding rural lanes, including sunken lanes, passing through open and wooded landscapes.
- Variety of important wildlife habitats including ancient woodland, heathland, meadows and pasture, open water and parkland.
- Landscape parklands with their origins in medieval deer parks.
- Relatively dense pattern of rural settlement in some areas and some pressure and influence from adjacent urban areas in some parts.
- Numerous visible historic features including barrows, hill forts, a Roman road, earthworks, mottes and the Cold War monuments at Greenham Common.

5.8 Landscape change has also been evident in the loss of heathland at Greenham Common and conversion to concrete military base and, more recently, restoration back to heathland with concrete being recycled to the bypass.

5.9 The rural quality of the landscape is created by the balance between the woodland and heathland

5.10 The line of a Roman road between Calleva (Silchester) and North Warnborough crosses this zone northwest of the Roman town, and again west of Speen, the latter part surviving as a road to the present. Grim's Bank, a 5 kilometre defensive earthwork of uncertain date is also present, sections of which are found on the northern approaches to Calleva (including the Roman road), and to the west on Crookham and Greenham Commons.

#### H2: Greenham (Landscape Character Area)

5.11 The Greenham Woodland and Heathland Mosaic is located between the valleys of the Kennet and Enborne, east of Newbury. The landscape comprises a flat-topped ridge upon which Greenham Common is located: a large open expanse of heathland and acid grassland, which was controlled by the Ministry of Defence and was a former air base. The Common is now largely owned and managed by West Berkshire Council. The Common is surrounded by post and wire mesh fences and a ditch and areas of exposed gravels are also visible on the Common. Surrounding Greenham Common are areas of more typical Woodland and Heathland Mosaic with large, predominantly deciduous woodlands which form a regular pattern of linear ghyll woodlands in undulating wet gullies leading down to the Kennet Valley. Between these woods there is a mosaic of arable and pastoral land use. Sandleford Priory is an area of eighteenth century parkland. From this area there are important open views southwards towards Penwood and Newtown.

5.12 The landscape is connected with small rural roads, although these have been 'urbanised' in some

areas. Settlement includes the large nucleated villages of Brimpton as well as the suburban outskirts of Newbury. The greatest built influences are the military buildings around and within the Common and the warehouse type buildings at New Greenham Park.

5.13 Evaluation of Landscape Type: Features of key significance

- Varied landcover mosaic.
- Deciduous woodland context with a variety of woodland forms including valley woodlands and wooded ridgelines.
- Varied field pattern of small irregular and assarted fields.
- Presence of streams and ponds.
- Winding rural and sunken lanes.
- Important heathland, ancient woodland and grassland habitats.
- Landscape parklands.
- Features of archaeological importance.

Strength of Landscape Character

5.14 The landscape has a strong and intimate rural character with a diverse, yet unified mosaic of land use, although some land at the edge of the settled area has urban fringe characteristics. The framework of woodland enclosing areas of heathland, pasture and more open arable land create a balanced rural landscape. The landscape type also has an exceptionally high number of important sites valued for their archaeological and nature conservation interest

Landscape Condition

5.15 The condition of the landscape is generally very good although there is evidence that the condition of some of the farmed and woodland landscapes is currently declining. This is particularly as a result of loss of field boundary elements and unsympathetic design and integration of coniferous plantations.

Landscape strategy

5.16 The strategy for the Woodland and Heathland Mosaic Landscape Type is to conserve and, where necessary, restore the distinctive intimate and peaceful wooded landscape with its small-scale mosaic of pasture, arable farmland, woodland and parkland. In particular the heathland characteristics require conservation and there are opportunities for restoration of habitats and reinstatement of features that have been lost.

5.17 Key characteristics and Landscape Management guidelines are very specific to Greenham

Common.

#### Managing Future Change.

5.18 With regard to any future change, the aim should be to maintain the intimate woodland and heathland landscape context and conserve the dispersed settlement character. In addition to the features of key significance outlined above, the main landscape attributes to be considered with regard to any future change are:

- The attractive rural winding roads and sunken lane network, which are largely free from development and intrusive infrastructure.
- Wooded context of the settlements, which helps integrate the built form into the landscape.
- Distinctiveness and distribution pattern of the settlements.
- Prominent and visually sensitive wooded ridge tops.

5.19 Some of the character descriptions in the 2003 are now out of date. The former airfield has been restored to create a strong sense of place within the Greenham and Heathland Mosaic landscape. It will be important to continue to improve the landscape of the business within the framework of the LDO parameters and design guide. It will be important to retain the existing historical links and settings to the listed buildings. It will also be important to retain open visual links from the Common to the elevated land to the south.

5.20 The Newbury District Landscape Character Assessment (NDLCA) also produced in 2003 remains as planning guidance, and identifies the landscape of the site as being within the 'Plateau Edge Transitional Matrix' Landscape Type. The Common itself is within the Wooded Lowland Farming Landscape Type. The landscape descriptions in the document have not been repeated here, as the descriptions within the Berkshire LCA were found to be appropriate.

#### **Site Baseline**

5.21 The key points from the studies above are:

- The plateau occupied by Greenham Common is set within a strongly wooded context with steep sloping minor valleys.
- Surrounding Greenham Common are areas of more typical Woodland and Heathland Mosaic with large, predominantly deciduous woodlands which form a regular pattern of linear ghyll woodlands in undulating wet gullies leading down to the Kennet Valley. Between these woods there is a mosaic of arable and pastoral land use.
- Landscape change has also been evident in the loss of heathland at Greenham Common and conversion to concrete military base and, more recently, restoration back to heathland with concrete being recycled to the bypass.
- The rural quality of the landscape is created by the balance between the woodland and

heathland

- The greatest built influences are the military buildings around and within the Common and the warehouse type buildings at New Greenham Park.
- There is a strong sense of place with strong elements of heritage and conservation providing an interesting, distinctive and diverse landscape.

**Landscape Effects: Sensitivity (derived from considering the landscape value and its susceptibility to change)**

- 5.22 Overall the value of the local landscape (local to the site) is Medium/High with many positive features and elements of interest. The Scheduled Monument comprising the former missile silos, the control tower, the remnants of the airfield runway, the SSSI designation of the Common and general attributes as a recreational resource. VPs 2, 3, 4, 8 and 14 illustrate the general appearance and broad open views of the Common.
- 5.23 In terms of susceptibility to change, there are few detractors in this plateau landscape. The views of the buildings within the Greenham Business Park detract from the view, though the historic link between the former airfield and the former hanger and other buildings within the business park can be considered a positive influence. The English Provender Factory, located on the north west edge of the business park is prominent and represents a significant detractor to the landscape character of the Common.
- 5.24 The landscape is therefore relatively sensitive and the susceptibility to change is moderate to high. Overall the sensitivity must be regarded as medium-high.

**Landscape Effects: Magnitude of Change**

- 5.25 The magnitude of change is a combination of the impact of the development on the key features of the landscape and also the area over which these changes are evident.
- 5.26 The LDO seeks to identify a set of development parameters in terms of building scale, mass and height (and other factors such as materials and roof form, open space provision and landscape design). This LVA report has informed the process to define these parameters by identifying the key elements of the landscape, those that make up the distinctive character and the key views that should be taken into account in terms of how the overall landscape is perceived by the public.
- 5.27 The building heights parameter plan is shown in LDO Plan 3. The site has been divided into 3 zones.
- 5.28 Zone 1 is effectively a continuation of the plateau of the Common extending south from the southern boundary of the Common in a strip of land approximately 120m wide running parallel with the Common boundary. This is the most sensitive part of the Business Park site being closest to the Common and being most visible. Zone 1 has been divided into 1A and 1B to reflect the increased sensitivity of the strip of land closest to the boundary. Cross sections through the boundary have been shown in Figure 3 to show the relationship of the Common, the existing

boundary screening and the existing buildings heights.

Zone 1 building heights would be: up to 7m within the first 30m from the boundary (Zone 1A) and restricted to 12m in height beyond that in Zone 1B.

- 5.29 Zone 2 comprises most of the interior of the Business Park site. This land is sloping away towards the south and as a result becomes less intrusive on the Common landscape with buildings being set back from the boundary and/or effective heights dropping with the topography. See Cross sections.

Zone 2 is split into two sections. Zone 2A is set back from Zone 1 but is at a similar elevation, before gently sloping away to the south. Building heights in this zone will be up to 14m high. Zone 2B is within land that is sloping away towards the south east and this will have building heights up to 16m (taking the largest existing building as the precedent – Building 302 (QTR)). This building was a former hanger for the UASAF Air base and as such can be regarded as having a close link with the former airfield, runway and control tower, and other structures.

- 5.30 Zones 3 is within a lower part of the site in the south east corner, nearest a scattered number of residential houses set within a woodland context.

Zone 3 building heights: up to 11m (taking the 2002 Reserved Matters application as the precedent).

- 5.31 Building height is just one factor that will determine the overall form and impact of any proposed development. It will be the cumulative combination of the height, scale, massing, form and materials that will ultimately determine how the development will appear and what impacts will result on the landscape character and visual receptors of the Common. For example a continuous high wall of buildings within close proximity to the Common boundary would represent a large adverse change to the existing view and impose a level of development overlooking the Common that would be undesirable.

- 5.32 The usual methodology to assess the significance of landscape impacts would combine the sensitivity of the landscape, which has been assessed as Medium-High, and the magnitude of the proposed change. Normally a LVIA reports on a fixed design and known set of parameters. In the case of this LDO the parameters are rather more fluid and so a broader approach must be taken.

- 5.33 Precedents for building heights already exist in the form of Building 400 (EPC Factory) (in Zone 1) at around 13m high and the QTR building (in Zone 2, and is set back from the boundary is 16m high).

- 5.34 A form of development would be required that takes account of the sensitivity of the Common landscape character and the sensitive visual receptors that use the Common. This will of necessity take into account height and massing in particular and would ensure that development



would not be overbearing on this boundary and landscape.

5.35 In order to achieve this, there would need to be a restriction on building heights to not exceed that of Building 400 (EPC), and a balance between the built form and the gaps between buildings, breaking up the mass of the built form and avoiding any suggestion of a 'wall' effect. In addition roof forms and heights should be varied to break up the height profiles of the development. Additional measures can also be employed in terms of appropriate choice and use of materials for cladding and roofing and for fenestration to reduce impact. This could include green walls and green roofs. Additional screening can be provided within the site to increase the long term provision of mitigation.

5.36 In terms of attempting to define what will be acceptable in landscape and visual impact terms along the northern boundary of the business park, it may be helpful to reverse-fit the LVIA significance criteria that would usually be used to define a given significance of impact. The definitions of Significant of Impact would be as follows:

- Major adverse: The proposed development would result in material changes to the landscape, to its landform, scale and pattern which cannot be effectively mitigated. The integrity of the site is compromised and the value substantially undermined.
- Moderate adverse: The proposed development would be out of scale with the landscape and/or result in the partial loss of characteristics of the site.
- Minor adverse: The proposed development would have some effect on some characteristics of the site but the overall character is sustained and the value of the landscape is not materially harmed or has been mitigated.
- Neutral: The proposed development would not materially alter the character of the site and its setting nor detract from the value of that landscape.

5.37 The above set of definitions represents a continuum of possible effects, and the reality is that the actual impacts are a combination of one or more of these definitions. The ideal situation would be a 'Neutral' outcome, but in reality the impact of any development along this boundary will be more likely to have a Minor or up to Moderate adverse impact. A 'Moderate or above' level of impact would be likely to be unacceptable due to the combination of the criteria mentioned above (scale, massing etc) to be sufficiently overbearing on the Greenham Common landscape.

## **6 Visual Assessment**

### **Introduction**

6.1 The visual impact assessment is a separate exercise to the landscape impact assessment. It consists of assessing the impact on views into and out of the site of the proposed development. The impact takes into account the location of the viewpoint, its sensitivity, and the importance of

the view and the magnitude of change to the view that the development represents.

- 6.2 The importance of the view is a balance of how visible the site is and by whom it is viewed. Also important is whether the views are short or long term and if any negative changes can be mitigated.

### **Methodology**

- 6.3 Potential viewpoints have been determined from a site visit. In practical terms the bulk of the site is well screened from most views with only local views from a limited number of receptors being possible. Those from the Common are the most significant.
- 6.4 Private viewpoints have not been accessible and all viewpoints (apart from within the site itself) have been taken from public points of access. From a desk-top study of published maps the likely visual receptors have been determined and these were then verified on site as being appropriate. No photographs have been taken from private property and the impacts from private property can only be estimated from the knowledge of the site and distance from it.
- 6.5 A representative selection of viewpoints is presented here with the locations chosen where there is likely to be an impact with respect to the sensitivity of the users and the magnitude of the change experienced. Only relevant viewpoints have been assessed where they are deemed to be significant. Other views are included for context and to sometimes demonstrate the lack of view available towards the development.
- 6.6 Refer to Figure 2 for the Viewpoint (VP) locations and photos from the viewpoints are contained in Appendix A (Viewpoints). All photos are taken with a 50mm equivalent focal length lens approximating to the human eye.
- 6.7 Mitigation is usually assumed to be in place on completion of the development for the purpose of assessment of impacts. As screen planting matures it is normally the case that visibility reduces. Where relevant this is mentioned in the narrative below to illustrate how the impact may be significant in some views at completion but after establishment of the planting to maturity, these impacts can reduce to levels where they are no longer considered significant. Winter views are generally considered to be worse than summer views when leaves on the trees and hedges make screening vegetation more effective.

### **Sensitivity of Receptors**

- 6.8 In this analysis and in common with best practice public viewpoints and public routes and paths are considered the most sensitive locations as the users are moving slowly and most likely using and valuing the view as recreation. Residences with permanent views can also be in this category. Less sensitive receptors include outdoor sports facilities and outdoor spaces associated with places of work as users are not generally enjoying views as their prime activity. Road and transport corridors are considered lower sensitivity as the landscape experience is transitory and

the user's focus is mainly on the activity of driving.

### **Survey Dates**

- 6.9 The site visit was made during clear conditions in the summer months of May and July 2017 and this therefore represents the best case scenario in terms of the effectiveness of screening vegetation.

### **Overall Visibility**

- 6.10 In general the zone of visual influence for views is quite close to the site with longer views being possible from within the Common.
- 6.11 Views from the LDO site from the A339 are screened to a large extent by existing vegetation apart from where the two roundabout road entrances open up and where as a result views are possible into the site.
- 6.12 The furthest receptors from the site identified in this report are VP5 (1km) and VP15 (1.5km) in the west and east of Greenham Common respectively. Here it can be seen that the mitigating effect of distance and intervening vegetation is effective in reducing the view to a relatively low level. Closer views such as VP16, Building 400 (EPC) becomes dominant in the view.
- 6.13 The possible views that will be experienced by most people using the Common will be from the circular route (former taxi-ways) that skirt the outer edge of the Common. This means that viewers on the northern leg of this route are 340m away from the Business Park boundary, and on the southern leg they are adjacent to the site. The potential impact on receptors will therefore vary considerably depending on where they are.
- 6.14 From the viewpoints provided it can be seen that the existing screen mounding and vegetation along the northern business park boundary is important in screening out the lower parts of buildings and in fact only allows views of the upper parts of Building 400 (EPC), QTR and Marshalls buildings (ie VP14) and a building at the extreme east end of the site (VP12). This mound and vegetation is assessed to provide screening up to between approximately 8m and 12m high above the surrounding level of the Common. (See Cross Sections at Figure 3 VP17 shows the view from within the site looking north towards the screening discussed.
- 6.15 Viewpoints considered to have any significant impact are generally those within a 1km radius of the site. Receptors beyond this distance are generally screened from the site by intervening vegetation and are at a distance where the buildings within the site will comprise a small proportion of any view and will be assimilated within the general view with other competing elements.
- 6.16 Views from the north side of the Common (VPs 8 and 11 for example) more or less opposite the site have partial but clear views of the upper parts of Building 400 (EPC), QTR and possibly the Marshalls buildings. More oblique views (VP9 and 10) are more dominated by the closest building to the receptor. Then more tangential views such as VP4 is also dominated by the closest building

– in this case Building 400 (EPC).

- 6.17 Closer to the business park boundary, Building 400 (EPC) becomes increasingly dominant, taking up a larger proportion of the view. This is due to both its height and its close proximity to the boundary.
- 6.18 Within close proximity it is impossible to disguise the fact that the boundary is a man-made feature and that there is development behind it. However in setting the parameters for the future site development it will be important to avoid over-dominance of new buildings overshadowing the recreational route around the Common. This can be achieved with a combination of limitations of height, of varied set-backs for buildings, and with a balance of open spaces between buildings. Additional screen planting may also be possible either to supplement and reinforce the boundary vegetation within the site. The bund itself is important as a habitat for reptiles and is therefore not suitable for any additional planting.
- 6.19 Other glimpses of the buildings on the site are possible from properties along Bury Bank Road. These are indicative of VP9 which is taken from just within the Common. Vegetation surrounding these properties as well as vegetation on both sites of Bury Bank road itself provide more screening than is indicated in VP9 and which means that views are limited



*Views of properties on Bury's Bank.*

- 6.20 It is interesting to note that in the Landscape Statement provided as part of the extant outline planning consent from 1994, it was recommended that a 20m buffer strip be introduced along the northern site boundary to provide the required level of screening here. It was also noted that once established this screening (after some 20 years) would substantially screen the existing buildings (stated as being up to 17m high for Building 301 [the existing QTR Building]). This screening is in place and is becoming increasingly effective in doing what it was designed to do. This Landscape Statement also goes on to say that it is envisaged that any new buildings located along the north

boundary would be lower than the hanger, and would therefore not be as visually dominant as Building 301.

- 6.21 As it stands, Building 400 (EPC) is lower at 13m, but is still visually dominant in closer views and the buffer planting would need to be denser and higher for it to become more effective in reducing this dominance.

## 7 Construction, Residual and Cumulative Effects

### Construction Effects

- 7.1 The nature of the LDO will mean that developments are likely to occur at any time over the lifetime of the consent. This will mean period times of disruption for the erection of new building and facilities and this will cause temporary disturbance to existing site tenants, to local road users in terms of access and egress to the site. There may be other more remote minor visual impacts due to tall cranes during construction periods.
- 7.2 It is anticipated that working hours will be limited (normally 7am-5pm) 5/6 days per week in accordance with good practice and control of other factors such as noise and dust will also be controlled.

### Residual Effects

- 7.3 Residual effects are those that are apparent once the development is complete and in use. These will include the visual and landscape effects described above in terms of how the development is perceived long term by the various receptors. This relates closely to the quality of the design, the mitigation, the detailing and colour of the buildings and the appearance of the site.
- 7.4 New development will be undertaken within an agreed set of development and design parameters and this will enable a more streamlined process of planning and development to happen. It may be the case that for individual developments coming forward on the more sensitive northern boundary of the site, a greater level of detail may need to be agreed with the local planning authority where, at this stage, it is difficult to be too prescriptive about the broader LDO site parameters without the development potential becoming too inflexible to allow for changing trends and to meet future commercial demands. It would be appropriate to consider the need for LVIA's to be undertaken for any new development within Zone 1 on LDO Plan 3.
- 7.5 The likely development over the period of the LDO will represent a continuing change and evolution of the site as a thriving commercial hub and business centre, continuing the appropriate use of the site in its post USAF existence. Future development is likely to be appropriate and in scale with existing site use and appearance.
- 7.6 It will be important for the future development to go forwards with a set of design guidance in terms of the types of materials and colours and spatial organisation, including on-site amenities, open space and areas for outdoor relaxation and exercise. Non-reflective, recessive colours of the buildings will be appropriate and will help to minimise visual impact in any views over the Common. The development is already relatively well screened from public views with additional screen planting and the management of existing planting to full maturity, there is the potential to create a more robust edge to the development that currently exists.
- 7.7 The LDO will include a Design Guidance Document which includes a high level Landscape

Strategy overview.

### **Cumulative effects**

- 7.8 The cumulative effects of any development in landscape and visual terms are important as the impact on the long term integrity and sustainability of the landscape depends on the retention of its inherent qualities. The gradual erosion of these qualities due to the increasing numbers or frequency of developments, or indeed the expansion of existing developments can influence the quality and character of a landscape.
- 7.9 It is the case that the site is already commercialised through the established existing development and that large scale buildings are characteristic of the site. This site has a large footprint though the site is well contained within the landscape and wider impacts are mostly restricted to the northern boundary next to Greenham Common. Proposed development would be carried out within the agreed set of parameters, but as mentioned above it may be possible to add an additional level of scrutiny and development control for development occurring in Zone 1 (LDO Plan 3) due to its sensitive nature. This scenario would add a level of protection for the landscape and amenity of the Common to help avoid the imposition of overbearing development in this location.

## 8 Conclusions

- 8.1 The work so far in undertaking this assessment has comprised site visits to gain an understanding of the landscape and the visual receptors of the area and in particular the sensitivities of Greenham Common and how the Business Park/Common interface will affect the potential LDO parameters in terms of massing, scale, height and appearance.
- 8.2 A series of photo viewpoints have been produced to illustrate the potential views within the Common towards the Business Park and the existing influence the buildings on the Park currently have.
- 8.3 The landscape of the Common is reclaimed from the former air base and has been restored to a heathland and is well used for recreation and common rights grazing of cattle. The whole of the site is important for nature conservation.
- 8.4 The Common landscape is large scale and provides a valuable recreational wildlife resource. Remnant reminders of the former air base remain and still influence the character of the site. The fragments of runway, the alignment of the footpath/cycleways on the former taxiways, the former control tower and missile silos are all prominent reminders of the Cold War influences that once dominated this landscape. The silos in particular are still dominant in the west half of the site, with the control tower overlooking the central and east half of the Common.
- 8.5 The Business Park is also a key influence in the landscape. Buildings along the northern edge and several that are set back within the site are clearly visible from views within the Common. The northern boundary of the Business Park has an earth bund along its northern extent which is planted with trees and shrubs. This can also be seen in many of the Viewpoints provided in Appendix A. The bund and established trees provide a good deal of screening along the Park/Common interface. These tend to screen out most of the views of the buildings within the Park. The English Provender Company (EPC) (Building 400) is located at the extreme northern edge of the park and is at the east end of the site. This building is up to 13m high and large in mass and scale. It is, as a result, prominent in many views as can be seen from the photo viewpoints. The tree screening at this point does not form a continuous solid screen at higher levels and as such allows views through to the building even at relatively low levels (VP8 and 16).
- 8.6 The buildings that are set back from the northern edge of the site are less prominent. The Marshalls building is around 12m high (similar to Building 400 (EPC) height), but the topography slopes away from the northern boundary to the south and this factor helps to reduce the visual impact of these buildings. With the topography sloping away the tree screen becomes more effective. Figure 3 Cross Sections AA, BB, CC and DD show the interface of the Park and Common, the existing boundary bund and trees, and how the potential growth of the trees over a period of 10 years could increase the level of screening. The sections also show the topography serves to reduce the effective height of the buildings when viewed from the Common.
- 8.7 Initial considerations of what parameters may be possible along the Park/Common boundary must



balance the above factors to achieve an overall acceptable scale and mass of the built form with sufficient screening in place so that the landscape character and visual impact from the Common is at an acceptable level.

- 8.8 The preliminary conclusion is that building heights along the northern boundary should be no higher than 7m within the first 30m from the boundary and restricted to 12m beyond that. A variation in height would also be a positive aspect to avoid having a continuous roof line. In considering massing, there should also be a balance between the built form and the gaps between buildings, again to avoid the perception of a wall of development adjacent to the Common. Over time, the existing tree screening will progressively become more effective in mitigating the views.
- 8.9 Further into the Business Park site and on the sloping ground, the building heights can be slightly higher without impacting significantly on to the Common.
- 8.10 Aspects of design of the buildings themselves are also key in assessing the overall appearance of the park. The building form, roof design, colour and lighting all play a part in influencing the quality and character of the park and its influence on other landscape and visual receptors.
- 8.11 The addition of further screening within the site would also be desirable to strengthen the screening over the long term either in specific locations to screen specific buildings and/or to provide a more robust level of buffer between the Park and the Common.
- 8.12 It would be appropriate to emphasise that the business park, based on the former Technical Area, is identified in Local Plan policy and Planning Guidance as an area of regeneration to support the local economy, and has long been identified as a major development area. The LDO is intended to assist in delivering this development potential.

## Bibliography

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- South Oxfordshire Landscape Assessment (SOLA) 1998
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- West Berkshire Core Strategy
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- Berkshire Landscape Character Assessment Final Report by Land Use Consultants in 2003.
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- Outline Planning Application for Storage and distribution.....etc for Greenham Common Airbase: Planning Statement (By Barton Willmore) from 1994.

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# Greenham Common LDO

## Appendix A Viewpoints

June 2017



Prepared by Anthony Stiff BSc MA CMLI

June 2017

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# Photos



Footpath route into Greenham Common via Greenham Road. English Provender Company building is directly in the view.

VP1

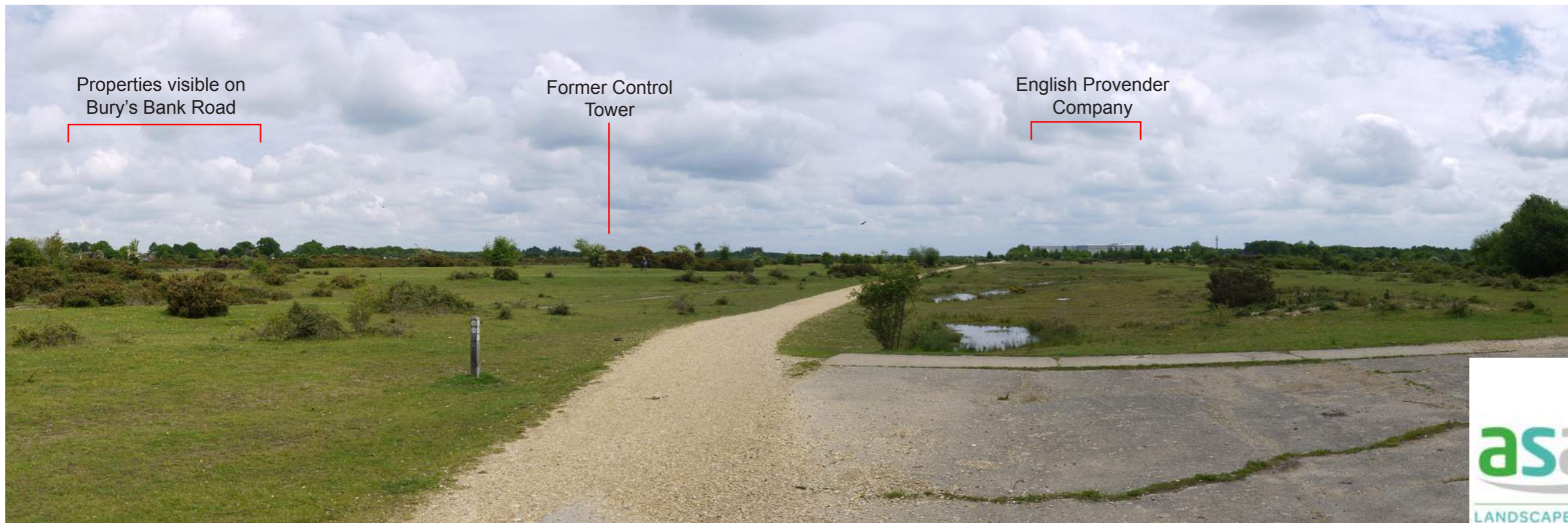


VP2 - View looking east on to Greenham Common.

# Photos



VP3 - View looking east within Greenham Common.



VP4 - View from near Silos east across Greenham Common.



English Provender  
Company

VP5 - View looking south east towards the Common.



VP6 - View from near north boundary of Common looking south east.



# Photos



VP7 - View of Former Control Tower and south across the Common.



VP8 - View south across the Common.



VP9 - View from just south of Bury's Bank and Golf Club.



VP10 - View from footpath within Common, south of Bury's Bank.



# Photos



VP11 - View from north side of the Common.



VP12 - View of new building on northern edge of Business Park at east end.





VP13 - View of east end of Business Park and interface with the Common.



VP14 - View from path near northern edge of the Common.





Other buildings visible on English Provender  
eastern edge. Company

VP15 - View from extreme east end of the Common.



English Provender Company

VP16 - View from Common to show boundary with Business Park.



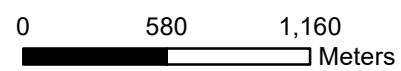
## Photos



VP17 - View from within Business Park looking north.



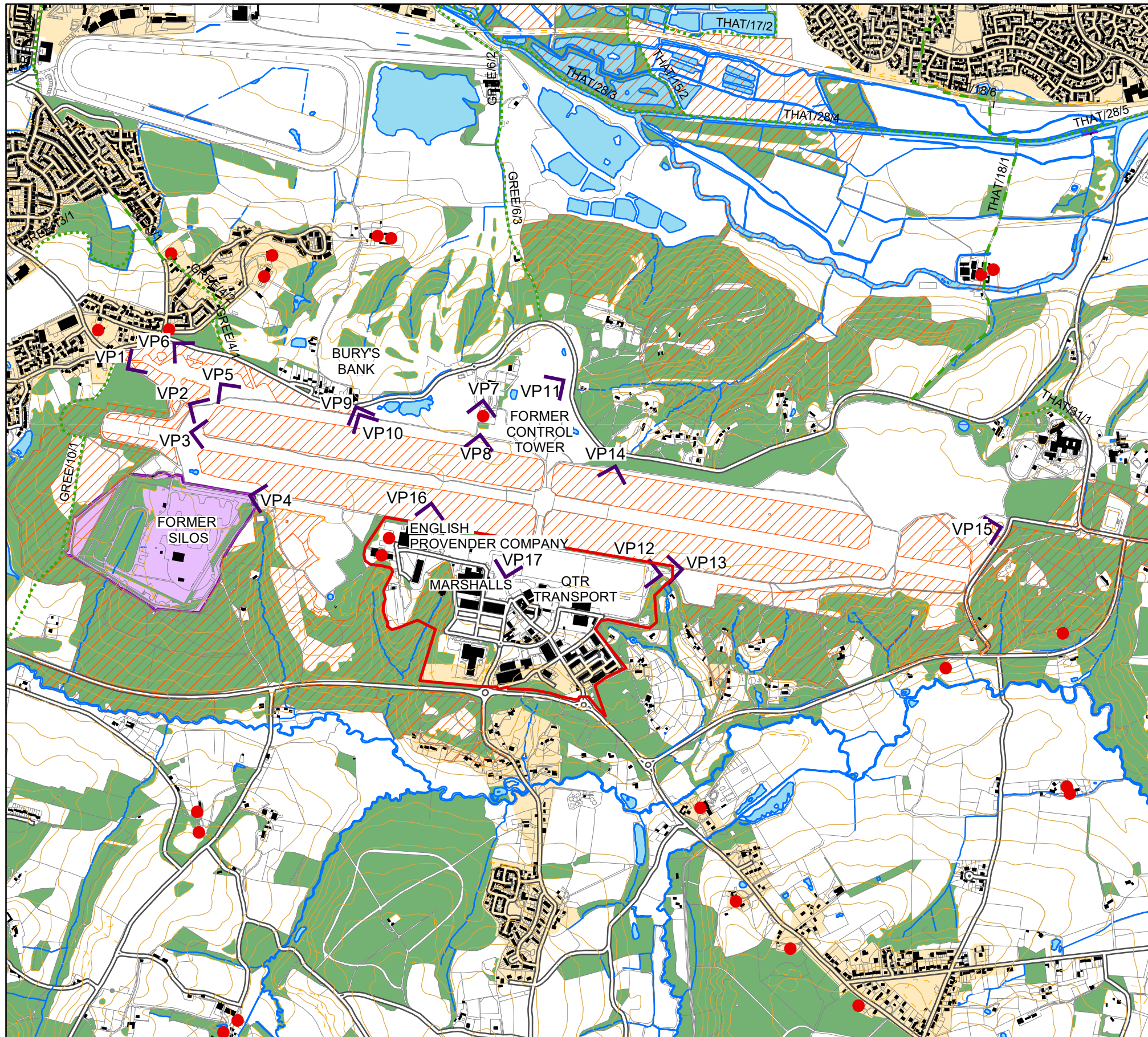
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  - Bridleway
  - Byway
  - Site Boundary
  - Listed Buildings**
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  - Grade II\*
  - Grade II
  - Contour Line
  - Water Line
  - Building Area
  - Road Line
  - SSSI
  - Settlement Area
  - Water Area
  - Woodland Area
  - Scheduled Monument
  - AONB



















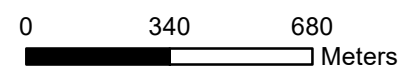
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Figure 1:  
Site Location and Designations Plan



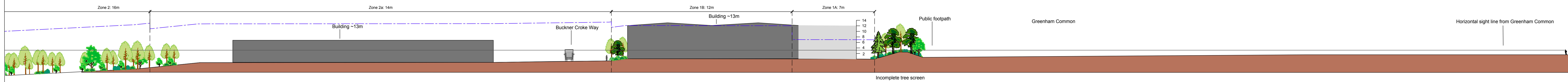
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  -  Contour Line
  -  Water Line
  -  Building Area
  -  Road Line
  -  SSSI
  -  Settlement Area
  -  Water Area
  -  Woodland Area
  -  Scheduled Monument
  -  AONB



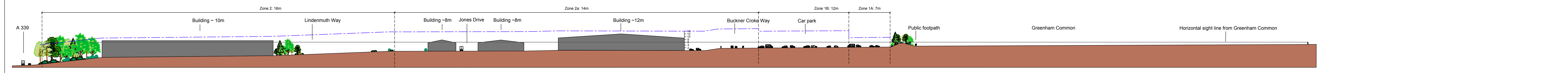
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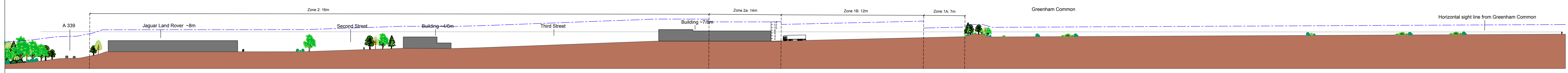
Figure 2  
Photo Locations



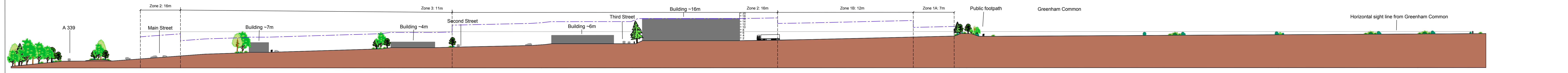
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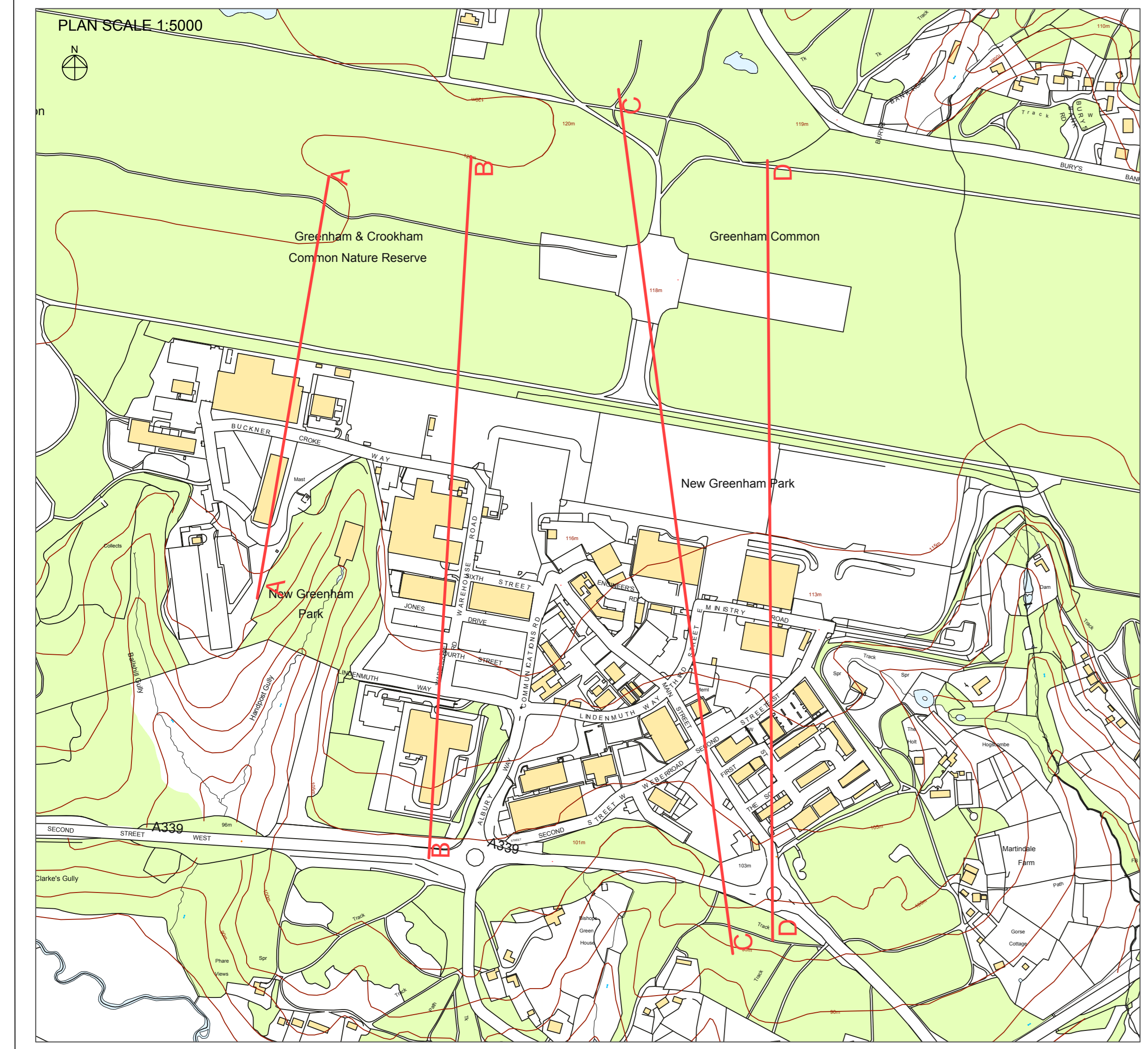
SECTION BB 1:1000



SECTION CC 1:1000



SECTION DD 1:1000



Zone heights added	C	VF	25/07/18
For Planning	B	VF	10/04/18
Cross section DD added	A	SB	14/12/17

Revision description	No.	By	Date

**asa** ANTHONY STIFF ASSOCIATES  
Site Landscape Architecture

**Status**  
**FOR PLANNING**

**Project**  
GREENHAM BUSINESS PARK

**Description**  
Figure 3 Cross Sections AA, BB, CC, DD

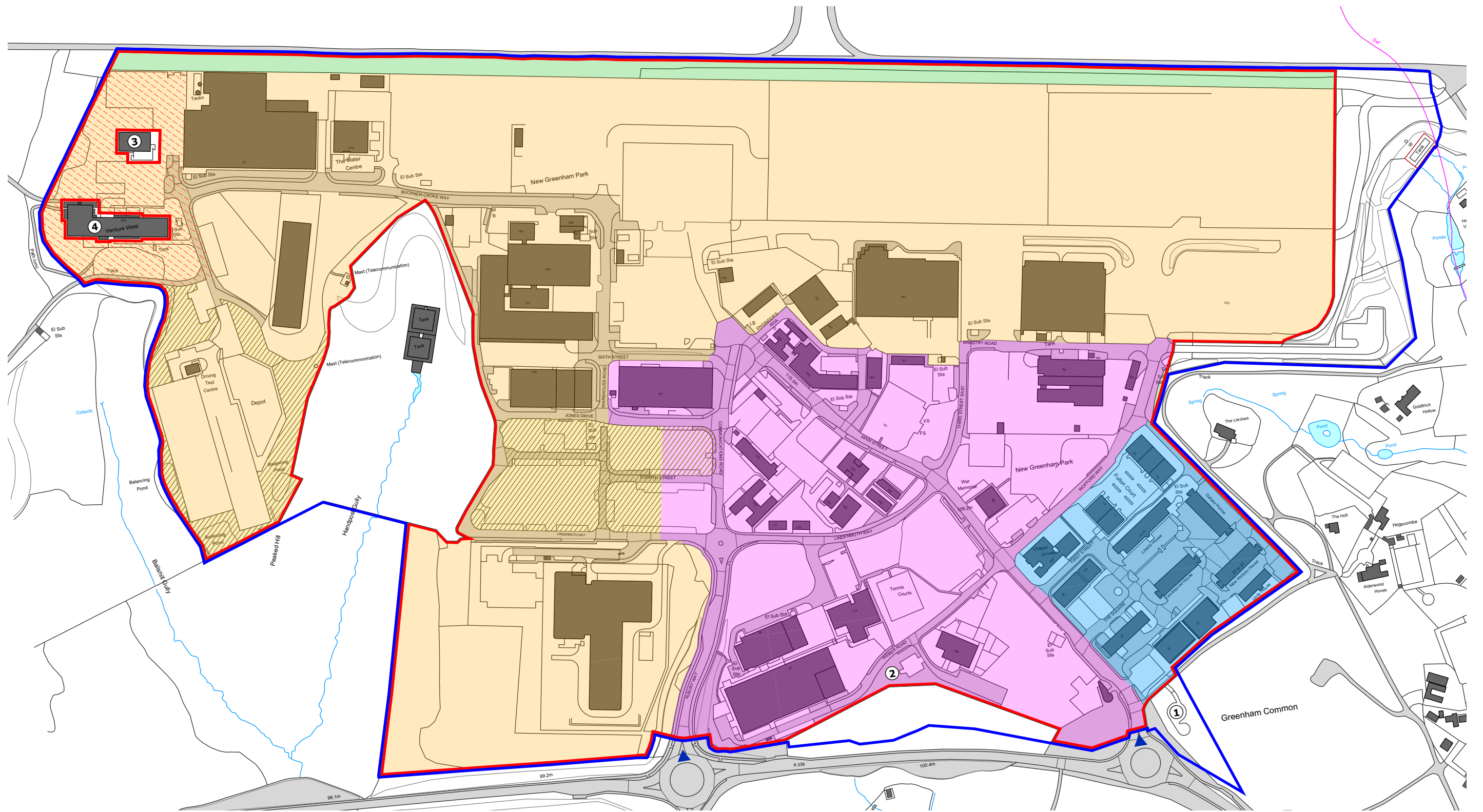
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Drawn By BM Checked By AS

Drg. No. ASA-534-DR-001 Rev. C

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LDO Area: 54.0 ha

Business Park Boundary: 60.9 ha

Zone A: Business Use  
(Primary uses only)

Zone B: Mixed Use  
(Primary & Secondary uses)

Zone C: Mixed Use  
(Primary & Secondary uses excluding B2/B8)

Zone D: No New Building  
(Without separate planning permission)

Zone E: Landscape / Ecology / Heritage

Area of Ecological Importance  
(Mitigation may be required before development)

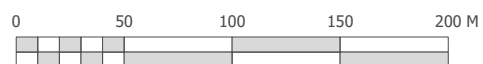
Access from  
Public Highway

**Heritage Assets:**

- Greenham Peace Gardens
- Memorial to the Fallen
- Combat Support Building (Building 273)
- Former Wing HQ Building (Building 274)

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D	23.01.18		MH	JL
E	01.03.18		MH	JL
F	06.03.18		MH	JL
G	12.03.18		MH	JL

CLIENT:  
**Greenham Common Trust**

PROJECT:  
**Greenham BP LDO**

DRAWING:  
**Land Use Plan  
(LDO Plan 2) - Draft**

DATE:  
**Nov 2017**

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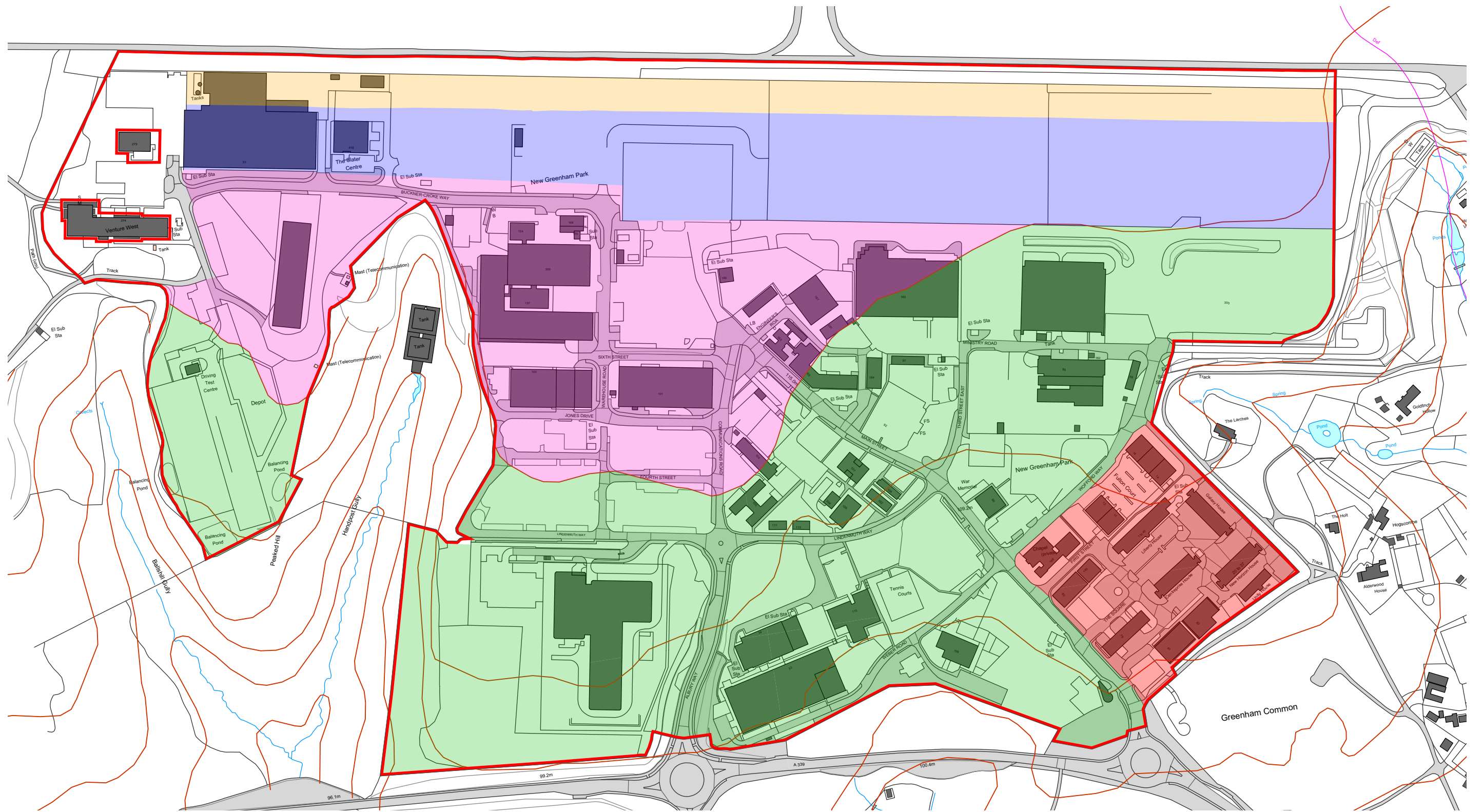
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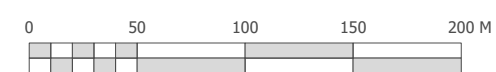




- LDO Area
- Zone 1 A: Up to 7m high
- Zone 1 B: Up to 12m high (Max 10m to eaves)
- Zone 2 A: Up to 14m high
- Zone 2 B: Up to 16m high
- Zone 3: Up to 11m high
- Contours (5m increments)

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G	18.06.18		MH	JL
H	25.07.18		MH	JL

CLIENT:  
**Greenham Common Trust**

PROJECT:  
**Greenham BP LDO**

DRAWING:  
**Building Heights Plan  
(LDO Plan 3)**

DATE:  
**January 2018**

SCALE: **1:3500 @ A3**

DWG NO: **2170/SK1-02**

REV: **H**



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