

PLANNING APPLICATION SUPPORTING STATEMENT

INCORPORATING DESIGN & ACCESS AND POLICY STATEMENT

PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT


REINSTATEMENT OF CONTROL TOWER PURSUANT TO CONDITION 7 OF PLANNING PERMISSION 20/03194/MFA (USE OF LAND FOR FILM MAKING TO INCLUDE EARTH WORKS TO REMOVE 'BUND' AND CONSTRUCTION OF 3 PERMANENT STUDIOS & CREATION OF 'BACKLOT SPACE' TO ALLOW FOR CONSTRUCTION OF TEMPORARY STUDIOS WITH ASSOCIATED SUPPORT SERVICES AND PARKING. USE OF FORMER CONTROL TOWER AS OFFICE SPACE AND/ OR AS A FILM SET. CONSTRUCTION OF SECURITY BUILDING AT ENTRANCE).

LAND AT:


**BOVINGDON AIRFIELD (CONTROL TOWER),
CHESHAM ROAD,
BOVINGDON,
HEMEL HEMPSTEAD,
HERTFORDSHIRE,
HP5 3RR**

Submitted on behalf of:
Mr H Mash

MAY 2022

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1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This statement is submitted on behalf of our client, Mr H Mash in support of a planning application for the reinstatement of the former control tower at Bovingdon Airfield (Control Tower), Chesham Road, Bovingdon, Hemel Hempstead, HP5 3RR.
- 1.2 The development seeks to comply with the requirements of Condition 7 of planning permission 20/03194/MFA. Condition 7 requires the submission of a planning application to restore the Control tower to its original (World War II) appearance. The application includes a scheme of works and a timetable for implementation and has been submitted within 6 months of the date of planning permission being granted under application reference 20/03194/MFA; in accordance with the requirements of Condition 7.
- 1.3 The reinstatement of the WWII control tower represents a positive heritage benefit to the site and to the Borough. The proposal has been carefully considered having regard to the condition of the building, the aim of reinstating the building to its original appearance and the contribution the building makes to the locality as a heritage asset.
- 1.4 Having undertaken a structural report of the building, it became apparent that much of the building would have to be re-built. This approach was discussed and agreed with the LPA. The scheme as submitted represents the reinstatement of the control tower to its original appearance, through the re-building of the tower as a replica structure in the main, while retaining, if possible, the stair tower.
- 1.5 The development of the site in the manner proposed complies with the requirements of Condition 7 of Planning Permission 20/03194/MFA, by enhancing the Borough's heritage and realising part of the Very Special Circumstances case as approved by the Council.
- 1.6 Within this statement, we set out the context of the planning application and provide a detailed description of the works. We then provide a detailed assessment of the proposal and demonstrate that the scheme is acceptable in principle and is a well-designed development in this context which is supported by the National Planning Policy Framework 2021 (NPPF), local plan policy and

any other material considerations, such that planning permission should be approved.

1.7 The remainder of this statement is set out as follows:

- 2) THE SITE
- 3) THE APPLICATION PROPOSAL
- 4) DESIGN & ACCESS STATEMENT
- 5) POLICY CONSIDERATION
- 6) CONCLUSIONS

1.8 The application is accompanied by the following documents

- Application Scheme drawings
- Location plan / Block Plan
- Photo sheet of Existing Building
- Structural Report prepared by MMP Design dated 7 December 2021
- Timeline of Works
- Architects Design Statement
- Policy Statement (contained in this statement)
- CIL forms

2 THE SITE

- 2.1 The application site lies within Bovingdon Airfield, located to the north of Bovingdon and the east of Whelpley Hill, on land designated as Green Belt. The airfield lies outside the defined settlements for these two villages. The wider air field amounts to some 26.85ha.
- 2.2 The Control Tower lies to the south eastern side of the airfield close to the boundary with HMP Mount. The mapping extract below shows the site subject of planning application 20/03194/MFA, with the location of the Control Tower within that area and marked by a star.



Map showing location of Control Tower (marked by a star) and its position relative to approved application 20/03194/MFA

- 2.3 Bovingdon Airfield was constructed in World War II c.1941 and occupied by RAF Bomber Command from June 1942. The former WWII airfield consists of two main runways in an 'X' formation, which are laid to tarmac. A third runways lies

to the southern end of the airfield and has been in use by the weekly Outdoor Bovingdon market for a number of years.

- 2.4 The Control Tower is a surviving element of the WWII airfield, constructed in the art deco style. The building has been identified by the Council as a heritage asset, being one of the few surviving elements of the historic airfield. The original appearance of the Control Tower can be seen in the photograph below:



Original appearance of Control Tower

- 2.5 The building is however currently in a poor state of repair; having not been in use for a number of years, and subject to vandalism. The current condition of the building is clearly visible in the photographs below. Additional photographs of the existing building are included within the application package:



Photographs showing current external appearance of building – source Cain Architects



Photographs showing current internal appearance of building – source Cain Architects

- 2.6 In line with the requirements of Condition 7 of 20/03194/MFA, this application proposes to reinstate the building back to its original appearance. This is proposed to be achieved through re-building, alongside the retention of the stair tower as shown on the submitted drawings. The nature of works now required to reinstate the building to its original appearance are extensive and result from the building having not been watertight for a number of years.
- 2.7 Access for vehicles will be taken from Chesham Road, which borders the airfield to the south. There are two access points along Chesham Road, both of which have been in use to serve the filming and market uses at the airfield. In line with filming applications, any larger articulated vehicles required to access the site to undertake works proposed will use the main western access. This has satisfactory sight lines onto the public highway to ensure no impacts on highway safety.

Planning History

- 2.8 Bovingdon Airfield has an extensive planning history. The relevant history in relation to the proposed development is application 20/03194/MFA.
- 2.9 Application 20/03194/MFA granted planning permission for use of land for film making to include earth works to remove the 'bund' and construction of 3 permanent studios, creation of 'backlot space' to allow for construction of temporary studios with associated support services and parking. Use of former control tower as office space and/ or as film set. Construction of security building at entrance.

2.10 Permission was granted subject to conditions, with Condition 7 requiring:

Within 6 months of the date of this permission, details (in the form of a planning application) of a scheme of works, including a timetable for implementation, to restore the on site control tower to its original (WW2) appearance shall be submitted to the local planning authority.

The scheme of works shall be carried out in accordance with the approved particulars and in line with the timetable for implementation.

Reason: In the interests of enhancing the borough's heritage and to provide, in part, the level of planning gain necessary to justify development in the Green Belt policy terms as part of a 'Very Special Circumstances' case, in accordance with Policies CS27 and CS5 of the Dacorum Core Strategy (2013), and paragraph 148 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

2.11 This application is submitted pursuant to Condition 7 of 20/03194/MFA and within 6 months of the date of the permission (i.e. Before 9 May 2022).

3 THE APPLICATION PROPOSAL

3.1 This application proposal seeks planning permission for the reinstatement of the Control Tower building. It is proposed to achieve this through re-building in the main, alongside the retention of the stair tower, where possible. The aim is to reinstate the building to its original appearance, with the finished building reinstating a heritage asset that will contribute to the heritage of the Borough.

3.2 The building will be used as a 'Welcome Hub and Office' in line with approved planning permission. The building will be the heart of the Airfield site and will be the first point of contact for visitors.

Background

3.3 This application has been submitted pursuant to Condition 7 of application 20/03194/MFA. Planning application 20/03194/MFA granted permission for the principle of development for the use of land for film making to include earth works to remove a 'bund' and construction of 3 permanent studios creation of 'backlot space' to allow for construction of temporary studios with associated support services and parking. Use of former control tower as office space and/or as film set. Construction of security building at entrance.

3.4 Condition 7 requires the submission of a planning application to include a scheme of works and a timetable for the implementation of works in relation to the reinstatement of the control tower.

3.5 Condition of Building

3.6 The Control Tower is currently in a poor condition having not been watertight for a number of years. A Structural Report was commissioned to support this application and has been used to understand the nature of works required to reinstate the building back to its original appearance.

3.7 The scheme as submitted is based on the findings of the Structural Report of the building by 'MMP Design Consulting Civil and Structural Engineers'. The approach forwarded in this application has been discussed with Officers pre-

application where their support in principle for the rebuilding works has been agreed.

3.8 The key observations of MMP Design's report are as follows:

Flat roof to stair enclosure

The asphalt roof covering and roof deck are defective; the composite steel filler joist sections have lamellar corrosion, causing cracking to the concrete roof soffit/ceiling to the staircase enclosure. The top three courses of brickwork are defective.

Flat roof area over first floor

The asphalt roof covering and roof deck are defective; the composite steel filler joist sections have lamellar corrosion, causing cracking to the concrete roof slab. The top four courses of brickwork are either missing or defective. The roof concrete slab is supported on the external walls with intermediate internal supports on the top flanges of exposed steel beam sections which bear onto masonry walls and/ or masonry piers. These steel beam sections have lamellar corrosion which has caused some reduction in their structural capacity and are defective.

Flat roof area over single storey ground floor area

The asphalt roof covering is defective; the roof deck appears to be a reinforced concrete flat slab with intermediate down stand reinforced concrete beams supported on masonry walls and/or masonry piers.

First Floor Joist System

The floor appears to be a concrete filler joist system supported on the external masonry walls with intermediate internal supports on the top flange of steel beam sections, which are exposed. These steel beams have lamellar corrosion and are defective. The floor has longitudinal and transverse cracking to the top and bottom surface of the slabs, The floor deck is defective.

There is an open area of previously timber joisted floor which provided external balconies to the side elevations at first floor level.

Internal Walls

The internal walls are either one brick thick or half brick thick in face brickwork and are partially rendered. There are numerous cracks in the masonry ranging in width from hairline to 35mm wide.

External Walls

These walls are 215mm (one brick thick) wide formed in English bond with an external render finish. There are numerous cracks in all walls mainly above and below the window and door openings. These cracks are up to 50mm wide. The extent and nature of the cracking indicates that a combination of thermal movements and settlement of the foundations has most probably occurred

The brickwork to single storey extension is defective and in places is missing. An original masonry pier is missing and the beam/lintel over the opening is defective. This beam has been propped. The lintel to one of the side elevation is defective and has been propped..

The brickwork close to the ground level is defective in most places. This has most probably been caused by frost attack.

3.9 MPP make the following recommendations in their report. –

Given the condition of the building fabric the following remedial works and new works will be required to restore the building fabric to current Building Regulations Standards.

- a) *Carry out an intrusive investigation of the underlying founding strata and carry out laboratory soil testing to confirm the bearing capacity and suitability of the underlying ground. Record the type and extent of the foundations to the building.*
- b) *Allow for remedial foundations in the form of underpinning to the existing foundations*
- c) *Demolish the single storey extension and remove foundations.*
- d) *Rebuild the extension with cavity blockwork external walls on new strip foundations.*
- e) *Provide temporary works propping and façade lateral restraint propping of the external walls.*
- f) *Remove all external and internal render to walls*

- g) *Demolish flat roofs in a controlled sequence and remove steel support beams*
- h) *Replace minimum top four courses of brickwork to external walls*
- i) *Carry out brickwork repairs to external walls in the form of brick sticking brickwork replacement, bed reinforcement and installation of movement joints. It is estimates that between 25% to 40% of the external walls will require remedial repairs.*
- j) *Install new roof decks – suspended promenade tile finish, perimeter handrail guarding, waterproof overing, insulated tapered to falls, precast concrete plank systems or steel profile composite concrete slab, suspended ceiling*
- k) *Demolish first floor system and remove steel beams. Install new steel beam supports, steep profile composite concrete floor slab, new perimeter support steel angles to floor slab fixed to masonry walls. Suspended ceiling.*
- l) *Demolish ground bearing floor slab and internal wall partitions*
- m) *Reduce internal ground level and install new ground floor slab system – suspended pre-cast concrete beam and block floor system on new internal foundations*
- n) *Renew all underground drainage and services.*
- o) *Repoint the external walls, fix external wall insulation and apply a render finish*

In addition to the above, allowances should be made for the following new building elements:

- i) *Mechanical, electrical and plumbing services*
- ii) *Joinery*
- iii) *Plastering*
- iv) *Replacement windows and doors*
- v) *Decoration*
- vi) *External works*

3.10 MMP concluded *'As the building has not been watertight for a long time and some of the damaged external walls have not been laterally restrained, these walls may have a reduced capacity to support the proposed loadings. It is also envisaged that the existing foundations would have to be enhanced to eliminate*

any further settlement of the building. Given the age and condition of the building, the amount of required demolition, replacement of the defective building elements and the potential for hidden defects in the foundations and walls, it is envisaged that most of the building would have to be demolished and re built.”

- 3.11 Having regard to the observations, recommendations and conclusions of the Structural Report, alongside the aim of the project, the following works are proposed as detailed in the accompanying plans (Scheme of Works).

Scheme of Works

- 3.12 The application drawings set out the Scheme of Works proposed by this application in order to reinstate the Control Tower to its former appearance:

3.13 Amount and Layout

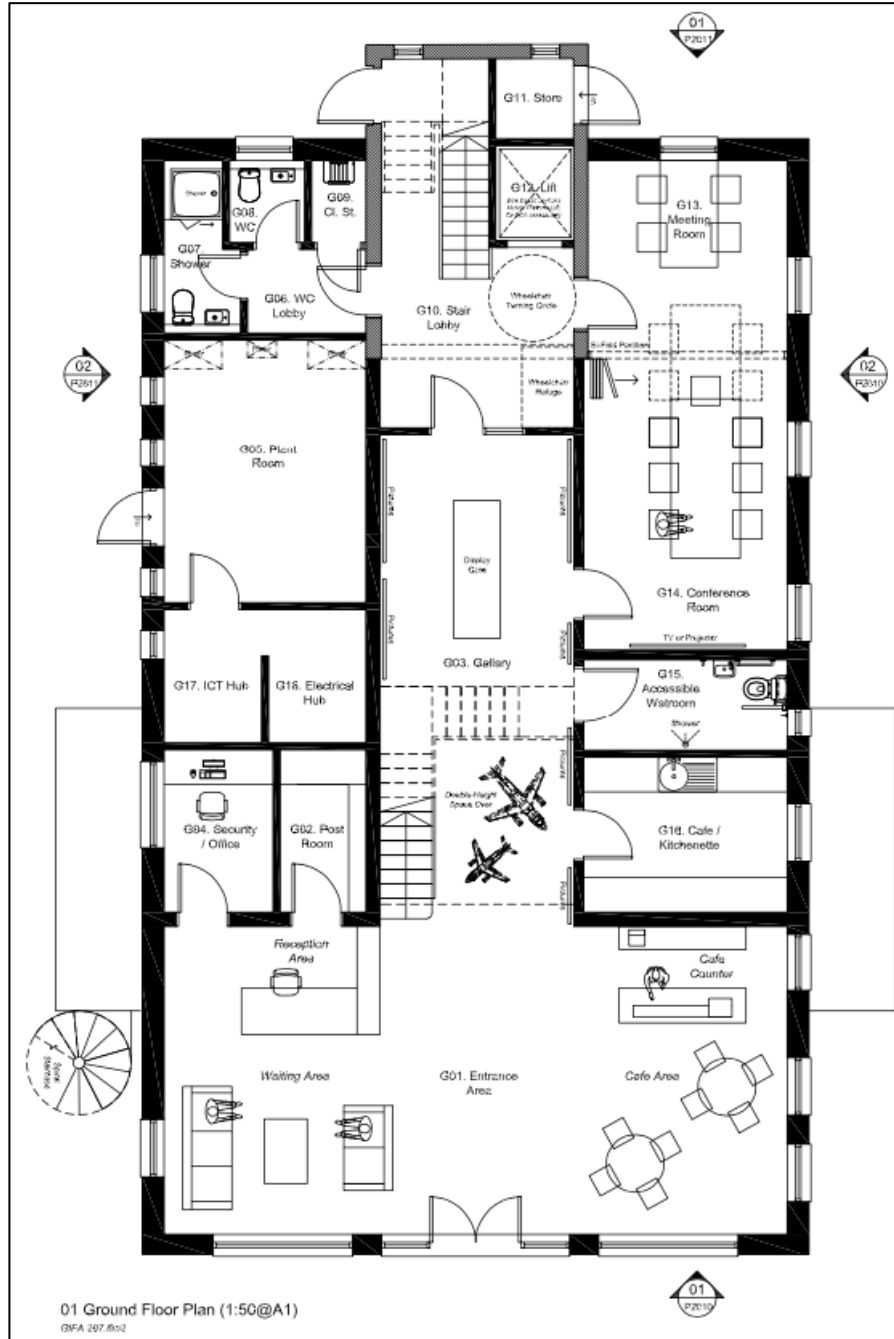
- 3.14 The proposal will reinstate the Control Tower to its original appearance. This includes the reintroduction of the currently lost viewing tower, as can be seen on the historic photographs.

- 3.15 No additional works beyond the reinstatement of the building are proposed as part of this application. The footprint of the original building will be used for the purposes of the building’s reinstatement. In order to ensure the key aim of the project is met, careful consideration has been given to sourced historic photographs of the building to ensure accuracy within the building project.

- 3.16 As per the approved planning application, the building will be used as office space and/ or as a film set.

- 3.17 At the ground floor an open plan entrance area will include a café area with seating and waiting area. A post room and security office will be sited to the rear of the entrance area. The entrance area will lead through to a central corridor, of which part will be a double height space. Positioned within the double height space an open stair case will lead up to the first floor. Leading off the ground floor central corridor a café/ kitchenette, accessible washroom, conference / meeting room, store and WCs. A plant room with electrical and ICT hubs will also be sited at ground floor, with external access proposed. To

the rear of the corridor the stair lobby with lift access will be situated – a further entrance door is proposed within the stair lobby. The ground floor layout of the building is shown in the drawing extract below:

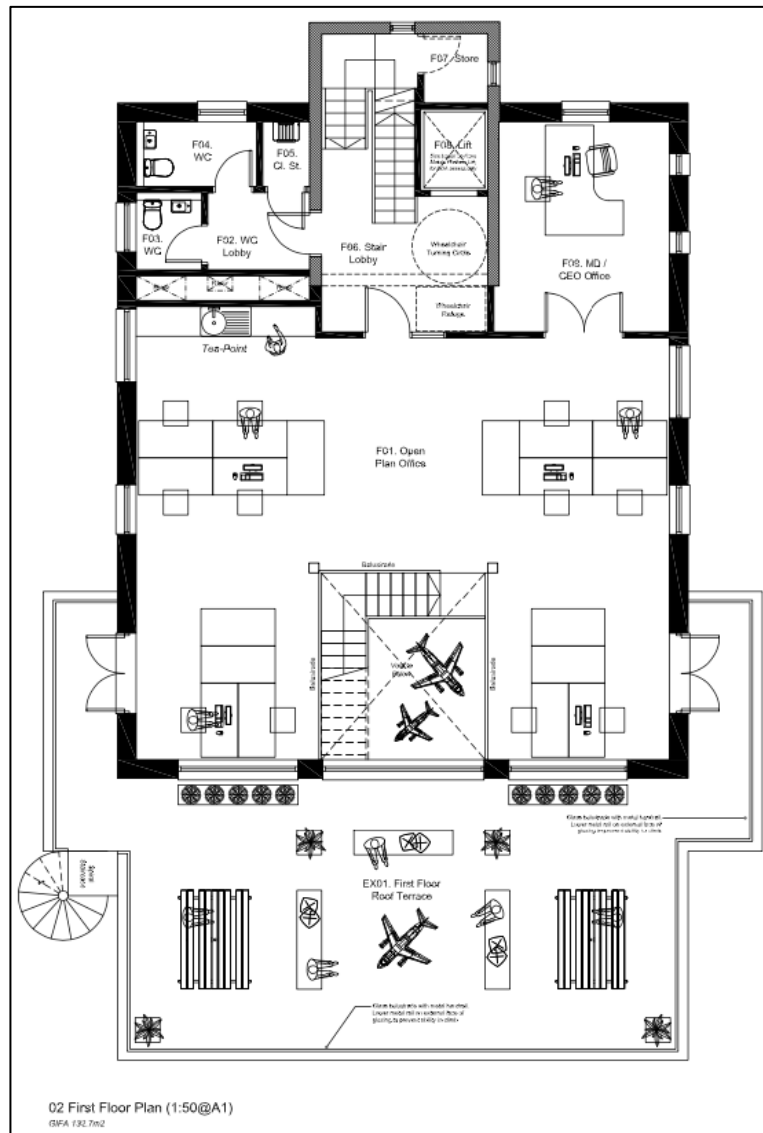


Proposed ground floor layout

3.18 At first floor open plan office space is proposed to extend across much of the area. Further WCs and an enclosed office space will also be provided.

3.19 One of the key design elements of the original building was its external spaces. The reinstatement of the building to its original design provides the opportunity for a viewing platform to be reintroduced. This will be achieved through the introduction of a roof terrace with access will be provided from the open plan office.

3.20 A secondary access to the first floor will be provided via a spiral staircase to the exterior of the building. While it's not an original feature of the building, current Building Regulations require an alternative fire escape. A spiral staircase is considered to be in keeping with the period of the building and therefore an appropriate feature in this instance. The first floor layout is shown in the drawing extract below:



Proposed first floor layout

3.21 The nature of works now required to reinstate the building to its original appearance are extensive and result from the building having not been watertight for a number of years. The areas of rebuild are identified in black. The areas of rebuild are in line with the findings of the structural engineers report. The stair tower, as denoted by the grey walling, is proposed to be retained, where possible. A further intrusive structural survey will be required to confirm this, as noted on the submitted plans.

3.22 **Scale and Appearance**

3.23 To ensure the appearance of the original building is reinstated, historic photographs of the original building have been sourced. The photographs have been used to inform the external appearance and detailing of the building.

3.24 The characteristic art deco style of the original building with its geometric form and series of set backs, will be re-created.

3.25 A key element of the scheme is to reinstate original building features which have been lost over time. This is considered fundamental to ensuring a high quality scheme that meets an original aims of the development.

3.26 The following original elements will be reinstatement by this proposal:

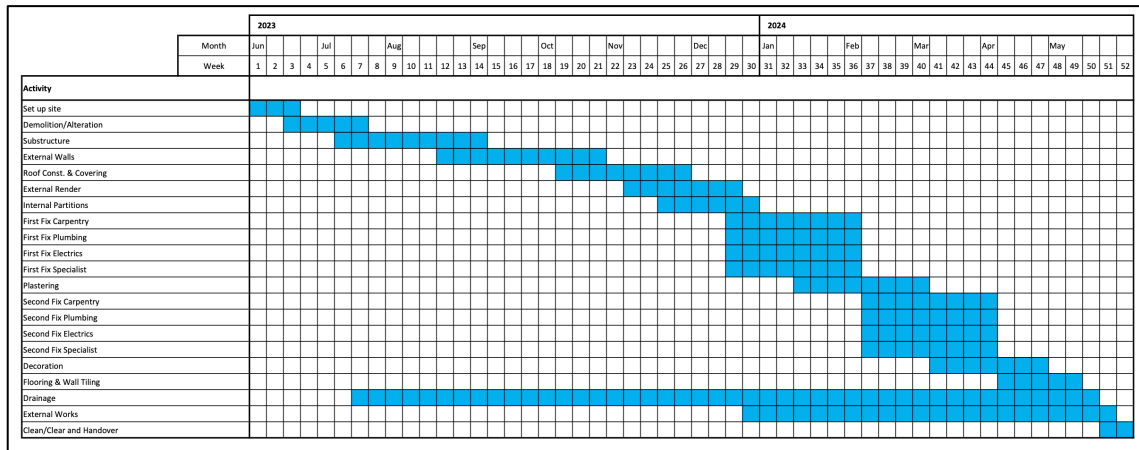
- Crittal windows and doors
- Metal balustrades to roof terraces
- Numerical display board to east elevation
- Roof level glazed viewing tower
- Aviation weather vane to top of viewing tower

3.27 Slimline crittal windows and doors are proposed to openings set within rendered walls to replicate the original building. While double glazed units will be installed to meet modern energy efficiency targets, their slimline design will ensure their appearance will be true to the original building. Openings will reflect the proportions, rhythm and design of the original fenestration within the building to ensure a high quality scheme.

- 3.30 A minor increase to the original height of the building is proposed due to current building regulations. This increase is modest and not considered to impact the overall appearance, quality of the resultant building.
- 3.31 The original Art deco style of the building will be re-created through a well designed scheme that is grounded in the key aims of ensuring the original appearance of the building and the heritage of the Borough is enhanced. The use of high quality materials, detailed design fenestration and reintroduction of original features combine to ensure the proposal meets these aims.
- 3.32 Overall it is clear that a high quality design approach has been taken to the proposal.
- 3.33 **Access and Parking**
- 3.34 The scheme does not propose to make any alterations to the parking and access arrangements on site or previously approved. Access will continue to be off Chesham Road to the south, where two access points are available. The western most access is suitable for larger articulated vehicles and thus would be appropriate for any larger construction vehicles needing to access the site.
- 3.35 Appropriate visibility splays are present to the western most entrance.
- 3.36 It is the case that the development will be constructed in accordance with the relevant requirements of Part M of the Building Control Regulations relating to access to and use of buildings.
- 3.37 **Landscaping**
- 3.38 The proposal relates solely to the reinstatement of the Control Tower building and no landscaping works are proposed. This application is submitted pursuant to approved application 20/03194/MFA, wherein landscaping works for the site were detailed.

3.39 Timetable of Implementation

3.40 To satisfy the requirements condition 7, a timetable of implementation is submitted with the application. The timetable is set out within the Outline Construction Programme. An extract of the document is reproduced below, with the full programme provided within the application package.



Outline Construction Programme – source Cain Architects

4. **RELEVANT POLICY**

- 4.1 Section 70(2) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 require all applications for planning permission to be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise
- 4.2 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) serves as the overarching planning policy document for England and is a material consideration in planning decisions
- 4.3 The key objective of the NPPF is to achieve sustainable development and at the heart of the Framework is a presumption in favour of sustainable development. The following are considered relevant.
- 4.4 The NPPF places an emphasis the effective use of land. At [paragraph 119](#) it sets out that '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. With [paragraph 120](#) stating 'decisions should...d) promote and support the development of under-utilised land and buildings ...
- Chapter 12: Achieving Well Designed Places
- 4.5 The NPPF places an emphasis on good design. Section 12 entitled "Achieving well-designed places", sets out the expected standard for development. At [paragraph 126](#), the NPPF states that 'The creation of high quality, beautiful and sustainable 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.'
- 4.6 [Paragraph 130](#) goes on to state that planning decisions should ensure that developments 'are visually attractive as a result of good architecture, layout and appropriate and effective landscaping' and 'are sympathetic to local

character' but 'optimise the potential of the site to accommodate and sustain an appropriate amount and mix of development'.

4.7 Paragraph 134 states that the LPA should give significant weight to 'development which reflects local design policies and government guidance on design' and 'outstanding or innovative designs which promote high levels of sustainability, or help raise the standard of design more generally in an area, as long as they fit in with the overall form and layout of their surroundings'.

- Chapter 13: Protecting Green Belt Land

4.8 Chapter 13 confirms that the Government attaches great importance to Green Belts, their fundamental aim is to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open; the essential characteristics of Green Belts are their openness and their permanence.

4.9 Paragraphs 147 and 148 set out that inappropriate development in the Green Belt is, by definition harmful and should not be approved except in very special circumstances. Local Authorities should ensure that substantial weight is given to any harm to the Green Belt. Very special circumstances will not exist unless the potential harm to the Green Belt by reason of inappropriateness, and any other harm resulting from the proposal, is clearly outweighed by other considerations.

4.10 Paragraph 149 confirms that a Local Planning Authority should regard the construction of new buildings as inappropriate in the Green Belt. Exceptions to this are:..

c) the extension or alteration of building provided that it does not result in disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original building

g) limited infilling or the partial or complete redevelopment of previously developed land, whether redundant or in continuing use (excluding temporary buildings), which would:

- not have a greater impact on the openness of the Green Belt than the existing development; or

- cause substantial harm to the openness of the Green Belt, where the development would re-use previously developed land and contribute to

meeting an identified affordable housing need within the area of the local planning authority.

- Chapter 14: Meeting the challenge of climate change, flooding and coastal change

4.11 Paragraph 152 confirms the planning system should support the transition to a low carbon future in a changing climate...It should help to....encourage the reuse of existing resources, including the conversion of existing buildings.

- Chapter 16: Conserving and enhancing the historic environment

4.12 Paragraph 197 states Local Authorities should take account of (in determining applications);

- a) the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation;
 - b) the positive contribution that conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities including their economic viability; and
- the desirability of new development to make a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness

4.13 Paragraph 203 confirms the effect of an application on the significance of a non-designated heritage asset should be taken into account in determining the application. In weighing applications that directly or indirectly affect non-designated heritage assets, a balanced judgement will be required having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset.

4.14 The works to partially rebuild the control tower building, while retaining the stair tower conform to the principles as set out in the NPPF. The scheme would reinstate the building, a non designated heritage asset, to its original appearance. The WWII Control Tower is one of the only surviving features of the historic airfield and the proposal would therefore positively contribute to the heritage of the site and Borough and also represent a visual enhancement of the site. The proposal would therefore amount to appropriate development within the Green Belt.

4.15 The Development Plan for Dacorum Borough comprises the Dacorum Borough Council Core Strategy 2016 – 2031 (Adopted 25/09/2013) and Dacorum Borough Local Plan 1991 – 2011 (Adopted 21/04/2004).

4.16 Paragraph 213 states existing policies should not be considered out of date simply because they were adopted prior to the publication of the Framework. Due weight should be given to them according to their degree of consistency with the NPPF.

4.17 Both the Core Strategy and Local Plan pre-date the NPPF, although the following are considered generally consistent.

4.18 The relevant policies are considered in detail against the proposal in the planning assessment below.

4.19 **Dacorum Borough Council Core Strategy 2016 – 2031**

- NP1 – Supporting Development
- CS5 – Green Belt
- CS7 – Rural Area
- CS12 – Quality of Site Design
- CS25 – Landscape Character
- CS27 – Quality of the Historic Environment
- CS29 – Sustainable Design and Construction

4.20 **Dacorum Borough Local Plan 1991 – 2011**

- Policy 34 Other land with established employment generating use
- Policy 111 Height of buildings

4.21 **Emerging Planning Policy**

4.22 Dacorum Borough Council is in the process of preparing a new Local Plan for 2020 – 2038. Once adopted, it will replace the Core Strategy, the saved policies of the Local Plan and the Site Allocations Development Plan Document.

4.23 The Dacorum Local Plan Emerging Strategy for Growth was consulted on between November 2020 and February 2021. This contained the emerging

Bovingdon Delivery Strategy which makes specific reference to the airfield, and states that the plan will support the principle of film and television production on the land subject to the normal Green Belt considerations.

- 4.24 Emerging Policy DM40 provides further information with regard to the airfield and identifies that the airfield has established itself as a location for film and television productions. The supporting text to DM40 identifies the importance of such activities and the contribution it makes to the UK film and television industry and local economy.
- 4.25 The emerging Bovingdon Delivery Strategy, which has gone to for formal consultation, makes specific reference to the airfield, and states that the plan will support the principle of film and television production on the land subject to the normal Green Belt considerations.

Planning Assessment

4.26 Background and Principle

- 4.27 The principle of development has been established in the granting of planning application 20/03194/MFA. This application is submitted pursuant to Condition 7 of planning permission 20/03194/MFA. Condition 7 requires

Within 6 months of the date of this permission, details (in the form of a planning application) of a scheme of works, including a timetable for implementation, to restore the on site control tower to its original (WW2) appearance shall be submitted to the local planning authority.

The scheme of works shall be carried out in accordance with the approved particulars and in line with the timetable for implementation.

Reason: In the interests of enhancing the borough's heritage and to provide, in part, the level of planning gain necessary to justify development in the Green Belt policy terms as part of a 'Very Special Circumstances' case, in accordance with Policies CS27 and CS5 of the Dacorum Core Strategy (2013), and paragraph 148 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

- 4.28 In any event the principle of development is supported by both Green Belt and Heritage policies. Green Belt policy confirms that the partial or complete redevelopment of previously developed land, whether redundant or in continuing use (excluding temporary buildings), which would not have a greater impact on the openness of the Green Belt than the existing development, would amount to appropriate development.
- 4.29 While Heritage policies confirm that heritage 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 for existing and future generations.
- 4.30 The proposal would conserve a heritage asset and also represent the partial redevelopment of a site where there would be no greater impact on the openness than the existing development. The principle of development is thus appropriate in this case.
- 4.31 The key issues are considered to be:
- Impact on the character of the area
 - Heritage Impacts
 - Sustainable Construction

Impact on the character and appearance of the area

- 4.32 Policy CS12 **Quality of Site Design** seeks to protect the character and amenity of the Borough by requiring new development to be of a high quality, which responds to the built and natural environment within its setting.
- 3.41 This is consistent with the NPPF which states that the creation of high-quality buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve (paragraph 130).
- 4.33 Policy CS25 **Landscape Character** seeks to conserve and enhance the natural and historic landscape by assessing proposals for their impact on landscape features to ensure they conserve or improve the prevailing landscape quality, character and condition.

- 4.34 The existing building in an extremely poor state of disrepair. To achieve an appropriate scheme to reinstate the original appearance of the building, historic photographs of the building have been sourced. The proposal has paid careful regard to the original art deco style of the building and sought to reintroduce lost features within the building. The use of crittal windows and rendered elevations further add to the overall style, while the detailed window design, proportions and rhythm all contribute to the overall quality of the development.
- 4.35 The proposed development represents a significant visual enhancement to the appearance of the site and its immediate landscape setting, reinstating a building that positively contributes not only to its immediate context but also to the wider heritage of the Borough.
- 4.36 The proposal would therefore comply with Policies CS12 and CS24 of the Development Plan as the development proposes a high-quality, well-designed scheme which integrates well with the site and would complement its landscape setting.
- 4.37 Heritage Impacts
- 4.38 The NPPF requires Local Authorities in determining applications to i) take account of the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and ii) putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation and the positive contribution that conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities including their economic vitality.
- 4.39 The NPPF also confirms that heritage 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 for existing and future generations.
- 4.40 Policy CS27 states all development will favour the conservation of heritage assets. The integrity, setting and distinctiveness of heritage assets will be protected, conserved and if appropriate enhanced.
- 4.41 In assessing planning application 20/03194/MFA the Council's Conservation and Design Officer provided the following comments in relation to the Control Tower:

The control tower is one of the few surviving elements of the historic airfield which had an impact on Bovingdon and wider national/international events. Therefore we would consider it to be a heritage asset (although note its rather poor condition). If the applicant is needing to provide planning gain/conservation gain the restoration of the tower would be a useful addition to the heritage of the borough...the restoration of the aircraft control tower to its original form would be beneficial to the historic environment of the borough.

- 4.42 The Officer report to Committee concluded that that due to the “limited number of control towers remaining from this era, it is considered that a full and sympathetic restoration of the control tower would result in a positive heritage benefit to the borough.’
- 4.43 It is clear the application will significantly enhance the heritage asset. The building is currently in a very poor state of disrepair, having not been watertight for a number of years.
- 4.44 The scheme has carefully researched the original building to ensure the forwarded proposal reinstates the building to its original appearance, retaining where possible the original structure. The introduction of previously lost building features alongside the use of critical windows set within rendered elevations all contribute to this aim. The resultant appearance will be of a high quality art deco control tower building within the airfield setting.
- 4.45 The proposal will reinstate the original building and in turn enhance the heritage assets of the site and Borough. The proposal will thus be fulfilling a key aim of the reason for the imposition of the planning condition and accord with the Development Plan and National Guidance.
- 4.46 Sustainable Construction
- 4.47 Policy CS29 **Sustainable Design and Construction** which seeks new developments to comply with the highest standards of sustainable design and construction as possible.

- 4.48 The re-building of the much of the ordinal building provides an opportunity for a better outcome in sustainable design and construction terms to be realized. A range of design and construction elements will be incorporated.
- 4.49 A fabric first approach is to be taken to the building design with the building to be highly insulated. Double glazed fenestration will be utilized within the building for increase energy efficiency over the traditional single glazed crittal windows. In order to balance the need for energy efficiency while also maintaining the original character of the building, slimline glazing will be utilized.
- 4.50 An electrically driven heating and cooling system will be installed. Such a system is highly efficient, reduces carbon emissions and is a visually more appropriate solution for the building.
- 4.51 The proposal is considered to be in line with the aspirations of Policy CS29 of the Core Strategy.

5. **SUMMARY**

5.1 This statement has set out the details of the proposal and demonstrated that the reinstatement of the historic WWII Control Tower is acceptable for the following reasons:

- The development will restore a WWII heritage asset;
- The scheme positively contributes to the heritage of the site and Borough;
- The proposal will reinstate the building to its original appearance;
- The proposal constitutes appropriate development in the Green Belt, comprising the partial redevelopment of previously developed land which would not have a greater impact on the openness of the Green Belt than the existing development;
- The proposal will visually enhance the character and appearance of the area
- The proposal accords with the requirements of Condition 7 of permission 20/3194/MFA
- Safe access can be achieved into and out of the site;
- There will be no detrimental impact on the surrounding area;

5.2 Accordingly, we trust the Council will agree with the appropriateness of the application scheme and we look forward to confirmation that the scheme is likely to be viewed favourably by the Council and permission granted.