



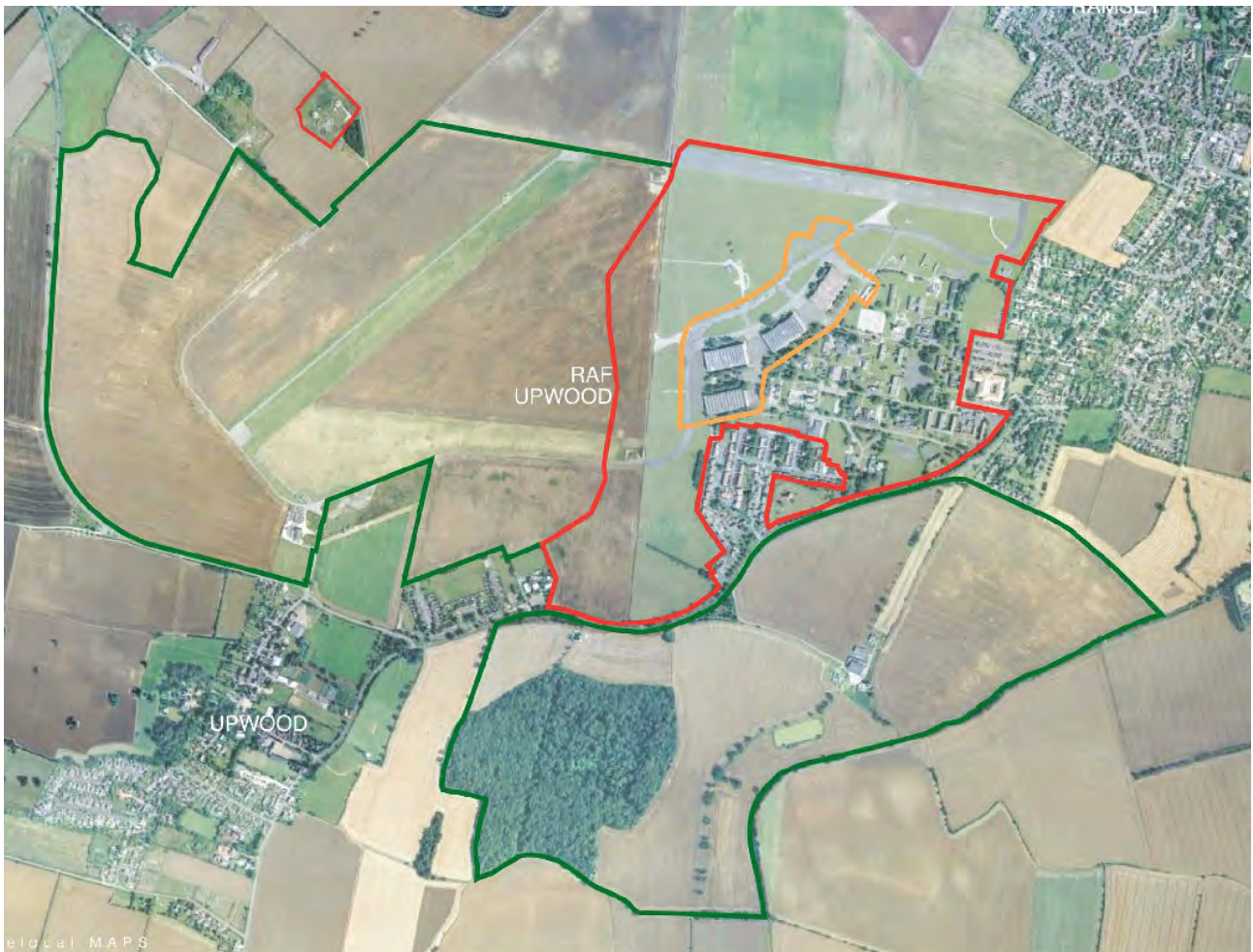
RAF Upwood, Cambridgeshire

Environmental Statement

March 2009

Non-Technical Summary

Omnivale Limited



PREFACE: NON-TECHNICAL SUMMARY

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1. Introduction

- 1.1 This Environmental Statement (ES) has been prepared to accompany an outline planning application on behalf of Omnivale Limited for the mixed use development at the former RAF Upwood airfield, Upwood, Huntingdon, Cambridgeshire (referred to within this ES as RAF Upwood).
- 1.2 This report provides a non-technical summary of the ES. The full ES and supporting information are included within Volumes 1 (Environmental Statement) and 2 (Technical Appendices).

Environmental Impact Assessment

- 1.3 The proposed development falls under Section 10(b) of Schedule 2 of the Regulations. The proposal comprises an urban development project with an area in excess of 0.5ha.
- 1.4 The ES fulfils the requirements of Schedule 4, Part 1 of the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) (England and Wales) Regulations 1999 (as amended) and the Circular and comprises the following information:
- A description of the development, including its nature, size and scale as well as information about the site and its surrounding area;
 - A description of the measures envisaged in order to avoid, reduce and, if possible, remediate significant adverse effects;
 - The data required to identify and assess the main effects which the development is likely to have on the environment.
 - An outline of the main alternatives considered by the applicant and an indication of the main reasons for the chosen set and proposals, taking into account the environmental effects; and
 - An indication of any difficulties encountered and limitations to the assessment.

Structure of the Environmental Statement

- 1.5 The ES comprises three volumes; a Preface, Volume 1 and Volume 2. This report forms the Preface Volume; the Non-Technical Summary.
- 1.6 Volume 1 is the main assessment report relating to various issues identified above, whilst volume 2 comprises the technical appendices containing all the supporting information.
- 1.7 In each Chapter of Volume 1, the assessment of the environmental impacts under each topic is explored in terms of assessment methodology, baseline conditions, the potential impacts of both construction and operation of the completed development, and providing an indication of any mitigation measures required and the effects of such once mitigation measures are in place. This Non-Technical Summary provides a summary of the findings of these chapters and their associated technical appendices.

Further Information

- 1.8 Copies of the ES and Non-Technical Summary are available to view at Huntingdon District Council. Alternatively the Agent will be able to assist and can be contacted as follows:

Miss Katie Anderton / Miss Laura Wallis
BWB Consulting Limited
3 – 4 Kayes Walk
The Lace Market
Nottingham
NG1 1PY

Telephone: 0115 924 1100

Email: katie.anderton@bwb-consulting.com or
laura.wallis@bwb-consulting.com

- 1.9 Additionally, hard copies of the full ES (and accompanying appendices) may be purchased for £450 per copy or £25 per CD ROM from the Agent. Copies of this Non-Technical Summary can also be emailed free of charge or sent on a CD ROM at a charge of £10 also available from the Agent.

2. Development and Planning Policy

The Development Site

Development Location and Setting

- 2.1 The site is located in Cambridgeshire on the edge of the settlement of Ramsey/Bury. Ramsey town centre is approximately 1.5km from the development site to the north east while the centre of Upwood village is located some 600m from the boundary of the application site. The site is situated roughly 10km from the A1(M) which provides good access to Huntingdon and Peterborough.
- 2.2 That part of the site proposed for the main built redevelopment, which constitutes previously developed land within the definition set out in Annex B of Planning Policy Statement 3: Housing, covers approximately 55 hectares, comprising former base technical and barracks areas, together with adjoining residual sections of runway and taxiway (all contained by a perimeter fence), but excludes the four former hangars within the technical area. This area lies to the north and west of Ramsey Road/Upwood Road. The southern and eastern boundaries are defined by the Road, by housing comprising the former residential married quarters previously attached to the base and by a military clinic which remains in operational use. It forms part of a wider area of land owned by Omnivale Limited, which includes: to the west, most of the rest of the former airfield, previously occupied by the former runway, taxiways and perimeter track, which have been reclaimed and remediated to open greenfield agricultural and grassland use (part of which is used by a gliding club); and, to the south, beyond Ramsey Road/Upwood, land comprised in a farm which was never part of the former airfield.
- 2.3 As is clear from the above, historically, most of the site comprised a military airfield constructed substantially immediately before and during the Second World War. The former base technical and barracks area is now vacant, save for the four large hangars which have been disposed of for industrial use. All the other buildings in this area are disused and vacant, many derelict and in disrepair.

Development Proposals

- 2.4 The project will comprise a mixed use residential and commercial redevelopment, implemented in several phases. Thus, outline planning permission will be sought for approximately 650 dwellings, for 10 hectares of employment development and for a neighbourhood centre (containing small scale shopping and community facilities) within the 55 hectare previously-developed area. The land owned by Omnivale to the west and south of this area will be used for the growing of biomass to feed the proposed biomass boiler serving the development, for landscape and ecological mitigation and bio-diversification, and for drainage facilities, including surface water attenuation and foul sewage treatment.

- 2.5 The strategic infrastructure, including principle roads, sewers, drainage, utilities, structural landscaping, bio-diversity measures, major open space, the neighbourhood centre and the renewable energy generation facilities will be implemented by the masterplanner and lead-developer, pursuant to the outline planning permission and site wide approvals of reserved matters. The 650 dwellings, which will include a proportion of affordable housing, together with local access roads, neighbourhood open space (including children's play facilities) and amenity landscaping will be constructed by third party housebuilders (and, in respect of the affordable housing, by a registered social landlord) under discrete approvals of reserved matters. Similarly the 10 hectare employment area will be developed by individual developers under separate approvals or reserved matters.
- 2.6 The development will be designed to meet Code for Sustainable Homes Level 5/BREEAM 'Excellent' but enabled to achieve Code Level 6/BREEAM 'Outstanding' in due course. This outcome will be secured through, amongst other measures, the use of on-site generation of renewable energy (including a district heating system served by a biomass boiler, fed by locally grown [willow] biomass), sustainable urban drainage schemes, extensive recycling of water and other waste materials, and through highly energy efficient buildings.
- 2.7 The proposed development will, through a high quality, comprehensive, integrated, innovative, socially-inclusive, and very sustainable scheme, provide a range of needed housing (including affordable housing), employment and community facilities (including open space), enhancement of the environment and increased bio-diversity, on a previously-developed/brownfield site that is within and well-related to the built-up area of the town of Ramsey/Bury and will also contribute to the regeneration of that Town.

Scoping Opinion and Consultation Process

- 2.8 A Screening Opinion was not sought from the Local Planning Authority (LPA) as the developer intended to provide the Environmental Statement as part of their commitment to providing a sustainable and environmentally sound development.
- 2.9 The site also falls under Section 10(b) of Schedule 2 as it is an urban development project and exceeds 0.5 hectares in size and therefore must be subject to an EIA.
- 2.10 A Scoping Opinion was sought from Huntingdonshire District Council setting the scope of works to be undertaken as part of the EIA and demonstrated within the ES.

Statement of Community Involvement

- 2.11 A first round of exhibitions took place between 2nd and 4th October 2008 at Upwood, Bury and Ramsey.

- 2.12 Due to the success of the first round of exhibitions a second and final exhibition took place on the 29th November 2008 at Upwood Primary School.

Planning Policy

- 2.13 The overall planning policy context for the project is provided by guidance from Central Government in Planning Policy Guidance Notes and Planning Policy Statements and by the provisions of the development plan, comprising, the East of England Plan (the Regional Spatial Strategy for the East of England) and the emerging Huntingdonshire Local Development Framework, including the submitted Core Strategy.
- 2.14 Relevant Central Government Guidance to the project as a whole is set out in Planning Policy Statements: 1 – ‘Delivering Sustainable Development’, and 3 – ‘Housing’; Draft PPS4 – ‘Planning for Sustainable Economic Development’ and PPG13 – ‘Transport’. Other PPSs and PPGs provide relevant guidance on individual aspects and impacts of the development and are cited as necessary in the separate chapters of this Statement.
- 2.15 The relevant provisions of the East of England Plan are policies: SS1 – ‘Achieving Sustainable Development’; SS2 – ‘The Overall Spatial Strategy’; SS4 – ‘Towns and other than Key Centres and Rural Areas’; SS5 – ‘Priority Areas for Regeneration’; H1 – ‘Housing’; and E2 – ‘Provision of Land for Employment’.
- 2.16 The relevant provisions of the Huntingdonshire LDF, Core Strategy are: The Spatial Vision; Objectives of the Core Strategy; Policies: CS1 – ‘Sustainable Development in Huntingdonshire’; CS2 – ‘Strategic Housing Development’; CS3 – ‘Settlement Hierarchy’; and, CS7 – ‘Employment Land’.

3. Assessment Methodology and Alternatives Considered

Baseline Conditions

- 3.1 In order to assess the environmental impacts of the proposed development, a baseline needs to be established. The development site comprises the former RAF Upwood airfield and is therefore a previously developed brownfield site.
- 3.2 There is a need to have regard to the application site and its surrounding area when assessing the baseline conditions. Indeed the sensitivity of the setting of the site, along with the scale of development.

Assessment Matrices

- 3.3 The ES is required to consider the impact in terms of timescales, sensitivity of the receptor, locality, and magnitude of effect. Assessment matrices have been used to establish the environmental impact of each aspect of the development.

Significance	Criteria
Major Adverse	Results in a complete loss of resource or receptor
Moderate Adverse	Results in an impact on resources or loss of part of resource or receptor
Minor Adverse	Results in a impact on resource or receptor
Negligible	Results in an impact on the resource or receptor but not significantly enough to affect its use or integrity
Minor Beneficial	Results in a positive impact on the resource or receptor
Moderate Beneficial	Results in a positive impact on resource or receptor by increasing or improving it
Major Beneficial	Results in a significant positive impact on resource or receptor increasing or improving it substantially

Table 3.1 Significance of Impact

Significance	Criteria
Short Term	Usually considered to be associated with construction effects and can be reversed with mitigation
Medium Term	Usually considered to be associated with construction effects and phasing of construction and can be reversed with mitigation
Long Term	Usually considered to be associated with the operational completed development and can be reversed with mitigation
Permanent	Can be from both construction and completed impacts and is irreversible.

Table 3.2 Temporal Effect of Impact

Significance	Criteria
Local	On the application site or immediate surrounding sites
District	Within Huntingdonshire District Council area
Regional	Within The East of England
Country	Within the UK
International	Further than the UK

Table 3.3 Scale of Impact

- 3.4 The prediction of effects were made for both the construction and completed development phases of the proposed development.

Alternatives Considered

- 3.5 Under the EIA Regulations an ES must consider the alternative scenarios considered for the development proposals.
- 3.6 The development proposals have been developed through the ongoing EIA process and reflect the findings of technical reports. Consideration has been given to the location of various aspects of the development such as citing sensitive receptors away from potential causes of noise, air pollution etc.
- 3.7 Two alternative development scenarios to the Project have been considered for the Site in question:
- A 'do nothing' scenario, with the former RAF Upwood site left wholly undeveloped and unremediated;
 - A scenario based on the Local Development Framework Submitted Core Strategy (hereafter referred to as the Core Strategy Scenario), which assumes the provision of 150 dwellings and hectares of employment land on part of the former RAF Upwood site. (See Core Strategy Masterplan, Appendix 2.B of Volume 2).
- 3.8 The Project, the subject of the Application and this Environmental Statement is based on the exceptional opportunity presented by, the perceived potential and the physical capacity of the former RAF Upwood site itself as a previously developed site within the continuously built-up area of Ramsey/Bury Spatial Planning Area set out in the development plan. Finally, there are no comparable previously-developed sites in the area. Accordingly, no alternative **sites** have been considered in this Environmental Statement.

4. NON-TECHNICAL SUMMARY

Socio – Economic Factors

- 4.1 The former RAF Upwood forms part of the continuous built up area of Ramsey and Bury (hereinafter referred to as “the Town”) which is one of four ‘market towns’ identified in the Submitted Huntingdonshire Local Development Framework Core Strategy 2008.
- 4.2 The proposed development will have a number of general socio-economic effects on the local community and economy. Social and demographic effects such as the age profile of the population and household size and character will inform issues such as house size, house price, affordability and the wider requirements for local services such as education, health and recreational facilities.
- 4.3 Other general economic effects of the proposed development will include the potential labour supply generated by the residential development, their employment needs workplace destination and mode of travel to work; and the range and quality of employment opportunities created within the development itself.
- 4.4 This chapter therefore considers the likely significant socio-economic impacts arising from the Proposed development in the following areas:
- Demography and Social Factors
 - Housing
 - Employment
 - Shopping and Other services
 - Education
 - Healthcare
 - Sport, Leisure Recreation and Assembly
 - Public Safety, Crime and Public Order
- 4.5 The main sources of baseline socio-economic information are: the 2001 Census; The Ramsey Area Partnership Healthcheck Strategy and Action Plan, 2004, the Huntingdonshire Community, Strategy 2004 and various studies undertaken as part of the evidence base for the emerging Local Development Documents.
- 4.6 The proposed development will increase the need and demand for social, community and commercial infrastructure, including schools, health facilities, sports, recreation and leisure facilities and shops. Insofar as the increased demand may exceed the current and planned capacity of this infrastructure mitigation will be required to accommodate the need and demand.
- 4.7 The housing element of the development will also increase the need and demand for employment and, insofar as that demand cannot be met either from existing employers in Ramsey/Bury or from the employment element of

the proposed development itself, there is the potential for out commuting which may be considered unsustainable.

- 4.8 Because the development proposal has been explicitly formulated so as to address, amongst other things, identified socio economic problems in the target area (Ramsey/Bury/Upwood) and includes specific provisions to mitigate any adverse impacts, through the agency of a Planning Obligation, the impacts are found to be predominantly beneficial, or, if potentially adverse, then insignificant or beneficial after mitigation that can be provided for in the Planning Obligation.
- 4.9 Thus, there are no adverse impacts that cannot be mitigated and all these impacts have been anticipated and addressed in the development proposals and the related Planning Obligation. The most significant beneficial impacts are:
- Demographic – in terms of the increased population of Ramsey/Bury and changes to its structure;
 - Housing – in terms of a greater quantity, range and choice of all types of housing and a significant increase in affordable housing;
 - Employment – in terms of a greater quantity, range and choice of employment land and buildings;
 - Shopping – in terms of a larger catchment population for Ramsey Town Centre that will help to underpin the vitality and viability of that Centre.

Sustainability

- 4.10 The proposed development will, through a high quality, comprehensive, integrated, innovative, socially-inclusive, and very sustainable scheme, provide a range of needed housing (including affordable housing), employment and community facilities (including open space), enhancement of the environment and increased bio-diversity, on a previously-developed/brownfield site that is within and well-related to the built-up area of the town of Ramsey/Bury and will also contribute to the regeneration of that Town.
- 4.11 The cornerstones of the sustainability of the development are:
- The contiguous extension of a substantial established community - the market town of Ramsey/Bury - making the most of existing infrastructure and the potential for improvements or extensions to it and of the existing economic and social capital of the Town;
 - The use of a previously developed site and a number of the buildings thereon and making efficient use of this land by developing at the highest density consistent with the context and character of the site;
 - The promotion of an integrated mixed use development comprising housing, employment and key commercial and community services and facilities;
 - The use of on-site renewable and low carbon energy generation technologies and of energy efficient buildings. The development will be designed to meet Code or Sustainable Homes (CSH) Level 5 (but

enabled to meet Code 6 in due course) and to BREEAM 'Excellent' standard (but enabled to meet BREEAM 'Outstanding' in due course).

- Investment in sustainable transport measures, including walking, cycling and public transport. The substantial improvement of the local bus network will, in particular produce a step change in service levels and links with surrounding higher order centres, enhancing the accessibility of Ramsey/Bury as a whole;
- Significant contribution to the regeneration of Ramsey/Bury, increasing its critical mass and viability as a sustainable settlement.

4.12 The Project represents the most sustainable development option for the former RAF Upwood Site and the most sustainable option for securing needed development in the Ramsey Spatial Planning Area as a whole. It presents the only opportunity currently available for securing major improvements in the overall sustainability of the settlement of Ramsey/Bury.

4.13 It therefore constitutes a Moderate to Major Beneficial sustainability impact overall, over all identified time periods, but with some Minor Adverse impacts in the Short/Medium Term.

Highways, Traffic and Transportation

4.14 The potential impacts arising from the proposed improvements to the local highway network and the changes to the conditions for the movement of pedestrian, cyclist and vehicles as a result of the proposed scheme during the construction and operational phases of the development have been assessed using local, regional and national guidance and standards. This has included the production of a Transport Assessment to assess the impact and identify appropriate mitigation measures and a Travel Plan to promote the use sustainable modes of transport.

4.15 The transport chapter of the Environmental Statement has assessed the likely impact of the development in three area, disruption due to construction, impact on pedestrians, cyclists, equestrians and the community and impact on vehicle travellers.

4.16 The assessment of the impact of construction traffic identified that any impacts associated with construction traffic are likely to be insignificant and no mitigation measures are required.

4.17 The impacts on pedestrian, cyclists, equestrians and the community were assessed in terms of journey length, local travel patterns, amenity and severance. The assessment concluded that with the proposed improvements set out in the Transport Assessment, and summarised below, the development would enhance local travel patterns, improve amenity and reduce severance. No further mitigation measures are therefore required.

4.18 The impacts on vehicle travellers were assessed in terms of view from the road and driver stress. The assessment concluded that the view from the road would be good and that drivers would be subject to low levels of stress and therefore no mitigation would be required.

- 4.19 The Transport Assessment has identified the likely person trips generated by the development, including vehicle trips generated during the peak hours, and assessed the impact on the local highway network. Impacts were identified along Ramsey/Upwood Road and at the High Street/Upwood Road junction in Bury. Mitigation measures have been identified to include:
- Significant bus service improvements to provide a stepped change in the service level provision including 30 minute frequency services to Huntingdon and Peterborough.
 - Bus infrastructure improvements including bus stops with real time information.
 - Upgrade the existing footpath along the site frontage to a footway/cycleway and extend it to the Tunkers Lane junction on Ramsey Road. Provide a new footway along the western site of Upwood Road from the Tunkers Lane junction to tie into the existing footway in Bury. Provide a Toucan crossing at the Tunkers Lane junction.
 - Traffic calming including two new roundabouts, traffic speed reduction measures, new gateway feature, and increase driver awareness of the pinch point on High Street.
 - Upgrading the High Street/Upwood Road junction to traffic signals.
- 4.20 A Travel Plan has also been prepared, which sets out the strategy to encourage the use of sustainable modes of transport at the development and also minimise the use of the private car. The Travel Plan includes a number of targets to be achieved in reducing private car travel and the measures to be implemented to achieve the targets. The measures include public transport travel vouchers, cycle parking, car clubs, and a car sharing scheme. The Travel Plan also includes a detailed implementation and monitoring policy so that the successes and failures of the Travel Plan can be identified and where necessary further actions and measures implemented to ensure the targets are achieved.

Noise and Vibration

- 4.21 The potential noise and vibration effects that could arise as a result of the proposed scheme during the construction and operational phases of the development have been assessed using local, regional and national guidance and standards.
- 4.22 Following 24 hour noise monitoring, an assessment of impacts has been completed from road noise onto the proposed residential scheme and from industrial noise. An assessment has also been completed on the suitability of the site for residential use.
- 4.23 The construction noise can be controlled by implementing Best Practicable Means and regulated by adopting a Code of Construction Practice, it is anticipated that there will be at worst a moderate temporary adverse impact on a local scale. It has been identified that certain piling operations may have the potential to be perceptible at residences although it has been suggested that monitoring is carried out using test piles in order to ensure that the

disturbance will be minimised. It is therefore anticipated that there will be a residual temporary slight adverse local impact from construction vibration.

- 4.24 With the proposed acoustic fencing it is considered that there will be a slight adverse permanent residual impact from the increased traffic flowing through the roads in the area. At some locations the impact will be even lower. The noise environment will be acceptable for the inhabitants of the new residential dwellings provided the acoustic design measures are implemented.
- 4.25 Proposed noise limits for the employment units and associated fixed plant have been based on those agreed with the Local Authority. Therefore, any residual effects are predicted to be permanent and minor adverse at worst in nature. The wind turbine has been located away from noise sensitive receptors so as to have only a slight adverse residual impact at worst.
- 4.26 Once plans for the water treatment centre and biomass boiler reach a more advanced stage a separate assessment can be carried out in order to ensure that there is minimal noise impact onto nearby noise sensitive receptors from associated equipment.

Air Quality and Odour

- 4.27 The air quality assessment has considered the impacts of the proposed RAF Upwood development on the local environment. The main impacts from air quality would arise from changes in traffic flows along the local road network and the introduction of a biomass boiler as part of the development.
- 4.28 With the scheme there would be an increase in levels of air pollutants. However, none of the pollutant levels would exceed any of the Air Quality Strategy objectives or EU Limit Value.
- 4.29 There would an increase in the emissions of the greenhouse gas carbon dioxide associated with the increases in road traffic and biomass boiler. However, some of this increase would be offset through willow planting on site and additional timber sources required to supply the biomass boiler.

Geology, Ground Conditions and Land Contamination

- 4.30 The assessment characterises the baseline environmental setting of the application site, assess the identified soil and groundwater contamination at the application site, identify likely contaminant-pathway-receptor relationships and assess these in terms of significance of their potential impact as a result of the proposed development.
- 4.31 Various tasks carried out in the running of the former airbase and the maintenance of the aircraft had the potential to cause soil and groundwater contamination including servicing and refuelling of the aircraft, heating of the buildings onsite, manufacture and testing of weaponry and burning and disposal of associated wastes.

- 4.32 Intrusive investigations carried out between August and October 2008 confirmed ground conditions as various hard-standing surfacing and areas of grass and topsoil overlying some made ground and mostly natural Glacial Till clay.
- 4.33 The closest surface water feature to the site is the Bury Brook, which flows north passing within 500m of the south of the site. Groundwater found at the site tends to be in isolated pockets and does not appear to form a definitive shallow water table and as such any contamination found within the groundwater would be unlikely to move off site.
- 4.34 Hotspots of contamination, relating to metals and hydrocarbon contamination in soils, have been identified at the site, in addition to low-level groundwater contamination within the shallow groundwater at the site.
- 4.35 Gas monitoring is ongoing, but to date indications are that basic gas protection measures may be required for buildings within the development.
- 4.36 A number of possible pollutant linkages have been identified at the site, relating to contamination identified as part of the environmental assessment.
- 4.37 Further to this a Remediation Strategy will be written for the Site detailing remedial works required at the Site and outlining a contingency plan should contamination be found during demolition and Site clearance works.
- 4.38 It is considered that any risks associated with possible pollutant linkages at the Site will be mitigated through capping of the soils at the site, the upgrading of water supply pipes, appropriate foundation construction design and the adoption of appropriate health and safety protocols during redevelopment.
- 4.39 Implementation of remediation measures will have a significant positive impact on the development with respect to the long term protection of human health of future site users.

Water Resources and Flood Risk

- 4.40 A Flood Risk Assessment has been prepared for the former RAF site and this shows that development lies in Flood Zone 1 and therefore not at risk of river flooding.
- 4.41 The existing site is largely hard surfaced and therefore considered brownfield. Surface water runoff from the proposed development will be controlled and will be no greater than at present. The introduction of green open spaces used for biodiversity and amenity will increase the permeable areas on the development site.
- 4.42 The use of sustainable drainage systems (SuDS) will be included in the detailed design of any surface water drainage. At this stage it is proposed that a pond will be used to attenuate surplus water until it is discharged. Swales are also to be included in the site design which will provide a two-stage

treatment train for any surface water runoff. This will improve water quality leaving the site.

- 4.43 There is risk to the water environment during the construction stage from fuel leaks and chemical spillage during the construction works. However, the mitigation measures which will be put into place will mean this risk is considered negligible.
- 4.44 The proposed development is likely to enhance the water environment by the use of SuDS and reducing the rates of surface water leaving the site.

Ecology

- 4.45 The habitats and species present on the site were assessed through a desk based study of publicly available information and a number of ecological and arboricultural surveys undertaken between 1999 and 2008. The assessment has shown that overall the site is of low ecological interest. A bat survey carried out in 2008 has shown that there is a possible bat roost in one of the buildings and that the site is well used by foraging bats. There are no other protected species (e.g. badgers) or habitats (e.g. 'important' hedgerows) present within the boundary.
- 4.46 There are a number of measures proposed to reduce the impacts of the development on ecology, including the clearance of habitats outside of the bird breeding season.
- 4.47 The development also includes the provision of a landscape buffer and ecological enhancements to the north east of the site, which has been designed to augment the ecological value of this area. Where it is considered that there is a reduction in potential habitat for protected species, the proposals ensure that these are compensated for by replacement habitat of equal size or greater quality. Following mitigation and enhancements, overall impacts are considered to be beneficial and of '*minor – moderate*' significance at the local to national level.

Archaeology

- 4.48 Neolithic flintwork, evidence of Iron Age settlement and Roman coins are recorded from the area, and a Danish *burh*, or fortified site, may have been located in the vicinity. Ramsey Abbey was founded in AD 969, and there is early documentary evidence for Bury, Upwood and Wistow and Hepmangrove, a suburb of Ramsey which lay to the west of Bury Brook. Although medieval coins are recorded from within the study site, it is likely that it formed part of the open fields of Ramsey, Upwood, Wistow and Bury during the medieval period.
- 4.49 Cartographic evidence indicates that, in the main, the study site formed part of the settlements' open fields during the post-medieval and early industrial

period. The open fields were enclosed between 1832 and 1853, and the post-enclosure field system survived until RAF Upwood was built in 1935-6.

- 4.50 The results of a geophysical survey conducted on the site do not indicate the presence of extensive archaeological remains although a few undated features have been recorded.
- 4.51 The distribution of recorded remains within the study area indicates that the potential for locating evidence of archaeological remains within the undisturbed parts of the study site is low to medium. However, at this stage, insufficient information is available to adequately characterise any below-ground archaeology which the undisturbed parts of the study site may contain, in terms of its character or importance. It is therefore proposed that further investigation should be carried out within these areas, in the form of a programme of archaeological trial trenching, to identify and if possible characterise any areas of archaeological potential. It is intended that the proposed programme of work will enable the likely importance of any below-ground archaeology to be categorized more accurately than can be the case at present.
- 4.52 It is anticipated that the results of this work will form an Addendum to the Environmental Statement.

Cultural Heritage

- 4.53 Analysis of the built heritage of the proposed development at RAF Upwood has been based on desk-based assessment informed by a variety of authoritative data sources, and supported by targeted on-site visual assessment.
- 4.54 Based on documentary and visual assessment the existing former airfield buildings within the site are considered to be of local to district importance rather than national significance. Therefore it is concluded that the direct impacts resulting from the redevelopment of the can be adequately mitigated by means of systematic recording of buildings on site. Such recording will need to be conducted in advance of commencement of site clearance works to enable all of the buildings and their inter-relationships to be fully understood and recorded before evidence is lost.
- 4.55 Assessment of the built heritage beyond the boundaries of the proposed development site has been based on a combination of desk-based and visual analysis. This analysis has concluded that the development site does not feature in views of or from listed buildings or conservation areas in the neighbouring settlements of Ramsey, Bury Wistow and Upwood. Therefore, although these built heritage features are important they will not be adversely affected by the proposed development. Therefore, it is concluded that the indirect impacts resulting from the redevelopment will result in no significant adverse affect on built heritage features beyond the boundary of the site.

Landscape and Visual Impact

- 4.56 Whilst the airfield comprises a large open landscape, the site is extremely well treed with large scale broadleaf planting dominating the landscape. Many of the trees were planted during the early years of the airfield, but there are more recent plantings which are not yet mature. The majority of the tree cover is in regimented groups and avenues, following roads and footpaths and planted close to buildings. The majority of the trees are non-native species, and some were obviously planted for their fast growth rates and are now over-mature. Disease problems have been noted in some trees and others are unsuitable for their locations close to buildings. However, the majority of the mature trees are in good condition and present no obvious problems for retention.
- 4.57 The assessment of landscape and visual impacts describes the changes in character and quality of the landscape and visual resources resulting from the site development.
- 4.58 The visual impact of the development has been appraised using viewpoints from locations on public roads and public rights of way within 3.5km of the site, and is considered appropriate for the scale of the development and the prevailing topography and land cover.
- 4.59 The consideration of proposed development on visual amenity was initially undertaken. It was identified that there would be views to the site from a considerable distance due to its elevated location and the wide treeless landscape of The Fens. It was evident that topography and woodland would restrict views from the south and that views from the east would be restricted by the urban form of Ramsey. The choice of viewpoints was made to indicate views from public rights of way, public roads and residential properties, however, the views are not totally exclusive. The following key landscape receptors have been considered:
- The landscape character areas;
 - Residential properties in the vicinity of the site; and
 - Roads and PROWs.
- 4.60 The analysis of the viewpoints has been used to inform a mitigation strategy to limit or minimise negative impacts, and to enhance the visual appearance of the landscape.
- 4.61 The Landscape and Visual analysis of the site and surrounding area demonstrates that the development proposal will be well-contained within the existing development pattern of the former RAF Upwood airfield. The viewpoint analysis indicates that the majority of the views into the site are filtered by the existing tree cover, even in winter, and that the residential element is well contained within an already developed area. The employment area will be more prominent but will be seen in the context of the existing development and tree cover, as well as being partially screened by the topography of the site. The most significant views will be from the northern fringe of Upwood village, and from the Fens to the north, but here distance quickly reduces the significance of impact.

- 4.62 The retention of the existing road layout and the majority of the trees on the site will ensure that the residential development has a mature landscape setting and will form linkages through the site to a large open space area at the north end which will retain a small section of the original runway. The historic connection will be retained throughout the site with the retention of key buildings at the site entrance for community purposes. New tree and shrub planting, the establishment of a central open space area, footpath links to Ramsey and Upwood, and making a feature pond in conjunction with the SuDS scheme, will provide further enhancement of the residential setting. The former Squadron Leader's house will be restored as elderly persons' accommodation, set in landscaped grounds, and will form a prominent feature of the site when viewed from Ramsey Road.
- 4.63 The employment area will be concentrated on the south western side of the site in the shallow valley leading from Ramsey Road and in the vicinity of the hangars.
- 4.64 A mixed development site can be developed at RAF Upwood without detrimentally impacting on the character of the landscape or significantly affecting the visual amenity of receptors, and is in accordance with the guidelines of the Huntingdonshire Landscape and Townscape Assessment. Mitigation will take the form of extensive boundary and off-site planting, coupled with extensive tree retention, management and new planting within the site. Ponds and open spaces will also be created as features of interest.

Utilities

- 4.65 The provision of utility services on the proposed development has been assessed due to the change in demand onsite. The assessment identifies the existing services supplying the site and considered their ability to supply the proposed development.
- 4.66 The former RAF Upwood site drained foul sewage to its own sewage treatment works which remains in existence. It is proposed to upgrade and replace the existing sewage treatment works onsite and provide sewage treatment services locally.
- 4.67 It is not consider that any of the services infrastructures will preclude the development proposals following appropriate reinforcement works. The additional services required will not result in any significant environmental impact.

Summary of Impacts, Mitigation and Residual Effects

- 4.68 In summary, other than construction noise which is slightly adverse all other impacts are negligible or beneficial to the existing sight once mitigation has been implemented.