

# **Extracts from Wycombe District Council Position Statement on Housing and Land for Business re RAF Daws Hill/Abbey Barn South (July 2011)**

## **Introduction**

On 18<sup>th</sup> July 2011 the Council's Cabinet agreed a Position Statement on Housing and Land for Business. This included the current position in relation to the RAF Daws Hill and Abbey Barn South sites. Extracts from that Position Statement in relation to those sites are set out below.

## **Extract from the Housing section of the Position Statement**

### RAF Daws Hill/Abbey Barn South

- 1.1 One of the reserve (greenfield) locations in the Core Strategy is the Abbey Barn South area. The Council has been assessing and consulting on whether there is merit in the early release of this site, as part of a more comprehensive development with the adjoining RAF Daws Hill site. RAF Daws Hill is primarily a previously developed site and is no longer an operational military establishment. At the time of writing the site has been marketed and is in the process of being sold to a developer. The principle of a residential led development now of the RAF Daws Hill site is accepted.
- 1.2 Any early release of the Abbey Barn South site would be in advance of when the housing supply situation outlined above indicates a release being required. As such, it is considered that very significant "added value" or additional benefits would have to be demonstrated to justify releasing the Abbey Barn South site in addition to RAF Daws Hill – an overriding case needs to be made out.
- 1.3 The Council's position is that, from the work undertaken to date and the evidence available to it, there is currently not the overriding case to release the Abbey Barn South site alongside the RAF Daws Hill site. Whilst there are some benefits associated with the comprehensive development of both sites, including the potential to create some enhanced community infrastructure in the area such as open space provision for the sites and wider area, and a more comprehensive design solution, there remain significant concerns about the transportation impacts of the larger development in terms of both mitigating the impact of the development itself and demonstrating the wider additional benefits that would justify the early release of the Abbey Barn South site. Unless such very significant benefits can be clearly demonstrated, the Council's preferred approach is to see the development of just the RAF Daws Hill site at this point in time, whilst ensuring that the development of the RAF Daws Hill site is designed and delivered in such a way as to enable the Abbey Barn South site to be developed at some time in the future in a way that fully integrates it with development on the RAF Daws Hill site. The site specific section

of this Position Statement sets out principles for the development of RAF Daws Hill.

### **Extract from the Site Specific section of the Position Statement**

#### **PS8 RAF DAWS HILL (Map 4)**

**This site is proposed for residential led mixed use development. The development will be expected to make provision for the following:**

##### **1. Land use requirements:**

- **Residential development including a good proportion of the dwellings designed to accommodate working at home**
- **A mixed use neighbourhood centre**
- **Provision of a range of other on- and off-site infrastructure and community facilities**

##### **2. Housing Mix**

- **Affordable housing in line with Core Strategy policy CS13 (i.e. at least 30% bedspaces) and Developer Contributions SPD a mix of housing that responds to the needs and aspirations of the local community consisting of a range of dwelling types and sizes in both market and affordable housing, including detached, semi detached, terraced, townhouses and flats. Scope for the provision of extra care elderly persons accommodation**

##### **3. Green Infrastructure and Design**

- **A design, layout and delivery solution that allows for expansion on to the Abbey Barn South site to create an integrated neighbourhood, should the Abbey Barn South site be released. This should include:**
  - **A new street network allowing for multiple connectivity between the RAF Daws Hill and the Abbey Barn South site, with the internal network following the principles of the Manual for Streets and promoting high pedestrian and cycle standards.**
  - **Public transport and quality cycle/walking route allowing penetration of buses well into the site (including to the neighbourhood centre) and capable of extension into the Abbey Barn South site should it be developed. The design and alignment of this route to ensure vehicle speeds are carefully controlled. Dwellings should be a maximum of 250m-400m distance to a bus stop (depending on topography).**
- **Adoption of a landscape-led approach that retains the landscape character of the site by ensuring a strong landscape structure and protection of all significant trees.**
- **Maintain and enhance rights of way network to the surrounding countryside/woodland, including retention of main north/south right of way through the site, and provision of a sensitively designed**

#### **woodland walk (Deangarden Wood)**

- **Neighbourhood green including Local Equipped Area for Play as part of neighbourhood centre**
- **Sensitive treatment of the woodland edges to the site**
- **Provision of open space to a standard of 4.45 hectares per 1,000 population including:**
  - **Outdoor sports provision at a standard of 1.2ha per 1,000 population to be provided in close proximity to the community hall/sports hall**
  - **Play space (children and teens) to a standard of 0.8ha per 1,000 population, including equipped areas**
  - **Allotments – 0.23 ha per 1,000 population**
  - **Park and semi natural greenspace – 1.67 ha per 1,000 population.**
  - **Public informal amenity space – 0.55 ha per 1,000 population.**

#### **4. Community**

- **Provision of a local mixed use neighbourhood centre including small scale local convenience shops and cafes/restaurants appropriate to a local centre, local primary school (1 form entry but with room for expansion to 2 form entry should the Abbey Barn South site be developed) and community/sports hall.**
- **Contribution to a range of off-site community facilities in line with the Developer Contributions SPD, including towards school provision.**

**The provision of open space/sport/recreation facilities referred to in 3. and 4. above to include consideration of retention/adaptation of existing facilities.**

#### **5. Business**

- **At least 6,000 sq m of small scale office and other use class B1 business units as part of the mixed use neighbourhood centre. Up to half of this provision could be provided in the form of live/work units provided that an equivalent amount of business floorspace is provided as the business element of the live/work units.**

#### **6. Other Sustainable Construction and Environmental Factors**

- **EITHER - Modular on-site Combined Heat and Power Plant with distribution system extendable into the Abbey Barn South site if required,**
- **OR connection to a wider Combined Heat and Power network in the wider area to serve the development, extendable to the Abbey Barn South development**

- Sustainable drainage initiatives
- 30% of homes built to Lifetime Homes standards
- Noise and Air Quality – take full account of noise and air quality constraints from the motorway in the design and layout of any development, including provision of all appropriate mitigation measures

## **7. Transport**

- A high quality and frequent (15 minute) bus service and associated infrastructure, including bus priority, linking to the town centre.
- Provision of direct public transport link with bus priority and high quality cycling/walking routes to the planned Handy Cross Hub (High Wycombe Regional Coachway Park and Ride), or if the Handy Cross Hub is not committed then a contribution to the future provision of this link is required.
- Bus priority access onto Daws Hill Lane
- At least two vehicular access points off Daws Hill Lane facilitating links through to the Abbey Barn South site, including suitable control measures to mitigate impact of traffic flows onto the principal road network during peak hours
- Travel Plans – residential travel plan, individual business and school travel plans with targets set in accordance with Buckinghamshire County Council’s developer travel plan guidelines. This should also include proactive targeted promotion of Smarter Choices campaign across all areas of the development, including public transport information, car share, cycling/walking and healthy lifestyle initiatives.
- Relocation of school car drop off facilities for St Bernard’s and St Augustine’s Roman Catholic Schools away from Daws Hill Lane and surrounding streets, together with appropriate parking management measures.
- Provision of new cycle routes, new and improved footways, appropriate road safety and access improvements along Daws Hill Lane connecting to existing infrastructure.
- Provide/enhance footpath/cycleway links to the valley to link with the town centre and east/west cycle route through the woods
- Improvements to the Daws Hill Lane/Marlow Hill junction in accordance with the requirements of the highway authority.

In addition a number of other junctions and routes may be affected and could require improvement. These should be assessed in the transport assessment, and include but are not limited to:

- Marlow Hill/Marlow Road gyratory
- Heath End Road/Abbey Barn Lane junction
- Winchbottom Lane

- Abbey Barn Lane/Kingsmead Road junction
- Abbey Barn Road/London Road junction
- Impact on rural and non-strategic urban routes
- Impact on strategic routes including London Road, Marlow Hill, the edge of the town centre and Handy Cross junction.
- Impact on Junction 3 of the M40

**Appropriate mitigation measures to compensate for the wider impacts of the development not addressed in the measures outlined in this policy, including a contribution to the High Wycombe Transport Strategy.**

### **Phasing**

**Subject to complying with this policy and ensuring timely delivery of infrastructure and facilities the site can come forward for development at the earliest opportunity.**

### **Masterplanning Approach**

**A collaborative Masterplanning approach should be taken to the development of the site. This should include the preparation of a Masterplan/Development Brief at an early stage the pre-application process, as part of the process of working towards a planning application. It should follow the principles given in the guidance “Creating Successful Masterplans” by CABI**

### **Delivery**

- Timing is subject to a satisfactory scheme being brought forward and the appropriate and timely provision of infrastructure, although it is considered that development could take place over a period of approximately 2014 - 19.
- 1.4 The RAF Daws Hill site is no longer an operational defence establishment and is available for development. The site has been marketed and it is understood that the site is in the process of being sold to a developer.
  - 1.5 The policy for the site outlined above provides a framework for proposals to come forward on the RAF Daws Hill site but in a way that allows for development to come forward on the ‘reserve’ Abbey Barn South greenfield site at a later date (should the site be released) such that a larger but fully integrated development is achieved. This means that in bringing forward a development proposal for the RAF Daws Hill site, the design and layout of the scheme will need to take full account

of the potential of the Abbey Barn South site coming forward at a later date. Developers will need to demonstrate how this can happen as part of the Masterplanning approach to the development through the preparation of a wider masterplan for the area. However, they will also need to demonstrate that the delivery of any later development on Abbey Barn South is not prejudiced through the phasing or other detailed constraints placed on the site, and if necessary the Council will use its planning powers to control this.

- 1.6 The scale of development on RAF Daws Hill is one which requires provision on site of all the main infrastructure that is needed to support development including open space/green infrastructure, community and transport infrastructure to ensure a genuinely sustainable development and community is created on the site. This should include an element of mixed use development including business development based around a neighbourhood centre. The scale of development is also such as to facilitate provision of a Combined Heat and Power (CHP) plant on site, or, if available to connect the site up to a wider CHP network. Any CHP plant provided should be designed to allow for a degree of flexibility in terms of fuel sources, for example, biomass fuels require both space for storage and to allow for deliveries.
- 1.7 Earlier consultations have highlighted major concerns about the adequacy of the existing transport infrastructure in the area and the impact that development of the site will have on that infrastructure. The area is poorly served by public transport at present and there are significant highway issues, including congestion on the local and more strategic road network. It is essential that any proposals fully address the transport issues that arise and a package of transport improvements across the range of transport modes is put in place. The policy outlines a number of these but further assessment will also be required through any future transport assessment associated with a planning application for the site to ascertain the full range of improvements that are required.
- 1.8 There are many buildings (including houses) on the site at present. The Council will expect any developer to enter into a dialogue regarding the opportunities for retaining appropriate buildings on the site.
- 1.9 Given the size and significance of this site an extensive pre-application consultation process will be expected to ensure that the local community have a meaningful input into the preparation of proposals for the site. This should be based around a masterplanning approach include the preparation of a development brief/masterplan for the site at an early stage. This public engagement should form part of an agreed process such as a Planning Performance Agreement.