



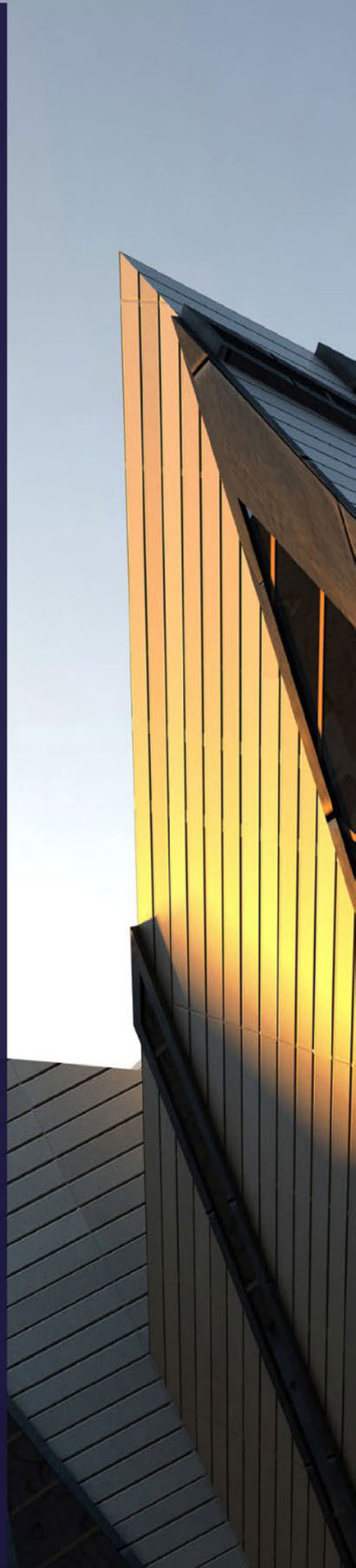
ENGAGEMENT REPORT

Campsfield IRC
Home Office

DEVELOPMENT & PLANNING | BIRMINGHAM

March 2026

Better never settles



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Version	Prepared By	Approved By	Date
Final	[REDACTED] MRTPI	[REDACTED] MRTPI	13 March 2026

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1. Introduction

- 1.1 This Engagement Report has been prepared by Cushman & Wakefield (C&W) on behalf of the Home Office (HO) in support of an Outline Planning Application for the expansion of Campsfield Immigration Removal Centre (IRC) (hereafter the Proposed Development) at Campsfield IRC, Evenlode Crescent, near Kidlington, OX5 1GN (hereafter referred to as the Site).
- 1.2 The report summarises the engagement that has taken place with stakeholders and how the engagement has contributed to the development of the proposals. The HO has undertaken engagement with key stakeholders who have an interest in the site and its existing and future purpose. This report summarises the engagement which has taken place since May 2025, although the HO proposes to maintain engagement with key stakeholders and will continue to do so post submission of the planning proposals and during the lifetime of the development.
- 1.3 The HO also conducted engagement in advance of commencing refurbishment works associated with the re-opening of the IRC, which included a public engagement event in November 2022. The IRC re-opened on 1st December 2025, and this Engagement Report specifically focussed on the engagement conducted by the HO in relation to the proposed expansion of the IRC.
- 1.4 This Engagement Report summarises:
- Engagement that took place in relation to the plans to expand Campsfield IRC from May 2025 including [but not limited to] ██████████ Cherwell District Council (CDC), Oxfordshire County Council (OCC).
 - Ongoing engagement with local statutory stakeholders (May 2025 and ongoing)
 - Engagement on the proposals; and
 - Key issues and themes identified from the engagement activity and the outcomes of the engagement on the proposal.
- 1.5 Accordingly, this report is structured as follows:
- Section 2 provides context for the engagement and background of the project.
 - Section 3 of this report sets out engagement on the Crown Development proposals.
 - Section 4 of this report summarises the outcomes of consultation with stakeholder groups, including technical stakeholders.
 - Section 5 of this report summarises the conclusions of the engagement exercise and outlines the next steps of engagement post submission.
 - Appendix A of this report contains information provided at the public engagement event.
 - Appendix B of this report is the Campsfield IRC Factsheet
- 1.6 The following appendices contain copies of other stakeholder engagement responses:
- Appendix C - Natural England, Crown Premises Fire Safety Inspectorate, Oxfordshire County Council, NHS England, London Oxford Airport, UK Health and Security Agency, Oxfordshire Police, Health and Safety Executive, Crown Estates Commissioners
 - Appendix D – Cherwell District Council

2. Background

- 2.1 The site was originally in use as a youth detention centre, but it reopened as an Immigration Detention Centre in November 1993. The IRC closed in December 2018.
- 2.2 In 2022, the HO announced the reopening of Campsfield IRC and, following refurbishment works, the IRC re-opened in December 2025. It currently has capacity to accommodate up to 160 people.
- 2.3 The HO proposes to expand Campsfield IRC to accommodate an additional 240 people bringing the capacity of the IRC up to 400 people.
- 2.4 The updated facility will offer modern, secure housing for detained men. An Outline Planning Application (OPA) for the new build will follow the Crown Development Route (CDR). This is due to the national importance of the proposals. These proposals are critical to matters of national and border security; hence it is appropriate to seek consent via this route.

3. Engagement on Proposals

3.1 The description of the proposed development below provides details of the proposed scheme which is included in the Planning Statement and was used as a basis for technical assessment.

“Outline Planning Application with all matters reserved (except for access) for the extension of the Campsfield Immigration Removal Centre comprising the erection of Accommodation Blocks, Care and Separation Unit (CASU), Gate House, Visitors’ Reception, Faith Building, Escorts’ Rest Area, re-use of modular buildings, installation of lighting columns, replacement of security fencing and CCTV, Installation of 2m fence along car park boundary. Erection of internal zonal fencing. Use of existing access/egress and creation of internal roads and rearrangement of existing car parking and creation of additional parking for staff and visitors together with associated groundworks and landscaping and demolition of existing structures and installation of roof top solar PV panels.”

Community Engagement Plans

3.2 There is no legal requirement to run a formal consultation as part of the Crown Development process. However, community engagement with a broad range of impacted and/or interested stakeholders is encouraged within the procedural guidance published by the Planning Inspectorate (PINS).

3.3 The objective of the Home Office’s engagement process was to share information relating to the outline planning application with local residents and property and business owners, elected representatives, local authorities and other relevant bodies and technical stakeholders. The events were intended to provide an opportunity for stakeholders to understand the proposals, ask questions and seek clarification directly from Home Office and technical representatives, and to raise any points or concerns for consideration as the proposals were progressed.

3.4 Following feedback from local partners, the decision was made to target the community engagement at those living close to the site and most likely to be affected by the development, with the aim of securing feedback specifically on the planning proposals. Working with the programme’s project team, a catchment area surrounding the Campsfield IRC site was drawn up with a view to inviting feedback from everyone who lived, or owned a property or business, within this area.

3.5 In addition, letters were sent to [REDACTED] Cherwell District Councillors, Oxford City Councillors, Parish Councillors, and technical organisations, to provide details about the engagement event and how they could attend.

3.6 The event was hosted by the Home Office and attended by NHS England officials, as well as the Independent Monitoring Board (IMB) to enable stakeholders to raise any concerns regarding plans. All concerns were recorded and are set out in section four of this report. Some of the key dates associated with the engagement process are listed below for reference.

Community engagement timeline	Activity
8 th August 2025	Engagement event invitation letters sent, via email, to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • [REDACTED] • [REDACTED] • Cherwell District Councillors • Oxford City Councillors • Kidlington Parish Councillors

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thames Valley Police • Oxfordshire Fire
8 th August 2025	Letters posted to properties within the catchment area.
3 rd September 2025	Public Engagement Event held at Exeter Hall, Oxford Road, OX5 1AB.
6 th January 2026	Meeting with [REDACTED]

Table 1 – Key engagement

Technical Stakeholder Engagement

3.7 In May 2025 the HO began a formal engagement process whereby a request for pre-application advice was submitted to MHCLG and CDC. The pre-application submission requested confirmation from both authorities on which stakeholders to engage with during the process of refining and finalising the Outline Planning Application. The HO was advised to engage with the following stakeholders in addition to the LPA (Appendix D), local residents and politicians (see Community Engagement above):

- a. Oxfordshire Fire and Rescue
- b. Oxfordshire (as lead local flood authority, highways authority)
- c. Oxfordshire Integrated Care Board / NHS England
- d. The Control of Major Accident Hazards (“COMAH”) competent authority
- e. The Crown Premises Fire Safety Inspectorate
- f. The Environment Agency¹
- g. The Health and Safety Executive
- h. National Highways²
- i. Historic England³
- j. Natural England
- k. Crown Estates Commissioners
- l. Any designated neighbourhood forum⁴

¹ Pre-application discussions with EA judged not necessary by land and drainage consultants, Curtins, following completion of site assessments.

² Pre-application discussions with Highways Authority clarified engagement with National Highways was not necessary

³ Pre-application discussions with He judged not necessary following completion of heritage and archaeology assessments.

⁴ There is not a designated Neighbourhood Forum within close proximity to the application site. However, the relevant Parish Council's were invited to the engagement event.

- m. Any relevant owners and occupiers of land included in the proposals (Thames Water).
- n. Department for Energy Security and Net Zero
- o. Water and Sewage Undertakers (Thames Water)
- p. London Oxford Airport

3.8 The applicant project team contacted the above stakeholders, where it was judged necessary, as well as the UK Health and Security Agency and Oxfordshire Police and explained the proposed development. Where necessary, formal engagement was undertaken through established pre-application protocols.

3.9 Table 2 below summarises the engagement activity with technical stakeholders and where a response was received.

Table 2 – Technical stakeholders contacted by the HO and Project Team

Technical Stakeholder	Method
Oxfordshire Fire and Rescue	Letter, via email 7 th November 2025. Response: 20 th November 2025
CDC / OCC (Heritage/ Archaeology/ Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA)/ Highways)	Pre-application discussions with Oxfordshire LLFA to agree FRA and Sustainable Drainage Strategy. Response 2 nd February 2026. Pre-application discussions with Oxfordshire Highways authority to agree Transport Assessment and necessary highways improvements. Pre-application discussions with Cherwell District Council (ref: 25/01559/F) received 5 th December 2025.
Oxfordshire Integrated Care Board / NHS England	Fortnightly meetings between HO and NHSE – ongoing consultation to build healthcare requirements within IRC. Letter via email to ICB 7 th November 2025. Response received 12 th November. Follow up meeting on 26 th November 2025.
The Control of Major Accident Hazards (“COMAH”) competent authority	Email 7 th November 2025. Response (by HSE) 12 th November 2025
Crown Premises Fire Safety Inspectorate	Letter, via email 7 th November 2025 Response 20 th November 2025
Environment Agency	Pre-application discussions judged not necessary for Outline Planning Application by Curtins based on outcome of Ground Investigation Report and Drainage Strategy Reports.
Health and Safety Executive	Email 7 th November 2025. Response 12 th November 2025

Historic England	Pre-application discussions judged not necessary due to outcome of Heritage and Archaeology Assessments.
Natural England	Pre-application discussions led by Sweco. Response 16 th October 2025 – [REDACTED]
Crown Estates Commissioners	Letter, via email Response 13 th November 2025.
Thames Valley Police	Email dated 2 nd September 2025 and 7 th November 2025. Response 19 th November 2025
Department for Energy Security and Net Zero	Letter, via email from Home Office Response 16 th December 2025
Water Sewage Undertakers - Thames Water (Drainage / Land Interest)	Letter, via email Developer inquiry made with Thames Water regarding the pumping station relocation (response 4 th February 2026) and the Sustainable Drainage Strategy.
London Oxford Airport	HO Email following LPA Pre-application advice. Response via email dated 4 th February 2026.

4. Outcome of Engagement

- 4.1 There has been productive engagement with a wide range of impacted stakeholders at national and local levels. This report has set out when this has taken place and through what methods. This section sets out key issues that have been identified, the channel of engagement and how the HO have responded.
- 4.2 In terms of response level 52 individuals attended the engagement event on 3rd September 2025. this included:
- 37 residents
 - 10 councillors
 - 3 representatives from Thames Valley Police
 - 1 MP (██████████) and a member of ██████ staff.
- 4.3 In addition to engagement event, responses from organisations were received by the HO following contact and these are summarised below and contained in full within the appendices to this report.

Community Engagement Feedback and Applicant Response

- 4.4 The event was held in a format usual for planning application engagement with several boards with information set out around the Hall and Home Office, and technical staff being present on the day to answer any questions.
- 4.5 The event was held in two sessions. Firstly, time was allocated for councillors and Council members to view the information and speak with the Home Office and wider technical team about any concerns they may have. This has been followed by a session for anyone interested in the proposed development.
- 4.6 During the day, Home Office and technical staff made notes of topics discussed, and a meeting of those attendees took place a week later to discuss the main themes of concern arising from local residents and councillors. The following section reviews the main themes and the Home Office response. Table 3 below groups comments made into key themes.

Table 3 – Engagement Comments by Theme with response below in **bold**:

Access and Highways	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Concerns raised around the new Oxford United football ground nearby, which will result in road closures on match days and potentially affecting day-to-day operation of the IRC. <p>Response</p> <p>Refer to technical response later in this section on highways.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Residents asked about how the proposed shuttle buses would operate at the IRC and where the bus would park. <p>Response</p> <p>A dedicated shuttle service from the train station to the centre was considered during solution development;</p>
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	<p>however, the locality of Campsfield IRC and the proximity of the public bus stop at the end of the road were deemed sufficient to support visitor access.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Residents asked if the ambulance station access (on Evenlode Crescent) would be affected. <p>Response</p> <p>It is not anticipated that the ambulance station access will be affected. The IRC already shares an access with the ambulance station (via Evenlode Crescent), and the access is not proposed to be amended. However, there will be an increase in traffic using Evenlode Crescent.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local resident had concerns about traffic, including access in/out of Evenlode Crescent <p>Response</p> <p>Refer to technical response later in this section on highways</p>
Neighbourly Issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local resident mentioned that contractors for phase 1 are reverse parking on her driveway. <p>Response:</p> <p>The construction process for the proposed expansion of the IRC will be controlled by a Construction Management Plan that will be submitted to the Local Planning Authority for approval. It is anticipated this will be required through a pre-commencement planning condition.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local resident asked for better signage to be provided identifying the IRC from the highway. <p>Response:</p> <p>The Home Office will consider how to ensure adequate signage is provided directing visitors to the IRC. This is a matter of detail that will be addressed within the Reserved Matters Planning Application.</p>
Safety and security	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Questions received regarding the type of resident that will be detained. As well as issues of safety & security (including escapes) and length of detention. Also, if residents, once released from the IRC, would be housed in the local community or dispersed nationally. <p>Response:</p> <p>The centre will house [REDACTED] None will be able to come and go from the centre. They will all be detained.</p> <p>IRC residents could include people leaving prison at the end of their sentence (time-served Foreign National Offenders), immigration offenders awaiting removal from</p>

	<p>the UK and failed asylum seekers. This is the same as the position in our other IRCs.</p> <p>Individuals can be granted bail, by either the Home Office or Court. People who are granted bail will be released to addresses throughout the UK. Some of them will have accommodation and are often released to it. This means there may be some individuals that remain in the local area, although we would not expect numbers to be large given people are likely to have addresses throughout the UK.</p> <p>Security Measures:</p> <p>The centre will be secure; people will be detained under immigration powers and will not be free to leave.</p> <p>Suitable security measures and procedures in place to ensure the site operates safely and securely.</p> <p>Ensuring the security of the local community and those in detention is a key priority.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There were concerns that there were too many people detained at the IRC and for too long. <p>Response:</p> <p>The expanded IRC will accommodate up to 400 people. The proposed development meets the design standards set by the Home Office and will be able to safely and securely accommodate 400 people. Detention for the purpose of removal must only ever be used where there is a realistic prospect of removal within a reasonable timeframe.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Residents asked if security measures at the IRC follow Ministry of Justice standards. <p>Response:</p> <p>The security measures will follow MoJ standards.</p>
<p>Site Operation and Maintenance</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Concerns about the construction associated with the reopening of the IRC including the use of Evenlode Crescent next to the residential dwellings, litter, the maintenance of the existing green space opposite and behind their houses. <p>Response:</p> <p>The construction process for the proposed expansion of the IRC will be controlled by a Construction Management Plan that will be submitted to the Local Planning Authority for approval. It is anticipated this will be required through a pre-commencement planning condition.</p> <p>A Framework Construction Management Plan is submitted with the outline planning application, which shows the</p>

preferred route of the construction traffic will not use Evenlode Crescent.

The green space west of the residential dwelling on Evenlode Crescent is outside of the application area and is not affected by this proposal. An indicative landscape plan shows how land within the application area will be landscaped. The detail of the landscaping and management regime will be determined at Reserved Matters stage.

- There is an external area of the IRC adjacent to Evenlode Crescent (escorting building) – it was noted that some residents can hear people talking in this area, highlighting privacy concerns.

Response:

A Noise Assessment Report is submitted with this outline planning application. The report identifies construction and operational noise generation and recommends appropriate mitigation to ensure the proposed development does not have an unacceptable impact on amenity.

- Concerns around impact on the nearby woodland.

Response:

The nearby woodland does not lie within the application area, and the proposed development will not affect this location.

- Questions received regarding the Mitie contract including profit, paid activity, room sizes, diversity, staffing ratios, healthcare provision, visits provision & minibus.

Response:

The outline application does not seek approval of detailed floor space. However, indicative layout plans are provided to show how the development will operate. Room sizes are in accordance with MoJ standards.

Primary healthcare is to be provided on site.

Social visiting hours are between 14:00 hrs and 21:00 hrs reflecting the current IRC operational hours.

Legal visiting hours are between 09:00 hrs and 21:00hrs.

- The police queried how the use of drones would be handled as it is noted that the area does not permit drones due to the proximity of the airport.

Response:

	<p>The use of drones is not a material planning consideration. We have a drone available and are working closely with Oxford Airport to ensure its use is implemented in full compliance with local regulations and safety requirements. This collaboration will address the restrictions in place due to the airport's proximity and ensure all operations are managed appropriately.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How would comms be handled with police and on site personal (operating provider). • What is the process for reporting incidents to the police. • How much police presence/attendance is required for demonstrations. <p>Response</p> <p>We maintain a strong and proactive relationship with Thames Valley Police, supported by a designated Single Point of Contact (SPOC). Based on historical evidence, demonstrations associated with this site have been peaceful and well-managed, with no incidents requiring significant police intervention.</p> <p>Accordingly, routine police attendance is not required for planned demonstrations. However, the police have attended on occasion to provide reassurance and support when deemed appropriate. This arrangement will continue under the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) agreed with Thames Valley Police, ensuring that any future demonstrations are monitored and managed collaboratively should circumstances change.</p> <p>Our approach prioritises community safety and minimises disruption, while maintaining flexibility to escalate police involvement if risk assessments indicate a need.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local resident mentioned that the pumping station gets blocked and that interdepartmental discussions should take place. <p>Response:</p> <p>The outline application is accompanied by a Drainage Strategy which will inform the detailed drainage plan that will be determined at the Reserved Matters application stage.</p>
Application Process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There was confusion around the Crown Development route process, what it includes and why the Home Office were following it. <p>Response:</p>

	<p>The applicant explained the Crown Development Route process to local residents. The application is accompanied by a Statement of National Significance, which explains why the route has been chosen.</p>
<p>Ongoing Engagement</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There were requests for residents and councillors to be engaged with, and they raised a concern of a lack of any person/contact for them to raise concerns/ask questions. <p>Response:</p> <p>We are committed to maintaining open and transparent communication with the local community. While a dedicated email address for Campsfield has not yet been established, this is currently in development and will be introduced shortly as part of our engagement plan.</p> <p>In the meantime, we continue to engage regularly with the local MP, who provides updates to constituents, ensuring that key information is shared effectively. Additionally, we issue letters to residents on an ad-hoc basis to keep them informed of significant milestones. For example, letters were sent to notify residents when Phase 1 was completed and opened, and further correspondence will be issued to advise them of the Crown Development application submission.</p> <p>This approach ensures that residents and councillors remain informed and have clear routes to raise questions or seek updates, with further enhancements to communication channels planned.</p> <p>The application is accompanied by a Construction Management Plan, which outlines how engagement on the construction process will be managed.</p>

Key Themes

- 4.7 Following the Home Office and technical team discussions with key stakeholders the main themes of concerns are summarised below.

Build and Design

Stakeholder Feedback

- 4.8 Pre-application advice from CDC in relation to design recommends the following design and layout principles:
- Keeping building heights to the minimum necessary for operational needs and airport safeguarding. Adopting a compact layout that remains tightly contained within the existing built envelope.
 - Locating new accommodation to minimise its prominence in views from Langford Lane, Begbroke and the edge of Kidlington.

- Using materials and colours that reduce visual prominence and avoid a harsh, monolithic appearance.
- Providing a robust structural planting and landscape strategy around the site, including woodland belts and hedgerow enhancements, to help screen the complex and reinforce the Green Belt edge.

4.9 London Oxford Airport (LOA) has confirmed there are no issues with the building and subsequent heights. Requested consultation prior to commencing construction, any cranes will need to be reviewed and will require permits. Requested details around the lighting to clarify there will be no distraction to any aircraft arriving or departing, so type of light and angle of the beam.

Response:

- 4.10 The approach to design is set out within the submitted Design and Access Statement.
- 4.11 If any concerns are raised by LOA, the construction process can be managed by an appropriately worded Construction Management Plan prepared in consultation with LOA required by planning condition. Details of lighting can be agreed through consultation with LOA at Reserved Matters Stage.

Sustainability/Environmental

Stakeholder Feedback

LLFA

- 4.12 The LLFA provided a formal pre-application response on 2nd February in relation to the draft Flood Risk Assessment and proposed site drainage strategy. It confirmed that:
- *“The risk of flooding from all sources is shown to be very low, and the LLFA is satisfied that the proposed development meets planning requirements relating to developing in flood risk areas.”*
 - *“With regards to the infiltration drainage strategy as proposed, there is insufficient groundwater level information available. Any application must demonstrate that there is a one metre depth unsaturated zone beneath the base of any infiltration feature. Monitoring of groundwater levels should be undertaken at the locations of proposed infiltration features, and must aim to identify the seasonal peak level.”*

Response:

- 4.13 The applicant is undertaking groundwater monitoring to provide clarification that infiltration is possible and this is the applicants preferred strategy. The submitted Drainage and SuDS Strategy explains how the preferred strategy is compliant with the development Plan and the NPPF. The Strategy explains an alternative option (if necessary) could be to connect into existing drainage infrastructure.

Thames Water

- 4.14 Thames Water confirmed the closest surface water sewer to inform decision making regarding the site drainage strategy.
- 4.15 Thames Water have also responded with an estimate of costs for the relocation of the pumping station.

Highways and Parking

OCC Highways and Response

- 4.16 A pre-application meeting was held with Oxfordshire County Council highway officers in October 2025 to discuss the proposed scheme. The meeting discussed the details around the improved pedestrian footways linking to the site, trip generation, shift patterns, car parking provision and junction modelling requirements. Comments from OCC were taken on board, this included the request to consider introducing a pedestrian crossing on Langford Lane.

IMPACT ON LOCAL SERVICES

Statutory/Technical Partner feedback:

NHS

- 4.17 Following advice from Health and Justice SE, HO have established regular meetings with NHSE to ensure that design development and requirements are aligned and progressing correctly.

Fire

- 4.18 The Crown Premises Fire Safety Inspectorate confirmed no objections or concerns relating to the proposed development and confirmed that observations and goodwill advice intended to support and enhance the project will be considered moving into RIBA stage 3.

Police

- 4.19 Key security considerations include ensuring sensitive details such as CCTV locations, fencing specifications, and operationally sensitive areas are not published on the public portal. Parking arrangements should provide adequate surveillance and lighting, with risk assessments for staff vehicle security. Lighting, landscaping, and CCTV should be integrated to avoid blind spots. Engagement with Thames Valley Police and provision for their operational needs should be considered.

Response

- 4.20 All sensitive information has been removed from the public portal. The applicant will engage with the Designing Out Crime Officer as part of the detailed design process.

OVERALL RESPONSE

- 4.21 The HO has taken a proactive and productive approach to external engagement since the re-opening of Campsfield IRC was announced. Following the completion of the pre-submission stage of engagement activity, the HO is now looking to progress to further stages of communications with key stakeholders, with the aim of ensuring local residents and property/business owners, as well as elected representatives, local authorities and other bodies are kept updated on the progress of development of the Campsfield IRC extension.

5. Conclusion and Next Steps

Conclusions

- 5.1 This Engagement Report has been produced to support the outline planning application for the expansion of Campsfield IRC. The report compiles the engagement that has been undertaken at the time of writing, the stakeholders who have been engaged and the general methods used to engage. The HO identified the key local stakeholders including the local authority, other statutory organisations such as the NHS, Police and Fire Service, elected representatives as well as the residents and property owners in the vicinity of the site. A range of engagement methods have been used including meetings, public events, written updates. This exercise demonstrates the HO's commitment to fulfilling the requirements to undertake diligent enquiries for information needed to make a decision.
- 5.2 The report discusses the key points raised through engagement with local and technical stakeholders. Furthermore, ongoing proactive, regular engagement with all relevant stakeholders is proposed for the duration of the programme, until the planning process is completed and through to construction and service transition and for the lifetime of the development.
- 5.3 The report identifies and summarises the key themes that have emerged from the engagement work. The report explores the themes and how the HO will address them. As noted, this report is to support the preparation of an Outline Planning Application. A Planning Statement is submitted in support of the proposal, and this document draws upon the engagement that has occurred with stakeholders to ensure appropriate controls for commitments made by the HO are secured through planning conditions or limitations.

Next Steps

- 5.4 Following the completion of pre-application stage of engagement activity which related to sharing information regarding the planning proposal for the expansion of Campsfield IRC, the HO is now looking to progress to further stages of communications and engagement with key stakeholders.
- 5.5 The aim of ongoing and future engagement is to keep local residents and property/business owners, elected representatives, local authorities and other statutory bodies and technical engagement partners updated on the progress of development of the Campsfield site.
- 5.6 Subject to any approval and/or planning conditions, further technical discussions with relevant stakeholders will also take place.
- 5.7 Consideration is also being given to engagement with the local community, particularly those living locally close to the site. The HO is looking into how and when to share further updates with them going forward but will want to update as and when plans for the site are further developed and ahead of any construction.

Appendix A - Information provided at the public engagement event.

Home Office

Campsfield Immigration Removal Centre (IRC) Public Event



Welcome to this public event for Campsfield Immigration Removal Centre. This event is being held to provide more information on the Phase 2 new build proposals.

As a part of our planning for the development of this centre, we are talking to local stakeholders including councillors, police, fire and health services as well as members of the local community.


Home Office

The requirement for Campsfield

As part of the Government's plans to tackle illegal immigration, the Home Office is expanding detention facilities, to assist with the removal of those with no right to remain in the UK.

Why this location?

As a previous Immigration Removal Centre, Campsfield offers a suitable opportunity to use and improve existing accommodation, as well as to develop further capacity to provide safe, secure and fit for purpose detained accommodation for men. Site assessments were carried out and took into consideration the location of the site and accessibility of services and utilities.



Background

Campsfield extends to 4.6 hectares. It is accessed via Evenlode Crescent off Longford Lane.

1993 - Formerly, Campsfield House operated as a youth offenders' facility, then became an Immigration Removal Centre in November 1993.

2018 - The Government announced the closure of Campsfield House. It was an old centre and required considerable investment for continued long term use. Its previous operational capacity was for 282 men and inspections found the former site to be safe and well run.

2022 - Present - The Home Office announced plans to open a new 400 bed Immigration Removal Centre on the former site. Phase 1 refurbishment of the existing site is complex and is due to open in 2025.

Home Office


Our Plans

The Home Office is not simply re-opening the former Campsfield House Immigration Removal Centre. We acknowledge that by the time it closed in 2018 it required considerable investment for continued long term use. The planned development will take place in two phases.

- **Campsfield Phase 1 is renovating the existing buildings with an operational capacity of 160 (compared to the 282 in 2018)**
- **Campsfield Phase 2 will be a new build, and the entire redeveloped site will have an operational capacity for approximately 400 adult men.**

When planning this development, the Home Office has taken recommendations made by inspection bodies into account.

When open, it will provide safe, secure and fit for purpose detained accommodation operated in line with the Detention Centre Rules 2001.





Current Construction - Phase 1 Refurbishment

Phase 1 refurbishment work to the existing buildings is complete and did not require planning consent, falling within the scope of permitted development rights.

Work included the replacement of all pre-existing electrical, plumbing, drainage and data services. Additionally, structural repairs, including the replacement of all windows and roofing, have been completed. Solar and heat pumps have been installed.

External Works

- Demolition and/or removal of redundant dilapidated temporary buildings and structures.
- New extensions constructed to match existing upgraded materials.
- Replacement of defective provisions to improve the safety, security, future maintenance and thermal performance of the building.

Internal Works

- Fabric repairs and redecorations and renewal of finishes.
- Replacement of defective provisions including redundant mechanical and electrical services, infrastructure, fixtures, plant and equipment with new energy efficient equipment.



Future Construction - Phase 2 New Build

A new accommodation building (up to 16 metres in height) with associated services for health care, visitors, interview rooms, administration, drivers' rest area, kitchens, and faith rooms (footprint approximately 4,533 square metres).

Other additions include:

- Fencing and external works.
- New entrance gates, gatehouse, vehicle lock, visitors' reception and escorts base.
- Construction of the car parking area, including electric vehicle spaces, cycle shelters and storage for staff and visitors.
- Sustainable drainage.



Security Measures:

- The centre will be secure; people will be detained under immigration powers and will not be free to leave.
- Suitable security measures and procedures in place to ensure the site operates safely and securely.
- Safety and security of the local community is our first priority.

During Construction:

- Jobs for local contractors.
- Use of local supply chains for materials.



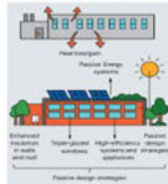
Sustainability - Environment & Climate Change

We will measure our sustainability performance using Building Research Establishment Environmental Assessment Method (BREEAM). This is a sustainability certification method.

It uses 10 different measurement categories such as materials, energy, water, waste, pollution, and more, to rate environmental performance and give it a score. Our target scores are as follows:

- Phase 1 target rating of "Very Good"
- Phase 2 target rating of "Excellent"

Our passive design methods to reduce energy:



- Air source heat pumps
- Improved insulation and air tightness
- High performance windows
- Heat recovery

Key Highlights:

- EPC A rating
- UK's first all-electric IRC
- Improved emissions rates using modern electric heating and LED lighting.
- Carbon savings of 430 tonnes
- 630 cubic metres of asbestos removed so far.



Useful Links



Campsfield Immigration Removal Centre - Factsheet



Detention Centre Rules 2001

Appendix B - Campsfield IRC Factsheet

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/campsfield-immigration-removal-centre-factsheet/campsfield-immigration-removal-centre-factsheet>

Appendix C – Consultee Responses

NATURAL ENGLAND

Letter dated 16th October 2025, Natural England Discretionary Advice Service – [REDACTED]
No comment provided on Habitat Regulation Assessment.

CROWN PREMISES FIRE SAFETY INSPECTORATE / OXFORDSHIRE FIRE AND RESCUE

Response received dated 20th November 2025:

Confirms that the CPFSA have no objections or concerns relating to the proposed project.

OXFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Highways

A pre-application meeting was held with Oxfordshire County Council **highway officers** in October 2025 to discuss the proposed scheme. The meeting discussed the details around the improved pedestrian footways linking to the site, trip generation, shift patterns, car parking provision and junction modelling requirements. Comments from OCC were taken on board, this included the request to consider introducing a pedestrian crossing on Langford Lane.

An email dated 14th November 2025 confirmed an accurate recording of the meeting.

Lead Local Flood Authority

The LLFA provided a formal pre-application response on 2nd February in relation to the draft Flood Risk Assessment and proposed site drainage strategy. It confirmed that:

“The risk of flooding from all sources is shown to be very low, and the LLFA is satisfied that the proposed development meets planning requirements relating to developing in flood risk areas.”

“With regards to the infiltration drainage strategy as proposed, there is insufficient groundwater level information available. Any application must demonstrate that there is a one metre depth unsaturated zone beneath the base of any infiltration feature. Monitoring of groundwater levels should be undertaken at the locations of proposed infiltration features and must aim to identify the seasonal peak level.”

NHS ENGLAND / ICB

Following advice from Health and Justice SE, HO have established regular meetings with NHSE to ensure that design development and requirements are aligned and progressing correctly.

LONDON OXFORD AIRPORT (LOA)

Email dated 4th February 2026.

There are no issues with the building and subsequent heights, however, please consult with us prior to commencing construction, any cranes will need to be put through the software as well, these will require permits. Also, an IFP assessment will be required for cranes, due to their location to the airport.

There is a restriction of No Tower Cranes, so all would have to be Mobile Cranes.

Requested details around the lighting to clarify there will be no distraction to any aircraft arriving or departing, so type of light and angle of the beam.

OXFORDSHIRE POLICE

Response from Designing Out Crime Officer, Oxfordshire Local Command Unit stated:

Key security considerations include ensuring sensitive details such as CCTV locations, fencing specifications, and operationally sensitive areas are not published on the public portal.

Parking arrangements should provide adequate surveillance and lighting, with risk assessments for staff vehicle security. Lighting, landscaping, and CCTV should be integrated to avoid blind spots.

Engagement with Thames Valley Police and provision for their operational needs should be considered.

HEALTH AND SAFETY EXECUTIVE / UK HEALTH AND SECURITY AGENCY / COMAH

Response from HSE Land Use Planning Advice Team confirmed:

Campsfield is outside any HSE consultation zones for hazardous substances or major accident hazard pipelines.

HSE's statutory role does not apply to this development under planning legislation.

Operational health and safety matters will be addressed separately under health and safety law, not through planning consultation.

CROWN ESTATES COMMISSIONERS

Response stated:

There are no Crown Estate ownership interests affected by these proposals, and no further consultation is required.

THAMES WATER

Thames Water confirmed the closest surface water sewer to inform decision making regarding the site drainage strategy. Thames Water have also responded with an estimate of costs for the relocation of the pumping station.

DEPARTMENT FOR ENERGY SECURITY AND NET ZERO

Consultation via telephone and follow up via email on 22nd December 2025. No further response received to email.

Response:

Confirmation that no further statutory consultation is required from DESNZ.

Appendix D – Cherwell District Council

Place and Regeneration

Development Management



Cherwell
DISTRICT COUNCIL
NORTH OXFORDSHIRE



Cherwell District Council



www.cherwell.gov.uk

Please ask for: [REDACTED]

Email: [REDACTED]

Direct Dial:

Our Ref: **25/02050/PREAPP**

5 December 2025

Dear Mr [REDACTED],

Thank you for your pre-application enquiry received 7th August 2025 with regard to a proposed Outline Planning Application for the expansion of the IRC comprising the development of additional accommodation within the existing IRC, the expanded IRC would accommodate an additional 240 people (400 people in total).

I write further to our site meeting on 5th November 2025 attended by [REDACTED] and yourself, apologies again for the time of the visit.

This report provides informal pre-application planning advice on the principle and key issues arising from an outline proposal to expand Campsfield House Immigration Removal Centre (IRC) to accommodate up to 400 detainees.

The advice is based on the information submitted with the pre-application enquiry, the planning history of the site and the current and emerging planning policy framework.

SITE DESCRIPTION

Campsfield House IRC occupies a former young offenders' institution on the southern side of Langford Lane between Kidlington and Begbroke and to the south of London Oxford Airport. The site extends to around 2.5–3 hectares and comprises a cluster of two and three storey institutional buildings, secure yards and ancillary structures within a secure perimeter fence.

The built complex is set back from Langford Lane behind existing vegetation and internal access roads. The wider corridor includes commercial and employment uses, including Oxford Technology Park and airport-related development, but the IRC complex remains a distinct, self-contained and heavily secured facility.

The nearest residential properties lie directly to the north on Evenlode Crescent and within Begbroke. The edge of Begbroke is 150–220 metres from the main buildings, separated by open fields, hedgerows and small woodland belts.

SITE CONSTRAINTS

Key constraints and designations relevant to the site include:

- Oxford Green Belt.
- Best and Most Versatile (BMV) agricultural land (20–60% likelihood and >60% likelihood tiles).
- Indicative location of a limited Green Belt review (Kidlington 1A).

- Proximity to London Oxford Airport and associated safeguarding zones (all development exceeding 15m to be consulted).
- [REDACTED]
- Radon Class 3 area [REDACTED]
- Potential for ground contamination [REDACTED]
- Proximity to designated ecological sites in the wider area, including Rushy Meadows SSSI.
- Flood Zone 1 (low fluvial flood risk), subject to confirmation via FRA.

These constraints drive the need for a robust Green Belt case, careful attention to height and lighting, a sensitive landscape and ecology strategy and proportionate work on ground conditions and drainage.

PROPOSAL

The enquiry relates to an outline proposal to:

- Provide additional accommodation within the existing IRC site to increase capacity by approximately 240 detainees.
- Overall capacity of around 400 [REDACTED] once works are complete.
- Deliver the expansion through one or more new accommodation blocks and associated support space within the existing secure perimeter.
- Reconfigure and upgrade existing buildings as necessary, together with changes to internal circulation, parking and service yards.

The assessment below is based on the submitted drawings that show that the new accommodation would be of three to four storeys, broadly comparable in height to the existing main blocks, and that the secure perimeter would not extend beyond its current limits.

PLANNING HISTORY (SUMMARY)

The site has an extensive planning history as a detention facility. The following are of particular relevance:

- Change of use from young offenders' institution to an immigration detention facility in the early 1990s.
- A series of permissions for additional accommodation, plant and support buildings from the mid-1990s onwards.
- 08/01942/F – Multi-faith education and workshop unit (permission granted but not implemented).
- 12/01762/F, 13/00692/F, 14/00344/F – Single-storey and first-floor extensions to the boiler / plant room building and other minor extensions.
- 14/01778/F – Comprehensive expansion of the IRC, including a substantial two / three storey accommodation block and ancillary development to increase capacity by around 290 [REDACTED] (total capacity circa 566). The officer report concluded that, on balance, very special circumstances existed to justify inappropriate Green Belt development, and recommended approval subject to referral to the Secretary of State, conditions and a section 106 agreement. The application was withdrawn prior to been heard at Planning Committee.

APPRAISAL

Principle of development and Green Belt

The continued use of the site as an IRC is established. The question is whether additional built form and intensified use within the existing perimeter is acceptable in the Green Belt.

The construction of new buildings in the Green Belt is inappropriate development unless it falls within specific exceptions. Additional accommodation blocks for detention purposes do not fall explicitly within those exceptions. The proposal therefore constitutes inappropriate development by definition.

The expansion would also increase the intensity of use and built mass on the site, with associated effects on openness and on the Green Belt purposes of safeguarding the countryside from encroachment and preventing coalescence between Kidlington and Begbroke.

Inappropriate development is, by definition, harmful to the Green Belt. Substantial weight must be given to any harm to the Green Belt, including harm to openness and to the purposes of including land in the Green Belt.

Planning permission may only be granted if very special circumstances (VSC) exist which clearly outweigh the harm to the Green Belt and any other harm. Any future application will therefore need to be accompanied by a detailed Green Belt assessment and VSC statement.

The previous expansion scheme (14/01778/F) was considered by officers, on balance, to be supported by a VSC case at the time, having regard to national need for IRC capacity, strategic locational benefits, estate optimisation and the lack of realistic alternatives. That assessment was undertaken in a different policy and factual context and does not automatically apply but it is likely that similar factors will be in consideration with this revised case.

The current proposal has the potential to be more compact and less visually prominent than the 2014 scheme. A robust VSC case should therefore:

- Explain current national capacity requirements and operational needs.
- Set out options considered, including alternative sites and configurations.
- Demonstrate why Campsfield House is operationally necessary and why this level of expansion is the minimum required.
- Provide a justification for the footprint, height, massing and visual impact.

Officers consider that some further intensification of use within the existing secure perimeter could, in principle, be justified, but this will be heavily dependent on the strength of the VSC case and the extent to which harm to openness is minimised.

Grey Belt

Grey Belt – policy context

Recent national policy updates introduce the concept of “grey belt” as a specific sub-category of land within the Green Belt.

In broad terms, grey belt is Green Belt land which:

- Is previously developed land (PDL), and/or
- Does not make a strong contribution to the main Green Belt purposes of:
 - checking the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas;
 - preventing neighbouring towns from merging; and
 - preserving the setting and special character of historic towns; and
- Is not subject to the most restrictive environmental or heritage designations that would, in any event, strongly limit development.

Government guidance expects local planning authorities to undertake a structured assessment of their Green Belt, identify any parts which meet this grey-belt definition, and then decide how such land should be treated in plan-making and decision-taking.

Where a site is properly identified as grey belt, national policy allows a more flexible approach to development, provided that:

- Development on that land would not fundamentally undermine the overall function of the Green Belt in the wider area;
- There is a demonstrable unmet need for the type of development proposed;
- The site is in a sustainable location; and
- Any additional criteria for the particular type of development (for example, for major housing schemes) are satisfied.

If all of those tests are met, development on grey-belt land may be treated as not inappropriate in Green Belt terms and can be considered in the normal planning balance, without the need to demonstrate very special circumstances.

Identifying grey belt – general approach

The emerging approach to grey belt is that it is a process, not a separate designation on the Policies Map. Authorities are expected to:

1. Divide the Green Belt into sensible assessment parcels.
2. Assess how strongly each parcel contributes to the key Green Belt purposes listed above.
3. Note any environmental or heritage constraints that would already rule out most forms of development.
4. Identify grey-belt parcels as those which do not strongly support the three key purposes and are not heavily constrained by other designations.
5. Consider whether bringing forward those parcels would undermine the function of the Green Belt as a whole in that area.

In practice, this usually means that:

- Heavily developed or degraded parts of the Green Belt (for example, large, long-established institutional or industrial complexes) are more likely to fall within grey belt.
- Open countryside, gaps between settlements and land closely related to historic cores or valued landscapes will continue to be treated as standard Green Belt with the usual high level of protection.

Potential grey-belt status of the Campsfield House site

The pre-application site comprises the established Campsfield House Immigration Removal Centre and its secure compound on Langford Lane. It contains substantial permanent buildings, hardstanding, security infrastructure and fixed services. As such, it is best described as previously developed land within the Green Belt.

The wider context includes London Oxford Airport and other large-scale commercial and institutional uses along the Langford Lane corridor. The site lies within the Green Belt gap between Oxford and Kidlington/Begbroke, and that gap clearly plays an important strategic role in preventing the coalescence of settlements and in controlling the outward growth of the urban area.

Against the grey-belt criteria, the key points are:

- Previously developed land: The Campsfield compound is clearly developed land. The built envelope is compact, long-established and visually associated with other developed land along Langford Lane. This weighs in favour of it being classified as grey belt in due course.
- Contribution to Green Belt purposes:
 - In terms of checking the sprawl of the built-up area and preventing neighbouring settlements from merging, the primary function is performed by the surrounding open land, rather than by the already developed compound itself. The complex reads as a discrete block of development within a wider open gap.
 - The site is not closely related to the historic core of Oxford or to a recognised historic town, so its specific role in preserving historic setting is limited.
 - On that basis, the developed envelope arguably makes only a moderate or limited additional contribution to the key Green Belt purposes when compared with the open fields around it.
- Environmental/heritage constraints: The compound itself is not understood to be subject to the most restrictive designations such as Sites of Special Scientific Interest or designated heritage assets, although there are sensitive ecological sites in the wider area. Detailed ecological assessment would still be required, but such designations do not automatically rule out grey-belt status for the compound.

Taken together, these factors suggest that the built part of the Campsfield site has characteristics which are consistent with grey belt as now understood nationally: it is previously developed, visually contained and part of a wider corridor already influenced by large-scale development.

However, the surrounding undeveloped land within the same Green Belt gap is likely to make a slightly stronger contribution to preventing sprawl and coalescence. This site is heavily bounded by tall fencing and landscape planting and sits within an obvious enclosure. Whilst the open land would remain standard Green Belt, and as such, any proposal that extends materially beyond the established compound into open fields would face a much higher level of policy resistance, the existing characteristics would lead the site to be viewed lower grade Green Belt erring towards Grey Belt.

Assessment

The Campsfield IRC compound is a long-established previously developed parcel within the Green Belt. In principle, that is the type of land which could be considered grey belt through a formal Green Belt review process.

The open land around the compound performs a limited role in maintaining the gap between settlements and in securing the wider Green Belt purposes. That open land is likely to be treated as grey belt with reduced protections.

The Council has not, at this stage, adopted a detailed Green Belt/Grey Belt assessment that expressly identifies the Campsfield site as grey belt. Until that work is complete, the land remains Green Belt in the development plan and the normal Green Belt tests continue to apply.

Grey Belt considerations would nonetheless be a material consideration in decision-making. They can support an argument that intensification within the existing developed envelope is more acceptable in principle than outward expansion into currently open land, provided that the scheme is compact, well designed and supported by clear evidence of need.

In summary, there is a credible planning argument that the established Campsfield compound sits towards the “grey belt” end of the Green Belt spectrum, as does the surrounding open land. Any future application should still engage fully with Green Belt policy, but can reasonably refer to these Grey Belt principles when discussing the modest intensification and expansion of the facility.

Character, appearance and landscape

The site lies within the countryside gap between Kidlington and Begbroke and contributes to the separation of settlements. Policy ESD13 and saved Policy C15 seek to protect this separation and local landscape character.

The existing IRC buildings are visible in some mid-distance views but are relatively well contained by landform, vegetation and other development along Langford Lane. Additional built form will nonetheless introduce further bulk and height into the landscape.

Key design and layout principles should include:

- Keeping building heights to the minimum necessary for operational needs and airport safeguarding.
- Adopting a compact layout that remains tightly contained within the existing built envelope.
- Locating new accommodation to minimise its prominence in views from Langford Lane, Begbroke and the edge of Kidlington.
- Using materials and colours that reduce visual prominence and avoid a harsh, monolithic appearance.
- Providing a robust structural planting and landscape strategy around the site, including woodland belts and hedgerow enhancements, to help screen the complex and reinforce the Green Belt edge.

A landscape and visual appraisal with verified photomontages from agreed viewpoints would be required. Subject to a careful design approach, it is considered that landscape and visual impacts could be reduced to a level that, while still harmful in Green Belt terms, may be acceptable in the overall balance, provided the VSC case, if required, is strong.

Heritage

There are no designated heritage assets on the site itself. However, there are heritage assets in the wider area, including listed buildings and conservation areas within Kidlington and Begbroke.

A proportionate heritage assessment should accompany any future application, considering whether the increased scale and massing of development would have any effect on the significance or setting of nearby heritage assets. On the current understanding of distances and intervisibility, significant direct heritage harm appears unlikely, but this should be confirmed through targeted assessment and visual analysis.

Residential amenity

The nearest residential properties are at a distance where direct impacts in terms of daylight, sunlight and overbearing presence are unlikely to be significant, provided building heights and massing are controlled and the tallest elements are set away from the most sensitive receptors.

The main potential effects on residential amenity relate to:

- Noise from plant, external activity, alarms and traffic.
- Light spill from security and circulation lighting.
- Perception of overlooking and loss of privacy.

A detailed noise assessment and lighting strategy would therefore be needed. These should demonstrate acceptable noise levels at residential locations and minimal obtrusive light at residential boundaries.

Subject to appropriate layout, acoustic design and lighting controls, it is considered that significant adverse effects on residential amenity are unlikely. The perception of intensification will, however, be a matter of local concern and should be carefully addressed in consultation material and design choices.

During pre-application discussions it has been suggested that construction traffic could be routed via Evenlode Crescent (West) to avoid the main secure facility, thereby maintaining security and reducing interaction between construction activities and the operational IRC. However, this would direct HGVs and delivery vehicles past homes on Evenlode Crescent, where residents are already concerned about the impact of the development outside their properties. Any future application will therefore need to explain and justify the proposed construction access strategy, including consideration of alternatives, and demonstrate how adverse effects on local residential amenity will be minimised.

Highway safety, access and parking

The expansion to 400 [REDACTED] will increase staff numbers, visitor trips, service vehicles and potentially contractor movements. Oxfordshire County Council, as Local Highway Authority, will expect a detailed Transport Assessment (TA) and Travel Plan.

The TA should:

- Establish current baseline traffic flows and modal split.
- Assess trip generation for the expanded facility, including peak shift-change periods.
- Consider cumulative impacts with other development on Langford Lane and the wider corridor.
- Assess the capacity and safety of the site access and key junctions.

The Travel Plan should set out measures to encourage sustainable travel by staff and visitors, such as shuttle bus arrangements, cycle parking and facilities, car-sharing and EV charging provision.

A Construction Traffic Management Plan will also be required to manage construction traffic routing, timing and site logistics taking into consideration raised above regarding residential amenity.

Given the existing lawful use and established access arrangements, and subject to appropriate mitigation and travel planning, it is likely that highway impacts could be made acceptable. Highway issues are unlikely to be the determining factor in the overall planning balance.

Flood risk and drainage

The site is understood to lie within Flood Zone 1 (low risk of fluvial flooding). Nonetheless, any increase in built footprint and hardstanding will require a Flood Risk Assessment and detailed surface water drainage strategy.

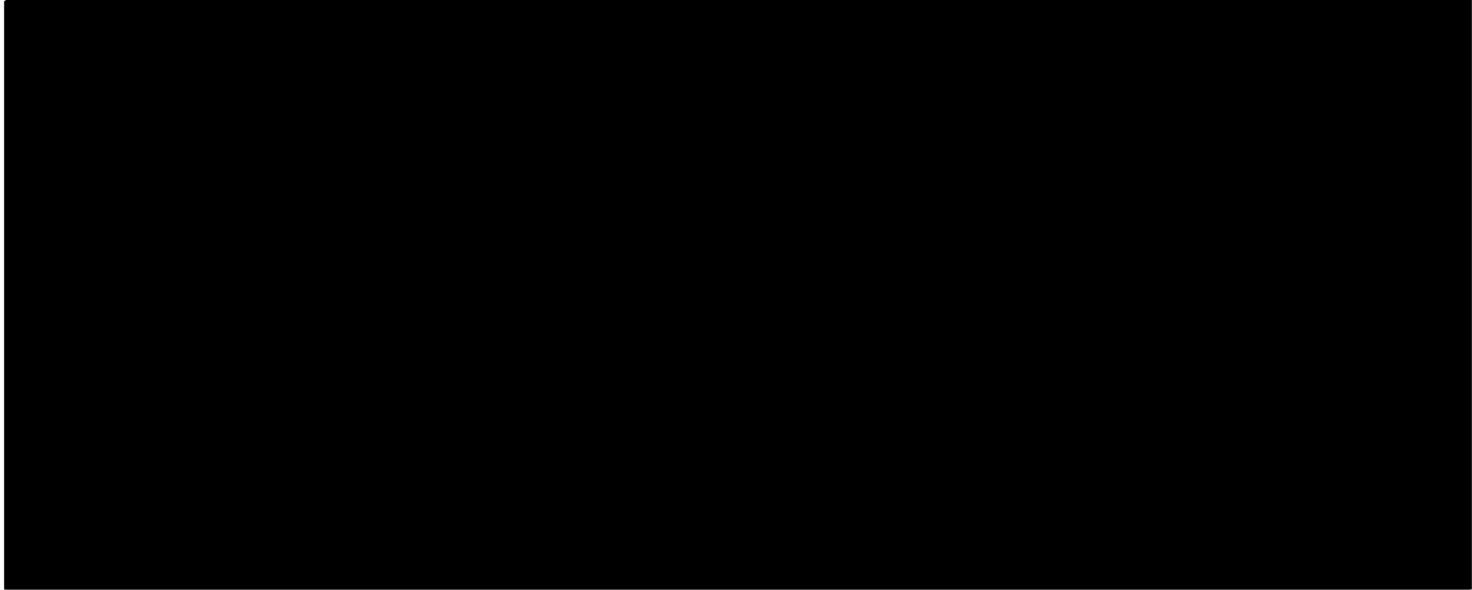
The drainage strategy should:

- Demonstrate that surface water runoff will be managed to greenfield rates or better.
- Incorporate sustainable drainage systems (SuDS) where feasible, such as swales, permeable paving or attenuation features.
- Include long-term management and maintenance arrangements.

Foul drainage capacity and connection arrangements must be agreed with Thames Water. If local networks are close to capacity, an impact study and any necessary reinforcement works are likely to be required.

Drainage matters are considered capable of being addressed through an appropriate strategy and conditions.

Ecology and biodiversity net gain



Airport safeguarding and aviation


The site lies within the safeguarding area for London Oxford Airport. Any increase in building height or the use of tall cranes during construction will require consultation with the airport operator and, where relevant, aviation authorities.

Maximum building heights and crane heights should be defined early and agreed with the airport. A detailed external lighting strategy will also be required to avoid glare or distraction to pilots and to comply with aerodrome safeguarding requirements. A bird hazard management plan may be necessary to balance ecological enhancements with aviation safety. Subject to early and ongoing liaison, airport safeguarding issues are likely to be capable of resolution.

Ground conditions and contamination

Historic institutional use means there is a reasonable prospect of contamination on site. A Phase 1 desk study and Phase 2 intrusive investigation will be required to identify any contaminants and to assess risks to human health and controlled waters.

A remediation strategy and verification plan should be prepared where necessary. An unexpected contamination condition would also be appropriate.

 A UXO risk assessment and appropriate management measures should be in place before intrusive works commence.

These matters are typically dealt with by condition and are unlikely, in themselves, to be determinative.

Sustainable construction and climate change

Policies ESD1–ESD5 seek to secure low-carbon, climate-resilient development, including high standards of sustainable construction and the use of low and zero carbon technologies.

Given the scale and public sector nature of the project, the Council would expect:

- A Sustainability and Energy Statement demonstrating application of the energy hierarchy.
- A BREEAM assessment targeting at least “Very Good”, and preferably higher.

- On-site low and zero carbon technologies, such as heat pumps and photovoltaic panels, where feasible.
- Measures to support climate resilience, including solar control, sustainable drainage and appropriate specification of building fabric.

Strong performance in this area will attract positive weight in the overall balance.

Community engagement and public perceptions

Previous proposals to expand Campsfield House have attracted significant public interest and objection, including concerns about Green Belt policy, traffic, local image and the ethical and social dimensions of immigration detention.

While many of these issues sit outside the strict remit of planning, the level of public concern is a material consideration. Any new application should therefore be supported by:

- Early and transparent community engagement, including with Kidlington and Begbroke Parish Councils and local ward members.
- Clear explanatory material on the scale, nature and rationale of the proposal.
- A Statement of Community Involvement showing how feedback has influenced the design and operation of the scheme.

PLANNING BALANCE AND CONCLUSION

The key policy issue is the impact of the proposal on the Oxford Green Belt. The development would be inappropriate in Green Belt terms and would cause harm to openness and to the purposes of including land in the Green Belt, including the separation of Kidlington and Begbroke. Substantial weight must be given to this harm.

The use of an existing IRC site, the potential to deliver modern and more humane accommodation for an essential service, job creation, ecological enhancements, sustainable construction and other benefits will attract some positive weight. However, these factors, taken together, will only justify planning permission if they are shown to amount to very special circumstances which clearly outweigh the Green Belt harm and any other harm. There is a credible planning argument that the Campsfield compound sits towards the “Grey Belt” end of the Green Belt spectrum.

On the information available, officers consider that:

- The continued use of the site as an IRC is accepted and some further intensification within the existing secure perimeter is capable of being justified in principle.
- Impacts on landscape, character, residential amenity, transport, drainage, ecology and other technical matters appear capable of mitigation, subject to detailed design and robust supporting evidence.
- The decisive issue for any future application would be the strength of the very special circumstances case when set against the Green Belt harm and any residual impacts.

A carefully designed, more compact scheme limited to a total capacity of around 400 [REDACTED], coupled with a clear and evidence-based VSC case, could be capable of support in principle. However, any recommendation would be finely balanced and subject to significant public and political scrutiny.

RECOMMENDATION (PRE-APPLICATION ADVICE)

Subject to the caveats set out above, officers consider that there is a realistic prospect that an outline or full application for an expansion of Campsfield House IRC to around 400 [REDACTED] could be supported in principle, provided that:

- The scheme is demonstrably more compact and less visually intrusive than the 2014 expansion scheme.
- A robust and up-to-date very special circumstances case is submitted, supported by clear operational evidence and an assessment of alternatives.
- The design, landscape, transport, drainage, ecology and sustainability strategies are of a high standard and respond fully to the constraints identified in this report.

SUGGESTED CONDITIONS FOR ANY FUTURE APPLICATION

At pre-application stage, the following headline conditions are likely to be appropriate for any future permission. These would need to be refined, justified and worded in full at application stage and may be supplemented or varied following consultee responses:

1. **Time limit** – Standard commencement period.
2. **Approved plans** – Development to accord with listed plans and documents.
3. **Phasing** (if applicable) – Phasing of construction and occupation, including any temporary arrangements.
4. **Materials and appearance** – Approval of external materials, finishes and colours.
5. **Site and finished floor levels** – Approval of existing and proposed levels and any earthworks or bunding.
6. **Landscaping and boundary treatments** – Detailed hard and soft landscaping scheme and long-term management.
7. **Tree protection** – Arboricultural method statement and protection measures for retained trees and hedgerows.
8. **External lighting** – Lighting strategy to protect amenity, ecology and aviation safety.
9. **Noise** – Noise assessment and mitigation for plant and external activities, with limits at noise-sensitive receptors.
10. **Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP)** – Including working hours, dust, noise, vibration and site management.
11. **Construction Traffic Management Plan (CTMP)** – Construction routing, timing, parking and wheel washing. Access via Evenlode Crescent (West) seems like the preferred route for construction traffic as it minimises risk to safety and security by bypassing the main compound. This option will result in serious impacts upon neighbouring residents though and consideration of timings and essential trips needs to be made.
12. **Highways and parking** – Provision and retention of access, internal roads, parking, servicing and turning areas.
13. **Cycle parking and EV charging** – Provision of secure cycle parking and EV charging infrastructure.
14. **Surface water drainage** – Detailed SuDS-based scheme and maintenance arrangements.
15. **Foul drainage** – Detailed foul drainage strategy and implementation.
16. **Ecology – CEMP (Biodiversity)** – Construction-phase ecological safeguards.
17. **Landscape and Ecological Management Plan (LEMP)** – Long-term management of habitats and planting.
18. **Biodiversity Net Gain** – Implementation of approved BNG plan and any off-site measures.
19. **Contamination** – Site investigation, remediation and verification, plus unexpected contamination.
20. **Unexploded ordnance (UXO)** – UXO risk assessment and management measures.
21. **Airport safeguarding** – Height limits, crane management and lighting in accordance with airport requirements.
22. **Sustainability and BREEAM** – Implementation of approved Sustainability and Energy Strategy and achievement of agreed BREEAM rating.
23. **Security and crime prevention** – Details of perimeter fencing, gates, CCTV and security infrastructure.
24. **Waste and recycling** – Provision and management of refuse and recycling facilities.

This list is indicative. The exact and any additional conditions, and whether they are pre-commencement or pre-occupation, will depend on the detailed design, consultee advice and national guidance on planning conditions at the time of any decision.

DISCUSSION OF CROWN PERMITTED DEVELOPMENT RIGHTS

Works to renovate the existing site have been undertaken in the past year. It was agreed that new perimeter fencing required formal approval and retrospective planning permission (25/01559/F was approved for these works in August. Officers accepted that other minor development on the site complied with the relevant classes of Part 19 of Schedule 2 of the GPDO. Whether the rebuilding of an accommodation block complied with Class A of Part 19 was however questioned by officers. A subsequent legal opinion that you provided has been discussed with the Council's Legal Team. The wording of the legislation is ambiguous and in the absence of any relevant case law, we were unable to come to a

definitive conclusion as to whether the works were permitted development, although it was recognised that there was some merit in the argument put forward by the KC.

Although you may want to consider submitting a certificate of lawfulness (we would consider getting our own legal opinion from a barrister) because the works improved the appearance and functionality of the accommodation block and resulted in a structure of almost identical proportions to the original, it is currently considered unnecessary for the Council to pursue this matter any further.

This advice above is offered without prejudice to the formal determination of any subsequent planning application by the Local Planning Authority and, where applicable, the Secretary of State.

Yours faithfully,



CONSULTATION RESPONSES, CONSTRAINTS AND RELEVANT POLICIES

Consultation Responses:

Oxfordshire County Council – Highways

Overall stance: No explicit objection at pre-app stage; expects a full Transport Assessment and strong emphasis on sustainable travel and mitigation.

Key points:

- Access via Evenlode Crescent East
 - Not expected to be adopted highway.
 - Must provide safe and convenient pedestrian and cycle access on and off the site.
 - Currently no footways on Evenlode Crescent – OCC want new pedestrian facilities along it in the interests of pedestrian safety and sustainable travel. *During Site visit footpath installed and road improved.*
 - Traffic calming may be required because of the straight alignment.
 - Junction with Langford Lane must accommodate the future cycle route along Langford Lane.
- Active travel
 - Site is well connected by existing/planned cycle routes.
 - A new cycle route is planned along the south side of Langford Lane (linked to the adjacent technology park).
 - If this development comes forward before the tech park scheme, the IRC scheme will be expected to deliver the necessary sections of that cycle route to ensure safe access.
- Public transport
 - Bus stops on Langford Lane are within comfortable walking distance.
 - There is currently no safe crossing point between the north and south side bus stops; OCC expects a suitable crossing across Langford Lane (to be delivered under a S278 agreement).
 - Depending on scale and staffing, OCC may seek a contribution towards bus services.
- Parking
 - Covering letter refers to up to 312 parking spaces plus dedicated visitor spaces – OCC wants clarification whether 312 includes or excludes visitor parking.
 - No specific standard for an IRC in OCC guidance; parking should be:
 - Only as much as is operationally necessary (plus reasonable staff provision).

- Justified in the Transport Assessment with reference to expected modal split.
 - Cycle parking should be secure, covered, convenient and provided at a generous level to anticipate increased cycling.
 - EV charging infrastructure expected in line with Oxfordshire's EV Infrastructure Strategy.
- Trip generation / Transport Assessment / Travel Plan
 - A full Transport Assessment is required, covering:
 - Scale of development and staff numbers.
 - Travel modes and shift patterns.
 - Traffic impact on the local highway network and key junctions.
 - A Travel Plan is expected to encourage sustainable modes for staff and visitors.
 - OCC points to its "Decide and Provide" TA guidance and Travel Plan / parking standards as reference documents.

Oxfordshire County Council – Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA)

Overall stance: No bespoke objection; sets out standard expectations for major development.

Key points:

- The development is "major" and must be supported by:
 - A Surface Water Management Strategy using Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS).
 - A site-specific Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) (development area >1ha in Flood Zone 1).
- SuDS must:
 - Manage runoff rates and volumes.
 - Provide water quality, biodiversity and amenity benefits.
 - Follow national Non-Statutory SuDS Standards and OCC's "Local Standards and Guidance for Surface Water Drainage on Major Development in Oxfordshire".
- Expectation that:
 - Existing drainage features and overland flow routes are retained and, where possible, enhanced.
 - The surface water strategy sets parameters for each parcel/phase even at outline stage, with space allowed for shallow conveyance and attenuation features throughout the site.

Oxfordshire County Council – Archaeology

Overall stance: No objection subject to conditions.

Key points:

- The site lies within an area of archaeological interest and potential:
 - Cropmarks c. 550m to the south-east indicate probable late prehistoric settlement (Iron Age pottery found in evaluation).
 - Extensive geophysical survey to the west recorded a possible Roman stone building and features of agricultural activity.
- OCC recommends a staged programme of archaeological investigation secured by condition, including:
 - Pre-commencement approval of an Archaeological Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) by a professional archaeological organisation.
 - Implementation of the agreed WSI and recording of archaeological remains during construction.
 - Post-excavation work and dissemination as appropriate.

Cherwell District Council – Ecology

Overall stance: No objection in principle; flags BNG and survey requirements, and anticipates a mix of on-site and off-site BNG.

Key points:

- Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG)
 - Development will be subject to the statutory Biodiversity Gain

- Condition (pre-commencement).
 - Minimum 10% BNG must be demonstrated.
 - For the future application, the applicant must submit:
 - A Biodiversity Net Gain report.
 - Completed Statutory BNG metric.
 - BNG plans/drawings in UKHab format (to scale) with habitat condition assessments.
 - A management plan showing how habitats will reach their target condition.
- On-site vs off-site provision
 - Officer notes the site is unlikely to have enough space to deliver a full 10% gain on site:
 - Currently vegetated areas will be lost to car parking.
 - The small enhancement area in the north-west is not sufficient alone.
 - Off-site units/credits are therefore likely to be required; applicant should:
 - Explain type and number of units and why off-site is justified.
 - Indicate where off-site units might be sourced.
 - Green roofs/walls are seen as positive and should be maximised.
- Ecological surveys / EclA
 - A full Ecological Impact Assessment (EclA) will be required.
 - The site lies in the amber risk zone for great crested newts – GCN must be fully considered.
 - Good connectivity to woodland, hedgerows and the River Cherwell; bats are a key receptor:
 - A bat-sensitive lighting plan is encouraged early (ILP/BCT GN08/23).
 - Parts of the site are recorded as Possible NERC Act Section 41 Priority Grassland Habitat:
 - Vegetation surveys needed at the correct season to confirm habitat types and conditions.
- Enhancements
 - Expectation for species enhancements such as bat and bird boxes, hibernacula, bee bricks, etc.
 - These should be designed into the scheme and shown on plans.

Cherwell District Council – Environmental Health

Overall stance: No objection in principle; requests targeted technical work at application stage.

Key points:

- Noise
 - A noise impact assessment will be required to show that any new external plant does not adversely affect nearby residents.
 - New plant should be designed so that the rating level is at least 5 dB(A) below the existing background level (LA90) at the nearest noise-sensitive properties.
- Air quality
 - An air quality assessment is not required.
- Contaminated land
 - A formal contaminated land assessment is not required for this proposal based on current information.
- Lighting
 - If new external lighting is proposed, an obtrusive light assessment may be required.
 - Assessment should ensure light spill/trespass at residential properties is acceptable and consistent with ILP GN01/20 – Guidance Notes for the Reduction of Obtrusive Light.
- Odour
 - No concerns; no specific comments.

Cherwell District Council – Building Control

Overall stance: Procedural comment only; not a planning objection.

Key points:

- Government (Crown) buildings are exempt from the procedural requirements of the Building Regulations due to Crown immunity.
- However, the substantive technical requirements of Building Regulations still apply and will need to be met through the design and construction process.

Flood Risk: Please delete or amend as relevant The site is within Flood Zone 1 which is the zone of lowest flood risk. The Environment Agency has produced advice for applicants and agents about assessing flood risk in the planning process, and this can be viewed online at: <https://www.gov.uk/flood-risk-assessment-for-planning-applications>. You should have regard to this advice when preparing your application.

The Environment Agency also offers a pre-application service, details about which are available online at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/planning-advice-environment-agency-standard-terms-and-conditions>

Drainage: Please delete or amend as relevant You need to consider foul and surface water drainage when designing your proposals. In respect of foul drainage, you should first seek to connect to the public sewer network. You can contact Thames Water for further advice about this; information about their pre-application service is available online at: <https://developers.thameswater.co.uk/commercial-building-works/water-supply/disconnections/pre-application-help-and-advice>.

Only if a connection to the public sewer network is not feasible should you then consider other foul drainage options. The Environment Agency would be consulted on any planning application that proposes non-mains foul drainage. If you are proposing non-mains foul drainage, you should submit a completed Foul Drainage Assessment Form with your planning application. This form can be viewed online at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/foul-drainage-assessment-form-fda1>

In respect of surface water drainage, wherever possible surface water should be drained within the site using Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS). Technical Standards for the design, maintenance and operation of SuDS can be viewed online at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/sustainable-drainage-systems-non-statutory-technical-standards>

In some cases the Water Authority may adopt SuDS which meet the legal definition of a sewer. Water UK has published [Design and Construction Guidance](#) which contains details of the water sector's approach to the adoption of SuDS. If you wish to explore the option of the Water Authority adopting SuDS, you will need to ensure the SuDS are designed in accordance with the Guidance.

In addition, you should refer to the guidance published on [Oxfordshire County Council's Flood Toolkit](#) concerning surface water drainage, and in particular the detailed guidance provided in the "Local Standards and Guidance for Surface Water Drainage on Major Development in Oxfordshire".

Relevant Planning History:

The site has an extensive planning history as a detention facility. The following are of particular relevance:

- Change of use from young offenders' institution to an immigration detention facility in the early 1990s.

- A series of permissions for additional accommodation, plant and support buildings from the mid-1990s onwards.
- 08/01942/F – Multi-faith education and workshop unit (permission granted but not implemented).
- 12/01762/F, 13/00692/F, 14/00344/F – Single-storey and first-floor extensions to the boiler / plant room building and other minor extensions.
- 14/01778/F – Comprehensive expansion of the IRC, including a substantial two / three storey accommodation block and ancillary development to increase capacity by around 290 detainees (total capacity circa 566). The officer report concluded that, on balance, very special circumstances existed to justify inappropriate Green Belt development, and recommended approval subject to referral to the Secretary of State, conditions and a section 106 agreement. The application was withdrawn prior to been heard at Planning Committee.

Policy: Planning law requires that applications for planning permission must be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The development plan in Cherwell comprises the Cherwell Local Plan 2011-2031 Part 1, and the saved polices of the Cherwell Local Plan 1996. The policies considered most relevant to your proposal are:

CHERWELL LOCAL PLAN 2011 - 2031 PART 1 (CLP 2015)

- *PSD1 – Presumption in favour of sustainable development.*
- *ESD1–ESD5 – Climate change, sustainable construction and renewable energy.*
- *ESD6, ESD7 – Flood risk and sustainable drainage.*
- *ESD10 – Protection and enhancement of biodiversity and the natural environment.*
- *ESD13 – Local landscape protection and enhancement.*
- *ESD14 – Oxford Green Belt.*
- *ESD15 – The character of the built and historic environment.*
- *SLE4 – Improved transport and connections.*

CHERWELL LOCAL PLAN 1996 SAVED POLICIES (CLP 1996)

- *C15 – Prevention of coalescence of settlements.*
- *C28, C31 – Design, layout and compatibility with residential areas.*
- *ENV1, ENV12 – Pollution control and contaminated land.*

CHERWELL LOCAL PLAN REVIEW 2042

The Council is preparing the Cherwell Local Plan Review 2042. The Proposed Submission Plan carries limited weight at this stage but will, in time, replace elements of the current plan. It contains updated strategic policies on Green Belt, climate change, design and infrastructure which will be relevant context for any future application.

OTHER MATERIAL CONSIDERATIONS

The National Planning Policy Framework (2019) is a material consideration which should be afforded significant weight. Other material considerations include:

- NPPF
- Planning Practice Guidance (PPG)
- Environment Act 2021 provisions on Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG).

You should be aware of the following matters/issues/designations:

- If the Highways Authority need to be involved contact www.highways.gov.uk. Useful link: <http://www.highways.gov.uk/publications/planning-protocols-for-planning-and-development>
- You may need to consider the effect on protected species when developing your proposals. Further information may need to accompany your application including a phase 1 survey to identify habitats present and features likely to be used by protected species and any further detailed survey reports for any individual protected species should these be necessary. In order to assist you in this you should refer to the Standing Advice prepared by Natural England (link below). This 'standing advice' will help in assessing if there is a reasonable likelihood of protected species being present and if so the relevant survey and mitigation requirements. This advice will be a material consideration in the determination of your application.
<http://www.naturalengland.org.uk/ourwork/planningdevelopment/spatialplanning/standingadvice/advice.aspx>

In this case I have considered the standing advice and note that there is a reasonable likelihood of protected species being present within the site due to xxxx I would, therefore, advise you to submit a phase 1 survey/bat and barn owl survey/great crested newt survey. Failure to do so could result in your application being refused as the Council will not be able to properly assess the impact of the development on protected species.



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