

4.10 FUTURE OF THE FORMER GREENHAM COMMON AIRBASE (ECON. 6)

4.10.1 Following extensive public consultation and discussion with the landowner and others having an interest in the land, a Planning Brief for the future of the former Greenham Common Airbase was adopted as Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) by the Council's Development Services Committee on 7th June 1994.

4.10.2 The former Airbase was declared surplus to defence requirements in February 1993 and comprises some 900 acres. In summary, the Brief proposes that most of the land should be restored to heathland grazing, much of which is designated SSSI. However, the former 'technical area Areas E and D3' on the south side of the base is to be used primarily for employment-generating purposes, with some sporting and recreational use. Major office developments will not be acceptable as these are already over-provided for.

4.10.3 Within the former technical area a range of new business, industrial and distribution development, sports and leisure facilities, an enterprise centre and day nursery have been developed. Provision of a site for 3 ha. is also made for a range of waste management purposes, in accordance with the Berkshire Waste Local Plan (1998). However, it is considered appropriate to continue to protect the area concerned, in order to retain employment opportunities in West Berkshire.

The Environment Agency is concerned that comprehensive drainage proposals should form part of any new development on the former airbase because of the potential risks from contaminated land on surface water runoff and water quality. New development will not be permitted unless comprehensive drainage is provided to serve the new development and mitigate potential risks.

4.10.4 The Greenham Common Trust, a local body with the Council as a member, was set up in 1994 to manage the Common "for the benefit of present and future generations." A profit making Management Company has since been set up as part of this Trust, to oversee the development and management of the employment scheme on the Areas E and D3.

POLICY ECON.6 Within the area defined on inset map (1) on the former Greenham Common Airbase and in accordance with the provisions of the adopted planning brief, proposals for industrial, distribution and storage space will be permitted, provided:

- (a) such uses do not impinge upon the agreed space to be made available for sporting and waste processing facilities; and
- b) there is no demonstrable harm to the amenities and features of the surrounding area, especially the nearby SSSI; and
- (c) where relevant, practicable, and necessary, appropriate developer contributions will be sought to improve the infrastructure of the area (sports facilities, highways and transportation infrastructure as identified in Policy TRANS.2 and services) and the restoration of the nearby open areas of the Airbase, for nature conservation and public access purposes; and
- (d) that apart from the enterprise centre proposed by the Council, B1(a) office content will be restricted to no more than 15% of the overall floorspace permitted on the site in addition to that which is ancillary to other business use. Small scale starter industrial units will be encouraged, subject to the above criteria with the exception of (c); and
- (e) provision is made for comprehensive drainage as part of the new development to mitigate potential risks posed by contaminated land.