

## Advanced Reading – Future of military installations

**Read the text and look at the questions that follow it. In this reading comprehension, the questions are multiple choice.**

### Air Base's Future

RAF Heyford airbase - once the heart of allied defence against nuclear attack by the USSR - could become a Cold War 'museum'.

Historians want parts of the base to be preserved as a heritage centre and museum in order to show future generations the U.K.'s struggle against Soviet communism 'in a way no document can'.

Details of the latest recommendations for Heyford - now being called Heyford Park - have been put forward by the English Heritage society which has called for measures to prevent demolition of the 'irreplaceable' historic military installations.

Current thinking comes from a detailed assessment of Cold War infrastructure across England by English Heritage experts. Daniel Ross, the chief executive of the South Westminster Consortium who are to develop part of the site for housing, said the English Heritage's proposals are on point for the future.

He said: "We are quite content with what English Heritage is proposing. It has always been part of our scheme to retain these structures regardless. "We are working with EHS to agree on a consistent plan for the buildings future use."

John Epslin, English Heritage inspector of historic monuments, said many of the Heyford features exemplify historical aspects of national importance considering the Cold War.

"The sheer scale and bare functionality of the structures on the base can illustrate for present and future generations, in a way no document can, the reality of the struggle with Soviet Communism," he said.

"In our view much of this character would be lost by future ill-thought-out change and there stands an opportunity to ensure this does not happen.

"We recognize that preservation of the whole base exactly as it stands today may not be a realistic option but a sustainable future could be found which balances the need for preservation against other needs."

Mr Epslin went on to say English Heritage view was that the base's future layout should include the most significant monuments and should:

- keep the open character of the runway area without planting schemes planned by developers

- keep a section of the main runway and the remainder as a grassed mall
- provide all-weather access to the monuments, preferably by keeping existing base taxiways and perimeter tracks, for visitors or other practical use
- preserve the present landscape balance around the bomb bunkers and quick reaction area.

The English Heritage Society study, submitted to the Planning Inspectorate in advance of the public inquiry into planning wrangles over the base which started at Bodicote House yesterday, has revealed that much of the Heyford landscape prior to becoming an airbase was open common or heathland - a feature Cherwell District Council planners would like re-zone as a local country park.

The council aims to defend the accepted 1,000-home plan which the North Oxfordshire Consortium of developers wishes to extend to over 5,000 homes.

1. Why does English Heritage Society want to preserve the military installation?
  - a. They believe it is still of military importance.
  - b. They think it can show young people something about history.
  - c. There hasn't been proper planning by developers.
2. What do the South Westminster Consortium think?
  - a. They want to build more houses than originally planned
  - b. They say there is some possibility of keeping the base's original buildings.
  - c. They want to call the base "Heyford Park".
3. Which of these proposals does English Heritage Society oppose?
  - a. Planting trees where the runway is currently.
  - b. Making it easy for people to see the important military buildings.
  - c. Not destroying all of the runway.
4. Which would be the best sub-title to the article?
  - a. Fight Against Communism Not Over Yet.
  - b. Historians and Developers Clash Bitterly.
  - c. Fight To Preserve Historical 'Document'.

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## ANSWERS

Question 1 - : They think it can show young people something about history.

Question 2 - They want to build more houses than originally planned.

Question 3 - Planting trees where the runway is currently.

Question 4 - Fight To Preserve Historical 'Document'.