



South Wiltshire Core Strategy

Matter 11

Core policy 9

Old Sarum Airfield

Ref: DJM/SWCS/M11

January 2010

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Question 11.1. Potential Areas for Development. *On what basis were the potential areas for development shown on Map 5 selected. In particular what assessment has been made of the potential effect, positive or negative, that developing these areas would have on the setting of The Old Sarum Airfield Conservation Area, of listed buildings within that area and of the Old Sarum Scheduled Ancient Monument?*

- 1.0 Areas shown on Map 5 were selected, firstly, because they would not prejudice the historic flying activity, at the airfield. The unsevered relationship between the listed hangars and the operational flying field is a unique feature as identified in the English Heritage study, 'Survey of Military Aviation Sites and Structures, Summery Report' by the Thematic Listing Programme, J. Lake 2000 (see evidence base document STU/49).
- 1.1 Secondly they were based on an assessment of the site to establish how the topography could be utilised to introduce carefully screened views both in and out of the site and across the airfield, thereby mitigating the impact of later commercial built interventions. The Old Sarum Conservation Area Appraisal is a detailed assessment of the airfield and its environs, the first step of which was the production of the document, 'Old Sarum Airfield Character Appraisal and Assessment of Eligibility for Conservation Area Designation' August 2006, by Atkins (see evidence base document STU/43). This document clearly indicates (page 32) where there have been instances of intrusion and damage to the special qualities of Old Sarum Airfield. Page 36 of the same document outlines the potential for enhancement, through improved landscaping and restoration of items of original character, through removal of inappropriate fences and such like. This data was drawn on by the landowner who commissioned their own detailed contextual landscape and site appraisal to further inform discussions with the Council. .
- 1.2 Based on such evidence it is the assessment of the Council that carefully designed development has the potential to have a positive effect on the airfield, listed buildings and Old Sarum Scheduled Ancient Monument, through the greatly improved screening of inappropriate views, through careful design and a comprehensive landscape scheme. Also, as outlined at page 36 of the Atkins Study, some interpretative material and managed public access to the site would greatly add to the understanding and appreciation of the airfield and its role in British aviation history.
- 1.3 South Wiltshire Core Strategy Final Sustainability Appraisal July 2009 Appendix IV, page 151-153 indicates a positive outcome for this proposal subject to appropriate mitigation measures.
- 1.4 At the Full Council meeting on 10 November 2009, Wiltshire Council resolved to submit the Core Strategy with the revision, raised initially by the local Councillor, that the area shown on Map 5, to the south of the airfield be deleted. This revision is subject to change highlighted in Schedule SWCS/13B, 'Changes to the South Wiltshire Core Strategy Submission Document'. Councillors expressed a concern over the impact of new residential development in this particular area on the separate identity and the amenity of the residents of the village of Ford. This proposed change has been subject to consultation and Sustainability Appraisal, which concludes it may have a positive effect in that it removes development from a settlement

that is not seen as sustainable in the settlement hierarchy and protects open space.

Question 11.2. Aircraft Noise. *What potential would the development of these sites have to secure some control over the noise of aircraft using the airfield?*

- 2.0 Core Policy 9, seeks to afford the Council some control over the level of flying activity and therefore the noise caused by it, for the first time. This would be by means of a voluntary, but enforceable, Section 106 Agreement that sets out the type and levels of flying activity that would be permitted. The background to this is important.
- 2.1 The Local Authority has been seeking a means of controlling flying activity for many years, to strike a balance between a locally important leisure activity, which acts to preserve the historic use of the airfield, and the amenity of nearby residents. In response to ongoing complaints over the noise the Council has considered a number of measures including:
- Environmental Health regulations
 - Enforcement Action
 - Seek changes to National Legislation.
 - Local Plan Policies
 - Discontinuance Order
 - Voluntary partnerships through the Flying Club Forum.

With the exception of the latter, which has been helpful due to the positive engagement by the Flying Club, the search has been fruitless.

- 2.2 The main issue being that when planning permission was granted for a change of use from military to civilian airfield in 1982, no conditions were imposed to control the use, and hence the owners have unrestricted flying rights. This includes potential night flying and continuous training circuits. While the operator has been responsible, there are occasions when intensification of flying, especially during the summer months, has led to peaks in complaints.
- 2.3 The landowner has expressed a commitment to explore a voluntary Section 106 agreement which sets out the type and levels of flying that will be undertaken. This would allow the Council, for the first time, to have some control over the activities so that it can monitor and enforce if, for example, the activity intensifies in a manner that is outside the agreed parameters and leads to a high level of complaints.