

1. REPORT SUMMARY

An appeal has been launched following committee refusal of Planning Application PL/2023/07368 for:-

Outline application with all matters reserved, except from the means of access to the site for the demolition, modification and renovation of existing buildings, structures and site development. Provision of approximately 15.03ha of residential land accommodating approximately 315 residential dwellings. Provision for mixture of employment, commercial/leisure, and aviation uses on 3.51ha of land at Area B, including a "flying hub" comprising a control tower, heritage centre, visitor centre, café/restaurant, parachute centre, aviation archives and aircraft hangars. Provision of associated access, including construction of new points of vehicular access to surrounding highways network, car parking and connections to surrounding footpath and cycle networks. Green infrastructure provision, including open space, play space, recreational footpaths, cycle paths and landscape enhancement areas; the provision of above and below ground utilities, including a sustainable urban drainage system and waste water treatment works. Associated vegetation removal, ground modification and engineering works.

2. BACKGROUND

The Parish Council were notified of the above application in September 2023. Following extensive public engagement at the Parish Council meetings in both October and November 2023, the Parish Council resolved to object to the application at its meeting in November 2023. The agreed and submitted 'OBJECT WITH REASONS' response is attached ANNEX ONE.

At Wiltshire Councils Strategic Planning Committee, held on 14th August 2024, the committee voted to refuse the application. The refusal notice is attached ANNEX TWO.

On 28th October 2024, the Parish Council were notified that the applicants had submitted an appeal to the Planning Inspectorate. The applicant has submitted several documents to support their appeal, which can be found on the Wiltshire Planning website under [PL/223/07368](#).

3. SUMMARY

Councillors have been asked to consider the appeal. Councillor Barker has drafted the response attached ANNEX THREE.

4. RECOMMENDATION

That the council resolves to OBJECT to the appeal for the reasons set out.

At it's meeting on 20th November 2023, Laverstock and Ford Parish Council resolved to OBJECT to the application on the following grounds-

1. After carrying out a systematic evaluation of local housing needs and a comparison of suitable sites with the potential to address this, Wiltshire Council has deleted the current Core Strategy 25 from the emerging local plan concluding that other sites are more suitable for development and that "the necessary protections for the site are already provided for through national and local planning policy..." Therefore to allow development on this site would undermine the emerging Wiltshire Plan.

2. The existing Wiltshire Council Core Strategy 2 and Policy 1 in the emerging local plan both identify Ford as a small village, only suitable for small scale infill development to meet community needs. However, the proposed development of Old Sarum Airfield, intending to build 155 houses in Ford, flies in the face of these long established policies. It will almost double the size of the village of Ford and significantly erode the distinctive settlement pattern of the parish which is protected through Policy 1 of the Laverstock and Ford Communities Neighbourhood Plan.

3. We have serious concerns over whether the proposal would be effective as an enabling development securing the future of the listed assets in the airfield. There is a lack of clarity as to the ownership of the listed hanger that is the centrepiece of the development and the fact that it has been allowed to fall into its current shocking state of disrepair shows a lack of regard for statutory obligations. The application does not contain a detailed statement of how the site will be operated in the future to maximise the heritage asset and to work in co-operation with other occupiers of the Conservation Area. We note with concern the comments in the English Heritage report and that the best remaining remedy is reinstatement of much of the hanger rather the restoration, limiting any positive heritage impact of this application. If permission was to be granted we would request that a clear timescale for works to the hanger should be set out via planning conditions/s106 agreement with remediation of the hanger roof being required within a year of the granting of planning permission.

4. The continuation of flying activity at the airfield is central to the concept of the development, and in the opinion of the parish council, essential to the preservation of the heritage asset. However, this proposal does not contain any

mechanism to prevent future residents of the 315 new dwellings on the airfield site from making a complaint of noise nuisance which could lead to the prevention of flying activity. Without a legal mechanism to prevent this happening this proposed development poses a long term threat to the heritage asset and the continuation of flying activity which has taken place for over one hundred years on this site. Old Sarum Airfield is one of only three surviving WW1 grass strip airfields of its type in Britain and is not only of local importance but of National importance. It is the most valuable Heritage asset in the Laverstock and Ford Parish and deemed as a Conservation Area. The perimeter of the flying field is largely unchanged. This proposed development would cause irreversible damage to that appearance and character through the substantial development of the three areas of that perimeter.

5. In 2019 an earlier planning application for housing on this site was taken to appeal by the scheme promotor. The Appeal Inspector concluded that harm, to both the airfield conservation area and setting of Old Sarum scheduled monument could not be satisfactorily mitigated under any circumstances. In fact, she concluded that the damage to the Heritage aspect would be so severe, that it alone was enough for her to deny permission. She did not even consider the lesser aspects of the application. The Airfield and Old Sarum are classified as being of National Heritage Significance.

6. The proposed development in areas A and B will lead to increased car use due to the limited facilities available within walking distance. There is a doctor's surgery in Bishopdown Farm but this is more than a 3 mile walk there and back from Area A and involves using a muddy unpaved, unlit, narrow footpath. In practice, residents have to go into the centre of Salisbury to be able to access these services. There is one full time nursery in Longhedge but this would involve approximately a mile walk to reach it. Old Sarum primary school serves both Old Sarum and Longhedge. Since the last planning application was made public transport services in Old Sarum have been reduced by 50%, from a bus every 15 minutes to a bus every 30 minutes and they are unreliable, often running late or not at all. This will increase pressure on already congested local roads, particularly Castle Road into Salisbury. The emerging Wiltshire Plan has taken account of the existing traffic and planned future development. Adding further housing in this area beyond that in the local plan could put unsustainable strain on the local highways.

7. The highways impact of development in area C is even more significant. The Ford Road is already one of the most significant highways concerns in our

parish. Due to the lack of pavements it is frequently used by pedestrians from the village accessing the Country Park and local footpaths, and it is also regularly used by recreational horse riders and cyclists. However it is also a notorious 'rat run' for traffic from the A30 and A36 trying to access the A345; particularly in the evenings and nights excessive speed is frequently a problem, with the highest speed recorded by the Parish's SID being over 80mph in a 30mph zone. The road is also narrow and wider vehicles are unable to pass safely at speed in several places. Adding all of the traffic created by the planned 155 dwellings in area C and the creation of an additional, significantly used junction, would further exacerbate these problems, and due to the character of the road the parish council believes that no effective mitigation is possible. The council believes that Para 8.2.3 of appendix 13.1 of the transport assessment, significantly understates trip rates by not taking account the concentration of schools in the local area producing significant traffic flows prior to the 17.00-18.00 peak used in the report and this document therefore cannot be relied upon.

8. The airfield site currently provides a wildlife corridor, connecting Green Lane to the open landscape beyond the Old Sarum historic monument. We note with concern the issues raised by in the RSPB report about the nature survey methodology and the potential impact on the rare stone curlew population. We believe that development of this site would therefore cause significant harm both the ecology of the site but also the wider area.

In accordance with paragraph 38 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), this planning application has been processed in a proactive way. However, due to technical objections or the proposal's failure to comply with the development plan and/or the NPPF as a matter of principle, the local planning authority has had no alternative other than to refuse planning permission. In pursuance of their powers under the above Act, the Council hereby REFUSE TO GRANT PERMISSION for the development referred to in the above application and plans submitted by you, for the following reason(s):

Refusal Reason(s): (5)

1 The development location would result in a significant increase in vehicular movements on a sub-standard rural road that provides no priority for walking and cycling in a location that is unsustainable in transport terms due to the high levels of car ownership and vehicle use associated with development in this area, and would not make the best use of existing infrastructure through effective design, management and maintenance. The Roman Road (C.278 road) is unsuitable in design terms due to its substandard nature and would result in the route being unsuitable for all road users, particularly sustainable modes, and further increase the risk of harm and perception of safety to vulnerable road users. The increase in vehicle movements on a substandard vehicular route with no dedicated walking or cycling facilities will discourage uptake of sustainable modes in this location. The proposal would therefore have an unacceptable impact on highway safety, and the residual cumulative impacts on the road network would be severe, contrary to the aims of the NPPF paragraphs 109, 115 & 116, the general amenity improvement aims of CP25 at criteria (iv) and (vi), and Wiltshire Core Strategy policies CP60, 61 and 62, and objectives SO3,06, 08, 09, 010, 012, 013, 014, 015, 017 & 018 of the Wiltshire Local Transport Plan, and the Wiltshire Highways Asset Management Policy and strategy in relation to the site.

2 The proposal is located within close proximity to and within the setting of the Old Sarum Scheduled Ancient Monument and its surrounding Conservation Area, and is located within the Conservation Area encompassing the Old Sarum Airfield, which itself contains several listed buildings. The site currently has an open character. The proposal is in outline form, with only access being a detailed matter, and the number of dwellings being approximately 315. Policy CP25 does not specify the number of dwellings or quantum of development. The development in all three areas would be of a significant height and scale, and the Council remain to be convinced that the number of hangar buildings, the uses, and their overall design, proposed for Area B would enhance the operation of the airfield. The development would visually amalgamate as seen from the Old Sarum monument, and from south of the site. The green buffer along the airstrip between Areas B & C would be visually diminished. Thus, the open character of the site

would be significantly reduced and eroded. Consequently, it is considered that the scheme as proposed, which stems from the applicants submitted Master Plan and Conservation Management Plan, would have a significant visual impact, and be likely to cause less than substantial harm, to the character and setting of the surrounding heritage assets, including the historic landscape of the Conservation Area surrounding the Old Sarum Monument, and the airfield Conservation Area itself, which is not outweighed by significant public benefits. The proposal would therefore be contrary to the aims of policy CP25 and CP58 of the Wiltshire Core Strategy, the Laverstock and Ford Neighbourhood Plan and associated Design Guide, and the guidance given in the NPPF, and sections 66 and 72 of Town and Country Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

3 The application scheme suggests the provision of a large area of public open space, including pathways and cycleways, and interpretation information. Whilst these public benefits are welcomed in principle, at the current time, the viability assessment of the application has not yet been concluded. Thus, it is currently unclear what mitigation, and via what mechanism (ie a legal agreement) this mitigation and public benefit is able to be secured, in respect of the on-site provision of affordable housing, or towards mitigating the off-site impacts of the development in terms of educational provision, provision for public art, highway improvements and waste and recycling facilities, and other mitigation. Consequently, and in the absence of a suitable legal agreement to secure such mitigation, it is considered that the scheme would not be able to provide required mitigation or offer significant public benefits, and would not be sustainable development, contrary to the aims of policy 6 of the Wiltshire Waste Core Strategy, policies CP3, CP25, CP43, CP57, and CP61- 64 of the Wiltshire Core Strategy, including saved policy D8 and R2, and the guidance given in the NPPF regarding planning obligations and the provision of sustainable development which mitigates its impacts.

4 Proposed Area C is located close to an active public firing range. There is currently conflicting information related to the intensity of use and operation of that firing range from the applicant and a third party. In the absence of further clarifying information from the applicant, it is considered that the proposal would be likely to result in noise impacts on some of the planned Area C dwellings to the south. On this basis, the proposal would be contrary to the aims of policy CP57 of the Wiltshire Core Strategy, and amenity and noise guidance in the NPPG.

5 The application is for a development of 315 dwellings in an area which has the potential to increase traffic within the Salisbury London Road Air Quality Management Area (AQMA). The air quality report confirms significant increases in nitrogen dioxide at the Salisbury London Road AQMA. According to the Council's draft Air Quality Management SPD, the site would be classed as a 'Type 3' site and therefore additional documentation is required from the applicant. In the absence of such additional

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LAVERSTOCK AND FORD PARISH COUNCIL

Author: Trudi Deane Date: 16th November 2024

evidence, the Council must conclude that the scheme would have an unacceptable impact on air quality, contrary to the aims of policy CP55 of the Wiltshire Core Strategy, and related guidance in the NPPF and NPPG

ANNEX THREE

PL/2023/07368

Site Address

Land At Old Sarum Airfield, Old Sarum, Salisbury, Wilts, SP4 6DZ

Having extensively perused all the documents associated with **PL/2023/07368**

Site Address

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It appears that there are not really any significant changes to the original application. Whilst the applicant seeks to mitigate the Heritage, Increased traffic, and Conservation aspects of the application, these have not been adequately addressed and the Parish Council continue to believe that the harm done to the Airfield, Village of Ford and the Conservation area would far outweigh any benefits. In addition, given the total absence of any Doctors, Dentists, and Pharmacists etc., in the Old Sarum, Longhedge and Ford catchment area, to further increase the population without adequate provision of these services, would be senseless. It will only contribute to the already heavily congested roads in Salisbury. Air quality, because of the increased, and at times stationary traffic around the city, would be compromised.

Despite what the applicant would have us believe, further houses in Old Sarum and Ford are neither wanted nor needed. The emerging Local Plan has already identified sites for future development in this Parish if it is required. The Local Plan has also recognised that Core policy 25 is flawed and it has been removed from the Local Plan. This has been done to protect the Conservation area and the Heritage aspect of the historic airfield.

Given the many refusals successive applications from this applicant have generated, his appeal to the latest refusal, shows a blatant disregard for the Public Purse and Council Finances.

Given the collapsed state of the Grade 2 Listed, Hanger 3, due to years of neglect, one might also question his ability, and desire, to adequately care for this Nationally important Heritage Site.

Laverstock and Ford Parish Council continue to oppose this application.