

**Minute 83(a) 15/04004/OUT: Old Sarum Airfield Limited, Lancaster Road , Old Sarum, Salisbury, Wiltshire, SP4 6DZ**

**Reasons Committee would have been minded to refuse the application for**

1. The proposal envisages a total of up to 462 dwellings, 302 on Area A which will utilise access points with the Portway, and 160 dwellings in Area C, utilising a new access onto the "C" Class Roman Road, as well as the additional facilities in Area B. Traffic calming measures and road improvements are suggested along the Roman Road adjacent Area C.

In relation solely to highway matters, the development of Areas A & B are considered to be acceptable subject to the enhancement of the local bus services. However, Area C, would have a vehicular access onto Ford Road, which is a relatively narrow rural lane which serves the local community and a degree of non-access through traffic. The lane has no footways to provide for safe pedestrian movement between upper and lower Ford areas, or to facilities in Castle Road and beyond; a greater intensity of conflict between increased vehicular and pedestrian and cycle movements on this road would present a higher and unacceptable safety risk.

Local bus services convenient to the site are very limited; this, together with the potential perceived threats to local pedestrian and cycle movement on Ford Road demonstrates the site does not have adequate sustainable transport facilities to provide a real or acceptable choice to future residents. The width of Ford Road is generally narrower than would be required within the development site; the resultant increase in traffic movements on the road will add an unacceptable level of conflict and inconvenience to existing users.

Whilst the applicant has agreed in principle to a financial contribution related to a scheme of highway improvements along the Roman Road, it is unclear whether this will mitigate against all highway impacts including improving the local bus services.

Given current outstanding viability issues, such mitigation may not be forthcoming. Furthermore, at the time of writing, no formal S106 exists which would secure this mitigation. Consequently, in the absence of such a legal agreement which secures the required mitigation, the Local Planning Authority must assert that the scheme as proposed would be likely to have a significant adverse impact on the wider highway system

The proposal would therefore be contrary to the aims of the Local Transport Plan, and adopted policies CP60-64 and CP3 of the Wiltshire Core Strategy, as well as the guidance within the NPPF.

2. Notwithstanding the impact on the road system immediately around the site, Highways England has recommended that the application is acceptable, solely in terms of the impact on the trunk road network, subject to the implementation of an enhanced traffic management scheme, which would improve the issues surrounding

the impact of traffic from the development on the wider network, in particular in relation to how the impact of additional traffic would exacerbate existing congestion issues at the existing junction between Castle Road and the A36 trunk road.

Whilst the applicant has agreed in principle to a financial contribution to such a scheme of £500,000, at the time of writing, no formal S106 exists which would secure this mitigation. Consequently, in the absence of such a legal agreement, the Local Planning Authority must assert that the scheme as proposed would be likely to have a significant impact on the wider highway system, particularly the A345 Castle Road and its junction with the A36 Trunk Road at Castle Roundabout. The proposal is therefore contrary to the aims of the Local Transport Plan, and adopted policies CP60-64 of the Wiltshire Core Strategy, as well as the guidance within the NPPF.

3. The proposals would be located adjacent to a working airfield and airstrip. A primary reason for the inclusion of Policy CP25 within the adopted Wiltshire Core Strategy is to secure a scheme to reduce historic noise and disturbance emanating from the use of the airfield. Notwithstanding this matter, the housing proposal sites Areas A & C would be located closer to the operating airfield than existing dwellings in the surrounding area. Several of the dwellings planned within Areas A & C would, in the opinion of the Council, be likely to suffer noise disturbance from the operation of the airfield.

Notwithstanding, in recent months the applicant has apparently increased flying activities at the airfield, including the introduction of helicopter training flights. This has resulted in additional complaints to the Council regards noise disturbance, and it is unclear whether these additional flights have been included in any updated noise assessment. It is also understood that these additional training flights would need to continue for the foreseeable future, due to contractual arrangements.

In addition, it is understood from viability discussions that the number of flights that would be needed to attain the viability the applicants seek would need to be above 50,000 a year. This raises the issue of whether, at this sort of scale of operation, the aim of achieving reduced noise disturbance can be realistically achieved.

Whilst the applicant has offered in principle to agree to restrictions and limitation on the operation of the airfield, at the time of writing, no binding S106 legal agreement has been entered into, and therefore it is not clear what measures the Council could reasonably impose on the airfield operations which would reduce the impact of the operations on existing and future residential amenity, and whether such restrictions would in any event adversely affect the long term viability of the airfield.

Consequently, in the absence of such a legal agreement which would achieve reasonable noise controls whilst maintaining the flying operations, the current proposal would be likely to have an adverse on existing and future residential amenity, contrary to the aims of policy CP25, and policy CP57 of the Wiltshire Core Strategy, and the guidance provided in the NPPF and the NPPG, and associated Aviation guidance, regards amenity and noise disturbance, and maintaining airfield operations.

4. 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 Aerodrome, which itself contains several listed hangar buildings. The site currently has an open character.

The proposal is in outline form, with only access being a detailed matter, but the number of dwellings being fixed. The applicants own visual assessments and other graphical information suggest that the residential development on Areas A & C would be readily visible from the Old Sarum Ancient Monument, with Area C likely also to be visible above the ridge line. The applicant's submitted information shows only a small area of landscaping, and to achieve the number of dwellings indicated on Area A, the indicative plans suggest the need to build up to three and four stories across much of the site, with some properties requiring under-croft parking arrangements.

Thus, the development of Area A as suggested with the number of dwellings proposed would be highly prominent and intrusive in the landscape. In relation to Area B the details of the buildings and uses within this area are sketchy and it is unclear how tall these buildings would be, or how they would relate to the adjacent development or surrounding open land, or how visible they would be within the surrounding area. In relation to Area C, the large number of dwellings proposed would significantly enlarge the size of the existing small settlement of Ford, a settlement designated with Laverstock in the Wiltshire Core Strategy as a 'small village' where development is normally restricted to a few dwellings. This scale of development, together with its extent would have an unacceptable impact on the character of the village, and would also have an adverse impact on the character and appearance of the landscape and the Old Sarum Airfield Conservation Area. The northern edge of this scheme would be visible across the airfield and would be likely to visually amalgamate with the development of Area A and B as seen from higher land to the south, including the Old Sarum Monument.

Consequently, the current quantum of residential development is unacceptable and it is considered that the scheme as proposed would have a significant visual impact and be likely to cause substantial harm, to the character and setting of the surrounding heritage assets, including the historic landscape of Conservation Area surrounding the Old Sarum Monument, and the airfield Conservation Area itself. The proposal would therefore be contrary to the aims of policies CP1, CP2, CP23, CP25 and CP58 of the Wiltshire Core Strategy, and the guidance given in the NPPF, and sections 66 and 72 of Town and Country Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

5. Notwithstanding the heritage issues related to Areas A, B & C, the application suggests that enhancement works would be undertaken to the heritage assets currently present within the airfield site, including the listed hangars. Whilst such a commitment is welcomed, it is currently unclear exactly what such enhancement works would entail and to which structures. Consequently, and in the absence of a suitable legal agreement to secure such works, it is considered that proposal would therefore be contrary to the aims of policy CP3, CP25 and CP58 of the Wiltshire Core Strategy, and the guidance given in the NPPF, and sections 66 and 72 of Town and Country Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

6. The application scheme suggests the provision of a large area of public open space, including pathways and cycleways, picnic areas, and interpretation information. The

applicant has also confirmed the proposal would mitigate its impacts with respect to waste and recycling matters.

However, at the current time, the applicant's viability assessment suggests that no mitigation is able to be offered 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, and does not make provision for public art.

Consequently, in the absence of a suitable legal agreement to secure such mitigation, it is considered that the proposal would not be sustainable development and would be 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.

7. The application site abuts Green Lane, a right of way running to the north east of the airfield perimeter. Insufficient information has been submitted to demonstrate that potential bat corridors along Green Lane can be maintained in the long term. No survey information was provided in relation to this corridor and, in light of the use made by bats of Green Lane at Hampton Park II to the south, the Council assumes it forms a commuting and potential foraging route for bats at Old Sarum. The Illustrative Landscape Plan is unclear on the treatment of this boundary. In addition, the Council remains to be convinced that boundary features under private control and located so close to adjacent dwellings will be maintained and managed appropriately for bats in the long term as experience from other schemes demonstrates new owners often remove or degrade hedgerows.

Additionally, Green Lane appears to be promoted in some of the application literature as a sustainable transport route. This has the potential to diminish the significance of the route for bats. The appellant has yet to demonstrate how such impacts will be avoided if there is future pressure from users to light this route.

Consequently, in the absence of information to the contrary, the proposal would be likely to have an adverse impact on protected species and the River Avon Special Area of Conservation, contrary to the aims of policies CP50 & 52 of the Wiltshire Core Strategy and the guidance provided by the NPPF regards biodiversity and habitat management.