

Statement made by Vic Bussereau on behalf of Laverstock & Ford Parish Council at the Public Enquiry

The Laverstock & Ford Parish Council objects to this Planning Application on many grounds and I will touch on 5 of the significant concerns raised by many residents from the local community and shared strongly by the Parish Council.

The first is community involvement. This has been sadly lacking.

- Despite statements made in various publications to the contrary, little effort has been made to consult with the local community or Parish Council on the Planning Application.
- The Wiltshire Council Statement of Community Involvement gives clear guidelines on this, as does the Wiltshire Core Strategy stating 'The Master Plan will be developed in partnership with the local community, local planning authority and the developer, prior to any planning application.' **This did not happen.**
- Any significant local community/Parish Council involvement was limited to the Enquiry by Design in September 2013 and the Community Consultation event in December 2014 when a fully developed Master Plan was presented.
- A questionnaire was provided at the December 2014 event, which was loaded heavily in favour of development; 138 were returned plus various detailed letters including one from the Parish Council.
- The responses to the question 'Do you welcome our general design approach' for each area demonstrated the strength of feeling. Figures for believing 'Yes, Well Considered' or 'Satisfactory' for the 3 areas were only 24%, 44% and 20% for Areas A, B and C respectively. All very much in the minority.
- Despite clear messages from the local residents and the Parish Council that the Master Plan as presented in Dec 2014 was not acceptable; the subsequent Planning Application did not reflect any material changes to the Master Plan.
- In late 2015 further communication between the Parish Council and the applicant's then agents were facilitated by our local Member of Parliament.
- Three meetings took place with the last in May 2016. Further supplementary questions were provided in Jun and receipt was acknowledged.

- However, nothing further has been heard or received from any agent or the applicant since.
- **All of this demonstrates the applicant's total disregard for the views of existing local communities.**

A major concern is the impact the proposed development will have on infrastructure.

- The Parish Council will address 2 of its concerns here: schools and traffic.
- There appears to be no education provision to accompany this Application..
- There is already a shortage of both infant and junior school places within the parish which requires children in Ford to be bussed outside the parish. An additional 160 dwellings in Area C would clearly exacerbate this problem.
- A requirement for more school buses or, most probably, more car journeys also compounds the current issue associated with traffic on local roads.
- There is much concern that the volume of housing proposed in Area A, with 2 access points on to the C56 (known as The Portway), will lead to major congestion on this road and at the roundabout at peak times where it joins the A345.
- Traffic is a major concern for residents of Ford with the obvious increased traffic from Area C. Metrocounts initiated by the Parish Council, have also shown a continual increase in traffic transiting through the village (ie using it as a rat run) along narrow country roads on which HGV, farm vehicles fitted with farm implements/trailors and occasional buses can be encountered.
- And not forgetting, cyclists, pedestrians and of course horses and riders from the 2 stables which are located within the village along Ford Road.
- A transport assessment commissioned by applicant indicates that a 20% traffic increase through Ford is not significant on roads which are considered safe!
- The figures presumable do not include any addition for residents in Area A who may wish to use Ford Road as a rat run.
- The assessment totally ignores the reality of life for residents of the village where **only some 10m (yes 10m) total** of footpaths exist along any of the 3 through roads.

- It seems to be grasping at straws to expect pedestrians to seek refuge from motor vehicles by jumping onto the verge as suggested in one of the applicant's proofs.
- The access points from Ford on to both the A345 and the A338 also leave a lot to be desired. And any increase in traffic here is a major concern.

Another concern is the volume of the proposed housing

- Ford is identified in the Wiltshire Core Strategy as part of the 'Small Village' of Laverstock and Ford.
- **Core Policy 2** identifies that development in Small Villages will be limited to infill.
- It is accepted that **Core Policy 25** is a site-specific policy; nevertheless, Ford should be afforded some protection under **Core Policy 2** and any development adjoining the village should be limited.
- 160 dwellings extending the village no way meets the criteria of **Core Policy 2**.
- One of the criteria in Core Policy 25 within the Core Strategy is that any development must 'protect the amenities of local residents'.
- Ford has limited amenities – (1) its size as a small village and (2) enjoying the benefits of the green space to the north and northwest provided by the old flying field within the Conservation Area.
- Whatever name the new estate of 160 houses in Area C would be given, (should it be built), it would be contiguous with Ford and in reality would double the size of the village.
- The proposed development would destroy both of the 2 amenities.
- Significantly the dwellings proposed in this application do not form part of the overall allocation for Wiltshire. They are in addition to those already approved or allocated in the Core Strategy and the latest Housing Site Allocation Plan.
- Furthermore, Wiltshire Council has stated as part of the new Local Plan consultation process that a further 250 dwellings only will be required in the

whole of the Salisbury Housing Management Area through to 2036, over and above those already 'committed'.

- Subsequently, it has also confirmed the proposed dwellings in this application do not form part of the 'committed' total, as Core Policy 25 does not define specific number of dwellings. The 3 areas are described as '**potential areas for development**'.
- There is, therefore, no requirement at this time for another large development within the parish through to at least 2036.

Moving on to aircraft noise issues noted by the local community

- The Parish Council has noted that all figures submitted by the applicant on noise levels relate to those pertinent to 2014 when there were only 35,000 movements per year.
- We now understand that, if the scheme were to go ahead, there would need to be a minimum of 50,000 for viability purposes.
- It is worth noting that a Flying Forum is held every 6 months or so at OSAF which reviews noise complaints; at the last Forum held in May this year aircraft movements were said to be 50,000 per annum but there were limited number of complaints recorded
- The Parish Council has little confidence that the proposed development, coupled with a minor realignment of the grass runway and even restricting movements to 50,000 movements a year, would mitigate the perceived noise issue.
- Indeed quite the opposite could be the case, with new-build dwellings closer to the edges of the grass strip than any of the existing housing.

The Parish Council also has major concerns on the impact of the proposed development on the Old Sarum Airfield Conservation Area

- The Council accepts that there is potential for some development within the Conservation Area and **fully** supports the aspiration to continue flying from this old historic airfield for the next 100 years as stated in one of the applicants Newsletters.

- A and C do nothing to enhance or safeguard the heritage assets within the airfield or preserve the character of the Conservation Area **and** may even put the future of the airfield at risk.
- Approximately 55% of what remains of the perimeter of the historic flying field and about 30% of the open grass area would be lost, and the shape of the current green space would be grossly distorted.
- Significantly this is an airfield – and **aviators flying over the airfield** would observe that it no longer reflected the historic airfield as seen during **its military years**.
- Sightlines into and within the airfield would be changed forever, including views to and from the old hangars, technical buildings and the historic and rare gun butts.
- The development would impact on many of the points in the 2006 Atkins Characteristic Appraisal and Assessment of the airfield, which formed the basis for granting Conservation Area status.
- One major omission from the point of view of the Conservation Area is an approved Management Plan. This is fundamental to the preservation and enhancement of the Conservation Area, as well as determining the type and extent of a development that can be allowed within it.

Finally

- Not only are the proposed 462 dwellings on the airfield unacceptable in the context of the Old Sarum Conservation Area but, given the 700 houses at Old Sarum development north of The Portway plus the 673 under construction at Longhedge, they would lead to a massive overdevelopment for the northern part of the Laverstock & Ford Parish.
- The Parish Council understands and fully supports the aspiration to continue flying at Old Sarum Airfield but what is proposed is development in the extreme and ignores the views of many residents from the local community.

VRDB
8 Oct 2018