

## REPORT FOR STRATEGIC PLANNING COMMITTEE

<b>Date of Meeting</b>	14 August 2024
<b>Application Number</b>	PL/2023/07368
<b>Site Address</b>	Old Sarum Airfield Limited, Lancaster Road, Old Sarum, Salisbury, Wiltshire SP4 6DZ
<b>Proposal</b>	Outline application with all matters reserved, except means of access to site, for the demolition, modification & renovation of existing buildings, structures & site development. Provision of approx. 315 residential dwellings, & mixture of employment, commercial/leisure, & aviation uses, including a "flying hub" comprising control tower, heritage centre, visitor centre, café/restaurant, parachute centre, aviation archives & aircraft hangars. Provision of new vehicular access to surrounding highways network, car parking, & connections to surrounding footpath/cycle networks. Green infrastructure provision, including open space, play space, foot & cycle paths, & landscape enhancement areas; & sustainable urban drainage system & waste water treatment works. Associated vegetation removal, ground modification & engineering works.
<b>Applicant</b>	Mr Grenville Hodge
<b>Town/Parish Council</b>	LAVERSTOCK AND FORD
<b>Ward</b>	OLD SARUM & LOWER BOURNE VALLEY – Cllr Oliver
<b>Type of application</b>	Outline Planning
<b>Case Officer</b>	Richard Hughes

### Reason for the application being considered by Committee

The application was called in by Councillor Oliver due to the scale of development, the visual impact upon the surrounding area, the relationship to adjoining properties, design -bulk, height, general appearance, environmental/highways impact, car parking, and the relationship with the Laverstock & Ford NP, WCS, and draft Wiltshire Local Plan.

#### 1. Purpose of Report

The purpose of the report is to assess the merits of the proposal against the policies of the development plan and other material considerations and for members to consider the officer recommendation that this application be REFUSED for the reasons suggested.

#### 2. Report Summary

1. Principle, Policy, and Planning history/ issues
2. Design and impact on surrounding area/heritage assets
3. Impact on residential amenity
4. Impact on highway systems
5. Impact on ecology
6. Archaeology issues
7. Drainage and flooding issues
8. S106 and viability matters

## 9. Planning balance and conclusions

Laverstock and Ford Parish – Objects (see report below)

Salisbury City Council – Object (see report below)

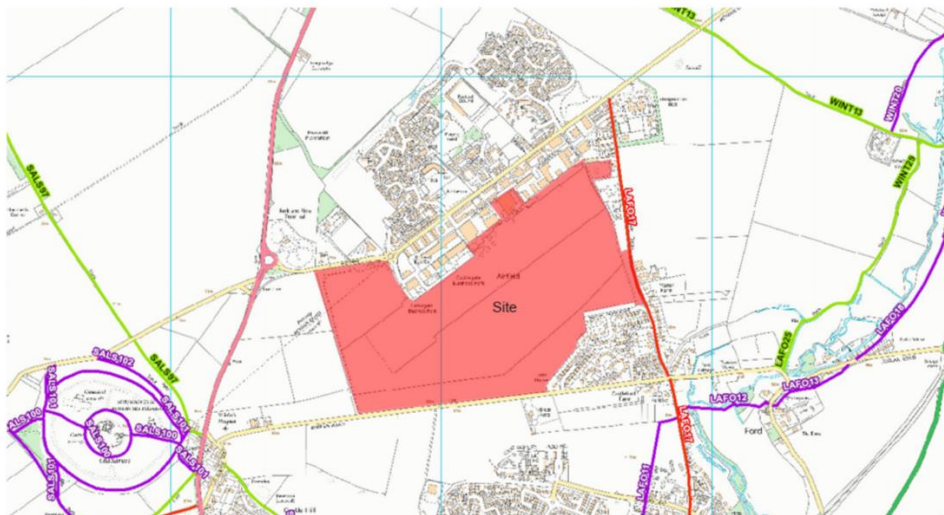
Third parties - 294 responses have been received, raising various concerns and issues, regarding the impact of the development on the surrounding area and the airfield itself (see later section of report).

### 3. Site Description

The site is located to the north of Salisbury and is located wholly within Laverstock and Ford Parish area. It is positioned between The Portway A338 Road (running along the north western boundary of the site) from which the airfield and other commercial uses are accessed, and the “C class” Roman Road, which bounds the site to the south.

The application site encompasses Old Sarum Airfield and associated airfield buildings and hangars. The three hangars are Grade II\* listed buildings, and the whole airfield site is located within a Conservation Area, and contains other listed buildings. The majority of the site contains open grassland. A grass airstrip is located in the centre of the site. The airfield dates originally from World War 1 and was operated by the Ministry of Defence until the early 1980’s, when it became a commercial/civilian airfield.

Immediately adjacent to the airfield operated buildings are more modern commercial uses and industrial buildings, not associated with the operation of the airfield (known as Sarum Business Park).



*The location of the site*

To the north east of the site runs Green Lane, a restricted Byway. To the north and north west are a number of commercial and industrial buildings, and beyond the developments of Old Sarum and Longhedge. To the south-west is located the Old Sarum Ancient Monument and its associated Conservation Area, and to the immediate south east, the site is bounded by the settlement of Ford, and Roman Road. Beyond that to the south is the residential area known as Hampton Park/Riverside Park and its associated Country Park.

### 4. Planning History

The most pertinent and recent applications on the site is as below:

PL/2024/00102 listed building consent for repair of hangar 3. Approved

15/04004/OUT - 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 18.6ha (gross) of residential land accommodating approximately 462 residential dwellings. Provision for a mixture of employment, commercial/leisure, and aviation uses on 3.1ha 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 the construction of new points of vehicles access to the surrounding highways network, car parking and connections to the 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. Associated vegetation removal, ground modification and engineering works

The above application was subject of a non-determination appeal in 2018. A copy of the subsequent appeal decision is attached as appendix to this report. The appeal was dismissed. This decision is referred to extensively in the report below.

The site has been the subject of numerous planning applications/works including a number of mobile and small scale buildings and different uses since the early 1980's. For brevity only the most pertinent and relevant have been listed below:

S/2004/0243 Certificate of lawful use - Use of land & buildings as an airfield for light aircraft storage, repair maintenance & refueling, together with ancillary offices & restaurants

S/1981/1043 Change of use of airfield to light industrial use and civilian airfield

Notwithstanding the various applications at the airfield, the land surrounding the airfield has been the subject of significant development in recent years, and in particular the following:

16/00048/FUL Revised Country Park design, at land adjacent to Hampton Park, Salisbury

S/2009/1943 500 Dwellings and new Country Park, Hampton Park, Salisbury

S/2005/0211 Outline consent for housing, commercial, local centre, retail and community uses at Old Sarum, the Portway (followed by various reserved matters and applications for additional housing)

13/00673 Outline consent for 673 dwellings, commercial uses, local centre and community facilities, at Longhedge, adjacent Old Sarum (reserved matters app no. 15/07253/REM)

## **5. The Proposal**

The current application is in outline form only, with only access details provided in detail. Other matters such as design, scale and layout and landscape are therefore indicative only and would need to be approved via a future reserved matters or other similar full application.

The application site is divided into 3 distinct areas of development.



Area A – On land to the north west of the airstrip and existing commercial buildings it is proposed to construct up to 160 dwellings, including two new access points of the adjacent Portway road system. This area also contains road access to the adjacent Area B. These works involve the removal of some existing planting including along the Portway, plus replacement landscaping.

Area B – This area is located directly to the south east of the existing hangers and other commercial buildings. It is proposed to construct several hanger buildings (7 shown on most plans, 6 on Area B specific plans). Furthermore, a new Aviation building would be constructed, which would include a replacement control tower, together with a replacement cafe and restaurant, and heritage and visitor centre, together with new access roads and associated parking.

Area C – It is proposed to erect up to 155 dwellings to the immediate north west of Ford settlement, between Green Lane and the Roman Road, with vehicular access off the Roman Road. This area would include new planting/landscaping, including along the southern boundary of the application site adjacent to the Roman Road. There are also suggested highways works (see highways section of report).

The applicants Design and Access statement lists the new facilities and benefits for the community to be developed as part of the Master Plan as including:

- Recreational walking and cycling routes around the airfield linking the new
- Country Park, Old Sarum village centre and new facilities created as part of this
- Proposal
- Restoration of the alignment of the Roman Road;
- Refurbishment of WW1 Hangar;
- Design to improve the relationship of the heritage buildings to the flying field;
- Creation of a flying hub;
- New restaurant;
- Fast food café;
- Seminar and training rooms
- Museum Wall
- Parachute centre
  
- Control tower
- Private aircraft hangars
- Improved public access to the flying field and the rest of the conservation area through the

formalising of visitor facilities and car parking and the creation of linked footpaths with specific viewing points to show the relationship between the grass flying field and the listed WWI hangers.

Additionally, to facilitate the above developments, the existing grass airstrip would be relocated 50-70 metres to the south of its current alignment, and extended.

It is proposed to remove some existing structures which are regarded as “clutter” in front of the existing listed hangers, and to make general improvements to the site, including interpretation boards, and to allow public access to and through the site as part of a large area of public open space, including footpaths and cycle networks. A waste water treatment works is also proposed, which would be part of the phosphate mitigation for the scheme and its bio diversity net gain.

Hangar 3 would also be repaired (the repairs were previously approved as part of application ref PL/2024/00102 listed building consent for hangar 3 with the intention that the repair works within that permission would be tied into any planning consent for the wider airfield via a suitable planning condition)

The application is supported with an EIA (Environmental Impact Assessment) including multiple documents on a number of issues, and various plans and associated graphics. These matters are examined in more detail in the sections below.

## **6. Relevant Planning Policy**

For the purposes of this application, the following policies are considered most relevant:

National Planning Guidance NPPF, NPPG

National Design Guide and Code

Central Government General Aviation Framework and Strategy

LTN 1/20 (Local Transport Note 1/20)

Section 66 of the Planning (Listed building and Conservation area) Act 1990 states that the local planning authority has a duty to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses.

Section 72 of the Planning (Listed building and Conservation area) Act 1990 states that the local planning authority has a duty to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving and enhancing the character or appearance of the conservation area.

### The Development Plan

#### Wiltshire Core Strategy policies

CP1 & CP2 – Settlement strategy and housing provision

CP3 – Infrastructure requirements

CP20 – Spatial Strategy for Salisbury Community Area

CP23 – Spatial Strategy South Wiltshire Community Area

CP24 – New Forest National Park

CP25 - Old Sarum Airfield

CP36 – Economic Regeneration

CP38 & 39 – Retail, Leisure and tourism

CP41 – Sustainable design and low carbon energy

CP43 – Affordable Housing

CP49 – Provision of local facilities

CP50, 51, 52 – Landscape, Green infrastructure and ecology

CP55 – Air Quality

CP56 – Contaminated Land

CP57 – Design and amenity  
CP58 – Conservation of the historic environment  
CP61 to 64 - Transport and Development  
CP67 – Flood Risk  
CP69 – River Avon SAC

Saved policies D8 (public art), R2 (open space)

Laverstock, Ford and Communities Neighbourhood Plan, including Design Guidance

Wiltshire Design Guide 2024

#### Other relevant documents

Wiltshire Council Housing Land Supply Statement 2023 (published June 2024)

Supplementary Planning Guidance “Creating Places” Salisbury

Policy WCS 6 of the Wiltshire Council Waste Core Strategy

Air Quality Action Plan for Wiltshire 2024-2029

Draft Wiltshire Council Air Quality SPD (to be adopted October 2024)

Wiltshire Council Planning Obligations DPD

Wiltshire Local Transport Plan

Draft LCWIP (Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans)

Emerging Wiltshire Local Plan review Pre-Submission Draft 2020-2038 (Regulation 19 stage)

### **7. Consultation response (summaries)**

Laverstock and Ford Parish Council – Object for the following reasons:

*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.

Salisbury City Council - Object for the following reasons:

*Salisbury City Council object very strongly to this application. This airfield is a site of national significance. We have concerns over the impact of the views – old Sarum and the historic landscape. A development of this size will have a significant impact on the infrastructure of the surrounding area - no junction improvements have been considered for A345. The nearby village of Ford is designated as a small village and this development will double its size with no facilities in the village. The road between this village and Castle Road is narrow and vehicles travel fast along it – it will not be able to take the additional transport that this development will generate. This goes against the Local Plan Review core Policy 25 which requires 40% social housing and none has been included in this development. In addition to this, the site is located next to the rifle range – we are concerned that noise from this will impact the residents and in the long term close the range and we wish to keep this living history site alive.*

*Following the recent collapse of Hangar 3, Salisbury City Council's Planning and Development Committee agreed the following statement at its committee meeting on Tuesday 23 January 2024.*

*The collapse of Hangar 3 at Old Sarum Airfield is a disaster long predicted by those who have been campaigning to save this Grade II\* listed wartime survivor.*

*Our heritage protection systems have failed abjectly in their duty to ensure its preservation despite years of pleading by aviation enthusiasts including the group SOS - Save Old Sarum. Legal action must be taken to salvage and restore it. And on no account must what remains of this historic airfield be swallowed up by housing development.*

Durnford PC – Object on the grounds that previous application was refused and appeal upheld, and the village of Ford, with no amenities is unable to support a development of this size.

WC Conservation – Object due to the significant harm caused by the scheme on the heritage assets (see later report)

WC Ecology – Final response awaited and will be presented to the committee meeting. (See ecology section of the report)

WC Landscape - Satisfied that landscape concerns I raised in the 15/04004/OUT have been considered in this new iteration.

WC Spatial Planning – Highlighted the planning policy issues and matters to take into consideration

WC Economic Development - Whilst the inclusion of some employment opportunities in this proposal is welcome the overall impact on the local economy is likely to be limited and will not be of the highly skilled/remunerated jobs we would like to see created in the area. We are also concerned at the increase in demand on the local infrastructure that a residential development of this size will create in an area that is already struggling to cope. Due to the lack of new employment opportunities in the Salisbury area it will also mean an increase in out commuting, placing further strain on the road network.

WC Public Protection – No objections subject to suitable conditions and mitigation. £5000 yearly monitoring fee needed for aircraft movements

WC Highways – Object to the impact of the traffic generated by Area C on the roman road

WC Rights of Way – No response



WC Open space – There will be approximately 90,000m<sup>2</sup> of open space (to include play and recreation spaces), so I'm satisfied that the on-site requirement will be met for both Play and public open space. A Sports contribution of £142,317 towards a Full Size 3G Artificial Turf Pitch within/to serve the Southern Wiltshire Community Area and/or sports, pitch or ancillary provision within the vicinity of the land is required.

WC Public Art - In the event of public art being sought through planning obligations an indicative figure would be in the region of £93,000 (based on £300 per dwelling x 310 dwellings and £3 per square metre of non-residential commercial land) to be commuted to the Council's arts service to engage an experienced professional public art specialist to devise, manage and deliver the art and design process and programme in line with our 2024 Guidance

WC Housing – Object, 40 percent affordable housing should be provided in line with Policy CP43, subject to viability assessment

WC Education – Financial contributions for early years provision should be secured via a S106

WC Archaeology - No objections subject to suitable mitigation and management, and a suitable condition.

WC Waste and Recycling - No objections subject to waste and recycling contributions in line with policy as part of a legal agreement.

WC Urban Design – Object due to harm caused to the heritage assets.

WC Drainage – No objections subject to conditions secure suitable foul and surface water drainage

Wilts and Dorset Fire and Rescue – General advice about fire safety and infrastructure

Historic England – No objections subject to listed hangar is repaired (see later report)

Natural England – No objections subject to suitable mitigation and the Council concluding a positive appropriate assessment

Environment Agency - No objection, subject to conditions related to foul and surface water drainage, land contamination, groundwater protection, surface water management, water efficiency, and a Construction Environmental Management Plan

National Highways - no objection to application reference PL/2023/07368 but advises that a proportionate developer contribution is sought by Wiltshire Council towards the Salisbury Transport Strategy, particularly sustainable transport measures that will help to manage demand at the A36 Castle Roundabout.

MoD – No safeguarding issues

Active Travel England – Raised issues regards sustainable transport options and enhancement of existing pathways and routes, and mitigation. Advised Council to defer judgement of the application until such matters were sorted out.

CAA – No response

RSPB – Objects due to insufficient assessment of impacts on breeding birds including stone curlew.

## 8. Representations

Third Parties - 294 comments (some from the same parties and regarding the amended plans), and a petition, raising various concerns and issues regarding the impact of the development on the surrounding area and the airfield itself. The issues raised include:.

- Impact on swifts, suitable mitigation needed
- Sets precedent for further development north of Salisbury
- Results in over development/ over population
- Less sensitive alternative sites are available
- Unacceptable density proposed
- Site is not a strategic housing allocation
- No need for housing in the area
- Benefits will not outweigh harm to heritage assets
- Cumulative impacts of developments in area
- No affordable housing
- Noise complaints from new residents will lead to a cessation of flying
- Long term operation of the airport will be threatened
- Flights will be unable to operate safely in constrained area
- Lack of costings information provided
- Alternative income/funding streams have not been considered
- Justification on the basis of viability not material to the application
- No justification for how flying will be sustained provided
- Clear business case needs to be presented
- Noise, pollution and safety concerns will lead to closure
- Harmful to aviation heritage/ conservation area/ listed buildings
- Harmful to setting of Old Sarum SM
- Perimeter of airfield is valuable to its character and will be destroyed
- Grass airfield should be preserved as it is a rare surviving example
- Existing road infrastructure inadequate
- Highways improvements proposed insufficient
- Adverse impact on A345/ journeys to Salisbury
- Additional traffic in Ford unacceptable
- Safety and pollution concerns
- Emergency access - Impact on Green Lane unacceptable
- Cumulative highways effects have not been considered
- Lack of alternatives to private car – unsustainable
- Roads are prone to flooding in Ford
- Pedestrian routes are inappropriate
- Harm to views from Old Sarum Scheduled Ancient Monument
- Destruction of semi-rural character of the Parish
- Impact on distinctive landscape character
- Impact on views from and to old sarum hill fort
- Loss of open space/ green fields/ countryside/ recreational space/ agricultural land
- Develop brownfield first
- Harm to wildlife/ ecology
- Loss of wildlife corridor
- Loss of unimproved grassland habitat
- Impact of flying – with risk of airport closing
- Impact of traffic
- Noise attenuation in proposed dwellings unacceptable
- Impact of construction

- Adequacy of noise survey regards shooting range questioned
- Impact of shooting range use/noise issues for Area C housing
- Restricting flying will enable the Council to control noise
- Impact on local facilities and infrastructure
- Inadequate infrastructure improvements
- Need for affordable housing
- Lack of capacity in local schools
- No local employment
- Lack of health facilities
- Lack of shops
- Lack of public transport
- Impact on character/ identity of Ford
- Impact on Ford's infrastructure
- Reduction of safe land area, particularly relevant as airfield is used for training
- Safety concerns associated with additional traffic
- Impact on potential for air displays due to encroachment of development
- Inadequate engagement by applicant
- Views of community disregarded
- Existing flooding not adequately considered
- Capacity of drainage network
- Roads prone to flooding
- Sewage Capacity and flooding/drainage issues in Ford and Green Lane

#### Boscombe Down Aviation Collection:

*A thriving community heritage aviation hub already playing an important part at local and national level, has recently been awarded full Arts Council Accreditation and notes the content of the Planning Application. The Collection would look for absolute assurances that its operations would not be compromised, particularly with regard to accessibility and parking for our heritage users, in order that the Collection can enhance the long-term local community and national benefits that its operation is already delivering*

## **9.0 Planning Considerations**

### **9.1 Principle, policy, and planning history**

#### National Planning policy

In terms of general overarching planning policies, the NPPF, is supportive of economic regeneration projects and the provision of housing in sustainable locations. NPPF para 11 indicates generally that Local Planning Authorities should be:

- approving development proposals that accord with an up to date development plan without delay; or
- where there are no relevant development plan policies, or the policies which are most important for the determining the application are out of date, granting permission unless:
  - i) the application of policies in this Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a clear reason for refusing the development proposed; or
  - ii) any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole.

In terms of aerodromes and airports, Paragraph 110 (f) of the NPPF 2023 generally covers the topic:

*f) recognize the importance of maintaining a national network of general aviation airfields and their*

*need to adapt and change over time – taking into account their economic value in serving business, leisure, training and emergency service needs, and the Government’s General Aviation Strategy.*

The General Aviation Strategy referred to by the NPPF refers to small aerodromes, but largely deals with the protection of them from other adjacent development. It is also clear that the protection of the aerodromes is a matter for the aerodrome itself in association with the CAA. This particular application is somewhat unique in that it relates to development proposals by an airfield operator, much of which is not connected to the actual operational requirements of the business (ie the proposed housing in Areas A & C).

The NPPF also supports the provision of housing including affordable housing (Section 5), building a strong competitive economy (Section 6). Other parts of the NPPF will also be relevant to the proposed scheme, and these will be specifically referred to elsewhere in this report.

### Development Plan policies

Section 70(2) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 require that the determination of planning applications must be made in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. At the current time of the statutory development plan in respect of this application consists of the Wiltshire Core Strategy (WCS) (Adopted January 2015) and the Laverstock and Ford Neighbourhood Plan.

In general terms, CP1 & CP2 relate to sustainable development and housing provision.

The enhancement of the airfield leisure facilities would also be covered by policies CP38 & 39. CP 49 encourages the enhancement of community facilities. Laverstock and Ford is designated as a “small village” by WCS policy CP2, where housing development is limited to small scale infill development. The Parish Design Guide, which forms part of the Laverstock and Ford Neighbourhood Plan, suggests that no development should exceed 50 dwellings (page 5, section 6, subsection 6.6).

Core Policy 25 relates directly to the site. The supporting text to this policy states that:

***Old Sarum Airfield dates from the First World War and is one of the best preserved in the country as it has remaining technical buildings and three listed hangars, which still have a functional relationship to the grass airstrip. The facility is highly valued locally for the historical and recreational opportunities it provides. However, there are a number of issues relating to the site that this Core Strategy seeks to resolve.***

***5.133 The heritage value of the airfield has been damaged by the intrusion of functional late 20th century industrial sheds, which compromise its historic character. There are no controls over the level and intensity of flying activity from the airfield, and there has been a long history of complaints from local residents about the noise, which has been caused largely by aeroplanes flying over the city, in training circuits, especially during the summer months. While there is no local wish to prevent flying altogether, there is a desire to seek some control and strike an appropriate balance between the flying activity and amenity of Salisbury's residents.***

***5.134 This strategy will allow sympathetic new development on the airfield perimeter, including high quality residential use, where it can be fully demonstrated that it will deliver the outcomes identified in the following policy. The Master Plan will be developed in partnership with the local community, local planning authority and the developer prior to any application being considered.***

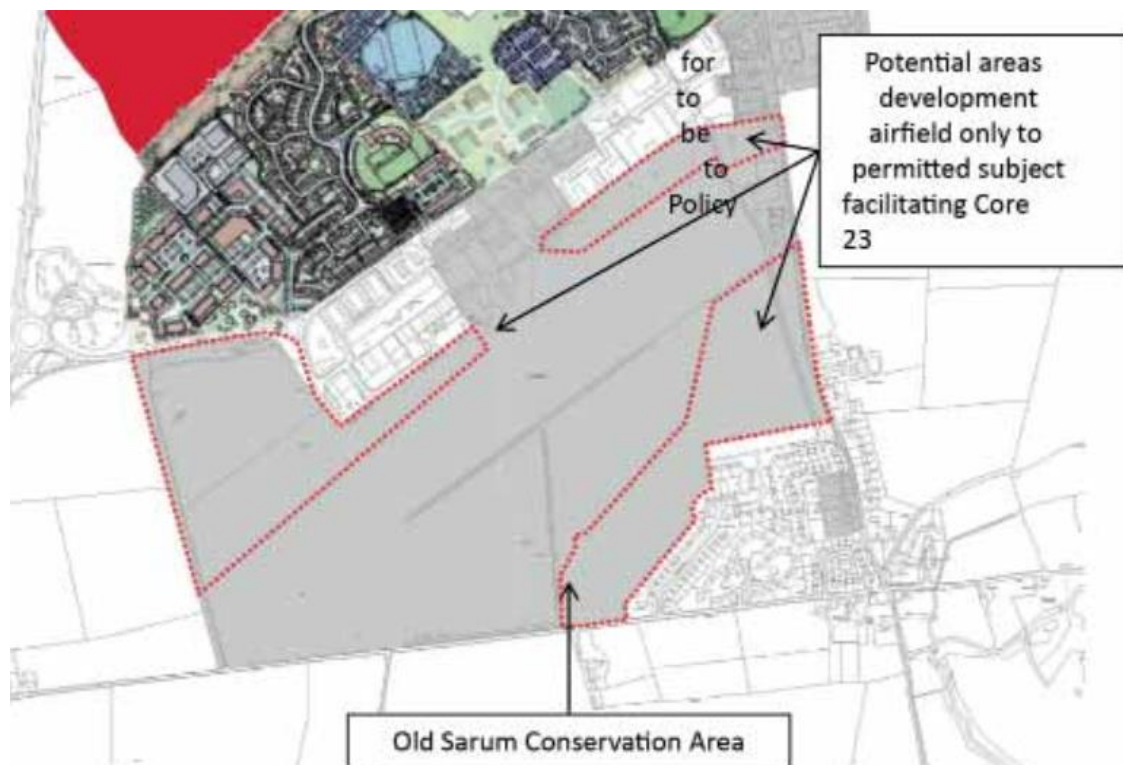
The main text of the policy sets out the criteria that must be met if any new development at the airfield is to be permitted:

***New development will only be permitted on Old Sarum Airfield if it delivers the following:***

- i. A long-term proactive strategy for the enhancement of the Conservation Area including management plan and public access and visitor/interpretive material on its historic***

**relevance**

- ii. **A high quality strategic landscape improvement to mitigate impacts of existing intrusive buildings, to soften impacts when viewed both out and into the Conservation Area and from Old Sarum Scheduled Ancient Monument**
- iii. **The completion of a legal agreement (section 106) to agree reasonable controls over flying activity in the interests of the amenity of local residents**
- iv. **Submission, agreement and implementation of a development master plan, which delivers a high quality development that takes opportunities to enhance the historic environment and protects the amenity of existing residents**
- v. **Retains and safeguards flying activity from the airfield**
- vi. **Provides community benefit for the Old Sarum residents.**



Therefore, some form of development of this site is acceptable in principle, but only subject to the various criteria listed within the policy being met as well as the other relevant policies in the development plan, and compliance with the statutory duties applying to development and heritage assets, and national planning guidance. The following report outlines the scheme that has been submitted and whether the aims of policy and other national and local planning policies have been met.

However, in order to fully understand the reasoning behind Core Policy 25 (see below), it is necessary to understand some of the recent history related to the site that occurred up to the policy being formulated.

Old Sarum Airfield dates from the First World War and is one of the best preserved in the country, in that it has remaining technical buildings and three listed hangars which have an unsevered, functional relationship to the grass airstrip. The facility is highly valued locally for the history and recreational opportunities it provides. However the site has been affected for years by two issues.

Aircraft noise - Historically, there had been noise complaints to the Council (then Salisbury District Council) relating to the operation of the airfield. It is understood that whilst the Council sought to take some form of enforcement action, operational airports and aerodromes are exempt from prosecution in regards to noise disturbance under the Environmental Protection Act. Furthermore, the original planning permission granted for the commercial airfield in 1981 did not contain any restrictive planning conditions on the operation of the airfield.

Heritage - The heritage value of the airfield (Grade II\* listed hangars and a designated Conservation Area) has been affected by the introduction of later industrial buildings which compromise its historic character. Furthermore, the value of the heritage asset has been placed at risk by ongoing speculative developments.

In this respect the Inspector in his final report into the South Wiltshire Core Strategy (predecessor to the current adopted Wiltshire Core Strategy) concluded:

*“...Another issue is that the hangars are surrounded on three sides by unsympathetic modern industrial buildings. These buildings are intrusive, they harm the character and appearance of the conservation area and, being clearly visible from the ramparts of the hill fort at Old Sarum, they harm the setting of this Ancient Monument.”*

As a consequence, the Council began discussions with the owners of the airfield to try and resolve the noise complaints. The result of these discussions was that it was resolved that a legal agreement would be required from the airfield operator in order to place restrictions and limitations on the operation of the airfield that would reduce the noise disturbance issues and result in heritage improvements. In return, it was agreed that such an agreement would be secured as part of a Core Strategy policy, which would permit some form of limited development of the airfield in exchange (and hence CP25 was developed).

#### How the three development areas were produced

As part of the previous officer report for previous application 15/04004/out, it was indicated that the areas highlighted for development in the Core Policy were developed as follows:

*“.....Areas of the airfield were assessed, firstly, to ensure that regeneration would not prejudice the historic flying activity at the airfield or compromise the unsevered relationship between the listed hangars and the operational flying field, which is a unique feature as identified in the English Heritage study, 'Survey of Military Aviation Sites and Structures, Summary Report' by the Thematic Listing Programme, J. Lake 2000 (see evidence base document STU/49).*

*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. This document clearly indicates where there have been instances of intrusion and damage to the special qualities of Old Sarum Airfield and 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.*

*Based on such evidence it is the assessment of the Council, as set out in adopted policy, that a carefully designed development has the potential to have a positive effect on the airfield, listed buildings and Old Sarum Scheduled Ancient Monument, through the improved screening of inappropriate views allied to careful design and a comprehensive landscape scheme. Also 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.*

*The South Wiltshire Core Strategy Final Sustainability Appraisal July 2009 Appendix IV, page 151-153 indicates a positive outcome for this policy subject to appropriate mitigation measures...”*

#### Wiltshire Core Strategy evidence.

Regards the 3 areas, as outlined in the previous officer report, the Wiltshire Core Policy 25 is clear that the three indicative areas have the potential in principle, if sensitively developed, to bring significant benefits to the Airfield and wider environment, including mitigation of noise and softening harsh, urban edge views. As stated clearly in the Statement of Common Ground agreed with Blenheim Property Co at the Examination in Public related to the Wiltshire Core Strategy:

*Each area has different opportunities and constraints deriving from their location, adjacent uses and linkages influencing the types and forms of development most sensitive and appropriate to the location.*

*Definition of potential areas in Map 5 is indicative and does not necessarily mean that they will be fully or inappropriately developed:*

- in the north west area the original line of the Portway and the view cone to Old Sarum SM should be kept clear.*
- Proposals will be subject to stringent site specific and normal development management policies including on noise pollution, listed buildings, conservation areas, landscape, protection of amenity, sustainability, access.*

#### Collaboration with landowner

As part of the previous officer report for previous application 15/04004, it was indicated how the landowner was involved in policy formulation:

*“...The Council accepted that to achieve these aims then there needs to be an incentive for the landowner and hence Core Policy 25 states it will allow sympathetic new development on the airfield perimeter, including high quality residential use, where it can be unequivocally demonstrated that the above objectives can be delivered and that the historic flying function is preserved. To work in partnership with landowners to try and find a lasting solution to regeneration and safeguarding of heritage assets is standard practice and required by national policy. One of the key aspects is seeking a viable use, which makes necessary investment justifiable.*

*The Core Policy 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. The landowner has expressed a commitment to a 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 complaints. Therefore this would deliver one of the key outcomes sought by the then planning committee which looked at this issue in 2000...”*

#### Quantum of development.

The previous officer report advised that there is no expectation over numbers and indeed it was not discussed at either of the two EIP's (Examination in Public). The quanta of development and its form/layout on the airfield will be determined by the requirements of the policy (CP25), in particular, to deliver controls over aircraft activities, to deliver a workable management plan for the preservation and future safeguarding of heritage assets, to mitigate the impacts of existing development, and to protect the amenities of residents living within the vicinity of the airfield. This judgment will be balanced against the need to ensure all other material and policy considerations are taken into account. These 'other' considerations include the impacts on scheduled monument(s), the conservation area, the wider landscape, established uses of surrounding land, and amenity in general. The areas defined in Map 5 do not indicate the extent of acceptable built development; the acceptable extent of built development can only be determined after the constraints of all the considerations have been defined and mapped.

The Master Plan and supporting documents should be key in reaching this assessment and is the vehicle for the applicant to set out their narrative for how the concept meets the requirements set out in the Core Policy 25.

#### CP25 and emerging Draft Wiltshire Local Plan

Notwithstanding the above officer advice provided previously as part of the appeal scheme, the Council's Spatial Planning Officer has also commented thus:

*The emerging Wiltshire Local Plan review has also reached the Regulation 19 stage. The outcome of the consultation and submission of the plan is due to be considered by Cabinet and Council in October this year. The emerging plan proposes the deletion of Core Policy 25: Old Sarum Airfield (Appendix A Schedule of policies). As you will be aware the deletion of the policy has been contested.*

*Nonetheless, Core Policy 25: Old Sarum Airfield currently still forms part of the adopted development plan. As stated in paragraph 5.135, subject to all the policy requirements being met - criteria (i) to (vi) (including appropriate safeguards to secure them as part of any planning approval), the policy does allow for sympathetic development on the Airfield perimeter including high quality residential use. Indicative or potential areas are shown in the supporting text to the policy at Figure 5.16. Whilst areas are identified in Figure 5.16, these were only intended to be potential development areas and they do not in themselves as a whole form the footprint for urban development. Instead, the nature and form of any development proposed in these areas should be carefully scrutinised; and assessed against not only Core Policy 25 but other policies in the development plan including those that relate to heritage, landscape, ecology, design, transport and affordable housing.*

*There is also a clear expectation that a Masterplan would be developed in partnership with the local community and local planning authority prior to any planning application being considered (paragraph 5.135).*

*As with any planning application, all relevant policies in the development plan and material considerations will need to be considered at the time the decision is made.*

*The policy is not a housing allocation but one that seeks certain outcomes to be achieved as required by criteria (i) to (vi). It will therefore be important in assessing the application for the outcomes listed in the policy to be met, as well as other relevant policy requirements in the development plan and material considerations; given the time that has passed since the response was provided and the proposed development in this latest planning application.*

*This will not only include the most recent version of the National Planning Policy Framework but also includes the Laverstock, Ford and Communities Neighbourhood Plan, made in October 2022, which now forms part of the development plan relating to this area. The following policies will therefore be relevant considerations in assessing the proposal:*

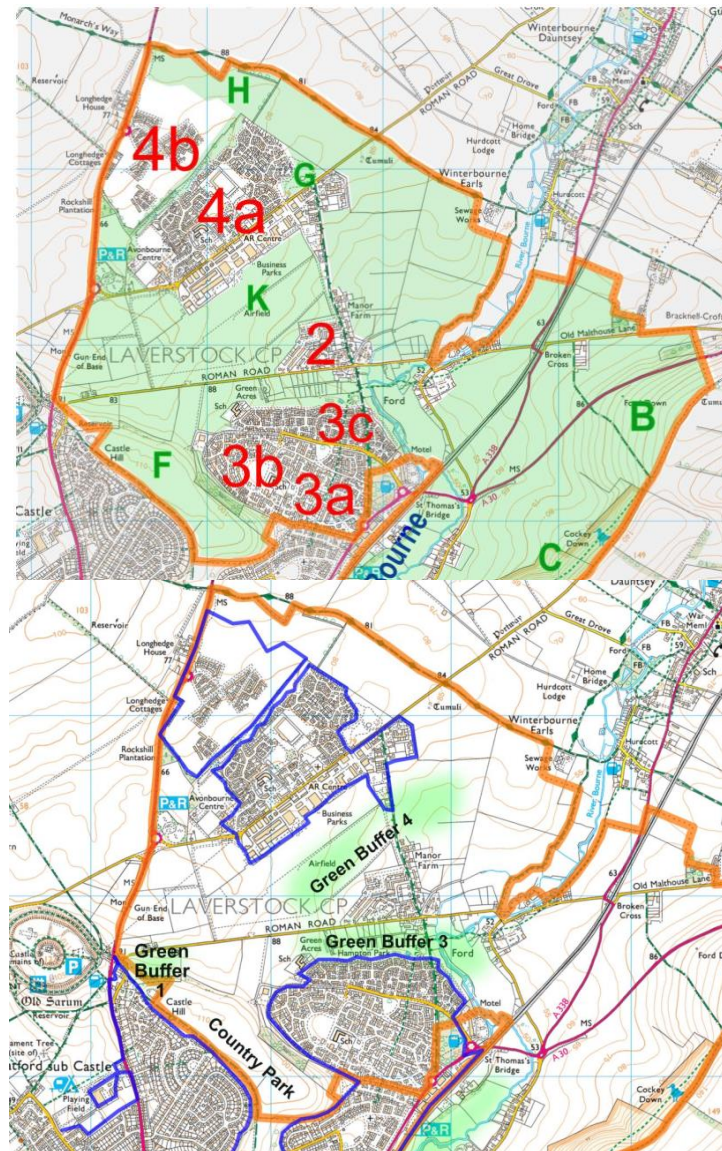
- Policy 1 Protection of the Distinctive Settlement Pattern of the Parish*
- Policy 2 Protection and Enhancement of the Distinctive Landscape Character, Wildlife Habitats and Heritage Assets*
- Policy 4: Design of future development*
- Policy 5: Improvements to infrastructure and amenity appropriate to the scale of specific future housing development.*

*Policy 3B Ford Amenity Green Space may also be relevant if proposals adjacent to it would have an impact.”*

#### Laverstock and Ford Neighbourhood Plan

This document is now part of the adopted Development Plan and therefore carries significant weight. The document highlights a number of Green Buffer areas in the Parish, one of which is airfield (as below plan extract: (Marked as “K” on the plan below and also shown as Green Buffer 4)





Above: extracts from Laverstock and Ford NP

It is however important to note that the Green Buffer shown on the plan above covers the grass airfield landing and take off area. Clarity was sought from the neighbourhood plan examiner before the referendum version of the draft neighbourhood plan was produced with regards to his meaning of narrowing the said green buffer to the width of the airfield landing/take off area. **The examiner reiterated the point that the green buffer should exclude the ‘potential developable areas’ referred to in figure 5.16 of Core Policy 25 of the Wiltshire Core Strategy and that he did not want the green buffer to be extended but reduced in size.**

The NP also refers at para 7.2.3 the issues limiting development across the parish, including:

- the conservation area designation on Old Sarum Airfield and several buildings associated with its former use as a military airfield dating back to World War 1
- proximity to Old Sarum scheduled monument and views to and from Salisbury Cathedral and Old Sarum and Figsbury Ring scheduled monuments

Paragraph 7.2.4 refers to Landscape Sensitivity in the Parish and also makes reference to CP25 being excluded from this assessment, and highlights that “..almost all of the land on which development would have limited impact on the landscape has been developed already..”,

The NP also has policy 3B, which relates directly to the area of land directly adjacent Area C of this application, and indicates that the land shall be retained as amenity green space. It goes on to state that ***“If damage or loss of this green infrastructure is unavoidable, the creation of new or replacement green infrastructure equal to or above its current value and quality, that maintains the integrity and functionality of the green infrastructure network, will be***

**required**. It should be noted that this application does not affect this area of land, despite being directly adjacent to Area C housing.



Ford Amenity Green Space Policy 3B of LFNP

The NP also contains policies on Design (Policy 4), which aims to improve the quality of the built environment, and maintain or enhance its semi-rural character and help address the climate emergency, and have “*a layout and infrastructure which would give residents easy, safe access to local pedestrian/cycle networks and to public transport, in order to help reduce vehicle usage*”. Policy 5 stipulates that “*Major development proposals shall include a phasing plan that assures the delivery of the related, supporting infrastructure and amenities prior to, or in phases during, the development*”.

The NP also contains two “Community Action” statements, which relate to the development of a “comprehensive, attractive network of footpaths and cycleways” within the Parish (Action 1), and Action 2 refers to “Improvements to infrastructure for future housing development”. Notably, the latter refers directly to the Portway and Ford/Roman Road, which are adjacent this application site, and states as follows:

*“b) Any significant proposed development adjacent to or dependent on the following roads shall be contingent on providing agreed improvements to the local highways network aimed at increasing pedestrian and cyclist safety and reducing traffic speed, noise and pollution, with particular focus on the following roads:*

- *The Portway, Old Sarum (C56)*
- *Ford Road/Roman Road, Ford (C287)*
- *Church Road, Laverstock (C329)*
- *Milford Mill Road, Milford (UC162902/UC152911).*”

Laverstock and Ford is designated as a “small village” by WCS policy CP2, where housing development is limited to small scale infill development. The Parish Design Guide, which forms part of the Laverstock and Ford Neighbourhood Plan, suggests that no development should exceed 50 dwellings (page 5, section 6 “Impact on surrounding Landscape”, subsection 6.6). The same section, subsection 6.3 and 6.4, indicate that:

6.3 All structures should be limited to a maximum height of 10 m (2.5 storeys), with the upper storey within the roof, reducing in height at higher elevations within a site to minimise visual intrusion of the roofscape.

6.4 Structures should not extend above the skyline from viewpoints outside the development

#### Housing Land Supply

Whilst policies CP1 & 2 relate to the provision of strategic housing sites, it should be noted that any housing being proposed as part of this proposal does not form part of the overall housing allocation for Wiltshire. Any dwellings approved as part of any scheme would therefore be in addition to those already approved or allocated by the Core Strategy.

At the time of preparing this report, the Council has confirmed in its recently published Housing Land Supply statement that it has a 4.2 year housing land supply.

As part of the changes introduced by the 2023 NPPF, the Council became a “paragraph 77” Authority, in that it is only required to demonstrate a 4 year housing land supply as a result of it having a draft Local Plan to Regulation 19 stage. The December 2023 NPPF contained two important amended/new paragraphs concerning housing supply and delivery, as follows –

*76. Local planning authorities are not required to identify and update annually a supply of specific deliverable sites sufficient to provide a minimum of five years’ worth of housing for decision making purposes if the following criteria are met:*

*a) their adopted plan is less than five years old; and*

*b) that adopted plan identified at least a five year supply of specific, deliverable sites at the time that its examination concluded.*

*77. In all other circumstances, local planning authorities should identify and update annually a supply of specific deliverable sites sufficient to provide either a minimum of five years’ worth of housing, or a minimum of four years’ worth of housing if the provisions in paragraph 226 apply. The supply should be demonstrated against either the housing requirement set out in adopted strategic policies, or against the local housing need where the strategic policies are more than five years old. Where there has been significant under delivery of housing over the previous three years, the supply of specific deliverable sites should in addition include a buffer of 20% (moved forward from later in the plan period). National planning guidance provides further information on calculating the housing land supply, including the circumstances in which past shortfalls or over-supply can be addressed.*

Paragraph 226 referred to in paragraph 77 states the following –

*226. From the date of publication of this revision of the Framework, for decision-making purposes only, certain local planning authorities will only be required to identify and update annually a supply of specific deliverable sites sufficient to provide a minimum of four years’ worth of housing (with a buffer, if applicable, as set out in paragraph 77) against the housing requirement set out in adopted strategic policies, or against local housing need where the strategic policies are more than five years old, instead of a minimum of five years as set out in paragraph 77 of this Framework. This policy applies to those authorities which have an emerging local plan that has either been submitted for examination or has reached Regulation 18 or Regulation 19 (Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012) stage, including both a policies map and proposed allocations towards meeting housing need. This provision does not apply to authorities who are not required to demonstrate a housing land supply, as set out in paragraph 76. These arrangements will apply for a period of two years from the publication date of this revision of the Framework.*

At the time of writing a revised Draft NPPF has just been published. This is a consultation document, and a finalised version is unlikely to be available until at least Autumn 2024. The

revised version suggests that that above changes to the 2023 NPPF will effectively be reversed, and hence the need to have a 5 year housing land supply may be reintroduced. However, this carries limited / no weight at the moment.

However, regardless of the above, it should also be noted that even if the housing land supply fell below the housing requirement in the NPPF, the presumption in paragraph 11 that permission should be granted unless 'any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits' is not engaged as the proposal directly affects designated heritage assets – including the Old Sarum Airfield Conservation Area which extends to cover all three of the proposed development areas within the site.

### Planning History

The recent planning history related to this site is a significant material consideration.

Previous application ref 15/04004/OUT as listed in the planning history elsewhere in the report was subject of a non-determination appeal in late 2017. A detailed officer report was then provided to a subsequent Strategic Planning Committee in January 2018, which advised Members of the various issues, and recommended that if officers had been able to, they would have recommended refusal of the scheme. Members agreed with officers regards the recommendation, and subsequently, the Council provide 7 putative (retrospective) refusal reasons as part of its appeal case. The subsequent appeal was subject of a protracted Public Inquiry in late 2018, early 2019. The Inspector subsequently dismissed the appeal. In 2020, the appeal decision was subject of a legal challenge by the applicant. The High Court however dismissed the challenge, confirming that the appeal inspector's decision had been soundly based. The judge in that case concluded at paras 98 & 99:

*“98. Subject always to the statutory protections and requirements where national and local heritage is concerned, CS Core Policy 25 provides a framework of reference. The current position with the Airfield has some negative consequences for all. With care, rigour, respect for the - quite remarkable - heritage involved, a commitment to quality and a constructive approach I cannot see that an outcome involving appropriate development need elude the parties. A statement of common ground, absent in the present case as Mr Mohamed highlighted, would be crucial in any future dialogue, as something on which the parties could build, let alone in any future proceedings.*

*99. To that end there is a great deal in the Decision, for which this judgment is no substitute, that repays constructive reading by the parties.”*

A full copy of the previous Inspectors decision from application 15/04004/OUT is attached to this report, and relevant excerpts from that decision have been included in this report. This should be read in conjunction with this officer report. The recent approval of Listed Building Consent in relation to the rebuilding of Hangar 3 is also a material consideration of weight.

Regards the Inspectors decision, and the general policy and principle matters, it can be seen that the Inspector refers to these matters in detail throughout her decision, and in particular, paras 10 and 11 of the decision which refer to the development of policy CP25, which reflect officer advice above. Para 10 reads as follows:

*“10. CS Core Policy 25 seeks to deliver a number of outcomes to secure sympathetic new development on the airfield perimeter. The number, type and mix of development is not specified in the policy. The inclusion of residential development is specifically mentioned within the accompanying text to the policy which indicates that sympathetic new development on the Airfield perimeter, including high quality residential use will be allowed, but only where it can be fully demonstrated that it will deliver the outcomes identified in CS Core Policy 25. The three areas for development are identified on an accompanying plan to CS Core Policy 258. The policy does not set out the specificity of development mix and numbers of homes. This is a matter which should be design led taking into account all the factors set out in policy as well as other material considerations.”*

### Summary

As a consequence of the above matters, whilst the principle of some development, including some housing, is in principle accepted by policy CP25, the specific form, and quantum of any such development will clearly only be acceptable if the proposals are deemed to meet the requirements of policy CP25, and the aims of the Core Strategy as a whole. The following sections of the report deal with the consideration of the outline scheme as submitted.

## **9.2. Design, and overall impact on wider Conservation Area/heritage assets**

Old Sarum airfield is a significant heritage asset. It has one of the most significant and complete groups of technical buildings representative of a Training Depot Station from the First World War period in the South West of England. It also, uniquely for any of the key surviving sites of the period up to 1918, retains its grass flying field with no perimeter tracks. Within the airfield perimeter are three surviving Grade II\* hangars. They were constructed in 1918 and are again relatively rare survivals from this period reflected in their Grade II\* designation. Other Grade II buildings also survive within the site.

The site and its immediate environs remain largely as they were when the appeal was determined. The wider area also contains numerous historical features of interest, including the Old Sarum Ancient Monument and its Conservation Area. There are other listed buildings in the immediate and wider vicinity, including Longhedge House, and the nearby Tollgate house. Some distance from the airfield to the east is located Figsbury Ring Scheduled Ancient Monument. As a consequence of this, the Council commissioned a study to assess the significance of the airfield (the Atkins report referred to by third parties and consultees), and subsequently, the whole site has been designated as a Conservation Area since 2007.

### Previous application and appeal decision

Members previously considered that regards the previous application scheme, they would have been minded to refuse for heritage reasons, due to the impacts on the Conservation Areas and the heritage assets. Details of the scheme were considered too sketchy at that time, and the quantum of development considered excessive. The visually amalgamation of the development areas as seen from the Old Sarum monument was an issue. The previous appeal proposal for this site subject of application 15/04004/OUT was dismissed by the Inspector primarily on design and heritage grounds. The previous Inspector's decision is attached in full, and relevant extracts from her decision are contained elsewhere in this report.

### National planning policy

From the point of view of the historic environment the main statutory tests are set out within the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. Section 66 requires that special regard be given to the desirability of preserving listed buildings, their settings or any features of special architectural or historic interest which they possess. Section 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 also requires the Council to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of designated Conservation Areas.

Since the previous appeal scheme was determined, guidance with NPPF has been updated a few times, although the Section on Heritage impacts remains largely unchanged in its overall emphasis. Section 16 of the NPPF 'Conserving and enhancing the historic environment' sets out the Government's high-level policies concerning heritage and sustainable development. Paragraphs 207-9 of the NPPF require a balanced approach with any harm which would be caused being weighed against the potential public benefits which might be achieved. Paragraph 203 requires local planning authorities should take account of the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness. National Planning Practice Guidance provides guidance on interpreting the NPPF

NPPF design policy has been updated following the introduction of the National Design Guide and Code, with the introduction of Section 12 "Achieving well designed and beautiful places". Paragraph 139 of the NPPF 2023 indicates that "*..Development that is not well designed should be refused, especially where it fails to reflect local design policies and government guidance on design, taking*

into account any local design guidance and supplementary planning documents such as design guides and codes. Conversely, significant weight should be given to:

a) development which reflects local design policies and government guidance on design, taking into account any local design guidance and supplementary planning documents such as design guides ; and/or

b) outstanding or innovate designs which promote high levels of sustainability, or help raise the standard of design more generally in an area , so long as they fit in with the overall form and layout of their surroundings.”

### Development Plan policies

Policy CP51, CP57 & 58 of the WCS remains as it was when the previous appeal scheme was considered, and deal generally with landscape impact (CP51), amenity and design issues in a broad context (CP57), and heritage impact matters (CP58). Wiltshire Council's Core Strategy Policy CP57 'Ensuring high quality design and place shaping'.

In 2024, the Wiltshire Design Guide was adopted. This document elaborates on adopted Core Policy 57, and is now a material consideration in the determination of planning applications. The guides contents are structured around the 10 characteristics of design as recognized in the National Design Guide. This document echoes the NPPF guidance at paragraph 2.2.7 that "Seeking pre-application advice is recommended for all applications where available". At paragraph 2.2.8, it also indicates that outline applications "should still consider certain design expectations as these will be key factors in the financial viability and deliverability of projects", including developer contributions, abnormal infrastructure costs, and additional costs allowances. Section 5.1 and 5.2 refers to connected networks of routes for all modes of transport and the prioritizing of active travel. Other sections cover Blue and Green Infrastructure and detailed design and materials.

The Laverstock and Ford Neighbourhood Plan was also adopted in 2022, and this contains design led policies, and a Parish Design Guide, as referred to elsewhere in this document (see Policy section).

### 9.21 Development Masterplan

The supporting text of the above policy CP25 at the last line on para 5.121 indicates that:

*".....The Master Plan will be developed in partnership with the local community, local planning authority and the developer prior to any application being considered."*

As submitted with the application, the "Masterplan" simply comprises a number of the drawings and is supported by the EIA information. However, a "masterplan" can come in many forms and there is no definition of what form or content a masterplan can or must take/include.

The quality of the public consultation undertaken to inform the document has however been disputed by several third parties, who have generally indicated that the document was not drawn up in partnership with others, and that its contents therefore do not reflect the views of the local community.

On this point, the previous appeal Inspector makes the following point, at para 67:

*67. "...Whilst the accompanying text to the CS Policy does refer to the masterplan being developed in partnership with the local community and the Council, I am also conscious that although the appellant company has not stuck strictly to the letter of that text, in an attempt to move the development forward they have used the planning application consideration of the scheme as a means of consultation and evolving the proposal. **I consider this responds to the spirit of the policy in seeking to enhance the heritage value of the Airfield in a timely fashion...."**(my emphasis)*

Therefore, based on the Inspectors reasoning above, whilst the ideal scenario would have been

that a previously agreed and adopted Masterplan would have been developed prior to this application being submitted, ultimately, the applicants are entitled to submit a formal planning application with what they consider to be appropriate supporting information and ask for it to be considered by the Local Planning Authority.

However, it remains the case that the scheme subject of this application flows from the Master Plan. Hence, the acceptability of the Master Plan is intrinsically linked to the acceptability of the application proposal.

### Conservation Management Plan

Criteria (i) of the main policy text of CP25 states that: “..... *A long-term proactive strategy for the enhancement of the Conservation Area including management plan and public access and visitor/interpretive material on its historic relevance.*” The applicants Plan include the following measures:

- A development master plan, which sets out proposals for high quality development that takes opportunities to enhance the historic environment and improve the visual and functional association between historic hangars and the grass flying field along with a package of aviation heritage related initiatives;
- Repair of hangar 3 which is in poor condition;
- Retaining hangar 3 in use for aircraft storage and ancillary aviation uses, which is its original design use and optimum beneficial use.
- Enhancement of the setting of the designated hangars by demolishing/removing the unattractive development ‘clutter’ which currently segregates the hangars from the flying field and by maintaining the aircraft movements between the hangars and the flying field which are key to their setting and understanding of their cultural value;
- Initiating a training programme for historic aircraft repair and conservation skills;
- Providing improved public access to the flying field and the rest of the conservation area through the creation of linked footpaths with specific viewing points to show the relationship between the grass flying field and the listed WWI hangars, of key significance as identified in the revised listing descriptions;
- Highlighting the line of the Portway across area A which enhances the setting of the Scheduled monument by showing more clearly its relationship with the roman road;
- Working with neighbouring owners to link the footways to a wider system leading to the scheduled monument and other destination sites in the area, making them more attractive to visit on foot
- Control of agricultural activity on the airfield to avoid negative impact on the setting of the hangars and avoid damage to the below ground archaeology.

### Overall design issues related to the development areas

#### Area A

This land is currently of an open character. It is bounded by hedging along its northern parts, with the large industrial units to the north east. The land (and that for Area B & C) is clearly visible from the surrounding area, including the adjacent Old Sarum Monument, and the Ford road to the south. It is the adjacent airfield and commercial buildings, and also the more recent developments of Old Sarum and Longhedge. The site is and will be readily visible looking northwards from the higher land associated with the Country Park to the south of the site.



Original layout of Area as appeal scheme (302 dwellings)

Area A was previously laid out as the plan above with 302 dwellings, and a southern building line level with Area B buildings. In respect of the previous appeal scheme above and Area A, the Inspector indicated from paras 38 onwards to 45 of her decision that in relation to the previous scheme:

- The development of Area A would unquestionably erode the open character and appearance of the Conservation Area. That erosion would also diminish the setting of the listed Airfield buildings merely in so far as it forms part of the Airfield itself
- The business park, as an unsympathetic block of uninspiring, indifferent, urban, industrial sheds is particularly harmful in views from the SAM being a strongly negative element in its wider setting.
- The Illustrative Master Plan does not convince me that a development of the density and dwelling number and type could be accommodated appropriately within Area A,
- A successful development of Area A needs to create its own sense of place taking into account the sensitivity of its location where its relationship with various heritage assets is of paramount importance
- The fundamentals of the layout and design of Area A are not matters which should be put off to a later decision in the context of this sensitive location where heritage considerations are to the fore.

The Inspector did however welcome the re-establishment of the line of the Roman Road as a public benefit of the scheme, at her paragraph 57.

#### Revisions to Area A

In response to the appeal inspectors comments and following their own private consultation discussions with Historic England, the applicants have reduced Area A to 160 dwellings, from 302 dwellings as proposed at appeal, and set back the housing from the main runway and open area, as the plan below. The route of the Roman Road remains emphasized, and additional computer renderings of the proposed dwellings, views and vistas have been submitted.

The applicants have submitted a Design Code which outlines the type and form of development



and materials which could be utilised. The intention being that a planning condition could be imposed on any future approval which tied any future development to the design principles in the Design Code.



Revised layout of Area A 160 dwellings

As before, the layout of the scheme would retain the route of an old roman road which originally ran from the end of the adjacent Portway road, towards Old Sarum Monument. Dwellings would then be arranged around this feature. This is welcomed, and in line with the Inspectors comments reiterated above. The additional illustrative material submitted with this current application demonstrates that the route of this heritage asset would be enhanced.



Indicative View 5- View identifying the alignment of the former Roman Road crossing Area A

As before, landscaping is proposed along the western edge of the development, with vehicular access being created off the Portway road to the northern edge of the site, and to the north east, off the existing road system that currently serves part of the adjacent industrial estate and the airfield. As before, the creation of the accesses would result in the loss of part of some of the existing mature hedging which sits along the northern edge.

The submitted indicative details for this area show a housing development of contemporary design, with the 3 storey apartment buildings located adjacent to the airfield perimeter to the south east (see graphic below). Whilst a line of hedging is shown on the indicative plan between the apartments and the runway area, unless this hedging was in time allowed to grow significantly in height, the proposed apartments would be readily visible from the south from the Country Park area. These apartments would be visible obliquely from Old Sarum Monument, as shown by the applicants drawings. The applicants submitted building heights plan indicates that many of the buildings on Area A could be up to 13.8m in height, with the remainder being up to 12.8m in height.



Above : Graphic of proposed apartments adjacent the airfield Area A southern edge

Whilst landscaping has been suggested along the western edge of the development, given the overall massing of the residential buildings being proposed, it would seem likely that any such landscaping would only serve a general softening role in terms of the visual impact of the development. The Council's Landscape officer comments confirm this assertion.

Details within the design code document suggest dwellings of mixture of materials including various brick colours/types with contemporary metal style cladding and timber cladding, and standing seam metal roofing (some traditional pitched, or barrel vault curved shaped), as well as more "traditional" grey tile. The elevational designs also show townhouse design and materials reflecting those already permitted on the adjacent Old Sarum development. The applicants have also submitted supporting photomontages and sectional drawings.

Historic England, indicates that in terms of the development of Area and the retention of the line of the Roman Road (extract):

*..The removal of more of the open ground **will erode the significance of the monument further as the open landscape and rural nature of its setting is developed. This will cause some harm, but less than that which would have occurred had the 2019 application been allowed.***

*While the construction of housing in Area A will continue to cause some harm through eroding the open character of the airfield and infringing upon the open setting of Old Sarum, the enhancements to the Roman Road and the screening of the industrial units are considered to provide some heritage benefits" (officer emphasis).*

The Historic England comments goes onto confirm:

*"When considered against the heritage benefits of the improved relationship and visual **accessibility of the former Roman Road route**, and the screening of the 20th century industrial buildings around the Airfield, we consider this harm to have been mitigated as far as possible. **The development now follows better the requirements of Core Policy 25**". (officer emphasis)*

The Council's Conservation officer has indicated the following regards the adjustment to Area A:

*“Notwithstanding the limited certainty provided by an outline application, the illustrative material for Area A has been revised, the buildings at the southern edge have become 3-storeyed blocks of flats with cambered roofs imitating the hangars, and they’re aligned differently. Fundamentally however, it is still an extensive development of an area noted for its open landscape character and clearly intrudes into the foreground setting of the hillfort. The open character of this area would be lost completely and the visual experience of the relationship between Old Sarum and the airfield, and of the airfield itself, would be significantly altered.*

*This harm is not confined to the setting of the hillfort, it is a significant impact on the character of the CA and an area of the airfield that has historically been used for flying activity”.*

The Council’s Urban Design Officer has also raised detailed concerns regarding Area A particularly in relation to the coverage and scale (mass(ing) and height) of development presented and the visual impact this would have on the context and setting of the Old Sarum Ancient Monument.

### Impact of Area A

It is considered that the redesign of Area A improves upon the appeal scheme, in terms of the significant reduction in the number of dwellings from 302 to 160, and the subsequent reduction in the overall area taken up by development, which allows Area A to be set back some distance from the airstrip area. The approximate area of reduction since the previous scheme is shown on the plan extract below, (blue area).



Blue area – reduction in Area A extent

The overall layout of the dwellings in Area A as now suggested would appear to following a generally “traditional” housing layout format similar to other modern housing estates with normal parking arrangements and areas adjacent to dwellings or within plots, and with feature buildings at prominent points throughout the development.

However, the revised scheme does still include a number of prominent apartment blocks along the southern edge of Area A facing the airfield and associated open land. Although the surrounding area does indeed contain multi-storey apartment blocks at the Old Sarum and Longhedge sites, and the Riverdown Park housing development to the south of Roman Road, these buildings are not quite as tall or as bold in architectural terms as those suggested for Area A. The applicants own building heights drawing suggests that the buildings in Area A would be a maximum of 12.8 and 13.8m high.

The Parish Design Guide, which forms part of the Laverstock and Ford Neighbourhood Plan, suggests that no development should exceed 50 dwellings (page 5, section 6 “Impact on surrounding Landscape”, subsection 6.6). The same section, subsection 6.3 and 6.4, indicate that:

6.3 All structures should be limited to a maximum height of 10 m (2.5 storeys), with the upper storey within the roof, reducing in height at higher elevations within a site to minimise visual intrusion of the roofscape.

6.4 Structures should not extend above the skyline from viewpoints outside the development

Officers remain to be convinced that even well designed and detailed apartment blocks and housing of the scale suggested and in this prominent location could alleviate the existing visual detriment to the landscape caused by the existing industrial buildings, particularly as the designs are illustrative only due to the outline nature of the application.

Thus, officers also remain to be convinced that a scheme based on the indicative layout and designs would provide a high quality residential development that would satisfactorily mitigate the impacts of existing buildings and be in accordance with the criteria set out in Policy CP25.

#### Impact on Beehive Toll House

This grade 2 listed building is located some distance to the south of Area A. Its immediate setting and context was altered significantly a number of years ago with the construction of the park and ride complex and the associated roundabout and access junctions. Given this, and the distance from the application site, it is considered that the character and setting of the building is unlikely to be affected to any significant degree.

#### Area B

Area B is located along the east facing edge of the existing airfield and adjacent commercial buildings. It is readily visible from the surrounding landscape. Part of the reasoning behind Core Policy 25 is to mitigate the visual impacts of the existing buildings in this location, particularly the modern industrial buildings.

The previous appeal proposal (below) envisaged a number of buildings along this edge, the intention being that a visual gap is left between any new development which would improve the setting of the listed hangars, along with the removal of other ancillary clutter and buildings in this area.



Previous layout for Area B appeal scheme

In respect of the previous appeal scheme, the Inspector indicated that (at para 29, 30,31):

***“29 ... The setting of the buildings has been unfortunately eroded by modern development, to a point where it is only where the hangars and Airfield are experienced in close physical***

association that the union and mutual inter-dependency of the Airfield and the hangars, as an expression of its war time service, can still be appreciated.”(officer emphasis)

30. Further, whilst outside of the Airfield Conservation Area, **the buildings of the business park are intrusive and neither preserve nor enhance its character and appearance (officer emphasis).**

31.. The plans and design concepts are accepted as being for illustrative purposes only, **but they do present an exciting and innovative glimpse at what could be achieved at Old Sarum revitalising the flying field and paying respectful homage to its past, whilst embracing its future firmly based in a continuation of flying from the Airfield. The buildings would also serve to physically frame views of the listed hangars as a centrally located aviation focus, creating a clear statement of the aviation purpose of Old Sarum, something which is currently lacking as described above. ....The development of Area B in the way indicated in Inquiry Document 36 would significantly enhance the hangars’ setting as well as their historic interest creating a modern expression of the original wartime flying hub. In this way the character and appearance of the Conservation Area would also be enhanced. The close proximity of any new flying hub buildings to the business park would have little impact on the openness of the Airfield, nor of the wider countryside setting of Old Sarum SAM from which the new buildings would be visible, but would be seen in the context of the Airfield with the potential to draw the eye from the urban/industrial buildings of Castlegate (officer emphasis).**



Above: Revised layout for Area B

### Revised scheme for Area B

The revised scheme subject of this application is in terms of its layout, similar to the appeal scheme, albeit that the aviation hub building has been repositioned to the northern part of Area B from its previous southern location as part of the appeal scheme. The revised scheme now shows 4 hangars/industrial buildings in the southern part of Area B, and 3 hangars/industrial buildings and the aviation building in the northern part of Area B. Previous sketches submitted as part of the appeal scheme have been resubmitted, together with computer renderings/sections of the Area B buildings. (Although 6 hangars are shown on one of the layout drawings for Area B, and this number has been referred to in the applicant’s viability data).

The applicants submitted ES at 6.2.9 explains Area B proposal as follows:

6.2.9 This area will comprise 2.83ha of land and will accommodate a new flying hub envisaged to comprise B2/B8/E(a-c)/E(g)/sui generis type development plus specific sui generis/F(c),(d) uses associated with continuing flying activities, **however these uses are subject to further agreement**. Specific proposals include the refurbishment of the WW1 hangar, improved connectivity of listed buildings to the airfield, new control tower, restaurant, fast food cafe, seminar/training rooms, museum wall, parachute centre, library/archive space and private aircraft hangars. **A residential component (use class C3) may also be incorporated**. Access will be from Lancaster Road. Proposals also include the demolition and removal of structures detrimental to the historic hangar frontage (**officer emphasis**).

Regards the above, it is noted that the use classes being proposed are of a broad range, and it is not specified that such uses would relate to the airfield, with Classes B2 & B8 being general industrial use, and storage and distribution uses. Class E uses referred to relate to retail and similar uses. It is noted that the uses are intended for "further agreement". It is also noted that a residential component is referred to. However, this element was deleted as part of the previous application, and thus it is assumed that the first floor of the hangar buildings would be ancillary to the use of the ground floors. The maximum amount of housing for the scheme as whole is 315 dwellings (on which all the assessments for the application are presumably predicated), and this figure does not allow for any residential uses in Area B.

Historic England has indicated as follows:

*In terms of Area B, the proposed development is positioned so as to limit the direct impact on the relationship between the Hangars and the airstrip. The airstrip would need to be moved to accommodate these hangars. However, the grass airstrip has historically occupied a number of different positions. **The form of the development proposed in Area B, with its aesthetic inspired by historic aviation, will create a positive visual relationship with the airfield.***

However, the Council's Conservation Officer indicates that:

***"I do not agree with Historic England and the appeal inspector that Area B development is justified for the purpose of screening the modern industrial buildings. The scheme is so bold that it completely dominates the historic character of the airfield with buildings for which there is no historic precedent, and creates a new character area of its own, rather than respecting the distinct character of the defined areas that are an important characteristic of the CA. The functions of all but one of the Area B buildings are unnecessary for operation of the airfield. Of note is the 'building heights' plan which shows the Area B buildings to be 'up to 14m' – the existing hangars are about 9.5m and the industrial units are mostly 8-9m, the tallest being the former Equinox building at 10.5m. The modern commercial buildings replaced the destroyed hangar and extended the built area to the west, but retained the general characteristic of large industrial sheds and the relationship with the flying field by maintaining a strict building line aligned with the south side of the central hangar. The inspector's view that 'creating a modern expression of the original wartime flying hub' would be an enhancement is certainly an interesting interpretation but the real 'original wartime flying hub' is already there to be experienced and enjoyed. I am not persuaded that screening one set of commercial buildings with another set (and which are taller with visually pronounced shaded eaves) would preserve or enhance the situation regarding visibility and intrusivity of modern development around the listed buildings or the character of the CA as expected by PLBCA Act 1990, although the inspector's explicit opinion cannot be ignored.***

*It is unclear whether the building shown at the NE corner on some drawings, near the squash courts, is intended – **it's on the concept masterplan but not the Area B-specific document (8441 A01)**: this building is objectionable as it stands further forward of both the proposed and existing units and intrudes into the long view from the hillfort of the flying strip with its parallel buildings and the view along the strip from within the airfield. The character of the proposed buildings, especially the 'restaurant/aviation' building, seems to be loosely inspired by early commercial airport terminals yet, as the Atkins report notes, the absence of such post 1938 interventions is key to the special interest of the site" (**officer emphasis**)*

The Council's Urban Design officer also raises issues regards Area B in terms of the hangar buildings being readily visible when viewed from the Old Sarum Monument in the context of Area A.

### Impact of Area B

It is clear that the overall design and its impact on the heritage asset has resulted in a difference of opinion between the consultees and the previous planning Inspector for the appeal, who's comments suggest that the previous Area B scheme was generally acceptable in terms of its heritage impacts. Historic England on the other hand seem to suggest that given the heritage improvement which would result from the rebuilding of Hangar 3, that the overall harm to the wider heritage asset might be acceptable. Historic England do however indicate that the final decision in terms of the balance of the harm to the heritage asset should be a decision for the Council.

It is accepted that policy CP25 allows for potential development within Area B, but that is subject to the impacts of that development. Furthermore, whilst CP25 refers to the enhancement of facilities at the airfield, no quantum or scale is provided.

The buildings in Area B are shown on the submitted building heights plan as being up to 14m in height. As highlighted in the section of the report above regards Area 1, the Laverstock and Ford Neighbourhood Plan Design Guide contains a policy related to restricting heights of buildings (page 5, section 6 "Impact on surrounding Landscape" subsection 6.3 and 6.4). The suggested heights of Area B buildings exceeds this requirement.

The use of the hangar buildings is somewhat unclear, as a range of uses is provided as part of the application, including a reference to possible residential use in the environmental statement. The submitted layout plan for Area B (extract above) and the sketch plans however show the upper floors of the hangar buildings as being "Hangar/Ancillary and B1 use". Class B1 use was removed a few years ago, and absorbed into Class E by the 2020 Use Classes Order changes, and general office use is now Class E (g). It is assumed the upper floor would therefore be utilized for general office and or ancillary storage use, but the plans are not clear in that respect.

As with the previous appeal scheme, the sketch elevations and computerized elevations of the hangars still show a residential character particularly on their visible east elevations, which contained first floor glazing and balconies. It is presumed that buildings intended to operate as aircraft hangars would be simpler structures with far less need for glazing. This would then affect the visual appearance of the buildings and their visual impact, and possibly their height. A glazed upper floor on all the hangar buildings across Area B would be likely to significantly increase the visibility of the buildings from a distance.



Proposed elevation of hangar buildings and aviation building facing airfield



Whilst the applicant's intention was to produce buildings which would screen the existing industrial units, no justification for the height/scale of the hangar buildings is provided at present, and no justification for the number of buildings proposed. The discrepancy in the number of hangars shown on the specific Area B plans (6) compared to other plans (7).

Whilst it is accepted that in improving the currently limited restaurant facilities, some increase in scale is acceptable, the applicant has not explained in any detail why the new control tower needs to be of the scale suggested to serve the needs of the airfield, particularly in the context of any future agreed restrictions on the operation of the airfield.

Whilst matters such as scale and design could be dealt with via any future reserved matters application, if the current plans and Design Code document was to be conditioned as part of any outline consent, this would make it very difficult for the Council to refuse any buildings along this eastern edge which would be approximately of the scale and design suggested in the Code or submitted sketches.

Therefore, whilst in principle, the provision of enhanced facilities associated with the operation of the airfield and its business, as well as to provide ancillary uses which have a synergy with the airfield operation is welcomed, in the absence of suitable justification or details of the scale of the buildings, or clarification regards the overall height and use, officers remain to be convinced that the buildings being proposed along this very visible edge could not be reduced in scale and height considerably, and thus the final visual impact of the scheme on the heritage assets and surrounding area could not be equally reduced, as well as potentially reducing the cost of construction.

#### Repair/enhancement to Listed Hangar on site

Hangar 3 was in a state of disrepair during the course of the previous application and appeal process. The previous appeal Inspector listed the restoration of Hangar 3 as one of the public benefits of the scheme, and stated as follows at paragraph 50 of her decision:

*".....Even in the context of the possibility that the building would be repaired outside of the proposed scheme I ascribe considerable weight to the early reversal of the hangar's current decline"(officer emphasis)*

Similarly, the removal of the unsympathetic more recent buildings and structures in Area B were also listed as a public benefit by the appeal Inspector at her paragraph 51. Likewise, the Inspector also listed the improvements to the flying field, and the extension and improvement of the existing flying hub as public benefits of the scheme, in her paragraphs 52-54.

The applicant's submitted scheme indicates that as part of the overall development of Area B, repair works to the listed hangar 3 will take place. Indeed, during the lifetime of this planning application, a listed building application was submitted and approved for repair works to this hangar. As a result of recent storm damage, the hangar is now currently in a very much deteriorated state compared to its condition at the time of the previous appeal. The applicants



estimates that these repairs would cost some £3 million pounds, and have provided a detailed run-down of the works which need undertaking.

Such repair is of course welcomed in principle. Historic England has stated the following:

*“However, **the condition of Hangar 3 remains of major concern**, and part of the proposal is its repair and reuse. Sufficient evidence has now been supplied to demonstrate that the hangar can be restored/rebuilt.*

***The proposed rebuild/restoration of the hangar is a major heritage benefit.** The harm caused by the proposed new development that we have identified above **has been minimised as far as possible through good design.** We are content that in heritage terms alone, **the heritage benefits outweigh the heritage harm.** There will, of course, be wider planning issues for your authority to consider upon which Historic England are not qualified to comment (**officer emphasis**).*

However, whilst Historic England consider that the repair/rebuild of hangar 3 is enough to outweigh the heritage harm of the wider proposal, the Council's Conservation officer has stated that:

*“Historic England caveat their response by expressing concern that the level of benefit is being eroded by deterioration of the hangar, noting that it could be lost completely. If this had occurred already, would the council consider that the other benefits of the proposals were sufficient to outweigh the harms? Certainly, a replica building (if that were achievable) would contribute visually to the character of the CA and setting of the other hangars, but it would have lost the majority of its significance. It would be difficult to argue that the levels of harm to the character of the airfield would be outweighed by the construction of a replica.”*

Previously, as part of the original appeal scheme, because there was a lack of clarity in relation to the exact scope of works and which buildings/ hangars are affected, and without a detailed S106 agreement to secure such works or funds, this matter was included within the putative reasons for refusal. However, this particular matter has now been resolved with the approval of the 2024 listed building consent, and it is considered that the repair of the hangar, and the timing of those repairs, could be subject of a suitable planning condition.

### Area C

This site is readily visible, both from the Ford Roman Road, and the wider area to the south east, around Ford and the Country Park. Equally, it would be readily visible from Green Lane to the east.



Previous appeal scheme layout Area C

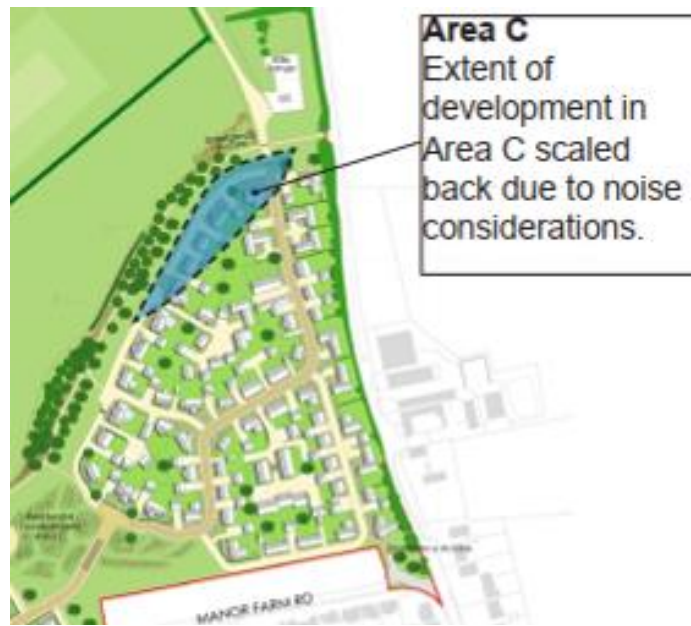
As above, the previous appeal scheme proposed up to 160 dwellings in this location. In respect of that previous appeal scheme, the Inspector indicated at para 33 to 36 that:

33. ....***The ridge and downward slope would, in my judgement, serve to conceal any new development in Area C from views from across the Airfield28 or from Old Sarum SAM. (officer emphasis)*** The landscape strategy is to plant up the ridge with trees to create a firm visual edge to the operational Airfield.

35. ***From more distant views in the landscape looking across the Airfield Conservation Area from the north-east, new homes in Area C would be viewed in the context of Ford village and in adopting a sympathetic design and layout, reflecting the character of this rural settlement, a strong relationship in character and appearance terms could be established (officer emphasis)***

36. ***Nonetheless, in respect of its importance to the significance of the Conservation Area and, to a lesser extent, to the setting of listed buildings on the far-side of the Airfield from Area C, the development site still forms part of the wider airfield context and the development of this part of the Airfield would represent an erosion of the wider Conservation Area, diminishing the openness of the grassed operational area with consequential harm to appearance and character of heritage assets and their significance ( officer emphasis).***

Area C has been reduced in area as per the plan extract below:



The current revised scheme shows up to 155 dwellings, as the plan below:



Revised Area C (northern part)



Revised Area C (southern part)

The submitted information show a suburban style development, which if suitable conditioned, may in general terms result in a scheme which could be generally acceptable (in design terms), as the previous appeal Inspector suggests. However, the building heights plan submitted indicates that the 2 storey dwellings on the site would be a maximum height of 10.2 metres, and the 2.5 storey buildings on the site would be a maximum of 12.8 metres in height. As shown by the previous appeal documents, the applicants own landscape visual assessment document indicates that some of the roofs of the dwellings, along the northern most part of the housing in Area C would be visible from the environs of the aircraft hangars, and from the Old Sarum Ancient monument, as photomontage below (yellow wire frame refers to proposed development).



Historic England has commented thus regards Area C:

*“The proposed development at Area C will **just be visible from Old Sarum, though planting will screen the development. It will further reduce the open nature of the Conservation Area**, but the harm is towards **the lower end of the wide range** of impacts encompassed by the broad spectrum of less than substantial harm.”(officer emphasis)*

Historic England do not raise an issue with regards the design of Area C.

The Council’s Conservation Officer also indicates that: *“Roofs of the new buildings and their boundary treatments would be visible from the airstrip, as can be seen in Appendix 10.3.”*

Similarly, the Council’s Urban Design officer highlights the same matter and queries whether the intended landscape screening would mitigate the impact, particularly during autumn and winter.

## Impact of Area C

Area C has been reduced by 5 dwellings since the previous appeal scheme. Whilst the comments of Historic England are noted, it is considered that the proposal remains very similar in its likely impacts to the previous appeal scheme. Officers have also noted that whilst the sketches seem to suggest housing of a scale reflecting ordinary suburban housing, information supplied by the applicant indicates that some of the suggested properties may be 5 or 6 bedroom properties, with some 2.5 storey buildings located close to the northern edge of the scheme as shown on the applicants building heights plan. There would appear to be some scope to reduce the size of the proposed dwellings and hence reduce the size of Area C and its impact.

The applicants own visual assessment also indicates that part of the northern edge of the development would be visible above the adjacent ridge line, and hence visible from across the open airfield, and visible from Old Sarum Monument. The Parish Design Guide, which forms part of the Laverstock and Ford Neighbourhood Plan, suggests that no development should exceed 50 dwellings (page 5, section 6 "Impact on surrounding Landscape", subsection 6.6). The same section, subsection 6.3 and 6.4 limits heights of buildings in this area.

Similarly, the Green Buffer designated in that Neighbourhood Plan covers the grass airstrip to the immediate north of Area C. A landscape belt is proposed along the northern edge of Area C. Consequently, Area C as suggested would then be likely to have the visual effect of reducing the prominence of the green buffer, when viewing Area C and the green buffer from the southwards direction, particularly with the proposed Area B development in the background.

## Impact of all three development areas - Summary

One of the aims of CP25 (criteria (ii)) is consequently to produce a high quality strategic landscape improvement to mitigate impacts of existing intrusive buildings, to soften impacts when viewed both out and into the Conservation Area and from Old Sarum SAM.

The appeal Inspector concluded in relation to all three areas of previously proposed development at paragraph 47 that: ***The proposed development would represent an erosion of the open character and appearance of the Airfield Conservation Area, the setting of the listed hangars and that of the Old Sarum SAM***

Historic England summarises its position as:

*"While we consider that the layout, disposition, and design of the proposed new housing responds to the character and appearance of the conservation and the setting of nearby heritage assets, there would still a be degree of harm to the character and appearance of the conservation area, through the introduction of built form into historically open land.*

*There would also be a slight degree of harm to the setting of Old Sarum hillfort, a Scheduled Ancient Monument. This is because the hillfort derives some of its significance from its open setting, into which further built form would be introduced.*

*However, to be balanced against this is the significant heritage benefit associated with the restoration/rebuilding of the part-collapsed Hangar 3. In Historic England's view, the heritage benefits of restoring/rebuilding the hangar outweigh the heritage harm I have described above".*

However, the Council's Conservation officer concludes his position as thus:

*"...There would be significant harm to the character of the airfield conservation area, and to a lesser degree the setting of the hangars, caused by the loss of openness and by the siting of development forward of the historic building line for the technical area. This is contrary to the aims of s72 and 66 of PLBCA Act 1990. In addition there would be harm to the setting of the scheduled monument via the development within its setting. The harm caused would be contrary to the aims of the NPPF, CP58 and CP25.*

*...In the absence of any other specific proposals that provide confidence that the public benefits of the scheme can be secured for the long-term future of the airfield, it is my opinion that the heritage benefits which can be secured are limited and insufficient to outweigh the harm that will be caused to the settings of these highly graded assets. I therefore **object** to the approval of the application with regard to its impact on the historic environment..”.*

The planning application is accompanied by a comprehensive Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) that is supported by extensive supporting documentation, including viewpoint photography, verified photomontages and the use of GIS models to represent zones of theoretical visibility. The Council's Landscape officer has commented thus (extract/summary):

*“I am fairly satisfied that landscape concerns I raised in the 15/04004/OUT have been considered in this new iteration....A significant characteristic of Old Sarum is its elevated position that has provided a strategic vantage point for the surveillance of the wider landscape for centuries. The airfield is very much part of the view to the east and the continued use of the air strip will ensure that a clear view across the fields and to the landscape beyond is maintained. I completely accept that any development in Area A can only be filtered rather than screened when viewed from the SAM due to the elevation however it is desirable to maintain an open visual connection to the wider landscape.”*

Taking the above into account, it is considered that it is the quantum of development being proposed by the applicant that appears to be the main source of many of the issues, and the apparent scale (massing) and height) of the development. With regards Area A, it is acknowledged that the number of dwellings has been significantly reduced down to a maximum of 160 dwellings in Area A, and this has allowed the built form to be set back from the airfield area. It is also acknowledged that the line of the Roman Road is better defined than the previous appeal scheme, and that the surrounding housing would be provide a less dense development than the previous appeal scheme, with housing of a design which would be sympathetic in their overall form to the character of the airfield, and the wider residential area beyond. In that respect, the scheme seems to have addressed some of the concerns of the previous appeal Inspector.

However, some of the 160 dwellings are provided by the provision of a number of three storey apartment blocks along the southern edge of Area A. Whilst the scheme is in outline only, the submitted information and Design Code clearly indicates the apartment blocks in this location. Further, in order to fit the quantum of development (ie 160 dwellings) suggested into the reduced envelope of Area A, apartment blocks would have to be provided. Therefore, whatever the final detailed design of these apartment blocks would be at a later reserved matters stage, if the application is approved and tied to the submitted Design Code, then the principle of large apartment blocks in the position and to the scale shown has been accepted.

These apartment blocks would be readily visible from the adjacent open land, and particularly when viewed from a southerly aspect, where they would be seen in a linear fashion. They would create a stark and prominent urban edge to Area A, unsympathetic to the character of the area, and would have an adverse impact on the wider airfield Conservation Area, and the Old Sarum SAM Conservation Area. As a consequence, it is considered that the scheme has not fully overcome the concerns of the previous Inspector regards the overall impact of Area A.

With regards Area B, computer renderings of the planned hangers and main aviation building have now been submitted with this application, alongside the resubmission of the previous sketches submitted as part of the appeal scheme. This helps to visualize the overall likely impact of the Area B. Whilst the Inspectors apparent positive comments regards Area B are noted and are a significant material consideration, and that enhancement of airfield facilities is a stipulation of policy CP25, it is clear that there remains heritage concerns from the Council's Conservation Officer regards the overall impact of these buildings on the wider conservation area, and it is unclear why such significantly sized hangars and a substantial aviation building would be required to service the airfield, particularly when it is intended that the future flying operation of the airfield would be restricted by a number of planning conditions. The hangars are also shown on the submitted plans as being for general light industrial use (previous Class B1 use), and this also suggests that the units may not be needed for the purposes of the airfield operations. Therefore, whilst buildings in this location would also provide a positive function of screening the adjacent

industrial buildings, the quantum and overall scale of development proposed appears to be somewhat disproportionate to meet the needs of an enhanced airfield operation. The applicants own Planning statement notes at point 7.38 that: *“Inevitably, due to the proximity of the development proposed in Areas A and B, significant visual effects would be experienced from Old Sarum SM.”*

In terms of Area C, the number of dwellings would only be reduced to a maximum of 155, down from the maximum 160 proposed as part of the appeal scheme. The applicants own wire-frame drawings still indicate that the dwellings at the top of the rising land would be likely to be visible over the existing ridge from the airfield. The applicants own Planning statement notes at point 7.35 that *“... The construction of houses within Area C would result in a marginal extension of the zone of visibility to include the eastern section of Old Sarum SM..”*

Furthermore, the footprint and overall scale of some of the dwellings in Area C would seem capable of reduction, with a number of them being 5 or 6 bedroom properties. It remains the case that if the amount of dwellings was reduced in Area C, and the overall scale of the dwellings reconsidered, this would reduce its likely visual impact on the airfield Conservation Area and the Old Sarum SAM.

Therefore, whilst the response of Historic England has been taken into consideration, as have the previous concerns of the Inspector regards Area A & C, given the remaining the concerns of the Council's Conservation Officer, it is considered that there would be significant harm to the character of the airfield Conservation Area, and to a lesser degree the setting of the listed existing hangars, caused by the loss of openness and by the siting of development of the scale and quantum forward of the historic building line for the technical area of Area B.

As a whole, it is considered that this scheme would result in “less than substantial harm” to the heritage assets. The NPPF states that ‘less than substantial harm’ may be weighed against the public benefits of a scheme (paragraph 208). The following report will consider whether the harm to the heritage asset is outweighed by the public benefits of the scheme.

### **9.3 Impact on amenity/noise issues**

#### Aircraft Noise issues

One of the main aims of Policy CP25 (criterion 3) is to secure noise controls over the existing airfield operations, as a result of historic complaints from surrounding residents. Core Policy 57 of the WCS generally deals with amenity and disturbance issues. The NPPG also covers noise related matters. More specifically, Central Government's Aviation Policy Framework 2013, Section 3 of the document states:

*“..General aviation and helicopters*

*3.42 ....annoyance can also be caused by smaller aerodromes used for business and general aviation (GA) purposes, especially at times of intensive activity. However, it would not be appropriate for the Government to intervene by exercising powers under section 78 of the Civil Aviation Act 1982 to set noise controls at small aerodromes. Industry has developed codes of practice and the CAA has produced guidance. We would encourage the GA sector and the CAA to review their respective best practice and guidance to reflect the policy adopted in this Policy Framework. We would also encourage the sector to monitor compliance with its codes of practice.*

Hence, one of the main aims of policy CP25 is to improve the amenity of those residents living close to the airfield, and to secure controls over the airfield as part of an enforceable legal agreement. As explained, flying operations at the airfield are not currently subject of any planning controls, and the only way for the Council to impose such controls would be via an agreement with the airfield operators.

#### Previous appeal scheme

The Council stated that it would have been minded to refuse the proposal due to the impact of the proposals on the amenities of residents, particularly in the absence of agreed controls of noise

mitigation and aircraft operations, flying times and numbers on the level of aircraft.

However, as part of the previous appeal scheme, a range of conditions were agreed between the parties. Subsequently, the Inspector stated the following regards amenity issues:

53. *The re-alignment of the airstrip would also serve to reduce the overflying of the Old Sarum SAM. **This would reduce noise in the immediacy of the SAM itself** which would enhance its character.(officer emphasis)*

56. *Control of flying movements which currently remain unrestricted. In the circumstances of the provision of an appropriate mechanism to secure the restriction of hours of use for flying purposes and type of aircraft using the Airfield, **this would be a significant public benefit**. I heard that over time there has been cause to complain about aircraft noise by local residents both in the immediate environs and in Salisbury itself. **The control of the number of aircraft movements along with restricted times of flying would certainly improve noise levels issuing from the use of the Airfield in general**. The proffered monitoring and reporting of aircraft noise would serve to oversee the reasonable controls sought. Resultant improvements to the amenities of local residents should be given considerable weight in any balancing exercise.(officer emphasis)*

#### Current scheme

Further to the previous agreement of planning conditions during the last appeal process, these have been revisited, and the Council's Public Protection officer has now commented as follows with regards to noise from the airfield:

*"...I note the site layout for Areas A and C have been altered for this new application and looking at Appendix 14.3 Figure A11482\_01\_SK001\_4.0 dated 13th June 2023 dwellings are set back from the 57dB contour for Area A, and in Area C the contour is on a road in front of houses so no private outside amenity areas are within the 57dB contour in that diagram.*



Noise contour plan – blue line 57db

*Given these changes in site layout we will not recommend refusal of this application due to the impact of airfield noise, providing suitable conditions are applied to ensure the benefits of this revised layout are taken forward to layouts at reserved matters and there are suitable controls over flying..."*

The Council's public protection officer has suggested a number of restrictive conditions, the essence of which are reiterated below, as they indicate how the development works and the flying operations would be restricted if this application were to be approved.



- *No construction or demolition work or deliveries shall take place on Sundays or Public Holidays or outside the hours of 0800 to 18:00 Monday to Friday and 08:00 to 13:00 on Saturdays.*
- *Submission of a Construction Management Plan*
- *The Runway Strip shall be realigned*
- *No departures or landing by any aircraft shall take place at the airfield between 1900 hrs and 0800 hrs except in cases of emergency or up to 5 returning aircraft based at the Airfield.*
- *No helicopter flying training shall be permitted/take place.*
- *A scheme of monitoring and reporting of aircraft noise shall be submitted*
- *Limitation on the noise level of aircraft landing or taking off from the airfield shall not exceed 57 dB LAeq 16 hours (0700-2300 hrs)*
- *No dwelling on the site including private external amenity areas, shall be subjected to noise exposure greater than 57 dB LAeq 16hrs (0700-2300hrs)*
- *In the event that monitoring shows that the restrictions have been exceeded action shall be taken by the airfield operator to ensure that the breach is remedied*
- *No reserved matters applications for dwelling, including private external amenity space on the sites will be proposed within the blue 57 dB contour line*
- *In relation to any dwellings predicted to be exposed to sound levels above 51dB LAeq 16hours, a written scheme for noise mitigation to be submitted*
- *A detailed electronic record shall be kept of all aviation movements*
- *A record of all complaints received regarding noise from the airfield site shall be kept by the Airfield Operator*
- *Each year the Airfield Operator shall pay the council £5000 towards the cost resources required for reviewing the technical reports mandated by this agreement.*
- *The number of flights per annum (take-off and landing movements) shall not exceed 35,000 per annum.*
- *Regards Area A the developer shall submit a scheme as part of the reserved matters, detailing noise mitigation measures to protect internal noise levels within the proposed dwellings and noise levels of private external amenity areas from commercial and industrial uses*
- *Details of a scheme for protecting the proposed dwellings from external traffic noise shall be submitted*

### Summary

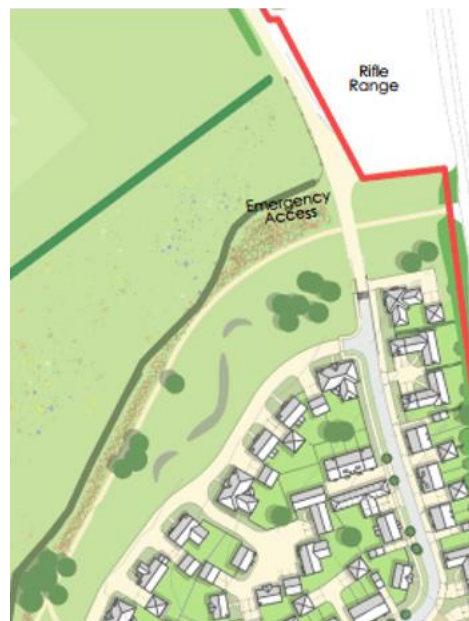
Whilst such matters could be controlled via a very detailed S106 legal agreement as referred to in policy CP25, central government planning advice has evolved since CP25 was originally drafted, and the emphasis now is on using planning conditions to control development, rather than legal agreements. It is therefore considered that subject to the above conditions/restrictions

being put in place and adhered to, the proposal, in terms of its noise impact in aircraft/flying terms, is considered to be acceptable. Criteria iii) of CP25 would therefore be met. (Condition related to £5k monitoring contribution referred to above does however request monies to be paid, and this would need to be secured via a suitable S106).

#### Impact on and from firing range facility

To the north east corner of the site, adjacent to Area C, is located an historic firing range, which once formed part of the MoD airfield use, but is now in separate usage by a civilian pistol group. The range is currently located away from existing dwellings, separated by field systems and part of the airfield land.

As per the appeal scheme, the housing at the northern most end of Area C is shown as being located in close proximity to the existing firing range, as plan below:



Third party objections have been raised from users of this facility, indicating that should Area C be approved as suggested, then it is likely there would be future noise disturbance to the proposed dwellings. The applicants noise evidence has been disputed by third parties, particularly those involved in the operation of the firing range use.

The applicants have undertaken a noise assessment, and maintained that subject to conditions, the relationship between the firing range and Area C would not be problematical.

Based on the applicant's submitted assessment, the Council's Public protection initially advised that this matter can be resolved via appropriate planning conditions. However, having subsequently seen the third party concerns disputing the applicants information, the public protection officer initially revised her comment to one of refusal, but upon receipt of further information at the time of compilation of this report, she has indicated that further information and reassurance is needed regards the mitigation methods to protect adjacent dwellings from noise.

The applicant has been asked to provide further comment, and further information. At this time, a refusal reason based on the above concern has been recommended at the end of this report. However, officers will update members at the meeting should this matter be resolved.

#### Air quality

The applicants have submitted a detailed air quality report, which indicates that there would be unlikely to be an issue regarding this matter, particularly as less polluting vehicles (electric etc) come on stream.

The Council's Public Protection Officer has commented thus regards air quality:

*"The submitted air quality report makes references to our 2012 Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) which was never formally adopted by the council. A new SPD has been developed alongside our new Air Quality Action Plan (AQAP). Both policy documents were subject to a wider public consultation in 2023 and are due to go to cabinet in March/April this year where we expect them both to be formally adopted. 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 increases in nitrogen dioxide at the Salisbury London Road AQMA as high as 2.3 µg/m<sup>3</sup> at receptors (receptor 37 according to report). As such according to our SPD, the site would be classed as a 'Type 3' site and we will require additional documentation as set out in the new SPD. In the absence of this documentation, we would recommend refusal of this application on air quality grounds unless suitable mitigation can be put in place to offset this expected increase in nitrogen dioxide emissions.*

Following receipt of the above concerns, the applicant has been asked to provide comment, and further information has been submitted to the Council which is being considered. At this time, a refusal reason based on the above concern has been recommended at the end of this report. However, officers will update members at the meeting should this matter be resolved.

#### General amenity impacts on existing dwellings

The current residents of Ford are likely to suffer the most significant reduction in residential amenity. The proposed development of Area C surrounds these properties to the north, and the new dwellings would be accessed via Roman Road. Whilst the development of Area C is considered acceptable in principle by CP25, the quantum of development being currently proposed indicates that a number of the dwellings would be located in close proximity to existing dwellings in Ford. Given the elevated nature of part of the site, it is therefore likely that the open aspect and high level of privacy many of the residents currently enjoy over the airfield land would completely alter in character, to a more suburban appearance. However, as previously advised by officers, the detailed design of the scheme is not a matter for consideration at this stage. These are likely to be similarly affected during construction. Following construction and building out of the scheme, it is officer's opinion that the occupiers of existing dwellings to the north of Area A would suffer from increased road and traffic noise, together with a general impact on their aspect and outlook to the east, which at the current time is of a rural character, albeit somewhat affected by the busy A345 road. However, given that the principle of development on Area A is considered acceptable, and the detailed design of the scheme is not a matter for consideration at this stage. This was not raised as an issue by the appeal Inspector previously.

#### General Aircraft and public safety issues

Concern has been expressed by various third parties regard's the suitability of locating development within such close proximity to the operating airfield and airstrip. This issue was not previously a matter the Council raised at appeal, and the Inspector did not refer to it in her decision.

However, this proposal is somewhat unique in that it is the aerodrome operators themselves that are proposing the development adjacent to the operating airfield and airstrip. The applicant is suggesting repositioning the landing strip some 50-70 metres to the south east.

The Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) has not responded to the current application. However, as part of the previous application process, they simply indicated that the location of the development as shown on the submitted plans would be unlikely to affect aircraft safety. However, it reiterated that such safety matters should be discussed with the aerodrome, and that it is the aerodromes responsibility to ensure the safety of the airfield operations. Officers asked the CAA whether there were any minimum distances between the operating airfield and residential dwellings, but they simply reiterated that there were restrictions on heights of buildings, not distances between buildings.

Consequently, as the airfield operators are ultimately responsible for the safety of the airfield and the public, and whilst the various aircraft safety concerns are understandable, it is considered that it would be difficult to refuse the scheme subject of the application on the basis that the development was likely to harm aircraft safety, or hence, likely to harm the safety of the occupiers of any new development on the site.

Therefore, officers do not recommend that the scheme be objected to on an aircraft safety or a related public safety issue.

### Construction Impacts

Notwithstanding the above, the submitted EIA covers the mitigation required to protect neighbouring amenity, and the conditions above will mitigate those impacts. However, it is likely that regardless of any mitigation, general construction works will be likely to lead to a reduction in local residential amenity whilst construction works are carried out, and this could be for a number of years. Consequently, given that the Inspector's previous appeal decision does not highlight any significant issues in relation to the impact of the previous development on the surrounding amenity, and given the comments of the Public Protection officer, a refusal on this point would be difficult to justify at appeal.

### Contamination

A detailed contamination report has been submitted by the applicant. Regarding Contaminated land, the Public Protection officer has not objected. The Environment Agency has also raised no objection regarding contamination issues, subject to a suitable condition. Consequently, a refusal of the scheme based on this point would be difficult to justify. This would be in line with policy CP56 of the WCS, and NPPF guidance.

## **9.4 Highways impact issues**

### Previous application scheme and appeal

Previously, as part of the original application, the Council's Highways officer had indicated that whilst they had no issues with the highways related impacts of Areas A and B, they did object to the impacts of Area C. The previous officer report for application reference 15/04004/OUT stated that WC Highways objected to the previous Area C proposal.

Consequently, as a result of the above previous comments, officers previously recommended a refusal reason regarding highway safety and the lack of a S106 and thus the provision towards sustainable transport mitigation. The appeal was originally undertaken on this basis.

The Council previously considered that if they had been able to the previous scheme would have been refused due to the impact of Area C development on the narrow Ford Road, which has no footways, and limited bus services, and likely conflict between vehicular and pedestrian and other traffic.

However, as part of the subsequent appeal process, the Council's Highways officer and the applicant signed a **Statement of Common Ground and agreed planning conditions**, which resulted in the previously identified highway harm of the Area C appeal scheme being mitigated with planning conditions. Essentially, WC Highways withdrew its previous objection to the scheme, and so the reason for refusal above was overcome.

### Current scheme

The current scheme proposes a number of enhancements to the highway system and connectivity around the site:

#### Area A

Area A has been reduced to 160 dwellings since the previous appeal. It will be primarily accessed via the Portway with a new priority T junction with ghost island right turn lane, and include the

following:

- Widening of the existing carriageway to provide 3m wide through lanes on Portway and a 3m wide ghost island right-turn lane;
- Site access road of 6m width, 3m wide shared footway / cycleway on both sides (transitioning to 2m wide footways within the site), with dropped kerbs / tactile paving to facilitate crossing movements of the junction bellmouth;
- 3m wide shared footway / cycleway along the site frontage with Portway

Furthermore, there would be a secondary emergency vehicular access from the Castle Gate Park access road through part of the existing boundary hedging along the eastern edge of the site.

### Area B

Area B is split into two parts, and contains several hangar/industrial buildings and the Aviation building. It would have two vehicular access points. Firstly, via the existing access from the business park off the Portway to the western part of Area B, and the east, via the existing access from Old Sarum Park. An emergency access would be provided between Area B and C.

### Area C

Area C has been adjusted for this current application with 155 dwellings, rather than the previous 160 dwellings shown as part of the appeal scheme. Otherwise, the two schemes in highways terms are similar, with a main vehicular access onto Ford Class C Roman Road to the south, via the construction of a new priority T junction located some 145 metres west of Merryfield Road.

The proposal also suggests works, as below:

- Extension / relocation of the 30mph speed limit to incorporate the site frontage and approach from the west (commencing at a point 90m west of the site access).
- Footway connecting the site and the junction with Merryfield Road. Within the site, this will be provided at width of 2m, set back behind the hedgerow (transitioning to a 3m wide shared footway /cycleway on the approach to its connection with the internal access road). To the east of the site, the footway reduces to 1.8m width (with 0.2m offset from the highway boundary), and
- Provision of new build-outs to the west of the access (priority westbound), between the access and Merryfield Road (priority eastbound), between Ashlands and The Steadings (priority eastbound), and between The Steadings and Green Lane (priority westbound).

Within the site and connecting Areas A,B , and C with the surrounding area to the north and south, and internal circular footway / cycle path within the site boundary providing a traffic free route for pedestrians and cyclists, including a link to the existing right of way (Green Lane) to the east of the airfield.

Concerns have been raised regards the highways impacts of the development by many third parties, particularly with regards the likely impact of the scheme on the narrow Ford (Roman Road) which serves Ford and the immediate area, which is of a pleasant rural character, but already used as an alternative route by local traffic between the A345 and the A30 London Road and A338, and is described by many third parties as a “rat run”.

As the previous appeal scheme, a detailed Transport Assessment has been submitted with the application, which concludes that:

- The site is accessible for non-car modes, with well-established links to existing facilities available via walking and cycling modes and public transport options available near the site;
- Safe and suitable access can be provided to / from the site for all users;

- The development has been designed with reference to national and local guidance; and
- The impact of the proposed development will not be 'severe', meeting the requirements of local policy and the NPPF. The application is accompanied by a TP that will promote the uptake of sustainable travel opportunities.

A travel plan has also been submitted, which aims to encourage a modal shift from cars to public transport and other sustainable travel options. Construction traffic would not exit onto Ford (Roman) Road, but go northwards to and from the Portway.

As stated, this application is in Outline form only. However, the only matter to be considered in detail for the proposed scheme are two access points into Area A & B, and the access to Area C, including some suggested works to the Roman Road.

WC Highways and the applicants have had ongoing exchanges, and the Highways officer has offered revised comments over the course of the application. Below are extracts from the highways officer's responses outlining the issues resolved and not resolved (extracts):

*Construction Management - A separate construction access is now proposed from the Portway and this can be submitted as a standalone drawing and secured as an approved drawing to any permission. A construction management plan will also be required prior to commencement of any approval. The revised proposal has removed construction traffic from Ford Road which is beneficial and responds to the environmental weight restriction on this route.*

*It must be noted that with all construction traffic routing from Portway and with temporary routes to Part C of the development proposal that the LHA still has questions as to why Portway cannot serve the development whole with no requirement for access from Ford Road.*

*Bus Stops - Introducing high quality bus infrastructure including Real Time information as a hard measure will significantly aid modal shift measures that are sought via the Travel Plan. The applicant has assessed the existing stops and considers shelters and printed timetables to be acceptable. Overall, the submission has not responded constructively to the opportunity to encourage public transport use and has only sought to rely on what is already in this location. It must be noted that whilst the infrastructure is in place that the local travel*

*Car Ownership & Statistical data - There is always a risk associated with making use of statistical data, no matter how well related to a location as it opens up a broader range of issues in relation to a specific data set. In this case, significant attention has been paid to the concern of car reliance and high levels of car ownership in this location.*

*The submission has responded with further statistical derivatives that existing houses in Ford have higher numbers of bedrooms and as such more adults. Whilst the statement makes sense, a rebuttal analysis shows that in 2011 for 150 dwellings there were 352 adults aged 16-74. There were also very low levels of zero car ownership with less than 3% of households having no car compared to a national average of 22%. There were at least 297 cars associated with the 150 dwellings and 352 adults. Taking into account those that don't have a license the overall outcome is still 0.85 cars per adult. The national average is around 0.55 cars per adult against a London position of 0.3 cars per adult.*

*In that regard whilst some statistics in relation to house sizes have been made and no information is available on child numbers within the Ford area, the average household population correlates to the national average, but what is clear and has not been presented is a recognition that less than 97% of households having access to a car and car levels close to 1 per adult must be recognised as a geographical location heavily reliant on private car use to the detriment of a genuine choice of modes.*

*Travel Plan - has responded to LHA concerns that the Area C element of the development is too challenging to ensure modal shift targets can be met. However, this is somewhat contradictory in terms of comments relating to car ownership and trip rates, in other parts of the response materials. However, the Travel Plan has not recognised that if parts of the development proposal*

cannot respond to modal shift targets that a higher expectation would fall on the remaining development.

Whilst there has been some commitment to hard initiatives including electric scooter infrastructure to support faster internal journeys the remaining elements place a heavily reliance on walking distances in excess of 2km and cycling in excess of 4km for rail services with an absence of high-quality connecting infrastructure.

Aside from the challenge of distance, which is noted that historically walking up to 2km has been considered acceptable, does not recognise that most trips on foot would be 2km each way and on routes of low quality. In the local setting, beyond leisure, there is little practicality in walking and cycling that could make the option as a genuine choice. It would be fairer to say that if a car was not available then walking or cycling may be an alternative but that the journey quality and experience would be lower than when using a private vehicle.

### Area A & B

Whilst the Highways officer originally had some concerns regards Area A, a revised drawing for access to Part A relying on a single access point from Portway with an emergency access from the business park road has been provided. The access arrangement is considered to be acceptable and can be supported.

### Impact of revised Area C development

As explained elsewhere in this report, Area C has been reduced to a maximum of 155 dwellings from the 160 dwellings previous proposed as part of the appeal. The access arrangements onto the Class C Roman Road through Ford remain as per the appeal scheme, as does the mitigation being offered.

The Council's Highways Officer has however objected to the impact of Area C (summary/extract):

*“The Roman Road bears no hierarchal relationship to the A345 and the proposed development. The application does little to note the difference between the two access points and the routes to and from. The Portway has a greater level of utility with shared footway/cycleway, bus shelters and the opportunity to create a ghost-right hand turn lane with carriageway widths supporting the 40-mph speed limit with an access to roughly half of the residential development proposed.*

*The Roman Road which is currently a rural road with a derestricted speed limit, apparently will also offer an acceptable level of utility subject to an artificial traffic calming intervention with an intention to lower the speed limit in the vicinity of the proposed access point to 30mph.*

*When considering that both access points serve the same scale of development the disparity in terms of quality and modal choice when comparing the clear difference in infrastructure but that both are considered to be adequate and fit for purpose under the context of the NPPF and current design standards is questioned.*

*As has been previously noted, the Roman Road is not built to any standard, it is a road under public maintenance which has already been restricted in both speed and vehicle weight terms.*

*When comparing the proposals for the Portway access with the Roman Road access there is too great a disparity between the quality of offer from this proposal to the intended residents. The Portway access point is clearly significantly better and could serve the entire development and nothing has been presented as to why this could not be achieved.*

*In the absence of a structured reasoning and the clear disparity in quality of access that would be created, the access on the Roman Road cannot be supported.*

*In terms of the proposed speed limit change the newest published position on setting local speed limits is from March 2024. No speed limit change should be for less than 600m and creation of a new access, is not in itself sufficiently sound justification to revise a speed limit. If an access point*

*is not achievable within existing speed parameters, then changing the speed limit, to which there is no guarantee of achieving a behavioural change in speed should not be an automatic choice of mitigation.*

*In this application this is furthered by the proposed provision of the traffic calming which only identifies that the location is not naturally fit for the proposed change in speed limit.*

*The general position of the response is that access in this location was agreed during the previous application and was acceptable for 160 dwellings compared to the now proposed 155 dwellings. Whilst it states no changes in DMRB or Manual for Streets and it is accepted that response was provided before the latest edition of Setting Local Speed Limits the approach taken to reducing the speed limit on a C-class rural road with a predominantly local function for a length of only 300m is not considered appropriate. This is also in the context of artificially lowering the speed limit and implementing traffic calming simply to create an access point in a location that will otherwise retain all of its rural character with no observable elements of the development showing from the driver perspective, other than the access bellmouth.*

*The remaining concern about the proposed location of the access point is its position immediately opposite another private access which within the length of frontage available would appear to be avoidable and whilst unlikely, there would have to be a concern about crossing movements from access to access particularly on foot.”*

Further to the above, the Highways officer then provided the following final position on the matter:

*“Further to previous responses and further information submissions there has been no subsequent information to address highway authority concerns in relation to this application.*

*In a previous response it was stated that ‘It must be noted that with all construction traffic routing from Portway and with temporary routes to Part C of the development proposal that the LHA still has questions as to why Portway cannot serve the development whole with no requirement for access from Ford Road.’*

*From the position of the highway authority there has been no justification or understanding as to why the entirety of the development proposed could not be served solely from the Portway, which is the most appropriate local highway infrastructure in design and maintenance terms to facilitate a development and support a genuine choice of travel modes.*

*It is noted that there has been a reliance in submissions to this application to the change in position of the Highway Authority in relation to application 15/04004, through the application and subsequent appeal.*

*The highway authority objected to the prior application. It is also accepted that parties involved during a subsequent appeal agreed a revised position that did not object.*

*What is known is the appeal was dismissed and that a subsequent High Court challenge to the appeal dismissal failed. It has been a position of this applicant that the history of the site supports that highways matters have been resolved.*

*However, when considering the last and final legal position on highways matters the following statements stand and are considered of relevance, although as stated not necessarily in the [planning] balance.*

*The High Court Position stated that the position had been made on public benefits ‘(1) highway capacity, road safety and health’. The high court then followed ‘It is in my judgment plain that what the Inspector had concluded was that (cycleways and pathways apart, which were considered, and as benefits), additional claimed public benefits (1) and (2) were not material public benefits that could add weight in the balance. Indeed, there might (in line with the Council’s concerns) in fact be positive harms in these respects, but she did not need to go on to reach a conclusion on that’*



*On this point the reading by the highway authority is that highways matters outside the site and in line with Para 115 on highway safety and residual cumulative impacts remain without a conclusion.*

Further following from the High Court makes this position clearer as follows:

*'What the Claimant saw as additional public benefits in the areas of highway capacity, road safety, ecology and diversity, did not in the present case result in overall material public benefit in those areas, and there might even have been harm'*

And

*'In my judgment the Inspector's decision must be understood to be saying that, even if it might be the case that mitigation measures overcame harm, the measures did not go beyond that.'*

*By this reading it is clear that the best position that could be conveyed is that highways capacity, road safety and health may have been neutral but could also as likely been a harm. However, at no point were the highways accesses to the site considered to be public benefits.*

*The proposed development would result in a settlement adjacent scale of dwellings that would require access to 300 dwellings from the C287 Roman Road. The increase in and continuous damage to the highway, which has historically been recognised on both sides, cannot be reasonably supported by a S59 Agreement or a planning contribution as neither would mitigate in perpetuity a solution that could be considered acceptable by any competent highway authority.*

*There must be recognition of causing damage and deterioration to a sub-standard road and to prevent this the proposed scale of development would require entry by a road to the standard of a major access road.*

*There does not appear to be any reasonable mitigation strategy that would place further and unreasonable burden on the maintaining authority, should development come forward. Nor, is the primary means of access along the C287, for all traffic, including those who are at most risk of arm sufficiently laid out to support increases in movements.*

*Based on the highway authority understanding of the other history, but taking this application on its own merits, with the information provided within this application **we recommend refusal on highways grounds.**"(officer emphasis)*

The WC Highways officer has suggested two reasons for refusal, which are repeated here as they further help explain the concerns of the officer:

*1. The development location would result in 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 115 & 116, 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.*

*Highway Safety – NPPF 115, S08*

## *Residual Cumulative Impacts – NPPF 116, S03, 06, 08, 09, 010, 012, 013, 014, 015, 017 & 018*

*2. The development does not adequately address the pattern of growth as it seeks to establish significant development via a sub-standard means of access that does not offer a genuine choice of travel mode for all users and fails to provide a high quality development that protects the amenity of existing residents due to:*

- i. The C.287 Roman Road is derestricted and insufficiently wide to cater for two-way passing vehicles including buses without localised reductions in vehicle speeds and full use of available highway width at the expense of any other highways users;*
- ii. The C.287 Roman Road has no dedicated pedestrian facilities and is absent of street-lighting creating unreasonable levels of conflict for new development between user types and would not promote walking as priority mode of travel or create a suitable pattern of movement;*
- iii. The C.287 Roman Road has no dedicated cycling infrastructure and would create unreasonable levels of conflict for new development between user types and would not promote cycling as a priority mode of travel or create a suitable pattern of movement;*
- iv. The C.287 Roman Road is subject to an environmental weight restriction to minimise the impacts of vehicles exceeding 7.5T travelling through the village of Ford between the A345 and A338.*
- v. Failing to place significant new development in a location within suitable walking distance to a frequency of service of public transport that would offer a genuine choice of travel mode.*

*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 & Wiltshire Core Strategy policies CP25 in relation to the site.*

The above is clearly a change of position in terms of the WC Highways team since the last appeal scheme. As the environs of the site have changed little since the appeal, and Area C is similar to the appeal scheme, both in terms of the quantum of development and its vehicular access arrangements, in order to refuse the current scheme, the Council need to highlight the factors that have changed since the appeal was determined.

### Changed factors since the previous appeal decision

#### NPPF

The NPPF has been adjusted several times since the last appeal scheme was determined. The December 2023 update makes the position in relation to highways and transport as matters to be considered in the determination of planning applications. In terms of the NPPF there is a specific section relating to the 'Consideration of Development Proposals' that sits within chapter 9 'Promoting Sustainable Transport'. The revisions include emphasis on the use of local design codes prepared in line with the National Model Design Code as well as producing well-designed places.

Paragraph 109 of the NPPF 2023 that states: *“The planning system should actively manage patterns of growth in support of these objectives. Significant development should be focused on location which are or can be made sustainable, through limiting the need to travel and offering a genuine choice of transport modes. This can help to reduce congestion and emissions, and improve air quality and public health. However, opportunities to maximise sustainable transport solutions will vary between urban and rural areas, and this should be taken into account in both plan-making and decision-making”*

Paragraph 115 of the NPPF 2023 indicates that: *“Development should only be prevented or refused on highways grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety, or the residual cumulative impacts on the road network would be severe”*

(Note: The NPPF does not define what “severe” means in a highways context. However, the courts have held previously that this should not mean that anything other than a severe impact

on highway safety would be acceptable. (Mayowa-Emmanuel v Royal Borough of Greenwich)

### National Design guidance

The National Design Guide was published in October 2019 and The National Design Code was published in July 2021. The following definitions relate to built form within the National Design Guide:

'Accessibility: The ability of people to move around an area and reach places and facilities, including older and disabled people, those with young children and those carrying luggage or shopping.

Compact form of development: Development that is planned with a relatively high residential density and an urban layout. Community facilities are closer to one another and their users, preserves more open landscape, and makes efficient use of land and resources.

Walkable: Local facilities are within walking distance, generally considered to be no more than a 10-minute walk (800m radius).

Destinations: Places or facilities that people want to visit. In a neighbourhood these may be transport hubs, open spaces, local services such as schools, shops, healthcare or community facilities.'

The Model Design Code further expanded on the 10 characteristics of good design which includes 'Movement - accessible and easy to move around.'

### Setting Local Speed Limits – March 2024

This circular gives guidance to local authorities on how to set local speed limits on single and dual carriageways in urban and rural areas. It has also been designed to help explain why and how local speed limits are determined.

### Active Travel England (ATE)

ATE were made a statutory consultee to all planning applications equal to or exceeding 150 housing units, 7,500 m<sup>2</sup> of floorspace or an area of 5 hectares on the 1 June 2023.

The purpose for the creation of this new statutory consultee 'to help planning authorities in their work to implement good active travel design – for example, by ensuring developments include walking, wheeling and cycling connectivity to schools and local amenities. This will help improve public health, save people money and reduce harmful emissions.' has to be noted as a necessary step in supporting planning authorities but vicariously also supporting local highway authorities and local authorities as a whole. There is recognition that for the creation of ATE there would need to have been concern in relation to the overall national direction of walking, wheeling and cycling as a result of development.

Active Travel England has commented on the application, and states (extract):

*"Before it is able to support this application, ATE requires confirmation as to the extent of the applicant's off-site contributions as previously set out. ATE would expect the LCWIP to inform such discussions in line with the requirements of the LHA. Therefore its position remains one of deferral until such time as this confirmation is provided. ATE would be happy to participate in any relevant discussions with the applicant and LHA around this.*

*Please note that, as set out below, contributions towards improvements in the surrounding area are considered to be of key importance and it is essential that a satisfactory solution is reached with the LHA. This would meet the requirements of government policy to ensure that future residents are offered a genuine choice of active and sustainable modes of travel to access surrounding amenities. It is considered that a proportionate level of contribution is required in order to make this development acceptable in planning terms. Given that this development is*

*likely to yield close to 750 new residents it is considered that the contributions are both necessary and directly related to the increased number of trips eg on infrastructure such as Green Lane. ATE is currently unaware of the precise level of contribution proposed and would welcome further clarification on the final agreed contributions. Should a satisfactory level of contributions not be agreed, ATE's final position is likely to be one of objection.*

*ATE would also note that the policy and guidance on active travel has evolved somewhat since the previous application was determined at appeal (for example, documents such as LTN 1/20, Gear Change and Inclusive Mobility must now be taken into account) and therefore it is appropriate to request such contributions."*

ATE have since confirmed that it maintains the above stance until the viability issues have been concluded, and various highway related contributions have been agreed with the applicant.

### Local Transport Note 20 - Infrastructure Design

Notwithstanding the above, Local Transport Note 20 which was updated in 2020 and 2021, This document provides local authorities with direction on design standards for high quality cycling and walking infrastructure as part of a '*clear ambition to make cycling and walking the natural choices for short journeys or as part of a longer journey with supporting objectives to increase cycling and walking levels. This guidance supports the delivery of high-quality cycle infrastructure to deliver this ambition and objective; and reflects current good practice, standards and legal requirements*'

The document also encourages Council's to produce Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans.

### Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan

The Council has a draft LCWIP (Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan) document for Salisbury, which is likely to be adopted before the end of 2024. This document provides the first iteration of the Salisbury Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP). A draft Framework Wiltshire LCWIP is published in conjunction with this plan and provides the wider strategic context. The Salisbury LCWIP refreshes and replaces the existing Salisbury Town Cycle Network and adds a long-term approach to improving the walking network in the city centre.

The key outputs of LCWIPs, as set out by the Department for Transport (DfT), are:

- a network plan for walking and cycling which identifies preferred routes and core zones for further development.
- a prioritised programme of infrastructure improvements for future investment.
- a report which sets out the underlying analysis carried out and provides a narrative which supports the identified improvements and network.

The Salisbury LCWIP covers the contiguous urban area around Salisbury, including:

- the city of Salisbury;
- the market town of Wilton;
- **the parishes of Laverstock and Ford**, Quidhampton, Netherhampton, and Britford;
- the Southampton Road area (part of Clarendon Park parish).

### Laverstock and Ford Neighbourhood Plan

As explained elsewhere in this report (see main Policy section), the Laverstock and Ford Neighbourhood Plan (adopted 2022) also contains policies/aims which relate to the improvement of the road network around the application site. This document also cross refers to the more recent highways related policy guidance of LTN 20 and the Council's Draft LCWIP document. Policy 3B c) indicates that significant housing development should include a layout and infrastructure which would give residents easy, safe access to the local pedestrian/cycle networks

and to public transport, in order to help reduce vehicle usage.

### Policy CP25

The policy CP 25 remains as it was at the time the previous scheme was considered. It has no direct position on transport mitigation. However, the requirements of the policy which overlay with the need for a responsible transport strategy are implicit in the following criteria:

*‘iv. submission, agreement and implementation of a development masterplan, which delivers a high quality development that takes opportunities to enhance the historic environment and protects the amenity of existing residents’; and*

*‘vi. community benefit for the Old Sarum residents’*

If the proposed scheme produces a car-reliant development and no particular sustainable highway improvements, the general environment and amenities of local residents will be likely to suffer, and hence criteria iv and vi will not be met in highway terms.

### Transport policies

Other Local Planning policy in the Development Plan remains as it was at the time of consideration of the previous appeal scheme. However, this has always had an emphasis on the use and promotion of non-car travel. Policy CP57 of the WCS deals with the general impacts of a development, linking to CP61 of the WCS, which deals with the highway impacts of a proposal. Similarly, policies 62-66 also relate to the highway related impacts of the proposal.

Core Policy CP60 states: ‘The council will use its planning and transport powers to help reduce the need to travel particularly by private car, and support and encourage the sustainable, safe and efficient movement of people and goods within and through Core Policy 61 (Transport and New Development) of the WCS indicates that: *“New development should be located and designed to reduce the need to travel particularly by private car, and to encourage the use of sustainable transport alternatives”*.

### The Highways case for refusing the scheme on highway grounds

The Council’s Highways officer has sought to justify the change in consultee response from approval with conditions at appeal, to refusal, as follows (extract and summary):

*“It has been clearly and definitively outlined that since 2019 there have been significant national changes in the expectation of planning to respond to sustainable transport, both in policy delivery and expectations relating to the quality of infrastructure. Broadly, all these changes align with the National Planning Policy Framework goal of achieving development by identifying land for homes that accords with Paragraph 74:*

*‘The supply of large numbers of new homes can often be best achieved through planning for larger scale development, such as new settlements or significant extensions to existing villages and towns, provided they are well located and designed, and supported by the necessary infrastructure and facilities (including a genuine choice of transport modes’*

*When considering Policy 25 of the WCS and the lack of specific statements relating to highways and transport impact and sustainable transport there must be an expectation that any address to submissions for planning would fall under the national planning context, along with associated design standards at that time.*

*In that regard, it can be seen and accepted based purely on the difference in policy and standards through the period 2015 – 2024 that any application would receive responses appropriate to the context of the time.*

*The Local Highway Authority is satisfied that the three formal responses issued in relation this application, reflect the national policy and standards of today. This is supported by reasoning that*

*both ATE and WCC act as statutory consultees on matters that overlap but with different responsibilities. ATE have a national delivery strategy, whilst WCC acting as a local highway authority will inherit the responsibility and burden of care for all public highways impacted by this development, along with community expectations for travel choice. Given that under the national context position both ATE and WCC have provided broadly similar concerns in relation to this application it is considered that the responses to date accurately reflect the NPPF.*

*To conclude this point, whilst the LHA position on a prior application is noted (the previous appeal), it no longer reflects current values and cannot be relied on. Nor has anything been provided within the submissions as to why that position would or does in fact remain relevant.*

*Considering the lack of WCS Core Policy 25 position on transport matters and noting that the policy as written appears to be worded more towards conservation, landscape and implementation of a S106 to place reasonable controls on the airfield the LHA can only advise as follows:*

*.....additional housing immediately adjacent to the existing settlement of Ford will result in housing that is wholly car reliant that no planning conditions or obligation mechanisms will be able to reasonably overcome. Any development in this location will be detrimental in not offering a genuine choice of transport modes under the construct of the NPPF and National Design code and will be car reliant.*

*The development in this location will result in housing that does not reflect 'Sustainable in Transport Terms' resulting in travel patterns that will not support 'Sustainable development'. Housing immediately adjacent to Ford will negatively impact on the overall sustainable in transport terms outcomes that the WCS and emerging Local Plan, regardless of the standard of outcome expected.*

*It is accepted that not all development can achieve no impact or better when seeking benefits for genuine choice of travel mode, walking, wheeling, cycling and access to facilities in a way that reduces private car use. In that regard this response seeks to demonstrate, as best as possible, how negative the weight of matters in relation to the National Planning Policy Framework to assist the Local Planning Authority come to a balanced decision given the policy context in the WCS for the Old Sarum site."*

Regards the above, Local Planning Authorities need to be consistent in their decision making.

The applicant's agent has raised this issue, stating: "...consistency in decision making is well established in planning law, including being articulated in authorities including *North Wiltshire DC v Secretary of State for the Environment and Clover (1993) P&CR 137*, and *St Albans City & District Council v Secretary of State for Communities & Local Government [2015] EWHC 655 (Admin)*. This principle is not that like cases must be determined alike, but a decision-taker ought, when considering a materially similar proposal, to have regard to the principle of consistency, to have good reason if deciding to depart from the previous decision, and to give reasons for any such departure. As we have noted in a number of previous emails, the planning policy context of this site is largely the same as it was at the time of the 2019 appeal decision; and we have also noted the various statements to the High Court regarding what was agreed at that time. This includes statements regarding highways and other matters being resolved by proposed planning conditions.

*As such, the importance of consistency in decision-making means that when there has been a previous decision to grant or refuse planning permission in respect of the same site that is capable of being a material consideration on a later application; and if the decision-maker is minded to depart from the previous decision it has to engage with the reasons for that decision and explain its departure from them.."*

Regards the above, it can be seen from the above that National Planning Policy Framework has changed and adapted since the appeal decision in 2019, and since the Council's Highways officer adjusted his recommendation to approval with conditions in 2018. The Development Plan now contains the Laverstock and Ford Neighbourhood Plan, which also contains sustainability

policies, and other highways related legislation has, or is about to come into force, the focus of which and the direction of travel is now on encouraging sustainable and safe car free modes of travel and creating an environment where this can flourish, thus reducing car-bourne travel.

It is noted that policy CP25 remains the policy in force for this application site, which in principle allows some potential development of Area C, including housing, although no quantum of development is given. Whilst the draft Wiltshire Local Plan is proposing to delete this policy, it is the subject of objection, and the draft plan itself carries no weight at this stage of the Local Plan process.

It is also noted that the adopted Laverstock and Ford Neighbourhood Plan does not supercede or conflict with CP25, and does not itself preclude development within the area. However, Laverstock and Ford is designated as a “small village” by WCS policy CP2, where housing development is limited to small scale infill development. The Neighbourhood Plan contains Policy 5 (page 25) and two Community Actions (at pages 26 & 27), which seek to secure infrastructure improvements as part of development works, including to local highway networks, with the aims of increasing pedestrian and cyclist access and safety. The Parish Design Guide, which forms part of the Laverstock and Ford Neighbourhood Plan, suggests that no development should exceed 50 dwellings (page 5, section 6, subsection 6.6).

This current proposal is for approximately 155 dwellings, triple the limit suggested by the adopted Neighbourhood Plan Design guide. All of the Area C traffic would use the proposed vehicular access onto the Ford Road. The Highways officer has advised that the additional housing will result in housing that is likely to be largely car reliant, and that no planning conditions or obligation mechanisms will be able to reasonably overcome impact of that. It therefore appears that the previous appeal highways related conditions agreed between the parties at the appeal would not help mitigate the impacts of the development, and even if they were imposed, it appears from the comments of the highways officer that some of the mitigation proposed for Ford Road could not be successfully implemented in practice.

If suitable planning conditions cannot be imposed, and in the absence of a suitable S106 Agreement to secure other financial contributions towards infrastructure mitigation, it is considered that the proposed development will result in travel patterns that will not support ‘Sustainable development’, contrary to the aims of the NPPF, Wiltshire Core Strategy and the Laverstock and Ford Neighbourhood Plan (the Development Plan), and associated highways and sustainability guidance.

Members will note that at the Recommendation section of this report, a singular reason for refusal has been listed related to highways matters. It is considered that the second refusal reason suggested by the highways officer is essentially covered by the first reason for refusal, and is therefore superfluous in that regard.

#### Impact of the scheme on A36 road system

Notwithstanding the above matter, as part of the previous appeal scheme, Highways England (now National Highways) had requested that a large commuted sum be paid to undertake works to the Castle Roundabout in Salisbury. Due to the lack of a suitable S106 agreement at the time, the Council stated that it would have been minded to refuse the scheme on the secondary highways related grounds.

A S106 was subsequently provided by the applicant at the previous appeal which would have mitigated this issue. As the appeal was dismissed, that S106 did not take effect.

However, as part of this revised application, National Highways have not objected to the proposed application and have not requested the previous contribution/works to the Castle Roundabout. Following receipt of the above consultation response, the case officer sought clarification from National Highways on the issue of the previously request mitigation payment:

*“The TA does not identify a need for mitigation at A36 Castle Roundabout to accommodate development traffic, nor do the assessment findings rely on Travel Plan reductions to be*

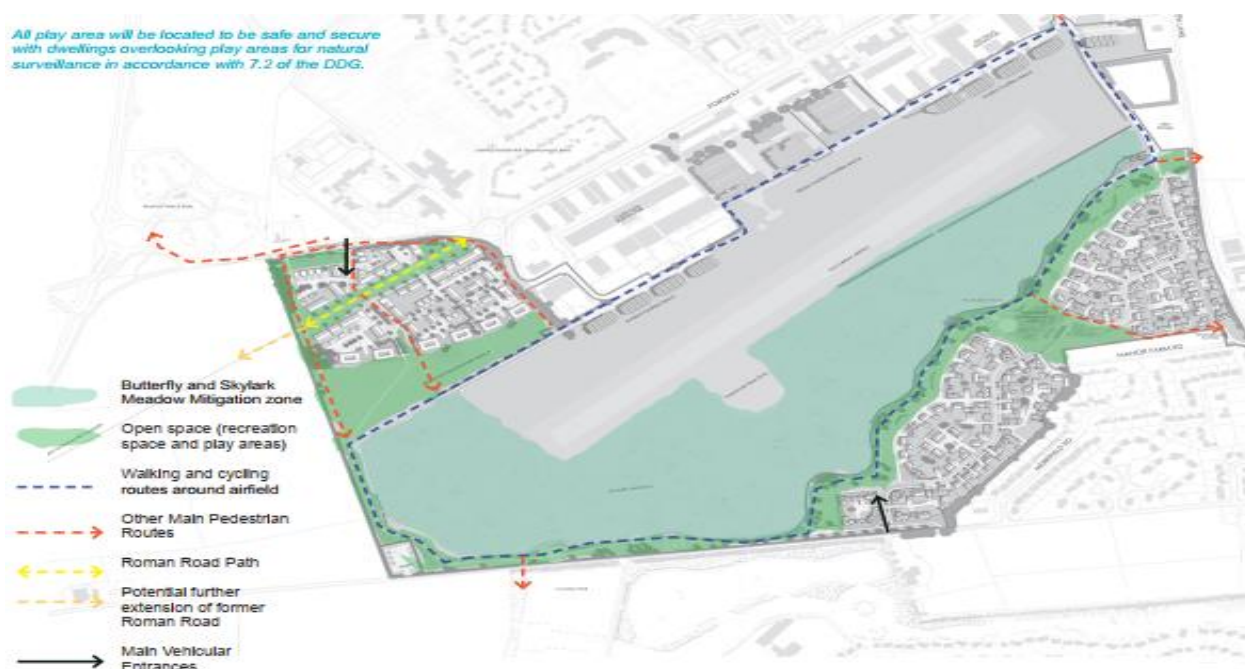
acceptable in respect of the SRN in terms of the NPPF. **The proposed improvements at Castle Roundabout to upgrade to MOVA control are already in the NH forward programme and being delivered and funded by NH. We are not therefore expecting contributions for this scheme.**

Rather we would expect that Wiltshire Council would want to seek contributions from the development that contribute to the delivery of the various other components of the STS eg Demand Management, Public Transport and Ped and Cycle improvements. The scale and type of contribution would be for Wiltshire Council to determine, whether that be through specific measures identified by the development (eg cycle improvements) or through travel plan measures (eg bus improvements). We understand that there are bus services and a Park & Ride within the corridor, but there may be opportunities to improve service frequency. Bus improvements elsewhere in the town could also benefit Castle roundabout. Smarter choices measures could also limit background traffic, at the same time as a development-specific Travel Plan seeks to reduce the need to travel by car. It is likely that Wiltshire Council will have specific measures that the development could contribute to – eg the STS refers to a programme of school, workplace and residential travel planning, the expansion of car clubs, improving cycle parking etc, all of which could have an indirect impact on the operation of the A36 and Castle roundabout.”

Consequently, in terms of the impact of the application on the wider trunk network, a refusal on highway impacts grounds would be difficult to justify.

## 9.5 Public Access, Open space, play areas, footpaths and cycleways linkages

The outline scheme suggests the provision of areas of public open space within Areas A & C, and also indicates that the areas of open land and landscaping between Area C and the airfield, along Roman Road, and the open and landscaped area adjacent the western boundary of the airfield leading up into Area A would also be utilised for more informal public open space, served via a footpath/cycle pathway. The new paths would enable access to and from the developed areas, onwards towards Old Sarum to the north, and southwards to the Country Park and the city to the south.



As part of the appeal scheme, the Inspector include the provision of these parts of the scheme as a “public benefit”, indicating that such features would “**encourage public access and enhance the experience of the flying field and an appreciation and access to heritage assets**” The provision of the open space and various linkages around the site are therefore similarly welcomed, as a public benefit of the scheme.



Such linkage is considered desirable, and is welcomed. It would also allow all residents to share the various facilities and services offered in the surrounding area, including the open space, schools, and any other community facilities which may develop over time. In particular, it would offer access to the planned community land and to the wider countryside via the footpath network. Such a link would in officers opinion, offer benefits to the future residents of the scheme, as well as to existing residents of the both the Old Sarum and Hampton Park residential areas. Whilst it is noted that a similar linkage already exists via Green Lane, linking Ford and Old Sarum residential areas with the edges of the city, this linkage is some distance to the south, and a northern linkage would allow easier access to the emerging Country Park facilities and the adjacent school.

However, such linkages may need to be secured via any S106 agreement, as public access may need to be secured in perpetuity, and they may need to be built out to adoptable standards, and this may be affected by the different legal ownerships of the application site. Previously, regards the appeal scheme, planning conditions and a legal agreement covered these points. A financial contribution has also been requested by the open space officer which will need to be secured via the S106.

At this point in time, not such agreement exists, and therefore the linkages and any benefits have not yet been secured. Consequently, at the present time, until such agreement is reached, the proposal would not secure such community gains, and thus, be contrary to the aims of CP25. Officers have therefore recommended a refusal reason on this basis.

The Council's open space officer has no objections to the suggested provisions of open space, which amounts to some 90,000 sqm.

However, such land is normally secured via a suitable S106 Agreement. As the Council no longer adopts areas of open space, such spaces would either need to be provided and maintained in perpetuity by the applicant, or by another body, usually the Parish Council.

## **9.6 Ecology and biodiversity**

The NPPF indicates that planning decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural local environment, and provide net gains for biodiversity. Similarly, Core Policy 50 (Biodiversity and geodiversity) & 52 (Green Infrastructure) are relevant, with the former stating that (summary):

*“Development proposals must demonstrate how they protect features of nature conservation and geological value as part of the design rationale.... all development should seek opportunities to enhance biodiversity. Major development in particular must include measures to deliver biodiversity gains through opportunities to restore, enhance and create valuable habitats, ecological networks and ecosystem services..”*

Policy 2 of the Laverstock and Ford Neighbourhood Plan relates to ecology and habitats matters, and an overall improvement of wildlife habitats.

The site is located within proximity of the River Avon SSSI. It also falls within the New Forest Mitigation Area. Hence the area is sensitive in terms of development which may affect the water systems and drainage.

### Previous appeal scheme

As part of the previous appeal scheme, there remained some ecology related matters outstanding between the parties. Members considered that they would have refused the previous scheme on ecological grounds related to Green Lane and its associated bat corridor.

However, the above was resolved during the course of the previous appeal via planning conditions and a legal agreement.

## Revised scheme

As members will be aware, planning policy in relation to ecology matters has become significantly more complex in the years since the previous appeal. The application site is now affected by the New Forest Mitigation Strategy, the nutrient neutrality issues, and has to deal with biodiversity matters.

The applicants have submitted an Environmental Statement (ES) which covers the likely impacts on the ecology and water systems, including how the scheme mitigates its impacts in terms of nutrient neutrality, and provides biodiversity net gain. On this last point, it should be noted that as the application was submitted before April 2024, it does not have to provide a 10 percent net gain in biodiversity, and simply has to prove a bio-diversity net gain. However, it is understood that the scheme would provide for a significant biodiversity net gain.

A large area in the centre of the airfield site would be given over to a skylark and butterfly mitigation meadow (see plan above in Open space section of report). The taking out of this land from agricultural use would also help nutrient mitigation. The scheme would also include a new water treatment plant in the south west corner of the site which would also help to produce a nutrient neutrality scheme.

There have been ongoing discussions with the Council's Ecologist and an exchange of additional and updated information. At the time of writing, some matters have been concluded and agreed. The Council's ecologist has only informally suggested that the scheme as a whole is acceptable, following the submission of recent amended details. A written response is awaited at this time.

As a result, subject to the Council's ecologist confirming that the scheme and adjusted information is now all acceptable, the proposal would accord with the aims of policies CP50 and 52 of the Wiltshire Core Strategy, and the biodiversity aims of the NPPF and NPPG.

## **9.7 Drainage and Flooding matters**

The NPPF guidance is reflected on this matter is that development be directed to areas that have no flooding issues. Core Policy 67 of the Wiltshire Core Strategy relation to Flood Risk and indicates the same.

Some concerns have been expressed by third parties that the quantum of development overall being proposed by the developers, would have an adverse impact on the existing and proposed drainage infrastructure and also exacerbate flooding issues which have occurred in recent years to part of the Ford roadway and surrounding land.

The application is supported by a site specific Flood Risk Assessment. The sites planned for development are elevated and on sloping ground, and are in flood zone 1. There are no known surface or ground water issues related to the application sites. The Environment Agency has not raised any fundamental objections to the proposed scheme, subject to suitable conditions being imposed. Similarly, the Council's Drainage officer has raised no particular objections. As a result, whilst the local objections and concerns are noted, it would be difficult to refuse the scheme subject of the application on drainage and flooding grounds.

Consequently, provided suitable planning conditions are accepted by the applicant as part of the appeal process, there is no reason for refusal regards this issue.

## **9.8 Archaeology**

The Council's Archaeologist has commented thus:

*"This application follows an EIA Screening Opinion request in 2022 (PL/2022/08401) and a previous outline proposal in 2015 (15/04004/OUT). As I understand it, the current proposal is similar to these previous proposals, albeit providing for fewer dwellings. The Archaeology Service's previous advice therefore largely remains valid.*

*The Environmental Statement accompanying this application includes an 'Archaeological Statement' (EDP, dated July 2023), along with previous desk-based assessment, geophysical survey and evaluation reports undertaken in relation to previous iterations of this proposal. As the 'Archaeological Statement' notes, the areas of proposed development have been subject to a programme of archaeological evaluation so that the implications of the proposal on the buried archaeological heritage are understood. Wiltshire Council's Archaeology Service had previously agreed that the archaeological impacts of the 2015 scheme could be mitigated through an appropriate mitigation strategy secured by condition, and this is the case for the current proposal."*

Consequently, provided suitable planning conditions are accepted by the applicant as part of the appeal process, there is no reason for refusal regards this issue.

## **9.9 S106, viability and planning conditions**

CP25 specifically refers to the need for a legal agreement in relation to noise issues, and also outlines other enhancement and benefits. These are covered elsewhere in this report. However, as with any large development scheme, and in accordance with the NPPF and WCS policy CP3, the scheme would result in a number of impacts on surrounding infrastructure and services which would require mitigation to ensure that any development is sustainable. The Council's Planning Obligations DPD supports policy CP3.

### Previous appeal scheme

Members previously considered that if they had been able to, they would have refused the previous application scheme on viability grounds and the lack of a legal agreement to secure various mitigation.

Subsequently, as part of the appeal scheme determination, the applicants submitted a legal agreement which covered the payment of some contributions, including:

- Public open space and play area provision, maintenance and management
- Provision of waste and recycling facilities
- Drainage Maintenance
- Footpaths, cycleways and picnic areas provision and maintenance and public access
- Travel Plan
- Aviation restrictions and monitoring of noise
- Discontinuance of Agriculture use

Some of the above were also covered by draft planning conditions at the appeal. The draft planning conditions were generally agreed at the appeal inquiry between the Council and the applicant. However, as the appeal was ultimately dismissed, it is unknown whether the Inspector fully agreed with those conditions or the submitted legal agreement. Monies can only be secured via a S106 legal agreement. When or not some of the non-financial mitigations listed above can or should be dealt with via conditions will be a matter for any subsequent appeal Inspector.

The following contributions have been raised by the various consultees as being required to mitigate the impacts of the development:

### Highways improvements

If the scheme were to be deemed acceptable, the proposal would be required to mitigate its impacts on the surrounding area. The following has been suggested by the WC Highways officer:

### Works derived from the emerging LCWIP

*The Salisbury Draft LCWIP identifies works within the vicinity of the site as Green Lane shared walking and cycling path scheme including Surface improvements to be made along the route, informal crossing improvements to be considered at Ford and extension of existing route on right of way.*

*The cost estimate within the LCWIP for these works is £500,000, which can be cost indexed from 2022 to any obligation. The cost of the works is identified as being developer funded and from the Active Travel Fund. In March 2024 the ATF commitment to Wiltshire stands at a combined total of £1,078,000. The available monies from the ATF towards the Green Lane proposals is still being established. Initial design plans of these works are available and can be used to secure the details for the agreement. The plans relate to the length of Green Lane from the Ford Crossroads to Pearce Way.*

*It is also considered that additional works to resurface the bridleway section of Green Lane are required to provide wider community benefits and consistency in terms of quality of walking surface on Green Lane from Portway to Pearce Way. The length requiring resurfacing is roughly 800m in length and it is considered that these works would be in the region of £420,000.*

*Consequently, until such time that the Active Travel Funding allocation to projects is confirmed it is considered that the mitigations to the local area will **total £920,000 to improve local walking and cycling routes.***

*Additionally Bus Real Time information upgrades - **£45,000.***

**Thus, a contribution total of £965,000 towards highways mitigation**

However, there is no completed S106 at the moment, so such provision has yet to be secured.

#### Affordable housing provision

The Council's Affordable Housing officer has advised that the scheme would need to comply with Council housing policy of 40 percent affordable housing provision, as outlined by CP43. The applicant had originally expressed a preference to house military veterans on the site as part of any affordable housing provision.

However, at this time, the applicants have indicated that due to viability issues, the scheme is unable to provide any affordable housing whatsoever. This is obviously contrary to the Council's Core Policy 43 and the Council's Housing officer has indicated that until any viability matters are resolved which indicate otherwise, she would object to the application on grounds of non-compliance with CP43.

However, viability discussions remain ongoing between the Council and the applicant, and officers are therefore unable to advise whether the scheme as proposed could support or provide any affordable housing. Furthermore, no formal S106 agreement securing any affordable housing has been provided by the applicant.

Consequently, at the current time, the proposal remains contrary to the aims and objectives of WCS policy CP43 and CP3.

#### Education provision

The Council's Education officer has previously indicated that financial contributions are only required towards early years educational facilities **£683,358** to mitigate the impact of the children living in the new housing. It is suggested that the schools on the Old Sarum/Longhedge sites may benefit from some of the monies collected. This would need to be secured via S106 Agreement.

However, at this time, as matters are ongoing, there is no S106. Consequently, at the current time, the proposal remains contrary to the aims and objectives of policy CP3. A S106 payment is required and justified in this instance as any such payment is required to mitigate the specific impacts of the scheme in the immediate area around the site. It is neither sustainable development nor acceptable if the costs of the provision of education facilities for the children living on this development had to be picked up by the local taxpayer.

### Open Space and other facilities

As stated elsewhere in this report, a substantial area of open space is being proposed, which includes play areas, informal seating/picnic areas, footpaths and cycleways, together with interpretation boards. The Council's open space officer has indicated that a financial contribution of **£142,317** is required towards the provision of **a Full Size 3G Artificial Turf Pitch within/to serve the Southern Wiltshire Community Area and/or sports, pitch or ancillary provision within the vicinity of the land**. The need for this is justified in the Council's draft Wiltshire Play Area Strategy.

Saved Policy R2 of the WCS also deals with the provision of suitable open space and play areas to serve a development. However, the above sum would need to be secured via a S106, including the future maintenance of such areas, and public access. Consequently, at the current time, without a suitable S106, officers are recommending that this form part of any reasons for refusal.

### Waste and Recycling

The Council's waste and recycling officer has advised that a financial contribution is required in line with policy WCS6 of the WC Waste and Recycling Core Strategy to provide suitable recycling bins for the dwellings. The contribution being requested is **£31, 815**.

### Public Art

In accordance with saved policy D8, policy CP3 and policy CP57 of the WCS, the scheme should provide funding for public art projects. Hence, this provision would be secured via a S106 Agreement. Public art projects are normally costed at approximately £300 per dwelling and £3 per/sq m of non-residential/commercial land. The need for this contribution is justified also by the Council's recently adopted Public Art guidance SPD. The contribution required would be **£121,215**.

### Noise mitigation/monitoring

As covered in the noise/amenity section of this report, the Council's Public Protection officer has suggested a planning condition related to securing of **£5000 annual monitoring fee** towards the cost resources required for reviewing the technical reports required if planning permission were granted. This accords with the requirements of policy CP25, and other policies such as CP3, CP57.

### New Forest mitigation

Under the revised New Forest mitigation strategy, each new dwelling within the mitigation zone, is required to pay a contribution of £600 per dwelling. Regards this scheme, at the time of writing, only 10 of the proposed dwellings are within the defined zone, and hence a contribution of **£6000** is currently required.

## **9.10 Viability issues**

Central Government planning policies allow the viability of a scheme to be taken into account. Generally, the guidance indicates that Local Authorities should seek only appropriate financial contributions and other S106 provisions, and should be flexible in terms of which such provisions are requested of a developer.

The applicants have therefore submitted a viability assessment, which indicates that the scheme would not be viable enough to provide any affordable housing. An independent viability adviser has been appointed to assess the proposals, and ongoing discussions between the parties have occurred over several months. At the current time, no agreement has been reached between the parties, and thus officers are unable to confirm whether the scheme would be viable enough to provide any, some, or all of the provisions outlined above. However, the latest iteration of the independent **viability assessment of the applicant's case summarises that the scheme may be viable enough to provide S106 and other policy contributions (including highways**

## **works) of £3,364,715**

The applicant will need to provide the following as part of its proposed scheme should it be approved, subject to the viability assessment conclusions. The S106 requirements listed above would be in addition to the matters below, which the applicant needs to deliver as part of the scheme:

Aircraft Noise and restrictions on flying - Controls on the number of aircraft and times of flying, and restriction on helicopter flying (as listed in the Noise section of this report)

Heritage - Applicant to deliver heritage enhancements in accordance with the Conservation Management Plan including refurbishment of the Applicant's Listed WW1 Hangar - Works to hangar estimated by the applicant as being £3,000,000.

### Summary

Consequently, at this stage, until such time as the viability issues are resolved, officers must consider the scheme to be viable, and on that basis, it is necessary to provide the required infrastructure to service the development. Thus, on this basis, as it stands at present, the scheme would be contrary to the aims of policy CP3 and the NPPF, regards the provision of suitable supporting infrastructure and mitigation.

### **9.11 Community and Public Benefits**

Notwithstanding the above mitigation via S106, policy CP25 highlights that any scheme should provide community benefits. Policy CP49 covers the provision and enhancement of community facilities. The application essentially outlines the benefits of the scheme as follows:

- Recreational walking and cycling routes around the airfield linking the new Country Park, Old Sarum village centre and new facilities created as part of this Proposal
- Restoration of the alignment of the Roman Road;
- Refurbishment of WW1 Hangar;
- Design to improve the relationship of the heritage buildings to the flying field;
- Creation of a flying hub;
- New restaurant;
- Fast food café;
- Seminar and training rooms
- Museum Wall
- Parachute centre
- Control tower
- Private aircraft hangars
- Improved public access to the flying field and the rest of the conservation area through the formalising of visitor facilities and car parking and the creation of linked footpaths with specific viewing points to show the relationship between the grass flying field and the listed WWI hangers.

At paragraph 50 of her decision onwards to para 60, the previous Appeal Inspector listed the public benefits of the scheme as below.

- Securing the restoration of the listed hangar 3
- The removal of unsympathetic more recent buildings and structures
- Improvements to the flying field including the re-orientation of the grass runway
- Extension and improvement of the existing flying hub
- Provision of landscaped and amenity areas
- Control over flying movements
- Re-establishing the line of the Roman Road and interpretation materials

## **10. Overall Conclusions and balancing exercise**

### Heritage Balance

Officers agree with the previous appeal Inspector that the identified public benefits of the scheme as above, cumulatively, do present considerable weight to be added to the heritage balance set out in the NPPF, along with the presumption that preservation is desirable.

However, whilst the reduction in the area of Area A is acknowledged and welcomed, Area A remains of a significant scale and massing. Whilst some adjustments and additional illustrative material have been undertaken and been provided with respect of Area B and C, the proposals for these areas remain largely as previously presented at the previous appeal. Officers therefore consider that the Inspector's judgement at her paragraph 62 of the appeal decision remains valid, in that the resultant erosion of the open character and appearance of the Airfield Conservation Area and the setting of the Old Sarum Scheduled Ancient Monument, the listed hangars, and other associated buildings, whilst contributing "less than substantial harm" would not preserve the setting of the listed buildings or the Scheduled Monument, and would not preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the Airfield Conservation Area. This would still result in a significant amount of harm to heritage assets. In line with the previous Inspector, considerable importance and great weight should be given to this identified heritage harm.

### Conclusions and Planning balance

Policy CP25 of the Wiltshire Core Strategy relates directly to the airfield, and in principle permits development of the identified parcels of land, but only if any scheme addresses the various criteria outlined in the policy. However, as the policies of the Plan must not be read in isolation, any scheme should also be tested against other policies in the Core Strategy; the statutory duties imposed by the government, and national planning guidance.

The issue relating to noise from aircraft is no longer subject to an objection from the public protection officer, subject to a number of detailed conditions being imposed on any consent which limit flying activities and operations. This also addresses criteria iii) of CP25, one of the main criteria of the policy, and is given **significant weight, albeit tempered by the fact that a legal agreement is not yet available to secure the required yearly monitoring mitigation.**

The provision of public open space, pathways and cycleways is also welcomed. The open space provision is a policy requirement, and thus is of **limited weight**. However, the provision of linkages through the site would benefit future occupiers of the site as well as local residents to the south and north of the site. However, as Green Lane public right of way is already available for use, these new linkages are attributed **modest weight**, particularly as they would be over private land, and public access in perpetuity would need to be secured via a legal agreement.

The enhancement of the existing dilapidated hangar, and hence the overall heritage asset, is welcomed in principle. The previous appeal Inspector attributed "considerable weight" to its early refurbishment. However, following a collapse of parts of the hangar in January 2024, the rebuilding and repair is given **modest weight**, as it would simply return the building to a state it was previously in a few years ago, and would be likely to result in a modern facsimile of the original hangar and its features.

The provision of housing would ordinarily carry **significant weight**. However, at the current time, the Council can demonstrate a housing land supply above that specified in current NPPF 2023. Notwithstanding, policy CP25 is not a housing allocation policy, and thus any additional housing on the site is not required to meet the Council's land supply requirements. Given that the viability matter is not yet completed at the time of writing, it is not yet clear whether the scheme can provide any affordable housing provision on site in line with national or local planning policy CP43. Thus, in this case, the provision of housing is given **only modest weight in favour of the proposal**, and indeed, the lack of any affordable housing provision in such a large housing scheme would **weigh against** this proposal.

Airfield related development would be located in Area B directly to the south east of the existing airfield buildings and adjacent commercial industrial units. In principle, the provision and enhancement of existing airfield facilities and operations is welcomed, particular where this would also enhance the overall visitor experience and provide public related community facilities, as well as enhanced employment opportunities. In principle, the provision of such facilities align with the aims of CP25. Such benefits could therefore be given **significant weight**. However, the hangars and aviation development proposed in Area B is considered to be excessive in its scale compared to the requirements of the airfield, and are deemed to cause less than substantial harm to the heritage asset. Thus, the weight ascribed to these provisions would be **limited**, as significant weight needs to be given to the harm to the heritage asset. Notwithstanding, whilst the provision of community facilities is welcomed, it would be difficult to ensure that facilities and public access would be maintained in perpetuity rather than the facilities being used for private benefit (as a private club/facility etc). The operation and future retention of the features in perpetuity, including the future operation of the airfield, is also not possible through the planning system, as that will as ever be up to the individuals running the operation.

Similarly, at the time of writing, the remain outstanding matters and concerns regarding the likely impacts of the firing range use on some of the proposed dwellings in Area C terms of noise disturbance. There is also an outstanding issue in relation to air quality mitigation. **Significant weight** is attributable to these potential harms.

Furthermore, the impacts of the proposed housing on the adjacent highway system remain subject of a significant objection from the Council's Highways officer on highway safety grounds. This harm is of **significant weight**.

Notwithstanding the above, at the time of writing, there is also an outstanding issue related to the viability of the scheme and its ability to mitigate the impacts of the scheme, as required by normal planning policy. The subsequent harm which may result from the lack of mitigation, in particular in terms of various mitigation outlined in the S106 section of this report, is considered to **significantly weight** against this proposal.

Furthermore, whilst it appears that the current application scheme may provide some community/public benefits as outlined in the report above, and these are given cumulatively considerable weight, as the previous Inspector indicated at paragraph 65 of her decision, the delivery of those benefits cannot come at any cost.

As a consequence, based on current submissions, the current scheme would not achieve some of the aims of policy CP25 of the Wiltshire Core Strategy, and, given that the viability process is not yet complete and there is no S106 in place to secure some mitigation, the proposal would also fail to comply with the requirements of CP3 in terms of providing the required mitigation and infrastructure including public art, CP43 in terms of the lack of provision of affordable housing, CP57 in terms of the provision of a high quality design, CP58 in terms of the protection and enhancement of the historic assets, and CP61, in terms of the protection of the highway system. The proposal is therefore also contrary to the guidance given in the NPPF & NPPG regards good design, protection of amenity, infrastructure provision and protection, and the protection of heritage assets.

Therefore, as expressed by the Inspector at paragraph 68 & 69 of her decision, there remains identified conflict with the Development Plan as a whole, resulting in consequential harm to which substantial weight should be attributed. The conflict with the NPPF also weighs significantly against the proposal. The heritage harm, together with conflict with the Development Plan remain as the previous Inspector stated, "sufficiently weighty" to clearly outweigh the benefits of the proposal, and the presumption in favour of sustainable development is not engaged. The scheme is therefore recommended for refusal.

**RECOMMENDATION: REFUSE for the following reasons:**

1. The development location would result in 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 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 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.