



Appeal Decision

Inquiry commenced on 9 October 2018

Accompanied Site visit made on 14 February 2019

by Frances Mahoney DipTP MRTPI IHBC

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 11 July 2019

Appeal Ref: APP/Y3940/W/17/3190561

Old Sarum Airfield, Lancaster Road, Old Sarum, Salisbury, Wiltshire

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 against a failure to give notice within the prescribed period of a decision on an application for outline planning permission.
 - The appeal is made by Old Sarum Airfield Limited (Mr Grenville Hodge) against Wiltshire Council.
 - The application Ref 15/04004/OUT, is dated 17 April 2015.
 - The development proposed is demolition, modification and renovation of existing buildings, structures and site development. Provision of approximately 18.6ha of residential land accommodating approximately 462 residential dwellings. Provision for a mixture of employment, commercial/leisure, office use (Class B1) and aviation uses on 3.51ha of land at Area B, including a flying hub comprising new 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 vehicular 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 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.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed and planning permission is refused.

Applications for costs

2. At the Inquiry applications for costs were made by the Council against the Appellant and by the Appellant against the Council. These applications will be the subject of separate Decisions.

Preliminary matters

3. The Inquiry sat from the 9-12 October, 16-18 October 2018 and 13-14 February 2019 with an initial site visit on the 10 October 2018 and an accompanied site visit on 14 February 2019.
4. In this outline proposal all matters are reserved for future consideration save that of access. The description of development set out above differs from that on the planning application form, in the main, with respect to a reduction in the number of dwellings proposed. This change was undertaken during the period

that the Council were considering the proposal and was an agreed change between the parties. I am satisfied that the amended description of development better reflects the scheme of development now proposed which is essentially a reduction in the number of residential units and the introduction of office space within Area B (commercial/aviation uses). All the main parties, along with those who addressed the Inquiry were aware of the alternative plans and made comment in the context of them where appropriate. As such I am satisfied that there has been no prejudice to any interested party in the change in the description of development and the introduction of the illustrative plans of the hangars in Area B¹. Therefore, my consideration of the proposal is based on the description reflected in the bullet points above.

5. I am also conscious that other than the location plan and site access plans², all other plans are purely for illustrative purposes only. However, I have considered them on the basis of a promoted design approach and whilst they may not be determinative, they have informed my reasoning³.

Background

6. The appeal site is essentially the land which makes up Old Sarum Airfield which dates from the First World War (WWI) and still includes technical buildings and three listed hangars which have a functional relationship to the grass airstrip⁴. Historic England's publication Historic Military Aviation Sites Conservation Guidance⁵ identifies 'Key' sites in England of pre-1945 military aviation sites. Old Sarum is identified as one of the best-preserved flying fields of the WWI period with one of the most complete suites of technical and hangar buildings of the period. Although no longer in military use, continuous flying activity has been maintained since 1917 from the grass airstrip. Old Sarum is now operated as a commercial/civilian airfield, including leisure and training flights.
7. The Airfield was designated a Conservation Area in 2007. It includes three former WWI aircraft hangars with internal Belfast roof trusses, listed as being Grade II*. In addition, further listed (Grade II) buildings, including the TA headquarters and workshops, add to the suite of support structures.
8. The open space of the airstrip and its environs are generally defined but the associated historic buildings have been subsumed into a more modern industrial estate accessed from the Portway made up of large late 20th century industrial sheds.
9. The Airfield currently has an unrestricted level of intensity of flying activity. Over time there have been issues relating to aircraft noise in the vicinity, including over Salisbury itself⁶. The Wiltshire Core Strategy (CS) Core Policy 25 is titled Old Sarum Airfield and has essentially sprung from a desire to seek some control⁷ and strike an appropriate balance between the flying activity and the amenity of Salisbury's residents, in the context of the facility being highly

¹ Inquiry Doc 36.

² CDs 18, 19 & 20.

³ I have noted that the appellant company has suggested the broad perimeters of the illustrative material could be secured through the use of conditions.

⁴ Part of the proposal is to re-align the grass airstrip. The current line of the runway is unlikely to be the original alignment having been re-aligned over the years.

⁵ CD 65 – Council CDs – Page 30.

⁶ CS para 5.134.

⁷ Without preventing flying altogether.

valued locally for the historical and recreational opportunities it provides, including maintaining flying from the airstrip.

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.
11. This is a policy which essentially has been in the Development Plan since 2012⁹. To my mind the delivery of the specified outcomes of this Development Plan policy lies at the heart of this case and I will return to CS Core Policy 25 later in this decision.
12. The proposed development would be divided into three areas around the perimeter of the Airfield. Area A on the north-west of the airstrip is proposed to accommodate 302 dwellings with main access from the Portway. Area B, would be located to the south-east of the existing listed hangars and other commercial buildings, including proposed hangar/office buildings along with a new control tower, café/restaurant, heritage, visitors and parachute centres, aviation archives and aircraft hangars. Area C is on the far southern periphery of the Airfield adjoining the village of Ford, where the residual 160 homes are proposed taking access from Ford Road. In general, the three proposed areas of development follow those indicated on the accompanying plan to CS Core Policy 25¹⁰.
13. Within my reasoning whilst I shall consider the three areas separately, I shall make it clear where cumulative impacts prevail.

Agreed housing matters¹¹

14. It was agreed between the parties that the Council could demonstrate a 5.12 years supply of housing land¹². This was for the purposes of the Inquiry. That said, the appellant company did not accept the Council's methodology of calculation and consider the actual supply to be significantly below that promoted by the Council. As already identified the appeal site, whilst not a strategic allocation, has been identified as being capable of accommodating high quality residential use¹³. This is to address matters which go beyond the achieving and maintenance of a five year housing land supply. Any dwellings built on the appeal site would certainly contribute to boosting the supply of homes supporting the Government's objective in this regard¹⁴. It is reasonable

⁸ It is essentially the same plan included in the South Wiltshire Core Strategy (SWCS) Policy 9.

⁹ SWCS adopted 7 February 2012 – Policy 9.

¹⁰ Figure 5.16.

¹¹ Inquiry Doc 20.

¹² Inquiry Doc 20.

¹³ Subject to the policy requirements of CS Core Policy 25 along with the aims of the Development Plan as a whole.

¹⁴ National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) Para 59.

to consider the proposal in that context, but in the policy circumstances of the appeal site and the agreed position of the parties on housing land supply. I see no reason to depart from that settled point.

Consideration of the historic environment

15. Notwithstanding the criteria set out in CS Core Policy 25 and taking into account the primacy of the development plan¹⁵, I am conscious that as already indicated, there are a number of heritage assets to be considered in terms of impacts of the appeal proposal¹⁶. As decision-maker I must consider this appeal in light of the statutory duties placed upon me in Section 16(2), 66(1) and 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 which require that special regard shall be had to the desirability of preserving listed buildings or their settings or any features of special architectural or historic interest which they possess, and special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of conservation areas.
16. Paragraph 184 of the Framework sets out that heritage assets are irreplaceable resources to be conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance.
17. Paragraph 193 of the Framework also requires that great weight should be given to the conservation of assets, irrespective of whether any potential harm amounts to substantial harm, total loss or less than substantial harm to its significance. I shall proceed with the consideration of this proposal with these matters at the forefront of my reasoning and weighing of the decision.
18. Further, based on all I have heard, seen and read I consider the overriding main issue which I shall address up front in this decision to be whether the proposed development would preserve or enhance the character or appearance of Old Sarum Airfield Conservation Area, the Stratford sub Castle Conservation Area, and whether it would preserve the setting and architectural and historic interest of the listed buildings on the Airfield, and in particular the hangars in terms of significance of the buildings and the Airfield as a whole, along with the impact on the Old Sarum Scheduled Ancient Monument (SAM).
19. The dominant designated heritage asset in the landscape has to be Old Sarum, SAM, set within the Stratford sub Castle Conservation Area which, whilst not adjoining the Airfield Conservation Area is closely physically associated with it being only a field's width apart with a skirting roadway.
20. The SAM has its origins back into the Iron Age period. It is a large multivallate hillfort with discernible earthworks, including ramparts and ditches. It has been fortified over the Roman, Norman and Saxon periods. Within its defensive circuit is the remains of a royal motte and bailey castle, a medieval town, and an ecclesiastical precinct within which lie the cathedral and bishop's palace. The remains of the castle and cathedral are listed Grade I. It is

¹⁵ The duty in section 38(6) of The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 enshrines in statute the primacy of the development plan. As an essential component of the 'plan-led' system, it is also reiterated in the Framework paragraph 2 which is of course a material consideration to which substantial weight should be attached.

¹⁶ Designated heritage assets - Old Sarum Schedule Ancient Monument (SAM), Stratford sub Castle Conservation Area, Old Sarum Conservation Area, Listed hangars and associated support buildings – non-designated heritage assets – Portway and Ford Road and other non-listed Airfield buildings.

prominently positioned on the northern edge of modern Salisbury overlooking the River Avon. Its significance is firmly based on the synergy of its physical presence within the landscape being a dramatic steep-sided chalk spur which facilitates panoramic 360-degree views of the surrounding lower-lying countryside, and its historic development as a strong defensive position.

21. It presents a point of convergence of strategic routeways and rivers which, in the past, allowed the control of trade routes, a developmental factor in the growth and permanence of Old Sarum as a defensive settlement over discernible periods of the history of Britain as a nation. Portway and Ford Road lie on the line of two Roman Roads which undoubtedly focus on Old Sarum SAM. The line/route of these roads are important non-designated heritage assets which are integral to an understanding of the SAM and its prominence in the landscape. Either side of the Portway is a concentration of recent development. On one side¹⁷ there is a major residential commitment to over 1000 new homes and some employment land. Some rather undistinguished residential development has already been constructed close to the Portway. On the southern side is the Castlegate Business Park, a development of equally undistinguished commercial units which adjoins the Airfield. The lining of the Portway in this manner does emphasize the linear nature of the road, so typical of Roman routes which take little account of topography or landscape, forcing through an essentially straight highway. From Old Sarum SAM, the converging lines of the two Roman Roads are obvious although not complete in the case of the Portway, where the line of the road ceases at the Portway/Ramsbury Drive roundabout. The strongly linear layout of the Castlegate Business Park and the Airfield buildings also run parallel to the Portway, adding further definition to the Roman Road when seen from overlooking landscape viewpoints.
22. The Stratford sub Castle Conservation Area surrounds the immediate environs of the hillfort, preserving it in a limited open landscape context to the west and south, where the encroachment of the wider urban sprawl of Salisbury has been checked, the lower slopes of the SAM still being readily discernible and readable in the context of the defensive position. To the north and east the expanse of the low-lying open countryside spreads out well beyond the boundaries of the Stratford sub Castle Conservation Area. When viewed from both within the hillfort and without¹⁸, even to the casual observer, the reason for both the SAMs defensive and authoritarian historic functions is clear in its assertive and powerful physical presence dominating the landscape, in the context of the open generally rural character of the plains and peripheral hills of its surroundings. In this way its immediate and wider landscape setting is a constituent part of the significance of the SAM.
23. The rural views over countryside which remain from the SAM do form a key part of the setting and significance of the monument. However, a landscape cannot be frozen in aspic. It naturally changes with the seasons and as leaves fall in the autumn and winter the view may change. That said the views are expansive and within the landscape there are discernible pockets of built development, including farmsteads. Old Sarum has already been permitted to grow, providing new homes, employment land and a park and ride facility. From Old Sarum SAM this expansion is unmistakable, but its distant

¹⁷ Northern side

¹⁸ I viewed the landscape in which the hillfort (SAM) and the appeal site sit from Figsbury Ring a distant Iron Age hillfort.

- separation and the degree of mature and maturing landscaping soften the impact of what appears further urbanising sprawl. Taking a purist view of the setting of the SAM, it could be argued that the sprawl of modern-day Salisbury and Old Sarum does not make a positive contribution to the significance of this heritage asset, diminishing its wider setting.
24. This setting does include the open expanse of the Airfield which is of particular importance due to its close proximity to the SAM and it being a foreground feature when viewed from the ramparts or in landscape views both near and far, being part of the surroundings in which the heritage asset is experienced.
25. It is interesting to consider that Old Sarum Airfield became established in the very shadow of the historic hillfort for the same defensive function of protection and war time engagement.
26. I find that linkage palpable and when standing on the ramparts of the hillfort overlooking the Airfield it is easy to imagine the defensive efforts of the military who operated from Old Sarum Airfield undertaking sorties during both the First and Second World Wars and the debt of gratitude owed by this Nation to those men and women who operated from the air station. The Airfield was also used as a training facility.
27. As already indicated, above the Old Sarum Airfield is a Conservation Area in its own-right and includes Grade II* listed buildings. Its significance is partially defined by its boundary definition as an expression of what remains of the WWI/WWII functioning Airfield, including the surviving grass airstrip¹⁹, hangars, shooting range, officers' mess and quarters. The association of the remaining military buildings with the Airfield, many of which I observed are still in use, including the WWI shooting range and the listed hangars, further expound the significance of the Conservation Area. The openness of the grassed Airfield maintains an expression of the extent of the operational area of its military purpose, albeit some has already been lost to development over the years. However, at the heart of its significance is the use of the airstrip for flying purposes which has been a continuous operation from the military flying/training from the early 20th century to the Airfield passing into civilian hands in more recent time. It is still used for recreational and training flying, including helicopters and parachute jumping/training. This particular aspect of the significance of the heritage asset is highly valued locally and there is no local wish to prevent flying altogether. In fact, the maintenance of flying from the airfield is one of the focal points of preserving the character of the heritage asset. However, there are no controls over the level and intensity of flying activity from the Airfield and there has been a history of complaints about noise from local residents caused by over-flying Salisbury.
28. CS Core Policy 25 seeks to address this situation and I will return to this point later. However, one further point which the policy response seeks to deal with is the damage caused to the heritage value of the Airfield by the intrusion of the functional late 20th century industrial sheds on the business park.

¹⁹ The position of the grass airstrip may not necessarily be in the exact position as that used in time of conflict as the strip has the potential to move within tolerances to accommodate other aircraft types.

Area B

29. Old Sarum Airfield is one of only three surviving WWI grass strip airfields of its type in Britain and so is of national importance in this context. Part of its importance is the inclusion of the Grade II* listed WWI hangars along with other associated supporting military buildings²⁰. The hangars were built in 1918 and were used to house and repair aircraft contemporary to the period. They continued in use through the Second WW supporting the interventions of the Air Observation Unit, Special Operations Executive and the Royal Canadian Air Force. The only remaining listed hangars²¹ are a single and two paired arrangement. They stand adjacent to the wider flying field with a close association with the control tower and other associated designated and non-designated assets²². However, the modern Castlegate Business Park has engulfed the heritage buildings²³, shrouding them with modern unremarkable commercial sheds. The hangars seem to visually recede into the business park, diminishing the buildings standing as important WWI military resources. In some view points from the Portway, Green Lane and distant views in the landscape, they could be mistaken as being part of the business park. Their significance is firmly based on their contemporaneous association with the Airfield throughout its military use. 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.
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 appearance²⁴.
31. The development of Area B would essentially run either side of the listed hangars, along the Airfield periphery where it adjoins the business park. The proposal is to create a hub of flying activities with new hangar buildings with office space above, and an aviation building including restaurant and new control tower. Inquiry Document 36 sets out the vision for these proposed buildings and their relationship with the existing historic aviation-centric buildings. 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 buildings would also be of a comparable scale to the industrial sheds behind and would successfully screen this unsympathetic development from view creating a much improved and wholly appropriate context for the hangars. The hangars' current immediate constricted setting is not one which warrants preservation in

²⁰ Virtually a complete surviving example of a WWI airfield and training depot station - Grade II listed workshops, the station headquarters, the Motor Transport Sheds and Yard and the Shooting range all dated to the WWI period.

²¹ Some were destroyed by fire.

²² In the form of Workshops and military support buildings.

²³ Both designated and non-designated heritage assets.

²⁴ CD 45 – para 189.

its current form²⁵. 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.

Area C

32. The peripheral edge of the Airfield and, consequently, the Conservation Area, adjoining the village of Ford is proposed to accommodate 160 new homes. This area, which in the main corresponds with that identified as a potential development area under the terms of CS Core Policy 25²⁶, does form part of the wider functioning Airfield, but in operational terms, due to its challenging topographical nature is unsuitable for flying activities due to its sloping nature being on the far side of a low ridge sloping down towards the village.
33. The Illustrative Master Plan²⁷ shows a layout of development taking some reference from the curving streets of Ford, which includes ex-military housing. 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. The landscape strategy is to plant up the ridge with trees to create a firm visual edge to the operational Airfield.
34. The diminution of the open flying field, were Area C to be developed, would be more perceivable from Ford Road and Green Lane as well as the adjoining roads in Ford.
35. From more distant views in the landscape looking across the Airfield Conservation Area from the north-east²⁹, 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.
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.

Area A

37. In my mind Area A is the more polemical part of the development when considered in respect of the impact on heritage assets. Area A lies on land south of the Portway and west of the Castlegate Business Park. This part of the Airfield is out of sight of the main flying hub and in current operational

²⁵ Three sides adjoin the business park.

²⁶ Only to be permitted subject to facilitating CS Core Policy 25.

²⁷ CD 23.

²⁸ From the Castlegate/Portway side.

²⁹ From Figsbury Ring as an example.

terms the land is used for informal car parking and grazing. As part of the Airfield it is within the setting of the listed hangars particularly when viewed from across the Airfield from the east, from parts of Ford Road and from Old Sarum SAM itself. In respect of the Conservation Area, Area A, in general, is seen in the context of the Airfield, being part of its grassland extremities and its open character.

38. Like Area C, but to a greater extent, 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.
39. However, there is the impact on the Old Sarum SAM to consider³⁰. From the ramparts of the SAM the openness of the land at the foot of its slopes is of particular prominence, both visually and in terms of the character of the expanding wider view of the open low-lying countryside off to the north and east, which is part of the setting of the SAM. The elevated position of the SAM above its surroundings and the consequently high-level panoramic views, are an expression of its setting for those experiencing the SAM from its ramparts. These elements all go as important contributors to the significance of the heritage asset.
40. Any development of Area A would be of particular prominence being in an exposed location where built form would be encroaching on the open space currently between the Castlegate Business Park, the concentration of existing recent residential development on the northern side of the Portway, taking into account the commitment to the Longhedge extension, and the park and ride facility at the Beehive. 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 setting³¹. Unfortunately, to some degree the Portway residential development also negatively diminishes the quality of the character and appearance of the setting, being only saved by the continuing maturity of the landscaping within it. As already identified, the Airfield does present a positive synergy with the SAM which is best appreciated looking out from one military reconnaissance/combat point, across another, of another time and another military means of distant reconnaissance/combat.
41. To avoid any further unsympathetic development in such an exposed location so close to the SAM itself I need to be entirely confident that Area A would be developed in such a way so as to preserve the setting of Old Sarum SAM³².
42. The Illustrative Master Plan shows a layout designed around the creation of a linear park built as an expression of the alignment of the Roman Road (the Portway) extending towards Old Sarum SAM. The connection between the Portway and the SAM no longer exists other than in the imagination of those standing on the ramparts of the SAM looking out towards the Portway or

³⁰ Its associated Stratford sub Castle Conservation Area would not, in itself, be impacted upon by the proposed development which would have only a neutral effect other than, in so far, as the Conservation Area forms part of the immediate setting of the SAM.

³¹ I agree with Inspector Yuille's assessment that the modern buildings of the business park are intrusive being clearly visible from the ramparts of the Ancient Monument thereby harming its setting – CD 45 para 189.

³² Taking into account the terms of CS Core Policy 25, Area A being more or less the same as that area defined in Figure 5.16 for potential development.

experiencing the SAM from the Roman Road itself. Area A could deliver a re-establishing of the physical expression of the alignment of the road emphasised by landscaping and building blocks either side, as well as informative resource material³³. The 302 proposed homes in this area would be a mix of dwellings, including apartments and family homes. It is suggested in the Design and Access Statement³⁴ that there would be a number of focal points and landmark buildings designed into the layout. Building heights would be of the order of 2 to 4 storeys with a varied roofscape. Design influences would be taken from the historic airfield buildings. The character and appearance of the proposal is promoted as being contemporary with an historic influence resulting in an individual character where contemporary feature buildings would create local landmarks for navigation around the site.

43. Various illustrative plans have been produced to show what the building heights might look like, what densities might be appropriate in Area A and other strategic concepts within the development design³⁵. However, I am conscious that this is an outline proposal with only access for consideration. The illustrative material is informative but that is all.
44. It has been suggested that planning conditions could be used to secure reserved matters which broadly conform to the parameters set out within the Illustrative Master Plan and other associated material. As a mechanism for securing such compliance, in theory, this could be used. However, this presupposes that the illustrative layout and design guidelines present indicators of what would be an acceptable form of development in an extremely sensitive location within the immediate setting of the SAM. It is vital that the design and quality of the development should be such that the finally constructed development preserves the setting of the SAM³⁶ and, in my mind, this must be more than just screening off the industrial sheds of the business park. This is an opportunity to create a development which takes the aviation heritage of the Airfield and combines it with the enhancement of the SAM through the physical acknowledgement of the Roman route through the site. The submitted concept plans and supporting information do give a flavour of how development might be approached, and, in my view, they are moving in the right direction but with only basic and, by the appellant company's own volition, only illustrative information. 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, even given some would be apartments. From the SAM the illustrative layout would have the desired effect of screening/softening the impact of the business park buildings, but in my view the layout has been designed with too much emphasis on that purpose. 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.
45. The illustrative material submitted gives me no surety that the final scheme, which may or may not be led by the appellant company³⁷, would be of the high

³³ CS Core Policy 25 i.

³⁴ CD 7 – Section 5.6.

³⁵ Core Plan folder - plans CP3, CP6 and CP7 and CP17 and CD23 + CD 4.

³⁶ Inspector Yuille indicates that it would be particularly important that care was taken in the design, siting, scale and landscaping of the most westerly of the development areas as this is particularly visible from Old Sarum SAM -CD 45 para 195.

³⁷ I have noted that the evidence of the appellant company was that they would control the development of the appeal site, but circumstances can change – no mechanism was produced to secure this commitment.

quality of design which Area A demands. For a future potential interpretation of development to be more akin to a volume house approach would be unfortunate in such an exposed location of importance to the significance of the SAM. This is particularly so when the elevated views across Area A are taken into account from the SAM ramparts. The layout and design of development takes on a different dimension when seen from a high-level view point. Being so much closer to the SAM than other residential development Area A would be more exposed where landscaping, in a screening capacity, would be of limited effectiveness. 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.

Heritage harm outcome

46. So, having considered all three areas separately I need to draw together the threads of the effects of the proposed development on heritage assets.
47. It is undeniable that the appeal proposals would represent change in the significance and setting of these designated and non-designated heritage assets. 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. In all of these cases, openness is a fundamental element of their significance. However, there would not be a total loss of significance and so the appeal proposal, as a totality, would lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of designated heritage assets.
48. An Inspector colleague waxed lyrical expressing that "At times the exercise of identifying the degree of harm within the category of less than substantial harm can appear like trying to count how many angels can dance on the head of a pin"³⁸. In this instance considering the cumulative harm to heritage assets that has been identified, and particularly to the setting of the Old Sarum SAM, I am of the mind that the head of the pin would be greatly populated by the dancing angelic hosts in terms of the degree of less than substantial harm brought about.
49. Having reached this view, the less than substantial harm to the significance of the designated heritage assets should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal, including securing its optimum viable use³⁹.

Public benefits – these are not listed in order of importance

50. *Securing the restoration of the listed Hangar 3* - the appellant company proposes this before any of the housing development commences. They also made it clear the development proposal should not be seen as enabling development but facilitating the works of restoration⁴⁰. As I saw at my site visit the hangar is still in limited use, but its roof and internal roof structure are in need of considerable works. It struck me at the Inquiry that those who are involved in the running and overseeing of the Airfield are immersed in its history and importance and are seeking to secure its long-term future as a flying hub. From the evidence of Mr Hodge I was left with the impression that it is likely that the hangar would be repaired, in any case, but this would be

³⁸ Inspector SRG Baird – Ref 3189592.

³⁹ Paragraph 196 of the Framework requires that the identified harm in the less than substantial category should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal.

⁴⁰ Durrant proof para 5.8.

over time dependant on availability of resources. The timely restoration of the hangar would be to halt the current deterioration of the condition of the building, preserving it as a building of national importance. 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.

51. *The removal of unsympathetic more recent buildings and structures*, which have no historic value, from the area in the foreground of the hangars and on the edge of the flying field, would certainly improve the immediate setting of the hangars and enhance the character and appearance of the Airfield Conservation Area. By returning this central area of aviation activity to something more akin to its WWI origins would amount to a public benefit creating a further insight to the development of the Airfield.
52. *Improvements to the flying field*, including the re-orientation of the grass runway which would allow rare historic aircraft such as Spitfires to land. This would be an important enhancement of the Airfield and consequently to the character of the Conservation Area as not only would flying be maintained⁴¹ but would facilitate the reintroduction of historic aircraft with a close association with the military past of the site.
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.
54. *Extension and improvement of the existing flying hub* which would provide services to facilitate public access, including a resource centre, aviation archive and café/restaurant for visitors and those actively using the site⁴². Such facilities would enhance the character of the Conservation Area, improving public access in terms of movement around the site to appreciate flying activities via cycleways and circular pathways⁴³.
55. *Provision of landscaped and amenity areas* to encourage public access and enhance the experience of the flying field and an appreciation and access to heritage assets.
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 Airfield⁴⁴, 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

⁴¹ CS Core Policy 25 v.

⁴² CS Core Policy 25 vi.

⁴³ Would also increase connectivity across the site and from Ford village over to the Portway/Beehive, a public benefit to be encouraged – CS Core Policy 25 i, vi.

⁴⁴ The offer of the removal of helicopter flying/training from the Airfield to improve residential amenity for those living in Ford in respect of noise.

reasonable controls sought⁴⁵. Resultant improvements to the amenities of local residents⁴⁶ should be given considerable weight in any balancing exercise.

57. *Re-establishment of the line of the Roman road* as already described above to enhance the experience of the SAM, along with resource and interpretive material. This latter resource would also be provided around the Airfield to enhance understanding and appreciation of its history and development.
58. Even in the face of a marginal and yet accepted 5 Year Housing Land Supply, the proposed new homes would serve to contribute to the Government's objective of significantly *boosting the supply of homes*.
59. The appellant company within its Closings sets out the fall-back position should planning permission not be granted⁴⁷. Most of the benefits outlined above would not happen, particularly in relation to the current unrestricted movements of aircraft of all types. Therefore, one of the aims of the Development Plan policy would not be delivered⁴⁸. The business park would also still remain as an obvious hard urban, unsympathetic feature within the setting of heritage assets. The condition of Hangar 3 would also be likely to further deteriorate which would not preserve the listed building nor any of its features of special architectural or historic interest. All of these are weighty matters which do need to be added to the balance of this decision.
60. However, based on the evidence before me, the maintenance of flying from Old Sarum Airfield is secure even if planning permission is not granted for this proposal. The heritage connection between flying and the Airfield would be maintained and therefore, this in itself does not weigh positively or negatively into the balance. This equally applies to the securing of the Airfield's optimum viable use as a working airfield.

Heritage balance

61. The identified public benefits of the appeal proposal do present cumulatively considerable weight to be added in the heritage balance set out in Framework paragraph 196, along with the presumption that preservation is desirable.
62. However, the resultant erosion of the open character and appearance of the Airfield Conservation Area and the setting of the Old Sarum SAM and the listed hangars and other associated buildings, whilst constituting less than substantial harm in Framework terms, would not preserve the setting of the listed buildings/SAM, nor would it preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the Old Sarum Conservation Area in the circumstances of the overall scheme as currently proposed⁴⁹. This would result in an inordinate amount of harm to heritage assets. The considerable importance and great weight which I ascribe

⁴⁵ The mechanism to secure the proffered restrictions of current unfettered usage and consequent noise levels, in my view, needs to reflect the requirement set out in CS Core Policy 25 iii there being rights over private land involved.

⁴⁶ CS Core Policy 25 iii

⁴⁷ Inquiry Doc 39 Section 2 page 11.

⁴⁸ CS Core Policy 25 has essentially sprung from a desire to seek some control and strike an appropriate balance between the flying activity and the amenity of Salisbury's residents, in the context of the facility being highly valued locally for the historical and recreational opportunities it provides, including maintaining flying from the airstrip.

⁴⁹ Statutory duties placed upon decision-maker in Section 16(2), 66(1) and 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. The terms of CS Core Policy 58 would also be offended.

to this identified heritage harm⁵⁰ would outweigh the public benefits which would ensue from the development⁵¹.

Planning Balance

63. On the face of it then the heritage harm would be enough to reject the proposal at this stage. However, I am conscious that the Development Plan supports the principle of new development at the Airfield under the terms of CS Core Policy 25. So, I move on to the planning balance.
64. CS Core Policy 25 is an up to date policy seeking to facilitate a strategy allowing sympathetic new development on the airfield perimeter. Its aim is ensuring that any development over the airfield area is closely controlled, of a high quality, able to enhance the historic environment and will deliver the benefits required by policy. The identified elements within the policy were all considered by two previous Examining Inspectors and must all be delivered for compliance⁵².
65. As already indicated in the heritage balance and above, a goodly number of public benefits would be delivered through the development scheme and this would include a number of the criteria set out in CS Core Policy 25⁵³. However, the delivery of those benefits can not be at any cost.
66. Criteria iv seeks the 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. As I have explained in respect of Area A, the Illustrative Master Plan and associated material have shortcomings and I have for the reasons set out above found it wanting in heritage terms, the historic environment would not be enhanced⁵⁴.
67. Whilst the accompanying text to the CS Policy does refer to the masterplan being developed in partnership with the local community and the Council⁵⁵, 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. That said I find the Illustrative Master Plan, going beyond heritage considerations, to be equally unacceptable for the same reasons as previously stated above. The required high quality development would not be delivered on current showing, nor would a strong sense of place be created, drawing on

⁵⁰ Framework para 193.

⁵¹ I have also taken into account implied economic benefits of the scheme both during construction as well as into the future.

⁵² Both Examining Inspectors were clear that the development of the Airfield as indicated by Figure 5.16 of the CS must be suitable and of a high quality. There was no indication of the acceptability of a design or layout however conceptual.

⁵³ When looking at the public benefits in the heritage balance, I have indicated where some elements of CS Core Policy 25 would come forward – See various footnotes above.

⁵⁴ The proposal as presented in illustrative form does not convince me of the quality of the development nor its compatibility with the sensitive historic environment of which the appeal site forms a characterising component part.

⁵⁵ CS para 5.135.

context, in this instance being the heritage assets and being complimentary to the locality⁵⁶.

68. Therefore, it is clear that there is identified conflict with the Development Plan as a whole, resulting in consequential harm to which substantial weight should be ascribed⁵⁷. The proposal has also been assessed against the Framework as a whole and when specifically assessed against paragraph 196, it is found in the balance of the decision that specific policies in the Framework indicate development should be restricted, a finding which similarly weighs significantly against the proposal.
69. I am conscious that there may or may not be other harms to put into the balance of this decision. The heritage harm I have identified, along with the specified harm resulting from conflict with the Development Plan, are sufficiently weighty⁵⁸ to clearly out-weigh the benefits of the proposal. They are also material considerations leading to a conclusion that the presumption in favour of sustainable development is not engaged. On this basis, it would not be productive in the context of this appeal to examine matters further.
70. Consequently, I dismiss this appeal and refuse planning permission.

Frances Mahoney

Inspector

APPEARANCES

⁵⁶ CS Core Policy 57 would be offended.

⁵⁷ This includes conflict with the other relevant Development Plan policies already identified in this decision.

⁵⁸ Great and over-riding weight.

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Vic Bussereau	Vice Chair of Laverstock & Ford Parish Council
Richard Buss	Member of the Salisbury Vintage Rifle and Pistol Club
Sam Salter	Member of Tidworth Rifle and Pistol Club
Ron Champion	Local Resident

INQUIRY DOCUMENTS

Doc 1 - Residential Roads and Footpaths – Layout Considerations April 1992

Doc 2 - Draft conditions and section 106 draft – dated 7 October 2018 – superseded by Inquiry Doc 32

Doc 3 - Council opening remarks

Doc 4 - Appellant's opening remarks

Doc 5 - Councillor McLellan statement plus documents

Doc 6 - Mr Bussereau statement

Doc 7 - Mr Buss statement

Doc 8 - Mr Champion statement

Doc 9 - *Mere* Appeal decision

Doc 10 - Area B Hangers plan; November 2014 – Superseded by Doc 36

Doc 11 - Plan going with CD 83; development principles plan (appeal in 1999)

Doc 12 - Wiltshire Council environmental control and protection consultation response

Doc 13 - Technical Note on phosphate neutrality

Doc 14 - S106 / Unilateral Undertaking Docs – superseded by signed version Inquiry Doc 31

Doc 15 - Old Sarum aircraft movement summary 2002-2018 (includes helicopters)

Doc 16 - Old Sarum Airfield activities

Doc 17 - Costings on Hangar repair provided by Mr G Hodge

Doc 18 - *Southside Court*, Green Lane Appeal Decision

Doc 19 - Catesby Estates Limited Court of Appeal Decision

Doc 20 - Joint Position Statement on Housing Land Supply

Doc 21 - Appraisal on viability; Hodge and Atfield

Doc 22 - GDPO legislation extract

Doc 23 - Email to Mr Hughes from Mr Harris and attached solicitor's letter from Wilsons

Doc 24 - Agreement application description as agreed and signed

Doc 25 - Bus Plan and bus times extract

Doc 26 - Site visit plan as agreed

Doc 27 - Conditions bundle of documents from the Council

Doc 28 - Schedule of viability inputs (from Council and Appellant)

Doc 29 - South Wiltshire Submitted draft of Core Policy 9

Doc 30 – Revised Appropriate Assessment dated 12 February 2019 along with accompanying correspondence

Doc 31 – Signed and completed Unilateral Undertaking

Doc 32 – Revised conditions dated 6 February 2019

Doc 33 – Revised condition and UU text dated 6 February 2019

Doc 34 – Waste storage and collection: guidance for developers

Doc 35 – Henham appeal decision APP/C1570/W/16/3162954 & APP/C1570/W/17/3171425

Doc 36 – Area B Buildings 7796 A04 – October 2018 - Supersedes Doc 10

Doc 37 – Plan 7796 005 A00 – Demolition Plan

Doc 38 – Closing remarks – Council

Doc 39 – Closing submissions – Appellant Company

Doc 40 – Application for Costs on behalf of the Appellant Company

Doc 41 – Response by Council to the Appellant Company's Cost Application

Doc 42 – Housing Schedule to be attached to Goadsby appraisal

Doc 43 – Cost submission on behalf of the Council

Doc 44 – Response by the Appellant Company to the Council's Cost Application

Doc 45 – Comment on Site Visit use of firing ranges on February 14 2019 – Grenville Hodge