



## Report to West Area Planning Committee

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| <b>Application Number:</b>              | 20/08255/R9FUL   |
| <b>Proposal:</b>                        | Construction of glider track (Regulation 3 application)    |
| <b>Site Location:</b>                   | Wycombe Air Park<br>Clay Lane<br>Booker<br>Buckinghamshire |
| <b>Applicant:</b>                       | Buckinghamshire Council Property And Assets                |
| <b>Case Officer:</b>                    | Lucy Bellinger   |
| <b>Ward(s) affected:</b>                | Chiltern Villages  |
| <b>Parish-Town Council:</b>             | Great Marlow Parish Council                                |
| <b>Date valid application received:</b> | 16th December 2020   |
| <b>Statutory determination date:</b>    | 17th March 2021. (Time extension agreed to 10/12/2021)     |
| <b>Recommendation</b>                   | Permit subject to planning conditions                      |

### 1.0 Summary & Recommendation/ Reason for Planning Committee Consideration

- 1.1 Planning permission is sought for a new asphalt runway at Wycombe Air Park for use by glider and tug operations.
- 1.2 The application is being considered by the West Area Planning Committee because the Council is the applicant. The application is not of a strategic nature so it is appropriate for it to be considered at the relevant area committee rather than Strategic Planning Committee.
- 1.3 The development would accord with the development plan. In summary the proposal: -
  - would not be inappropriate development in the Green Belt and it would preserve openness.
  - would not have a negative impact on the natural beauty and special qualities of the adjacent Chilterns AONB
  - would integrate within and not change the established Air Park site landscape or visual character
  - would have no adverse impact on highway or pedestrian safety or the operation of the local road network
  - would deliver a net gain in biodiversity
  - would not increase the risk of flooding and would incorporate sustainable drainage

- would not have an adverse impact on the amenity of surrounding residents and land by way of aircraft noise pollution

1.4 The approval of planning permission subject to conditions is recommended.

## 2.0 Description of Proposed Development

- 2.1 Planning permission is sought for a new asphalt runway which is to be used by gliders and tug aircraft at Wycombe Air Park (also known as Booker Airfield). The Air Park has operated as a general aviation aerodrome since 1965 and provides take-off and landing facilities for small “fixed wing” aircraft, gliders and helicopters. Flying activity, albeit weather and light dependent takes place 7 days a week generally between 9 – 5:30pm (4pm in winter) and up to 7pm for up to 4 days a week in the summer.
- 2.2 The greatest proportion of the Air Park comprises a mown grassland airfield with tarmac runway and taxiing areas. The east of the Air Park has extensive built development of aircraft hangers and industrial buildings for aircraft storage, servicing and other commercial activity.
- 2.3 The area of the new runway is currently used for helicopter movements and aircraft parking. These will be relocated within the confines of the Air Park.
- 2.4 The Air Park operates three runways and accommodates over 90,000 flight movements each year. The flights are private and there are no commercial or air freight operations from the Air Park. The current airfield layout comprises:
- Runway 06/24 – an asphalt runway aligned south-west north east
  - Runway 06/24 G – a parallel grass runway located 100m to the south of runway 06/24
  - Runway 35 – a grass runway aligned north south which crosses the other runways

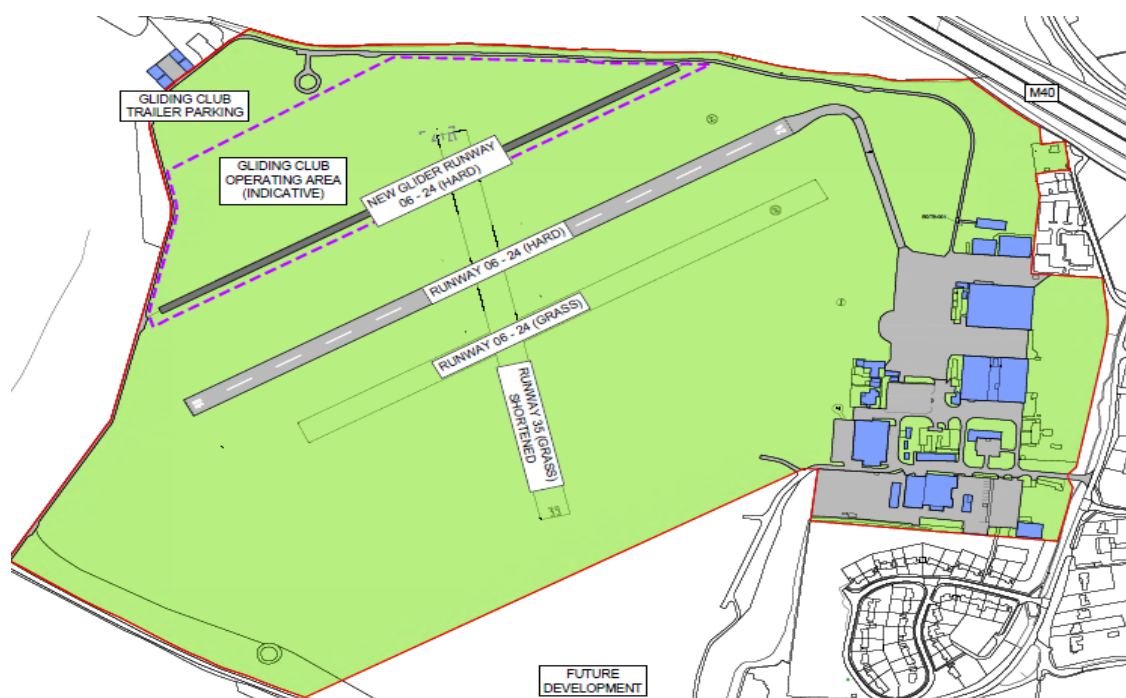


Figure 1: Proposed airfield layout

- 2.5 There is currently no officially designated runway for gliders but they broadly operate parallel to the south of runway 06/24 or to the west of runway 35 depending on the wind direction. The new runway will solely be for glider and tug use.
- 2.6 The new runway will not result in an increase in aircraft using the Air Park. In any event this is not controlled by the planning process but by the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) as the UK aviation regulator. The new glider runway and relocating the glider operating area to the north will necessitate a number of changes to flight routes.
- Glider tug routes would depart to north of the airfield as opposed to south at present
  - Fixed wing circuit routes from existing runway 06/24 will move to the south of the airfield
  - Runway 35 will be shortened but not change in circuit route
  - The north helicopter training area (HTA) will no longer be used. Therefore, helicopters will all operate from existing HTA E and a new HTA W will be created. Helicopters will use a new circuit route which head initially east and west respectively before turning south.
- 2.7 Land within the southern part of the air park is allocated in the Local Plan as a strategic employment area (policy HW15) – an area for new commercial development. To facilitate this coming forward, the existing airfield needs to be reconfigured. This includes the relocation of the glider operation area from the south to north side of the airfield and the construction of a new glider runway. The new runway has been designed specifically for gliding use, while fixed wing aircraft and helicopters will continue to take off and land within other parts of the Air Park.
- 2.8 A planning application has recently been submitted for the allocated employment site for use as a filming site.
- 2.9 The Council own the land at the Air Park and lease the airfield to Airways Aero Associations Limited (AAA)/Booker Aviation who operate Wycombe Air Park as a CAA Licensed Airfield. Aspects relating to safety, flight numbers, routes and noise are all controlled/regulated by the CAA. If planning permission is granted for the application, there would be a separate formal regulatory process controlled by the CAA.
- 2.10 The Wycombe Air Park Joint Consultative Committee (JCC) provides a forum for the discussion of all matters concerning the development or operation of the aerodrome and is made up of representatives from the local community, the Council and airfield users.
- 2.11 Prior to submission of the planning application, Booker Aviation and the former Wycombe District Council undertook public consultation on the new runway and associated changes to flying patterns.
- 2.12 There are existing Noise Abatement Zones (NAZ) associated with the Air Park which seek to prevent local aircraft from overflying populated areas when climbing after take-off and these zones depend on which runway is in use at the time. These are voluntarily established and monitored by the JCC and Air Park and only aeroplanes under the control of Wycombe Air Park Control Tower are subject to the NAZ. The management of the Air Park and operators pledge to deal with any infringement that is brought to their attention.
- 2.13 The application is accompanied by:
- a) Design and Access Statement

- b) Transport Statement
- c) Statement of Community Involvement
- d) Flood Risk Assessment
- e) Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment
- f) Ecology Report and Biodiversity Accounting
- g) Noise Assessment
- h) Geo-Environmental Report

2.14 The applicant has been provided with the opportunity to respond and address matters and has submitted amended technical documents including a revised Noise Assessment and amended Construction Traffic Management Plan.

### **3.0 Relevant Planning History**

3.1 There is planning history relating to various changes that have occurred at the Air Park over the years but none of this is of direct relevance to the proposal.

3.2 A planning application has recently been submitted for the southern part of the air park for use as a filming site.

21/07902/FUL, Change of use of southern corner of existing air park for use as filming site, construction of 2 x sound stages and 6 x workshops with associated access and infrastructure, parking and backlot for a temporary period of 2 years, land at South Corner, Wycombe Air Park, Booker – pending determination.

3.3 The development has been screened under the Environmental Impact Assessment Regulations and the local planning authority has concluded that an environmental impact assessment is not required in this case.

### **4.0 Policy Considerations and Evaluation**

#### **Green Belt**

Wycombe District Local Plan (August 2019): CP1 (Sustainable Development, CP2 (Overall Spatial Strategy), CP8 (Protecting the Green Belt), DM42 (Managing Development in the Green Belt)

4.1 The existing Air Park and the new glider runway are located within the Green Belt.

4.2 Inappropriate development is by definition harmful to the Green Belt and should not be approved except in very special circumstances. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) sets out limited forms of development which are not inappropriate in the Green Belt provided they preserve its openness. This includes local transport infrastructure which can demonstrate a requirement for a Green Belt location. In this instance the Air Park already exists within a Green Belt location and the laying of a flat tarmac surface would preserve the openness of the Green Belt.

4.3 Minor earthworks will be required to ensure that the runway is designed to appropriate gradients. These will not be discernible within the wider landscape nor impact upon Green Belt openness.

4.4 The NPPF also states that the provision of appropriate facilities (in connection with the existing use of land or a change of use) for outdoor recreation is acceptable providing the facilities preserve the openness of the Green Belt and do not conflict with Green Belt purposes. In this instance a runway is clearly necessary for recreational flying and its flat form would preserve openness. The creation of a runway would not conflict with the purposes of including land within the Green Belt.

- 4.5 In summary, the development would not be inappropriate in the Green Belt and it would preserve openness. The development would accord with local and national Green Belt planning policy.

#### **Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty**

Wycombe District Local Plan (August 2019): CP1 (Sustainable Development, CP2 (Overall Spatial Strategy), CP10 (Green Infrastructure and the Natural Environment), DM30 (Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty)

- 4.6 The site is not located within the Chilterns AONB but wider surrounding countryside is designated as AONB and the Air Park is discernible within some longer distance views from the AONB. Overall, the Air Park is well screened from viewpoints in the surrounding landscape by a combination of topography and boundary vegetation.
- 4.7 The new glider runway by virtue of its form and taking account of the existing air park operation would not have a negative impact on the natural beauty and special qualities of the Chilterns AONB. The tranquillity of AONB countryside around the air park is already subject to urban influences such as aircraft and traffic noise from main roads such as the M40 & A404 and existing flight movements. The new runway will not result in additional flight movements as it is simply replacing the existing facility for gliders. The changes to aircraft routing as a consequence of this planning application will result in a reduction in the area of the Chilterns AONB exposed to aircraft noise.

#### **Landscape and visual Impact**

Wycombe District Local Plan (August 2019): CP10 (Green infrastructure and the Natural Environment), DM32 (Landscape Character and Settlement Patterns)

- 4.8 The planning application is accompanied by a Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA). Officers agree with the conclusions of the LVIA which is that landscape changes are assessed to have at a local level low-negative landscape impact. While visual effects of the development are assessed to have a neutral to minor negative visual impacts at a local level from the adjacent footpath.
- 4.9 The applicant has highlighted that the creation of a temporary construction access will require some tree/hedgerow management works to Old Horns Lane. A planning condition is recommended to secure the detail of this in order to ensure the long term health and retention of existing hedgerow planting and to minimise the impact of the development upon local landscape character and appearance.
- 4.10 Overall the new runway will integrate within and not change the established Air Park site landscape or visual character.

#### **Transport matters**

Wycombe District Local Plan (August 2019): CP7 (Delivering the infrastructure to support growth), CP12 (Climate Change), DM33 (Managing Carbon Emissions, Transport and Energy Generation), DM35 (Placemaking and Design Quality)

DSA: DM2 (Transport requirements of development sites)

- 4.11 The development is acceptable in transport terms, subject to a number of planning conditions.
- 4.12 The Highway Authority have not raised any concern that local roads will not be able to absorb traffic associated with the development.
- 4.13 A construction traffic management plan has been provided, the detail of which is acceptable to avoid danger, obstruction and inconvenience to roads users during the

construction phase. A temporary construction access is proposed via Old Horns Lane, which the Highway Authority is satisfied with. Having a dedicated construction traffic access would allow traffic to remain clear of traffic accessing the Air Park and avoid aircraft manoeuvring.

- 4.14 A planning condition is necessary to ensure that the scheme is built out in accordance with the construction traffic management plan.

#### Rights of Way

- 4.15 A public footpath runs adjacent to the northern airfield perimeter hedgerow, outside of the application site. The development does not propose to alter or remove the existing footpath. The applicant has provided clarification that the use of the new runway will not cause any danger or hindrance to users of the footpath. The Rights of Way Officer does not object to the application.

#### Environmental issues

Wycombe District Local Plan (August 2019): CP7 (Delivering the infrastructure to support growth), DM20 (Matters to be determined in accordance with the NPPF), DM30 (Chilterns AONB), DM35 (Placemaking and Design Quality)

- 4.16 Technical advice on environmental noise is provided within national planning practice guidance (NPPG) and the Noise Policy Statement for England (2010). In assessing the impact of noise account needs to be given to whether the overall effect of noise exposure is, or would be, above or below the “significant observed adverse effect level” and the “lowest observed adverse effect level.” These are defined as follows:

| Response                                  | Examples of Outcomes   | Increasing effect level             | Action                           |
|---|--|-------------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| No Observed Effect Level                  |  |                                     |                                  |
| Not present                               | No Effect  | No Observed Effect                  | No specific measures required    |
| No Observed Adverse Effect Level          |  |                                     |                                  |
| Present and not intrusive                 | Noise can be heard, but does not cause any change in behaviour, attitude or other physiological response. Can slightly affect the acoustic character of the area but not such that there is a change in the quality of life  | No Observed Adverse Effect          | No specific measures required    |
| Lowest Observed Adverse Effect Level      |  |                                     |                                  |
| Present and intrusive                     | Noise can be heard and causes small changes in behaviour, attitude or other physiological response, e.g. turning up volume of television; speaking more loudly; where there is no alternative ventilation, having to close windows for some of the time because of the noise. Potential for some reported sleep disturbance. Affects the acoustic character of the area such that there is a small actual or perceived change in the quality of life.                | Observed Adverse Effect             | Mitigate and reduce to a minimum |
| Significant Observed Adverse Effect Level |  |                                     |                                  |
| Present and disruptive                    | The noise causes a material change in behaviour and/or attitude, e.g. avoiding certain activities during periods of intrusion; where there is no alternative ventilation, having to keep windows closed most of the time because of the noise. Potential for sleep disturbance resulting in difficulty in getting to sleep, premature awakening and difficulty in getting back to sleep. Quality of life diminished due to change in acoustic character of the area. | Significant Observed Adverse Effect | Avoid                            |
| Present and very disruptive               | Extensive and regular changes in behaviour, attitude or other physiological response and/or an inability to mitigate effect of noise leading to psychological stress, e.g. regular sleep deprivation/awakening; loss of appetite, significant, medically definable harm, e.g. auditory and non-auditory  | Unacceptable Adverse Effect         | Prevent                          |

- 4.17 Aircraft noise associated with the new runway and its impact upon residential amenity is a material planning consideration. However, changes to aircraft routing as a consequence of this planning application are not controlled by the planning system but by the CAA. As such the matter of aircraft noise is of limited consideration in the planning assessment.
- 4.18 The new runway is not intended to increase the number of flights or change the type of aircraft using the Air Park as such there is no change to the overall amount of noise, however there would be knock on changes in the distribution of aircraft noise.
- 4.19 The planning application is accompanied by a noise assessment, which has been amended from that originally submitted. The Environmental Health Officer has confirmed that the submitted noise impact assessment report provides a robust basis for decision making.
- 4.20 The proposed glider runway would not itself change noise associated with flight activity. However, the effects of changing flight paths would decrease aircraft noise to the north of the Air Park and increase aircraft noise in areas to the south/south east of the Air Park. The planning application does not propose to change the operating hours therefore existing or planned respite days will limit to a degree community noise exposure.
- 4.21 Under both the current and proposed airfield layout no population would be exposed to aircraft noise above the level which the government expects airports to offer acoustic insulation or other mitigation.

- 4.22 Overall the net position (i.e. having regard to population relieved of existing aircraft noise as set against those that will experience a diminution in amenity) is that more households, in the region of 600 people will be exposed to aircraft noise. And there would be around 190 people predicted to be “highly annoyed” by aircraft noise in comparison to 60 based on the current situation. Relative to population size this is not considered to be significant.
- 4.23 The residential areas that would be affected (namely Holmers Farm Way, Booker, northern area of Marlow Bottom) already have a relatively high background noise level from traffic noise. The following provides a summary of the changes to these areas:
- Around Holmers Farm Way, South Wycombe – expected to be exposed to between 25-49 aircraft events per day above 65 dBLAmax<sup>1</sup> in comparison to 10-24. This equates to a maximum of approximately 6 aircraft an hour during the daytime. This area is exposed to road traffic noise from the M40 and local roads such as Holmers Farm Way itself. Typical maximum noise levels measured near Holmers Farm Way are between 70-75 dBLAmax for cars and rising to 75-80 dBLAmax for larger vehicles.
- Booker – aircraft noise will increase due to helicopter activity on the south side of the Air Park. This area is expected to be exposed to between 10-24 aircraft events per day above 65 dBLAmax. This equates to a maximum of appropriately 3 aircraft an hour during the daytime. Noise from non-aircraft sources is relatively low with a typical maximum noise level measures near Claymoor Park were between 60-66 dBLAmax for passing traffic.
- Northern Marlow Bottom – expected to be exposed to between 25-49 aircraft events per day above 65 dBLAmax in comparison to 10-24. This equates to a maximum of approximately 6 aircraft an hour during the daytime. This area is some distance from the M40 so road traffic noise is limited to local roads with typical maximum noise levels measured between 70-75 dBLAmax for cars and rising to 75-80 dBLAmax for occasional larger vehicles
- 4.24 In comparison aircraft noise will decrease for Lane End and remain broadly the same for Willow Avenue, High Wycombe. There will be a reduction in the area of the Chilterns AONB exposed to aircraft noise.
- 4.25 The Environmental Health Officer has highlighted that no household will be exposed to aircraft noise that would trigger a statutory insulation or compensation payment. Furthermore, the proposal would not have any impact on night time noise levels so will not have impact in terms of sleep interruption.
- 4.26 The Environmental Health Officer concludes that the proposed development would fall within the “lowest observed adverse effect level” classification which the NPPG suggests that the appropriate response is to “mitigate and reduce to a minimum” the adverse effect. In this instance, the existence of the Wycombe Air Park Joint Consultative Committee (JCC) provides appropriate mitigation as it governs and enforces how the air park operates. Although the Council has no statutory power to deal with aircraft noise complaints, control could be used via landlord/leasehold measures given the Council’s ownership of the Air Park.

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<sup>1</sup> average number of aircraft events (flights) per day predicted to cause a maximum noise level of at least 65 dB LAmax outdoors. Such a level is slightly louder than a normal conversation.

- 4.27 In summary, the change in noise distribution is considered to be a minor impact and is not at a level that would justify the refusal of planning permission on the basis of noise pollution having a significant adverse impact on amenity. The conclusion reached has taken account of the nature (short burst), level (loudness) and frequency of aircraft noise and existing background noise levels.
- 4.28 The proposal does not raise any other environmental issues relating to lighting, pollution or land contamination.

#### **Flooding and drainage**

Wycombe District Local Plan (August 2019): CP7 (Delivering the Infrastructure to Support Growth), CP12 (Climate Change), DM39 (Managing Flood Risk and Sustainable Drainage Systems)

- 4.29 The development is acceptable in respect of managing flood risk and the incorporation of sustainable drainage systems. As such the development would accord with relevant development plan policy.
- 4.30 The Lead Local Flood Authority has no objection to the development subject to a planning condition which would secure the final detail of the surface water drainage scheme. Such a condition is necessary to ensure a satisfactory solution to managing flood risk.

#### **Green networks and infrastructure, biodiversity and ecology**

Wycombe District Local Plan (August 2019): CP7 (Delivering the Infrastructure to Support Growth), CP9 (Sense of Place), CP10 (Green infrastructure and the Natural Environment), DM34 (Delivering Green Infrastructure and Biodiversity in Development)

DSA: DM11 (Green networks and infrastructure), DM13 (Conservation and enhancements of sites, habitats and species of biodiversity and geodiversity importance), DM14 (Biodiversity in Development)

- 4.31 Subject to the imposition of planning conditions, the development would deliver appropriate enhancements and achieve a net gain in biodiversity. The development would not have a harmful effect on protected species.
- 4.32 The scheme proposes a number of ecological enhancements, the implementation and on-going management of which should be secured by planning condition.

#### **Infrastructure and Developer Contributions**

Wycombe District Local Plan (August 2019): CP7 (Delivering the Infrastructure to Support Growth)

DSA: DM19 (Infrastructure and Delivery)

- 4.33 The development is a type of development where CIL would not be chargeable.
- 4.34 It is considered that there would not be other types of infrastructure that will be put under unacceptable pressure by the development to justify financial contributions or the direct provision of infrastructure.

## **5.0 Weighing and balancing of issues / Overall Assessment**

- 5.1 This section brings together the assessment that has so far been set out in order to weigh and balance relevant planning considerations in order to reach a conclusion on the application.
- 5.2 In determining the planning application, section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that proposals be determined in accordance with the

development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. In addition, Section 143 of the Localism Act amends Section 70 of the Town and Country Planning Act relating to the determination of planning applications and states that in dealing with planning applications, the authority shall have regard to:

- a. Provision of the development plan insofar as they are material,
- b. Any local finance considerations, so far as they are material to the application (such as CIL if applicable), and,
- c. Any other material considerations

5.3 As set out above it is considered that the proposed development would accord with development plan policies.

## **6.0 Working with the applicant / agent**

6.1 In accordance with paragraph 38 of the NPPF (2019) the Council approach decision-taking in a positive and creative way taking a proactive approach to development proposals focused on solutions and work proactively with applicants to secure developments.

6.2 The Council work with the applicants/agents in a positive and proactive manner by offering a pre-application advice service, and as appropriate updating applications/agents of any issues that may arise in the processing of their application.

6.3 In this instance:

- The applicant was provided with pre-application advice,
- The applicant was provided the opportunity to submit amendments to the scheme/address technical issues.
- The application was considered by the Planning Committee where the applicant/agent had the opportunity to speak to the committee and promote the application.

## **7.0 Recommendation**

7.1 The application is recommended for approval subject to the following conditions:

- 1 The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.  
Reason: To comply with the requirements of Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (As amended).
- 2 The development hereby permitted shall be built in accordance with the details contained in the planning application hereby approved and plan numbers 1226-FJO-WAP-00-DR-C-0010, 1226-FJO-WAP-00-DR-C-0011, 1226-FJO-WAP-00-DR-C-0012, 1226-FJO-WAP-00-DR-C-0013, 1226-FJO-WAP-00-DR-C-0014 unless the local planning authority otherwise first agrees in writing.  
Reason: In the interest of proper planning and to ensure a satisfactory development of the site.
- 3 No other part of the development shall begin until the new temporary means of access for the construction stage of development has been sited and laid out in accordance with the approved drawing and constructed in accordance with the Buckinghamshire Council guide note "Commercial Vehicular Access Within the Public Highway".

Reason: This is a pre-commencement condition in order to minimise danger, obstruction and inconvenience to users of the highway and of the development.

- 4 The development hereby permitted shall only be carried out in accordance with the approved Construction Traffic Management Plan by Ridge dated 23 February 2021, unless otherwise first agreed in writing by the local planning authority.

Reason: To avoid danger, obstruction and inconvenience to users of the highway and of the development during the construction phase.

- 5 Within one month of the development being completed the temporary access onto Old Horns Lane shall be stopped up by raising the dropped kerb or removing the bellmouth and reinstating the highway boundary to the same line, level and detail as the adjoining footway and highway boundary.

Reason: To limit the number of access points along the site boundary for the safety and convenience of the highway user.

- 6 Prior to the commencement of development details of the proposed tree management works to Old Horns Lane shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. Thereafter the development shall only be carried out in accordance with the approved details unless otherwise first agreed in writing by the local planning authority.

Reason: This pre-commencement planning condition is necessary to ensure appropriate tree works and retention of existing hedgerow planting and to minimise the impact of the development upon local landscape character and appearance.

- 7 Prior to the commencement of development further detail of the ecological enhancement scheme including plans, specification, implementation and management shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The detailed ecological enhancement scheme shall be informed by the Ecological Impact Assessment Report Rev A dated 15 January 2020.

The development shall thereafter be implemented in accordance with the approved details unless otherwise first agreed in writing by the local planning authority.

Reason: This is a pre-commencement condition to ensure a net gain in biodiversity as required by policy DM34.

- 8 Development shall not begin until a surface water drainage scheme for the site has been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The scheme shall subsequently be implemented in accordance with the approved details before the development is completed. The scheme shall also include:

- Prioritise the use of sustainable drainage systems
- Drainage layout detailing the connectivity between the proposed runway and the surface water drainage system
- Calculations to demonstrate that the proposed drainage system can contain up to the 1 in 30 storm event without flooding. Any onsite flooding between the 1 in 30 and the 1 in 100 plus climate change storm event should be safely contained on site.
- Construction details of all SuDS and drainage components

- Details of how and when the full drainage system will be maintained, this should also include details of who will be responsible for the maintenance
- Details of proposed overland flood flow routes in the event of system exceedance or failure, with demonstration of flow direction

Reason: This is a pre-commencement condition to ensure that a sustainable drainage strategy has been agreed prior to construction in accordance with Paragraph 163 of the National Planning Policy Framework to ensure that there is a satisfactory solution to managing flood risk.

#### INFORMATIVE(S)

- 1 In accordance with paragraph 38 of the NPPF2 Buckinghamshire Council approach decision-taking in a positive and creative way taking a proactive approach to development proposals focused on solutions and work proactively with applicants to secure developments. Buckinghamshire Council work with the applicants/agents in a positive and proactive manner by offering a pre-application advice service, and as appropriate updating applications/agents of any issues that may arise in the processing of their application.
- 2 The applicant is advised that the off-site works will need to be constructed under a Section 184 of the Highways Act legal agreement. This Small Works Agreement must be obtained from the Highway Authority before any works are carried out on any footway, carriageway, verge or other land forming part of the highway. A minimum period of 3 weeks is required to process the agreement following the receipt by the Highway Authority of a written request. Please contact Highways Development Management at the following address for information:
 

Highway Development Management (Delivery)  
Buckinghamshire Council  
6th Floor, Walton Street Offices  
Walton Street,  
Aylesbury  
Buckinghamshire  
HP20 1UY
- 3 This permission shall not be deemed to confer any right to obstruct Footpath GMA/28/1 passing along the northern airfield perimeter, which shall remain open and available unless legally diverted under Section 257 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 or temporarily closed by Traffic Regulation Order under Section 14 Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984.

## **APPENDIX A: Consultation Responses and Representations**

### Councillor Comments

**Cllr D Hayday** - I would like to object to this application. There has been no public consultation over this application. The recent noise assessment report was not made public. This was submitted over the quiet period of Christmas and not many people had the chance to see this. This plan ignores the current Noise Action plan and adds a new flight path through the existing Noise Abatement Zone (which has been in place for many years to control the noise over the airspace around the airpark). Many more residents will be affected by the extra noise in which the flights would cause based on if this application were to go ahead. There is currently a sizeable housing application going through the planning process along Horns Lane of which would be directly affected by the change to this runway, they would have planes flying directly over their homes whilst the airfield is operational and the tug planes are landing after taking up the gliders. As one of the local members I cannot support this plan.

**Former Cllr J Teesdale** – Request that the application come before the Planning Committee with a site visit from the committee if that is possible re Coronavirus.

### Parish/Town Council Comments

**Hambleden Parish Council** – No objection

**Great Marlow Parish Council** – Objection. Right of Way GMA/28/1 – there are variations on the various plans and drawings as to how close the end of the proposed runway will be to this very popular public right of way. Bearing in mind that the length of runway seems to be based on minimum requirements without an allowance for a safety area at the end, this appears to be dangerously close to pedestrians. Bearing in mind that the tugs when landing will be trailing a tow rope approx. 55m long which, as the tug slows to land, will be descending behind them, this appears to be an additional hazard for people on the right of way.

Access points during and post construction - emergency Gate 3 is on a section of the B482 which is very near a blind bend and quite close to a yellow 'Watch Your Speed' accident warning sign. Page 7 of the Design and Access Statement states that if this is used for construction traffic it may need traffic signals. This should be a requirement of any permission to use this gateway for large construction vehicles. The other access off Old Horns Lane appears to be an extraordinary proposal bearing in mind the narrowness of the lane and the close proximity of the bungalow. There seems to be very little room for vehicles to turn by the side of the existing bungalow.

### Consultation Responses

#### **Lead Local Flood Authority**

Comments: No objection subject to a planning condition

#### **Highway Authority**

Comments: No objection subject to planning conditions relating to laying out of temporary construction access, closure of temporary construction access within 1 month of completion of the development and that the development is carried out in accordance with the construction traffic management plan.

#### **Rights of Way Officer**

Comments: No objection. The development will not impact upon users of the adjacent footpath GMA/28/1.

#### **Ecology Officer**

Comments: No objection subject to planning conditions. The metric suggests that a biodiversity net gain will be achieved through planting of a flowering lawn mixture adjacent to the new glider track. This enhancement is considered acceptable when combined with the other enhancements included in table 4 (page 16) of the Ecological Impact Assessment. However, we currently do not have much detail about the enhancements so this aspect needs to be secured by planning condition.

#### **Environmental Health Officer**

Comments: Detailed comments provided. In summary, the noise impact assessment report is a sound basis for the local planning authority decision making as it identifies the quantum of persons that are likely to be adversely affected by the proposals and that the impact will be restricted to non-health matters, i.e. a higher incidence of daytime noise annoyance. For information, the Council's powers regarding the abatement of noise nuisances under Part III of the Environmental Protection Act 1990 do not extend to noise associated with aircraft due to an exemption contained within Section 79(6) of the Act. So, the Council cannot use its statutory powers under this legislation to deal with complaints arising from aircraft noise associated with this proposed development.

#### **Highways Agency**

Comments: No objection.

#### Representations

**Booker Gliding Club** – Support the proposal. The Gliding Club currently operates from a grass area on the southern part of Wycombe Air Park. This land is required by the Council for development purposes, the consent granted in the Local Plan for development of this area is conditional on it not adversely affecting gliding operations. The Club has therefore agreed in principle to relocate its operations the northern part of the airfield so as to release the land to the south.

The land available to the north is less than in the south, and without improvement will be unsuitable for safe gliding operations. The proposed glider track overcomes this shortfall - without it gliding operations to the north will not be viable.

The move to the north and the consequential adjustments to the airspace and circuit patterns in the sky above and around the aerodrome will permit more efficient flying operations for all airfield users, and eliminates an existing area of risk where the circuit patterns for the powered aeroplanes and gliders conflict.

The Gliding club has worked with the Council and the Aerodrome Operator in developing the design and position of the proposed take-off track and is content that it meets the club's requirements.

**Frieth Village Society** – Not support. Concerned about hurried and perfunctory nature of the application and lack of consultation through the Wycombe Air Park Joint Consultation Committee. As such support cannot be given. The supporting application documents show little regard for the local Noise Abatement Zones and that pilots frequently fail to adhere to these and that WAP has yet to tackle this issue appropriately. If we had an opportunity to be persuaded (via a JCC meeting) of the merits of the proposal, then the likely benefits from noise reduction/disturbance would be much appreciated in the area. But we remain unconvinced that the Air Park has any intention to tackle the matter of overflying our villages.

**Sands Residents Association** - This proposal appears to pave the way for a re-organization of the flightpaths, which has been discussed at past JCCs for some time but with no progress. This re-

routing would benefit many areas to the North of the airfield, particularly in our case Sands, which has suffered overflying from all the flightpath options with the existing runways, and with very little mitigation. Exchanging the endless training flights for the Glider tugs would be of benefit.

Deploying some of the land for additional employment use should benefit both the council and taxpayers, compared with the relatively low income from the Airpark.

**Wycombe Air Park Action Group** – Support. The new runway will allow the Council to create much sought after new employment opportunities as the new runway enables the Council to carry out this industrial development, on which notice has been served on the Airfield.

The new runway will reduce overall noise levels according to the Noise Impact Report in the AONB. There will be a minor increase in noise in areas to the south of the Air Park but a MAJOR decrease in areas to the north.

It will also, as a result, facilitate the moving of circuit training flights over the AONB including the villages of Lane End, Moor Common, Frieth, Parmoor, Skirmett and Fingest. These training flights are frequent and noisy. Moving these circuit flights must be in the best interest of all concerned if transferred to a less noise-sensitive areas.

**Booker Common and Woods Protection Society** – Object. The proposed rerouting of aircraft needed to allow this application are unworkable. The take-off route is through the centre of an existing Noise Abatement Zone and will result in significant and unacceptable noise pollution for local residents. It is also totally inconsistent with another development, also planned by the Council to build new houses. This land is directly under the proposed flight path and would be subject to even higher noise levels making the new properties totally uninhabitable.

There has been no meaningful consultation and it is clear from other objections that the application has been made in haste without even consulting the required official bodies.

## **Other Representations**

The following comments have been received supporting the proposal:

- The shift of air traffic to the south is very welcome and environmentally more appropriate. It would alleviate the Chiltern villages to the north and west of the air park who have been blighted by inappropriate and unnecessary noise pollution from aircraft movements for many years.
- Sensible use of brownfield land to increase the local authority's income, thus assisting rate payers.
- It will create jobs which are much needed.
- It will allow Frieth Cricket Club grounds to be played on without interruption and interference from aircraft noise.
- It will restore peace and quiet to St Katharine's, Parmoor retreat house.
- Wycombe Air Park has failed to hold any JCC meetings for over a year. It has not therefore consulted with local groups regarding the beneficial impact of the proposed changes to flying arrangements at the air park. Until it does not it is not in apposition to object to this application by the Council

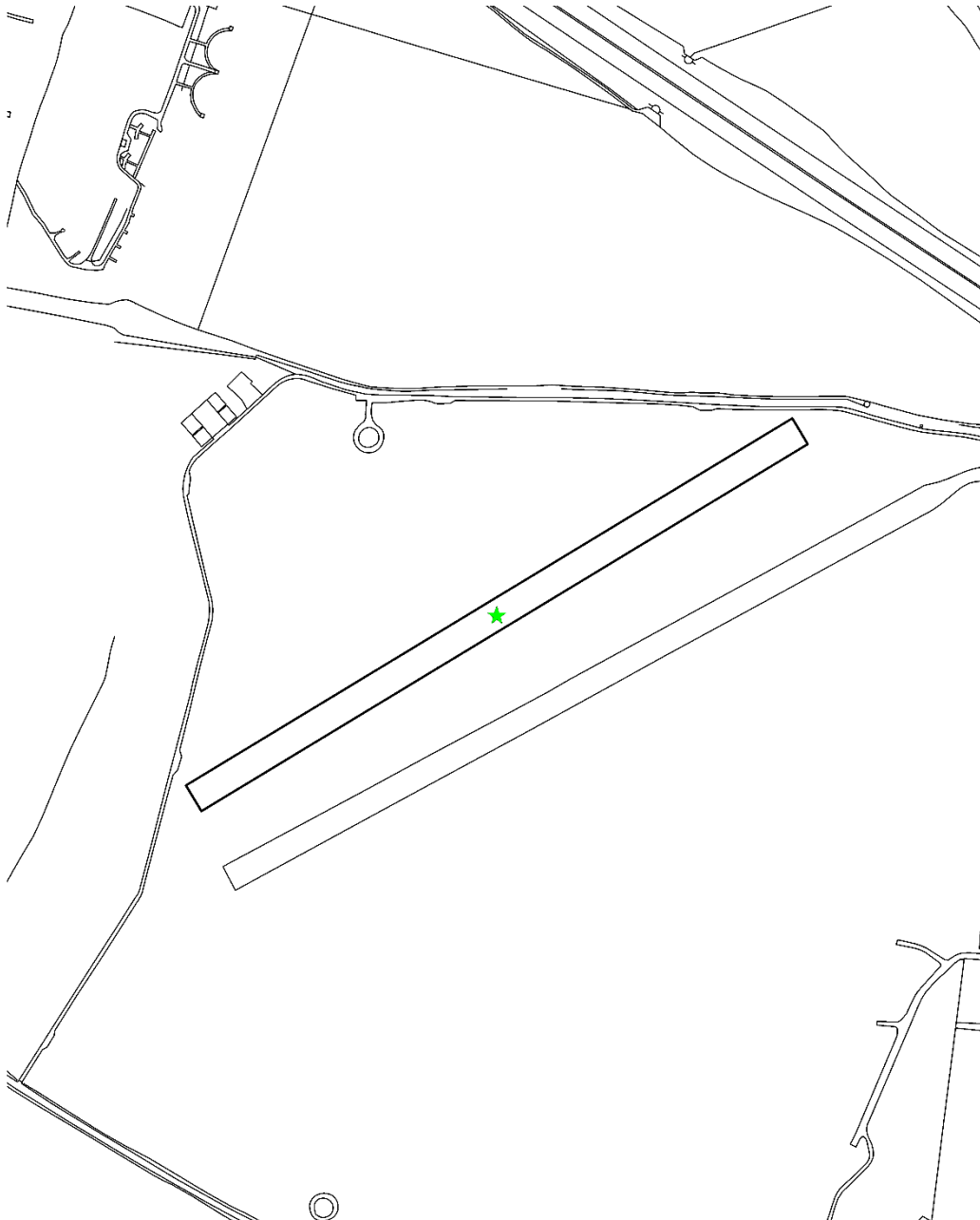
The following comments have been received objecting to the proposal:

- Safety concerns with the runway being too close to the public footpath and risks from trailing tug plane ropes.
- Inaccuracies within the planning documents. For example, the Design and Access Statement references Air Traffic Control but Wycombe Air Park ended their provision of ATC and moved to Ground to Air in mid-2020. Hangers at the north west side of the airfield are in use and not disused as suggested in the application.
- Increased noise levels at Claymoor Park from relocation of helicopter training area. The noise survey has not covered helicopter hovering noise.
- Noise survey was undertaken when limited flying activities were happening.
- The Licenced Airpark Operator has stated that they object.
- The proposed access route for construction vehicles from the east would use Old Horns Lane which is in part a single track road and unsuitable for heavy construction vehicles. An existing bungalow also seems to be in the way of this suggested route. The lorry route is along a designated public footpath.
- Disappointing that the land and the flying activities that can and do live in harmony with their neighbours, are in danger of being eroded by greed. The desire for commercial activity on the area of land on the southern side of the airfield seems to be the only reason for this planning application, to the detriment of the current flying activities.

APPENDIX B: Site Location Plan



20/08255/R9FUL  
Scale 1/5000



Planning Committee  
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