



**DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT**  
**TO SUPPORT THE PROPOSAL**  
**FOR A**  
**TEMPORARY DWELLING**  
**AND**  
**THE SITING OF 2No CARAVANS**  
**FOR**  
**SHORT TERM HOLIDAY LETS**  
**(RE-SUBMISSION OF APPLICATION REF:P/17/1360/2)**

**INTRODUCTION**

The application seeks planning permission for a temporary dwelling and the siting of 2 No static caravans for short term holiday let at Fourways Farm, Narrow Lane, Wymeswold, Leicestershire.

The planning application is a re-submission of reference: P/17/1360/FUL which was refused by notice on 24th May 2018. The reasons given for the decision by Charnwood Borough Council are stated on the decision notice as follows;

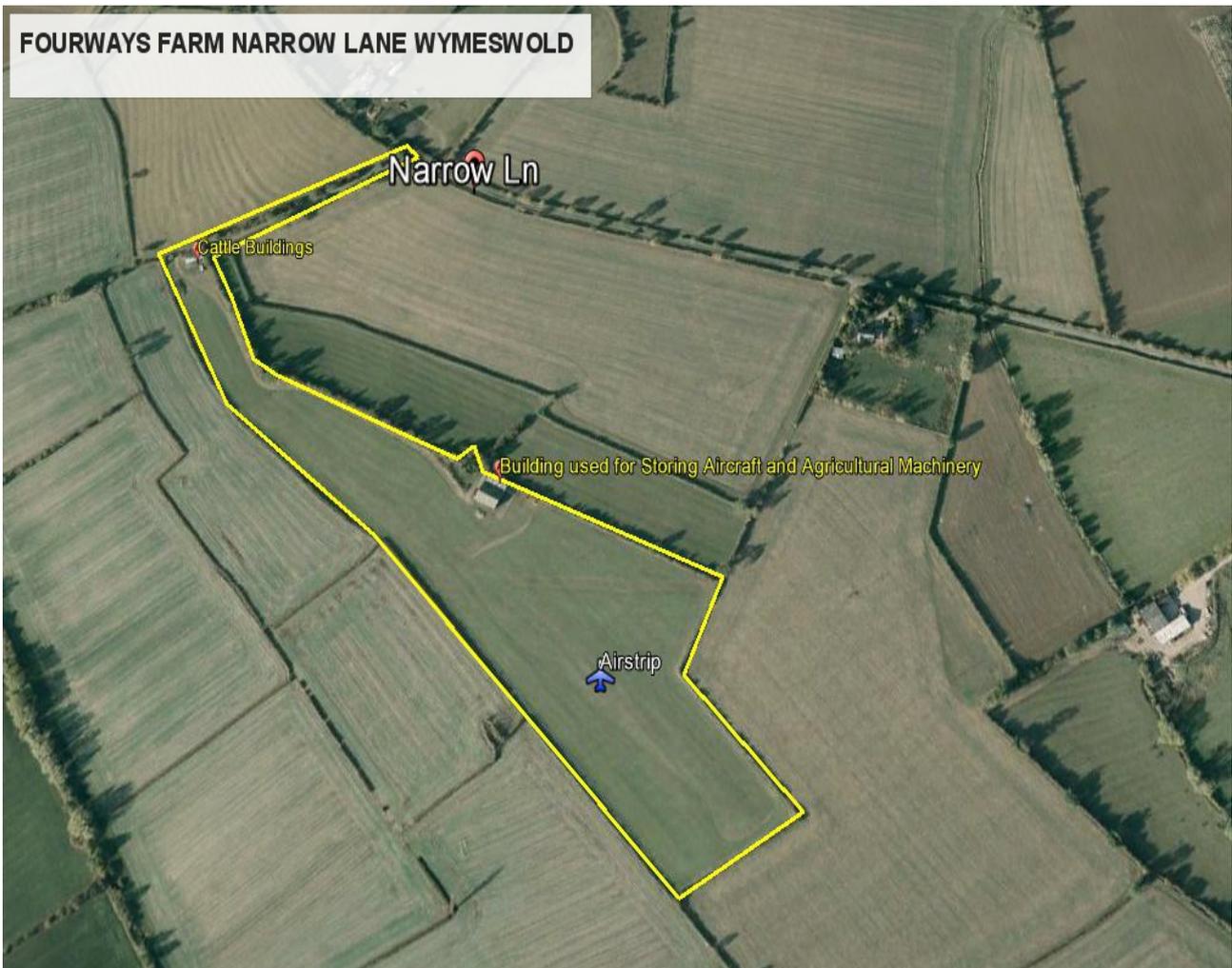
*Under section 1 it states; "It is established planing policy at both national and local level, that new development should be permitted outside established settlements in exceptional circumstances only. These circumstances normally relate to where new development has a strong relationship with the operational requirements of agricultural or land based businesses. The application site is located in the countryside and despite the information submitted with the application, there are no exceptional circumstances which justify over-riding the normal planning policies relating to remote dwellings in unsustainable locations or which justify the siting of caravans on the land in connection with the airstrip use on the site which does not currently have the benefit of planning permission or a lawful development certificate. The proposed development would therefore conflict with the relevant provisions of the National Planning Policy Framework, Policies CS1, CS10, CS11 and CS25 of the Charnwood Local Plan (2011-2028) Core Strategy and saved policies ST/2 and CT/1 of the Borough of Charnwood Local Plan which promote sustainable development and seek to protect the rural character and appearance of the countryside."*

*Under section 2 it states; "In the absence of an unauthorised/lawful airstrip use at Fourways Farm or information accompanying the application which demonstrates that there are special circumstances for the dwelling or adequate justification for the static caravans on sit, the proposal would constitute an unwarranted intrusion in its rural location which would be damaging to the character and appearance of the countryside and contrary to the principles set out in the National Planning Policy Framework, Policies CS2, CS10 and CS11 of the Charnwood Local Plan (2011-2028) Core Strategy and saved policies CT/1 and EV/1 of the adopted Borough of Charnwood Local Plan which seek to protect the rural character and appearance of the countryside".*

The following statement demonstrates that the applicant has taken into consideration the matters raised by the planning officers report, a long side the consultation responses received and has addressed all matters within the decision notice to ensure that the re-submission application accords with planning policy and that a successful outcome can be achieved.

## LOCATION AND SETTING

Fourways farm lies to the south east of the village of Wymeswold and is located on a remote block of 6.1 hectares of land, on Narrow Lane, ( as identified below). Access to the property is via an existing shared access of which the applicants have legal right of way. Cattle buildings are located at the entrance to the site with a long driveway leading to the hangar building that is used for parking up to 4 aircraft and agricultural machinery. The site allows for sufficient turning area and car parking for visitors. The grass airstrip is well maintained and runs the length of the site with a turning areas for aircraft at both ends.



The applicants want to expand the services and facilities on site, however they are reluctant to advertise the isolated airstrip unless they can fulfil the security and operational requirements of the site by being present at all times.

**PLANNING POLICY - USED TO DETERMINE PREVIOUS APPLICATION (P/17/1360/2)**  
**(\*Applicants comments are in bold)**

The following planning policies were at the forefront of the local authority's decision process and the application was considered to not meet the criteria within them. It should be noted that some of the following policy content has been superseded or is outdated as a result of changes in national planning policy since the determination of the application.

**NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY FRAMEWORK 2012**

All proposals for dwellings in open countryside have to be in accordance with Government Planning Guidance, whilst ensuring that they are in line with Locally Adopted Development Strategies.

**PARAGRAPH 55 - ESSENTIAL NEED**

The planning officer has included paragraph 55 of the NPPF (2012) on the decision notice, which states that; *"To promote sustainable development in rural areas, housing should be located where it will enhance or maintain the vitality of rural communities. For example, where there are groups of smaller settlements, development in one village may support services in a village nearby. Local authorities should avoid new isolated homes in the countryside unless there are special circumstances such as;*

- *The essential need for a rural worker to live permanently at or near their place of work in the countryside;*
- *Where such development would represent the optimal viable use of a heritage asset or would be appropriate enabling development to secure the future of heritage assets;*
- *Where the development would re-use redundant or disused buildings and lead to an enhancement to the immediate setting;*
- *The exceptional quality or innovative nature of the design of the dwelling".*

**\*It should be noted that since the determination of the previous planning application, there has been significant changes in the content of the National Planning Policy Framework and as such a newly revised version was published in July 2018. The essential need merits of the proposal now fall under paragraph 79 of the newly revised NPPF, not paragraph 55 as stated on the decision notice.**

**CHARNWOOD LOCAL PLAN (2011-2028) CORE STRATEGY**

**POLICY CS1**

The planning officer has included Policy CS1 in the decision notice and states in their officer's report that; *"Policy CS1 sets out the overall strategy for development in Charnwood by directing development towards established settlements and restricting development in the countryside. Whilst this policy is out of date because of the lack of 5 year housing supply of deliverable housing sites, this policy (along with CS10, 11 and 25) was adopted post NPPF, is consistent in terms of the aims and objectives of the NPPF and considered to carry very significant weight in terms of this planning proposal".*

**\* It should be noted that the newly revised NPPF supersedes the previously adopted one. As stated Policy CS1 is out of date due to the local authority's inability to meet its five year deliverable housing supply, therefore as it no longer post dates the current NPPF the validity of policy CS1 must be questioned in the future decision making process.**

## **POLICY CS10**

Policy CS10 has been included on the decision notice and states that; *“Rural economic development seeks to maximise the potential of the rural economy through supporting the sustainable growth and expansion of businesses in rural areas through well designed new buildings provided that in all cases scale and character of the development is designed and operated so as to cause no detriment to the character and appearance of the countryside”.*

**\* It should be noted that the decision to not support the growth of a rural business has major financial implications on its future viability. The proposal will be located in close proximity of existing buildings, any impact on the countryside can be significantly minimised through screening and appropriate landscaping schemes. It should also be noted that no complaints from neighbouring properties or local residents were received and only supportive letters were forthcoming throughout the planning process.**

## **POLICY CS11**

Policy CS11 states that; *“We will support and protect the character of our landscape and countryside by; · Requiring new developments to protect landscape character and to reinforce sense of place and local distinctiveness by taking account of relevant local landscape character assessments; · Requiring new development to take into account and mitigate its impact on tranquillity; · Requiring new development to maintain the separate identities of our towns and villages; · Supporting rural economic development, or residential development which has a strong relationship with the operational requirements of agriculture, horticulture, forestry and other land based industries and contributes to a low carbon economy, in accordance with policy CS10;*

- *Supporting the provision of community services and facilities that meet proven local needs as identified by a neighbourhood plan or other community-led plan;*
- *And supporting rural communities by allowing housing development for local needs in accordance with policy CS3.*

*We will protect the predominantly open and undeveloped character of areas of local separation unless new development clearly maintains the separation between the built up areas of these settlements”.*

**\* In line with the comments for policy CS10, it is considered that any impact on the character and appearance of the countryside can be mitigated and a successful outcome achieved through dialogue with the LA.**

## **POLICY CS25**

Policy CS25 is included on the decision notice and within the planning officer report it states that; *“Presumption in favour of sustainable development sets out the framework for achieving sustainable development which is based upon and reflects the presumption in favour of sustainable development”.*

**\*Inhibiting the growth of an established business will only serve to have a negative impact on its future sustainability, it is therefore vital that it is given the opportunity to develop on site.**

## **BOROUGH OF CHARNWOOD LOCAL PLAN (ADOPTED 2004) SAVED POLICIES**

The following policies have been included within the decision notice. They were considered relevant at the time of the adoption of the Charnwood Local Plan (2011-2028) Core Strategy and as a result were saved. However, given that the NPPF has now been revised and that the local authority are unable to meet their five year housing supply the continued validity of these policies for future decision making must be questionable.

### **POLICY ST/2**

Policy ST/2 states that; *“New development will be confined to allocated sites and other land within the limits to development identified on the proposals map, subject to specific exceptions”*.

### **POLICY CT/1**

Policy CT/1 states that; *“Policy CT/1 sets out the general principles for development in the countryside and the range of development which are acceptable in principle. It allows for small scale new built development where there would not be significant adverse environmental impact and the proposal would facilitate the diversification of the rural economy”*.

### **POLICY EV/1**

Policy EV/1 states that; *“Design in new development must respect the character of its surroundings and safeguard the amenities of adjoining residents”*.

**\*The policies above have been included within the decision notice. They were considered relevant at the time of the adoption of the Charnwood Local Plan (2011-2028) Core Strategy and as a result were saved. However, given that the content of the NPPF has now been revised and that the local authority are unable to meet their five year housing supply the continued validity of these policies for future decision making must be questionable.**

## **MAIN ISSUES -AS STATED ON DECISION NOTICE**

The following matters are material considerations for the assessment of the re-submission application and have taken in to account the issues raised in the original application.

- 1) ESTABLISHED USE- LAWFUL DEVELOPMENT CERTIFICATE**
- 2) ESSENTIAL NEED FOR RESIDENCE ON SITE**
- 3) VISUAL IMPACT ON RURAL CHARACTER AND APPEARANCE OF THE COUNTRYSIDE**
- 4) OTHER MATERIAL CONSIDERATIONS**

### **1) ESTABLISHED USE**

Following the refusal of application reference P/17/1360/2 the applicants submitted an application for a lawful development certificate which was duly granted by Charnwood Borough Council on 24th August 2018.

It has now been accepted by the Local Authority that the agricultural and airfield activities on site have operated in conjunction with each other in excess of 10 years and that this was verified by the substantial historical evidence submitted in support of the Lawful Development Certificate application.

With certification of the lawful development for a *suis generis* use, the applicants now consider that they are in a position to expand and grow the aviation activities on site and want to be able to offer over night accommodation to pilots flying to the area.

However in order to ensure security measures can be adhered to it is essential that a manager is in-situ at all times. Therefore a dwelling for staff accommodation is vital.

## **RECENT CHANGES IN NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY**

Following the adoption of a newly revised version of the National Planning Policy Framework in July 2018, the application for a new dwelling (temporary) now has to meet the essential need criteria of paragraph 79.

### **NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY FRAMEWORK 2018**

#### **PARAGRAPH 79**

*The NPPF states in paragraph 79 that; "Planning policies and decisions should avoid the development of isolated homes in the countryside unless one or more of the following circumstances apply;*

- a) There is an essential need for a rural worker, including those taking majority control of a farm business, to live permanently at or near their place or work in the countryside;*
- b) The development would represent the optimal viable use of a heritage asset or would be appropriate enabling development to secure the future of heritage assets;*
- c) The development would re-use redundant or disused buildings and enhance its immediate setting;*
- d) The development would involve the subdivision of an existing residential dwelling; or*
- e) The design is of exceptional quality in that it;*

- *Is truly outstanding or innovative, reflecting the highest standards in architecture, and would help to raise standards of design more generally in rural areas; and*
- *Would significantly enhance its immediate setting, and be sensitive to the defining characteristics of the local area”.*

**Whilst it is acknowledged that this application could be considered to be contrary to the normal planning policy approach and as such it does not fit neatly in to the “criteria”. The applicant contends that in the previous application the local authority failed to understand the wider national security benefits of providing 24/7 surveillance by living on site and this should be at the forefront of the decision process.**

## **2. ESSENTIAL NEED FOR RESIDENCE ON SITE**

### **AVIATION ACTIVITIES**

The proposal seeks planning permission for a residence on site in order to oversee the aircraft operations. The applicants are now at the stage where they want to expand their business and increase the revenue generated by the site. Those already using the site have expressed an interest in being able to fly into the site and have the opportunity to stay on site and explore the many local attractions that the Leicestershire area has to offer. Pilots often undertake longer trips, flying as a small group touring around the country as a holiday over a couple of weeks and look for different airfields to land and explore the area. The applicants would like to have the opportunity to provide this service for existing and future users of the airstrip by siting two static caravans on site as holiday lets for year round use.

The applicants have previously had pilots land on site, to find that they have experienced mechanical problems or the weather conditions have deteriorated preventing them from taking off and leaving them needing over night accommodation and their aircraft needing to be tied down outside.

Protecting the security of the site should be adhered at all times and therefore guest pilots or their aircraft can not be left on an unattended site, It is essential that a worker is residing on site 24/7, to not only carry out all of the daily operations, but to be available through the night, incase of an emergency and to monitor all aircraft movements.

The agreement with East Midlands Airport and the recently issued Lawful Development Certificate allows for 4 aircrafts to be stored on site. Currently the applicants have two aircraft stored in the hangar. However, again they have been inhibited by the potential risks of advertising an isolated site for the storage of more valuable aircraft.

### **SAFETY**

The safety of users of the airstrip is paramount. In 2013 a father and his daughter were killed after their aircraft crashed not long after take off from the airstrip at Fourways Farm. It is believed that the pilot tried to circle back round to do an emergency landing on to the airstrip but lost control of the aircraft. No one was on site at the time and it was over six hours before the wreckage was discovered and the emergency services alerted. This devastating tragedy highlights the need to be on site at all times.

It is vital that vigilant and frequent checks of the grass airstrip are carried out several times a day. The airstrip is regularly subjected to damage from rabbits and foxes. This can often occur within hours of a check, holes can have depths of 6 inches and widths of 8 inches and have to be made safe immediately. Whilst operating PPR allows pilots to communicate with the applicants for them to voice safety concerns to expected visitors, it does not allow for emergency landings, which do occur.



Photographs (above and below) show evidence of holes and damage caused by rabbits and foxes to the to airstrip and how vital it is that checks are carried out several times a day to prevent accidents occurring.



As part of training and safe flying practice, pilots are instructed to identify local emergency landing sites when planning flying routes should they experience mechanical failure or adverse weather. The Fourways Farm airstrip is very visible from the air, is clearly shown on google imagery and also ordnance survey maps, it is therefore highly likely it would be selected as a potential site for an emergency landing. An aircraft would not be able to contact the applicants in advance to check they are ok to land so it is imperative that the airstrip is maintained in a safe and useable condition at all times. The applicants have received many requests from pilots of regionally local airfields to practice emergency landings so it is evident that the airstrip is considered by non-resident pilots for this purpose.

## **ANTI-TERRORISM**

The UK has been subjected to several terrorist attacks with London and Manchester hitting the headlines with devastating consequences on families, as innocent lives were lost. As demonstrated by the supplementary evidence, unattended rural airstrips are vulnerable to use by unknown aircraft. Police continue to raise awareness of the need to provide 24 hour surveillance of unknown aircraft seeking to use isolated airstrips for the movement of explosives or illegal substances as well as people trafficking and illegal immigration.

Research of grass airstrips in the UK has shown that the majority are located on existing farms, with an established farmhouse on site that can fulfil the security requirement, acting as a deterrent and protecting against illegal activity. Unfortunately this is not the case at Fourways Farm, as the applicants live several miles away and as such the site is left vulnerable, especially at night. The vast size of the site and its surrounding rural location could not be adequately covered by CCTV, furthermore an offsite emergency response would be too late to stop any crime in progress.

The police have launched a nationwide project called Pegasus, which aims to bring all police forces together to reduce the threat of terrorism and organised crime with a focus on ensuring that all airstrip operators are vigilant at all times to raise the alarm immediately should any criminal activities occur. As part of the previous application the applicant consulted the Anti-Terrorism section of the Leicestershire Police and they confirmed that 24/7 surveillance is vital.

The Planning Officer acknowledged in their report that the intensification of use on site will increase the security needs, but maintained that there was not a need for residence on site. However, they failed to gain a response from the Police to justify this opinion.

## **PROJECT PEGASUS**

Project Pegasus is raising awareness to airstrip operators to look out for;

Is the pilot;

- Inexperienced, nervous or vulnerable to pressure?
- Flying at the edge of his capabilities?
- Disregarding weather conditions?
- Pushing their luck on short airstrips or low light?
- Taking risks with fuel?
- Damaging planes too often?
- Ignoring regulations? Filing misleading or false General Aviation Reports or Flight Plans?
- Being secretive about passengers, flights, routes?
- Are there suspicious people around?

Is the Aircraft;

- Modified to increase range or load?
- Carrying extra fuel?
- Visiting remote destinations, rarely used sites or isolated airfields?
- Regularly suffering minor damage?
- Covered in mud when only tarmac strips are on the flight plans?
- Landing short of its notified destination?

Is the airfield or site;

- Getting extra or unusual use without plausible explanation?
- Receiving puzzling deliveries?
- Showing unusual activity on the ground around a landed aircraft?
- Are windsocks or lights suddenly appearing? Is activity occurring at odd times or disguised or concealed?

## General Security;

- Packages being dropped from low flying aircraft
- Attempts to test or research security around an airfield
- Individuals buying equipment, chemicals, uniform, badges
- People in the wrong place or behaving oddly
- An odd pattern of aircraft hirings
- Club hopping by non-local pilots linked to attempts to reach distant destinations
- Signs of disguised continuation flights or deviations from plan
- Strange or fraudulent patterns of payment
- Employees not appropriate vetted (Project Pegasus - police anti-terrorism/airports and airfields).

**Planning policy continues to ignore the need for residence to improve on site security and yet rural crime remains on the increase and the potential threat of isolated airfields being used for organised crime is very real. It is therefore considered that in this case there are exceptional circumstances and that no amount of surveillance technology can be considered to be a substitute deterrent against the presence of an employee living on site.**

## AGRICULTURAL USE

In addition to the aviation activities on site the applicants also have an agricultural holding which amounts to approximately 32 acres of owned and rented land. The cattle buildings on entering the site accommodate the applicants herd of cattle and are built for their agricultural purpose. The existing building known, as the hangar and identified as having a dual purpose use, has sufficient floor area to accommodate up to 4 aircraft within it, as well as provide storage for the agricultural machinery that is required to maintain the agricultural and aviation activities on the site.

The livestock provide an additional incomes stream and are essential to maintaining the areas that do not form part of the airstrip. The applicants have a cattle contract agreement for carrying out the daily feed and management of 20 cows and calves. Using recognised sources (John Nix Pocket Book) the cattle have a functional requirement of 0.1 worker.

Sheep graze the airstrip in the winter as they play an important role in maintaining the grass strip during the wetter times of the year, when the use of heavy machinery can inevitably cause damage to the surface. Failure to keep the grass short at all times prevents aircraft from using the airstrip. During this period, pilots notify the applicants in advance of their intentions to use the airstrip so that the sheep can be removed prior to use.

After the wetter conditions have subsided the ground is slit, sand spread and rolled in preparation for the intensification of use and the sheep are removed permanently on to other areas of the site. Any non-resident visiting pilots would be required to follow the usual practice of giving prior notification before visiting and landing on site, this is stipulated as a code of conduct on small private airstrips so that neither safety or function is compromised.

The applicants also carry out agricultural contract work and produce hay and silage to sell to local farmers and horse owners. The incomes from the agricultural activities are included in the forecast provided.

The applicants seek planning permission based on the operational and security merits of the airstrip, it is not their intention to seek planning permission for an agricultural workers dwelling, although they would anticipate that any forthcoming planning permission would have a suitably worded occupancy condition attached.

## FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

The applicants propose to utilise the full potential of the site by storing 4 aircraft and 8 microlights. In addition landing fees will be applied to all aircraft in line with fees charged by other airfields.

<b><u>Estimated Income</u></b>	<b>Number Per Year</b>	<b>Output per Head</b>	<b>Gross Margin</b>
Aircraft Stored On Site	4	£1800	£7200.00
Microlights Stored On Site	8	£200	£1600.00
Aircraft Landing Fees	260	£25.00	£6500.00
2 x Static Caravans	365 (x2)	£35.00	£25,550.00
Airfield Events	2	£3,000	£6000.00
Cattle Contract			£5,200.00
Hay Sales			£5000.00
<b><u>Estimated Total Gross Margin</u></b>			<b><u>£57,050.00</u></b>
<b><u>Estimated Expenditure</u></b>			
Power and Machinery			£6200.00
Cattle Feed Costs			£3500.00
Rented Land			£500.00
Wages		1 worker	£20,403.00
<b><u>Estimated Total Expenditure</u></b>			<b><u>£30,603.00</u></b>
<b><u>Total Estimated Net Profit After Expenditure</u></b>			<b><u>£26,447.00</u></b>

The applicants propose to hold 2 airfield events per annum, which will be aimed at young people and aviation enthusiasts, as well as the local community. Stall holders will be encouraged.

## EMPLOYMENT

The business will inevitably bring revenue to the local area through the use of local services as well as providing local employment. The figures above provide a forecast for wages as £20,403.00. This is based on a 40 hour week @£8.62 per hour. Which is above the minimum wage and takes into consideration employer's statutory contributions and the provision of workers accommodation on site. As the applicants will provide the work themselves, it should be considered that the applicants will have drawn a wage from the business, covered their living expenses and still have a net profit (after expenditure) of £26,447.00. Based on these figures the business can easily sustain the costs of the proposed mobile home and therefore the financial criteria is fulfilled.

## STATIC CARAVANS AS HOLIDAY LETS

The applicant has received a considerable number of enquiries to date from pilots wanting accommodation in the area and therefore the proposal to include static caravans on site will undoubtedly attract more visitors to stay, which indicates that the figures in the table above are very achievable.

Situated in the heart of the Leicestershire countryside, close to the town of Loughborough and the border of Nottinghamshire, the site is strategically placed to provide a unique destination for tourism. It truly is an escape to the country and offers future guests the opportunity to access nature and countryside activities on its doorstep, making it the ideal destination for those seeking to go walking and cycling. Not only will the static caravans provide suitable accommodation, the wider choices of local attractions in Leicester City and in the wider Leicestershire and Nottingham area are plentiful.

The nearby village of Wymeswold has an abundance of amenities and is within close proximity of the site. Visitors will be encouraged to use local shops, pubs and restaurants as well as being given information on all of the tourist attractions; including the Great Central Railway, Bradgate Park, the National Space Centre and Richard III, Sherwood Forest and Nottingham Castle and Belvoir Castle. The applicants propose to help visitors with car hire, as well as provide bikes for those looking to cycle.

Despite the fact that both National Planning Policy and Charnwood Borough Council's own policies support the development of tourism and leisure activities in the countryside, the decision notice for the original application (P/17/1360/2) stated that; *"the siting of caravans on the land in connection with the airstrip would conflict with the relevant provisions of the NPPF, Policies CS1, CS10, CS11, CS25 of the Charnwood Local Plan (2011-2028) Core Strategy and saved policies ST/2 and CT/1 of the Borough of Charnwood Local Plan which promote sustainable development and seek to protect the rural character and appearance of the countryside"*.

Chapter 6 of the Charnwood Borough Core Strategy (2011-2028) Local Plan clearly indicates that the local authority support development that will benefit the rural economy. Written in 2011, chapter 6 states that; *" In Leicestershire tourism contributed to over £220 million to our economy in 2009 (17% of the total income of Leicester and Leicestershire). Around 17% of our jobs are in businesses which support tourism"*.

Policy CS10 stipulates that the local authority seeks to maximise the potential of the rural economy by 2028 and support the growth and expansion of businesses in rural areas, both through the conversion of existing buildings and well designed new buildings, the policy supports the need for farm diversification, as well as tourism and leisure facilities that benefit the *Great Central Railway, the River Soar and Grand Union Canal and the National Forest Strategy*. Provided that in all cases the scale and character of the development is designed and operated so as to cause no detriment to the character and appearance of the countryside."

Policy CS11 seeks to ensure that development protects the landscape and countryside, whilst supporting rural economic development that has a strong relationship with the operational requirements of agriculture, horticulture, forestry and other land based industries.

The Leicester and Leicestershire strategy for economic growth plan outlines a strong commitment to supporting and encouraging local businesses throughout the Leicester city and the wider county, with all Boroughs and districts working alongside Leicester & Leicestershire Enterprise Partnership (LLEP) and Leicestershire Promotions (Go Leicestershire, tourism) to support business development including leisure and tourism.

A review of Charnwood Borough Council's website found that the current Blue Print for Tourism was published in 2014, there appears to be no record of a Blue Print for Tourism that post-dates this and so its use must still be valid and applicable in this case.

Under the heading "*Strategic Themes*" of *The Charnwood Blueprint for Tourism (2014)* it states;

1. *"Destination: Offering people a wide range of quality attractions, accommodation and experiences with growing local distinctiveness and a warm and genuine welcome.*
2. *Positioning: developing and promoting the country's assets while differentiating between the business and leisure markets in a way which offers a unique and quality product.*
3. *People: ensuring visitors enjoy a world class experience and have their expectations surpassed, promoting tourism as a first choice career by investing in skills and training and creating a workforce capable of delivering high standards of customer service.*
4. *Intelligence: providing a robust evidence base enabling tourism businesses and the public sector to make informed and more co-ordinated investment decisions".*

The proposal meets the criteria set out within the Charnwood Blue Print for Tourism.

**The applicant considers that the local authority's assessment of the siting of the static caravans was influenced in the original application (P/17/1360/2), by their insistence that the aviation activities on site did not benefit from planning permission. Now that a lawful development certificate has been issued that regularises the dual purpose use for aviation and agricultural activities, the local authority should take a fresh approach to this proposal, as it is evident that the proposal is in line with their own policies, the Charnwood Blue Print for Tourism, as well as the visions of the LLEP that actively encourage diversification in the countryside and promote leisure and tourism that brings considerable revenue to the area.**

### **3) VISUAL IMPACT ON RURAL CHARACTER AND APPEARANCE OF THE COUNTRYSIDE**

The decision notice states that; *"the proposal would constitute an unwarranted intrusion in its rural location which would be damaging to the character and appearance of the countryside and contrary to planning policy".*

It should be noted that the site is not visible from both Narrow Lane and the Burton/Melton Road as it is shielded by mature hedges. The applicant considers that above reason given to refuse the original application can be overcome by implementing appropriate further landscaping and screening on the boundaries of the site, in order to mitigate the visual impact of the proposed mobile home and the static caravans on the character and appearance of the countryside.

As it is important that there is a balance between screening the impact of the proposal on the countryside whilst ensuring that the needed surveillance from the site is not compromised it is anticipated that a suitably worded condition will be attached to any forthcoming planning permission and that landscaping schemes will be submitted for approval by the local authority.

The site benefits from having infrastructure in-situ, with electric, water and telephone services, therefore the development would cause no changes to the existing status quo of the rural area.

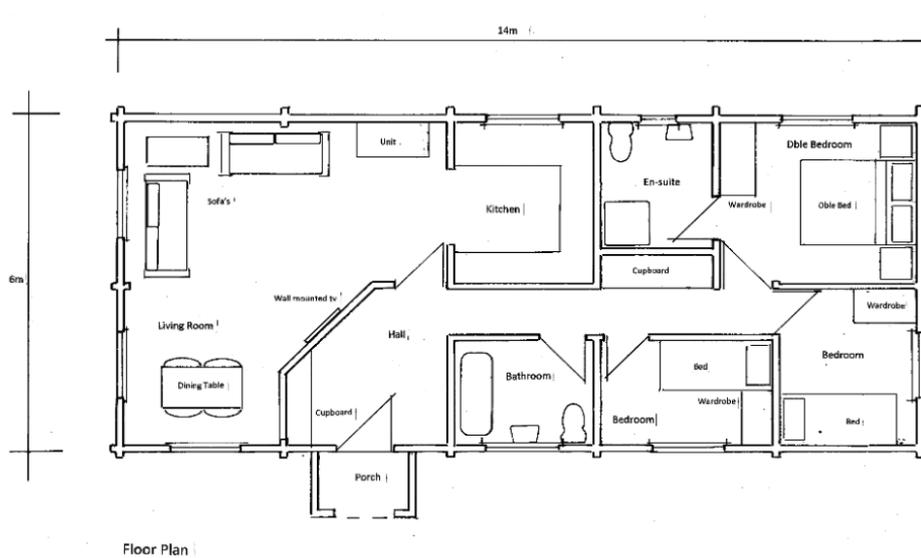
## Design Principles - Mobile Home



The mobile home is a low impact building that will appear subservient to the aircraft hangar. It will have an external timber clad appearance that will give it a rustic finish to blend in with the rural surroundings.

The mobile home will be positioned so as to benefit from all round surveillance of the site to maximise security. It will be in close proximity of the aircraft hangar and have full view of the airstrip and the access driveway. The position of the mobile home also meets the requirements for the distance between buildings and active airfields.

## Floor Plan



Scale 1:50 and 1:100 @ A2

The mobile home has a layout that is commensurate with the functional living requirements of living and working in the countryside. With an open plan kitchen, dining and living space

There are 3 bedrooms and a family bathroom. The master bedroom benefits from en-suite facilities.

## Static Caravans

The static caravans will be low impact and positioned within the site so as to ensure that they



have minimal impact on the immediate and wider setting. Enhanced screening can be implemented surrounding the static caravans to enable them to blend into the landscape.

The static caravan above is for illustration purposes only, but is indicative of the type and size that the applicant proposes to position on site.

It is therefore considered that as mitigating measures can be implemented then the proposal can accord with the policies CS2, CS10 and CS11 of the Charnwood Local Plan (2011-2028) Core Strategy and saved policies CT/1 and EV/1 of the adopted Borough of Charnwood Local Plan as stated on the decision notice of the original application.

## 4) OTHER MATERIAL MATTERS

It is considered that the status of all of the matters stated below have not changed since the previous application and as such the proposal meets the relevant planning policy criteria in these matters.

### Landscaping

As stated above it is anticipated that the imposition of a planning condition will request appropriate landscaping schemes to be submitted for approval prior to works commencing.

### Residential Amenity

It is evident that the aviation activities on site are supported by the immediate neighbours, who all wrote letters in support of the Lawful Development Certificate, confirming their knowledge that the

airfield had been in operation for more than 10 years. The original planning application (P/17/1360/2) was not met with any negative comments from neighbours or the local community.

The Planning Officer was satisfied that; *“Given the distance from residential properties, it is not considered that the proposal would adversely impact on residential amenity in terms of dominance, privacy, loss of light/ nuisance”*.

The planning officer concluded that the proposal did not conflict with the NPPF, CS2, EV1 and the SPD for Residential Amenity.

### **Biodiversity**

A protective species survey was submitted as part of the application and it was concluded that the proposal would not have any adverse impact on biodiversity and would therefore be in accordance with Policy CS13 of the Core Strategy.

### **Access - Highway Safety**

Access to the site is via an established access of which the applicants have a legal right of access. The Local Authority's consultations with the Highways Authority concluded that the additional traffic generated by the proposal would not be significant and the existing access would be adequate to cater for the relatively small increase in traffic.

There is ample space within the site to provide on site parking for the proposal in line with Policy TR/18 in terms of parking provision.

### **CONCLUSION**

In conclusion, all matters raised by the local authority have been addressed and whilst Planning Policy continues to evolve, it should recognise that not all development can fit neatly into the adopted criteria. The ethos of the NPPF is a presumption in favour of sustainable development and therefore it should, where appropriate, provide flexibility in the planning system.

The application constitutes sustainable development. The projected forecasts demonstrate that the proposal will create a financially viable business on site. The NPPF and the Charnwood Local Plan (2011-2028) Core Strategy promote the need for the planning system to support development that is essential to the needs of local business, with significant encouragement and incentives towards development for leisure and tourism.

The applicants find themselves in a stale mate situation, as they are reluctant to advertise their services and intensify the aviation activities without having the ability to provide 24/7 surveillance on the site.

Despite the local authority's attitude towards security, terrorism remains a real threat and this site is considered to be vulnerable to criminal activity based on its isolated position. There is a vital operational and national security need to justify a residence on site, this could not be substituted by CCTV.

There are no existing dwellings on site or in the immediate vicinity that are available to the applicants. Therefore no other dwelling could fulfil the operation requirements of the airstrip.

Temporary permission allows the Local Authority to retain control of the development as it establishes itself and grows and develops on site, with the Local Authority having the ability to review the case again at the end of the restricted period.

The applicants respectfully request that the Local Authority consider all of the matters addressed in this statement and give due consideration to the special circumstances of the case.