

The information, recommendations and advice contained in this report are correct as at the date of preparation, which is more than two weeks in advance of the Committee meeting. Because of these time constraints some reports may have been prepared in advance of the final date given for consultee responses or neighbour comment. Any changes or necessary updates to the report will be made orally at the Committee meeting.

Case Officer	John Thorne
Application No.	18/00454/FULPP
Date Valid	14th June 2018
Expiry date of consultations	5th July 2018
Proposal	Change of use of land from business (Use Class B1) to Airport use
Address	Land To The South Of Templar Avenue Farnborough Hampshire
Ward	St Mark's
Applicant	TAG Farnborough Airport Ltd
Agent	Roger Walker
Recommendation	Grant

Description

The application relates to an area of land covering some 2.8 hectares on the south side of Templar Avenue and Fowler Avenue. The land is within the ownership of TAG Farnborough Ltd. It is currently part of an undeveloped plot within the Farnborough Business Park and measures some 300m in length and between 40 and 65 metres wide. The eastern boundary is with a further part of the business park and the southern and western boundaries are shared with operational parts of Farnborough Airport. Immediately to the south is a hangar used by tenants operating within the airport. To the south west is the airport fire station and a telephone exchange.

The proposal seeks to change the use of the land from its current Class B1 (Business) status as part of the business park, to become operational land forming part of Farnborough Airport (Sui generis).

No physical development of the site is proposed as part of this application. Committee consideration of the application is necessary as it constitutes a technical departure from the development plan in that it proposes the loss of designated employment land to another use.

If the application is successful the land, which would then form part of an operational airport, would benefit from certain permitted development rights allowing the erection of fencing, hardsurfacing and access roads for operational use.

The change of use is being sought in order to form part of a suitable site to accommodate a proposed future redevelopment. This is intended to provide a new maintenance, repair and operations centre for the aircraft manufacturer Gulfstream which is indicated will be the subject of a planning application to be submitted later in 2018.

The current proposal will not prejudice the consideration of a later application on its planning merits, nor will it have any implications for the number of, or limits to, flights to and from the airport allowed by its current planning permission to operate.

Relevant Planning History

The land to which the application relates formed part of the RAE factory site which was used for much of the 20th century for aviation research and development. In 2000, outline planning permission was granted for its use as a business park to accommodate new build floorspace of 155,350 sq.m. with associated development for subsidiary uses within Classes A1 (retail), A3 (food and drink), D1 (Non-residential institutions) and D2 (Assembly and Leisure) car parking, landscaping, access, distributor road and a new junction at Elles Road, together with construction of a new 7.3 wide carriageway road with footpath, cycleway and verges between Government House Road in the south and the Factory site in the north together with new junctions (99/00744/OUT).

In 2002 reserved matters were approved in respect of the wider plot (referred to as 'Plot E') within the business park, of which the current application site forms part. This permission was in respect of a group of four office buildings (01/00807/REM).

In 2006 a variation of Condition 2 attached to the outline permission extended the time limit for submission of Reserved Matters applications until November 2017 (06/00362/FUL).

Submissions pursuant to outstanding conditions attached to the Plot E permission were received and approved in 2017 and works to commence implementation of the permission subsequently took place. The application site and the residual part of Plot E therefore benefit from a current and part-implemented permission for office development.

With the exception of one other area to the north side of Templer Avenue, development of all sites within the original business park has now been completed or commenced with a range of uses including offices, two car dealerships, a wholesale warehouse club, a public house and residential redevelopment and conversions.

Outline planning permission was granted in October 2000 (99/00658/OUT) for the development of Farnborough Airport as a business aviation facility. The illustrative masterplan accompanying the application showed new buildings to be associated with the function including hangars and maintenance facilities. The permission was modified by an appeal decision dated 13th March 2008 increasing the permitted number of aviation movements at weekends and on Bank Holidays.

A new permission granted on appeal on 10th February 2011 varied condition 8 attached to the earlier permissions to allow a greater proportion of the total permitted aircraft movements at the airport to take place at weekends and on bank holidays. The permission carried over the provisions of earlier conditions including condition 8. which restricts flying pursuant to the permission to between 07:00 and 22:00 on weekdays and 08:00 to 20:00 on Saturdays, Sundays and Bank Holidays except in emergencies.

In July 2013 planning permission was granted (13/00399/FUL) allowing non-intrusive maintenance activity to take place on open areas of the airport during the hours when flying is not permitted. Conditions attached to this permission restrict maintenance activity with the potential to generate noise to take place within specified buildings.

Consultee Responses

Planning Policy	Departure from the development plan, but no policy objection.
HCC Highways Development Planning	The change of use is not considered to have a significant effect on traffic generation or detrimental impact onto the surrounding road network.
	No Objection

Neighbours notified

In addition to posting site notices and press advertisement of the proposal as a departure from the development plan, individual letters of notification were sent to 17 surrounding occupiers. To date no responses have been received.

Policy and determining issues

The development plan as it relates to this proposal currently comprises the Rushmoor Core Strategy, 2011, and the saved policies in the Rushmoor Local Plan Review (2000). In addition, the Rushmoor Local Plan, Draft Submission, June 2017, sets out the future planning policy in relation to the site the subject of the proposal.

Rushmoor Core Strategy (CS)

The CS vision notes that Farnborough Airport will continue to be a business aviation facility of the highest quality, and Objective E of the Core Strategy seeks to encourage the continuation of business aviation flying at Farnborough Airport.

The site adjoins the Airport, and although it is within the ownership of TAG, it does not fall within the defined Airport operational boundary for the purposes of the application of the development plan. It is designated as a Key Employment Sites in the Core Strategy, and Policy SS1 (the Spatial Strategy) and Policy CP8 of the Core Strategy are applicable in determining the acceptability of the principle of the proposal.

Were it to fall within the planning policy boundary identifying the extent of the Airport, Policy SP6 of the Core Strategy would have applied, which brings with it a presumption in favour of aviation related development.

Rushmoor Local Plan Review (RLPR)

Saved Policy FA3 applies regarding the redevelopment of the "main factory site" for employment use.

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, March 2012) sets out a presumption in favour of "sustainable development", to which there are three dimensions; social, economic and environmental. Paragraph 7 of the NPPF notes that the planning system should be:

"...contributing to building a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right type is available in the right places to support growth and innovation."

Under the heading, Building a strong, competitive economy, paragraph 21 states that local planning authorities should:

- "...support existing business sectors, taking account of whether they are expanding or contracting...Policies should be flexible enough to accommodate needs not anticipated in the plan and to allow a rapid response to changes in economic circumstances;
- ...plan positively for the location, promotion and expansion of clusters or networks of knowledge driven, creative or high technology industries."

The Government has recently consulted on an update to the NPPF, and of note, paragraph 105, bullet (f) states that planning policies should:

"recognise the importance of maintaining a national network of general aviation facilities - taking into account their economic value in serving business, leisure, training and emergency service needs, and the Government's General Aviation Strategy."

Draft Submission Rushmoor Local Plan, June 2017

Policy SP4 - Farnborough Airport

Within the defined Farnborough Airport Planning Policy Boundary (APPB), development is restricted to that supporting business aviation and associated Airport related uses. The APPB as set out in the Draft Submission Rushmoor Local Plan replicated below. The site the subject of the proposal falls outside, but directly adjoining, the proposed Airport Planning Policy Boundary.

Airport Planning Policy Boundary, Draft Submission Rushmoor Local Plan, June 2017

Policy PC1 - Economic Growth and Investment

Policy PC1 sets out an approach that seeks to enable growth and retention of existing businesses within the Borough through the protection and regeneration of Strategic Employment Sites for B-class uses, and support for the delivery of infrastructure to contribute to the improvement of skills and education. The policies in the draft Local Plan seek to protect the majority of these sites to ensure a portfolio of employment sites and premises to meet future needs.

Policy PC2 - Safeguarding the Strategic Employment Sites to support core economic sectors
Policy PC2 contributes towards meeting the future economic growth needs of the Borough and the wider Functional Economic Area by protecting and safeguarding Strategic Employment Sites against their loss to other, non B-class uses. Small-scale proposals for changes of use to non-employment uses will be supported where they would provide complementary uses(s) (such as cafes and sandwich bars) that are not detrimental to the

function and operation of the Strategic Employment Site. Farnborough Business Park is defined as a Strategic Employment Site.

Policy PC5 - Farnborough Business Park

Draft Policy PC5 clarifies the role of Farnborough Business Park as the Borough's flagship office development site, noting that proposals that would develop or enhance the B1(a) office employment use will be supported.

Enterprise M3 Local Economic Partnership (M3 LEP)

The Enterprise M3 LEP Strategic Economic Plan (SEP) (March 2014) maps the key economic assets of the LEP area, of which TAG Farnborough is considered to be one. The SEP also confirms that the LEP area has world-class sectors in ICT and digital media, pharmaceuticals, aerospace and defence and professional and business services. These four sectors are identified as priority sectors by the LEP.

Farnborough is identified as one of four growth towns in the LEP area (the others are Basingstoke, Guildford and Woking). The SEP states that these towns deliver one third of the jobs and GVA of the Enterprise M3 area, and this will continue to increase: Ensuring their success is fundamental to the success of the whole area and the UK economy as a whole.

Policy issues raised by the Proposal

Policy SS1 of the CS directs major employment uses to town centres and Key Employment Sites (KES), and the land the subject of this proposal falls within the Farnborough Business Park KES. The use of part of the site for B-class employment is established by virtue of the KES designation, which is a continuation of the policy position as set out in saved Policy FA3, which supports the principle of use of the land the subject of the proposal for employment related development.

This policy position established by the existing development plan is not changed notably by the preparation of the emerging policy framework through the progress on the new Local Plan, which, based on up to date evidence, designates the land as a Strategic Employment Site. This brings with it a policy presumption against the loss of land on such sites to non B-class uses, unless such uses are deemed "ancillary" to the main B-class use, and subject to testing the impact of the proposed use on the function of the site (i.e. its impact on the supply of such sites for B-class uses) and the operation of the site, including the ability of neighbouring occupiers to undertake their activities without constraints.

The emerging Local Plan has been the subject of examination, and the hearing sessions took place in May 2018. The Council is expecting to consult on modifications to the Plan prior to receipt of the Inspector's Report later in 2018. Whilst the Plan is yet to be adopted, the policies therein have reached a stage where they carry significant weight as a material consideration in the determination of planning applications.

The proposed change of use from B-class use to Airport use (sui generis) represents a departure from the development plan. The issue for decision is whether overriding material considerations exist to warrant this departure.

The proposed change of use for aviation is anticipated to prepare for delivery of a project to provide increased supporting aviation facilities on the TAG Farnborough Airport site. This is intended to provide increased aircraft storage and on-site aircraft servicing and maintenance facilities to support the business aviation function of the site.

Whilst the site does not fall within the boundary of the Airport for the purpose of applying Policy SP6 of the Core Strategy, the land has a close physical relationship with the existing Airport, being wholly under the ownership and control of TAG.

The proposal would enable the delivery of aviation related uses on land already within the Airport's ownership. The land is designated as a KES in the Core Strategy. Whilst the latter directs major B-class employment development to such locations, weighing in favour of the proposal are the economic benefits of the Airport to the local and regional economy (as demonstrated in the 2009 study of the Economic Impact of Business Aviation at Farnborough Airport), further recognised in the Enterprise M3 LEP's Strategic Economic Plan. Significant weight can therefore be afforded to the economic benefits of the inclusion of the site in the Airport's operation boundary for the purpose of aviation related development.

Policy CP8 of the Core Strategy supports the introduction of new non B-class uses on Key Employment Sites where they would support, or not be detrimental to, the function and operation of the site. Where possible, non B-class uses should generate employment themselves. The grant of this application would result in a change of use of the land from B-class to sui generis "aviation related" land use. The types of activity that are envisaged as a result of this would be storage and maintenance activities, which represent the types of employment generating activity that would otherwise take place in traditional B-class premises.

Whilst the land the subject of the proposal is part of Plot E of the business park, and would become part of the Airport's operation area, a significant proportion of Plot E would remain, with the potential for the delivery of some B-class employment use along the Fowler Avenue frontage. It should be noted that the bottom right hand diagonal section of Plot E, which falls within the KES, is intersected by the Public Safety Zone. This brings with it a restriction on potential land use in this location, as the number of people living, working, or congregating in the PSZ should not increase, and if possible, should be reduced over time.

The change of use of the land from B-class use to airport related use brings with it the capacity for a multiplier effect in terms of the significant economic benefits arising from the presence of Europe's premier business aviation Airport in Farnborough. These benefits are considered to outweigh notably the minimal impact on the supply of land for traditional B-class uses in this location.

Commentary

The NPPF attaches great weight to a strong economy as a key thread of sustainable development, and requires local authorities to plan for existing clusters of industries and to support existing businesses where they are seeking to expand. The economic significance of the Airport, and the associated aerospace industry, to the economic health of, not only Rushmoor, but the wider Enterprise M3 LEP area, and in turn, the national economy, is recognised in the LEP's Strategic Economic Plan. All these factors add significant weight to the economic benefits of the change of use of the land to Airport related use, and these have been weighed in the balance against the loss of a small part of a KES from the supply of land for traditional B-class uses. Whilst the proposal therefore represents a departure from the development plan, the material considerations are deemed to be overriding, and no policy objection is raised.

In terms of the immediate and long term future of the application site, the change of use is being sought in order to assist in the assembly of a suitable site for a strategic aircraft maintenance facility which will, in the event of a planning application coming forward, be

assessed on its individual merits.

The effect of planning permission being granted for the current proposal will be that preparatory infrastructure works such as the erection of new perimeter fencing and realignment of internal access roads in this part of the airport will be able to proceed as permitted development. Furthermore in the event of a planning application coming forward for the envisaged redevelopment, the matter of the departure from the development plan will not be an issue. Should the redevelopment not proceed for any reason, the application land still benefits from the extant and implemented office redevelopment permission which will remain as an option for the landowners.

Full Recommendation

GRANT planning permission subject to the following conditions and informatives:

- 1 The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.

Reason - As required by Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as amended by Section 51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

- 2 No aircraft maintenance activity shall take place on any open part of the application site other than internal diagnostic and servicing.

Reason - To prevent the transmission of noise to surrounding property.

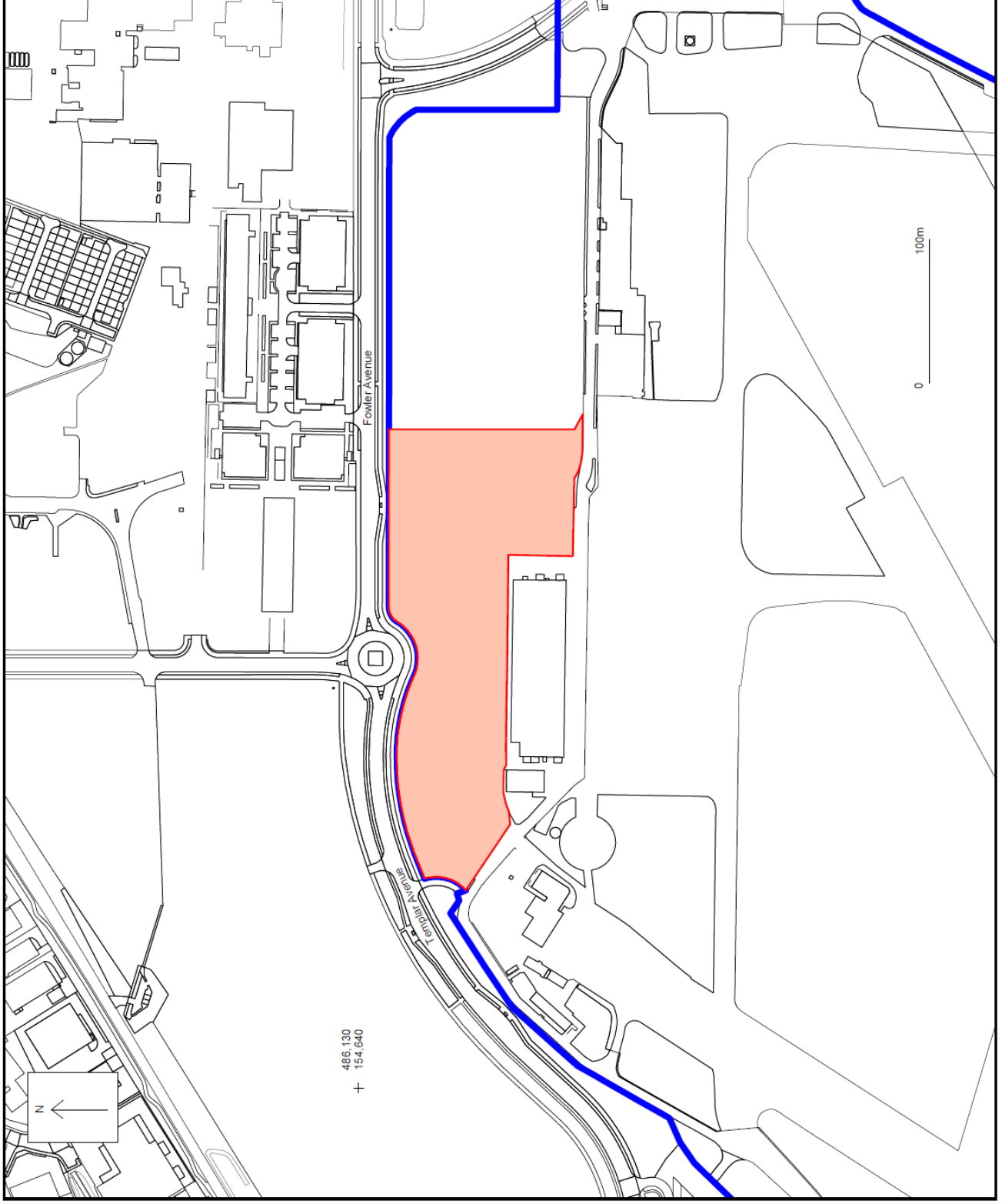
- 3 The permission hereby granted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved drawings - GN TG A OP 2841 A & 2842 A

Reason - To ensure the development is implemented in accordance with the permission granted

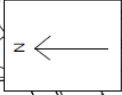
Informatives

- 1 **INFORMATIVE** – The Local Planning Authority’s commitment to working with the applicants in a positive and proactive way is demonstrated by its offer of pre-application discussion to all, and assistance in the validation and determination of applications through the provision of clear guidance regarding necessary supporting information or amendments both before and after submission, in line with the National Planning Policy Framework.
- 2 **INFORMATIVE - REASONS FOR APPROVAL-** The Council has granted permission because the proposed change of use would support the development, sustainability and employment generation potential of aviation related activity in the borough. A balanced comparison between the proposed use and the loss of designated Class B employment land would, notwithstanding the consequent departure from the development plan, not give rise to any significant planning harm. It is therefore considered that subject to compliance with the attached conditions, and taking into account all other material planning considerations, including the provisions of the development plan, the proposal would be acceptable. This also includes a consideration of whether the decision to grant permission is compatible with the Human Rights Act 1998.

Key:



486,130
+ 154,640



Fowler Avenue

Tempest Avenue

0 100m

Revisions



TAG Farnborough Airport Ltd
Farnborough
Hampshire
GU14 6XA

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Scale@A3 1:2500 Date 29/05/18 Drawn by SG

Title

Site Plan

Drawing No. **GN TGA OP 2841** Rev No. **A**

File