
From: Neil Porter (ABN airshow)
Sent: 02 November 2017 06:31
To: Planning Policy Vale
Subject: Local Plan 2031 consultation / Abingdon - Dalton Brks
Attachments: Image.jpg

Dear VWHDC Planning team

We have read through the latest version of the Local Draft Plan 2031 part 2 and I noted that any public questions / ideas are to be submitted to you by 22nd November.
Please find an attachment and our notes to put to the VWHDC Planning team.

Abingdon Airfield / Dalton Barracks.

In the latest draft, we have noticed that the boundary line for proposed development has increased beyond the original boundary in the previous draft (though I think it was fluid anyway to a degree). If you stand in the middle of the airfield and look around, within your ideas, it is a big area to re-develop and talking to locals who live on the boundaries, are not happy because your eating into the Green Belt areas, and will ruin the general area approaches and natural land offering openness.

Its noted that any works has to fall in line with the existing aesthetics of the site, from previous documents and that with all other proposed building works and a new road system across Sunningwell etc, I think you need to listen to the locals concerns and offer them more than what you are proposing, to help keep them on side.

I am assuming that you have planned for some of the buildings onsite which have historical value / listed building status are to be kept with a survey carried out? Some of the Hangars are of 1930s vintage, as with the Officers Mess and Station Headquarters and possibly the original Control Tower (in front of D Hangar). With careful planning, these Hangars could be put to good use for businesses and transport hubs or workshops, which would generate income and provide jobs. Heyford Park (former RAF / USAF Upper Heyford) have employed a similar idea and I know nearly all their Hangars / Hardened Air Shelters are now occupied by paying tenants ie: companies.

Likewise, some of the more modern SLAM barrack blocks which are less than 20 years old could be modified and turned into flats, saving developers money, you could also use a building for a hotel, expand the Gym facilities buildings already onsite - to me utilising some of the existing buildings will generate jobs and income to the community quicker rather than flatten the site to start again if that's the intention.

Also, as mentioned the historical value needs carefully looking at, and again you only need to look at both Heyford Park and Bicester Airfield (Bicester Heritage Centre) to see what can be done.

Moving on to the airfield, and referring to the attached idea, you will see that I have incorporated some of VWHDCs proposed site boundaries, however I have drawn a line under the East / West runway.

Apart from Oxford South Parks and Newbury Showground for example, there is no-where just off the A34 offering a showground facility off road which offers a safe environment.

The airfield would be perfect for this (or part of it). I know Abingdon like the back of my hand, worked on it, and run a successful Airshow / Country Show on it presently which has been going now for some 18 years. I know just how much pleasure and enjoyment the local population and not so local enjoy a good family day out in a safe environment and its providing Abingdon some additional revenue for shopping / accommodation etc with tourists.

Referring to the basic map, you will see the idea of a fenceline running West to East below the E/ W runway. As you move to the eastern side, it could join some of the existing army inner perimeter fence to cross the runway furthest inner fence and up to the NE boundaries. So in effect what you have as shown, is a segregated area offering a runway / perimeter track which, if you see on the diagram the fenceline to the east actually eradicates the inner section that runs along the big concrete hardstandings, and joins the furthest inner army fence - this allows some of the eastern perimeter track to be back in use within the area shown and creates a complete circuit scenario. The concrete pans on the east side can be used and keeping the existing training facility buildings would mean no need for new buildings to be built, and possible storage sheds could be built alongside.

Entering the showground can be controlled by a gate on the western perimeter track, and if needs be off honeybottom lane NE gates.

As with current activities on the airfield, who hire it, it would be exactly the same. The showground can offer similar, such as the following:

Cycle events
Limited Motor Racing events (within reasonable noise limits)
Marathons
Charity events such as: Fundraising activities
Our Air & Country Show (in a different format if its still going by then).
Track Days
Limited Aviation useage ie: Helicopter Pleasure flight company around the local area.
Heritage days
TV & Film works.

There are more, but all the above as such could bring some good income into the area, it provides the locals around the developments something to offer in most cases, and keeps part of the airfield open to business, with the views not being hindered from the boundaries from the north looking south. It also keeps some of the green belt intact, and BBOWT on the NW corner would also not be affected as it is now.

A Heritage centre with a cafe could easily be constructed within the Showground site (utilising one of the buildings on the NE side) honouring the past military background of Abingdon / Dalton Barracks as, it will have provided by 2029 nearly 100 years of military occupation and provided valueable service to both the Royal Air Force and the British Army - something that needs to be recognised (2026 we heard there is possible release of some of the land to the south for development with the Army remaining in situ until 2029 - if the base still is being disposed of by then) It would again create some jobs within the showground facility.

Too many ex MOD sites disappear without real thought of its potential or a compromise which benefits both in this case VWHDC and the local community.

Also, not forgetting Edward Brooks Barracks, they will need a local area to train on, no better than the Showground facility, and even to a degree leaving RAF Benson to utilise the runway for continued limited military helicopter training as it has done the last 25 years, as they need sites away from base to practice their skills within the Vale area to cut down on flight times further afield. Again, Heyford Park allowed this every so often - it all helps the military and its good to keep the military on our side.

Please feel free to acknowledge the ideas, its a group of us that have been talking about it including a figure from Westminster and being as we are in an event environment aswell as knowing what the site can offer, it was worth putting it all down into an email by the deadline.

All the best
Neil

Neil Porter

Main Event Organiser, Abingdon Air & Country Show
Abingdon Airfield (Dalton Barracks), Oxfordshire.
2018 show - Sunday 6th May.
Web: www.abingdonairandcountry.co.uk

Groundcrew support - Historic Army Aircraft Flight,
Army Air Corp Centre, Middle Wallop, Hampshire.