



Epping Forest District Council

NORTH WEALD AIRFIELD STRATEGY CABINET COMMITTEE

Monday, 28th July, 2008

Place: Civic Offices, High Street, Epping

Room: Committee Room 1

Time: 6.00 pm

Democratic Services Officer G Woodhall, Democratic Services Tel 01992 564470
Email: gwoodhall@eppingforestdc.gov.uk

Members:

Councillors Mrs A Grigg (Chairman), M Cohen, Mrs D Collins, Mrs M Sartin, D Stallan and C Whitbread

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

2. MINUTES (Pages 5 - 8)

To confirm the minutes of the last meeting of the Cabinet Committee held on 31 July 2007 (attached).

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

(Assistant to the Chief Executive) To declare interests in any item on this agenda.

4. TERMS OF REFERENCE

- “1. To monitor and submit recommendations to the Cabinet as appropriate on:
- (a) Strategic land use issues relating to the future development of the Airfield;
 - (b) Strategic matters relating to the business, recreational and other activities conducted there; and
 - (c) Proposals for redevelopment of the Airfield or its disposal.
2. The Committee’s Terms of Reference shall not extend to decision-making on existing Council activities on the site, which shall remain the prerogative of the relevant Portfolio Holders within the Cabinet or the Cabinet itself”.

5. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Section 100B(4)(b) of the Local Government Act 1972, together with paragraphs 6 and 25 of the Council Procedure Rules contained in the Constitution require that the permission of the Chairman be obtained, after prior notice to the Chief Executive, before urgent business not specified in the agenda (including a supplementary agenda of which the statutory period of notice has been given) may be transacted.

In accordance with Operational Standing Order 6 (non-executive bodies), any item raised by a non-member shall require the support of a member of the Committee concerned and the Chairman of that Committee. Two weeks’ notice of non-urgent items is required.

6. NORTH WEALD AIRFIELD PLANNING CONTEXT (Pages 9 - 12)

To consider the attached report.

7. NORTH WEALD AIRFIELD - FUTURE OPTIONS (Pages 13 - 22)

(Deputy Chief Executive) To consider the attached report.

8. NORTH WEALD AIRFIELD - EXTENSIONS OF EXISTING LEASES AND LICENCES (Pages 23 - 24)

(Deputy Chief Executive) To consider the attached report.

9. NORTH WEALD AIRFIELD AIRFIELD - CONTACT WITH INTERESTED PARTIES/DEVELOPERS (Pages 25 - 26)

(Deputy Chief Executive) To consider the attached report.

10. EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC AND PRESS

To consider whether, under Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public and press should be excluded from the meeting for the items of business set out below on grounds that they will involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in the paragraph(s) of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act indicated:

<i>Agenda Item No</i>	<i>Subject</i>	<i>Exempt Information Paragraph Number</i>
11	North Weald Airfield – Terms of Leases and Licences	3

To resolve that the press and public be excluded from the meeting during the consideration of the following items which are confidential under Section 100(A)(2) of the Local Government Act 1972:

<i>Agenda Item No</i>	<i>Subject</i>
Nil	Nil

Paragraph 9 of the Council Procedure Rules contained in the Constitution require:

- (1) All business of the Council requiring to be transacted in the presence of the press and public to be completed by 10.00 p.m. at the latest.
- (2) At the time appointed under (1) above, the Chairman shall permit the completion of debate on any item still under consideration, and at his or her discretion, any other remaining business whereupon the Council shall proceed to exclude the public and press.
- (3) Any public business remaining to be dealt with shall be deferred until after the completion of the private part of the meeting, including items submitted for report rather than decision.

Background Papers: Paragraph 8 of the Access to Information Procedure Rules of the Constitution define background papers as being documents relating to the subject matter of the report which in the Proper Officer's opinion:

- (a) disclose any facts or matters on which the report or an important part of the report is based; and
- (b) have been relied on to a material extent in preparing the report does not include published works or those which disclose exempt or confidential information (as defined in Rule 10) and in respect of executive reports, the advice of any political advisor.

Inspection of background papers may be arranged by contacting the officer responsible for the item.

11. NORTH WEALD AIRFIELD - TERMS OF LEASES AND LICENCES (Pages 27 - 28)

(Deputy Chief Executive/Director of Corporate Support Services) To note the terms of existing leases and licences – restricted schedule attached.

EPPING FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL COMMITTEE MINUTES

Committee: North Weald Airfield Strategy **Date:** 31 July 2007
Cabinet Committee

Place: Committee Room 1, Civic Offices, **Time:** 7.25 - 8.05 pm
High Street, Epping

Members Present: Mrs A Grigg (Chairman), M Cohen, Mrs D Collins, Mrs M Sartin, D Stallan and C Whitbread

Other Councillors: Mrs P Smith

Apologies:

Officers Present: P Haywood (Joint Chief Executive), D Macnab (Head of Leisure Services), L MacNeill (Assistant Head of Leisure Services), D Goodey (General Manager North Weald Airfield), M Scott (Valuer and Estates Surveyor) and G J Woodhall (Democratic Services Officer)

1. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest pursuant to the Council's Code of Member Conduct.

2. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

It was noted that there was no other urgent business for consideration by the Cabinet Committee.

3. TERMS OF REFERENCE

It was suggested that the Nota Bene section of the Terms of Reference was not relevant, as the Cabinet was no longer constituted on a pro-rata basis amongst the different political groupings. It was agreed that the attention of the Head of Research and Democratic Services would be drawn to this and that the Constitution should be amended accordingly in due course.

The Cabinet Committee noted its Terms of Reference.

4. NORTH WEALD AIRFIELD PLANING CONTEXT - EAST OF ENGLAND PLAN

The Planning and Economic Development Portfolio Holder presented a report concerning the planning context of North Weald Airfield in relation to the East of England Plan. The Portfolio Holder reported that North Weald Airfield had continued to be omitted as a location for major development, following the receipt of the Secretary of State's Proposed Changes to the East of England Plan for 2001-2021 and Statement of Reasons. During consideration of the East of England Plan, the Council had adopted a prudent approach to the length of leases and licences granted

to tenants at the Airfield. The general policy had been to offer tenants certainty until 31 December 2007, with annual break clauses thereafter that could be exercised by either party until 2010. This had allowed operators a degree of certainty, whilst still enabling the Council to retain sufficient flexibility to respond to possible development pressures. With the removal of the threat of a Regional Planning Guidance compelling the Council to develop alternative uses for the Airfield, a longer-term view regarding the lease and licence arrangements for the site could be taken. This would enable the Council to pursue its objective of maximising leisure use of the airfield whilst also managing the site as efficiently as possible and maximising income.

RESOLVED:

That, in relation to the East of England Plan, the planning context for North Weald Airfield be noted.

5. EXTENSION OF RETAIL MARKET AGREEMENT - NORTH WEALD AIRFIELD

The Head of Leisure Services presented a report concerning the extension of the Retail Market Agreement at North Weald Airfield. It was reported that Hughmark International, a trading name of Rondeau General Merchants Limited, had been a longstanding tenant at the airfield, operating what was considered to be the United Kingdom's largest Saturday and Bank Holiday market. Currently, the market represented the most significant source of income to the Council from the site, enabling many of the other uses to be subsidised. Hughmark International wished to maintain confidence amongst their traders and had formally approached the Council to seek assurance about their medium-term future at the site; the current licence was due to expire in 2010. Negotiations had taken place with Hughmark International, and a proposal had been drafted which attempted to deliver the surety sought by Hughmark International whilst also safeguarding the Council's financial position and providing a degree of flexibility should circumstances change in the future.

The Cabinet Committee felt that the renewal of the licence would indicate that large-scale housing development at the airfield was not imminent, and would be popular with the residents of North Weald who were keen for the market to continue. It was confirmed to the Cabinet Committee that the new agreement would have no break clauses for the period 2007 to 2010. The Cabinet Committee did stipulate that the landlord and not the tenant should only be able to exercise the break clauses applicable from 2010 onwards. The Cabinet Committee were advised that the Meadow Area did not form part of the Green Belt area of the airfield, and that if the offered sum was not sufficient to resurface the area then the Council would have to consider whether to make up the shortfall.

RECOMMENDED:

- (1) That the current Retail Market Licence be surrendered and a new licence with amended terms be granted;
- (2) That the length of the new Retail Market Licence be from 2007 to 2017, subject to an annual landlord only break clause from 2010;
- (3) That the new Retail Market Licence be uplifted by £1,000 per market with effect from 2010, with annual index linking for inflation; and
- (4) That, in addition to the existing annual Airfield Improvement Contribution and as a single additional contribution to the Airfield Improvement annual charge, a lump sum payment of £150,000 be contributed

by Rondeau General Merchants Limited, trading as Hughmark International, towards the resurfacing of the Meadow Area at the commencement of the new agreement.

6. FUTURE USE OF HANGAR ONE

The Head of Leisure Services presented a report about the future use of Hangar One. The Royal Air Force had erected the building known as Hangar One in the 1930's for the housing and maintenance of aircraft and it was currently situated within the employment zone of the Airfield. It had been leased by Hughmark International, who served notice to the Council on 25 June 2007 of their intention to terminate the lease on 31 December 2007. The general condition of the building was such that the roof required full refurbishment, the main armoured doors required repair or replacement, and the building lacked modern electrical and mechanical services.

The Head of Leisure Services reported that prior to their decision to terminate the lease, Hughmark International had instructed a commercial agent to market the Hangar to ascertain the future letting potential. As a result of the exercise, Hughmark International had informed the Council that Becro Engineering Limited had expressed interest in leasing Hangar One. Becro Engineering Limited, who had verbally indicated that they might be prepared to refurbish the Hangar, did not consider the current condition of the Hangar an insurmountable issue. An annual rent of £85,000 had been offered, subject to review after five years, provided the Council were prepared to grant a minimum ten-year lease without break clauses. The company would also have to submit a planning application for change of use to General Industrial (B2), however the Local Plan had suggested that this use would be considered appropriate for the location.

The Cabinet Committee felt that as the commercial agent engaged by Hughmark International had conducted an extensive marketing exercise for Hangar One, the acceptance of the offer by Becro Engineering Limited would be consistent with the Council's need to obtain best consideration for the site. The Head of Leisure Services added that the company were also planning to bring their Research and Development, and Design branches of the business to the site, and that as an engineering company, there was the possibility of an apprentice scheme being set up, which would be of benefit to youngsters within the locality. In addition, the proposed use of the building would not interfere with the Airfield's programme of outdoor events. The Cabinet Committee felt that, subject to further information regarding the proposed refurbishment and maintenance works, the proposed lease should be agreed in principle and recommended to the Cabinet for approval.

RECOMMENDED:

- (1) That a minimum ten-year lease with Becro Engineering Limited be agreed in principle as the best future option for the use of Hangar One, at an annual rent of £85,000 per annum on a full repairing basis for the purposes of fabricating structural steelwork and subject to review after five years;
- (2) That the final terms of the lease, to include further information about the proposed refurbishment and maintenance works, be negotiated with Becro Engineering Limited and reported to the Cabinet for final approval by the Finance, Performance Management and Corporate Support Services Portfolio Holder; and
- (3) That, as the proposed future manufacturing use is a deviation from the current approved general storage or distribution uses, the potential

environmental impact of the proposal be fully considered as part of the planning application process.

7. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The Cabinet Committee felt that a further meeting should be arranged following the next meeting of the Cabinet on 3 September 2007. The Democratic Services Officer agreed to liase with the members of the Cabinet Committee and organise another meeting.

CHAIRMAN

Report to the North Weald Airfield Strategy Cabinet Committee



**Epping Forest
District Council**

Date of meeting: 28 July 2008

Portfolio: Planning and Economic Development

Subject: North Weald Airfield Planning Context

Responsible Officer: Ian White (01992–564066).

Democratic Services Officer: Gary Woodhall (01992–564470)

Recommendations/Decisions Required:

That the possible implications for the Airfield as a result of the need to identify sites for housing and employment for the adopted East of England Plan be noted.

Executive Summary:

The report outlines the implications of the housing and employment targets of the East of England Plan for the period up to 2021. The “roll forward” to 2031 is also considered in the context of preparation of the Core Strategy.

Reasons for Proposed Decision:

It is far too early in the process for preparing the Core Strategy to come to any rigid conclusions regarding future uses on the Airfield.

Other Options for Action:

There are none at this stage.

Report:

Adoption and Review of East of England Plan

1. The East of England Plan (EEP) was adopted on 12 May 2008. There are no policies which refer directly to future uses for the Airfield. The Plan makes provision for urban extensions to Harlow, some of which will inevitably extend into the district, and sets a target of 3,500 new houses elsewhere in the district by 2021. This figure is to be treated as a minimum, and councils are being encouraged to make greater provision. As the period of the Plan runs from 2001, houses built, or granted permission, since that time should be subtracted from the total. This theoretically reduces the district’s figure to about 500.

2. A group of seven authorities, collectively called the “Rest of Essex” has to make provision for 56,000 new jobs in the same period, although the Plan acknowledges that more detailed work for Local Development Frameworks may challenge that figure. This District and Harlow are part of that group.

3. A review of the EEP is already underway to roll the Plan forward to 2031, and it is hoped that the revised Plan will be adopted by 2011. The Government has indicated that it wants annual housebuilding rates to increase significantly in the period 2021 to 2031. There is no equivalent advice about growth in employment.

Core Strategy

4. The Core Strategy (the key document of the Local Development Framework) will have at least a 15 year time span from date of adoption, and it seems sensible to match the end date with that of the reviewed EEP. In looking over 20 years ahead, it is obviously impossible to predict some issues or changes which may arise, the current very sudden economic slowdown being a good example. The Core Strategy will therefore have to be flexible and include contingencies or alternative options which could still deliver the objectives or targets.

5. Work on identifying sites for the housing and employment growth targets of the EEP is only just starting. A “Call for Sites” consultation was sent out in early June and most replies should be returned by the middle of July. Portfolio Holders are also involved and their returns are expected in August. All of these sites, and others which may be identified by officers, will have to be assessed on a consistent basis. An initial report will be published listing the assessment criteria and summarising the responses to the consultation. This will be followed up by an “Issues and Options” public consultation early next year for the Core Strategy. Officers will be proceeding more or less concurrently with a Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment – another requirement of the new planning system, which attempts to identify a 15-year supply of housing land.

6. Making provision for (a minimum of) about 500 houses up to 2021 is not a particularly difficult job, and it is perfectly feasible that capacity could be found within existing settlements without requiring any change to Green Belt designation. However, if the Core Strategy is aimed at addressing housing (and employment) needs up to 2031, this will obviously require the identification of more potential sites, which in turn will probably mean a review to some Green Belt boundaries. All the towns and (at least) the larger villages will have to be included in the assessment. North Weald and the Airfield will be part of this study.

7. It is perhaps dangerous to attempt to come to conclusions at this very early stage, but it may be worth considering the following:

(a) although by far the biggest settlement in the district, Loughton/Buckhurst Hill is significantly constrained against further expansion, with Epping Forest to the west, the Roding floodplain to the east, and a relatively narrow green wedge to the north separating the town from Theydon Bois; if, therefore, this area is going to make some provision to the EEP targets, this is likely to be restricted to redevelopment; the potential capacity is not yet known;

(b) while it is one of the District’s larger villages, North Weald does not support a particularly wide range of services – it is likely for instance that most weekly shopping is carried out in Harlow or Epping; two of the objectives of the EEP are to (i) locate development so as to reduce the need to travel; and (ii) effect a major shift in travel away from car use to public transport, walking and cycling; in the context of these criteria, neither North Weald nor the Airfield appear to be appropriate locations for major new development as residents and employees will generally need to use cars for the majority of journeys;

(c) Harlow is identified as a “Key Centre for Development and Change” in the EEP, and regeneration of its town centre and industrial areas are key to this; significant employment growth on the Airfield could threaten the success of the regeneration.

8. While it is very early in the process, and given the above, officers believe that the greatest potential for meeting the EEP targets lies with the settlements that provide the greatest range and frequency of services and facilities.

Implications for North Weald Airfield

9. Subject to the outcome of the Call for Sites consultation, and the assessment of the results, it is possible that some potential for small-scale residential and commercial development in the village and the Airfield will be identified. In the context of the EEP objectives and in the interests of achieving sustainable development (however that is defined), North Weald and the Airfield do not seem to be appropriate locations for major development, at least in the period up to 2031.

Resource Implications:

The Council is a major landowner in the area, so decisions on future land uses will affect budgets.

Legal and Governance Implications:

The Core Strategy must be in general conformity with the Regional Spatial Strategy, and must not conflict with national planning policy.

Safer, Cleaner and Greener Implications:

No implications at this stage.

Consultation Undertaken:

None

Background Papers:

East of England Plan 2008; Report to Cabinet Committee 31 July 2007.

Impact Assessments:

None required at this stage, but these would be included in the preparation of the Core Strategy.

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Report to the North Weald Airfield Strategy Cabinet Committee



**Epping Forest
District Council**

Date of meeting: 28 July 2008

Portfolio: Planning and Economic Development

Subject: North Weald Airfield – Future Options

Responsible Officer: Derek Macnab (01992-564260)

Democratic Services Officer: Gary Woodhall (01992-564470)

Recommendations/Decisions Required:

- (1) That Members reconsider the six Options previously identified within the Drivers Jonas Report and identify any that they wish to explore in more detail;**
- (2) That if Members wish to proceed with further feasibility work, a scoping report and brief be developed, and expressions of interest be sought from suitably qualified consultants to undertake the work; and**
- (3) That a supplementary CSB estimate be sought to cover the costs of undertaking any such study.**

Executive Summary:

Members are asked to reconsider the options for the future use of the Airfield identified by Drivers Jonas and determine whether there is a need for further feasibility work and if so to seek a supplementary estimate to engage a consultant.

Reasons for Proposed Decision:

The Drivers Jonas report needs to be updated to reflect changes in the policy, planning and general economic context that currently prevail.

Other Options for Action:

Take no action at this time in relation to the future use of the Airfield.

Report:

1. In 1999 the Council, after a competitive process, commissioned Property and Valuation Consultants, Drivers Jonas, to undertake a review of potential options for the future of North Weald Airfield. The Council initiated the study at a time when it was being subject to development pressures, by the then Department of the Environment, Transport and the Regions. In addition, a number of aviation related studies were being undertaken by the DETR – Airports Policy Division, in relation to the potential growth of business aviation in the South East.

2. After a period of research and review, which included transport and infrastructure studies, Drivers Jonas identified six potential Options. These Options were subject to public consultation. As a result Option 6b emerged, largely being promoted by existing airfield tenants, who considered that a Business Aviation Option would be viable.

3. In the event, whilst some low level operational issues were pursued, with respect to safeguarding, the feasibility of extended operating hours and the collection of landing fees, the Council elected not to proceed with taking any of the Options forward. The rationale behind this decision was in recognition of the fact that the East of England Plan 2000-2021 was being developed at this time. As such, it would have been premature to pre-empt any potential outcome of this Regional Spatial Strategy.

4. With the potential for Regional Planning Guidance, compelling the Council to develop alternative uses for the Airfield now largely removed, there is scope for a longer-term view of the Airfield to be undertaken.

5. The Options previously identified by Drivers Jonas are listed below, with the relevant plans attached.

Option 1A – Do nothing/Incremental Development:

This option envisages EFDC continuing to operate the airfield as at present. Opportunities for further development and income generation would be assessed on an ad hoc basis. The moratorium on further development by the tenants would be lifted and all outstanding planning consents would be implemented.

Option 1B – Do nothing/Incremental Development (Housing):

This is a development on the previous option assuming greater residential development on the eastern flank. In addition to the dwellings proposed in the previous option, further areas of land are released for residential uses.

Option 2 – Disposal of Airfield

This assumes that EFDC dispose of their interest in the short term. This is similar to the previous option in as much as the value that the market would put on the airfield would be based on an assessment of the current income and the development opportunities that the airfield offers at the current time. In addition, a purchaser would make an assessment of 'hope value' based on the probability of obtaining the necessary consents to increase the development potential of the site.

Option 3 – Develop Airfield for Aviation and Other Commercial Uses:

Continued use and development of the airfield for either executive or general aviation is combined here with the development of surplus areas of the airfield. In particular, it is envisaged that large scale light industrial (B1) and storage distribution (B8) uses are developed; the existing industrial estate tenants benefiting from long leasehold interests remain in occupation but that the vacant industrial sites are developed for housing; and, as with the incremental option, land to the east of the peripheral road is sold for housing and hotel use.

Option 4 – Consolidate Aviation Use and Develop Other Uses:

This involves the shortening of Runway 02/20 to allow the release of more land for

development. The land closest to the runway would be developed for B1 and B8 uses and residential development would take place on the land closest to the existing settlement. The long leasehold tenants would remain in occupation of their units with the remainder of the estate being developed for residential and retail uses. It is anticipated that over time the long leaseholders could transfer their interests to food and non-food retailers thereby forming a core retail centre in North Weald.

Option 5 – Close Airfield and Develop Mixed Use Site:

This option requires the closure of the airfield to allow for the development of mixed use 'new settlement'. Within this option there are two main sub-options:

- Housing Led Development
- Commercial (B1/B8) Led Development.

Option 6 – Develop Airfield with Adjoining Land:

This considered the merits of incorporating adjoining land ownerships to facilitate development of the airfield. Rather than consider a larger area for development (the airfield is already sufficiently large enough to accommodate different mix of development) consideration should be given to how adjoining land ownerships can facilitate development on the airfield itself. In particular, the advantages of incorporating land to the north-west of airfield, currently in agricultural.

Potential Way Forward

6. Clearly the analysis of the Drivers Jonas report is approaching 10 years old, and would need to be updated to reflect changes in the policy, planning and general economic context that currently prevails. However, Members may wish to utilise the original Options to assist deliberation, of what they feel the most appropriate future for the site may be.

7. If any options are ruled out, it would assist in focusing any future additional feasibility work that members may wish to commission. The Council does not currently have the expertise and capacity to undertake such a complex property review. If Members are minded to pursue any Option, it would require the commissioning of further specialist advice, for which no current budgetary resources exist.

Resource Implications:

Need for supplementary estimate if members wish to engage a consultant to undertake feasibility work.

Legal and Governance Implications:

None at this stage

Safer, Cleaner and Greener Implications:

None at this stage

Consultation Undertaken:

None

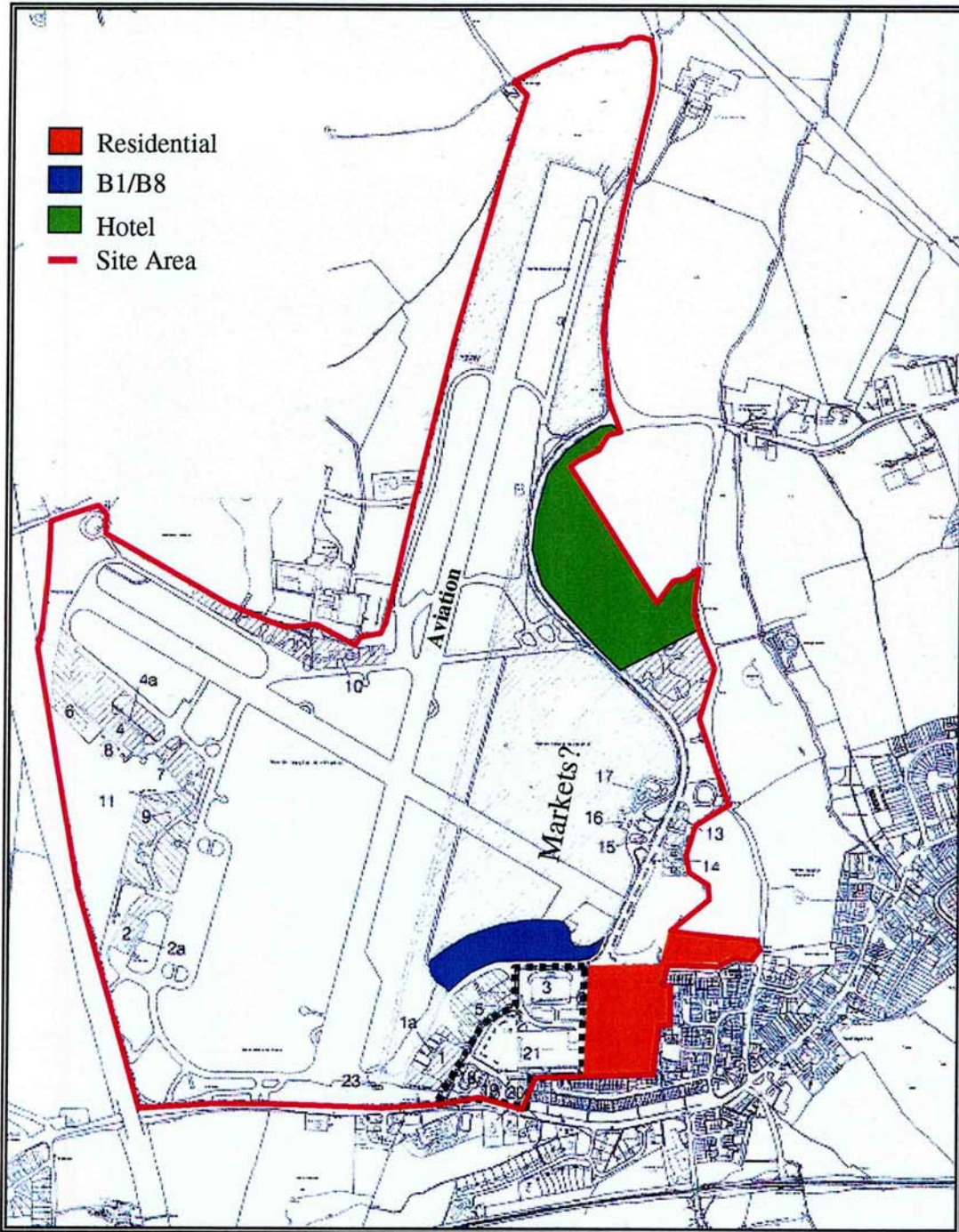
Background Papers:

Drivers Jonas Report

Impact Assessments:

None required at this stage.

**North Weald Airfield
Indicative Areas of Development**

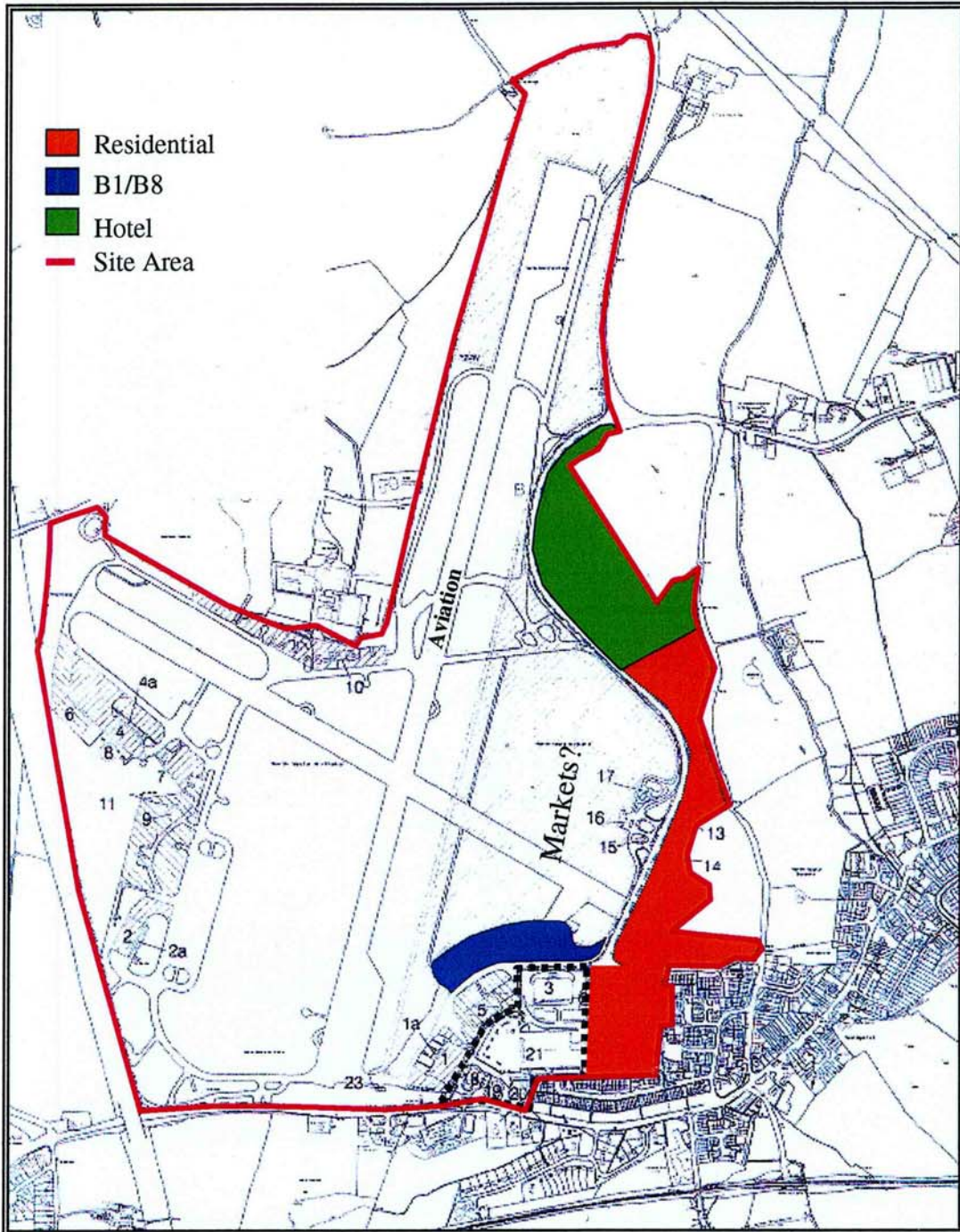


Option 1a Do Nothing / Incremental Development

This plan shows broad areas of development within which are included a 30% provision for open space and buffer zones between uses.

Not to scale

North Weald Airfield Indicative Areas of Development

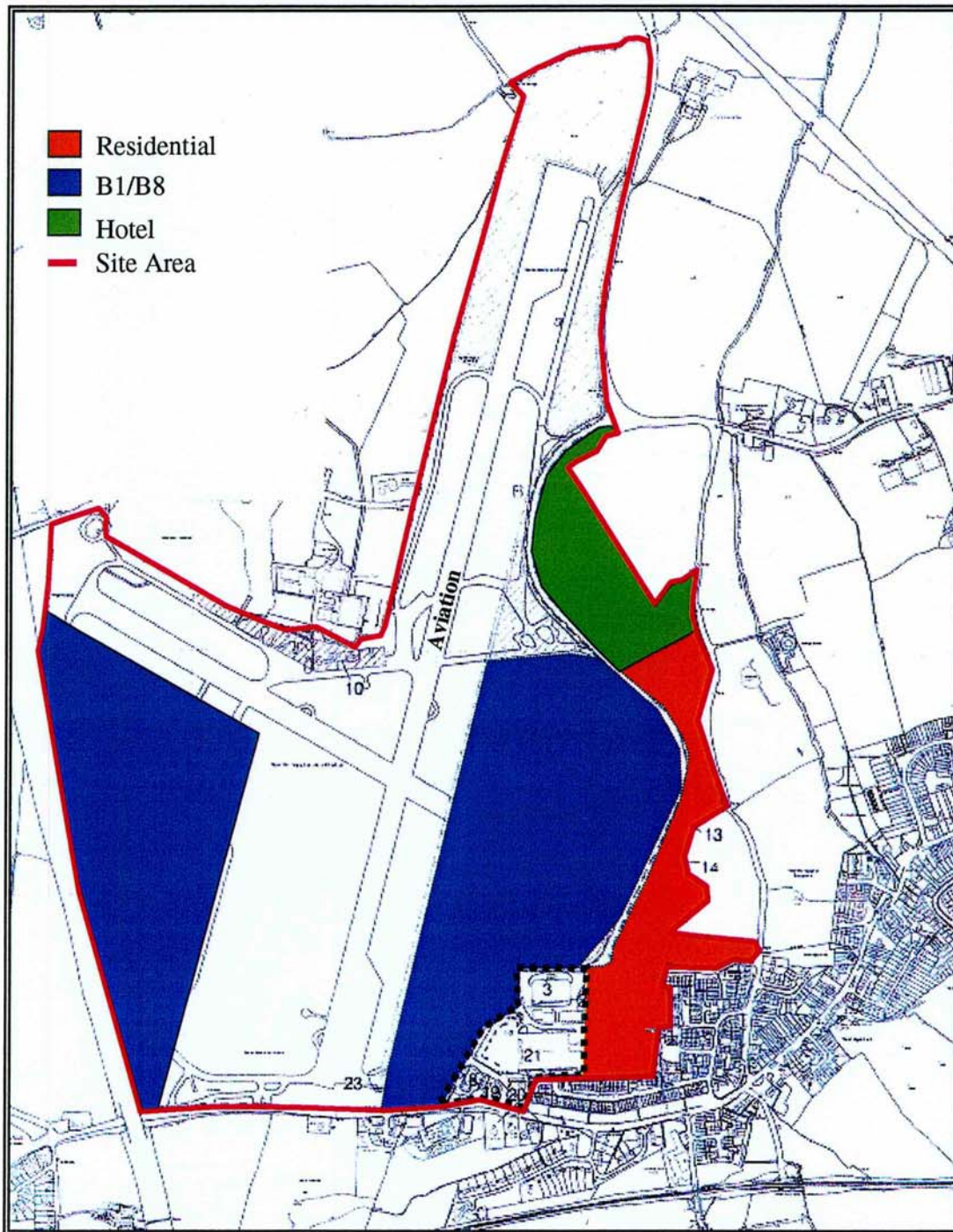


Option 1b Do Nothing / Incremental Development

This plan shows broad areas of development within which are included a 30% provision for open space and buffer zones between uses.

Not to scale

North Weald Airfield Indicative Areas of Development

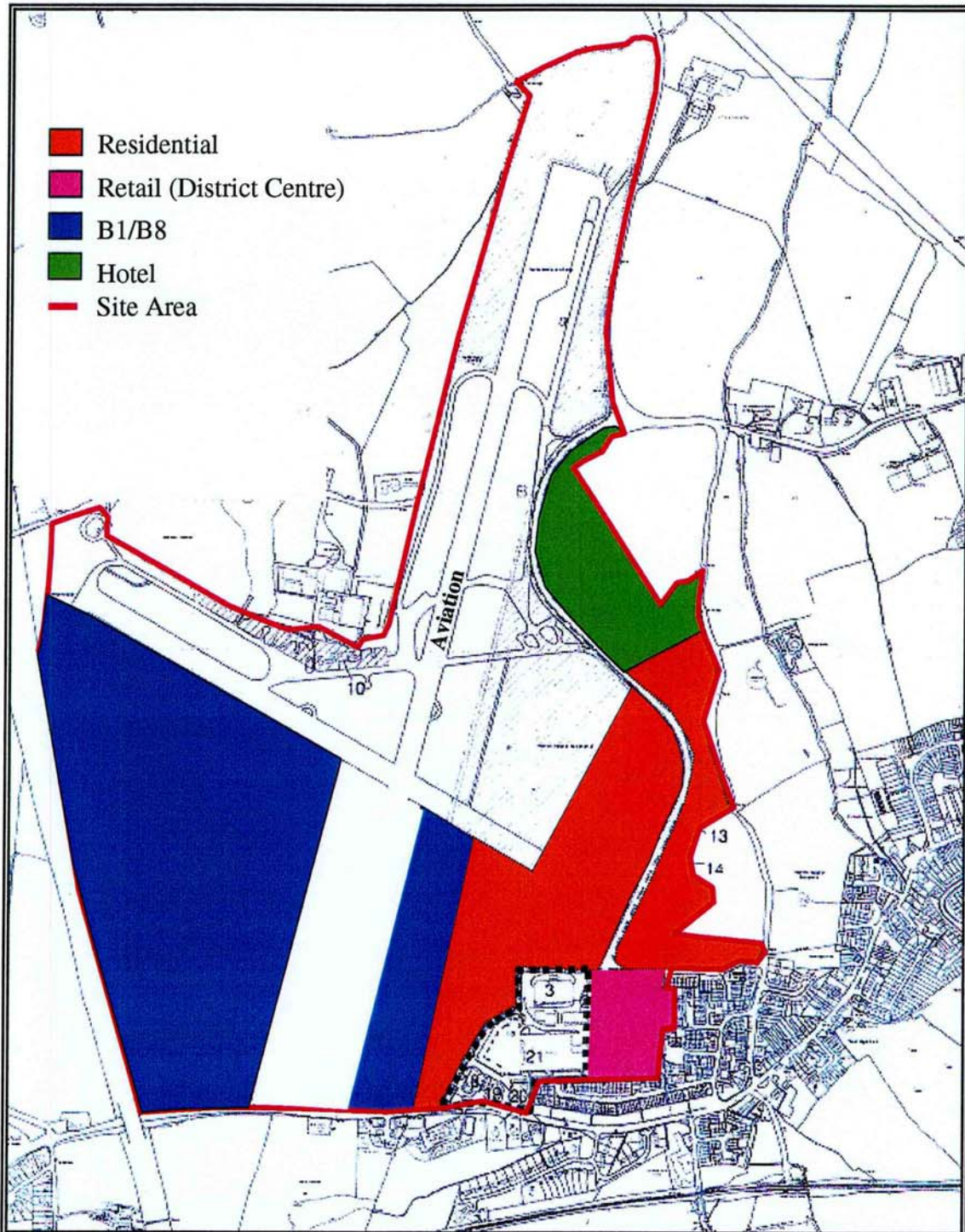


Option 3 Develop Airfield and Other Commercial Uses

This plan shows broad areas of development within which are included a 30% provision for open space and buffer zones between uses.

Not to scale

**North Weald Airfield
Indicative Areas of Development**

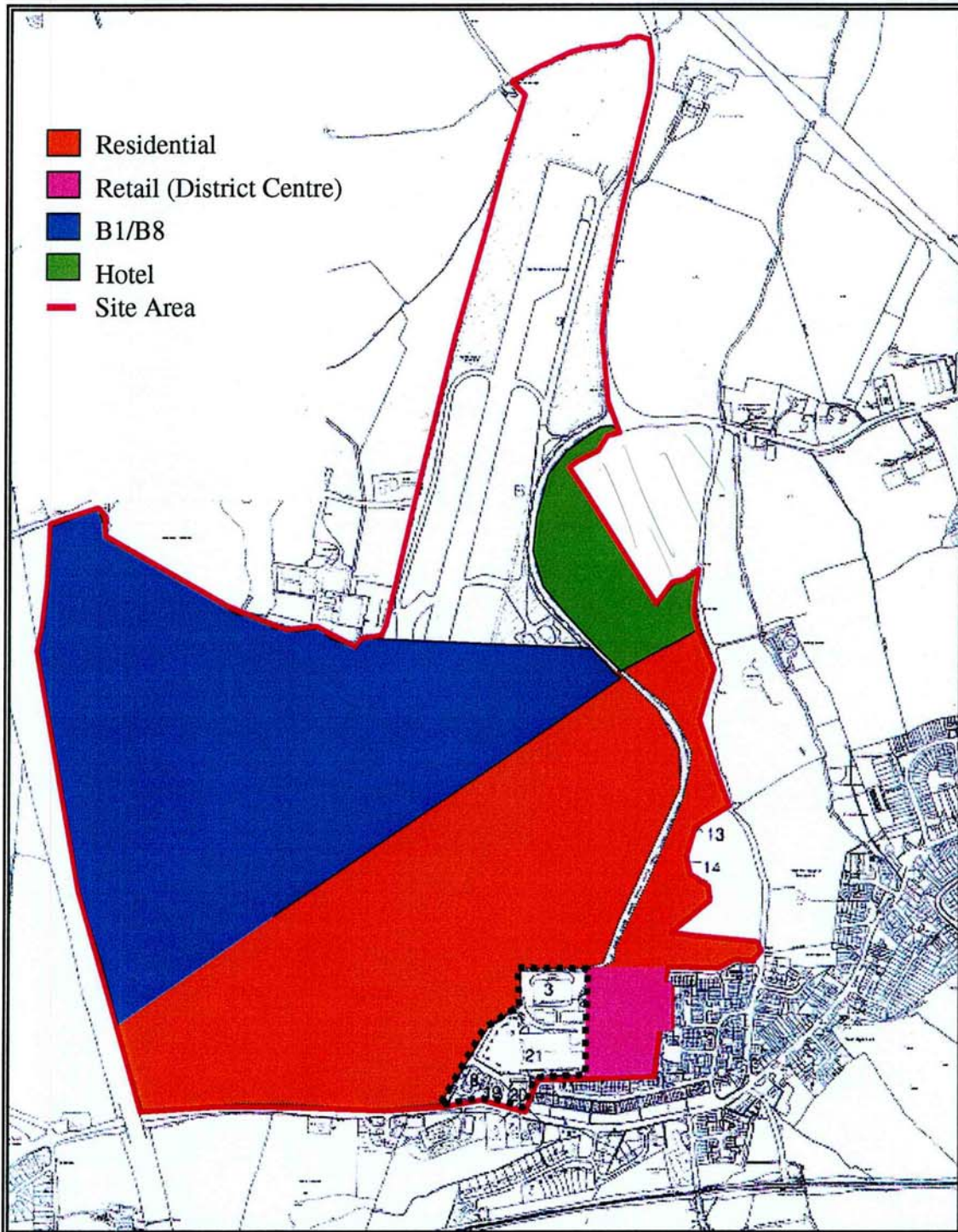


Option 4 Consolidate Aviation Use and Develop Other Uses

This plan shows broad areas of development within which are included a 30% provision for open space and buffer zones between uses.

Not to scale

North Weald Airfield Indicative Areas of Development

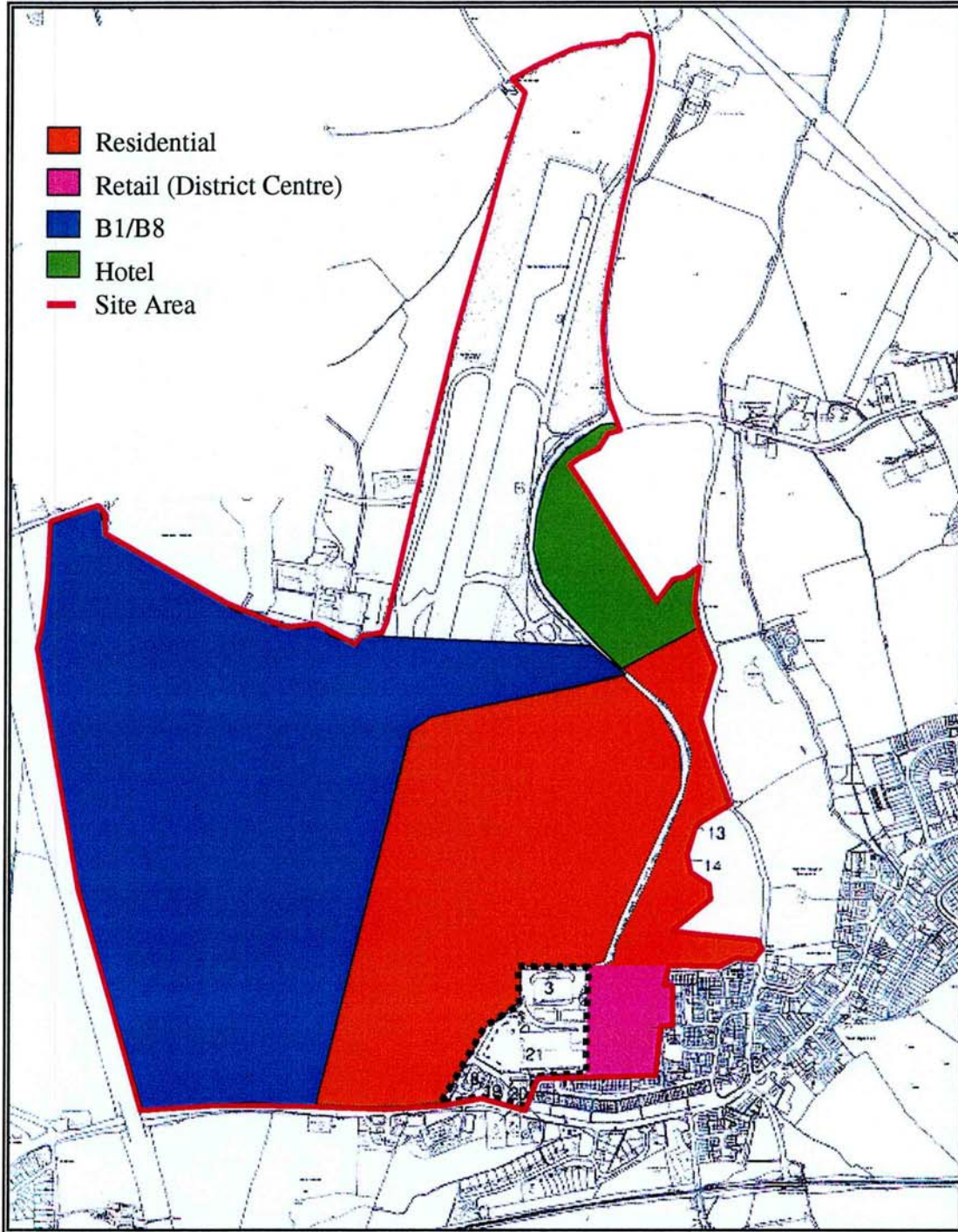


Option 5a Close Airfield - Mixed Use -> Residential Led

This plan shows broad areas of development within which are included a 30% provision for open space and buffer zones between uses.

Not to scale

North Weald Airfield Indicative Areas of Development



Option 5b Close Airfield - Mixed Use -> B1/B8 Led

This plan shows broad areas of development within which are included a 30% provision for open space and buffer zones between uses.

Not to scale

Report to the North Weald Airfield Strategy Cabinet Committee



**Epping Forest
District Council**

Date of meeting: 28 July 2008

Portfolio: Corporate Support and ICT Services

Subject: North Weald Airfield – Extensions of Existing Leases and Licences

Responsible Officer: Derek Macnab (01992–5644260).

Democratic Services Officer: Gary Woodhall (01992–564470)

Recommendations/Decisions Required:

That consideration be given to granting extensions of leases without security of tenure, which are largely due to terminate in 2010.

Executive Summary:

This report suggests that there is an opportunity to agree to extensions to some existing leases.

Reasons for Proposed Decision:

In the light of the East of England Plan it is apparent that the timescales envisaged in the Drivers Jonas report for any major development proposals to take effect the Airfield are no longer applicable and there is an opportunity to allow some occupiers to have extensions to their leases.

Other Options for Action:

Not to allow any extensions of leases.

Report:

1. A number of commercial, aviation and leisure uses of North Weald Airfield have developed incrementally, since the Council acquired the site from the Ministry of Defence.
2. The current arrangements fall largely into four categories, i.e. long ground leases, leases with security of tenure, short leases without security of tenure and licenses. (A plan will be available at the meeting detailing the individual locations). The long ground leases are largely situated on the North Weald Airfield Industrial Estate and on the live side of the Airfield.
3. With respect to leases with security of tenure, the Council would need to have definite firm proposals in order to successfully challenge existing tenants' rights to a new lease on lease renewal.
4. However, the more immediate issue for the Council relates to short leases without security of tenure on renewal. Following a moratorium on new leases in 1998 and the

subsequent publication of Drivers Jonas report, any new leases on the Airfield have been limited to 31 December 2010 with break clauses at the end of 2007, 2008 and 2009. This is to reflect the minimum timescales envisaged within the Drivers Jonas report for any development proposals to take effect. Tenants are now generally aware of the deletion of North Weald Airfield as a site for major potential development in the East of England Plan. They are also clearly concerned that they have no rights to remain on the Airfield after 2010. There is therefore a need in the short-term to grant a number of new leases, with break clauses as appropriate, pending any longer term plans the Council may have, coming to fruition. It should be acknowledged that it is unlikely that short lease terms would encourage new tenants to the Airfield, however, it would not be prudent in any event to allow piecemeal development which could prejudice future plans.

5. In addition, some tenants wish to carry out a degree of development and/or improvements. As such they are actively seeking lease extensions, which would allow them to recoup a return on their investment. In particular, the Golf Driving Range operators currently cannot make a business case or obtain planning permission to realise their aspirations for a major upgrade of the range and new clubhouse, without a larger lease period.

6. The Golf Driving Range operator has therefore requested a minimum extension of five years and/or some form of overage arrangements, in the event of future development. Given the likely timescales involved in determining a clear future for the Airfield, members may wish to consider granting extensions to lease holders without security of tenure.

7. Details of the terms of existing leases are set out in the item to be considered at this meeting in private session. If members consider that they need to discuss the terms before coming to a decision on extending leases it will be necessary to resolve that this item is moved to private session.

Resource Implications:

Set out in the item to be considered in private session

Legal and Governance Implications:

Terms of leases

Safer, Cleaner and Greener Implications:

No implications at this stage.

Consultation Undertaken:

None

Background Papers:

None

Impact Assessments:

None at this stage

Report to the North Weald Airfield Strategy Cabinet Committee



**Epping Forest
District Council**

Date of meeting: 28 July 2008

Portfolio: Leader's

Subject: North Weald Airfield – Contact with Interested Parties/Developers

Responsible Officer: Derek Macnab (01992–564260).

Democratic Services Officer: Gary Woodhall (01992–564470)

Recommendations/Decisions Required:

That the Council's current policy with respect to contact with interested parties/developers, remains in place until such time as it may be amended to reflect changed circumstances.

Executive Summary:

This report seeks views on the action to be taken by officers in relation to unsolicited approaches in relation to possible development at the Airfield.

Reasons for Proposed Decision:

The Council is not yet in a position to make any decision about the long term future of the Airfield.

Other Options for Action:

To enter into detailed discussions with interested parties.

Report:

1. Following publication of the East of England Plan, the Council is again starting to receive unsolicited approaches, largely from companies involved in Business Aviation. With respect to handling such enquiries, it was agreed by members of the North Weald Airfield Working Party and Policy and Co-ordinating Committee in 2000 that the then Head of Planning Services should record details of individuals and companies expressing an interest in the future development/management of the Airfield.

2. Members acknowledged that officers had received and would continue to receive informal approaches from developers in the light of the Drivers Jonas report and ongoing strategic planning studies. However, because the Council was not able to take any decisions about the long-term future of the Airfield, it was premature to do more than simply note interest, rather than involve members and officers in detailed discussions about possible scenarios.

3. Since this time, officers have complied with this protocol and advised developers accordingly. Members can inspect the record of interests expressed, but there are no "results" of discussions to share with members at this stage. Of course, if development

and/or disposal is contemplated by the Council in the future, then formal discussions would be necessary, involving ward members, other councillors and stakeholders in the normal way.

4. Members are asked to reaffirm this approach until such definite proposals emerge.

Resource Implications:

None

Legal and Governance Implications:

None

Safer, Cleaner and Greener Implications:

No implications at this stage.

Consultation Undertaken:

None

Background Papers:

None

Impact Assessments:

None at this stage

By virtue of paragraph(s) 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

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