

## **Report to the North Weald Airfield Cabinet Committee**



**Epping Forest  
District Council**

**Report reference: NWA-007-2009/10**

**Date of meeting: 7 December 2009**

**Portfolio: Finance & Economic Development**

**Subject: Proposal from The Caravan Club for a caravan site during the 2012 Olympics at North Weald Airfield**

**Responsible Officer: J Gilbert (01992 564062).**

**Democratic Services Officer: Rebecca Perrin (01992 564532).**

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### **Recommendations/Decisions Required:**

- (1) To consider the request from the caravan Club for the use of North Weald Airfield for a caravanning & camping facility during the 2012 Olympiad;**
- (2) Subject to recommendation (1) to authorise officers to commence detailed contract and technical negotiations with the Caravan Club with a view to finalising a contractual arrangement; and**
- (3) To report back to the Cabinet Committee accordingly.**

### **Executive Summary:**

The Council has been approached by the Caravan Club with a view to utilising a part of North Weald Airfield for a caravanning and camping site in the lead up to and during the 2012 Olympiad. Officials from the Club have visited the Airfield and considered it an ideal location. Council officers have sought further detail, especially in respect of the possible financial arrangements, and this report brings these to the Cabinet Committee for consideration.

### **Reasons for Proposed Decision:**

To enable the Cabinet Committee to consider in detail the proposals of the Caravan Club.

### **Other Options for Action:**

None at this stage.

### **Report:**

1. The Caravan Club was founded in 1907 and represents around 1 million caravanners in the UK. It operates 216 full caravan sites plus grants certificates for around 2,500 smaller sites. The Club is an exempted organisation under the terms of the Caravan Sites & Control of Developments Act 1960, meaning that its sites do not require to be licensed by a local authority.
2. Since the announcement of the 2012 London Games, the Club has been seeking locations to meet the likely domestic and international demand for caravanning and camping

provision close to the Olympic sites. The four locations it has within the M25 are considered to be inadequate to meet the likely demand. The Club believe that demand will be extremely high from caravanners and campers from all over Europe, and their research amongst their members supports this view.

3. The Club are seeking the following a site for the 12 week period from 2 July to 21 September inclusive, with the following arrangements:

- (i) 2 to 24 July for site set up;
- (ii) 25 July to 14 August for occupation during the Games;
- (iii) 15 to 26 August for a low occupancy 'wind down period';
- (iv) 27 August to 11 September for occupation during the Paralympic Games; and
- (v) 12 to 21 September for site clearance/reinstatement etc.

4. The Club believes that this activity could be undertaken alongside existing airfield uses, including aviation and the Saturday markets. Indeed they see the market as benefiting from the additional numbers in the locality. The Club has indicated that it would like to be able to use the area currently used for model flying since it provides a hard standing area suitable for larger motorhomes and for those with disabilities. All booking and administration would be handled by the Club, this commencing at the same time as the availability of Olympic tickets, thought to be the spring of 2011.

5. The area under consideration is shown on the plan attached as appendix 1 to this report. The plan sets out the areas and proximities to existing users. The Club believes that around 2,000 pitches could be made available, resulting in around 34,000 overnight stays for the main Olympics and a further 15,000 for the Paralympics.

6. Research undertaken by the Club suggests that an event of the nature could generate significant local economic benefits for the local community and businesses, through secondary visits and associated spend of £1 million locally and a further £1 million in London and closer to the mains Games site. Local tourist attractions will also benefit since Club members are enthusiastic visitors to and users of museums, parks, local walks etc.

7. As well as providing the necessary on-site facilities, the Club have also indicated that it will provide a "park and ride" facility between the Airfield and Epping to enable access to the Central Line, which will also potentially increase visitor number to Epping itself.

### **Resource Implications:**

The Club's normal financial model for a temporary site of this type is based upon a rental for each occupied over night pitch. Based on the numbers set out above and an over night pitch rental of £2.50, this would generate income in the order of £122,000. The Club are suggesting the following profile:

- (a) £12,000 after contract signing in 2010;
- (b) £12,000 a year later in 2011;
- (c) £25,000 prior to site preparations in 2012; and
- (d) the balance based upon actual occupancy paid post event.

At this stage there remain issues which are unclear, but may have a financial impact on the Council, including:

- (i) the use of electricity;
- (ii) costs of refuse collection/disposal; and
- (iii) surface and foul drainage

and these will need to be considered as part of any formal contract negotiations with the Club.

### **Legal & governance implications**

There may be issues around contract standing orders to resolve given that the totality of any contract with the caravan Club would clearly exceed standing order limits.

Since the Club is an exempt organisation as scheduled in the Caravan Sites & Control of Development Act 1960 there are no site licensing implications for the Council

Other implications may arise depending upon negotiations should the Cabinet Committee decide to proceed.

### **Safer, Cleaner and Greener Implications:**

The Caravan Club is a long standing and well respected organisation representing caravanners and campers throughout the UK. Their status has gained them dispensation from the licensing requirements of the Caravan Sites & Control of Development Act 1960. As part of negotiations, should they proceed, there will discussions around, inter alia:

- (i) site security;
- (ii) site lighting;
- (iii) waste management;
- (iv) potable water and waste water management;
- (v) noise; and
- (vi) sanitation arrangements.

### **Consultation Undertaken:**

None at this stage, but if the Cabinet Committee decide to proceed there will need to be consultations with existing airfield tenants/users, local land owners, the North Weald Parish Council, Essex County Highways, and the Essex Police.

### **Background Papers:**

Letters from the Caravan Club.

### **Impact Assessments:**

#### Risk Management

Given the reputation and expertise of the caravan Club in organising sites/events of this type, the risks to the Council should be minimised. However, the consultation process with other Airfield users should be used to understand and manage any operational conflicts which may arise through large numbers of people being present on the Airfield. The Airfield Team's experience through the Scouting World jamboree will prove to be of considerable benefit in this context.

#### Equality and Diversity:

Did the initial assessment of the proposals contained in this report for relevance to the Council's general equality duties, reveal any potentially adverse equality implications? Yes

Where equality implications were identified through the initial assessment process, has a formal Equality Impact Assessment been undertaken? No

What equality implications were identified through the Equality Impact Assessment process?  
An impact assessment will be undertaken once a decision to proceed has been made. The main issues to be considered will revolve around access for and facilities provided for those visitors with disabilities.

How have the equality implications identified through the Equality Impact Assessment been addressed in this report in order to avoid discrimination against any particular group?  
See above