

Report to the North Weald Airfield Cabinet Committee



**Epping Forest
District Council**

Report reference: **NWA-011-2009/10**

Date of meeting: **17 May 2010**

Portfolio: **Finance & Economic Development**

Subject: **Use of part of airfield as park and ride for Olympic white water centre**

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

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

Recommendations/Decisions Required:

- (1) To note that the Caravan Club has withdrawn its proposal to use part of North Weald Airfield as a camping site for the duration of the 2012 Olympics;**
- (2) That the Olympic Development Agency's request for the use of North Weald Airfield as a park and ride facility for the white water centre be considered;**
- (3) That subject to recommendation (1) consideration be given to the terms and conditions of any such agreement; and**
- (4) That the recommendations be advised to Cabinet accordingly.**

Executive Summary:

The Caravan Club has withdrawn its proposal to provide camping facilities at North Weald Airfield during the Olympics. Their decision results from the fact that the Council was unable to provide them with sufficient land to meet their requirements without compromising aviation operations at the airfield.

However, the Olympic Development Agency (ODA) has enquired of the Council whether North Weald Airfield would be available for use as a park and ride facility for approximately 5,000 cars for the duration of the white water events at Broxbourne, which takes place over the 4 days from Sunday 29 July to Wednesday 1 August 2012. The plan attached indicates the areas of the Airfield proposed for this use. Given the withdrawal of the Caravan Club, this is a proposal which can be considered.

Reasons for Proposed Decision:

To consider whether to recommend to Cabinet that an agreement with the ODA be entered into.

Other Options for Action:

There are no alternative options available since the proposal makes use of the only available land on the Airfield suitable for the intended purpose. The Council does not own any other locations which could be used for this purpose.

Report:

1. Members of the Committee will recall that the Caravan Club had put forward a proposal to use a significant part of the Airfield as a camping/caravanning site for the duration of the Olympic and Paralympic Games in 2012. However, the Club required access to land on the “live” side of the Airfield which could have compromised the safe operation of aviation. Therefore the Council were unable to accept that part of the proposal and the Club consequently withdrew from negotiations.

2. However, the Olympic Development Agency (ODA) has enquired of the Council whether North Weald Airfield would be available for use as a park and ride facility for approximately 5,000 cars for the duration of the white water events at Broxbourne, which takes place over the 4 days from Sunday 29 July to Wednesday 1 August 2012. Such a proposal would not have been possible if the Caravan Club proposals were to proceed, but their withdrawal enables serious consideration to be given.

3. The intention is that the areas of the Airfield immediately in front and to the north of the control tower would be used to park approximately 5,000 cars whilst the land used for the market (the apron) would be used to load and unload the coaches taking visitors to the white water site just outside of Waltham Abbey. The plan attached provides an indicative layout. Representatives of the ODA are to attend a meeting at North Weald on the 20th of May.

4. The proposals as currently proposed do require discussion of the following:

- (a) although the white water rafting takes place over just the 4 days set out in paragraph 1 above, the ODA have indicated that they would require the site for the week preceding and post the event;
- (b) locations C and D on the attached plan form part of the land on which the Saturday market is held. If cancellation charges are to be avoided this land would have to remain available for the market on the Saturdays prior to and after the white water events;
- (c) there is currently no routing information for cars coming to the site or coaches leaving for Waltham Abbey, although this would present no major difficulties given that routing for incoming vehicles could mirror those used for the market. It would be envisaged that coaches leaving the site would use the A414 north to junction 7, then route southbound on the M11 to the M25, then east bound on the M25 to J26 and then to Waltham Abbey via the link road; and
- (d) other desirable operational conditions / requirements

5. Whilst the Airfield has not been used as a formal park and ride facility before, it has been used for a broadly similar purpose during scout jamborees when it served as a “staging post” for buses, other vehicles and equipment operating between the Airfield and Hylands House in Chelmsford. This was a very effective operation demonstrating that the Airfield operational staff were able to manage such uses alongside the operational aviation requirements.

6. Prior to the officer meeting on the 30th of May it would be helpful for the Cabinet Committee to express a view on the ODA proposals and suggest any conditions considered appropriate to minimise disruption on the Airfield itself and to the neighbouring community. The views of this Committee can then be considered by Cabinet, along with those of the ODA and officers following the meeting on the 30th.

Resource Implications:

At the time of report preparation, no details were available regarding the nature of the facility charge to be met by the ODA for the use of the Airfield for park and ride or whether a charge would be made by the Local Organising Committee for the Olympic Games (LOCOG). The ODA have stated in their proposal that they would be responsible for the erection and removal of all temporary facilities on site, making good any damage caused, litter etc for the entire period of use, obtaining any required statutory consents and external signage.

Nevertheless, although the Council maintains a 7 day a week presence on the Airfield, it is anticipated that the level of officer attendance would need to be increased during an extended operation such as this, as was the case during the scout jamboree mentioned above.

Further information will be provided to the Committee at the meeting if available.

Legal and Governance Implications:

It will be necessary to ensure that the Saturday Market operation is not compromised through any agreement for a park and ride. Failure to do so will result in market cancellation charges becoming payable and the ODA have indicated that they would be unlikely to be able to meet any such costs.

Clarity is also required in respect of which organisation any use agreement will be with, since it appears that the ODA has responsibility for acquiring facilities but it is LOCOG who will operate them

Further information will be provided to the Committee at the meeting if available

Safer, Cleaner and Greener Implications:

Should an agreement proceed it will be necessary to ensure that matters such as traffic management, litter clearance and site protection are adequately dealt with to protect the Council's interest and to reduce disruption to local communities.

Consultation Undertaken:

None, but it is suggested that the views of the North Weald Parish Council are sought generally and Essex County Council on highway related matters.

Background Papers:

Letters/emails from the ODA
Withdrawal letter from Caravan Club

Impact Assessments:

Risk Management

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?
The ODA/LOCOG will be required to demonstrate that the park and ride facilities provide specialised parking spaces for those with disabilities and that buses/coached used for onward transfer are accessible

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?
Will be addressed through the use agreement with the ODA/LOCOG