

NEWINGTON PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Ordinary Parish Meeting

held via Zoom on Thursday 18th February 2021

Attendees	Cllr. James Nettleton (JN) Cllr. Mike Black (MB) Cllr. Peter Ablett (PA) Cllr. Duncan Howlett (DH) Cllr. David Turner (DT) (SODC) Bianca Rush (BR) (Clerk)		
Apologies	Cllr. Graham Howlett (GH) Cllr. Lorraine Lindsey-Gale (LLG) (OCC)		
65/20	Introduction	The Chair (JN) opened the meeting and welcomed all present.	
66/20	Apologies	GH and LLG.	
67/20	Minutes of the Last Meeting	Minutes approved and signed by JN.	
68/20	Matters Arising	None.	
69/20	Open Forum & Village Matters	None.	
70/20	District Councillor Report (DT)	DT reviews February report and updates, also highlighting a letter from the Civil Aviation Authority (Appendix 3) expressing objection to Homes England's proposed development of Chalgrove Airfield. DT feels the letter is helpful, and strengthens oppositional arguments raised locally.	
71/20	County Councillor Report (LLG)	LLG not in attendance however all reviewed most recent report; no questions raised.	
72a/20 MB	SAD Speed Awareness Device	Thanks again to MB for his fantastic work on this project. MB states that the speed sign seems to be activated quite early when approaching the village however all agree that this draws attention to the speed limit in order to slow cars on approach.	
72b/20 DH/GH	CommLiaison/ Notice Board	No updates.	
72c/20 DH/GH	Planning Applications	No local planning applications.	
72d/20 PA/MB/BR	Church Revival	Following quinquennial report highlighting a number of urgent works the PCC is covering initial £6k repair costs. Other works to be quoted by structural engineer. PA questions if we could use DT's grant towards the structural engineer's work. PA will need another conversation with DT on this. ACTION: BR to send SODC DT grant application form to PA to review before PA discusses with DT further. JN confirms all approve that this is the best course of action.	BR PA
72e/20 MB/JN	Event Co-ordination	No events due to Covid-19. Could look to organise a fun run or tennis tournament as allowed to raise funds for the church if required.	

72f/20 BR	Website Management	No updates.	
72g/20 PA/MB	Neighbourhood Plan	No updates.	
72h/20 MB/GH/PA	New Highways/ Potholes	JN gives thanks DT for spotting an open tap on his land. MB raises issue of leak on Thame Road which has been ongoing for years. Letter received by parishioner stated that repairs would be pushed back due to budgets. MB suggests NPC send a letter to Mr Jamie Raffell, Technical Officer (Highways and Drainage) Area Operations (South) to seek resolution. ACTION: MB will work with parishioner to draft a letter to Jamie Raffell at OCC Highways from NPC. DH highlights other local leaks that are more severe such as the one in Chiselhampton which still haven't been fixed and questions where we sit in terms of priority. All happy that a letter goes to Highways from the PCC. DT recommends getting LLG involved to expedite the process.	MB
72i/20 JN	Responsible Financial Officer	Reviewed cashbook. All satisfied with current position. Approved payment for the Clerk. Precept set as agreed.	
72j/20 DH	Footpaths	BR raises email from parishioner about brambles overgrown on the pathway alongside the Lydes. ACTION: DH to contact parishioner to find out where it is and look to rectify. DT offers congratulations to local landowners for keeping the footpaths clear and in good state of repair. DT noticed instances of paths up and down the country of path widening due to increased use, however this is not the case locally.	DH
72k/20 BR	Upcoming Training Events	None.	
73/20	AOB	OCC transport consultation strategy – PA questions if this is something NPC should comment on. DT highlights upcoming County Council Public Transport Representatives Meeting (Tues 23 rd Feb). ACTION: DT to send all the Zoom link so that someone from NPC could join. DT highlights that older people in rural areas are often isolated due to lack of transport. ACTION: JN asks that CILrs ask their neighbours what the general feeling is about bus services etc. CIL – BR questions if NPC is happy to accept the £988.69? All agreed to accept CIL. All discuss possible uses of the CIL payment. ACTION: BR to add CIL/Community Transport Fund to agenda for next meeting to discuss possibility of utilising CIL to support residents in getting to shops, etc.? River Thame - DH mentions emails circulated locally about severity of River Thame flooding this year. DH highlights desire to push back against large scale housing development which could potentially worsen flooding. DT highlights severity of flooding in Chalgrove recently. DH highlights Drayton St Leonard sewage plant's opposition to further development in the area, as they are already at capacity.	DT All BR

		<p>JN proposes BR send a letter to the River Thame Conservation Trust to highlight concerns around River Thame Flooding. ACTION: DH to speak to River Thame Conservation Trust to find out who is best person to speak to. BR to write letter from NPC highlighting concerns around River Thame flooding, amount of fallen trees, impact on wildlife, run off from hard surfaces as a result of increased development in the area.</p> <p>JN asks if a letter to Thames Water would be appropriate to ask if sewerage is being discharged into the local river. All agreed that this is appropriate. ACTION: PA to draft a letter to TW to ask if sewerage is being discharged into the River Thame.</p>	<p>DH BR PA</p>
74/20	Date of Next Meetings	<p>Thursday 15th April 2021 Thursday 20th May 2021 Thursday 22nd July 2021 Thursday 16th September 2021 Thursday 18th November 2021</p>	

Signed: Chairman

Date:

Appendix 1: SODC Councillor's Monthly Report February 2021

Councils launch a dog fouling awareness campaign with maps showing locations of the highest number of complaints. Vale of White Horse and South Oxfordshire District councils have put together dog fouling maps of local towns and villages showing the areas with the highest number of complaints about owners not picking up after their animals. Using the maps the councils want to highlight the issue of dog fouling and remind owners that it is an offence for a person in control of a dog – an owner or dog walker – not to clean up immediately if the dog has fouled on public land. The councils' envirocrime officers can issue a £50 fixed penalty notice to someone who fails to clean up after their dog. If the case goes to court this could cost the owner or person in charge of the animal up to £1,000. In the past year the councils' joint envirocrime team has received 118 complaints about dog fouling. These included a video message from a mother and young daughter from Wantage after the child got covered in dog mess not cleared up by the animal's owner. They also got CCTV of a night-time dog walker allowing his pet to foul a neighbour's path. The councils are also trying to tackle the issue of dog walkers putting their pets' mess in a plastic bag and leaving it as litter on the ground or near a litter bin or sometimes hanging in a tree! The councils' envirocrime team patrol popular dog walking areas and talk to dog owners and other residents about the problem. Dog owners have been issued with fines for dog fouling and residents are being encouraged to report incidents of dog fouling via the councils' website pages. I (David Turner) am pleased to say that none of the Parishes in Chalgrove Ward have shown up as hot spots.

Residents in Southern Oxfordshire should not go cold and hungry this winter. The Winter Support Grant Scheme is now available for residents in South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse who need help to buy food and heating their homes this winter. South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse district councils have been working with Oxfordshire County Council and other district councils to distribute the nearly £1.4million given to the county by the Department for Work and Pensions in December 2020 as part of the Covid Winter Grant Scheme.

South and Vale businesses urged to sign up to mailing list for the latest news on financial support. Businesses in South Oxfordshire and the Vale of White Horse are being urged to sign up to the South and Vale Business Support mailing list to ensure they keep up to date with the latest news about the financial support available to them during the ongoing restrictions. South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse District Councils are currently administering a number of government-funded support grants which cover the periods during national lockdowns and localised tier restrictions, as well as further support for pubs. Each time the government announces a new grant it can take several weeks before they provide councils with the specific details they need in order to open the scheme for applications. To ensure they find out as soon as new grant funding becomes available locally, businesses are urged to visit svbs.co.uk to sign up to the Business Support mailing list.

The following information was sent to Town & Parish Councils on 29th January:

Vaccinations in Oxfordshire latest

You may have seen on the news that a roll out of COVID-19 vaccinations in Oxfordshire began at the Kassam Stadium in Oxford on Monday. The new vaccination centre, which is run by Oxford Health NHS Foundation Trust is vaccinating priority frontline patient-facing staff first. It will then begin providing vaccinations for the public from Monday. Vaccinations appointments will take place between 8am and 8pm and are by invitation only. People aged 75 and over will be invited via the national booking system to make an appointment and should not just turn up to the stadium without a booking.

The latest Covid rates across Oxfordshire. The latest weekly Covid-19 rate for South Oxfordshire in 261.2 cases per 100,000 population, and 247.8 in the Vale. These numbers are still significantly higher than they were in December and so we are supporting the Director of Public Health at the County Council, Ansaf Azhar to press the message that we are a long way from being out of the woods, and people should continue to follow the rules closely and to keep themselves and their families safe. We are also sharing messages to encourage people to get the vaccine, along with warnings against vaccination complacency. The science currently shows that it's likely people who have had one or both parts of the vaccination can still spread the virus to other members of the public, even though they're more protected against contracting the disease themselves. This means that anybody who has had the vaccination must still adhere to the lockdown rules and all social distancing measures, including wearing masks where required. We're also working with our colleagues across Oxfordshire to see what we can do to help increase take up of the vaccine among our BAME communities, as there are national concerns that those communities might include groups less likely to get vaccinated. Please do help to share these messages among your communities. Feel free to share our social media posts too.

Additional Restrictions Grants for businesses. The latest Additional Restrictions Grant scheme for businesses is now open for applications. This is the discretionary scheme to provide financial support to businesses who have been excluded or unsuccessful from other government grant schemes. We're processing applications on a first come, first served basis, so please encourage businesses to apply immediately. To find out if they're eligible and to apply for the grant, local business owners should visit the Additional Restrictions Grant page of our business support website.

Help businesses keep their finger on the pulse. The first businesses to find out about the first-come first-served Additional Restrictions Grant were those that are signed up to the South and Vale Business Support newsletter. Nearly 700 more businesses have recently signed up to the newsletter following a promotional campaign. If businesses in your communities aren't signed up, they're hearing news about support schemes later than the 2,153 businesses that are already on the mailing list. Encourage them to sign up at our business support website: www.svbs.co.uk

Anyone for (Table) Tennis? Would your community benefit from new table tennis equipment? We're making preparations to keep people active after lockdown, and so we're working with Table Tennis England on a project to help town and parish councils like yourselves fund the sport in your areas. If you already have table tennis clubs or sessions in your communities or you can demonstrate a need for it, then Table Tennis England will match any funding you put up to purchase tables and equipment. If you'd like to know more or to submit an application, please get in touch with our Leisure Development Officer by emailing Cath.Dale@southandvale.gov.uk or calling 07801 203551.

Councillor Community Grants – deadline extended. We've extended the deadline for you to apply for community funding from your local district councillor. They each have a total of £5,000 of grant funding to award to projects or services that offer community benefits in their ward area. Following feedback from councillors and community groups, we've extended the deadline by two weeks to midday 19 February. You can find out more on our website <https://www.southoxon.gov.uk/south-oxfordshire-district-council/community-support/grants/councillor-community-grants/>

Comms Team South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse District Councils
www.southoxon.gov.uk @southoxon
www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk @whitehorsedc

David Turner
SODC Councillor (Chalgrove Ward)
1st February 2021

Update to DT report

The following information was sent to Town & Parish Councils on 10th February:

COVID-19 rates across Oxfordshire

Oxfordshire cases of Covid-19 are starting to plateau but are still at a high level and are double the rate in the first lockdown. There are areas of concern nationally and near our communities, such as in Reading. Positive Covid-19 rates in schools are decreasing, and whilst things are moving in the right direction the message to convey to residents is that we must keep doing all we can to protect ourselves and our neighbours and safeguard the vulnerable. The latest weekly Covid-19 rate for South Oxfordshire is 109.1 cases per 100,000 population, and 118.4 in the Vale.

Vaccinations in Oxfordshire latest

Capacity is increasing at the community vaccination centre at the Kassam Stadium in Oxford. Oxford Health NHS Foundation Trust will soon be able to offer 1,000 – 1,600 vaccinations per day at the centre. The centre has already had lots of positive feedback from patients.

Invited members of the public over the age of 75 continue to receive their jabs at the centre and plans are being made to start working through the much larger cohorts 5 and 6 next – this means people aged 65-69 years, and under 65's who are at an increased risk will be getting their jabs next.

Getting vaccinated is crucial in the country's strategy against the virus and Oxford Health NHS Foundation Trust would like support in encouraging everyone who has been contacted to arrange their vaccination to do so without delay. See the attached stakeholder briefing for further details on vaccinations across the county.

With numbers still high, the vaccine alone cannot control the virus, and so even with increasing numbers being vaccinated, we still need to push the message that everyone needs to continue observing the lockdown rules, and following the government's Hands, Face, Space message.

Symptom-free testing centre latest

The symptom-free testing has been going well. The three sites have been testing employees from Thames Valley Police and Fire & Rescue. It looks like we will be able to roll out the service to the next three cohorts – adult social care, children's social services and early years soon.

We're hoping to be able to make a public announcement soon on the testing work.

Community hub support

The Community Hub had 15 referrals last week and handled enquiries from residents about Winter Grants and those seeking support after a positive Covid-19 diagnoses.

We've published details on some new self-isolation support packs on our website and will be linking to these in our social media messages. Please do help share our messages.

We're in the third week of delivering the Winter Support Grant scheme and have now supported 199 individuals and households with children. That's more than £55,000 in supermarket vouchers and utility bill payments provided through our local advice centres.

This grant is available for residents who are struggling to afford food and fuel bills as a result of Covid-19. Residents can contact Citizens Advice in both districts and also Wantage Independent Advice Centre in Vale who will offer a package of advice along with whatever financial assistance is most appropriate. This can take the form of supermarket vouchers, fuel vouchers or direct payment of fuel bills.

The emergency assistance grant is still available in South Oxfordshire and is enabling us to help residents who are struggling to afford food and other essential provisions such as toiletries and nappies. Residents who have been referred into a food bank by a referral agency can now be signposted to our Community Hub.

Our community connectors can now allocate supermarket vouchers for the emergency assistance grant in the South as there is still some unspent grant available.

Housing team supporting vulnerable people during the pandemic

The first lockdown saw the Housing team's workload jump dramatically from seeing an average of 1.6 households per week needing emergency accommodation to 6.2 households per week. Those that had homes were suddenly finding themselves at risk of homelessness because of the pandemic. Family and friends were no longer willing or able to accommodate some people, relationships were breaking down and others were losing their homes after losing their jobs.

Since the first lockdown in March last year the Housing team has found long term accommodation for 78 households across both districts. Also, for the first time Vale recorded zero people sleeping rough during the government's December count. South's figure for the same period was two persons, who had both declined repeated offers of assistance.

Information being given to market traders on what are 'essential goods'

The Food Safety Team and Covid Compliance Marshals are giving street and market traders across both districts clear advice on what goods are classed "essential" and are therefore permitted to be sold during lockdown.

They are distributing an information sheet. This details clearly essential and non-essential items and gives recommendations on the wearing of face coverings. Officers always begin with promoting a Covid-secure environment by providing business with information and advice to encourage compliance.

**Appendix 2: COUNTY COUNCILLOR'S REPORT TO PARISH COUNCILS
BY CLLR LORRAINE LINDSAY-GALE – FEBRUARY 2021**

I'm sorry this report is so long, but I wanted you to be aware of how complex it is for the County Council to set its budget. These proposals may change once further financial information is received from the government and consultation responses from the public have been considered. The council's annual net budget in 2020/21 is £474.6m. In 2021/22, taking into account all savings and investments, it is currently forecast to be £485m.

FRONTLINE SERVICES GIVEN PROTECTION WITH NEW INVESTMENTS

Frontline services are being given high levels of protection and new investment as part of OCC's budget proposals for 2021/22. This includes a proposed 1.99% rise in basic council tax, plus an extra 1% specifically for adult social care, making a total of 2.99%. The council's Cabinet met on 19 January and formally proposed the budget ahead of the annual meeting of all 63 county councillors on 9 February when the budget will be agreed and set.

Next year and beyond, the council is committing to strengthening its approach towards climate action, an enhanced focus on addressing inequality, developing its youth offer and delivering its COVID-19 recovery strategy.

A total of £19.6m of savings are being proposed in total across all services. £14.6m of these savings were already planned and are centred on the transformation of services to make them more efficient while protecting the frontline.

The council is also dedicated to investing in services that will have positive long-term impact for local communities. The budget proposals reflect this with more than £25m of additional funding included. Some of this funding has been previously agreed but £9.5m of this is newly proposed for 2021/22 to help meet additional demands, including within adult social care.

New investments

- A total of £1m long-term funding would be invested in expanding the youth offer in Oxfordshire. A study is due to report in the Spring on the needs of young people and how the wider partnership of the voluntary, community and public services can best provide support. An additional £500,000 of one-off accelerator funding will also be provided to develop sustainable long term approaches and help tackle the impacts of the pandemic on young people.
- An extra £4m will be added to the adult social care budget for 2021/22. This includes a total of £1.35m for managing risks such as provider sustainability.
- OCC has been part of a joint partnership to procure and manage services for single homeless people in Oxfordshire since it was formed in 2017. A further one-off contribution to the partnership of £500,000 was included in the budget, with £250,000 of this allocated for 2020/21 and the same in 2021/22. The council is proposing to continue the council's support for the partnership from 2022/23.
- An extra £400,000 is proposed for highway maintenance focused on additional resource for vegetation and drainage clearance plus supporting the roll out of a trial currently being undertaken enabling parish councils to implement 20mph schemes in their villages.
- An extra £330,000 will be invested into children's services on increasing early intervention services, increasing the skill base of children's social care workers and special educational needs related services.
- A total of £100,000 would be invested in issues linked to digital exclusion.
- A total of £81,000 would be invested in domestic violence services and £150,000 into apprenticeships.

Proposed savings

- The council proposes to carry out more checks to make sure companies who have been granted permits to carry out roadworks finish on time. This will ensure that late finishers are fined (up to £10,000 per day). This should generate £225,000 in 2021/22.
- The council is carrying out a review of its winter service. This would save £100,000. This would not change the current network of roads treated and there would be no change for the winter of 2020/21.
- For adults with care support needs, the council intends to focus on maximising the use of existing contracted capacity and looking at creative ways to meet needs at a lower cost. This would be done while also helping residents to live as independently as possible. It is anticipated that it will be possible to save £1m (around 1 per cent of the total budget) in each of the adults with care and support needs and Better Care Fund pooled budgets in 2021/22.
- A £430,000 increase was planned in the waste management budget in 2021/22 due to the forecast rise in the number of homes in the county. It was expected this would lead to more waste. However, new homes have not been built at the predicted pace and this investment can be deferred beyond 2021/22.
- A set of projects are underway to focus on outcomes for children the county council cares for to improve the ability to meet their needs through local placements, particularly children with complex needs. This includes two projects – one looking at providing the right type of foster placements for children and the other looking at the provision of small residential homes (two to three beds). The aim is to be able to provide the placements within Oxfordshire wherever possible. This would save £1.02m.
- Funding was originally allocated for growth in demand for school transport, based on new build housing. However, housing hasn't been developed as quickly as anticipated. As such the council can save £700,000 in 2021/22.
- The county council will benefit from £1.66m of savings it has been able to make through the retendering of its insurance contract. This is based on an analysis of amounts that have been required in recent years.
- Based on activity in 2020/21 and looking forward to longer-lasting changed ways of working in 2021/22, the council estimates it will be able to save £750,000 on staff travel budgets and £100,000 on printing. This would be closely monitored throughout the year.
- The county council's property team will save £1.95m in 2021/22 rising to £3.3m in 2022/23. The focus in 2021/22 will be on joint working with Cherwell District Council to blend the two property teams and jointly find more efficient ways of working.

Improving picture but COVID still at dangerous levels

Residents are being reminded not to let their guard down as the levels of COVID-19 remain dangerously high in the county, despite a slightly improving picture.

While there has been a decline in rates throughout Oxfordshire, they are still much higher than they were in December and hospitals remain under tremendous pressure.

For the week ending 22 January, there were 294.7 cases per 100,000 people in Oxfordshire compared to 399.5 the week before. However, this is still more than three times higher than the figure of 83.7 per 100,000 on 4 December. Case rates in the over 60s remain of particular concern.

The vaccination programme continues to make excellent progress in Oxfordshire, and we are on track on schedule to achieve the government target of the top four priority groups being vaccinated by mid-February.

Testing is another valuable tool in our fight against the virus and work is now ongoing to introduce community testing in early February for select key workers in the county.

As we approach 12 months of restrictions, it's really important that we do not give up now. Everyone is doing so well, but we need to continue to do our bit so that together we can stop the spread. The rapid transmission of the highly infectious new variant of COVID-19, plus the risks of other variants, makes it even more vital that we don't relax now – we could end up back at square one, very quickly, if we do.

Please, keep going.

Cases in Oxfordshire

With the total number of cases in Oxfordshire standing at 294.7 per 100,000 of the population, the number of cases per district is listed below.

Cherwell 367.4 per 100,000

Oxford 392.2 per 100,000

South Oxfordshire 261.2 per 100,000

Vale of White Horse 247.8 per 100,000

West Oxfordshire 161.8 per 100,000

Winter Support Grants available to help people hit financially by pandemic

Financial help is still available for people struggling to feed their families or heat their homes this winter as a result of the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Oxfordshire County Council, in partnership with the county's district councils and Citizens Advice services, is offering support to vulnerable residents through a Winter Support Grant. Oxfordshire was awarded £400,000 by the government in December to fund the cost of food, electricity, heating and other essential items, and the financial help is available for households to claim by 31 March, 2021.

What help is available

Households with children can claim up to £350, while those without children can receive up to £175. The support teams provide the funding through supermarket vouchers, cover costs for pre-payment meters, or make sure that a heating or water bill is paid. If a resident has received a food voucher from a previous scheme, they may also be eligible to have one from the Winter Support Grant.

My Councillor's Priority Fund

I have been able to support a whole range of community activities and projects during the last year. My fund is now fully committed until April 2021. As the Cabinet Member for Education I was very pleased to fund eight laptops for local children who need to be able to keep up with their online tuition.

You can contact me on lorraine.lindsay-gale@oxfordshire.gov.uk or telephone 01865 858976, mobile 07872 592666.

Appendix 3 – UK Civil Aviation Authority Letter RE: Development of Chalgrove Airfield

Nicola Smith
Vale of White Horse District Council and South Oxfordshire District Council
135 Eastern Avenue
Milton Park
Milton
Abingdon
OX14 4SB

Dear Nicola,

P20/S2134/O Outline planning application for the redevelopment of Chalgrove Airfield

The Airfield Advisory Team (AAT) has reviewed the plans to redevelop Chalgrove Airfield, home of Martin-Baker Aircraft Company Limited as set out in the outline planning application referenced above.

The AAT is a new team within the Civil Aviation Authority which has been set up to support General Aviation (GA) airfields on a wide range of aviation related matters including licencing, operations, airspace etc, as well as development and planning matters, local authority liaison and other stakeholder engagement matters. Additionally, the AAT ensures that the Department for Transport (DfT) are kept informed as to evolving challenges, risk and trends which impact the sector.

General Aviation and the protection of airfields are a priority for the DfT and this policy intent is referenced significantly in two strategy documents released by the Government, Aviation 2050 and GA Strategy 2015. As a result of these strategies, the AAT was formed to protect and boost the viability of GA. Protection is vital for the network of GA airfields who contribute significantly to the UK economy and so we reference these important excerpts from the strategies in relation to safeguarding GA below:

In order to provide greater support for local GA airfields, the Government is issuing guidance about aerodromes to planning authorities with reference to the National Planning Policy Framework, so that the network of these sites is considered within Local Plans and taken into account in future planning decisions [GA Strategy 2015].

The government aims to ensure that there are appropriate and proportionate policies in place to protect and support General Aviation (GA) and its contribution to GDP and jobs [Aviation 2050].

The government proposes that every aerodrome should adopt either official or unofficial safeguarding and does not propose mandatory official safeguarding [Aviation 2050]. There is no doubt that Chalgrove is of significant importance to the sector given Martin-Baker's contribution to employment, the local and wider economy as well as UK and western defence. The Local Plan for South Oxfordshire, as you know, was examined in parallel to the submission of the outline planning application. It is great to read the reference to GA Strategy 2015 in the Inspector of the examination's final report and indeed the protection of Martin-Baker's operation is emphasised in the final Local Plan, excerpts of which are included below:

From the evidence and a consideration of the relevant documents, there appears no reason at this time why the allocation should conflict with the Government's 2015 General Aviation Strategy or any emerging strategy arising from Aviation 2050. [Inspector's final report]

Proposals to develop Chalgrove Airfield will be expected to deliver land safeguarded for the future operations of Martin-Baker to include a re-aligned runway to be designed in line with Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) standards. [Local Plan 2035]

Having read AECOM's technical assessment, Aviation Statement, Martin-Baker's planning representation and having carried out a site visit to Chalgrove to consolidate our understanding of Martin-Baker Aircraft Company's operation, we have very significant concerns relating to how the proposed development can achieve the aims given in both the Inspector's final report and the Local Plan to ensure Martin-Baker's full operation can be safeguarded.

We have laid out why the proposals do not afford Martin-Baker the protection described above. Since 1946, Martin-Baker has been at the forefront of aircrew escape equipment and ejector seat design and manufacture and are world leaders in this field. This highly specialised and important work directly contributes to UK and western defence. We understand from the company that in addition to the maintenance and upkeep of their products on existing military aircraft platforms, they are also involved with next generation aircraft platforms for UK and International customers. The nature of the work carried out by Martin-Baker at Chalgrove Airfield is both sensitive and potentially hazardous in nature. It is important to highlight that the ongoing development of Martin-Baker has, in part, been made possible by having an operational base that meets very particular requirements.

Martin-Baker require runways, taxiways and apron environments in order to permit the movement of its personnel 24 hours a day using its own fleet of aircraft, as well as to accommodate movements from its partners and customers, to and from international locations in a variety of aircraft types. This is an operation that requires completely sterile and very separate environments, within the confines of its secure aerodrome boundary to conduct highly specialised testing of its products. Such environments are required to be quite separate from primary operational surface infrastructure such as runways and taxiways to ensure that those surfaces remain uncompromised and available for other aviation traffic, free from surface contamination and foreign object debris and other inherent hazards associated with Martin-Baker's specialised work. Chalgrove is unique and Martin-Baker require an aerodrome that can accommodate their precise requirements.

Martin-Baker carry out a variety of highly specialised tests at Chalgrove. These include variable speed airborne seat ejection; low speed-ground based seat ejection; high speed-ground based seat ejection; parachute drop testing from higher levels with rotary wing aircraft; ground based-static seat ejection; low level-first stage propulsion system seat ejection, canopy jettison and fracturing tests and several others.

The proposed new aerodrome layout is inadequate and cannot accommodate even the basic flight operations requirement of Martin-Baker. The size and layout of the proposed new aerodrome is completely unmatched to the highly specialised needs of Martin-Baker. There are intrinsic problems with the vision of redeveloping Chalgrove Airfield. It is not our opinion that the current proposal could be improved or optimised in any way to accommodate both a housing development and Martin-Baker Aircraft Company Limited within the limits of the current airfield for the reasons described thus far. We do not feel that space is a luxury to Martin-Baker in the current aerodrome layout either. It is clear to us that they are operating the aerodrome in an optimised and balanced way and that any reduction in the space available would impact their operation.

It is our strongly held view that the AECOM report has fundamentally failed to understand the complexity and the many nuances associated with Martin-Baker's operation at Chalgrove. Our recommendation is to discontinue development aspirations at Chalgrove Airfield for the following key reasons.

- o The site cannot accommodate both a housing development and Martin-Baker Aircraft Company Limited's specialised operation
- o The proposed new runway and wider aerodrome site is inadequate for the flight operations requirements of Martin-Baker Aircraft Company Limited
- o The proposed new aerodrome is inadequate in terms of space required for tests carried out by Martin-Baker Aircraft Company Limited
- o Any reduction in the space currently available to Martin-Baker will directly impact their ability to carry out specialised testing and to service their customers effectively and efficiently

This letter has been sent to the Department for Transport to ensure they are aware of the current situation. The AAT will continue to support all stakeholders associated with the proposed development as required. Should you have any questions, please don't hesitate to contact us at any time. We look forward to speaking to you again soon.

Yours sincerely
James Head
Airfield Advisory Team Principal
Civil Aviation Authority
CC Head of International Group, Civil Aviation Authority
Head of General Aviation Policy, Department for Transport