

# Waverley Local Plan Part 1 Examination

## Note on Policy SS7A - Dunsfold Aerodrome Design Strategy

**Date:** 05 July 2017

### Background

The following note sets out a response to Agenda Item 7, Matter 9 raised by the Planning Inspector in advance of the Waverley Borough Council Local Plan Part 1 examination hearing. As part of this response, a further Local Plan Part 1 policy, SS7A is proposed and set out below.

Amongst other sources, reference in responding to this Matter has been taken from draft Policy TD1 of the emerging Local Plan, other example design policies for new settlements in similar circumstances, planning application documents in relation to application ref. WA/2015/2395 and the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

It is noted that Paragraph 59 of the NPPF recognises that *"design policies should avoid unnecessary prescription or detail and should concentrate on guiding the overall scale, density, massing, height, landscape, layout, materials and access of new development in relation to neighbouring buildings and the local area more generally."*

Paragraph 60 goes further to state that:

*"Planning policies and decisions should not attempt to impose architectural styles or particular tastes and they should not stifle innovation, originality or initiative through unsubstantiated requirements to conform to certain development forms or styles. It is, however, proper to seek to promote or reinforce local distinctiveness."*

The proposed Policy SS7A seeks to address the Matter raised by the Inspector, taking into account the guidance set out within the NPPF for such policies and ensuring that the Dunsfold Aerodrome site allocation delivers a design-led vision and strategy for development.

Development of a new settlement, comprising 2,600 homes requires a comprehensive, structured and considered approach to design in order to make this a sustainable and successful community. The design strategy should be robust and able to evolve as the development progresses.

This additional policy wording has been discussed and agreed with the Dunsfold Aerodrome land owners' consultants, as Applicant of planning application ref. WA/2015/2395.

### Agenda Item 7, Matter 9 – Design strategy for Dunsfold Aerodrome

**"7. Design strategy for Dunsfold Aerodrome. If Dunsfold Aerodrome were to be allocated for housing, what should the Plan do to establish a design-led vision and strategy for the site, in accordance with NPPF paragraph 58?"**

***a) How will it be made locally distinctive, instead of "anywhere" development? What is there in the Plan to prevent it appearing as a set of housing estates in the countryside instead of a coherent new settlement with well-designed village forms and integral landscape structure? (NB Policy TD1 doesn't do it!)"***

The draft Policy SS7A requires the development of a masterplan which identifies character areas across Dunsfold Aerodrome. This approach seeks to prevent the site becoming an "anywhere" development and ensuring that the site is developed in a coherent manner. Character areas across the site, including in different densities of residential accommodation, a village centre and a business centre should help

divide the site into zones with a variety of characteristics to avoid one type of design across the whole site. Furthermore part i) of the policy would require the design to respond to the distinctive nature of Dunsfold Aerodrome, including to reflect the previous uses of the site as an airfield.

**"b) What should the plan have to say about cohesive village design, masterplanning, local distinctiveness and landscape structure?"**

The masterplan approach identifying character areas, access and movement, residential density, building heights and infrastructure aims to provide a cohesive approach to the site and a flexible approach in providing a village design.

The policy seeks to secure further detail in point two, including providing a strong sense of place in a long term quality development. Point i) in particular draws on local distinctiveness, requiring the proposal to respond to the previous use of Dunsfold Aerodrome as an airfield in terms of features and layout.

Point ii) gives particular regard to landscape structure. The masterplan will be required to create a connected network of Green Infrastructure, open spaces and recreational activities which are set out in Policy SS7.

**"c) What would the site look like at the end of the plan period, and what role is envisaged as regards the future settlement pattern and development needs of the District?"**

Without being overly prescriptive, stifling innovation, or being inflexible to change as new forms of settlement develop, the masterplan approach will provide a mechanism to ensure that the future settlement is design-led and coherent. This could include, for example, a requirement that its design for 2,600 dwellings should not prejudice potential further expansion of the site beyond the plan period.

The masterplan requirements set out in draft Policy SS7A will create a strategy for new residents to live, work and play and to minimise the need to travel by private motor vehicle. Smarter travel choices will be encouraged, including a network of footpaths and cycleways, to create the capacity for sustainable lifestyles.

**Current Policy SS7 wording**

For context, Policy SS7 of the draft Local Plan Part 1 reads as follows:

**"Policy SS7: New settlement at Dunsfold Aerodrome**

*Dunsfold Aerodrome, as identified on the Adopted Policies Map and on the plan below, is allocated for mixed use strategic development to accommodate housing, employment and associated supporting uses.*

*The development should create a high quality, mixed use community with its own identity and character, forming a new settlement, with a range of community facilities and services, appropriate to a settlement of this size. The development should fully recognise the significance of the heritage value of the site and conserve the site's heritage assets in a manner appropriate to their significance.*

~~*The development must protect the setting of the nearby Surrey Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, in accordance with Policy RE3. The setting of the AONB will be protected, in accordance with Policy RE3.*~~

*The scheme should include:*

- a) *Up to 2,600 homes to be delivered by 2032.*
- b) *An expanded business park with around 26,000 sq m of new employment (B Class) floorspace.*
- c) *A local centre providing -*
  - i. *At least 3,750 sq m gross floorspace with shops, financial and professional services, restaurants and cafes, drinking establishments and hot food takeaways (Use Classes A1 to A5) to provide for the day to day needs of residents, and*

- ii. *Social infrastructure including a new primary school, which will additionally provide early education for two to four year olds, health facilities, and community facilities. A financial contribution will also need to be made to off-site secondary school provision.*
- d) *The provision of publicly accessible local and strategic open space, to include a managed Country Park of at least 103 ha.*
- e) *Appropriate on and off site leisure facilities.*
- f) *A new canal basin to the Wey and Arun Canal.*
- g) *Land to be reserved on or adjoining the site for the provision of a museum reflecting the site's history as an aviation centre.*
- h) *Public art to reflect the heritage of the site.*
- i) *Necessary highways improvements to adequately mitigate the likely impacts, including cumulative impacts, of the proposed development on both the safe operation and the performance of the surrounding road network.*
- j) *A package of sustainable transport measures including a bus service to be provided and secured in perpetuity for this site, to maximise opportunities for alternative forms of transport and to support alternatives to the private car.*
- k) *The reinforcement of existing utility infrastructure for electricity, gas, water and telecommunications to serve the development.*
- l) *An appropriate buffer between the permitted anaerobic digestion facility and any new housing development.*

~~*The Council would expect a comprehensive masterplan to be produced to inform the delivery and phasing of the development."*~~

Note: As a result of the proposed Policy SS7A, which is an expansion of the final sentence in relation to a comprehensive masterplan, it is proposed that the final sentence is omitted. A further minor amendment is proposed to Policy SS7 to reflect the planning balance which must be made in relation to AONB's at paragraph 115 of the Framework. It is proposed that both of these amendments are incorporated in the Council's table of Modifications.

### Draft policy wording

#### **Policy SS7A Dunsfold Aerodrome Design Strategy**

The Council will ensure that the design strategy for Dunsfold Aerodrome New Settlements complements the character and amenity of the Borough. Prior to or with any outline planning application a Design Strategy shall be provided that will describe a masterplan design approach to the redevelopment of the Dunsfold Aerodrome site, identifying Character Areas; Land Uses; Residential Density; Building Heights; Access and Movement and Green Infrastructure. The Design Strategy will include the following matters:

1. To set out how the site will function; provide a long term quality development; provide a strong sense of place; optimise the potential of the site to accommodate sustainable development; respond to local character and heritage; provide a safe and accessible environment and provide a high quality public realm and architecture. It will ensure that:
  - i. New development will be of a high quality and inclusive design, creating a locally distinctive design that responds to the previous use of Dunsfold Aerodrome as an airfield.
  - ii. The new development will create an inclusive and sustainable community, with a cohesive masterplan layout to promote sustainable design, resource efficiency, and a connected network of Green Infrastructure, open spaces and recreational facilities that respects and enhances the landscape qualities of the area and meets the needs of the new community.
  - iii. A Landscape Strategy as an integral part of the Design Strategy.
  - iv. The masterplan will encourage smarter transport choices to meet the needs of the new development and maximise the opportunities for sustainable travel, including the provision of a network of footpaths and cycleways.
  - v. The Character Areas for the development will set a context to create a series of attractive places that contribute overall to the creation of a varied, but cohesive, new community with a strong sense of place.
  - vi. The development promotes connectivity between business, residential and community uses, including shared spaces.
  - vii. The design should not prejudice consideration of further development beyond the plan period.