

SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

REPORT TO: Planning Committee 14 November 2018
AUTHOR/S: Joint Director for Planning and Economic Development

Application Number: S/2866/18/VC

Parish(es): Little Gransden

Proposal: Variation of Condition 4 (Aerotows) 5 (Flying activities) 6 (Self launching sail planes) 7 (Hours of Operation) 8 (Aerotowing Equipment) of Planning Consent S/0607/90/F for Use as Gliding Club and ancillary purposes

Site address: Land at Gransden Lodge Airfield, Cambridge Gliding Club Ltd, Gransden Lodge Airfield, Longstowe Road, Little Gransden

Applicant(s): Mr Richard Brickwood

Recommendation: Approval

Key material considerations: Principle of development
Impact on Residential Amenity

Committee Site Visit: 13 November 2018

Departure Application: No

Presenting Officer: Alison Twyford – Senior Planning Officer

Application brought to Committee because: Referred from Chairs Delegation, where it was brought following a request from Little Gransden Parish Council and because it was considered there may be a wider public interest.

Date by which decision due: 17 September 2018

Executive Summary

1. The application site is bisected by the district council boundaries, Huntingdon to the north, South Cambridgeshire to the south. Planning Permission for Cambridge Gliding Club Ltd (formerly Cambridge University Gliding Trust Ltd) to operate a gliding club from this site was granted by Huntingdonshire DC on 28 June 1990 under 90/0467 and subsequently by SCDC on 15 August 1990 under reference S/0607/90/F.
2. The original planning application was granted subject to conditions which were imposed to “*protect the amenities of the area and local residents*”. Since the grant of the previous planning permission a number of technological improvements have been

made and the club has upgraded their launch facilities to include more powerful winches and quieter tug aircraft. Established tow out routes have also been implemented which have been chosen to minimise the impact on surrounding villages along with a biannual Consultative Council to which both District Councils, Cambridgeshire Country Council and all neighbouring Parishes are invited.

3. The application therefore seeks to vary a number of the original conditions to take into consideration the improvements made and to remove administrative burdens that the current conditions require the club to undertake. Despite concerns and objections from a number of parish councils, the District Council's Environmental Health has raised no objection. In the absence of any other technical objections, officers have concluded that the respective conditions can all be amended as necessary.

Planning History

4. S/0607/90/F- Use as Gliding Club and ancillary purposes- Approved

S/1083/18/VC- Variation of Condition 4(Aerotows) 5 (Flying activities) 6 (Self launching sail planes) 7 (Hours of Operation) 8 (Aerotowing Equipment) of Planning permission S/0607/90/F Use as Gliding Club and ancillary purposes-Application Withdrawn.

Concurrent application with Huntingdonshire District Council:

18/01574/S73- Application for the variation of conditions 9, 10, 11, 12, & 13 for application 9000467FUL-Awaiting decision.

Planning Policies

5. *National Planning Policy Framework*
National Planning Practice Guidance

6. **South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2018**

S/1 Vision

S/3 Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development

S/7 Development Frameworks

HQ/1 Design Principles

E/16 Expansion of Existing Businesses in the Countryside

SC/10 Noise Pollution

TI/2 Planning for Sustainable Travel

TI/3 Parking Provision

TI/5 Aviation-Related Development Proposals

Consultation

7. **Little Gransden Parish Council** - Little Gransden Parish Council considered this application at their meeting on 6 September 2018 and responds to application to vary conditions as follows:

Condition 4 (Aerotows) (HDC Condition 9). Little Gransden Parish Council SUPPORTS.

Condition 5 (Flying activities) (HDC Condition 10). Little Gransden Parish Council SUPPORTS.

Condition 6 (Self launching sail planes) (HDC Condition 11). Little Gransden Parish Council SUPPORTS.

Condition 7 (Hours of Operation) (HDC Condition 12). Little Gransden Parish Council OBJECTS. Comment: the current hours of operation should not be changed.

Condition 8 (Aerotowing Equipment) (HDC Condition 13). Little Gransden Parish Council SUPPORTS.

8. **Longstowe Parish Council** – Objects.

Condition 4: Increase in aerotows. OBJECT. We would continue to support up to 80 a day for competition events. We consider that the use of sailplanes should be part of the limit.

Condition 5. No change.

Condition 6: Self launching sailplanes. OBJECT. We have no objection to self-launching sailplanes provided that these are included in the daily quote of aerotows.

Condition 7: Longer hours. OBJECT. Evenings would be the most disturbing time for residents.

Condition 8: Increase in noise. OBJECT. We consider that, whilst exceptions can be made for competition events, the current level of 68dB should be adhered to.

9. **Eltisely Parish Council** – Objects re Noise

10. **Caxton Parish Council** - As the Council supported the original proposal and these amendments are an improvement to try to take in the concerns of local residents it believes it should again recommend approval.

11. **Cambourne Parish Council** - RESOLVED to object to the application as the proposed conditions 9, 11 and 12 will have an adverse effect on the adjoining residential areas due to increased noise and disturbance. We support condition 13 as it has a clearer measurable noise measure.

12. **Gamlingay Parish Council** – Supports. No concerns

13. **Abbotsley Parish Council**- Has no recommendation

14. **Arrington Parish Council**- Arrington Parish Council would like to make the following representation to the above planning application –

Variation of Condition 4 (Aerotows) Object –increase in traffic and potential noise.

Variation of Condition 6 (Self Launching sail plane) Object –details of noise unclear.

Variation of Condition 7 (Hours of Operation) Object –additional hours would be intrusive on residents.

Variation of Condition 8 (Aerotowing Equipment) Object –details of noise unclear.

Recommendation –Object The overall recommendation of the Parish Council is to Object due to the intrusive nature of the changes for residents

15. **Croydon Parish Council** - Objects to the application. Comments:
The current hours are more than reasonable considering the concerns of the people who live close-by - Croydon is affected at times, due to the wind direction and the way the tug planes have to take off. Increasing the flying hours by moving the start and finish times will impact on the quiet enjoyment of those who do live nearby.
If a glider is self-launching, then is it an aeroplane? The most noise is generated when the "glider" is taking off - once it is at a safe height to glide, the engine is shut down and the propeller stored. More noise for the nearby residents!
The current number of aerotows is adequate, unless a competition is taking place.
16. **Hatley Parish Council** - the Parish Council resolved to recommend the refusal of the variation of conditions as requested by Cambridge Gliding Centre (CGC). The issues and concerns raised by the Parish Council in April 2018, in relation to the withdrawn application, have not been resolved by this current application. All of the proposed changes will result in an increase in noise pollution and an increase in the level and frequency of those noise disturbances for local residents.

The resubmission of an application to vary planning conditions is justified by CGC on the following grounds:

1. HDC and SCDC, when granting the original Planning Permissions in 1990, imposed certain conditions . . . intended to protect the amenities of the area and its residents, because of the unknown effects that the operations of CGC might have'.

The impact, 28 years on, is known, and the many objections raised by Parish Councils and local residents in response to the withdrawn application clearly illustrates the importance of continuing to protect local amenities and to minimise noise disturbances for local residents. The new application proposes not only a 50% increase in activity, but noisier aircraft, increases to noise limits, longer operational hours and 14 days of unlimited activity. These variations, taken individually or as a whole, will have a detrimental impact on the local amenity and offers no benefit to the local rural area, just an increase in noise nuisance. The District Council's obligation to protect residents and the rural area from unnecessary and unwanted levels of noise disturbance and nuisance is as valid now as it was in 1990. Noise pollution is still a significant material planning consideration and the Parish Council urges you to consider the impact on the quality of life of residents in Hatley and the surrounding area should the number of flights increase, regardless of whether this is a result of a wider time-frame for flying, a 50% increase in flights, 14 days of unlimited flights or the introduction of new noisier aircraft.

2. CGC states that when the Club proposed to move from Duxford to Little Gransden the important consideration for planners at the time 'were the existing levels of aviation activity in the area and the potential disturbance this caused'.

This is still a very significant consideration, as levels of aviation activity remain high in the surrounding area, despite the presence of CGC, and therefore the current conditions relating to the number of flights and hours of operation should remain unchanged.

Hatley Parish Council does not agree with the statement by CGC that the presence of their airfield has helped to reduce local aircraft activity from other airfields. Hatley continues to suffer from an increasing amount of disturbance from aviation noise, which come from all sides of the Parish, to include:

- a. Gliding Club Airfield: within 3 km on the north-eastern parish boundary
- b. Little Gransden/Fullers Hill Airfield: within 3 km on the north-western parish

boundary

c. Top Farm Airfield: within 3 km on the southern parish boundary

d. Old Warden Airfield: flights pass through the parish

e. Duxford Airfield: flights pass through the parish

f. Military planes and military helicopters: routine flights through the parish. The helicopters seem much noisier and are flying much lower than before.

g. Commercial flights: drastically increased in volume in the last 20 years, now stacking overhead as they approach Luton and Stansted airports.

Taking in to account all of the above-mentioned sources of noise nuisance, the proposed increase in activity by CGC will greatly impact the frequency of noise disturbance for Hatley residents. Hatley is a small and quiet rural parish where the current level of noise disturbance from aircraft is thought to be great enough. Therefore, the request to increase the number of recreational flights and to extend the timeframe for those flights is considered to be an unreasonable request and the current conditions should remain unchanged.

3. CGC states that over 25 years 'we have established good relations with all neighbouring parishes and receive very few complaints' and that CGC 'has a vested interest in protecting the amenities of the area and residents.'

The resubmission proposes a 50% increase in activity, 14 days of unlimited flights, longer hours of operation and increased noise levels and noisier craft, which does not suggest that CGC has fully considered the objections and reasons for objections submitted by residents and Parish Council's previously. There will be a significant impact of the local amenities of the area and the upset shared by many residents close to the airfield, at the prospect of any increase in activity, have been completely disregarded, which does not support the suggested 'good relations'. CGC has failed to consider that for many people the club's activity is barely tolerated at current levels and any variations would be detrimental to the enjoyment of the local amenities by residents, with noise nuisance occurring over longer periods and in times when residents wish to enjoy the peace and quiet of their gardens in the evenings and at weekends.

Furthermore, the historical meeting minutes of Hatley Parish Council show that the activity of CGC has been an issue over the years and residents have been advised on such occasions to address their complaints direct to CGC. It is important to consider that other factors may result in a low number of complaints being recorded, rather than being indicative of good relations. These factors include:

a) Difficulty in reporting complaints: CGC has one phone line for complaints which is not always manned.

b) Difficulty in proving the complaint: residents may be unable to clearly identify the aircraft.

c) Lack of knowledge concerning unpermitted activity and lack of awareness about the complaints process.

d) Perception that complaints may not result in any action by CGC or a change in the behaviour of a CGC member.

e) Flights are generally considered to be in accordance with granted permissions and as such there are no official grounds by which the noise nuisance can be lodged as a complaint.

In May 1996 Hatley Parish Council requested that following the CGC's competition week it should consider giving the local area a one week break from towing gliders. No response was ever received, which does not support the CGC's view of having maintained good relations with neighbouring parishes. This fact was noted in the previous response in April by Hatley Parish Council and therefore this suggestion

remains ignored to be CGC.

In contrast, CGC now proposes 14 days of unlimited activity between April and September, which could result in 7 consecutive weekends of unlimited activity, which must be endured by their neighbours.

4. CGC states that it needed to demonstrate to HDC and SCDC that the variations they were proposing 'would not generate unacceptable levels of noise or have a significant detrimental impact on residential amenity for the nearby residential properties'.

Hatley Parish Council acknowledges that SCDC's Environmental Health experts surveyed noise levels in May 2017 and considered it to be an acceptable level. However, Hatley is a quiet rural setting with very low levels of ambient noise, making the sound generated by the aerotow more noticeable than it may be in areas where there is noise from other sources of traffic. Furthermore, the tolerance of any sound is subjective and the conditions under which the aviation noise is measured are variable. As such what is an 'acceptable' level of noise to the Local Authority may not be acceptable and might even be considered as annoying to residents when heard repeatedly over long periods of time or on consecutive days, especially when there is no other background noise. The Local Plan refers to noise having a '*significant adverse impact upon environmental quality, health and quality of life including amenity. Annoyance is probably the most widespread adverse effect of noise*'.

Residents in Hatley have also confirmed that they experience a very noticeable increase in the aerotow noise level when the glider has been released and the aerotow turns to make the return journey to the Club, possibly as fast and direct as it can. The Parish Council is interested to know whether the noise generated during the return journey was also accounted for in the review of May 2017. Again, this was questioned in the response to the withdrawn application in April 2018. The variation will see noise limits increased which cannot be justified, especially as current noise levels already being considered a noise nuisance.

5. CGC states that they have 'carefully considered the feedback and objections raised to the original application' and that some of those objections were not 'planning matters'.

Some objections may not link directly to planning policies, but they do illustrate a feeling of discontent among residents at the prospect of increased aircraft activity and the subsequent noise pollution that would be suffered. It should prove to HDC and SCDC that many residents do not feel that these proposals will be anything but 'detrimental to the interests of the residential and rural amenities of the locality' as it does not have the support of local residents and offers no measurable benefit to the locality. Hatley Parish Council continues to object to each of the of the proposed variations as detailed below:

1. Variation to Condition 4: 'there shall be no more than 60 aerotows and self-launching sailplane launches a day'. A 50% increase in activity cannot be supported. The current limit of 40 launches is considered by some to be plenty, and by others to be too many.

The prospect of including SLS's in this figure, whilst being an improvement compared to the previous application, cannot be supported. The SLS's engines can be switched on and off any time and any number of times during flight, which will create a new source of noise disturbance in quiet, rural locations. CGC cannot guarantee that any

individual pilot will not abuse the possibility of restarting their engine when in flight. Additionally, this variation proposes that *'this limit may be exceeded on no more than 14 days between 1 April and 30 September each year to accommodate competitions or other exceptional circumstances'*. This is considered to be an unreasonably high number of exception days, especially when CGC does not host competitions annually. CGC stated at their meeting with local Parish Councils earlier this year that competitions are very time consuming and expensive to organise and there would not be a competition this year. So, this begs the question, why are 14 days of unlimited flights being proposed as opposed to a much lower number? If this was approved it could possibly equate to 14 consecutive Saturdays of unlimited activity during the summer months, when weather is favourable and residents wish to enjoy their gardens without any additional noise nuisance.

Hatley Parish Council strongly objects to any increase in number of aerotows and to the introduction of SLS's. Both variations will result in additional noise disturbance and annoyance to residents. Winch launches should continue to be used as a quieter option for launching and the limit of 40 flights should be maintained.

2. Variation to Condition 6: Only self-launching sailplanes with a noise measurement of a maximum 68 dB(A) . . . be permitted'.

The Parish Council recognises that SLS's can be a quieter solution to aerotows, however it objects to this proposal as the SLS's still make considerable noise and will increase the amount of noise nuisance suffered by residents in Hatley and the surrounding area. As stated already, there is the potential for an SLS engine to be switched on and off any time and any number of times during flight and no guarantee can be given that any individual pilot will not abuse the possibility of restarting their engine when in flight. Furthermore, supporting data shows that SLS's typically produce noise levels of 64-66 dB(A) which does not support or help to explain CGC's intention to set a limit of 68 dB(A).

3. Variation to Condition 7: 'There shall be no launching . . . before 08.00 hours or after 19.00 hours.

Hatley Parish Council appreciates that CGC has reduced its proposed hours of operations compared to the withdraw application, but still believes that the current operating hours of 09.00 hours to 18.00 hours is more than adequate for the business and club members, whilst allowing residents to enjoy their early mornings and evenings without the disturbance of additional activity. Hatley Parish Council objects to this revised proposal and maintains that the current condition should remain as it is of real benefit to the residential and rural amenities of the locality. The proposed extension of operating hours for aerotow flights and SLS flights will not only result in a significant increase in the frequency of noise disturbances but, more importantly, this will occur during hours when more residents are likely to be home (i.e. outside of the normal working day). The Parish Council considers CGC's intentions to make more flights across much longer days a very unneighbourly proposition. Residents of Hatley and the surrounding parishes should be able to enjoy their outside space, especially during weekends and evenings in the summer months, without the annoyance and disturbance caused by the sound of the aerotows and SLS's.

4. Variation to Condition 8: All aircraft to be used for aerotowing, shall not exceed a maximum of 70 dB(A) when measured to ICAO Annex 16 Chapter 6, or 75 dB(A) when measured to Chapter 10 unless otherwise agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority.

The Parish Council agrees that as all of the proposed changes will result in an increase in the amount of noise suffered by residents that this proposal should also be opposed.

Whilst aerotows and SLS may be comparably quieter than some of the other types of aircraft that passes through and around the Parish, CGC's air traffic is not 'passing' traffic like the others and therefore can be more of a nuisance than other passing air traffic.

The flight path map illustrates a take-off path to the east of East Hatley, however the Parish Council is aware that some tow planes are often much closer to, and at times directly over, Hatley St, George and East Hatley.

This variation also demonstrates that CGC intends to exceed this noise limit as and when required under written application to the Local Authority, which cannot be supported as this level of noise is significant enough. The silencer kits under the current conditions ensures that noise does not exceed 69 dB(A) and therefore to alter the conditions up to 75 dB(A) is a huge increase in noise levels which cannot be supported and which will have a significant impact on residents in the area.

The Parish Council asks you to consider all of the above noted concerns and to recognise that the current conditions were implemented for very valid reasons which still apply today.

The variation of those conditions will be detrimental to the rural and residential amenity of the many rural parishes that surround the site.

17. **Local Highway Authority** - No significant adverse effect upon the Public Highway should result from this proposal, should it gain benefit of Planning Permission.
18. **Environmental Health Officer**- I do acknowledge concerns raised by residents in relation to alleged existing noise impact from flying activities, and also those relating to the potential for increased problems should planning consent for the proposals of S/2866/18/VC be granted. I have checked the records of this service dating back a number of years and cannot find any that relate to complaints of noise having been received which were in relation to activities from Cambridge Gliding Club.

In conclusion, I wish to confirm that I have no adverse comments to make from an environmental health standpoint.

Representations

19. 25 Representations were received in connection with this application which made the following summarised points:
 - To alter the conditions makes it sound like they were wrongly applied in the first place
 - Noise concerns
 - Other clubs contribute to the noise from the air and to increase this would not be acceptable
 - Current rules are broken which does not give confidence for further relaxation
 - The changes to condition 13 are supported
 - Do not consider the club acts in a neighbourly way
 - The current situation is intolerable and any increase would not be acceptable; gliders are frequently seen after the later times
 - An increase to numbers raises concerns that this could lead to further accidents
 - The gliders are at highest use at the same time people wish to enjoy peace and quiet

in their gardens

-Allowing gliders with engines will inevitably increase noise as the current gliders are quiet

-The noise levels were not made at all affected areas

-The frequency of take offs is of concern

- Military traffic has indeed been reduced in the area since 1990, however, civilian traffic has increased considerably

-Background levels may have changed but this does not mean louder sounds should be allowed as a result to further intrude upon residential amenity

Planning Assessment

20. Paragraph 54 of the National Planning Policy Framework states Local planning authorities should consider whether otherwise unacceptable development could be made acceptable through the use of conditions. The original conditions were imposed on the grant of planning permission to regulate the development and to ensure it was compliant against local planning policies.
21. Section 73 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 allows applications to be made for permission to develop without complying with a condition(s) previously imposed on a planning permission. The local planning authority can grant such permission unconditionally or subject to different conditions, or they can refuse the application if they decide that the original condition(s) should continue. The concern raised in the representations that the conditions were not correctly considered when first applied is noted, but this section of the legislation is provided to allow an application to be considered with amendments if circumstances have changed that could affect the wording or requirements of conditions.
22. Paragraph 55 of the Framework requires conditions to be necessary, relevant to the planning and development permitted, enforceable, precise and reasonable in all other respects. Any variation of the original conditions would need to ensure that the new conditions also passed the same tests and comply with current local planning policies.

Consideration of each condition

23. **Condition 4 (Aerotows)** of Planning permission reference S/0607/90/F of the original application read:
There shall be no more than 40 aerotows per day unless otherwise agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority.
(Reason: In the interests of the residential and rural amenities of the locality).
24. The wording proposed for the new condition by the applicant reads:
“There shall be no more than 60 aerotows and self-launching sailplane launches a day from the application site. This limit may be exceeded on no more than 14 days between 1 April and 30 September each year to accommodate competitions or other exceptional circumstances. Cambridge Gliding Centre, the operating entity of Cambridge Gliding Club Ltd, will electronically notify the Planning Departments of Huntingdonshire District Council and South Cambridgeshire District Council no later than 30 days before any proposed event which may exceed the total of 60 aerotows and self-launching sailplanes a day and shall also electronically notify the Parish clerk of the Parishes which are members of the Cambridge Gliding Club Ltd Consultative Council for reference by 30 April advising them of any predictable major competitions, or other such events, for the forthcoming season.”
25. A number of objections have been received from Parish Councils and local residents

in respect of the proposed increase which has been noted to increase the permitted activity by 50% of the existing permission.

26. In respect of the impacts upon residential amenity which formed part of the reason for the original condition it is not considered that the proposed alterations would have a significant adverse effect that would be sufficient to warrant refusal of the application. The wording of the condition however is considered excessive for the restrictions required and the proposed notification to the Parish Councils is not considered "necessary" in accordance with Paragraph 55 of the NPPF.
27. An amended wording to read:
"There shall be no more than 60 aerotows and self-launching sailplane launches a day from the application site. This limit may be exceeded on no more than 14 days between 1 April and 30 September each year to accommodate competitions or other exceptional circumstances. Cambridge Gliding Centre, the operating entity of Cambridge Gliding Club Ltd, will electronically notify the Planning Departments of Huntingdonshire District Council and South Cambridgeshire District Council no later than 30 days before any proposed event which may exceed the total of 60 aerotows and self-launching sailplanes a day"
28. Subject to the above wording alteration the proposed variation is considered to comply with adopted Local Plan Policies HQ/1 and SC/10.
29. **Condition 5 (Flying activities)** of Planning permission reference S/0607/90/F stated:
*"The airstrip shall only be used for gliding club purposes and at no time shall there be other flying activities on the site.
(Reason: To enable the LPA to retain control of the development to which this permission relates.)"*
30. A number of objections have been received from both Parish Councils and local residents in respect of the proposed change to the condition, mainly in relation to the potential increased impact upon residential amenity.
31. Whilst the description of the application includes reference to condition 5 it is noted that no changes are proposed to the wording of this condition. The proposal is therefore considered to comply with Policies HQ/1 and SC10.
32. **Condition 6 (Self launching sail planes)** of Planning permission reference S/0607/90/F states:
*"At no time shall self-launching sailplanes be used at the site.
(Reason: To enable the LPA to retain control of the development to which this permission relates.)"*
33. This application seeks to alter the condition to read:
'Only self-launching sailplanes with a noise measurement of a maximum 68dB(A) when measured to ICAO Annex 16 Chapter 10 be permitted to self-launch from the application site.'
34. A number of objections have been received from both Parish Councils and local residents in respect of the proposed change to the condition, mainly in relation to the potential increased impact upon residential amenity.
35. The Environmental Health consultee has not objected to the proposed changes and considers that the specified noise parameters are acceptable. Thus In respect of the impacts upon residential amenity which formed the reason for the original condition it

is not considered that the proposed alterations would have an adverse effect that would be sufficient to warrant refusal of the application. The proposal is therefore considered to comply with Policies HQ/1 and SC/10 and the proposed revised wording of the condition be adopted.

36. **Condition 7 (Hours of operation)** of Planning permission reference S/0607/90/F originally stated:
*“There shall be no aerotowing from the site after 1800 hours or before 0900 hours daily. All launching outside these hours shall be by winch.
(Reason: To enable the LPA to retain control of the development to which this permission relates and in the interests of the residential and rural amenities of the locality.)”*
37. The proposed change to this condition reads:
“There shall be no launching by Aerotow or Self Launching Sailplanes before 08:00 hours or after 19:00 hours daily from the application site.”
38. A number of objections have been received from both Parish Councils and local residents in respect of the proposed change to the condition, mainly in relation to the potential increased impact upon residential amenity.
39. The Environmental Health consultee has again raised no objection to the proposed changes.
40. In respect of the impacts upon residential amenity which formed the reason for the original condition it is not considered that the proposed alterations would not have an adverse effect that would be sufficient to warrant refusal of the application. The proposal is therefore considered to comply with Policies HQ/1 and SC/10.
41. **Condition 8 (Aerotowing equipment)** of Planning permission reference S/0607/90/F originally stated:
*“All aircraft to be used for aerotowing shall have a maximum of 250 hp and shall be fitted with silencer kits and four bladed propellers or such other equipment as may be agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority.
(Reason: To enable the LPA the retain control of the development to which this permission relates and in the interests of the residential and rural amenities of the locality.)”*
42. The proposed alteration to the condition reads:
‘All aircraft to be used for aerotowing, shall not exceed a maximum of 70 dB(A) when measured to ICAO Annex 16 Chapter 6, or 75dB(A) when measured to Chapter 10 unless otherwise agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority.’
43. A number of objections have been received from both Parish Councils and local residents in respect of the proposed change to the condition, mainly in relation to the potential increased impact upon residential amenity. There have also been some supportive comments however in respect of the proposed changes.
44. The Environmental Health consultee has not objected to the proposed changes.
45. In respect of the impacts upon residential amenity which formed the reason for the original condition it is not considered that the proposed alterations would not have an adverse effect that would be sufficient to warrant refusal of the application. The proposal is therefore considered to comply with Policies HQ/1 and SC/10.

Other Matters

46. Concerns have been raised in respect of the places in which sound measurements were taken. Members should be aware that pre-application advice was sought and provided by both South Cambridgeshire District Council and Huntingdonshire District Council on two occasions prior to the submission of an application. This included involvement on site by environmental health officers which suggested the chosen sites as appropriate for noise measurements to ensure the respective Local Planning Authorities to be satisfied that the aircraft usually used for aerotowing generates an acceptable level of noise and no significant detrimental impact on residential amenity for the nearby residential properties.
47. The sites were chosen by Environmental Health Officers and because the areas were located beneath each of the three locations of travel usually used when towing out and were around 2.5km away from the take-off point so that the planes would still be climbing (or just finished climbing). The measurements required background sound levels to also be taken from each location without any audible activities from the Gliding Centre.
48. The concern that the proposed changes could lead to further accidents are not something that Officers can give significant weight to. There is legislation in place and a number of guidelines in place that will account for health and safety requirements. The concerns have been considered as part of the application, but Officers are not of the view that the proposed changes to any of the conditions would have a significant impact upon health and safety.
49. Comments were received in the representations that the current rules are broken which does not give confidence for further relaxation and that the club allegedly does not behave in a neighbourly way. Officers have considered these concerns but note that no complaints have been received by the Environmental Health Department or Planning Department in recent years. In addition, should conditions not be complied with the Local Authority can pursue formal enforcement action to ensure that all conditions are correctly complied with.
50. Condition 1,2 and 3 are not proposed for re-attachment from the original permission as they are not considered to perform a required or necessary planning function and therefore do not meet the required tests of paragraph 55 of the NPPF.
51. Officers note that the application site falls within two District Council areas and that a tandem application is being considered by Huntingdonshire District Council for the same alterations. The subsequent recommendation requests delegated authority for the decision to allow the tandem application to also be considered so that both decisions can be issued on the same day.

Recommendation

52. Officers recommend delegated approval subject to:

Approval of a tandem application at Huntingdonshire District Council also being approved; and

Conditions and Informatives

53. Planning conditions and Informatives as set out below, with the final wording of any amendments to these to be agreed in consultation with the Chair and Vice Chair prior

to the issuing of planning permission:

- (a) *There shall be no more than 60 aerotows and self-launching sailplane launches a day from the application site. This limit may be exceeded on no more than 14 days between 1 April and 30 September each year to accommodate competitions or other exceptional circumstances. Cambridge Gliding Centre, the operating entity of Cambridge Gliding Club Ltd, will electronically notify the Planning Departments of Huntingdonshire District Council and South Cambridgeshire District Council no later 30 days before any proposed event which may exceed the total of 60 aerotows and self-launching sailplanes a day*
(Reason - To minimise noise disturbance for adjoining residents in accordance with Policy SC/10 of the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2018).
- (b) *The airstrip shall only be used for gliding club purposes and at no time shall there be other flying activities on the site.*
(Reason - To minimise noise disturbance for adjoining residents in accordance with Policy SC/10 of the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2018).
- (c) *Only self-launching sailplanes with a noise measurement of a maximum 68dB(A) when measured to ICAO Annex 16 Chapter 10 be permitted to self-launch from the application site.*
(Reason - To minimise noise disturbance for adjoining residents in accordance with Policy SC/10 of the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2018).
- (d) *There shall be no launching by Aerotow or Self Launching Sailplanes before 08:00 hours or after 19:00 hours daily from the application site.*
(Reason - To minimise noise disturbance for adjoining residents in accordance with Policy SC/10 of the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2018).
- (e) *All aircraft to be used for aerotowing, shall not exceed a maximum of 70 dB(A) when measured to ICAO Annex 16 Chapter 6, or 75dB(A) when measured to Chapter 10 unless otherwise agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority*
(Reason - To minimise noise disturbance for adjoining residents in accordance with Policy SC/10 of the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2018).

Background Papers:

The following list contains links to the documents on the Council's website and / or an indication as to where hard copies can be inspected.

- South Cambridgeshire Local Plan (adopted September 2018)
- National Planning Policy Framework
- Planning File Ref:S/2866/18/VC

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