

PUBLIC MEETING

THE FUTURE OF WELLESBOURNE AIRFIELD



More houses for Wellesbourne?

**Hampton Suite
Charlecote Pheasant Hotel 7pm.
Wednesday 23rd October 2019**



THE THREAT RETURNS!

A mixed-use development from the owners and developers who have been trying to shut down Wellesbourne airfield for some years, now appears to have support from Stratford District Council (SDC), despite contradicting their own policy.

In recognition of the strategic importance of Wellesbourne Airfield

from both aviation and economic perspectives, the Council included policies within the Core Strategy, adopted in July 2016, **to retain this facility for the wider benefit of the District.**

AS.9(c)(2): “Retain and support the enhancement of the established flying functions and aviation related facilities at Wellesbourne Airfield”;

CS.26: “General aviation activity within the District will be supported at the existing airfields of Snitterfield and Wellesbourne. Proposals for development associated with aviation activity requiring planning permission will be permitted within the established limits of an existing airfield subject to them not having an unacceptable effect on the environment of adjacent areas and on local residents and businesses.”

The Wellesbourne and Walton Neighbourhood Plan also includes similar provisions, under Policy WW14.

“Existing commercial business premises and employment sites should be safeguarded within Wellesbourne and Walton, including the airfield and local manufacturing and distribution park.

... The retention of flying activities at the Wellesbourne Airfield is supported. The role of the airfield must take account of, and safeguard, the needs of associated business, leisure and training activities and enable them to grow.”

On 12th December 2016 and for the purposes of **“protecting Wellesbourne Airfield as a working airfield”**,

the District Council's Cabinet resolved to enter into negotiations with



the owners of the airfield to agree the purchase of the site. In the event this was not achieved, the Cabinet further resolved to take steps to compulsorily purchase the airfield.

The developers have since entered into an agreement with the council ostensibly to preserve the airfield but in fact they are deliberately undermining it. The council has allowed them to do this.



WELLESBOURNE AIRFIELD MUST BE SAVED TO INSPIRE CURRENT AND FUTURE GENERATIONS INTO THE WORLD OF AVIATION.

On 30th August 2019, SDC and the owners of the airfield jointly signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU), with the stated intention of ensuring "...that aviation will continue at Wellesbourne Airfield whilst plans for the future enhancement of the facility are developed and discussed".



However, the MoU fails to safeguard the policies enshrined in the Core Strategy or the Neighbourhood Development Plan.

It provides the airfield owners with the freedom to run-down the airfield to a bare minimum: an endeavour upon which they have already embarked by seeking to evict

the largest flying club with over 300 active pilot members.

The agreement allows for substantial downgrading of the airfield facilities.

In particular, the MoU anticipates the removal of runway 05/23, which will render the airfield unusable during certain wind conditions. It also provides for a reduction of the length and width of the remaining runway, which will have the effect of excluding certain aircraft types. At least one local business will be unable to land their aircraft on the shorter runway.

This erosion of the airfield's facilities will inevitably lead to fewer visitors reducing revenue for the remaining businesses.

THE VOICE OF THE LOCAL COMMUNITY NEEDS TO BE HEARD!

None of this serves to **retain and support the enhancement of the established flying functions and aviation related facilities** as provided for in the statutory development plan.

It would appear that the airfield is being intentionally run-down by the owners, so as to make it appear unviable. During the legal process undertaken by the tenants the Landowners have already been successful in removing half the businesses from the airfield site. The landlords have previously made their intention to run down the airfield perfectly clear, they have refused to engage with new businesses that want to establish themselves at the airfield, are refusing to offer all the existing tenants leases.

One has to question **why the Council entered into an agreement without consulting the businesses at the airfield or the Parish Council**, when this agreement clearly contradicts the statutory development plan to retain or support the established flying functions or safeguard the businesses at the airfield but, instead, permits the immediate and substantial diminution of the airfield.

RESIDENTS, AIRFIELD BUSINESSES, PARISH COUNCILLORS' AND STRATFORD DISTRICT COUNCIL ARE INVITED.

