

Planning Committee: 11 January 2006

Item Number: 12

Application No: W 05 / 1831

Registration Date: 28/10/05

Town/Parish Council: Baginton
Case Officer: John Beaumont

Expiry Date: 23/12/05

01926 456533 planning_east@warwickdc.gov.uk

COVENTRY AIRPORT, Coventry Road, Baginton, Coventry, CV8 3AZ

Formation of a 6 metre wide vehicular access road to Northern perimeter of site;
creation of car parking areas to serve Hangar 5 and Shackleton House and erection
of security boundary fencing FOR Atlantic Air Transport Ltd

This application is being presented to Committee due to objections from the Parish Council.

SUMMARY OF REPRESENTATIONS

Parish Council : Object. The Parish Council was always given to understand that any internal roadway from this site would provide access to the road infrastructure via the Rowley Road, airport north, entrance. This application does not and is therefore unsatisfactory. Any development at Airport West should take traffic away from the village, not encourage more, which would be the effect of this application; in support of this objection the Parish Council have submitted a site visit report.

Neighbours : None received.

Head of Environmental Health : No objection.

WCC (Planning) : "The relevant policies of the adopted Warwickshire Structure Plan 1996-2011 in the determination of this application include the General Development Policies, Policy GD6, Policy T12. Policy GD3 of the WASP direct most new developments towards towns with more than 8,000 people (at 1991). Since this proposal is located outside one of the main towns identified in the WASP, but related to Coventry Airport, Policy T12 is of particular relevance.

Policy GD6 concerns the Green Belt, within which the site is located and placed the onus on Local Plans in defining boundaries and specifying policies, in accordance with PPG2. As such the District is best placed to determine whether the proposal meets these criteria and as to whether any very special circumstances are required or exist.

However, Policy T12 places the onus on the Local Plan to provide facilities ancillary to the operation of existing commercial aviation activity within the existing airport curtilage, without the removal of land from the Green Belt and as long as it is consistent with regional and national airport strategies. From the plans provided the site appears to be within the airport curtilage and therefore, due to the nature and scale of the proposals, such development is supported by this policy. Therefore, the County Council, as Strategic Planning Authority, has no objection to the proposals."

Highways Agency : "Referring to the construction of 120 car parking spaces in the unsecured (rather than airside) part of Airport South, through discussion with your authority the Highways Agency understands that these new car park spaces are to replace a similar number of spaces that are presently located airside; and that the

change is required because the present method of operation is regarded as a safety and security risk as cars travel close to planes and could even get onto the runway.

Furthermore, the Agency has been advised that the current car park spaces (airside) will become a standing area for planes when the new car park is constructed. The Highways Agency therefore considers that these proposals are unlikely to result in an increase in vehicular trips to and from the airport and subsequently are content that there will be no detrimental traffic impact on the A45/A46 trunk road junction at Tollbar End.

With this in mind the Highways Agency does not wish to object to the proposed development subject to the following condition (directed on the attached TR110 form) being included upon any permission that your authority may wish to issue.

Condition - Upon completion of the new car parking facility the land currently used for car parking on the area known as "airside" shall no longer be used for this purpose."

WCC (Ecology) : No objection.

WCC (Archaeology) : No objection.

Warwickshire Police: "In my opinion as the Policing Development Officer for Coventry Airport, I regard this request as being valid. I base this judgement upon my knowledge of the site and its working practices, together with the regulations and legislation laid down and regulated by the Civil Aviation Authority and Department For Transport, regarding the movement between landside and airside of both vehicles and pedestrians. The Police, and Department For Transport are primarily concerned with the security of the site. The construction of both the road and the boundary security fencing would enhance the security of Coventry Airport within its northern boundary as it would prevent unauthorised access on to the "airside" areas".

RELEVANT POLICIES

- (DW) ENV3 - Development Principles (Warwick District Local Plan 1995)
- (DW) TR9 - Development of Coventry Airport (Warwick District Local Plan 1995)
- (DW) ENV1 - Definition of the Green Belt (Warwick District Local Plan 1995)
- PPG2 (Green Belts)
- DP1 - Layout and Design (Warwick District Local Plan 1996 - 2011 Revised Deposit Version)
- DP2 - Amenity (Warwick District Local Plan 1996 - 2011 Revised Deposit Version).
- DP6 - Access (Warwick District Local Plan 1996 - 2011 Revised Deposit Version)
- DP8 - Parking (Warwick District Local Plan 1996 - 2011 Revised Deposit Version)
- SSP7 - Coventry Airport (Warwick District 1996 - 2011 Revised Deposit Version)
- GD.3 - Overall Development Strategy (Warwickshire Structure Plan 1996-2011).
- GD.6 - Green Belt (Warwickshire Structure Plan 1996-2011).
- (DW) TR12 - Provision of Additional Railway Stations (Warwick District Local Plan 1995)

PLANNING HISTORY

Clearly there are a significant number of planning applications relating to Coventry Airport. It is not considered, however, that any of these are of particular relevance to the consideration of this application.

KEY ISSUES

The Site and its Location

The application relates to land on the northern side of Coventry Airport; the extent of the land in the ownership of the applicants has already been enclosed by a post and wire fence and the application site presently has the appearance of vacant land. An area of hardstanding has been laid in the location of the proposed route of the access road and there is a mound of rubble/tarmac scrapings to the rear of the offices known as Shackleton House. The land to the north of the site has the appearance of a vacant, overgrown area.

Details of the Development

The proposal is to create a new access road from within the existing airport (accessed via the present internal airport roads from the north western, Leamington Road, airport access) which will be some 6m wide and will run tight along the northern boundary to serve a car park for 30 car parking spaces adjacent to Hangar 5 and a car park for 90 spaces adjacent to the offices known as Shackleton House. A new fence is proposed to separate 'airside' and 'landside' activities within the applicants site; this fence would be 2.4m in height and is stated by the applicant to be similar in appearance to other fencing on the perimeter of the airport.

In support of the application, the applicant has stated:-

"It is important to note that the development does not facilitate an expansion of activity within the Air Atlantique Group area as no additional accommodation is created by these works. However, it does allow us to address several areas of serious concern to us and the airport operating company, namely:

(a) it will allow a complete separation of landside and airside areas within the western side of the airport. The current arrangements under which vehicles and personnel (staff, visitors and casual observers) can mix with aircraft are not recommended practice in safety or security terms. Our proposal will remove the risk of unauthorised incursions into airside areas by vehicles and personnel which can pose a threat to aircraft operations and personnel safety.

(b) it will enable the security procedures at the airport to be brought into line with best practice by restricting access to the Air Atlantique airside area to a controlled and manned vehicle and pedestrian access point at Shackleton House."

The applicant has also confirmed that there will be no additional lighting along the access road or to the car parks as the 'ambient' level of light generated by the existing airport operations and buildings is considered sufficient for safety and security purposes. With regard to the views of the Parish Council, the applicant has commented:-

"1. Traffic impact

Contrary to the Parish Council's suggestion, our proposal will not have the effect of encouraging more traffic to pass through Baginton village. In fact, it will be neutral in traffic terms given that the access road and car parking areas will be for our staff and visitors only, all of whom already access our site through Airport West and the Baginton entrance and will continued to do so. The rerouting of traffic within the

airport boundary will have no effect whatsoever on the pattern of use of the public road network or entry point into the airport itself.

2. Routing of internal road

I believe that the Parish Council's reference to being 'always given to understand' that future internal roads would redistribute traffic from Airport West to Rowley Road', is based on a misunderstanding of discussions between Warwick District Council and West Midlands International Airport Limited dating back to March 2003 when the Air Atlantique Group owned and operated Coventry Airport.

The discussions on alternative airport internal road routings were held at that time in the context of identifying issues for possible inclusion within a Section 106 Agreement to be agreed as part of that March 2003 passenger terminal application which was always strenuously opposed by Baginton Parish Council and which has subsequently been rejected.

Since the takeover of Coventry Airport by TUI, Air Atlantique has controlled only a small part of the airport land, as can be seen from the plans attached to the current application. Such land does not extend to the Rowley Road entrance. Any future linking up of internal roads to create an Airport West-Rowley Road link, while not precluded by the current application or opposed by us in principle, is a matter for the current airport operator and not the subject of this application."

The applicant stated in conclusion that the application is 'driven by security and safety needs', to comply with best practice safety and security recommendations of the Department of Transport and Civil Aviation Authority.

Assessment

The land the subject of the present application falls within the Green Belt and is outside the boundary of the area considered by the District Council to be 'operational land' at Coventry Airport. Nevertheless the land is in the ownership of Atlantic Air Transport Ltd. (Air Atlantique) and has been fenced such that it now has the appearance as forming part of the airport.

As new development within the Green Belt, the construction of an access road and car park is not 'appropriate development' within the Green Belt as defined in PPG2, Green Belts; such development should only be permitted when very special circumstances are considered to exist, and the harm to the Green Belt is clearly outweighed by other circumstances.

In this instance, I am mindful that at the present time car parking to serve the operation of Air Atlantique does take place within the 'airside' part of the airport, within the existing 'airside' security zone'; These car parking areas are in a variety of locations where there is clearly potential conflict between the manoeuvring of aircraft and the movement of cars; access to the car parking area also entails the vehicle physically being taken within the 'airside security zone'. I consider that the clear separation of 'airside' and 'landside' activity and car parking which will be achieved by this proposed development does constitute 'very special circumstances' to justify this 'inappropriate development' within the Green Belt. In reaching this conclusion, I am taking into account the limited scale of this proposal, the fact that it is hard against existing buildings and within an existing enclosed area and does not entail the construction of new buildings which might be seen as an unacceptable outward

extension of the airport, reducing the gap between the existing airport buildings and the village of Baginton.

I note that the objections of the Parish Council do not relate to the provision of the car parking itself, but rather to the fact that they consider it should be served by access from the Rowley Road (Airport North) entrance. Whilst this may be a legitimate aspiration, the application must be determined as submitted i.e. on the basis that this is a proposal for substitute car parking for existing 'airside' parking such that traffic flows through Baginton will not be affected. I am aware that the Highways Agency has not raised objection and therefore subject to a planning condition to ensure that the car park will only be used by employees and visitors to the area of the airport operated by Air Atlantique, and that existing 'airside' car parking will no longer take place, I do not consider that a refusal of planning permission on the basis of highway grounds could be sustained.

Finally, inasmuch as the justification for this proposal is solely for the provision of substitute 'landside' car parking, and that the proposal entails development within the Green Belt. I consider it reasonable that a planning condition be imposed to require the application site to be used solely for the parking and manoeuvring of vehicles and for no other purpose whatsoever.

RECOMMENDATION

GRANT, subject to referral to the Secretary of State as a departure from the Development Plan and to the conditions listed below.

CONDITIONS

- 1 The development hereby permitted must be begun not later than the expiration of three years from the date of this permission. **REASON** : To comply with Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, as amended by Section 51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.
- 2 The development hereby permitted shall be carried out strictly in accordance with the details shown on the approved drawing 'Atlantic demise and car parking plans, Sept. 2005, Scale 1:1250 deposited with the District Planning Authority on 28th October 2005 unless first agreed otherwise in writing by the District Planning Authority. **REASON** : For the avoidance of doubt and to secure a satisfactory form of development in accordance with Local Plan Policy ENV3.
- 3 The access road and car parking areas hereby permitted shall not be used for those purposes until such time as the security fence line to separate 'airside' and 'landside' areas, shown on the approved plan (identified in Condition 2 above) has been constructed in accordance with the details contained in the applicant's letter dated 23rd November 2005. This fence shall thereafter be retained in position at all times. **REASON** : This development is justified within the Green Belt to achieve safety and security through the physical separation of existing 'airside' and 'landside' car parking activity at Coventry Airport. It is considered necessary therefore to ensure this construction of the new security fence to achieve this separation and to comply with the requirements of Policy ENV1 of the Warwick District Local Plan 1995).
- 4 The access road and car parking areas hereby permitted shall be used solely for those purposes and by employees and visitors to the area of land edged blue on

the approved plan (identified in Condition 2 above) and for no other purposes and by no other people whatsoever at any time. **REASON** : This development is justified within the Green Belt to achieve safety and security through the physical separation of existing 'airside' and 'landside' car parking activity at Coventry Airport. It is considered necessary therefore to restrict the use of this land to ensure adequate car parking remains available and to comply with the requirements of Policies ENV1 and ENV3 of the Warwick District Local Plan 1995).

- 5 On the first bringing into use of the access road and car parking areas hereby permitted, no car parking (other than of vehicles essential for the operation of airside activities) shall take place within the land edged blue on the approved plan (identified in Condition 2 above) to the airside of the line of the security fence shown on that plan to separate 'airside' and landside activity. **REASON** : This development is justified within the Green Belt to achieve safety and security through the physical separation of existing 'airside' and 'landside' car parking activity at Coventry Airport. It is considered necessary therefore to restrict parking within the 'airside' area to achieve this separation and to comply with the requirements of Policy ENV1 of the Warwick District Local Plan 1995).
- 6 The development shall be screened along its northern boundary by trees, a hedge or shrubs, details of which shall previously have been submitted to and approved by the District Planning Authority, before the development hereby permitted is commenced. Such approved scheme shall be completed, in all respects, not later than the first planting season following the completion of the development hereby permitted. In the event of any failures or loss through damage, the screen planting shall be replaced at the next appropriate season. **REASON** : To protect and enhance the amenities of the area, and to satisfy the requirements of Policy ENV3 of the Warwick District Local Plan.

INFORMATIVES

For the purposes of Article 22 of the Town and Country Planning (General Development Procedure) (England) (Amendment) Order 2003, the following reason(s) for the Council's decision are summarised below:

In the opinion of the District Council very special circumstances are considered to justify this development which does not prejudice the openness and rural character of this Green Belt area.
