

Objection to the new Airfield at Panshanger on behalf of HERTSGREENVALLEY.ORG

Planning Reference link: <http://planning.welhat.gov.uk/plandisp.aspx?recno=86720>

GROUNDINGS FOR OBJECTING

1. We write in respect of the planning application by Mr Haim Merkado REF 6/2018/0158/OUTLINE (see link above) for a new airfield on existing open space, situated adjacent to Homes England and Mariposa Ltd's proposed new housing development in Panshanger, which is located on the outskirts of Welwyn Garden City in Hertfordshire. We represent a group of local residents, HertsGreenValley, (see ANNEX 1)
2. The planning application requests outline permission:
"for the relocation of runway, erection of a clubhouse, hangar, car park and aircraft parking with all matters except access and layout reserved"
3. The application is subject to procedural rules set out in Part A before it can be examined on its merits under the substantive criteria set out in Part B. We believe that the application should be refused for failing to meet or comply procedurally. Even if the Council are prepared to overlook the procedural defects in the application, it should be refused on the grounds that the need for housing on the outskirts of Welwyn Garden City outweighs the need for a private airfield to return to the outskirts of Welwyn Garden City and that the detriment to the local community from an airfield would far exceed its benefits.

PART A – PROCEDURAL ISSUES

4. Legal Framework and policies on which the decision has to be based is complex, as it involves UK planning law, EU Environmental and Aviation law, which has been enacted in to UK law as well as taking into account UK law on nuisance. As an application for a new airfield rather than an amendment to an existing permission, it should be backed up by substantial documentation, which is missing. In the event that it is seen by the Council as an amendment, it should still be dealt with in the same manner as an application for a new airfield due to the substantial changes to the old airfield, including the realignment of the runway, the new access and the construction of new buildings on green belt land which need to be fully investigated.

New Airfield by reason of Abandonment

5. In our view, this application should be treated as an application for a "new" airfield as the northern part of the land included in the Application (shaded green on Map A in Annex 6) was granted agricultural use in 1954 (see planning E/1954/0753 Annex 6) confirming that airfield use on that part of the site was abandoned 64 years ago.
6. The remaining land included in the Application ceased to be used for an airfield in September 2014 in accordance with the wishes of the landowner (Homes England & Mariposa Ltd) to develop the land for housing and recreational use. Since then, all of the aircraft buildings have been demolished to make way for the housing, all maintenance of the grass airstrip has ceased and preliminary excavations necessary for the grant of planning permission for housing have commenced. Taking into account all these developments since 2014, the previous use on this part of the land should be also treated as "abandoned" in planning terms and the new application should have to be justified from scratch (see *Hughes v Secretary of State for the Environment [2000]*).

Relevance of the existing (historic) planning permission

7. Even if the fact that there is an existing (historic) permission on the land in question is a relevant consideration, it is not a consideration that should carry any great weight in view of the substantial changes which are being proposed to the use of the site as a result of (1) the realignment of the runway (2) the new access route (3) the construction of an aircraft hangar and a clubhouse on green belt land which is presently open green space. A large car park is also proposed on the green belt land (4) the prospect of significantly increased nuisance and noise and other pollution from any reopened facility and (5) the increased dangers posed by the shortened and realigned runway. These points are elaborated on below. In any event, the historic permitted use of part of this field as a landing site for private planes at a time when the dangers of leaded AVGAS fuel, and the impact of a flying school, stunt planes and helicopter training on the local community was less well understood, is not a compelling reason to grant a new permission for these activities, **when it has become clear they are not appropriate to the location.**

New Appraisal by reason of new material considerations arising from the realignment of the runway, the new access route, new car parking and new buildings on green belt land.

8. The serious adverse consequences flowing from an airfield (which affect not only the properties mentioned but the local environment generally) are discussed in detail later under the title Substantive Issues in part B of this letter. They are as follows:
- a) persistent invasive noise pollution
 - b) danger of a light aircraft accident
 - c) repeated invasion of privacy
 - d) persistent pervasive air pollution (including toxic lead microparticles)
 - e) economic damage to existing local businesses,

9. These adverse consequences are explained and evidenced in Part B of this letter. Each of these adverse consequences will be exacerbated by granting the new planning permission now sought, as explained below.

Increased detriment to homes, businesses and wild life sites due to new runway alignment and new access

10. The proposed new airfield will have a new runway which differs from the previous runway in that it has been rotated approx. 20 degrees clockwise and shifted North by approx. 50 meters. The new alignment of the runway substantially increases the serious negative impacts of the airfield on the neighbouring properties compared to the impact of the previous alignment, as it will lead to aircraft travelling much closer to homes in the vicinity.
11. The new landing strip will also be very close to newly planned and existing housing on neighbouring sites and will be shorter (and therefore more dangerous) than the previous runway.
12. The properties worst affected by a new alignment of the runway are multiple homes at Bericot Green which will now be about 50m from the new runway, having previously had open green space of approx. 80m wide between them and the runway. There would be a much greater loss of privacy combined with dramatically higher pollution and noise levels. Furthermore, the risk of involvement in an accident significantly increased by the fact they are beside the boundary of the airfield. York Aviation's letter (see Annex 5) in support of the application states:
- "The Transitional surface will extend across land both within the aerodrome and outside of the aerodrome boundary. No fixed objects, whether buildings, trees, masts, aerial, etc can penetrate this surface, otherwise the OLS and hence aerodrome safeguarding will be compromised."*
13. Warrengate Farm will be also be badly affected, not only by the realignment, but the new access which would result in them having to sharing their access with additional road traffic including not only cars and delivery vans, but also fuel tankers carrying highly flammable Avgas.
14. The new alignment also means that 3 homes halfway up Panshanger Lane and the Panshanger Park Forest School, run by Tarmac which is to be located close to those houses on Panshanger Park, would be much closer to the flightpath when the aircraft are at low altitude during their approach or following take-off, so that they too will suffer a worse impact from the risk of an accident, noise, air pollution and loss of privacy than from the previous runway alignment. The same is true for the homes in Birch Green and Hertingfordbury Cowper primary school which is now directly in line with the runway. Similarly, at the same distance but in the opposite direction the homes on north side of the B1000 just after the Moneyhole Lane access, the multiple homes at Archer's Green and Tewin Water will also be worse affected by the new alignment
15. In addition to the blight for the reasons already specified, there could be economic loss to a number of successful businesses near the new flight path due to the realignment of the runway. These would include Mimram Kennels and Tewin Bury Farm Hotel on the B1000, Cole Green Plant Nursery and The Aquatic Warehouse next door, as well as Rochford's Plant Nursery and Cowper Arms Pub & Restaurant in Letty Green. These are all likely to be badly affected due to the new alignment and therefore more likely to suffer adverse economic circumstances. Over 120 Tewin Bury Farm Hotel guests have signed a petition against the proposed airfield (see Annex 3).
16. In front of the TBF hotel is a nature reserve, one of over 300 protected wildlife sites many with SSSI status within a 5-mile radius of the new airfield (see Annex 2). The realignment of the runway puts the River Mimram and the wildlife sites along it at significantly greater risk of pollution.

New Highways Appraisal required to investigate the safety of the new Access

17. The new access is a narrow lane off the B1000, a busy B-road where the speed limit at that point is 60mph. There are several other junctions and a lay-by in the vicinity of the access road which would complicate traffic movements in the area. There is no space to create a safe waiting place for vehicles travelling from the East and wanting to turn into the lane but having to wait for oncoming traffic to pass. Similarly, there is no space to create a splay for vehicles from the West to slow down to safe speed to enter the lane. The sort of roadworks required to make the access safe would probably require something similar to that 500 yards up the road where Hens Lane meets the B1000. (see Annex 7 photos of Hens Lane & Moneyhole Lane Junctions)
18. At present, Moneyhole Lane does not go as far as the proposed site and so would require extensive building work in green belt land to be carried out to extend it to provide the necessary access. It is also quite a steeply inclining road which may pose extra risks which need to be addressed.

Loss of openness on Green Belt Land

19. The application also involves the construction of new buildings on green belt land, which was not the case under the pre-existing permission. The large new clubhouse and even larger aircraft hangar are sited on green belt land close to the boundary of the airfield. There will also have to be a re-fuelling station at least 25 feet from the hangar and a place for de-icing the planes which is not mentioned on the site plan. Both risk spills of chemicals that would contaminate the land and the ground water.
20. Many people who choose to live on the edge of a town do so in order that they have a sense of freedom and can be near an open green space. However, living along the boundary of the airfield means that they would be fenced in by a large boundary fence. Also, the existing footpath may have to be relocated as safety reasons any new airfield would probably need to be properly ring fenced in accordance with CAA guidelines and that would in effect create an impenetrable boundary inaccessible to pedestrians, leaving residents feeling imprisoned.
21. The former airfield site nearby was used by around 20 airplanes, microlites and helicopters. These often need storing in large unsightly hangars. The boundary, as explained above, needs to be secure so rather than the houses overlooking an open green public multi-use space it will be heavily fenced off from public use and populated with unsightly aircraft hangars.

Land sterilisation- the relevance of the fact that the applicant does not own the land

22. The fact that the applicant does not own the land over which an application is made if not, of itself, a reason for refusing a planning application. However, in this case it is relevant to note not only that the land required for the proposed airfield is owned by 3 different owners unconnected to the applicant, but also that all three owners have made it clear that they oppose the airfield and have no intention of selling their land (or in the case of Warrengate Farm) permitting access over their land, to facilitate any development as an airfield. Accordingly, the effect of granting permission will simply be to "sterilise" the use of land which could otherwise be made available for much needed housing and associated facilities in the area (which has been planned for the last 25 years). This would be wrong in principle and is a compelling reason, of itself, for refusing the application.

The emerging plan, and prematurity

23. The Council must deal with the planning application in accordance with section 70(2) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 which provides that:
"In dealing with an application for planning permission... the authority shall regard to the provisions of the development plan, so far as material to the application, and to any other material considerations."
24. A new local plan has been submitted by the Council and is presently subject to examination by an Inspector whose enquiries are at an advanced stage. It is well established that policies in an "emerging local plan" such as exists here may be taken into account especially when it is at an advanced stage.
25. The emerging Local plan contains a new policy directly related to this land (Policy SP18). It presently provides for a strategic allocation for 650 new homes, instead of potentially 750 or more, so that a portion of the land could be used for an airfield. However, the portion of land allocated in the Emerging plan is insufficient to meet CAA regulations for an airfield for the use intended by the applicant and so does not correspond with the much larger area for the airfield shown in this application. In order to accommodate the new airfield, the emerging plan would

have to further substantially reduce the number of homes (far below 650) which could be built by Mariposa and Homes England on their land.

26. Aside from the issue of land sterilisation discussed above, if this application is granted it would also pre-empt the Inspector's decision as to whether the need for housing or the need for an airfield should take precedence in the new Local Plan despite the land having been reserved for housing since 1993 and having been safeguarded for housing as "an Area of Special Restraint" under the 2005 Local Plan. The proposed use of the land for an airfield is incompatible with adjacent use for housing due to the serious adverse effects already mentioned above and explained in detail below. Moreover, it would be incompatible with the hopes for some alternative sporting or leisure facilities that the Community is presently lacking on any remaining land available for recreational use in conjunction with the housing use.

27. Consequently, this application should be refused on the grounds of "prematurity" having regard to the policy guidance in Planning Practice Guidance (2014) as follows:

"arguments that an application is premature are unlikely to justify a refusal of planning permission other than where it is clear that the adverse impacts of granting permission would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, taking the policies in the Framework and any other material considerations into account"
Such circumstances are "likely, but not exclusively to be limited to situations where both

- a) *the development is so substantial, or its cumulative effect would be so significant, that to grant permission would undermine the plan-making process by pre-determining decisions about the scale, location or phasing of new development that are central to an emerging Local Plan or Neighbourhood Planning, and*
- b) *the emerging plan is at an advanced stage but is not yet finally part of the development plan for the area"*
(see Encyclopaedia of Planning Law and Practice P.70.09)"

Local Planning Policy

28. Pending the adoption of a new Local Plan many policies under the 2005 Local Plan were saved. These included "Policies for Rural Areas" which under s15.51 deals with "Noisy Recreational Activities". It states:

"The siting of such uses is very sensitive because of the environmental problems they can create, including damage to the landscape, natural habitats, and noise problems..."

29. The relevant saved policy under the 2005 Local Plan is **Policy RA23 – Motor sports and Other Noisy Recreational Activities** states:

"Planning permission will only be granted for.... other noisy or intrusive recreational activities where all of the following criteria can be met:

- (i) The activity will not harm the amenity of any residential property;*
- (ii) The activity will not prejudice the functioning of any agricultural enterprise;*
- (iii) The activity will not have an adverse effect on the appearance and character of the local rural area including its environmental assets, landscape qualities and historical interest;*
- (iv) The activity will not harm the amenity value of the area for informal recreation*
- (v) The activity will not harm the biodiversity of the area;*
- (vi) It will not generate demand for any new buildings; and*
- (vii) It is in accordance with Policy RA28 New Development using Rural Roads and will not prejudice safety and convenience of road, bridleway and footpath users."*

30. Policy RA23 (Protection of rural areas) applies to this application because the proposed new airfield is in a rural location at the end of a farm track (which would require extending and upgrading) despite being so close to Panshanger and will have a major impact on many neighbouring rural communities (Marden Hill, Tewin, Digswell, Bramfield, Cole Green, Letty Green, Birch Green East End Green and Essendon) in addition to the suburban area of Panshanger.

31. By reason of the danger of a light aircraft accident, persistent invasive noise, repeated invasion of privacy and persistent pervasive air pollution, the impact of which are all dealt with in detail later on in this letter, the application is contrary to RA23 because

- a. It will harm the amenity of hundreds of existing rural residential properties including, but not limited to:
 - i. several rural residences within 200 yds of the proposed airfield at Bericot Green and Warrengate Farm;
 - ii. several rural residences within 600m of the proposed airfield on Panshanger Lane and Archers Green;
 - iii. many more rural residences within 1 mile including the multiple and shared residences at Marden Hill and Tewin Water;
 - iv. many hundreds of rural residences within 2 miles in the villages of Cole Green, Letty Green, Birch Green, Tewin, Bramfield, Digswell, East End Green and Essendon,
 - b. It will harm the amenity of the many 100s of new residential properties in Panshanger immediately adjacent to the other side of the proposed airfield;
 - c. It may prejudice the functioning of arable and livestock agriculture presently carried out on the fields around Money Hole Lane and the B1000;
 - d. It may have an adverse effect on the environment especially the several local wildlife sites within 1 mile of the proposed airfield including Henry Wood and the Mimram valley;
 - e. It will harm the amenity value of the area for informal recreation; and
 - f. It will harm biodiversity in the locality;
32. It further contravenes RA 23 because it involves the demand for new buildings in a rural environment, including a substantial new club house and an even more substantial new aircraft hangar.
33. The new airfield will be in the countryside accessed off a country lane (Money Hole Lane) from the B1000 (between two curves in the road) requiring traffic for the airfield to pass Warrengate Farm and up what is presently a farm track to the ridge of the hill. Consequently, the new airfield on this site would also be contrary to RA23 because it will prejudice the safety of the users of the footpath near Money Hole Lane and road users on the B1000 because the junction between Money Hole Lane and the B1000 is unsuitable for large amounts of traffic due to the curved nature of the B1000 at that point. The interference with the footpath is also contrary to RA25 (Public Rights of Way) which states:

“Planning permission will not be granted for development in the countryside which adversely affects the convenience, safety, setting and amenity of an existing definitive public right of way.”

National policy planning framework

34. Most importantly, the application must be decided in a manner which is consistent with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). NPPF 33 provides that an application for an airfield is subject to the NPPF as well as the UK Aviation Framework. For the reasons explained in detail below regarding the danger, noise, loss of privacy, pollution and loss to our local economy which a new airfield in the proposed location would bring, the grant of this application would be contrary to the following paragraphs of the NPPF:
- a) *NPPF 9 “improving the conditions in which people live, work, travel and take leisure”*
 - b) *NPPF 17 “finding ways to enhance and improve the places in which people live their lives”*
 - c) *NPPF 28 “Supporting a prosperous rural economy” e.g. “...support sustainable rural tourism and leisure developments that benefit businesses in rural areas, communities and visitors, and which respect the character of the countryside”*
 - d) *NPPF 70 “deliver the social, recreational and cultural facilities and services the community needs” and “ensure an integrated approach to considering the location of housing, economic uses and community facilities and services”*
 - e) *NPPF 74 “Existing Open space...and land... should not be built on unless*
 - *An assessment has been undertaken which has clearly shown the open space or land to be surplus to requirements; or*
 - *The loss resulting from the proposed development would be replaced by equivalent or better provision in terms of quality and quantity in a suitable location; or*
 - *The development is for alternative sports and recreational provision, the needs for which clearly outweigh the loss.*

- f) NPPF 109 *“The Planning system should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by:*
- *Protecting and enhancing valued landscapes, geological conservation interests and soils;*
 - *Recognising the wider benefits of ecosystems services;*
 - *Minimising impacts on biodiversity.....contributing to the Government’s commitment to halt the overall decline in biodiversity;*
 - *Preventing...development from contributing to or being put at unacceptable risk from, or being adversely affected by unacceptable levels of soil, air, water or noise pollution*
 - *Remediating and mitigating...contaminated... land..*
- g) NPPF 110 *“In preparing plans to meet the development needs, the aim should be to minimise pollution and other adverse effects on the local and natural environment.”*
- h) NPPF 118 *“... planning should be refused for development resulting in the ...deterioration of irreplaceable habitats including ancient woodland...unless the need for and benefits of the development in that location clearly outweigh the loss.”*
- i) NPPF 120 *“To prevent unacceptable risks of pollution....planning policies and decisions should ensure that new development is appropriate for its location. The effects (including cumulative effects) of pollution on health, natural environment or general amenity...should be taken into account*

35. At the hearing last month, the Inspector considered the question:

“Is the permanent loss of Panshanger airfield contrary to national policy, in particular paragraphs 28, 70 and 74 of the National Planning Policy Framework?”

36. In our view, the permanent loss of an airfield at Panshanger is not contrary to those paras of NPPF. Firstly, the Applicant has provided no business plan for how the airfield would support the local economy as required for support under para 28. Secondly, his evidence that in accordance with para 70 the community needs an airfield in this location is severely undermined by our evidence of the plentiful alternatives within 35 miles. Thirdly, given there is only a minimal need for an airfield in this location (if any), it cannot outweigh the loss of this land for over 650 homes which would justify the application of para 74.
37. We strongly believe that use of the land for the proposed new airfield adjacent to existing and proposed new homes is inappropriate. The appropriate use for this land given its proximity to existing infrastructure would be to provide up to 1000 new homes, a new primary school and new community sports facilities which are desperately needed in the area and would help develop a sense of community in the area as well as boosting the local economy in line with integral approach recommended in **NPPF 70** (see above) and:-

<https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/sajid-javid-to-crack-down-on-nimby-councils-that-refuse-to-build-homes-llfsd6wmm?shareToken=078eb4912a9b7c2c511482b6640adcb8>

Application of EU Directive and the need for an Environment Impact Assessment

38. Furthermore, the existence of previous planning permission for an airfield (which was not subject to EU law) does not exempt the present application from complying with EU Law. Consequently, we believe that an Environmental Impact Assessment would be required to meet the UK and EU legal regulations under the Directive, in particular SI Town & Country Planning (Environmental Impact assessment) Regulations 2017.

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/297106/geho0411btsc-e-e.pdf

UK Aviation law precedence over UK Nuisance Law

39. Finally, the UK Aviation policy on land-use planning states as follows:

- 3.2 That planning policies and decisions should aim to avoid a situation where noise gives rise to significant adverse impacts on health and quality of life as a result of a new development, and to mitigate and reduce to a minimum other adverse impact on health and quality of life arising from noise from the new development

3.21 The NPPF expects local planning policies and decisions to ensure that new development is appropriate for its location and the effects of pollution – including noise – on health, the natural environment or general amenity are taken into account.”

40. This is very important because once an airfield has permission, local residents lose their legal rights to complain about noise nuisance because s79(6) of the Environmental Protection Act 1990 specifically excludes aircraft noise.

PART B – THE ADVERSE CONSEQUENCES OF THE AIRFIELD AND THE LACK OF ANY CORRESPONDING LOCAL BENEFIT

IMPACT OF NOISE POLLUTION & LACK OF PRIVACY NPPF para 9, 17, 109, 115 & 118 AND THE PROPOSED EXPANDED USE OF THE AIRFIELD

41. The noise from a small propeller plane taking off is around 95 decibels and still 88dB when at flyover at 1000ft. These levels of noise severely impact on conversation so that families with gardens adjacent to the airfield would be deprived of their right to a peaceful environment and windows would have to be kept shut to be able to have a conversation (60 dB – half as loud as TV) inside or listen to music/TV (70 dB) etc. Once it gets above that level it can make concentration difficult and interfere with important mental tasks such as learning, reviewing documents, doing maths etc.
42. Noise is a health hazard and seriously impacts on the enjoyment of residential space. The US Federal Aviation Agency says that a maximum day-night average of 65Db is incompatible with residential communities (*see “Noise monitoring” Massport. Retrieved January 2014*). If you experience a noise over 84 dB for long periods of time it may cause permanent deafness called Noise Induced Deafness. Whether NIHL occurs will depend on the noise level (loudness) and overall length of time exposed to it. Damage is possible from 8 hours of exposure onwards (*see www.industrialnoisecontrol.com*)
43. The decibel scale is not linear. As a result, a 90dB sound is twice as loud as 80Db and 80dB is twice as loud as 70dB. OSHA (the Occupational Safety and Health Administration) says that to prevent NIHL in an environment where the average noise level over time is measured over 84dB employees must be offered hearing protection and a hearing test program implemented. The cumulative adverse effects of noise on mental and physical health are well documented – see link below
<http://www.aef.org.uk/uploads/Aircraft-Noise-and-Public-Health-the-evidence-is-loud-and-clear-final-reportONLINE.pdf>
44. In addition to NIHL, elevated noise levels can cause hypertension, ischemic heart disease, annoyance, sleep disturbance, decreased school performance, stimulate aggression and other anti-social behaviour (*see Kryter KD (1994) The Handbook of hearing and the effects of noise; physiology, psychology and public health. Boston Academic Press ISBN0-12-427455-2*)
45. The noise from an aerobatics or stunt planes (which were in the past flown frequently from and above the old airfield) is even greater because of the powerful engine required to do stunts. The noise of a stunt plane would therefore travel further and impinge on even more homes in Panshanger, forcing even more residents to keep their windows shut. There is a European campaign to control the noise of light aircraft especially aerobatics but so far, the European Commission has not acted. (see <http://www.aef.org.uk/downloads/GApullout.pdf> and www.chem.purdue.edu/chemsafety/Training/PPETrain/dblevels.htm)
46. The pilots, their passengers and the airfield employees will wear ear defenders but members of the public in housing hard up against the airfield should not have to do the same. A study comparing the effect of aircraft noise to the effect of alcohol on cognitive performance found that simulated aircraft noise at just 65db had the effect on a person’s ability to recall auditory information as a Blood Alcohol Concentration of 0.10 (*see Molesworth BR, Burgess M, Gunnell B, 2013 Using the effect of alcohol as a comparison to illustrate the detrimental effects of noise on performance Noise & Health 15, 367-373*) This is double the legal BAC limit in many countries, including Australia.

47. Helicopters (which it is also proposed to fly from the proposed new airfield) are much worse still, being louder by up to 105 Db at 100ft (more noise than a jackhammer!) and because pulsating or beating noises tend to be more annoying. The propeller motion of the main rotor blades generates both “blade slap” (technically referred to as Blade Vortex Interaction BVI) resulting from the interaction of the main rotor blade and previously shed tip vortices as well as High-Speed Impulsive noise when moving forwards. This is then combined with the tail-rotor noise at a different frequency which happens to be at the level to which human ears are most sensitive (see aviationweek.com/bac/managing-helicopter-noise).
48. Consequently, the Effective Perceived Noise Level (EPNL) generated by a 6 berth Bell 412HP helicopter is 93.4 EPNdB which is the equivalent of a Boeing 777 taking off. Helicopter training requires a person to do 52 hours of practice take off and landings which means that for 1 person alone to qualify there would be an hour of Boeing 777 noise at the new airfield every weekend of year for the whole of the local community! (See nuisance case www.bailii.org/ew/cases/EWCA/Civ/2017/273.html)
49. Despite the fact that a helicopter has the potential to cause considerable noise and annoyance to neighbours, wildlife and animals, “in many areas of their operation, helicopters are currently under-regulated with inadequate safeguards or consultation for members of the public affected by their operations.” (See *October 2011 Response to Dept of Transport Scoping document by Helicopter Noise Coalition*). The British Helicopter association advises users “always to avoid populated areas”. (See also DEFRA NANR 235 *Research into the Improvement of Management of Helicopter Noise*. See also *London Assembly paper “London in a Spin – A Review of Helicopter noise 2006*)
50. Sport England (App1 SASP, 25/01/18) states: “It is estimated that aircraft movements (a movement being either a take-off or landing) at this site number **approximately 5,500 per year**; the vast majority of these being sports and recreational aviation flights”. Our view is that this is an underestimate. A typical flying lesson involves repeated take-off and landing manoeuvres over an hour-long period and during busy periods with more than one lesson underway with other flyers, our experience is that there could be a landing and take-off as often as every 5 minutes, with the problem particularly bad at weekends, when most flying took place. Even if the overall figure were 5,500, most activity will be at weekends between March and September – precisely when they will cause the most impact on residents trying to socialise and enjoy their free-time in their gardens.
51. Being deterred from going outside and not being able to use your garden or open your windows could be potentially harmful to the residents’ physical and mental wellbeing as well as adversely impacting on children’s individual development if they can’t play and socially interact with other children on the housing estate. Allowing the airfield in the proposed location therefore would also be contrary to **NPPF 8** which states that the planning system has “an important role in facilitating social interaction and creating healthy and inclusive communities.”
52. Moreover, there will be many residents in Panshanger who do nightshift work (e.g. Hospital workers, Tesco and Ocado employees) whose sleep would be disturbed during the daytime by helicopters. According to a report entitled “Noise Management in Mixed-Use Urban Environments” by the NZ Planning institute “Noise has an even more serious effect when it leads to stress-related mental health decline and if the noise occurs during sleep periods then fatigue and disrupted sleep patterns can cause irritability, changes in behaviour and a reduced ability to work or perform tasks”.
53. The use of light aircraft near built up areas is also anti-social because it allows the pilots and their passengers to intrude on private gardens, invading those families’ privacy further, with the consequent adverse effects on mental and physical health.
54. In the circumstances, it is clear that the application should be refused as being contrary to the Government’s overall policy on aviation noise which is “**to limit and where possible reduce the number of people in the UK significantly affected by aircraft noise.**” (see para 3.12 UK Aviation Policy Framework).

IMPACT OF THE RISK POSED BY LIGHT AIR ACCIDENTS AND THE SHORTENING OF THE RUNWAY

55. Last year there were 100 light aircraft accidents (www.gov.uk/government/organisations/air-accidents-investigation-branch) There were also over 200 near-misses (“Airproxes”) (See www.airproxboard.org.uk). The www.pilotweb.aero site reported in February 2018 that not including 6 drone incidents, there were 15 near-

misses (“Airproxes”) of which 8 were assessed as having a definite risk of collision (3 category A and 5 category B). All the category A incidents and 1 of the Category Bs resulted from head-on encounters where the pilots did not effectively see each other, and none had the benefit of electronic conspicuity equipment to assist them in maintaining situational awareness. It concluded by encouraging pilots to “see whether it might be time to invest in something that may well save your life”. (See www.airproxboard.org.uk/home)

56. Light aircraft can be fitted with early warning systems to help prevent crashes, but these are expensive and therefore very few light aircraft are fitted with them despite their importance in times of poor visibility. Aircraft do not go up in bad weather but conditions can change quickly and so aircraft can be forced to land in foggy conditions which would be far from ideal next to a housing development, especially on a grass strip with no lights.
57. According to European Aviation Safety Agency (working paper 18/11/12) reports, the top 5 causes of fatal accidents in light aircraft are;
 - a. Loss of control in visual meteorological conditions
 - b. Controlled flight into terrain
 - c. Low altitude aerobatics or buzzing
 - d. Loss of control in instrument meteorological conditions
 - e. Forced landing due to pilot error (most often running out of fuel)
58. Training inexperienced pilots near an area of residential housing is wholly inappropriate. There are families living at Bericot Green and Warrengate Farm which will be located in a very exposed position near the new proposed airstrip affected every time a plane comes to land or take-off, particularly in rain, windy conditions or when the pilot is facing directly into the sun. Even light rain can affect visibility from inside the aircraft, making it hard to judge the distance to the ground when coming into land (see AAIB 1/2018). It is important to note that most forced landings are caused by running out of fuel, so in those situations the pilot may be tempted to cut the corner or shorten their turn into the airstrip bringing him/her closer than is safe to these family residences (see *GA Roadmap safety doc*).
59. Furthermore, once a pilot has obtained a licence, they only have to do 2 hours a year and 1 annual proficiency test to keep that licence current, so could return almost a year later without any refresher course and fly solo again. Moreover, that pilot could be just 17 years old. However, even experienced pilots should not land for the first time at a new airfield without a having pilot with them in the cockpit who has landed at that strip before. The CAA’s Safety Sense Leaflet 12 titled ‘*Strip Flying*’ contains guidance for pilots who intend to fly to an unfamiliar airstrip. It suggests that the best way for a pilot to understand the constraints of an unfamiliar airstrip is by first visiting in the company of a pilot who has prior experience of operating from there. However, there is no enforcement procedure.
60. Concern for the safe landings of aircraft have also been expressed on CHIRP (a website for the confidential and independent reporting of aircraft incidents) resulting from Airfields charging multiple landing fees when a first approach to land was unsuccessful, making pilots reluctant to pull out and try again in order to avoid a second fee.
61. The dangers identified above have materialised in the past. Since 2010, prior to the closure of the old airfield in 2014 there were at least 2 serious incidents of aircraft crashing off the runway, one of which involved personal injury to a local resident: (see link **below**).
<http://www.whtimes.co.uk/news/loss-of-engine-power-caused-welwyn-garden-city-plane-crash-1-215271>
See also Runway overshoot 30-Jul-2013 and <https://aviation-safety.net/wikibase/wiki.php?id=157871>
62. Low altitude flying, aerobatics and buzzing is another cause of accidents. Families living in and around Panshanger experienced this on a regular basis over their houses when the old airfield near Panshanger was operating. Despite the families ringing the airfield to complain, there was no apology, merely a denial that the pilot had done anything wrong. We believe that personal letters of objection from those who have experienced this behaviour will bear this out.
63. Furthermore, the shorter the runway, the more difficult it is to land. The old airstrip at Panshanger was 875m, but the new proposed new airstrip is due to be only around 700m. In a letter to Mr Merkado from York Aviation (see Annex 5) they confirm the minimum regulatory criteria for such an airstrip should be 799m with an additional 30 m run off at each end. It must also be 18m wide with an additional 30m either side of the centre line, totalling

859m long by 60m wide, which is far more than the site presently allows. It is worth noting that in Australia the minimum airstrip length they are prepared to use for the Flying Doctor service is 1000m.

64. Moreover, many of the alternative airfields listed (ANNEX 4) have runways at different angles to minimise planes having to deal with cross winds on take-off and landing (e.g. Henlow 3 strips, Sandy 2 strips). At Panshanger, the pilots will have no choice but to risk the cross winds or not fly. The narrow strip beside the new housing will leave little room for error in strong cross winds. This is particularly inappropriate given that it is to be used to train new and young pilots.
65. Built-up residential communities also clearly increase the risk of an accident caused by drones which have become popular recently. Increased use of drones has caused an increase in the number of incidents involving drones and aircraft (see Pilot Magazine 1/6/17). These are very popular but how would the airfield police the use of drones from the housing estate?

IMPACT OF AIR POLLUTION WITH HIGH LEAD CONTENT NPPF paras 9, 17, 109, 115 & 118

66. Despite the introduction of an unleaded fuel called UL91 specifically designed for small light aircraft in the UK more than 5 years ago, most light aircraft in the UK and throughout Europe continue to use AVGAS 100LL which has four times more lead (0.56mg) than old four-star petrol (0.15mg) (See EASA Safety Information Bulletin 10/5/12). **As a result, private aircraft now represent the single largest source of lead emissions in the UK.**
67. The World Health Organisation has found that there is no safe level of lead contamination (see www.who.int/mediacentre/factsheets/fs379/en/). Even the smallest amount can cause to damage to human physical and mental development. Lead is a well-documented cumulative neurotoxin which is stored in teeth and bones. It is particularly harmful to children because they are mentally and physically undeveloped, in particular, allowing the lead to adversely affect the development of their neural networks.

WHO link: <http://www.who.int/mediacentre/factsheets/fs379/en/>

68. It is no surprise then that lead fuel for cars was banned 18 years ago in the UK following concerns over the health effects lead in exhaust fumes were causing. All large commercial airlines have been using unleaded fuel for many years but light aircraft have escaped any such regulation.
69. In 2011, a study entitled “Environmental Health Perspectives” by US National Institute of Environmental Health Science (NIEHS) concluded that lead from AVGAS has a significant effect on blood lead levels of children living within 1000m of an airfield where AVGAS is used. For the record there are 5 schools within 1 km of the proposed airfield (Panshanger Primary School, Sir Frederick Osborn Secondary School, Watchlytes Primary School, Springmead Primary School and Swallow Dell Primary School), not including the new primary school Mariposa is expected to build adjacent to the proposed new airfield. **This makes the site wholly inappropriate for an airfield where AVGAS is used.** The younger the children the more at risk they are and all but one of these are primary schools, some with nursery schools attached.
70. This research backed up a 2008 nationwide study by investigators with the US National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration also showed that unlike other aerosols, airborne lead particles spike on weekends, probably because of recreational flights. Gradually, small aircraft’s pollution was becoming more widely recognized.

http://m.huffingtonpost.co.uk/entry/lead-fuel-airplanes_n_5213153

71. In 2016 ThinkProgress a US news website for Policy research and Advocacy, published an article entitled “*The forgotten source of lead that stills spewing into our air*”. In the article, they interviewed a Paediatrician working with children living near a small airfield training pilots. He discovered that 75% of his child patients had elevated blood lead levels and 10-15% suffered with ADHD. His findings echoed the study in 2011 by Marie Miranda, now Dean of the University of Michigan School for Resources and Environment which showed that children living within 500m of an airfield had 4% higher blood lead levels than children living more than 2km away.
72. In the highly regarded Scientific American Journal an article was published entitled “*Does the Continued use of Lead in Aviation Fuel Endanger Public health and the Environment?*” It found that the adverse health effects of repeated exposure to lead included damage to the central nervous system, kidneys and red blood cells as well as

decreased function in the Cardiovascular and immune systems. It reported also that the US National Toxicology Program had concluded that lead and lead compounds “are reasonably anticipated to be human carcinogens”.
<https://www.scientificamerican.com/article/lead-in-aviation-fuel/>

73. In September 2016 a report entitled “*Myths & Realities of Leaded Aviation Fuel*” commissioned by Friends of the Earth was published by the US Centre for Environmental Health (CEH) which recommended that US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) should make an endangerment finding on leaded AVGAS as soon as possible and that then the EPA should work with the US Federal Aviation Agency (FAA) to phase out leaded AVGAS as soon as reasonably possible. As a result, leaded AVGAS is due to be phased out by the end of 2018 throughout the USA. It also recommended that the EPA should evaluate the current extent of lead contamination near airfields including soil and air testing. This is not proposed in the UK.

CEH Report link:

https://www.smgov.net/uploadedFiles/Departments/Airport/News_and_Litigation/Friends%20of%20the%20Earth%20Report%20Regarding%20Lead%20Fuel.pdf

The CEH report found that lead exposure results in lower scores on IQ tests and decreased success at school. Some of these effects were found to be irreversible. In addition, lead was found to cause anxiety and depression in children. They also found a correlation between higher exposure to lead and crime in young adults. (see also BBC report) Once absorbed, lead remains in the body for extremely long periods, so preventing exposure is vital to protecting women’s reproductive health and that of their future babies (see CEH report Executive Summary). Lead in bone is released into the blood during pregnancy and becomes a source of exposure to the developing foetus potentially leading to miscarriage, stillbirth, premature birth, low birth weight and minor malformations (see WHO fact sheet referred to above).

74. Moreover, a recent BBC report (www.bbc.co.uk/news/magazine-27067615) highlighted the correlation between the decline in violent crime and the removal of lead from petrol. It is only possible to see the correlation now because of the time-lag effect (due to the length of time lead remains in the body). Leaded petrol was removed later in the UK than the USA and the crime rate began to fall later. Dr Bernard Gesch believes that the lead could account for as much as 90% of the changing crime rate across the world. Gesch found that “Lead alters the formation of the brain. It reduces grey matter in areas responsible for things such as impulse control and executive functioning – meaning thinking and planning.” In other words, lead poisoning leads to bad decisions. The “lead-crime hypothesis” is now widely accepted. (See Reyes JW, “*Environmental Policy as Social Policy? The impact of Childhood Lead exposure on Crime*” *The BE Journal of Economic analysis & Policy* 7(1), DRUm Kevin (11 Feb 2016)” *Lead: America’s Real Criminal Element. Mother Jones*). The UN Environment Program Executive Director, Achim Steiner argued “that the elimination of leaded petrol is an immense achievement on par with the global elimination of major deadly diseases” (see UN news centre “*Phase-out of leaded petrol brings huge health and costs benefits – UN backed study*” 27/10/11)
75. In addition to lead air pollution aircraft, exhaust fumes from Avgas contain nitrous dioxide, nitrous oxide and nitric oxide. Inhalation of NO species increases the risk of lung cancer (see Hamra GB, Laden F, Cohen AJ, Raaschou-Nielsen O, Brauer M, Loomis D (Nov 2015) “*Lung Cancer and Exposure to Nitrogen Dioxide and Traffic: A systematic Review and Meta-Analysis*” *Environmental Health Perspectives*, 123(11);1107-12) and colorectal cancer (see Turner MC, Krewski d, Diver WR, Pope CA, Burnett RT, Marshall JD, Gapstur SM, (21 Aug 17) “*Ambient Air Pollution and cancer mortality in the Cancer Prevention study II*” *Environmental Health Perspectives* 125(8) 087013)
76. AVGAS exhaust fumes, like most petrol-based fuels, also contain CO and Benzene which causes damage to the bone marrow, leukaemia and associated blood cancers. In cars these pollutants are mostly removed from emissions by a catalytic converter but most planes are not fitted with them. Many pilots seem to know the fuel they are using is polluting but simply seem not to care about it (see pilot blog www.pprune.org/private-flying?290328-carbon-emissions-light-aircraft-2.html).
77. In the UK, a survey conducted by Pilot Magazine in May 2016 to find out why pilots were still not using UL91, 37% of pilots said they had not switched to UL91 because it wasn’t available at their airfield. However, another 37% said it was because at most airfields (see table 3) AV100L is still cheaper than UL91 even though the tax is less. (e.g. FEB 2018 AVGAS100LL £1.80, UL91 £1.92 see www.wycombeairpark.co.uk/wycombe-air-park/facilities/fuel) compared with only 21% saying it was incompatible with their aircraft. The 12p difference becomes significant when you realise some aircraft fuel tanks go up to 800L.

78. Since aircraft engines work particularly hard during take-off, lead emissions are at their highest at that point, so a little less than half of lead emissions from piston-engine aircraft linger near the airfield itself. The rest, just over half, disperses far and wide during the flight, according to the EPA.¹² The potential exists for lead from AVGAS to contaminate water bodies and enter fish tissue and low-flying piston-engine crop dusters may deposit it directly onto food crops or livestock.
79. The fact that just over half the lead emissions dissipate over a wider area means that a new airstrip would not only put at risk individuals living near it but also in the surrounding area. Poor quality air would not only potentially harm all local people but could be particularly debilitating for asthma sufferers and others with more serious health problems. The QE2 hospital in less than 2 miles away and depending on wind direction patients could be adversely affected.
80. Accordingly, allowing an airfield to be operated so close to a hospital, private residences and schools runs contrary to NPPF para 9 which states
- “pursuing sustainable development involves seeking positive improvements in... people’s quality of life”*
81. There are also over 300 important Local wildlife sites (see Annex 2) within just a 5-mile aerial radius of where the proposed airfield would be. Once lead is released into the atmosphere it does not break down but sticks to particles in the soil or floats in the water and once deposited it is readily taken into the tissues of plants and animals. Consequently, there is also real concern regarding the impact on local wildlife and their natural habitats in the area as it could potentially affect not only their physical health but also the habitat on which they depend. Closest is Archers Green (58/003), a nature reserve about 500 meters from the proposed airfield in front of the Tewin Bury Farm Hotel (see www.hertswildlifetrust.org.uk/reserves/tewinbury). It comprises a series of grazing pastures within the narrow floodplain of the River Mimram which have developed on recent alluvial and glacial deposits overlying chalk. The Mimram and adjoining spring-fed watercourses are typical chalk streams supporting rich aquatic and bankside flora, enhanced by stretches of wet Alder (*Alnus Glutinosa*) woodland.
82. There are a range of grassland types from patchily distributed acid grassland in the east, supporting species such as Sheep’s Sorrel (*Rumex Acetosella*) and Common Bent (*Agrostis Capillaris*), grading into more neutral communities with base-rich marsh in the wettest areas. Species present here include Crested Dog’s-tail (*Cynosurus Cristatus*), Sweet Vernal-grass (*Anthoxanthum Odorum*), Meadow Vetchling (*Lathyrus Pratensis*) and Common Sorrel (*Rumex Acetosa*).
83. Wetter marshy grassland supports abundant rushes (*Juncus* spp.), sedges (*Carex* spp.) and species such as Meadowsweet (*Filipendula Ulmaria*), Marsh Marigold (*Caltha Palustris*) and Ragged Robin (*Lychnis Flos-Cuculi*). A number of uncommon species have been recorded including Southern Marsh-orchid (*Dactylorhiza Praetermissa*), Marsh Valerian (*Valeriana Dioica*) and Meadow Saxifrage (*Saxifraga Granulata*). Hedges and scattered trees further enhance the ecological value of the site. Water Voles (*Arvicola Amphibius*) have been recorded along the river. Wildlife Site criteria: Grassland indicators.
84. Also within 1000m are Henry and Birchall woods (58/021). These are ancient semi-natural woodland supporting predominantly Hornbeam (*Carpinus Betulus*) coppice with Pedunculate Oak (*Quercus Robur*) standards and a sparse understorey. Other trees present include much Sycamore (*Acer Pseudoplatanus*) with Ash (*Fraxinus Excelsior*), Field Maple (*Acer Campestre*) and Wild Cherry (*Prunus Avium*) plus coppiced Sweet Chestnut (*Castanea Sativa*) and planted Scots Pine (*Pinus Sylvestris*). The ground flora is quite sparse but support ancient woodland indicators, mainly Bluebell (*Hyacinthoides Non-Scripta*) with occasional Wood Anemone (*Anemone Nemorosa*) and Dog’s Mercury (*Mercurialis Perennis*). Wildlife site criteria: Ancient Woodland Inventory site; woodland indicators.
85. All of these could potentially be seriously affected by the air pollution generally and the lead poisoning, in particular, the Mimram River, one of only c.200 chalk bed rivers in the world. This special habitat could be potentially contaminated, endangering those species which depend on the chalk river. A fishing club operates along the River Mimram in Panshanger Park. Panshanger Park is Grade I listed and is home to one of England’s oldest oak trees - the famous 500 year-old Panshanger Great Oak.

IMPACT ON EXISTING LOCAL BUSINESSES NPPF paras 28 & 70

86. Many successful businesses near Panshanger depend on their customers enjoying fresh open-air spaces and the peace and quiet of the countryside (see Annex 3) For example, Panshanger Golf Club (less than 500 yards from the proposed site) and Mill Green Golf Club (less than 2 miles). Both have memberships in excess of 500 and employ in excess of 50 staff in total.
87. Tewin Bury Farm hotel is a popular wedding and conference venue by reason of its idyllic location in the Mimram Valley, and guest would therefore be adversely impacted by overflying light aircraft.
88. There is also a successful Mimram Kennels business, employing 6 people, on the Lower Hertford Rd. They want a peaceful relaxing environment for their pets at a time when they may be more stressed than usual because their owners are absent. The noise and air pollution could deter dog owners from continuing to use this business.
89. There are sheep and horses in the fields around Panshanger as well as agricultural crops which could all be adversely affected by the increased air pollution. Similarly, those who sell outdoor plants like Cole Green Nursery (employs 12) and Rochfords (employs 16) risk their plants being contaminated by lead air pollution. Other businesses could also suffer such as Riding stables in the area like Tewin Hill and Wild Hill Livery yard. Wild Hill employs 8 staff and keeps around 80 horses. Tewin Hill employs 12 staff and looks after over 40 horses.
90. It is important to remember that horse riding is risky at the best of times, so risk is added by microlights or other aircraft potentially flying over at any time. This could deter people from learning to ride or keeping their horses in these stables, to the severe detriment of those businesses. Tewin Hill Stables also runs a busy café open all day offering breakfast and lunch where all are welcome including cyclists and walkers etc.
91. This café and many of the local cafes and restaurants rely on their quiet peaceful countryside location to attract customers. These lovely local eateries where members of the public can eat al fresco in rural locations near Panshanger and where cyclists and ramblers can meet include the café restaurant at Tewin Bury Farm, Tewin Tea rooms at Tewin Hill stables, The Grandison at Bramfield, The Cowper Arms in Letty Green, The White Horse in Hertingfordbury, The Rose and Crown in Tewin and The Plume of Feathers also in Tewin as well as cafes at Panshanger GC and Mill Green GC. They could all be adversely impacted by noisy aircraft flying overhead and concern over the area being contaminated by the air pollution.
92. Consequently, in addition to the potentially serious economic loss to active local businesses, the downturn or eventual failure of any of these businesses by reason of the airfield could have a potentially damaging effect on the social and community feeling around the Panshanger area, as these are where the locals currently meet and interact on a regular basis in the community whereas any additional economic and social impact from a new small airfield with a cafe would be minimal.

LIMITED SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC BENEFIT OF A NEW AIRFIELD & CAFE

93. A new airfield would bring negligible economic benefits, given that its attractions are limited solely to those interested in aircraft and does not require much manpower to maintain. Any social and economic gain from a new airfield and café is likely to be very limited due to the fact that most people visiting would-be new and existing pilots and their friends and families, very few of whom are likely to be from Panshanger or other suburbs of Welwyn Garden City. Contrary to the core planning principle NPPF para 17, a new airfield would only enhance and improve the lives of those very few people visiting it temporarily, whilst adversely affecting the lives of a great many living permanently in Panshanger.
94. Furthermore, although styled in marketing materials as a “community” airfield, **it will not be open to the public.** Only members are likely to be granted open access (see www.caa.co.uk – preventing runway incursions at small aerodromes). The CAA states that in relation to the airfield “the boundary is secure and access is controlled...passengers should be escorted and supervised at all times whilst on the aerodrome”. Consequently, members of the public would have to be accompanied by a member at all times. Members of the public would presumably be able to join the Airfield club by paying an annual membership fee. However, the previous club was run by the North London Flying School. (now based at Elstree) and their annual membership fee to join is presently £120 (see www.flighttraininglondon.co.uk).

95. The café at the former airfield at Panshanger was not open to the public. A new public café provided by Mariposa beside a new sports park would be much better than a members' cafe at the airfield as it would encourage parents, friends and relatives to come and support those using the sports facilities, once more engendering a greater sense of community.
96. A new airfield could operate with very few full-time staff, if any, since many jobs can be done by part time or volunteer staff. The estimate by Mr Merkado of 30 staff bears no resemblance to how the former aerodrome operated unless he is including owner-pilots who teach others in which case this is not actually creating any new employment at all but merely relocating those jobs from other nearby airfields.
97. A new airfield might enhance the individual development of those few who can afford the lessons or to own a share in an aircraft but for the many reasons already outlined above, the presence of a new airfield would be to the potentially serious detriment of the physical wellbeing or mental wellbeing of those living in the community. Moreover, those who can afford to fly are also likely to have the means to drive to one of more than 35 other small airfields within 35 miles radius of Panshanger including a specialist aerobatics airfield near Sandy which are located away from residential housing. (See Annex 4).
98. Many of these local airfields have cafes and museums as well as offering flying lessons and flights on safer, longer runways. 80% of users of the old airfield were not local so could easily use one of the other many airfields listed in Annex 4. Moreover, NLFS is one of 42 flying schools listed on the website www.toprankflyingschools.co.uk.
99. Sport England has supported the application for a new private airfield despite the fact that it runs counter to numerous principles under its new core strategy which include;
- investing more in children and young people from the age of 5;
 - focussing more money and resources on tackling inactivity;
 - helping the sector to be more welcoming and inclusive especially to those groups under-represented in sport;
100. If Sport England were to withdraw its support for a new airfield and instead back more housing and more sports facilities, Welwyn Garden City might benefit from a new indoor pool and in doing so Sport England would instead be meeting its core strategic principles of:
- investing in children;
 - tackling inactivity and;
 - welcoming those groups under-represented in sport since swimming does not require any special hand-eye co-ordination so is not limited to "sporty" types and can be done across all age groups with minimal risk of injury. It can be done as part of a team or individually as a hobby or competitively.
101. Those backing the planning application have also tried to rely on the fact that it will have a positive effect on Education by reason of their tie-up with the Mechanical Engineering Dept at the University of Hertfordshire. However, their relationship is with a superior facility at Elstree which is 16 mins drive away from the UH and the facilities are far more extensive than they would be at the new location (including on site fire rescue team). At Elstree they benefit from unrestricted 24 hr operations.
102. Although hangars and open parking space for planes at Elstree may presently be fully used, there is clearly spare capacity elsewhere and always some amount of turnover. It is also interesting to note that Sport England states on p2 of its submission for SASP that around 80% of users of the former airfield were not from the local catchment area.
103. There also appear to be other more suitable sites for a new airfield away from built up areas within 10 miles of Panshanger. For example, South West of North Mymms near Redwell Wood, between the A1(M) to the East and the M25 to the South. There is no densely populated area within 1 mile and its close to the de Havilland Air museum in Shenley. No other more suitable alternative sites seem to have been explored by the Applicant. This area could offer multiple landing strips each much longer than the 700m proposed at the new site which makes landing and take-off apparently more difficult and unsuitable for some aircraft.
104. A new airfield in the proposed location is not required when viewed as part of the national overall network of small airfield and aerodromes due to many alternatives nearby - see comments in a recent Pilot blog responding to a request for alternative airfields to Panshanger those responding listed lots of the airfields shown in the list in Annex 4 and was summed up by one experienced pilot from the area who said "**conclusion – there are lots**

of places....” (see www.pprune.org/archive/index.php/t-543432.html). See the North Weald Flying Group which confirms “**there are in fact a good number of airfields in and around the narrow strip of airspace that we know as “the Luton-Stansted Gap”**”. (see www.northwealdflyinggroup.co.uk/the-luton-stansted-gap/?y=2106).

105. Since Panshanger ceased to operate in September 2014, the NPPF paras 28, 33, 70 and 74 which apply only to existing sports facilities and businesses **do not apply** and for the same reasons **neither do the safeguarding principles under the UK Aviation Policy FW** (see para 1.91 “Where a planning application is made that is likely to have an impact on existing aerodrome’s operations, the economic benefit of the aerodrome and its value to the overall aerodrome network as well as benefits of the development will be considered as part of the application process. However, these benefits will be balanced against all other considerations.”

SOCIAL & ECONOMIC IMPACT OF AN ALTERNATIVE USE FOR THE SITE FOR MORE HOUSING & SPORTS FACILITIES (EG ASTRO PITCHES & AN INDOOR POOL)

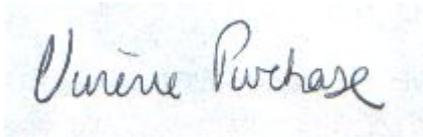
106. The importance of this land as an area for new homes is underlined by the fact it was first identified as suitable in 1993 and reserved as an Area of Special Restraint under the Local plan in 2005. A new café alongside a new sports centre park would bring far more economic and social benefits (cf Hartham Sports Centre in Hertford) for those new homes and those already existing nearby rather than one at an airfield. There would be a substantial benefit to the community if there were a new sports park with multi-use astro pitches for the 2000 new residents expected and existing local residents. Although expensive, the commercial profit made by Mariposa on a new development at around 650-750 houses worth between £400-500,000 each (and built for substantially less) could potentially make even a new indoor swimming pool feasible.

SUMMARY

107. The proposed location for a new airfield is wholly inappropriate because of the widespread adverse social, economic and environmental impacts of an airfield immediately adjacent to new housing in Panshanger on the outskirts of a densely populated town, which would significantly and demonstrably outweigh any small social and economic benefits it might bring when assessed in accordance with the NPPF. The fundamental over-arching concern for the welfare and safety of the surrounding community should override all other considerations. Individual Councillors could be held accountable for any accident resulting from the grant of such permission.
108. The provision of land for a new airfield comes at the cost of 100 houses (reduced from 750 to 650) when those houses are badly needed and on land which had been earmarked for housing since 1993. Along with the loss of the extra housing comes the loss of extra CIL requirements which would otherwise have benefitted the community far more than a private airfield.
109. The proposed airfield could, in fact, jeopardise the delivery of the Strategic Allocation of the remaining 650 houses as we ask who would want to buy a new family home close to an operational airfield? The noise intrusion and general disturbance adversely impacts on the residential amenity of the adjacent local community and the invasion of privacy.
110. The proposed new alignment of the airfield is a change to the established planning approval and this in turn is inappropriate for numerous reasons explained below.
111. Consequently, granting this planning application would also contravene the following NPPF core planning principles:
- a) on the transition to a low carbon future by increasing air pollution (by reason of the use of AVGAS)
 - b) contributing to conserving and enhancing the natural environment and reducing pollution
 - c) promoting mixed use of the land – safety concerns would mean residents cannot share or access the open space so unlike most open green spaces this is a single use only space and no other activities like dog walking, kite flying, cycling and football could take place etc)
 - d) for improving health, social and cultural wellbeing FOR ALL (not just a few existing and would-be pilots) - there is no demonstrable local need for an airfield given the many alternatives close by
 - e) threatening existing prosperous businesses that depend on a quiet peaceful rural environment for success
 - f) threatening sustainable rural tourism (e.g. Tewin Bury Hotel) and other leisure facilities (e.g. Panshanger and Mill Green GCs)

112. Given the significance of each of the reasons explained in this letter for refusal and the absence of any overriding health, social or economic benefits and in terms of safety, the adherence to a precautionary principle, this planning application should be refused. Fundamentally, this is not an appropriate site in land use planning terms on which to locate an airfield.

Yours faithfully,



Vivienne Purchase on behalf of HertsGreenValley

LIST OF ANNEXES

1. LIST OF HERTSGREENVALLEY SUPPORTERS (as at March 2018)
2. LIST OF OVER 300 LOCAL WILDLIFE SITES POTENTIALLY AFFECTED BY NOISE & AIR POLLUTION
3. LOCAL BUSINESSES (INCLUDING ALTERNATIVE RURAL CAFES) POTENTIALLY AFFECTED BY NOISE & AIR POLLUTION
4. LIST OF 47 ALTERNATIVE AIRFIELDS WITHIN 35 MILES OF PANSHANGER
5. YORK AVIATION LETTER AND MAP SHOWING HOMES AFFECTED BY REALIGNMENT & NEW ACCESS
6. PLANNING PERMISSION FOR AGRICULTURAL USE OF NORTHERN PART OF AIRFIELD
7. PHOTOS OF HERNS LANE/B1000 & MONEYHOLE LANE/B1000 JUNCTIONS

ANNEX 1 – LIST OF HERTS GREEN VALLEY ORG SUPPORTERS

Name	Postcode
Stelio Stefanou	AL6 0AA
Rod Leggetter	AL6 0AA
Jan Leggetter	AL6 0AA
John Brook	AL6 0AA
Grant Castle	AL6 0AA
Paul Crotty	AL6 0AA
Di Crotty	AL6 0AA
Vivienne Purchase	AL6 0AA
Rob Hay	AL6 0AA
Mike and Viv Pilbeam	AL6 0AB
Ivor Williams	AL6 0JB
Vaughan Williams	AL7 2ED
Michael Tennet	SG14 2NA
Jess Tennet	SG14 2NA
Mike Horsman	AL6 0LB
David Howson	AL6 0LB
Todd Canton	AL6 0LB



- PETITION -



Tewin Bury Farm Hotel, a 4 Star Hotel set in the beautiful Hertfordshire Countryside.
 Campaigners are urging people to sign a petition and bring back Pangshanger Aerodrome, where he fly over pass will be directly above Tewin Bury Farm!!
 Please join us in signing our petition **AGAINST** this proposal...

We want to **REMAIN** a quiet countryside retreat, we **DO NOT** want noise pollution and disruption, **WE WANT** to continue to provide the best experience for all our guests!!

Name	Address	Signature	Email
Jean Carter	21 Lower Green, Tewin, MK6 0LR	<i>Jean Carter</i>	jeancarter79@gmail.com
John T. Carran	"	<i>John T. Carran</i>	tblcarran79@gmail.com
Lou Harris	19 Downfield Lane, Lippitt	<i>Lou Harris</i>	louharris@orange.com
Fern Nathan	3 Green Linnworth Rd, A2910	<i>Fern Nathan</i>	fern.nathan@hotmail.com
Jane Harris	19 Downfield Lane, Lippitt	<i>Jane Harris</i>	jane-harris@hotmail.co.uk
Marion Jones	2, mixed state 10, west street	<i>Marion Jones</i>	marion_mj@scs.com
Samantha Beaman	38 Parkway, WGC, ACP6110	<i>Samantha Beaman</i>	samanthabeaman@gmail.com
DAVID DUANE	53 Elizabethway, Mangotsfield	<i>David Duane</i>	david.duane@btinternet.com
A. BULLOCK	Hatwood Close, TELLS	<i>A. Bullock</i>	
C. Dewey	30 Bentley Way, Woodford, Essex, IG8 0SE	<i>C. Dewey</i>	30bentley20@ms.com
Monica	Boxchild, Sittingbourne	<i>Monica</i>	
P. Collins	21 Lower Green	<i>P. Collins</i>	P.2.collins@bt.com
P. Collins	"	<i>P. Collins</i>	
Alfred	14 Goddard Way	<i>Alfred</i>	



- PETITION -



Tewin Bury Farm Hotel, a 4 Star Hotel set in the beautiful Hertfordshire Countryside.
 Campaigners are urging people to sign a petition and bring back Pangshanger Aerodrome, where he fly over pass will be directly above Tewin Bury Farm!!
 Please join us in signing our petition **AGAINST** this proposal...

We want to **REMAIN** a quiet countryside retreat, we **DO NOT** want noise pollution and disruption, **WE WANT** to continue to provide the best experience for all our guests!!

Name	Address	Signature	Email
Laura Palfrey	9 Moorlands, WGC, AL7 4RN	<i>Laura Palfrey</i>	laura.palfrey@btinternet.com
Steph Eason	3 St John Court, Lady Margaret Gardens, Ware, Herts, SG12 7JL	<i>Steph Eason</i>	steph.eason@btinternet.com
Karen Hendon	47 Henham Place, AVO 0DD	<i>Karen Hendon</i>	khendon@outlook.com
DIANNE YORDAN	101 HORTIC HOUSE, WILKINS ROAD, HENGL, HERTS	<i>Dianne Jordan</i>	djordani@yusal.com
Charlotte Craddock	58 Sealdon Ave	<i>Charlotte Craddock</i>	chocallyy@hotmail.co.uk
John Craddock	"	<i>John Craddock</i>	
Wendy Craddock	502, Transyee Road, Ware, SG12 0BX	<i>Wendy Craddock</i>	wendy.craddock@tiscali.co.uk
John Craddock	Littonside Cottage, Sittingbourne, G8 6NR	<i>John Craddock</i>	johncraddock@bt.com
Tom Ellis	Castle Gate House - ME1 1BQ	<i>Tom Ellis</i>	tenjeb43@gmail.com
KEVIN CLAPTON	34 Curton Rd, LONDON	<i>Kevin Clapton</i>	kevinclapton@btinternet.com
Annabel Chilton	"	<i>Annabel Chilton</i>	annabelchilton@btinternet.com
Barbara	138 Tibbed Avenue, Sharnbrook, Beds	<i>Barbara</i>	barbarac@bt.com
Brillie-mai Kingdon	4 Boresea House, Berkhamstead	<i>Brillie-mai Kingdon</i>	brillie-mai@bt.com
Jan Dean	27a Bells Lane, WITSOE	<i>Jan Dean</i>	jan@bt.com
Pauline	4, SLOW HANS CLOSE, AL2	<i>Pauline</i>	

2. **Panshanger GC** – Also hosts weddings and private parties as well as golf activities employing on average 20 full and part time staff.
3. **Mill Green GC** – Also hosts weddings and private parties as well as golf activities employing around 30 full and part time staff.
4. **Mimram Kennels** – caring for dogs whilst owners away employing 6 full and part time staff.
5. **Cole Green Plant Nursery Cole Green**, employing about 12 full and part time staff.
6. **Aquatic Warehouse**, Cole Green
7. **Rochfords Plant nursery, Letty Green**, employing 16 full and part time staff.
8. **Tewin Hill stables and Café** employing 8 full and part time staff (80 horses)
9. **Wild Hill Stables** employing approx. 12 full and part time staff (40 horses).
10. **The Cowper Arms** Letty Green employing on average about 30 full and part time staff.
11. **The Grandison** Restaurant Bramfield employing about 20 full and part time staff.
12. **The Rose and Crown** Tewin employing 4 full and part time staff.
13. **The Plume of Feathers** Tewin employing on average 30 full and part time staff.

Total number of employees of businesses listed above is approximately 278

ANNEX 4 - LIST OF 47 ALTERNATIVE SMALL AIRFIELDS WITHIN 35 MILES OF PANSHANGER

1. **High Cross Airfield**, North Drive, High Cross Ware SG11 1AR (9 miles)
2. **Rush Green Airfield** London Road, Rush Green, Hitchin SG4 7PQ (10 miles)
3. **Coleman Green Airfield** Plaistows Farm, Tower Hill Lane St Albans AL4 9BH (10 miles)
4. **Benington Airfield** Botts Farm, Benington SG2 7LA (11 miles). Grass runway.
5. **London Colney Airfield & De Havilland Aircraft Museum**, Shenley, London Colney AL2 1 BU (12 miles)
6. **Graveley Airfield** Church Lane Hitchin SG4 7BN (13 miles)
7. **Hunsdon Airfield**, Eastwick, Ware SG12 8NS (13 miles). (Limited flying) Used by micro-lites. Grass runway.
8. **Cottered Airfield** Cottered Buntingford SG9 9PU (16 miles)
9. **Baldock Airfield, Warren** Lane Clothall Baldock SG7 6RR (17 miles)
10. **London Elstree Aerodrome & Museum**, Hogg Lane, Borehamwood WD6 3AR (18 miles) Used by all light aircraft including helicopters and offer storage hangars. Various Asphalt and grass runways.
11. **Radwell Airfield** Radwell Baldock (18 miles)
12. **North Weald Airfield**, Merlin Way, North Weald CM16 6HR (19 miles) Busy airfield with over 20,000 movements per annum and between 300-500 daily. Café and museum on site Private Fire rescue team also on site. Listed status due to historic connections with WWII. Offers UL91 & AVGAS.
13. **Abbots Hill Farm Airfield, Bunkers Lane, Hemel Hempstead HP3 8RR** (19 miles) (grass strip)
14. **RAF Henlow Airfield** Henlow camp, Hitchin road, Henlow SG16 6DN (19 miles) 3 Runways for easy land as less cross wind issues etc. Additional RAF security.
15. **Newnham Airfield** Ashwell road, Newnham Baldock SG7 5JX (19 miles)
16. **Meppershall Airfield Campton Road Shefford SG17 5NN (22 miles)**
17. **Sandon Airfield** Sandon Hertfordshire SG9 (22 miles)
18. **Matching Airfield** Ongar CM5 0JR (22 miles)
19. **Takeley Street Farm** Takeley CM22 6QU (helicopters only)
20. **Willingale Airfield** Fyfield Grange Ongar CM5 0FE (25 miles)
21. **Fyfield/Willingale Airfield** Cannons lane Fyfield CM5 0SF (28 miles) Fyfield Flying Club
22. **Nuthampstead Airfield** Nuthampstead SG8 8LS (24 miles)
23. **Stapleford Aerodrome** Stapleford Tawney, Romford RM4 1SJ (25 miles) Fleet of over 40 charter aircraft on site. Flying instruction school. Part asphalt/part
24. **Dunstable Downs Airfield** Tring Rd Dunstable LU6 2JP (25 miles) Home of London Gliding Club
25. **Hitchin Airfield** Tye Green Road Bishops Stortford CM22 6EA (25 miles)
26. **Denham Aerodrome**, Denham UB9 5DF (26 miles). Fixed wing and helicopters. Restaurant and café grass
27. **Navestock** Jenkins farm Stapleford Abbots RM4 1HL (27 miles)
28. **Old Warden Aerodrome & Shuttleworth Collection**, Hill Lane, Biggleswade SG18 9EP (27 miles) Home of the Shuttleworth Collection of 58 vintage planes. World renowned aeronautical and automotive museum.
29. **High Easter Airfield** Easterbury Farm Slough road Chelmsford CM1 4FR (27 miles)
30. **Denham Aerodrome** Hangar Rd Denham UB9 5DN (28 miles)
31. **RAF Northolt** West End Rd, Ruislip HA4 6HG (28 miles) Military aircraft – limited private access
32. **Fowlmere Aerodrome** Fowlmere Royston SG8 7SH (30 miles)

33. **Audley End Airfield** Wenden Rd Saffron Walden CB11 4HD (30 miles)
34. **Fryerning Airfield** Hardings Farm Hardings Lane Fryerning CM4 0HZ (31 miles)
35. **Duxford Airfield and Imperial War Museum**, Duxford Cambridge CB22 4 QR (32 miles)
36. **Top farm Airfield**, Little Gransden, Royston SG8 0EH (32 miles) Grass runway.
37. **Sandy/Little Gransden Airfield** Fuller's Hill Farm, Sandy SG19 3BP EGMJ (32 miles) (Aerobatic specialists)
38. **Napps Field Airfield**, Brocks farm, Ingatestone Road, Stock CM4 9PA (32 miles)
39. **Noak Hill Airfield** Chequers Rd Brentwood CM14 5AY (32 miles)
40. **Holmbeck Farm Airfield**, Soulbury Rd, Leighton Buzzard LU70JW (35 miles) Grass landing strip with clubhouse. Storage hangars available.
41. **Damyns Hall Aerodrome**, Aveley Rd, Upminster café and clubhouse (35 miles)
42. **West Horndon Airfield** Barnards Farm West Horndon CM13 3LX (offers UL91 & AVGAS) (36 miles)
43. **Gerpins Farm** Gerpins Lane Upminster RM14 2XR (37 miles)
44. **Little Burstead Airfield** Chase Farm Botney Hill Rd, Little Burstead, Billericay CM12 9SJ (37 miles)
45. **Rayne Airfield** Rayne Hall Farm Braintree CM77 6BT (38 miles)
46. **Laindon Airfield** Bensons Farm Barleylands Rd Basildon SS15 4BG (38 miles) Thurrock Kings Farm Bulphan

ANNEX 5 – LETTER FROM YORK AVIATION TO MR MERKADO REGARDING SIZE OF RUNWAY REQUIRED
(attached)

ANNEX 6 – PLANNING PERMISSION FOR AGRICULTURAL USE OF NORTHERN PART OF AIRFIELD
E/1954/0753 (attached)

ANNEX 7 – PHOTOS OF HERNS LANE/B1000 & MONEYHOLE LANE/B1000 JUNCTIONS (below)



