

Headcorn Aerodrome Consultative Committee
Tuesday 20th June 2017

Present: Jamie Freeman – Chairman.
Brian Bristow – Smarden Parish Council
John Perry – Staplehurst Parish Council
Lyn Selby – Headcorn Parish Council
Gerald Hodges – Thurston Helicopters Ltd
James Tuke – Thurston Helicopters Ltd
Jane Hopkins – Skydive Headcorn Ltd
Ben Perkins – Aero Legends Ltd
Sue Line – Secretary

1 Apologies for Absence

Martin Round – Maidstone Borough Council
Terry Hodges - Private Aircraft Owner/Insurance
John Mather – Headcorn Parish Council
Alan Marsh – Ashford Borough Council
David Parker – Headcorn Parachute Club
Geraldine Dyer – Ashford Borough Council
Lester Gosbee – Frittenden Parish Council

2 Minutes of Previous Meeting.

The Committee read through the Minutes of the previous meeting.

3 Matters arising from the Minutes

Lyn Selby asked if the BBMF aircraft would be based at Headcorn all the time. JPAF indicated that the RAF complied with their own regulations and the CAA required them to comply with theirs, so the RAF said they would just do fly-pasts, with the exception of the Red Arrows who would be able to fly displays with a Flight Display Director on the ground. Brian Bristow asked about the Heritage Museum and Jamie Freeman said that now we have Aero Legends here we need to put another hangar to house the Spitfires so that transit flights are not involved. Jamie Freeman confirmed that the plan was for the new Heritage Hangar to be a Working Transport Museum as well as customer reception for Aero Legends. This would also be a matter of safety for customers.

4 Planning & Events.

Jamie Freeman had asked Adam Reynolds from the Planning Department at Maidstone Borough Council if he could attend the meeting but the invitation had been made at short notice and Adam Reynolds was not able to attend. However, there had been an exchange of emails whereby Adam Reynolds indicated that Headcorn Parish Council understood that the hangar under discussion would be significantly larger than the existing hangar and Jamie was able to confirm to Adam Reynolds the exact size, which was 30m wide by 40 m long, and was in fact significantly smaller.

Ben Perkins explained that during the winter months it would be possible to give tours of the aircraft and to offer “Sit in a Spitfire”. He explained that the transit costs at the moment were of the order of a quarter of a million pounds. This meant that when the aircraft were here Aero Legends Ltd had to fit in as many flights as possible to cover the transit costs. With aircraft based at the aerodrome there would be potentially fewer flights and less pressure to cover the costs and fewer issues with the weather. Gerald Hodges agreed this would mean fewer flights.

Lyn Selby had been asked by the Planning Committee to find out where the flights went, and Ben Perkins said they went towards Dover. Lyn Selby understood that essentially they would be landing and taking off. Ben Perkins felt that this was also bringing business to the village. Brian Bristow asked about the static display and cost and Ben Perkins indicated that visiting the aerodrome was free as there was no charge for entry to the field. The “Sit in a Spitfire” was currently sold at £79. The Aero Legends website explained all about the training aircraft, Tiger Moths, the Harvard, the 5 aircraft which Aero Legends currently ferry in, and the de Havilland Dove. Aero Legends currently operated 3 Spitfires. JPAF explained that the De Haviland Dove is the last one of its kind able to fly passengers. It currently returns to Lydd or Duxford and sometimes Sywell. The aircraft were currently maintained at Duxford, and the engineers would be able to come to Headcorn for much of the maintenance.

Basing aircraft at Headcorn would require a secure hangar. The aircraft were expensive and JPAF suggested a site visit.

Jamie Freeman took the Committee on a brief tour of the aerodrome: They were shown the Scramble Hut (Dispersal Hut) and briefly discussed its uses. The de Havilland Dove was on site and this is used for Fly Alongside with the Spitfire. The Committee were then walked through the main storage hangar to the site of the potential new hangar which was the subject of the most recent application. Jamie Freeman measured out the size of the hangar exactly, using a measuring wheel, so that the Committee could see the size (40m x 30m) and re-confirmed that this hangar would initially be used for storage of mainly the Aero Legends Spitfires and Tiger Moths, and when the Heritage Hangar had been approved, they would move over to that hangar and the 40m x 30m hangar would revert to regular aircraft storage. Brian Bristow asked a question about the shape of the Heritage Hangar and Jamie Freeman confirmed that it would be a blister hangar at the front and then a T hangar at the back. The size for the Heritage Hangar (not the hangar

which was presently the subject of the planning application) would be 80m x 30m and would house e.g. the Carriage Museum, a wheelwright and woodwork facility, the Steam Museum, Aero Legends and vintage transport. John Perry confirmed that the re-siting of the Carriage Museum was still under discussion and that he was very supportive of the move.

The Committee were then shown the extension to the existing Museum building. The Museum had given up some space to Aero Legends and required space specifically to house the Reichenberg. They were also shown the Picket-Hamilton gun emplacement, and Jamie Freeman discussed the removal of the two American aircraft which he hoped would be imminent after nearly 10 years of negotiation.

5 **Correspondence** There was no correspondence

6 **Complaints**

There were three listed complaints. 2nd April complaint re overflying by visiting helicopters - the pilot was requested to change his flying pattern., 11th May A noise complaint - Jamie Freeman said there were discussions with the pilot about changing his flying technique to ensure quieter running., 26th May Jamie Freeman had taken a complaint from the area of Blackmill Lane about a Spitfire. That area is under the circuit, but the complainant did not wish to leave their name.

7 **Any other business**

There was no other business.

6 **Date of next meeting**. Tuesday 24th October 2017 at 2.30

HACC20th June2017