

Matter 9- Filton Airfield, 21 June 2012
Representation No. 4038145
Welbeck Strategic Land LLP

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SOUTH GLOUCESTERSHIRE CORE STRATEGY
EXAMINATION IN PUBLIC

MATTER 9 – FILTON AIRFIELD

On behalf of
WELBECK STRATEGIC LAND LLP

May 2012

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1. INTRODUCTION

1. This Statement has been prepared by Dominic Lawson Bespoke Planning on behalf of Welbeck Strategic Land LLP (hereafter “Welbeck”). Welbeck has land interests at Hacket Farm, Morton Way South, Thornbury.
2. This Statement responds to the Inspector’s questions posed for the Matters for Examination as detailed in the Programme for the Examination of the South Gloucestershire Core Strategy, 25 April 2012. This Statement deals with questions relating to Matter 9 – Filton Airfield.
3. We also refer the Inspector to Welbeck’s previous submissions on the Core Strategy. Welbeck has submitted representations in relation to the Core Strategy on six previous occasions as indicated in our Matter 1 Statement. All representations submitted still stand.

2. FILTON AIRFIELD

4. Welbeck has provided representations on the proposals for Filton Airfield previously, see July 2011 (SGC ref 4038145) and February 2012 (SGC reference 4038145, paras 23-25) representations.
5. We are providing responses to questions 2 and 5:

Question 2

Is the balance of uses proposed for this area appropriate to the needs of the North Fringe and Bristol area?

Response

6. Welbeck considers that the proposed uses for Filton Airfield do not take account of its important strategic location for employment use, for the following reasons.
7. The council has failed to justify the proposed land uses for Filton Airfield. The council has not produced any new evidence to demonstrate that Filton Airfield is suitable for the amount of housing proposed. The Strategic Flood Risk Assessment 2 (Examination Document EB31/1-4) does not appear to take account of the proposed increase in housing for Cribbs, with the amount assessed at 1,750 (that proposed in the Submission Version Core Strategy) rather than the 5,700 dwellings proposed in the Post-Submission changes. This increase in housing by almost 4,000 dwellings for the North Fringe is proposed for Filton Airfield.
8. The council has not produced evidence to demonstrate that the transport and other infrastructure can accommodate the amount of housing proposed.
9. Furthermore, the council has not justified the loss of employment use which would appear to contradict the need for employment land in the North Fringe (see below).

Question 5

Is the amount of land to be retained for employment purposes adequate?

Response

10. We consider that the proposed uses for Filton Airfield do not take account of the important strategic location for employment use, for the following reasons.
11. Filton Airfield is strategically located to contribute to the priority key area – Filton/A38 Enterprise Area as identified by the West of England Local Enterprise Partnership. The North Fringe is acknowledged as a strategic area for advanced engineering industries such as the aerospace industry. Filton Airfield already hosts such industries. The West of England LEP's Local Economic Assessment, December 2011, noted that the potential closure of Filton Airfield would potentially have a significant impact on the aerospace industry in the North Fringe (see http://www.westofenglandlep.co.uk/?page_id=507, para 3.28).
12. The West of England LEP's Local Economic Assessment indicates that South Gloucestershire has consistently performed well in relation to employment. Employment rates are high, higher than elsewhere in the West of England including

Bristol and unemployment rates lower. The report also notes that there is a slowing down in the provision of employment space in the North Fringe due to fewer sites coming forward (para 4.49). The closure of Filton Airfield provides the opportunity to increase the provision of employment floorspace in the North Fringe. The West of England LEP's Local Economic Assessment is not included as part of the council's evidence base although South Gloucestershire is one of the four partners of the West of England LEP.

13. The potential closure of Filton Airfield provides the council with the opportunity to enhance this strategically important employment area.
14. Welbeck considers that the amount of employment use land should be increased to ensure that Filton Airfield continues to support the high tech industries based around the airport and in the North Fringe.

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