

SECTION '2' – Applications meriting special consideration

Application No : 11/01303/FULL1

Ward:
Darwin

Address : HPS Gas Station Leaves Green Road
Keston

OS Grid Ref: E: 541958 N: 162373

Applicant : London Biggin Hill Airport

Objections : YES

Description of Development:

Removal of existing security fence and hedgerow and erection of replacement repositioned security fence between 100m and 125m to the west of the existing fence line

Key designations:

Special Advertisement Control Area
Biggin Hill Public Safety Zone
Biggin Hill Safeguarding Birds
Biggin Hill Safeguarding Area
Green Belt

Joint report with application ref. 11/01304

Proposal

Two planning applications (refs. 11/01303 and 11/01304) have been received to erect new sections of security fence at Biggin Hill Airport. These involve removing sections of existing hedgerow and erecting a perimeter fence. The fences will be a 2.4m galvanised chain link fence. The fence will be sited to the west of the existing boundary of the airport, which is currently defined by a hedgerow. The existing hedgerow will be removed and a new fence installed. Biggin Hill Airport Ltd (BHAL) state the security fences have to be a certain minimum distance from the runway and there must be no obstructions within the safeguarded area between the runway and the boundary fence.

BHAL has recently undertaken a comprehensive review of its perimeter fencing around the airport boundary, and has to upgrade sections to comply with regulations as required by the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA). It is understood these requirements are mandatory in order to hold an Aerodrome Licence.

Location

The application site comprises an area of open countryside immediately adjacent to the airport. The site falls within the Green Belt.

Comments from Local Residents

Nearby owners/occupiers were notified of the application and comments have been received that raise the following issues, including:

- concerns over increased noise and atmospheric pollution
- hedge would be more attractive than a fence & would blend more with the surroundings
- concern that relocation of fence is to accommodate larger aircraft
- not clear why such a large area is required
- not clear why change is required now after so many years
- concerns with moving the boundary closer to residential properties

Comments from Consultees

The Council's Valuation and Estates Department raises no objections to the scheme.

Planning Considerations

The application should be determined in accordance with the following policies of the Unitary Development Plan:

BE1 New Development
BH1 Local Environment
BH2 New Development at Airport
G1 Green Belt

National policy documents are also relevant including:

PPS1: Delivering Sustainable Development
PPG2: Green Belts

Conclusions

The site falls within the Green Belt where there is a presumption against inappropriate development. The effect of constructing the fences in the position proposed is to enlarge the operational boundary of the airport. This could potentially have further implications, specifically in terms of the area enjoying aviation permitted development rights, since this extra land would fall within the 'operational boundary'. However, BHAL have confirmed that no development will be undertaken in future in this area, since it has to kept free of obstacles because of its proximity to the runway. The proposals would also amount to a change of use from agricultural land to operational land within the Green Belt. This would be inappropriate development in terms of PPG2. Very special circumstances are therefore required to justify inappropriate development.

The applicant has stated that very special circumstances exist as to why permission should be granted.

The applicant has confirmed that the enlargement of the operational area is needed to satisfy mandatory Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) requirements. A certain minimum unobstructed area from the runway is required under CAA rules, and this is why the fence is to be located west of the existing boundary. The applicant also states that a security fence is required around the perimeter of the airport in accordance with the UK National Security Programme E 300 2010 together with the single Consolidation Direction 1/2010.

The applicant has confirmed that there will be no changes to the operation of the Airport, including that there will be no increase in the number of flights or increase in size of aircraft, as these are governed by the terms of the airport's lease. The proposals will not therefore result in any increased noise or atmospheric pollution.

Objectors have requested that a hedge be used rather than a fence, as this would look more attractive and be better for wildlife. However, it is understood that this would not comply with the strict regulations which require that a fence not be capable of breach by unauthorised persons.

The relocated security fence would be a considerable distance from the nearest residential properties.

Overall Members may consider that, given the security fence is required under CAA regulations that are mandatory, very special circumstances exist to allow proposals within this Green Belt location. It is also considered that the erection of the fences will have no discernable effect on the openness of the Green Belt.

The aims and objectives of the above policies, national and regional planning guidance, all other material planning considerations including any objections, other representations and relevant planning history on the site were taken into account in the assessment of the proposal.

Background papers referred to during production of this report comprise all correspondence on files refs. 11/01303 and 11/01304, excluding exempt information.

Should Members be minded to grant permission, the following conditions are suggested.

RECOMMENDATION: PERMISSION

Subject to the following conditions:

- | | | |
|---|--------|--|
| 1 | ACA01 | Commencement of development within 3 yrs |
| | ACA01R | A01 Reason 3 years |
| 2 | AJ02B | Justification UNIQUE reason OTHER apps |

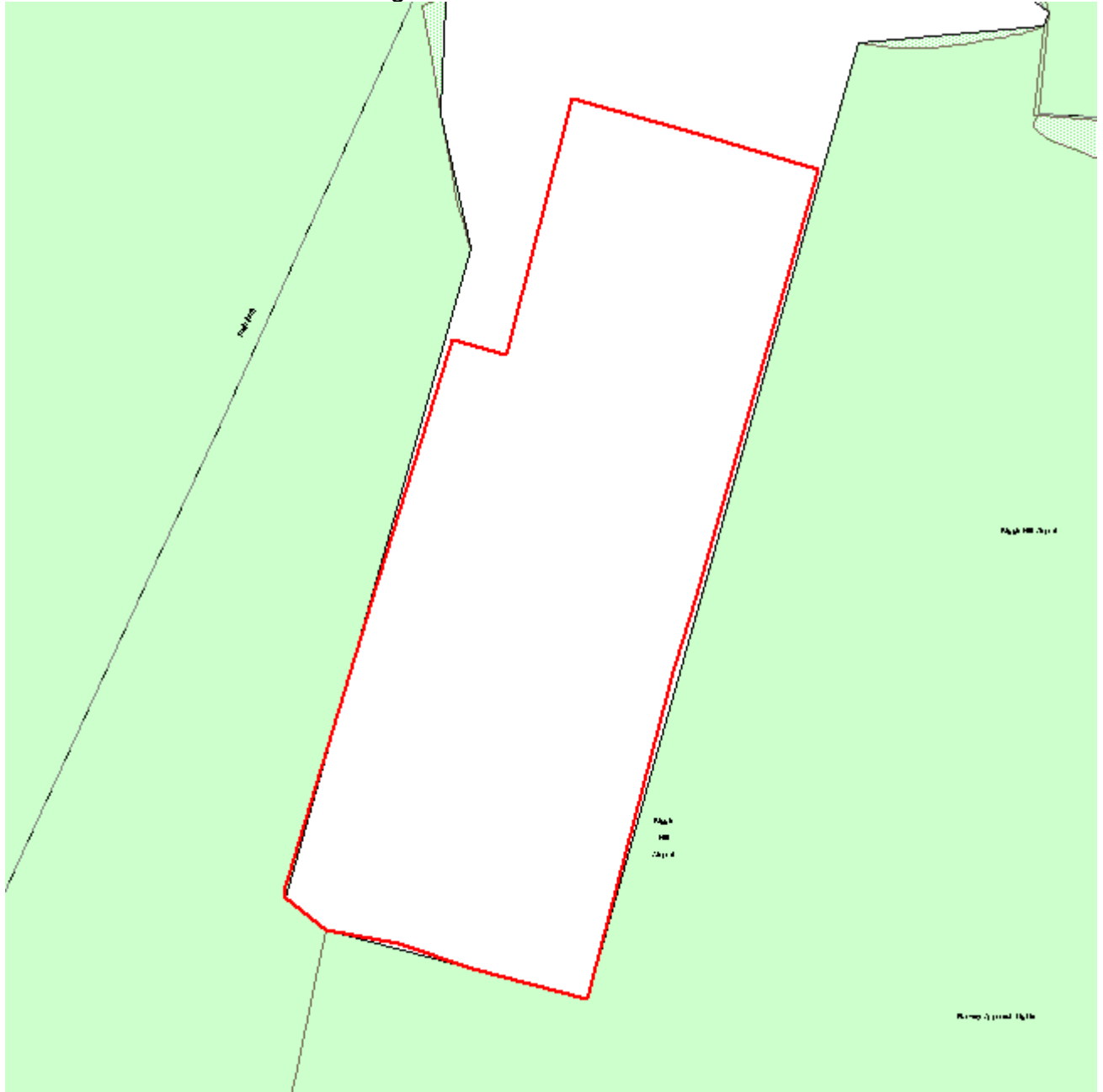
Policies (UDP)

BE1 New Development
BH1 Local Environment
BH2 New Development
G1 Green Belt

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