



Our Ref: LN3624/mh

18 January 2018

**Hayley Bennington**

Solicitor  
Braintree District Council  
Governance Service  
Causeway House  
Braintree  
CM7 9HB

Dear Ms Bennington

**ANDREWSFIELD AIRFIELD – NOMINATION TO LIST AS AN ASSET OF COMMUNITY VALUE**

Thank you for your letter of 15 December 2017 advising Braintree and Uttlesford Councils have received this application.

We are responding on behalf of (1) Havair Limited, a lessee of part of the Application Property from the Harvey Family, (2) the Harvey Family itself, and (3) Iconshield Limited a Special Purpose Vehicle which holds an option over part of the Property.

1. The actual current use does not, in our view, further the social wellbeing and interests of the local community. While no doubt the café/bar is used by some members of the local community, we believe rambling groups, cycling groups and particularly private pilots are by no means comprised of people who could be described as being from the 'local community'. Furthermore, flying cannot be described as a community activity, and is very much more individual and exclusive in nature, as opposed to say a local sports team.
2. Even if the café/bar is used by some local people, this does not justify designating the wider area indicated on the red-line plan attached to the application. This is private land and there is no entitlement for the public to use it.
3. Pilot training again cannot be considered in the interests of the local community. We accept that while there may be World War II history attached to the airfield, this can be recognised in other ways and the designation as an ACV is not an appropriate means for doing this. That would be a misuse of the provisions of the Localism Act. It cannot be argued that historical association furthers the wellbeing of the local community.

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4. Andrewsfield forms part of the strategic site for the proposed West of Braintree Garden Community. This proposal is one of the principal means of achieving delivery of new homes in both the Braintree and Uttlesford Local Plans. Two of the principles of Garden Cities are:

'A strong local jobs offer in the Garden City itself, with a variety of employment opportunities within an easy commuting distance of homes'

And

'Generous green space linked to the wider natural environment, including a mix of public and private networks of well-managed high quality gardens, tree-lined streets and open spaces.'

Using pilot training as an example of an employment opportunity is insignificant compared to the scale of employment the new garden community will create. The wide range of properly designed open spaces for community use in the garden community will far outweigh any unofficial recreational use of Andrewsfield that is carried out at present.

5. The identification of Andrewsfield as a source of employment and open space that benefits the local community to the extent it should be recognised and protected is misdirected. The development of the new garden community will secure a far greater quantity and quality of both. Furthermore, it will create opportunities for commemorating the area's WWII heritage through appropriate memorials, public art, all of which can be designed with the input of the local community.
6. The new community will include several local centres, some or all of which can include cafes/bars that can provide enjoyment for not only the existing but the new community. These will genuinely be an asset for many rather than the present few with limited local community connections.
7. It is thus our view that the ACV application is opportunist and its approval would not meet the tests set in the Localism Act for such a proposal to be granted. We believe there is only very limited local community benefit from the site at present. In contrast the new West of Braintree Garden Community will be a widespread source of community well-being; indeed it will be designed with contributions from the local community. The Plan will be 'locally led' and its success should not be undermined by any uncertainty created by the approval of the ACV application.
8. Please would you ensure these comments are considered by both Councils before any decision on the ACV application is made.

Yours sincerely



**MARTIN HERBERT**

Director – Town Planning  
WYG