

## **Decision in respect of the designation of the Daws Hill Residents' Association's application for Neighbourhood Area Status**

In respect of the application by the Daws Hill Residents' Association applications for Neighbourhood Area status, the following decision has been taken in accordance with the requirements of The Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012.

### **Neighbourhood Area**

In accordance with the Cabinet Decision on 10<sup>th</sup> September 2012 (Item 43), the application from the Daws Hill Residents' Association (as set out in the letter dated 31<sup>st</sup> August 2012 and accompanying attachments) for the Neighbourhood Area set out in Figure 1 is **REFUSED**. However, Wycombe District Council has designated<sup>1</sup> a smaller Neighbourhood Area which excludes the Wycombe Sports Centre and the former RAF Daws Hill site. This revised Neighbourhood Area is set out in Figure 2 (the area within the solid black line) accompanying this notice to form the Daws Hill Neighbourhood Area.

The reasons for the refusal for the Neighbourhood Area as applied for are as follows:

- Any development of the key strategic sites (RAF Daws Hill and Wycombe Sports Centre) outside the existing 'immediate' neighbourhood will have implications that impact upon a wider sphere of influence. Strategic issues come into play with the planning of these sites, including any supporting transport measures. There are larger than local impacts and larger 'communities of interest'.
- It is considered likely that if and when a neighbourhood plan, including one or more of the 'strategic' sites, came to examination an Inspector would judge (presuming the emerging plan was found 'sound' and 'compliant') that the referendum would need to take place over a wide area, reflecting the wider "community of interest".
- In the interests of the investment of time, energy and cost the resulting work on a neighbourhood plan needs to be well targeted. With planning matters advancing on the two key strategic sites (Wycombe Sports Centre and RAF Daws Hill) this introduces an important consideration of timeliness. An outline planning application is under consideration by the Council at Wycombe Sports Centre, and a planning application for the former RAF Daws Hill site is expected. A Neighbourhood Plan would have to follow the various statutory stages set out in regulations culminating in an Examination and, after that, a Referendum. For both the original and amended areas proposed significant cost is likely to be incurred and it is considered that the investment (not only by the community but also WDC) in such an exercise would not be timely

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<sup>1</sup> Schedule 9 of the Localism Act 2011 – Section 61G (5)

because of the existing and expected timing of planning applications and associated decisions. Furthermore there are other opportunities for input to decisions under consideration for the key strategic sites.

- To designate a Neighbourhood Area to include the full area in the application could unrealistically raise expectations as to the effectiveness of a Neighbourhood Plan in relation to the strategic development sites. The community and the Local Planning Authority cannot stop the submissions of planning applications and the likelihood is that a neighbourhood plan would be overtaken by events. This could lead to frustration and confusion.
- Among the responses received to the original Neighbourhood Area application (whose consultation period ran from 18th May to 29th June) were two from landowning interests in the proposed area objecting to their sites being included therein. One respondent also suggested that including the strategic sites at RAF Daws Hill and Wycombe Sports Centre in the Neighbourhood Area would be inappropriate as the proposals at these sites will have 'wider than local' impacts, particularly on strategic transport measures for the southern quadrant area.

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Wycombe District Council

Planning and Sustainability

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Figure 1: Neighbourhood Area boundary proposed by the Daws Hill Residents Association

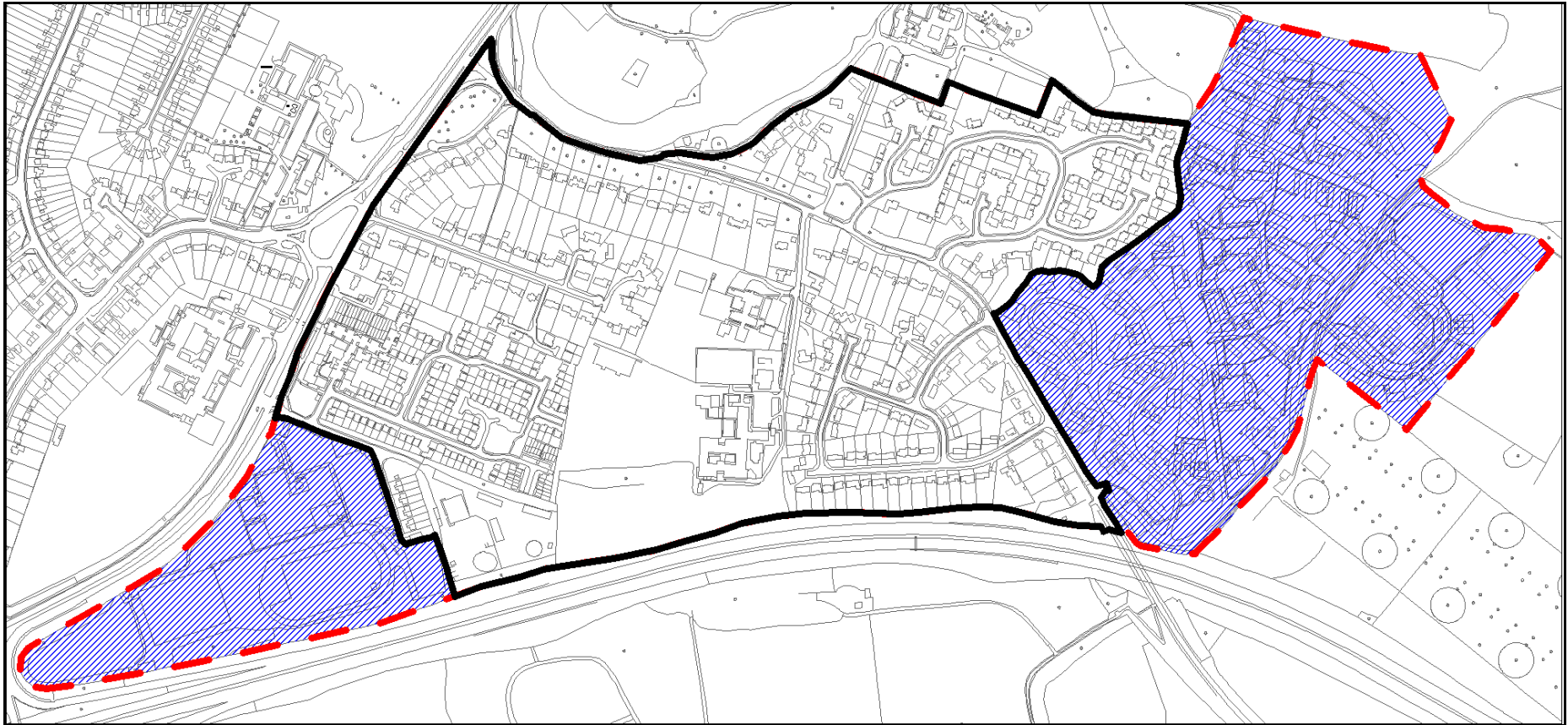


Figure 2: Map showing Daws Hill Neighbourhood Area as designated by Wycombe District Council (area within solid black line) and the areas excluded from the designated Neighbourhood Area (shaded)