

Statement for Hearing four of the Welwyn Hatfield Draft Local plan Examination in Public regarding the Panshanger Site on June 27<sup>th</sup> 2018

By Jane Quinton

During the third hearing for the Welwyn Hatfield local plan in February 2018, various spokespersons argued that policy SADM 7 (which addresses the retention of existing facilities) was not being implemented correctly with regard to Panshanger Airfield. This is inextricably linked to the site specific policy SP 18, but at that stage we were asked to refrain from discussing site specific policies as they would be covered in a later hearing. However, the set of questions put forward for Hearing 4 do not invite discussion of whether policy SP 18 is sound with regards to a realigned runway. We would argue that it is not sound, given that an airfield cannot be retained with the current masterplan.

I understand that the council have commissioned a report from an aviation expert on the relevant safety requirements for a realigned runway and how they would affect the site. This report should be available to the council just before the start of Hearing 4. I also understand that the council were tasked by the inspector at the end of Hearing 3 to investigate any other possible locations for an airfield in the local area as in his words "it's not going away". Could the council provide any update on these two points in sufficient time for the hearing?

Please could the inspector allow for a discussion in hearing 4 on whether Policy SP 18 is sound regarding the potential loss of Panshanger airfield and whether it is compliant with policy SADM 7?