strong attention made to distinguish structures according to their function.

Social and political history

Old Sarum was part of a group of military sites established early in the 20th Century in Wiltshire, a key location in the creation of modern British military practice. Its main purpose was to train personnel and to ensure co-operation between forces for effective land and air warfare. The aerodrome is inextricably bound to the history of the two World Wars: emerging from the First; it was an important site used for the successful prosecution of the Second. Pilots trained at Old Sarum flew in the Battle of Britain. The site was a key supply point for the forces in the D-Day Landings and the Allied Invasion. During the ensuing Cold War, the aerodrome was used as a strategic training school for NATO forces.

Importance to users and general public

Flying activity remains important at Old Sarum for civilian pilots. The flying club offers training, including for people with disabilities. Two of the hangars have been converted to industrial/storage and builders retail use, the workshop to light industrial and other commercial use. Though these uses are not inappropriate there is scant recognition of the significance of the buildings and the historic spaces between them. Lancaster Road, historically one of the main arteries of the aerodrome circulation, is blocked by fencing which attempts to define the boundaries of current ownership. Currently the site offers no amenities that attract members of the general public. A cafe within the flying club is available to members only.

Current land use and character appraisal

See figure 20 for the current land use plan.

According to Jeremy Lake's study Old Sarum is 'The best-preserved flying field of the period up to November 1918, bounded by one of the most complete suites of technical and hangar buildings of the period.'

The first impression however that is received on arriving at the site is that it is an industrial estate bounded by a tree lined road to the north and a grass airstrip to the south. The main hangars are not visible to the casual observer from the road, and only certain parts of some buildings are visible from the walls of Old Sarum to the west, from Ford to the south. The surroundings of the airfield are encircled by recent modern development.

Only civilian aircraft now use the airfield for flying. As highlighted above there is no hard landscaping to mark out a runway. Recently a hedge has been planted to the south of the Old Sarum Park Business area but is not yet established. To the south west of the airfield, fenced off by temporary barriers, the land is taken up for agricultural purposes (see Appendix D views 3,4 and 7 and aerial photograph of 2007 on page 5). On the edge of the area used for landing and take-off, just south of the former Technical Area, is a Control Tower built in the 1950s, together with the Signal Square and Airfield Code Letters.

Most of the southern part of what remains of the Technical Area is used by Blanefield Airfield Operations Ltd. Blanefield Airfield Operations Ltd also occupies Hangar 3, the north-east of the two remaining General Service Repair Sheds. Hangars 2 and 4 are used as workshops and for storage by different companies. The smaller technical support buildings, such as the former Carpenter's Shop and Dope Shed, are used as business premises. The south west portion of the Technical Area - the site of a collection of small technical support units from the station's early history and Hangar one lost in a fire - is now completely taken up by large modern warehouse buildings and low-rise office blocks/industrial units, which make up the Castle Gate Industrial Estate. The warehouses have been constructed in corrugated steel with pitched roofs; the offices are dark brick structures with pitched roofs and UPVC sash windows. The Machine Gun Range, situated on the eastern boundary of the aerodrome, made up of 40-foot red-brick walls with concrete buttresses, survives intact.

The remainder of the technical buildings, other than the Machine Gun Range, are all single-storey structures built mostly in brick and covered with a green-grey render. The smaller buildings mostly retain their original windows, which are either timber sash frames or steel casements. The majority of the buildings have modern pitched corrugated metal roofs. The Technical Area is served by a series of modern roads which fail to match the layout of the original airfield roads and paths.

Most of the buildings from the original Administrative Area have been removed or significantly altered to make way for modern development. The bulk of the area is now taken up by Old Sarum Business Park. The Station Headquarters, a two-storey flat fronted brick building, has survived and is now occupied by the Territorial Army but is isolated from the remainder of the Conservation Area by its function and surrounding security fencing.

The Army School of Co-operation and Infirmary buildings have undergone extensive changes. This includes the insertion of modern UPVC windows, new doors and fire escapes. An extension has also been built to connect the main 'School' building to the former Infirmary.

The modern buildings in this area have all been built in brick and consist in two-storeys with a pitched roof. Their uses include offices, car showrooms and warehouses. The layout of roads and paths here has been significantly modified by the construction of these buildings.

The Parade Ground site since the 1980's has been occupied by a residential estate, with modern brick houses which have pitched roofs. No trace of the Parade Ground layout remains here. The landscaping and street furniture in the Administrative Area relates primarily to the modern development. There are modern signs, lampposts, and paving as well as gravel flower beds and recently planted trees.

There are five main constituents to the Domestic Area which have all survived - yet none of these is occupied by military personnel; all have been converted to private residences. These are: Ford Farmhouse in the south east acquired with the rest of the aerodrome; two semi-detached and a detached Married Quarters for officers on Green Lane; the Warrant Officer's Married Accommodation, found directly to the north of the Portway; the NCO and Airmen's Married Quarters, located in the north east corner of the site between the Administrative Area and the former Officers' Mess and Quarters, and which has since its construction been adapted and extended; and finally the Officers' Mess and Quarters located to the north east of the site on the other side of Green Lane. Construction of this combined Mess and Quarters took place in 1935, according to a unique design, which Atkins state 'reflects the importance placed on Old Sarum as School of Army Co-operation'. Today, all the windows have been replaced in UPVC, and a veranda created along two flanks of the building; now known as Throgmorton Hall, it houses 15 private flats.

Owing to the loss of a large number of the original structures and a haphazard approach to modern development, the historic layout, in which there were four distinct functional areas, has largely been lost. Conversely, new boundaries, such as fences and walls, have cut off the links that once connected the different areas. Within the areas themselves there are numerous subdivisions to mark property ownership.

The scale and character of many of the new buildings are wholly different from the historic structures. The buildings in the south western section of the Technical Area, for example, are in stark contrast to the rest of that Area. The military character of the aerodrome has diminished. There is a series of empty spaces within these modern developments; in some cases where airfield buildings have been demolished, no new structures have been put in their place.

Any signage or street furniture that exists primarily relates to the modern development - there is little to mark out the historic structures. The appearance of some important buildings has changed significantly because of this new signage, painting and the modern windows, as stated above. Original planting and landscaping, some of which remains in the Technical Area has been completely lost in the rest of the aerodrome.

Although three of the aerodrome's buildings have been Listed Grade II* and two Grade II, little attention has been paid to maintaining the original character of the aerodrome as a whole or in ensuring that any modern development reflects the scale and density of the original site.

Given the disjunction between the present condition of the site and its significance, it is essential that any future development is accompanied by a coherent programme that addresses the defects of such an important site. In order to meet statutory requirements on