

AERODROME SAFEGUARDING



Who stole our airfield?

BGA Conference, 2005. Aerodrome Safeguarding Seminar

Will your airfield still be there when you get home?

Background and Rationale

Operational safety at aviation sites can become threatened or compromised by unwanted development within the circuit or close to the aerodrome and its approach or climb-out areas.

Tall buildings, street lighting, mobile phone masts, even sports pitches, can encroach into a gliding site's airspace and compromise operational safety. The recent proliferation of windfarms has exacerbated the problem.

Financial threats to an airfield may also arise if, for example, a club is unable to meet repayments on a mortgage, but that is a different issue and is not addressed in this paper.

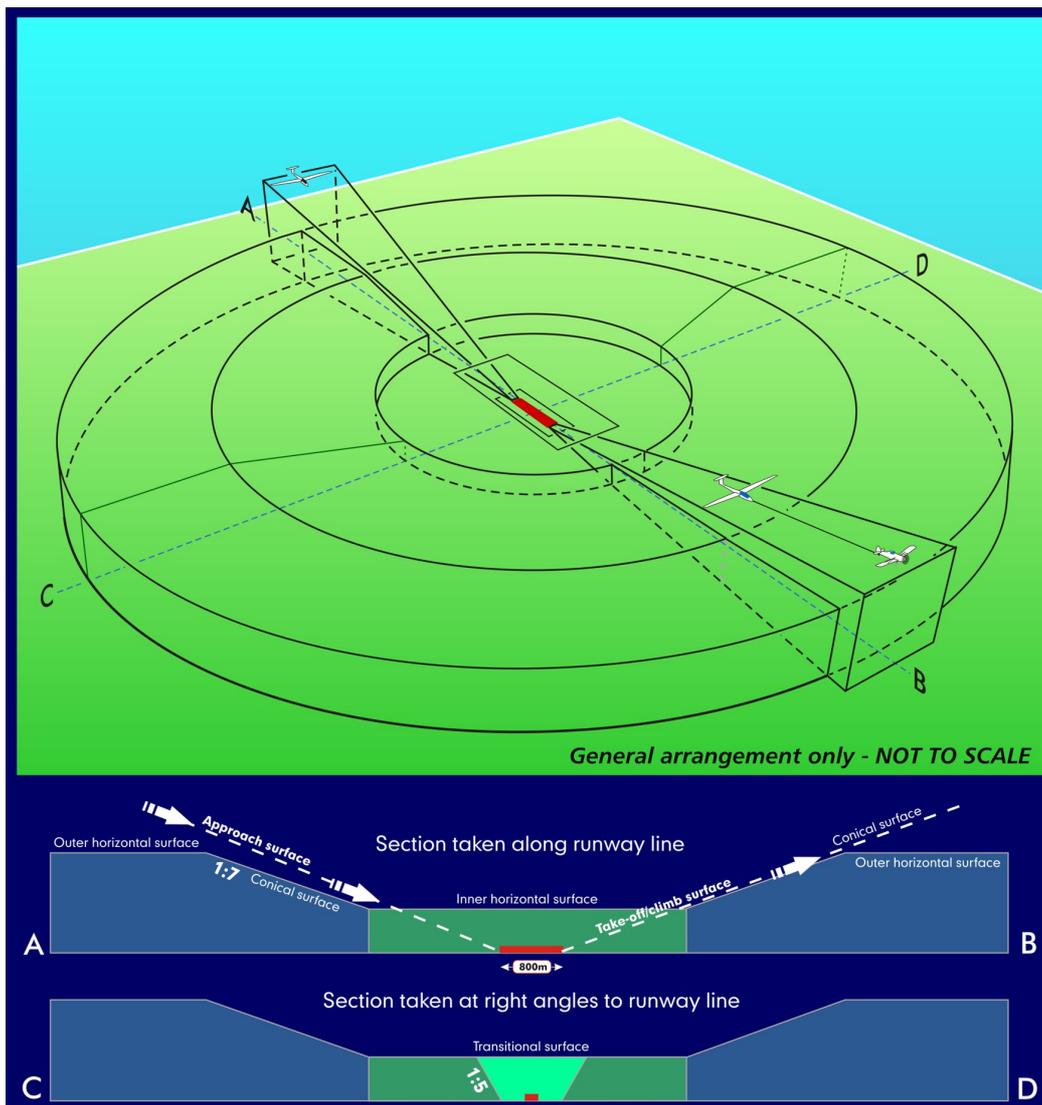
THE AIM of the seminar

- How to improve your protection
- What airfield safeguarding is
- How a safeguarding plan can protect you – and where it can't
- How to start on a safeguarding plan
- Who to contact for expert advice and where to look for specialist information

Perhaps the best means of protecting gliding site operations is to own and control both the airfield and land beyond the aerodrome boundaries? However, that is impractical.

Protection is by safeguarding the aviation site. Safeguarding is a process of consultation between an LPA and consultees. At least, this ensures that all potentially threatening developments are NOTIFIED to the Aviation Site for consultation. This can either take the form of official safeguarding, for a licensed aerodrome (where consultation is obligatory by statute) or as unofficial (non-official) safeguarding for an unlicensed aerodrome as applies to most, if not all, gliding sites.

The arrangements for safeguarding aerodromes have been in place since 1992 and are well documented in the BGA Site Operations Manual. Unfortunately, gliding clubs have been slow to make use of existing legislation and procedures to safeguard their operations. Firstly, this is done by defining and protecting their obstacle limitation surfaces (OLS).



Recent updates to legislation

More responsibility has been placed on local planning authorities (LPAs). This has made the whole arrangement more flexible and “adaptive” to a gliding club’s special needs. Circular 1 of 2003 (from ODPM, DfT and NAFW) requires LPAs to respond sympathetically to an aviation site’s needs. Nevertheless the planning authorities are required to liaise with the CAA to agree safeguarding policies. LPAs on the other hand have been reluctant to co-operate, resulting in endless delays.

Protect your aviation site NOW

Make better use of existing legislation and planning guidance. Lodge an application for aerodrome safeguarding before trouble starts.

Apply while still “clean”. Don’t wait until it is necessary to react, as a result of conflicting development. As with business planning, aerodrome safeguarding is best undertaken at your leisure, rather than under pressure.

Procedure

- (1) Draw up good quality plans of the Aviation Site and its OLS

Insert examples of safeguarding plans

- (2) Make clear statements as to the need for protection
- (3) Contact LPA. Request consultation and negotiation with planners. Expect gaps in LPA’s understanding and explain
- (4) Contact CAA Safeguarding Officer. Harry Siepmann will provide advice and support
- (5) Contact BGA
- (6) Consider appointing a professional consultant
- (7) Explore safeguarding by planning condition (e.g. Parham)
- (8) Apply to BGA Planning and Environment Fund for assistance with professional fees
- (9) Check and respond to local developments (especially windfarms about which CAA will contact BGA if proposals are within 30kms of a gliding site).
- (10) Respond to consultations but don’t cry wolf. Unnecessary objections waste time and damage BGA’s credibility
- (11) Be reasonable!

Bibliography

DOE Planning Circular 2/92 England; Welsh Office 5/92; Scottish Office 16/92
Planning Circular 1 of 2003 (ODPM, DfT, NAFW)
CAP 168 Safety Standards at Licensed Aerodromes (from CAA)
CAP 428 Safety Standards at Unlicensed Aerodromes (from CAA)
CAP 738 Safeguarding of Aerodromes (from CAA)
BGA Site Operations Manual: Chapter 12 - "Airfield Safeguarding- How Planning Can Protect You" by Philip Isbell
General Aviation Awareness Council (GAAC) website: www.gaac.co.uk
"Safeguarding of Aerodromes"(advice notes 1-5)
"Planning Applications, Appeals and Enforcement Action - Advice to applicants and appellants".
"Wind Energy and Aviation Interests" Interim Guidelines from DTI, 2002.
S&G articles:- "Who put that thing there?" Oct. Nov. 2004
"Tilting at Windfarms" Aug.-Sept. 2003

Aerodrome Safeguarding

Notes to diagrams

1. OBSTACLE LIMITATION SURFACES

Defines "slices" of air above runway to be kept clear of obstructions.

CAP 168 measurements

Approach 1/20 (short) – RUNWAY – TOCS (take off and Climb slope) 1/20 (short)
10 degree splays to runway centreline (CAP 168 CAP 428)

Anything that penetrates the Transitional Surface, the Inner Horizontal Surface or the Outer Horizontal Surface will be refused planning permission.

2. SOPHISTICATED SAFEGUARDING MAP

1 km squares (1: 100,000 scale)

Min OLS clearance indicated by colouring whole squares

Rule 5 Open Air Assembly of >1,000 persons to be notified as indicated (requires 1,000 m clearance)

DEFINITIONS OF “AERODROME”

Circular 1 of 2003

“aerodrome” means any area of land or water designed, equipped, set apart, commonly used or in prospective use for affording facilities for the landing and departure of aircraft and includes any area of space, whether on the ground, on the roof of a building or elsewhere which is designed, equipped or set apart, affording facilities for the landing or departure of aircraft capable of descending or climbing vertically, particulars of which have been furnished by the First Secretary of State, the National Assembly for Wales, the Civil Aviation Authority or the Secretary of State for Defence to the local planning authority or authorities for the area in which it is situated...

Civil Aviation Authority

Aerodrome = a defined area on land or water (including any buildings, installations and equipment) intended to be used, either wholly or in part, for the arrival, departure and surface movement of aircraft.