

Aerodrome Safeguarding

BGA clubs are very exposed to development around their airfields. A tall building, structure or mast in the wrong place could make operations impossible. Aviation is fortunate in that a formal process exists that makes it a little easier to defend against such developments. However not all BGA clubs have taken advantage of it and they are much more exposed than their well-prepared colleagues.

Q: What is Aerodrome Safeguarding?

A: Aerodrome safeguarding is a process that ensures that planning applications in the vicinity of an airfield do not accidentally create hazards or restrict aviation operations. The CAA recommends that all airfields are safeguarded, but it is the aerodrome operator's responsibility and they have to arrange it themselves.

Some licensed airfields have a stronger process (official safeguarding) but even unlicensed airfields (the majority of BGA clubs) can secure non-official safeguarding, which still brings many benefits. There are no officially safeguarded gliding sites. Official safeguarding only applies to a few commercial aerodromes.

Q: What are the benefits?

A: If your airfield is officially safeguarded then if a planning application may affect your operation then the local planners must consult you. Even if you are only non-officially safeguarded, they will normally inform you of any potential conflicts caused by applications.

By agreeing your safeguarding plan, the planning officer agrees to notify the aerodrome operator of applications for development within specified zones.

Q: Is My Airfield Safeguarded?

A: You'd have thought so wouldn't you? Some clubs have obtained safeguarding for their sites, but there are still too many BGA club sites that have not yet taken advantage of safeguarding. Some may have local reasons to refrain but for most it hasn't risen to the top of the pile, when keeping the day-to-day operation going seems so pressing.

Q: How Do We Get Safeguarded?

A: The first step is to read the guidance in the BGA Site Operations Manual Chapter 12 and the summary on the BGA website of a seminar at the 2005 BGA Conference. Together with GAAC factsheets, these have a wealth of information. Then contact the BGA Development Officer, who can give detailed advice on how to see this through to a satisfactory conclusion, using professional help if required.

Q: What Then?

A: Well, hopefully nothing, except to partake in a regular review of applications for development which might threaten the airfield operation. There may come a day when you are told about a planning application for something that would definitely "get in the way". At that stage the BGA Development Officers can again provide support if you need it and point you at the right way to respond – and to professional advice if needed.

Sources of Information

Information is available from a number of sources, including:

[BGA Site Operations Manual Chapter 12](http://www.gliding.co.uk/forms/clubmanagement/siteops12airfieldsafeguarding.pdf)

<http://www.gliding.co.uk/forms/clubmanagement/siteops12airfieldsafeguarding.pdf>

[BGA Aerodrome Safeguarding Seminar notes](http://www.gliding.co.uk/forms/clubmanagement/aerodromesafeguarding.pdf)

<http://www.gliding.co.uk/forms/clubmanagement/aerodromesafeguarding.pdf>

[General Aviation Awareness Council \(GAAC\) Factsheets](http://www.gaac.org.uk/content/?page_id=23)

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[Alison Randle, BGA Development Officer](mailto:alison@gliding.co.uk)

alison@gliding.co.uk