

## ***Fact Sheets from the General Aviation Awareness Council***

### **Fact Sheet 4 - Safeguarding your flying site – Practical Advice**

#### **Introduction**

It is strongly recommended that Fact Sheet 3 - Safeguarding Background is read before this. Among other things it describes safeguarding and details the publications that you should have available when safeguarding your site, licensed or unlicensed. Links common to both fact sheets are given at the end of this.

#### **What steps should I take to safeguard my site?**

There several things that can be done. Some of the important ones are listed below, and are mainly directed at the unlicensed site.

#### **Local Planning Authority (LPA) Liaison**

Whether in the planning stage or already operational, it is important for the operator to make that link with the LPA, and, if possible, establish the site's interests in the 'Statement of Community Involvement'. Regrettably there is no standard response from LPAs - it can range from welcoming to hostile. However, if explained with reference to the legislation, most LPAs will see the reason for safeguarding, and will accept a safeguarding map. After all, nobody wants to be seen to be responsible for a reduction in safety standards.

Having made the LPA aware of the legislation and the advice that comes from it, it is well worth providing a copy of the five advice notes produced jointly by the CAA, AOA, and GAAC (links at the end). These are directed at LPAs and cover a range of safeguarding issues. Apart from being informative (to the LPA and operator) they will help underline the importance of cooperation between the two.

#### **Safeguarding Parameters**

It is beyond the scope of this fact sheet to detail the various dimensions and parameters of the safeguarding surfaces (obstacle limitation surfaces or OLS) that you should adopt. However, although CAP 428 leaves the safeguarding parameters to the operator, it is recommended that the international standards laid down in CAP 168 are used, unless, of course, your operations require greater protection. For example, glider or microlight operations may require shallower takeoffs and/or approaches than the standard.

CAP 168 (Ch 3 and 4) cover all the options and you are advised to study these. Doing so you will note that the dimensions of the various surfaces are determined by airfield criteria. Establishing the OLS to be used is important, and it may be that specialist advice should be sought.

#### **Safeguarding Maps**

CAP 738 also gives advice on the production of safeguarding maps. While the production of a safeguarding map is recommended, CAP 428 makes the specification optional. The production of a full-specification map would be expensive, but there is a cheaper solution upon which advice can be sought.

Another important safeguarding factor is the bird-hazard. The normal area within which potential

bird-attractive developments should be checked is a radius of 13km from the site. It may be that this is excessive, but whatever the value, it should be marked on the map and/or the LPA made aware of it.

As a matter of policy the GAAC recommends that all aerodrome operators prepare a safeguarding map by which to ensure/encourage consultation.

### Planning Applications

Having lodged a safeguarding map with the LPA and ensured that it knows how to use it, what happens when the planning applications arrive? CAP 738 gives advice here, but the first thing to underline is that each will be time-limited; usually there are 21 days to reply. A 'no-reply' can be taken as a 'no objection'. So, for effective safeguarding, a system has to be in place to ensure that applications do not fall through the net.

The planned structure or change of land-use will then need to be checked against the safeguarding surfaces that are established for the aerodrome. It is beyond the scope of this fact sheet to show how this is done; however, CAP 738 details the procedure. From this a decision will have to be made about the advice to be given to the LPA.

If the safeguarding advice is to object to the application, the reasons should be given to the LPA. In this case, the operator should be prepared to attend, and give evidence in support of that advice, at any appeal hearing or inquiry which may follow. Thus, the safeguarding advice provided must be technically correct and supportable.

### Wind Turbines

These are increasingly becoming a safeguarding problem for aerodromes. Although an emotive subject, to the vast majority of sites wind turbines present no more of a physical safeguarding issue than any other structure of the same dimensions. They only become a special problem if, for example, radar is involved.

There are two issues - one that turbines are tall, the other that their proliferation is supported by HM Government's policies on renewable energy. These result in an almost inevitable infringement of safeguarding criteria when near to aerodromes (the critical distance varies), and a conflict between politics and aviation safety. The focus of action should be the potential effect of any wind turbine(s) upon the continued safe operation of the aerodrome.

The CAA publishes CAP 764 - Policy and Guidelines on Wind Turbines, a link to which follows.

### **Is that all that there is to it?**

Regrettably, no. These are probably the main things that need to be considered when safeguarding your site and following them will certainly put you on the right path. However, given the range of sites and flying operations in this country, taking advice on setting up a system of safeguarding is strongly recommended.

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Fact Sheet prepared by R J C Vousden AFRIN MRAeS, August 2007

[Airfield Safeguarding & Development](#)

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## LINKS (Current at time of publication)

### Legislation

England & Wales <http://www.dft.gov.uk/pgr/aviation/safety/safeguarding/safeguardingaerodromestechi2988>

Scotland <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/library5/planning/pcsa-02.asp>

Northern Ireland [http://www.opsi.gov.uk/si/si1994/Uksa\\_19940426\\_en\\_1.htm](http://www.opsi.gov.uk/si/si1994/Uksa_19940426_en_1.htm)

### CAA Publications

Aerodromes

(list) <http://www.caa.co.uk/application.aspx?categoryid=33&pagetype=65&applicationid=11&mode=list&type=subcat&id=3>

Wind Turbine Policy & Guidelines. CAP 764

<http://www.caa.co.uk/application.aspx?categoryid=33&pagetype=65&applicationid=11&mode=detail&id=2358>

**CAA/AOA/GAAC Leaflets** <http://www.aoa.org.uk/publications/safeguarding.asp>

Safeguarding - overview

Lighting near aerodromes

Potential bird hazards from landscaping etc.

Cranes and other construction issues

Potential bird hazards from landfill sites

Potential bird hazards from SUDS

Wind Turbines and Aviation

### Safeguarding Specialist

Airfield Safeguarding & Development [www.airfield-safeguarding.com](http://www.airfield-safeguarding.com)

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*This is one of a series of Fact Sheets available from the GAAC.  
For further information please contact the above address.*