Information Sheet 6 – Guidance & Advice for Applicants Considering Developments that may Impact on Gibraltar Airport

Department of Town Planning and Building Control
HM Government of Gibraltar

Introduction

Development proposals within the vicinity of Gibraltar Airport have the potential to impact on the safe operation of the airport and therefore special considerations apply when considering whether to grant planning permission. The Aerodrome Authority (AA), on behalf of Ministry of Defence, and the Gibraltar Civil Aviation Authority (GCAA) consider any proposals for development that may affect aviation activity at Gibraltar Airport and advise the Development and Planning Commission accordingly.

Aeronautical Studies

For most projects, particularly building developments, an aeronautical study will be necessary, the findings of which will need to demonstrate that the proposed development will not prejudice the safe operation of Gibraltar Airport. Applicants should bear in mind that whilst the AA will endeavour to assess any study within 28 days, on occasions this may take longer particularly if the study is a complex one.

Matters for Consideration

Although not an exhaustive list, applicants will normally be expected to demonstrate consideration of the following subjects:

a) **Physical safeguarding requirements** – The development proposal complies with international standards in respect to physical safeguarding and is identified as representing no physical threat or impediment to aircraft operations. For Gibraltar, a bespoke safeguarding profile has been developed and Developers can view the maximum permitted height of buildings by using the safeguarding overlay tool on the Gibraltar GeoPortal Website (http://www.geoportal.gov.gi/index.php/map-viewer/3d-obstacle-limitation-surfaces). Please note it is important to read the "How to Use" section on the page before attempting to use the overlay. While the Overlay provides vertical accuracy to ± 3 metres, if greater accuracy is required, please contact the GCAA. Full details of the OLS are available via the GCAA and guidance is contained within CAP 168 (Licensing of Aerodromes | Publications | About the CAA) and the Military Aviation Authority, Manual of Aerodrome Design and Safeguarding (MAA MADS - regulation-mads.pdf) for OLS standards.

b) **The use of cranes** – The use of cranes during construction can be expected to lead to infringements of the physical safeguarding characteristics. If cranes are to be employed, then any infringements will need to be temporary and subject to

management control to avoid conflict with airport operations. Those responsible should establish a crane management plan with the airport operator. It should not be assumed that all such temporary infringements will be acceptable.

c) **Bird strike hazard** – Any features of the development, both during construction and after completion, which could increase the bird strike risk should be avoided. A management plan to prevent bird attraction during construction should be included in construction method statements. Features that may attract birds include standing water, food sources, potential nest or roosting sites and should be avoided.

d) **Foreign Object Debris (FOD)** – FOD (which can be any loose article, such as a small metal bolt, cardboard, plastic bag, etc.) arising from construction activities is a potential concern requiring the adoption of appropriate management practices. A plan for FOD management during, and post construction, should be included in construction method statements. This should include covering of skips and vehicles and fencing designed to minimise FOD being blown off site.

e) **Lighting** – Pilot distraction and confusion caused by lighting in the vicinity of an airport is a potential concern. In accordance with standard practices it is recommended that lighting in or around the building/development/structure is designed to avoid strong light beams directed towards the airfield and along the line off approach and departure flight paths. If floodlights are to be employed during construction, management practices to avoid direct light towards the airfield and flight paths should be included in construction method statements.

f) **Obstruction lighting** – CAP 168 and MAA MADS define the requirement for the lighting of obstructions (including fixed or mobile cranes) in the vicinity of airfields. This includes the type of light, luminescence, configuration and requirements based on height. Close liaison will be required with the AA for the installation of obstruction lights on any structure (if lighting is required) and should be included in the construction method statement.

g) **Wind and turbulence** – Given the prominence of the Rock and the wind conditions in the local vicinity, wind and associated turbulence can have a significant effect on aircraft operations at the airport. Any additional new structures can also influence the effects of wind. When planning the location and design of the building, developers should consider wind and turbulence effects on aircraft flight paths and demonstrate this with a wind study if necessary.

h) **Reflectivity** – Pilot distraction caused by reflection of sun light from building surfaces in the vicinity of an airport is a concern. Developers are to indicate that they have

considered the various types of surface material, the actual design of the building and how it may affect or increase the likelihood of reflectivity in the vicinity of the airport. In addition to aircraft flight paths, the potential for reflection from the development affecting the staff in Air Traffic Control (located next to the Air Terminal) is to be considered, as their observations of flight safety hazards when aircraft operations are taking place are fundamental to a safe airfield. Developers may need to consider the use of non-reflective glass (or similar), the angles that windows open, etc., when designing structures in the vicinity of the airport.

In Summary

In summary, flight safety and the mitigation of identified hazards in the vicinity of the airfield is a paramount concern for the both the GCAA and the AA and as such, all opportunities to reduce potential risks from new developments close to Gibraltar Airport must be considered. Applicants are advised to seek early discussions with the GCAA to enable early identification of potential issues arising from a development proposal.

Further Advice

If you want to further advice on any matter relating to aeronautical issues please contact:

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