

Economic & Sustainable Development
Three Rivers District Council
By email

7th July 2014

Re: Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)

Dear Sir/Madam,

We refer to your letter dated 2nd July 2014, received in this office on the same day.

The Draft Charging Schedule has been examined from an aerodrome safeguarding perspective and although we have no safeguarding concerns we would like to add the following comments.

Aerodrome Safeguarding

Aerodromes important to the national air transport system are officially safeguarded by the Civil Aviation Authority and the process of ensuring that their operation and development is not inhibited is an integral part of the town planning system. A safeguarding map is derived from a series of protected three-dimensional surfaces above and around the aerodrome. The extent of the zone around Heathrow Airport shown on the official safeguarding map published to each council. Within this area the Planning Authority must consult the Airport Operator on development where the height of any building, structure, erection or works would affect the operation of the airport or the safe movement of aircraft i.e. potentially penetrate the protected surface. The aerodrome uses a variety of navigational aids, radio aids and telecommunications systems to facilitate air traffic control and aircraft movements. A new building, structure or extension because of its size, shape, location or construction materials can affect this equipment so the aerodrome must also be consulted to enable an assessment to be made of the potential impact on navigational aids. In addition, at night and in low visibility conditions pilots rely on approach and runway lights to align their plane with the runway and touch down at the correct point. Lighting elements of a development also have the potential to distract or confuse pilots, particularly in the immediate vicinity of the aerodrome and the aircraft approach paths. Safeguarding assessments therefore also consider the impact of lighting proposals for developments.

Government advise that applicants should initiate discussions with the Planning Authority and the Airport Operator at an early stage before submitting an application to ensure that they understand the constraints and provide the information which will be needed for a detailed assessment to be made of the proposal e.g. a construction methodology or navigational impact assessment,. If the Planning Authority propose to

grant permission or impose conditions contrary to the safeguarding advice of the Airport Operator, they must notify the Civil Aviation Authority and demonstrate they have assessed the application in the light of Government guidance and provide a statement of reasons. Ultimately, the application could be referred to the Secretary of State who has the power to issue a Direction.

Safeguarding issues should only prevent development taking place where absolutely necessary to maintain the safe operation of the airport and the efficient movement of aircraft. The safeguarding process rather seeks to mitigate the adverse impacts of development through; alternative design or by conditions restricting how a development operates and may be extended. Legal agreements will be used to deal with aspects of a development which cannot be satisfactorily covered by planning conditions.

Within the Safeguarding Zone(s) around Heathrow Airport shown on the official safeguarding map published to each council, developments will be permitted which demonstrate that:

a) the height of construction equipment, the height of the completed development and associated landscaping will not penetrate the protected surface of the safeguarding zone; development may have to follow an agreed construction methodology, restrictions may be imposed on future extensions and the height of landscaping to maintain the integrity of the protected surface

b) the position and height of construction equipment, buildings, telecommunications equipment, landscaping and external lighting arrangements will not interfere with the visual and electronic navigational aids of the airport; restrictions may be imposed to enable further assessment of any proposed changes

Policy 2 – Wind Turbine Developments

The safeguarding requirements for Heathrow Airport includes a circle with a 30 kilometres radius drawn from the aerodrome reference point to indicate the area within which the Planning Authority must consult the Airport Operator on proposed wind turbine development. This recognises the fact that the introduction of wind-powered generator turbines as an alternative energy policy can create problems for aviation. In addition to their potential for presenting a physical obstacle to air navigation, wind turbines can affect radar and other electronic aids to air navigation from radio frequency interference (the rotating blades create electromagnetic disturbance which can degrade the performance of these systems and cause incorrect information to be received). The amount of interference depends on a number of factors; the number of turbines, their size, construction materials, location and shape of blades. A wind turbine development is also likely to be the subject of consultation with the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA), NATS En Route Ltd. (NERL) and the Ministry of Defence (MOD).

Government advise applicants to initiate discussions with the Planning Authority and the Airport Operator at an early stage in the process and before submitting an application to ensure that they understand the constraints and provide the information to enable a detailed assessment to be made of the proposed development i.e. a navigational impact

assessment study. Where it is determined that a planning application for a proposed development may have an effect on navigational or other aeronautical systems, simulation or other types of interference modelling of the effects of the development may need to be conducted before a decision can be made on the application. It is usual for the developer to bear the cost of the modelling.

Within the safeguarding zone around Heathrow Airport shown on the official safeguarding map published to each council. , wind turbine development will be permitted that demonstrates for the duration of the construction period and during operation it will not adversely affect the operation of Heathrow Airport Ltd or the navigational aids, communication or surveillance equipment used for air navigation at Heathrow Airport Ltd.

Yours sincerely

Simon Vince
For and on behalf of Heathrow Airport Limited