

St Athan Environment Interest Group

Environmental Assessments and Sustainability

24th February 2009



Entec

Creating the environment for business

Environmental Assessments

- Environmental Statement – key output
- Requirement under the T&CP (EIA) Regulations
- Forms part of the planning application
- Detailed baseline surveys
- Assessment of the likely effects on ecology, landscape, traffic, noise, air and odour, heritage and archaeology, water, land quality and community
- Suggested mitigation and enhancement measures to reduce any effects and provide environmental benefits

Landscape and visual assessments

- **Aim of the landscape and visual assessments is to identify:**
 - landscape designations
 - key landscape features/elements
 - landscape character areas
 - landmark features within the landscape
 - sensitive local views of the development

Landscape baseline

- **Landscape designations**

- Special Landscape Areas
- Glamorgan Heritage Coast

- **Landscape features/elements**

- mainly military land-use – airfield, Super Hangar and other hangars, managed/unmanaged grassland
- low tree cover, streams
- railway, road networks

- **Landscape character**

- LANDMAP project defined the site as a character area: RAF St Athan
- 4 other character areas surrounding the site.

Local views

- **Views available from immediate surrounding landscape and elevated land to the north**
- **Visual locations/receptors:**
 - local views from Eglwys-Brewis Road
 - local views from St Athan looking west
 - sections of local lanes and public footpaths
 - properties on the edge of Llanmaes and Picketston
 - distant views from the north and north-east.

Landscape and Visual assessments

- **Consultation with the Vale of Glamorgan**
- **Design input into the construction phasing**
- **Design enhancement and mitigation input to the landscape strategies for the developments including:**
 - retention of existing hedgerows/trees
 - new planting
 - linking the ecology and biodiversity
 - use of landscape elements/form to provide screening
 - graded colouring to break up buildings

Noise assessments

- **Construction and operational phases of the project are being considered**
- **Existing noise sources:**
 - current operations at the MOD site
 - typical noise sources found in a semi-rural area; traffic and railway noise, agricultural
 - Cardiff Airport (6km east of St Athan)
 - Distant noise from Aberthaw Cement Works and Power Station

Noise assessments cont..

- **Noise modelling work is currently ongoing to assess the noise from:**
 - Aircraft engine testing and tank movements
 - Changes in road, rail and air traffic
 - Energy centre and other infrastructure
 - Aerospace Business Park operations
 - Proposed military activities including training areas
 - Recreational and community activities
- **Proposed mitigation to reduce noise impact – screening, location of 'noisy' activities**

Air and odour

- Vale of Glamorgan – no AQMA in the district
- Baseline – collected through existing data and monitoring – predicted that objectives will be met in the future and not exceeded
- Receptors and sensitive areas include farms and surrounding residential areas
- No statutory nature conservation sites (2km) but will consider non-statutory sites
- No existing odour baseline for the site and area

Air and odour work cont..

- **Predicted overall aircraft emissions are predicted to decrease**
- **Predicted emissions from existing (non-aircraft) will remain typical for a semi-rural area**
- **Assessment work will include**
 - emissions from aircraft – retention of the VC10 work, new commercial traffic, Uni Air Squadron and gliding school, Cardiff Airport
 - Energy Centre and traffic (including construction)
 - Odour modelling and assessment from aircraft and engine testing

Local Heritage and Archaeology

- Listed buildings – 4 within or adjacent to St Athan including the disused 12/13th century Church of St. Braise at Eglwys-Brewis, Pickeston House
- Neolithic and Bronze Age ceremonial/burial monuments at Flemingston and Llanmaes;
- Extensive late prehistoric/Romano-British settlement a number of large villa estates, including the Scheduled Villa at Caermead, north of Llantwit Major



Ongoing Baseline surveys

- **A programme of archaeological baseline surveys are in progress:**
 - Phase 1 Geophysics, prospect on of the entire 400ha+ development area is now complete.
 - Phase 2 Geophysics, a 100ha sample of target areas to provide plans of anticipated archaeological features.
 - Initial results have identified prehistoric/Romano-British enclosures in the Castleton area. Work on-going - will include examination of areas south of Llanmaes.
 - Trial trenching, specific proposals awaiting results of the the Phase 2 geophysics.
- **Baseline surveys will inform assessment and identify measures to reduce potential effects**