

SAN NEWS

Together We Can Fly

June 2025
Issue 5

200 AIRFIELDS IDENTIFIED AS STRATEGICALLY IMPORTANT

200 airfields in the UK have identified as strategically important
England—159, Wales—11, Scotland—26, Northern Ireland—4
Licensed—40, Unlicensed—155, Military—5

WWW.SAN-GA.CO.UK

We are pleased to announce the launch of our new website.

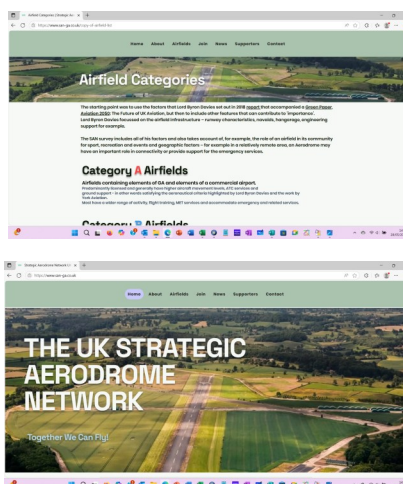
www.san-ga.co.uk

Our website is designed to ensure everyone is up to date with the progress of SAN

We will post regular updates, along with important information for airfield owners/operators

Back issues of SAN News will be available, along with the latest list of airfields who have identified as strategically important

If you wish to receive regular updates, please use the contact tab



SAN TEAM MEETS DFT & MHCLG

At the beginning of May, at one of the GAAC's regular meetings with the Department for Transport, which was joined by a representative of MCHLG, we were able to summarise progress on the SAN. In the meeting and subsequently we have provided updated information on the 200 Strategically Important airfields and also explained the goal of Increasing recognition of, and policy support for, the Network. We will continue to seek further such engagement.

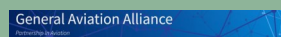
HOSPITAL HELIPADS NOW PART OF SAN

Hospital helipads are vital to the survival of critically ill patients, but are often subject to planning applications being submitted close by. It has been decided that all Hospital Helipads in the UK are incorporated into the Strategic Aerodrome Network, as they are part of the UK vital infrastructure

Supported by



AIRFIELD OPERATORS GROUP



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Summary of Results So Far

Is the Airfield?

32 Licensed
143 Unlicensed
5 Military

Traffic Type

169 VFR only
6 IFR
4 VFR/IFR

Nav Aids available on the Airfield

0 VOR/DME
2 DME
7 NDB
2 ILS
5 Lctr

Does the Airfield have associated airspace?

0 TMA
1 CTR
1 CTA
25 ATZ
4 MATZ

Does the Airfield have ATC?

88 Yes
89 No

What ATC services does the airfield have?

2 APP
3 TWR
1 GND
3 RAD
0 DEL
3 ATIS
10 AFIS
53 A/G
19 Safetycom

Types of Rwy lighting available

3 APP
14 Thr
19 Rwy
7 PAPI

ISSUE HIGHLIGHTED BY THE SAN SURVEY

The side bars in this Newsletter summarise the results so far. Each Newsletter will update the statistics and provide any analysis we think worthwhile.

In this newsletter we have drawn out comments made by the 200 to date that state that their Airfield is Strategically Important,

Note: Not all questions were answered by every airfield completing the survey, Not all airfields have completed the survey, some airfields have duplicated the survey

AERODROME SAFEGUARDING

What it is:

SAN News has mentioned the importance of Aerodrome Safeguarding before, as it is can be very significant - either if you wish to do building or works (development) on your aerodrome, or if someone else proposes to carry out building or works nearby which you may wish to seek to modify or resist.

If your aerodrome is not yet safeguarded or if you do not know what to do, read on!

‘Safeguarding’ applies if you are unlicensed or licensed. The purpose is to alert your Local Planning Authority to your presence and also, by doing this, increase the chances that a developer will also know of, and take note of, your presence.

NATS and the CAA do the same for large licensed airports, but General Aviation sites must make their own arrangements.

If you can agree an Aerodrome Safeguarding Arrangement with your Local Planning Authority, it should then give consideration to the existence of the aerodrome in:

- preparing its Local Plan – which allocates land and sites for housing and employment development; and
- considering planning applications made by developers – which may be in line with the Local Plan, but may be the promotion of development on sites not specifically allocated in the Local Plan.

A rush of solar farm schemes – generally not highlighted in a Local Plan - is a good, current example. These make safeguarding more urgent.

Once an Arrangement has been agreed, the Local Planning Authority should keep you on its mailing list and contact you when anything is proposed or to change.

If you do not yet have up to date / current contact with your Local Planning Authority, experience is that it is good to make an initial approach, explain what you do and that you would like to agree a Safeguarding Arrangement. You can make contact directly with the Local Authority planning team or your District or Local Councillor should assist. Once you have established principles, these can be developed and modified as necessary.

The Safeguarding Arrangement will normally include a map of your site, a written explanation of the type and location of development that could affect aerodrome safety and, therefore, the circumstances in which you should be alerted / consulted.

AERODROME SAFEGUARDING CONT

Increasingly, Local Planning Authorities have digital maps of their area and the best and most efficient arrangement will show the boundaries of your safeguarded area and provide a link to the details of development proposals that could create difficulty within or close to your area.

If you wish to do work on your aerodrome that needs planning permission, the existence of a Safeguarding Arrangement does not *directly* affect the Council's response but, *indirectly*, it is implicit recognition of the existence of the aerodrome and Government policy supports measures which support GA. So, this should be to the benefit for any application you submit.

Please also note:

Planning Officers change, filing systems change, use of IT changes – so make sure you keep your Safeguarding Arrangement up to date and refreshing it every few years is wise.

New legislation is planned for 2025 which will mean that more planning applications will be determined by the Planning Officer, rather than a Committee. If you can get to know the Planning Officer for your area, invite them to the Aerodrome, and make sure they know what you do and how important you are – this can be very beneficial.

How to do it:

Safeguarding Arrangements need to be specific to your aerodrome. The guidance for GA aerodromes setting out the principles of safeguarding and how to go about it is at:

<https://www.caa.co.uk/media/sthlcr14/guidance-note-1-safeguarding-guidance-to-aerodrome-managers-and-operators.pdf>

A range of other helpful information can also be found on the CAA CAST website

IS YOUR AIRFIELD OF STRATEGIC IMPORTANCE?

If you feel your airfield is of strategic importance to the UK, please contact Ann or Louise and let us know. By completing the online survey, the information can be used to help protect airfields in the UK

SAN MAP UPDATED

The SAN map has been updated to show all the airfields who have identified as strategically important. Available to see www.san-ga.co.uk/airfield-map

The airfield categorisation has been included, depicted in the colour of the name

Category A—Major airfield

Category B—Regional airfield

Category C—Sub-Regional airfield

Category D—Local airfield

Summary of Results So Far

What are the Airfield operating Hrs?

9 H24

70 SR-SS

85 PPR only

12 Out of Hrs cover

Is the Airfield Border Force designated?

79 Yes

105 No

Fuel availability

6 Electric

0 Hydrogen

59 AVGAS 100LL

25 JET A1

11 Mogas

29 UL91/94

Aircraft parking on Airfield

141 Grass

33 Hard

Does the Airfield provide maintenance facilities?

23 Part ML

10 Part CAO

5 BCAR

9 Part 145

20 Part 21

16 CAMO

0 Part 147

Does the Airfield have compulsory handling?

4 Yes

60 No

114 N/A

Airframe de-icing availability

10 Yes

173 No

Summary of Results So Far

Meteorological services available on the Airfield?

8 METAR

7 TAF

6 ATIS Tel

6 ATIS Radio

54 Webcam

Does the Airfield have noise abatement procedures in place?

78 Yes

100 No

Is there fire cover on the Airfield?

61 Yes

115 No

What type of ground support is available?

7 GPU

14 Electric charge

14 Handling

14 RR refuelling

Does the Airfield have heritage links?

87 Yes

84 No

Is your Airfield at risk?

19 Short term

54 Medium Term

47 Long term

Does the Airfield provide services for?

17 SAR

32 HEMS

29 Police

43 Military

23 Utility companies

Would you be interest- ed in the new Drone infrastructure?

65 Yes

109 No

AIRFIELD FOCUS—MANCHESTER BARTON

BY LIAM CHADBOND



In the inter-war years, the City of Manchester, in its quest to establish a municipal airport, chose the location of Fox Hill Farm, alongside the present A57 in 1928. This choice was strongly influenced by the City's Cleansing Department's ownership there of 2600 acres and additional persuasion by John Leeming, who went on to lead the Lancashire Aero Club into existence at the airfield.

Building of the Airport commenced in March 1929 and to initially reduce costs, the area was limited to 80 acres east of Fox Hill Glen.

The Airport officially opened on 29th January 1930 with a large Hangar, which was designed to house the most advanced passenger aircraft of the day, the Imperial Airways Argosy. The airport became the first municipal airfield in the UK to be licensed by the Air Ministry and the iconic Control Tower was completed shortly after. Both the Control Tower and original Hangar are now Grade II listed buildings and remain in operation today.

The first landing was by an Avro Avian, with the first large aircraft to use the airfield being Imperial Airways' three-engine Argosy on 23rd May 1930.

On completion of the airport and construction of its tower and hangar in 1930, Imperial Airways commenced operations, eventually offering a thrice-weekly scheduled service to London's Croydon Airport via Castle Bromwich Aerodrome, Birmingham, subsidised by the councils of Manchester, Liverpool and Birmingham. This service was timed to fly north from Croydon in the evening and to return south next morning, in order to provide connections to and from European airports from Croydon.

In 1937 North Eastern Airways had expanded its fleet, acquiring several De Havilland Dragon Rapide. Operating services predominantly from London to Edinburgh, the Dragon Rapide were utilised on services between Doncaster and Liverpool via Manchester Barton.

In 1937, following comments made by KLM regarding the poor surface conditions and weather at the aerodrome, Manchester City Council committed to building a second airport south west of the City Centre, eventually opening Ringway Airport (RAF Ringway), moving all commercial timetables to the new airport in 1938.

Between 1940 and 1942 Aer Lingus maintained an irregular commercial operation at Barton, operating to and from Dublin with their Dakota DC3 fleet. Operating the only timetabled service between the UK and Ireland, their DC3 was the largest airliner to serve Barton and ultimately the last.

Fast forward to 2025 and today the aerodrome is a hive of activity handling over 40,000 movements per year. Our team of eighteen run the operation 362 days a year, for the 100 based and many visiting aircraft we handle.

The aerodrome layout has changed little since the early days, with three quarters of our movements taking place on 08/26 runways. As these are the longest on the aerodrome, and are oriented with the prevailing wind, much investment has been made in drainage and grading work along the length of them.

2024 saw a major land levelling project on the aerodrome west of the Runway 08 thresholds. This work has improved safety by creating a level area off the end of the runway, and with the redirection of the Boyle Brook, will hopefully improve airfield drainage long term.

Our three aircraft hangars date from 1930, the 1960s and 2020, the newest of which is where our managed aircraft are housed. Our managed hangarage service began in 2024 and has grown to over ten aircraft. The service allows pilots to arrive at the airfield, and their aircraft be out on the apron, refuelled to their requested amount.



AIRFIELD FOCUS—MANCHESTER BARTON

BY LIAM CHADBOND



Established in 2012, Manchester Heliport is the North West regions only dedicated premium helicopter facility centre. Located onsite at Manchester Barton Aerodrome, the site offers a professional and secure environment, ideally suited for the comfortable and convenient transportation of VIP's. We are able to provide flexible extended operating hours (based on time of movement) at any time day or night with minimal notice providing availability 24/7 by arrangement. Currently the hangar at Manchester Heliport is home to ten helicopters ranging from Sikorsky S76 to Robinson R44 types. Next door to Manchester Heliport is the North West Air Ambulance base. With their two EC135 helicopters based with us, and one based at Blackpool, the NWAA are the busiest air ambulance outside of London. The National Police Air Support have been based at Barton since the 1990's, operating a number of types through the years including AS355, MD902 and now EC135 helicopters. The NPAS Barton unit are also the busiest of all the NPAS units outside of London.



It isn't just civilian helicopters visiting Barton. Our team are very often busy conducting rotors running refuels on military type helicopters. These usually visit while transiting the country, or when on navigational exercises. Our Jet bowser contains F34 variant fuel, which is specifically required in certain types of military helicopters, and with pressurised fuelling up to 400 LPM, we are well equipped for the largest of military visitors.

The aerodrome operates as a licenced aerodrome with code 1A runways. The air traffic service provided is an Aerodrome Flight Information Service (AFIS) manned by a team of five full-time FISOs. Following a four-year trial, our air traffic department became the first unit in the UK to operate a CAA approved Flight Information Display (FID). This has become a vital tool to the FISO in aiding situational awareness. On the ground, our Aerodrome Rescue Firefighting Service provide CAT1 cover (CAT2 on remission) using a Anglco and Land Rover Defender fire vehicles.



The largest flying school we have on site is LAC Flying School. LAC teach ab initio flight training for PPL(A) and LAPL students, as well as post PPL(A) courses such as Night Ratings and the Instrument Rating (Restricted). Mainair Flying School is one of the longest established flying schools at Manchester Barton Aerodrome. They offer microlight training at it's best and pride themselves on their quality of instruction. Offering training, trial flights and ground school tuition as well as a number of other services. Helicentre provides commercial and private helicopter PPL(H) training as well as charter, surveying, helicopter sales and management. With bases at Liverpool John Lennon Airport and Manchester Barton Aerodrome, they are well placed as the leading rotary training provider in the North West. In addition to these three schools, we have North West Aerobatics, Pagoda Flight Training, Mainair Microlight Centre, and North West Gyrocopters. You can see



from this, how busy an airfield we can be, and statics suggest we're getting busier.... which is great!

Long term, there are lots of areas for expanding our business. We are continually looking to work with new operators and exploring ways to improve the infrastructure onsite. As we head towards our centenary, there's no sign of us slowing down.

Summary of Results So Far

Activities on Airfield

96 Flight training
138 Recreational flying
21 AOC

16 Flying displays
33 Aviation related commercial activities
13 Airshows

Does the Airfield have flight training available?

72 PPL
73 NPPL
7 MEP

13 IR
12 CPL
57 Ground school
23 Aerobatics

Does the Airfield have environmental measures in place?

62 Habitat conservation
39 Biodiversity
30 Animal grazing
36 Land cultivation

Does the Airfield have non-aviation activities?

105 Yes
72 No

Does the Airfield engage with community groups?

72 School visits
80 Cadets/scouts
39 Aviation history clubs
18 Social learning groups
52 Voluntary groups
72 Open days
16 Flying displays
16 Apprenticeships

Airfields Stating Strategically Important

Category A – Major airfield

Blackbushe, Blackpool, Caernarfon, Chichester Goodwood, Denham, Derby, Duxford, East Midlands, Elstree, Kirkwall, Lydd, Manchester Barton, Old Buckenham, Oxford, Popham, Rochester, Sherburn in Elmet, Shobdon, Sleaf, Sumburgh, Teesside, Turweston

Category B – Regional airfield

Aston Down, Bagby, Balado, Bodmin, Burn, Coventry, Compton Abbas, Cumbernauld, Currock Hill, Dunstable Downs, Eaglescott, Earls Colne, Enniskillen, Enstone, Eshott, Fair Oaks, Fenland, Halton, Haverfordwest, Husbands Bosworth, Kemble, Lands End, Lasham, Lee on Solent, Little Gransden, Long Mynd, Manston, Old Warden, Parham, Perth, Portmoak, Scilly Isles, Strathaven, Sutton Bank, Swansea, Tibenham, Wellesbourne, White Waltham, Wickenby

Category C – Sub Regional airfield

Abbots Bromley, Barton Farm, Baxby, Beccles, Bellarena, Beverley, Bicester, Bolt Head, Brighton, Brent Tor, Cae Mawr, Camphill, Castle Kennedy, Challock, Chirk, Clench Common, Clipgate, Cromer, Dairy House Farm, Darlton, Dornoch, Eastbach, Eastchurch, Easterton, East Kirkby, Eday, Eggesford, Falgunzeon, Farway Common, Feshiebridge, Fife, Finmere, Full Sutton, Glenswinton, Gransden Lodge, Halesland, Kenley, Kingstanding, Kirkbride, Kirton in Lindsey, Kittyhawk, Little Snoring, Llewenni Parc, Lundy Island, Lyveden, Membury, Milfield, Milson, Movenis, Netherthorpe, New Model Farm, North Hill, Nympsfield, Otherton, Pembrey, Ridgewell, Ringmer, Ripple, Rivar Hill, Saltby, Seighford, Sherington, Shipmeadow, Skegness, Snitterfield, Strubby, Talgarth, The Park, Tilstock, Upavon, Upwood, Walton Wood, West Wales

Category D – Local airfield

Ashcroft, Aughrim, Bargrug, Berrier, Berrow, Bognor, Charterhall, Chilbolton, Colerne, Cottered, Crowland, Deanland, Devizes-Coate, Easter, East Fortune East, Errol, Fadmoor, Felixkirk, Fisherwick, Garton Field, Glassonby, Glenforsa, Great Massingham, Hadfold Farm, Headon, Holmbeck, Home Farm – Ebrington, Hughley, Insh, Ledbury, Longside, Lydeway, Main Hall Farm, Midlem, Newhall Mains, New York, Newport City, Oaklands Farm – East Tytherley, Oakley, Pent Farm, Perranporth, Pitsford, Pocklington, Pointon, Rectory Farm, Rothwell, St Michaels, Salterford Farm, Scampton, Sollas, South Cave/Mount Airy, Stoke Golding, Strathallan, Strubby North, Talybont, Temple Bruer, Tibenham Priory Farm, Tiffenden, Troutbeck/Keswick, West Horndon, West Tisted, Weybourne, White Ox Mead, Whittles Farm, Willow Farm, Wooburn

All Hospital helipads

STRATEGIC AERODROME NETWORK (SAN)

We plan to issue this Newsletter 4 times a year.

Each Newsletter will highlight common issues and challenge faced by Airfields and alongside will identify potential solutions to managing those challenges. We can draw on the excellent information provided in the Survey. Please highlight any issues you would like to raise.

Each Newsletter will have a short description of the activities and issues at one Airfield – if you would like to follow Manchester Barton and be showcased please let us know!

We know how isolated Airfields can sometimes feel, but many challenges, innovations and experiences are faced by many and highlighting these will help to protect and sustain our Network of General Aviation Airfields.

Together we can help protect GA Airfields!

Together We Can Fly!

If you have not received a survey link by email, please email louisesouthern@btinternet.com

The survey takes 10 mins to complete

Thank you for helping to protect the UK airfields for the future generations

Thank you for taking the time to read the SAN Newsletter

Ann & Louise