



SYWELL

AERODROME

[REDACTED]
The Head of Airspace, Air Traffic Management and Aerodromes,
The Civil Aviation Authority,
Aviation House,
Gatwick South,
West Sussex RH6 0YR.

23rd October 2019

[REDACTED]

Ref: The Sywell Aerodrome GNS Approach

Further to my letter of 2nd October 2019, I can confirm our designers, Pildo, submitted responses to all the outstanding CAA queries on 14th October in accordance with my assurances in my last letter to you. We are currently waiting for the go ahead and approval from the CAA to carry out the validation flights.

However, I have now received an email dated 18th October from [REDACTED] copy attached. **Our original application listed users of the GNS Approach as Based Operators and Corporate Aircraft Visitors.** Never at anytime was I aware of or agreed to such a restriction. This restriction is something that has been migrated into the process by the CAA. To state or imply there will be a potential change to the potential impact to those on the ground or in the air is nonsensical. Aircraft operate from Sywell all the time over those referred to, not just in bad weather conditions. So why should there be a change in potential impact just because it is low visibility?

The cynic in me thinks this is the “showstopper” the CAA has been after. Give the applicant an approval to satisfy the DfT but restrict it sufficiently to ensure it will have little use and hopefully be abandoned.

As you know we do not currently have a based operator who can make use of the GNS Approach as 2Excel migrated away to Doncaster some time ago. **If this restriction is not lifted it will kill off our aspirations of becoming a Corporate Aircraft Facility to serve Northamptonshire.**

There is already an agreed restriction within our GNS application of 1 approach per hour and a max. of 6 per day on a PPR basis only. In theory the GNS Approach could be used on every day of the year resulting in an absolute total of 2,190 Approaches. However, in practice we know that will never happen. It is more likely to be up to a maximum of 10% of days resulting in potentially a maximum of 219 Approaches but more likely this will be much less, lets say 150 Approaches per annum. Taken in the context of our annual ATM totals it becomes insignificant.

In any event all the ATMs at Sywell have been assessed, including the potential number of Corporate Aircraft, in the EIA attached to the hard runway planning approval. The CAA should be aware of this as it was part of the process. The eventual permission was granted by the Secretaries of State with restrictions on the overall annual ATMs permitted and further restrictions on the number of Corporate Aircraft ATMs within the annual total, a copy of which is attached. Therefore the proposed GNS Approaches have already been assessed and are restricted within the total permitted. **The GNS Approaches are not additional ATMs to the total permitted, therefore there will be no additional impact to local stakeholders.**

[REDACTED]

I have had to fight for 21 years to take Sywell from a grass strip on a journey chasing the dream of a Corporate Aircraft Facility and to where we are today. The planning process for the hard runway took 10 years, despite the CAA objections. It then took a further 2 years to build the runway ourselves because the budget had been spent on achieving the approval. We have since built a corporate hangar & apron. Recently we have installed runway lighting. We have invested a considerable sum for a small company in pursuit of our goal of creating a Corporate Aircraft Facility.

I have also tried hard to attract Corporate Users and there are a small number but not enough to justify the financial investment. The main reason they are deterred from using Sywell is the lack of an Approach, which gives the Corporate Client the certainty he will be reunited with their car on the return and not diverted to either Luton, Cambridge, or Coventry with their car 30 miles or more away.

We started preparations for the GNS application in 2015. We find ourselves nearly 5 years on being 'run round the block' by your organisation as I feared & predicted. **This should be a relatively straightforward application and not a political battle against the risk adverse culture regime within the CAA.** I fear this latest issue is a major stumbling block preventing our progression towards creating a GA Corporate Aircraft Facility if this proposed restriction is not lifted.

I have a Board Meeting on 26th November at which I will be required to report the current position having recently given Directors assurance I believed we were very close to an approval. I am not sure I can justifiably assure them that we have made any further progress. They will no doubt consider if they should approve further funds and resource chasing what appears to becoming a near impossibility.

A line needs to be drawn and a decision made.

We have submitted all the responses required, there is nothing outstanding. Please either issue the Approval we applied for i.e. without the FBO restriction, subject to a Section 106 style condition that requires the validation flights be carried out to the satisfaction of the CAA prior to the GNS Approach being made available for use.

OR

Issue a Refusal so that we can stop wasting time and money and move on.

I look forward to receiving your decision at your earliest convenience.

