



Draft Kildare County Development Plan 2023-2029

Department of Defence Submission – May 2022

1. The following is a submission from the Department of Defence concerning safeguarding of Military Operations, for inclusion in the 2023-2029 Kildare County Development Plan.
2. The Minister for Defence is responsible for the regulation of military aviation. The Irish Aviation Authority does not have remit for military installations or training areas. Safeguarding of military aviation operating in military airspace or operating to/from/in the vicinity of Casement Aerodrome and the Defence Forces Training Centre at the Curragh Camp is intended to protect current and future aircraft operations and take account of the security requirements associated with some of those operations. ICAO Standards and Recommended Practices with respect to safeguarding are applied as part of Department of Defence safeguarding.
3. The purpose of safeguarding
 - a. The purpose of safeguarding is to ensure the viability of military airspace and installations for air operations and training. Safeguarding must protect both current and future uses considering the longest possible view both in terms of future use and developments in air navigation technology.
 - b. The focus of this submission is the control of development in the following areas:
 - i. The area contained within the Co. Kildare portion of Restricted Area EIR15 which underlies the ICAO Obstacle Limitation Surfaces (OLS) established for Casement Aerodrome.
 - ii. The area of Co. Kildare contained within Restricted Area EIR16, within 20NM of Casement Aerodrome.
 - iii. The areas of Co. Kildare contained within Military Operating Areas (MOAs), within 20NM of Casement Aerodrome.
 - iv. Areas within 5NM of the Defence Forces Training Centre, Curragh Camp
4. Tall Structures
 - a. The Department of Defence has concerns with the erection of wind farms or other tall structures which will affect its ability to train and operate in a safe and economic manner. Further detail is provided in the next paragraphs of this submission.
 - b. For the purposes of this submission, ‘tall structures’ refer to objects that are **greater than 30m** in height, above ground level at the site of the object.



5. Military Airspace

- a. A large portion of the airspace above County Kildare is designated for the use of the Irish Defence Forces. These portions of airspace have the designations EIR15, EIR16, MOA3 and MOA4 and their purposes are as follows:
 - i. The EIR15 airspace protects arrivals and departures at Casement Aerodrome. It also protects aircraft conducting operations or training in the vicinity of the aerodrome and extends from surface to 3,000 feet above sea level.
 - ii. The EIR16 airspace is used primarily to recover aircraft making instrument approaches, under instrument flight rules, to Casement Aerodrome and extend from various base altitudes to approximately 24,500 feet.
 - iii. Military Operating Areas (MOA) 3 and 4 are used to conduct military pilot training, aerobatics and air combat manoeuvres and extends from surface to approximately 45,000 feet.
- b. The airspace described above is in frequent use. This area is designated in accordance with Section 68 of the IAA Act for use by the Defence Forces and its lateral and vertical limits are published in Section ENR 5-2 of Aeronautical Information Publication (AIP) Ireland. The lateral limits are also depicted in Figure 1.
- c. Military aircraft operating in military airspace may not be flying in compliance with the standard rules of the air, and particularly may be operating at lower levels than that permitted for civil aircraft.

6. Military Low Flying Training Areas

- a. The Irish Air Corps regularly conducts fixed wing and helicopter low flying training in the airspace over several areas of Co. Kildare. The presence of tall objects in these areas could be incompatible with their use and designation as low flying training areas.
- b. The following areas in Co. Kildare are currently used for military low level flying training:
 - i. **OLFA Allenwood / Edenderry**, which comprises an area within a 3NM radius of co-ordinate: 53° 16' 48"N, 006°59'11"W
 - ii. **OLFA Newbridge**, which comprises an area within a 3NM radius of co-ordinate: 53° 13' 18"N, 006°48'21"W
 - iii. **MLFA 3**, which is contained within the lateral limits defined by the following co-ordinates:
 - (1) 53°05'17" N 007°04'29" W
 - (2) 53°05'17" N 006°52'29" W
 - (3) 53°00'28" N 006°52'29" W
 - (4) 53°00'28" N 007°04'29" W

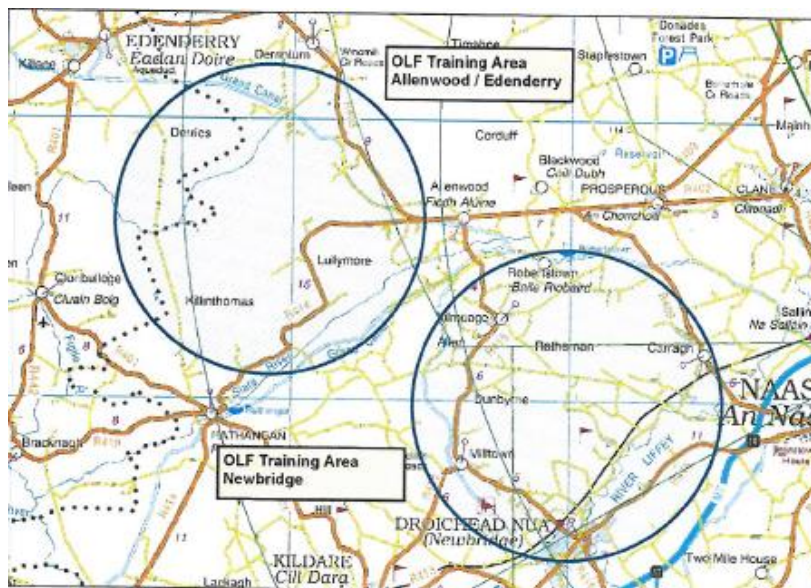


Figure 1
Showing the OLFA Allenwood / Edenderry,
(1) 53° 16' 48"N, 006°59'11"W
Showing the OLFA Allenwood/Newbridge,
(2) 53° 13' 18"N, 006°48'21"W

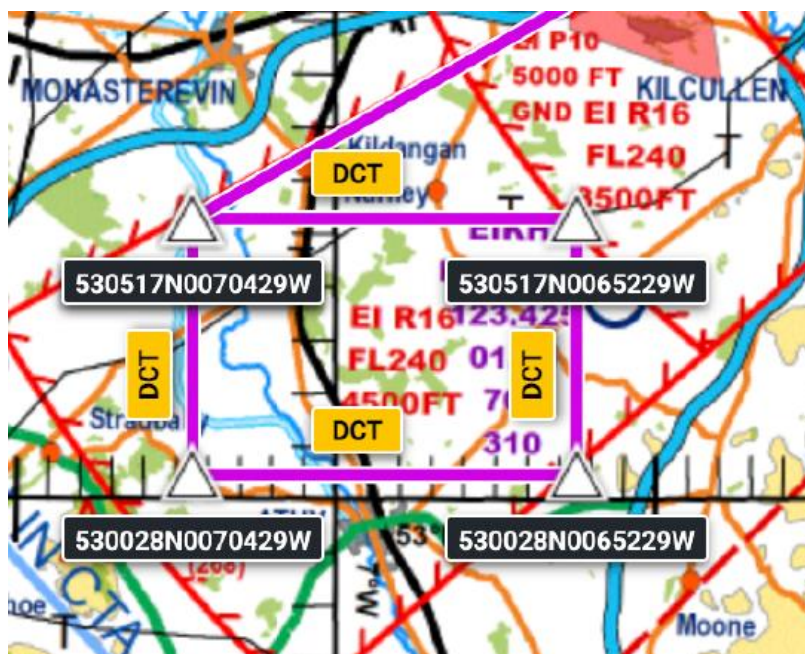


Figure 2 MLFA Athy
(1) 53°05'17" N 007°04'29" W,
(2) 53°05'17" N 006°52'29" W
(3) 53°00'28" N 006°52'29" W
(4) 53°00'28" N 007°04'29" W



7. Critical Low Level Helicopter Routes

- a. The following routes are identified as critical low-level routes in support of Irish Air Corps operational requirements and the Irish Air Corps / Department of Defence are opposed to the erection of windfarms or tall structures within 3NM of the route centreline, as this could affect the Air Corps' ability to access regional areas:
 - i. M4 motorway
 - ii. M7 motorway
 - iii. N7 national route
 - iv. M9 motorway
- b. **As a notifiable body the Department of Defence should be notified of planning applications or proposals for wind farms, wind turbines or other tall structures in Co. Kildare that lie within 3NM of the route centrelines of the M4 / M7 / N7 and M9 should be referred to the Property Management Branch of the Department of Defence for assessment of potential impact on flight operations.**

8. Wind Farm / Wind Turbine lighting

- a. **As a notifiable body the Department of Defence should be notified of planning applications or proposals for wind farms, wind turbines or other tall structures in the areas outlined in paragraph 3b to this submission, should be referred to the Property Management Branch of the Department of Defence for assessment of potential impact on flight operations.**
- b. **As a notifiable body the Department of Defence should be notified of all locations where wind farms or wind turbines are permitted, it should be a condition that they meet the following lighting requirements:**
 - i. Single turbines, structures, or turbines delineating a windfarm should be illuminated by Type C, Medium intensity, Fixed Red obstruction lighting with a minimum output of 2,000 candela to be visible in all directions of azimuth and to be operational H24/7 days a week.
 - ii. Obstruction lighting should be incandescent or of a type visible to Night Vision equipment. Obstruction lighting fitted to obstacles must emit light at the near Infra-Red (IR) range of the electromagnetic spectrum, specifically at or near 850 nanometres (nm) of wavelength. Light intensity to be of similar value to that emitted in the visible spectrum of light.



9. Solar Farms

- a. Solar / PV arrays can give rise to glint and glare problems for pilots and air traffic controllers so that any proposed arrays in the vicinity of Casement Aerodrome or the Curragh Camp, or on their approaches should be assessed within 'glint and glare' studies in relation to runway thresholds, fixed wing and helicopter flight paths and control towers.
- b. **As a notifiable body the Department of Defence should be notified of planning applications or proposals for solar farms 3KM of the Curragh Camp or those parts of Co. Kildare that are located within 5KM of Casement Aerodrome, should be referred to the Property Management Branch of the Department of Defence for assessment of potential impact on flight operations.**

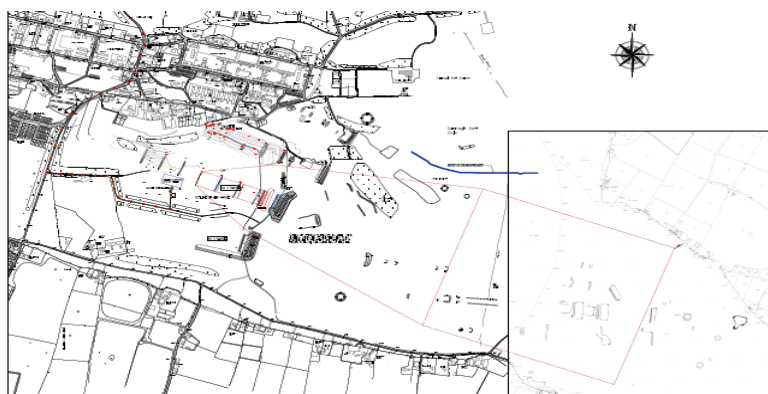
10. Curragh Camp/Defence Forces Training Centre

Aeronautical Assessments.

- a. The Defence Forces Training Centre is located at the Curragh Camp, Co. Kildare. This area is used extensively by the Defence Forces for helicopter operations and training as well as high and low level parachute training. If wind farm or other tall objects were to encroach upon the Curragh Camp area, its viability as a location for air operations would be lost.
- b. **As a notifiable body the Department of Defence should be notified of planning applications or proposals for wind farms, wind turbines or other tall structures within 5NM of the Curragh Camp should be referred to the Property Management Branch of the Department of Defence for assessment of potential impact on flight operations.**
- c. The rationale of a 5NM assessment area is to protect the CURRAGH CAMP as a site compatible with air operations including for the implementation of instrument arrival and departure procedures planned for the near future.

Ground Force Operations.

- a. Please see attached the attached map, outlining the Range Danger Area for the Curragh Camp. It is an area of importance with regards for the DFTC as any construction or development within this space would leave the range unusable.



End

The Department of Defence would like to take this opportunity to provide the following guidelines to flight paths and safe operation of Casement Aerodrome as it impacts on the County Development Plan.

Please see Appendix 1