

***Comments and Responses (in blue) to the Proposal***

***1. Regarding the model planes on the common - it wasn't just the noise that worried us.***

a) There was a bit of an accident when one got out of control and hit a member of the public walking across the Common.

***\* In all of his 60 years flying, Barry cannot recall any such occasion. Flyers are a tight knit bunch and we would certainly get hear about it.***

***\* We have constantly requested that in the event of any problems, we need date / time / details, including names of persons involved, especially in the further event of any potential claim.***

b) Every model plane flyer had to have public liability insurance - how can that be policed - we would never be sure if uninsured flyers we using the common.

***\* As a requirement of using the site, we all have to be members of the B.M.F.A. As such we are covered up to 25million pounds per any one claim. We regularly check our flying group.***

***2. I am not sure if I would hear the model planes in Linen Street even if they were not battery powered!***

a) But the suggestion to increase the hours but only for battery ones seems sensible

***\* It is not even possible to hear electric planes from the Stands. you would need to be at least within 50 feet of the Airstrip. The only noise present is from the motorway.***

***3. We think that as long as the residents are happy that the planes are battery operated and quiet and they are only flying within the agreed hours they should continue.***

a) We also think that the residents who have complained in the past about the noise and it affects mainly should be the ones consulted about any change of flying hours. We certainly would not like to have to sit in our gardens and listen to the perpetual droning noise.

***\* With 99.9% of electric flight, there is no danger of that. In any event, you are too far away.***

***4. I'm not at all keen on model airplanes.***

a) There was one flown in the summer which sounded as though the Battle of Britain was still raging in the skies.

\* To answer this we need a bit more evidence i.e. Date / Time. It is more than likely to be an ICE powered model that for the past 3-4 years, we do not fly

**5. Good afternoon xxx, if as Jane says aircraft are now silent then we have no objection to increased flying time.**

\* Thank you for your support

**6. No problem with model aircraft that make no noise**

a) but would certainly want restrictions to stay in place for petrol powered ones- preferably banning the latter altogether!

\* This could be a distinct possibility for the future. With 99.9% of planes electric, we would have no objection to this suggestion. ICE powered planes, in any event must stay with the current flying hours.

**7. Model plane suggestions seems reasonable (but we've never heard them from where we are anyway)**

\* Quite.

8. Regarding the planes, I would not be keen to extend flying times to dusk unless it was exclusively for the silent battery powered types, as we have no information about return of petrol engined versions. You may want to check with Sheila as the restrictions were hard won previously.

\* We have no intention at all to include ICE planes in the changing of hours back to the original times. There will be no 'return' of ICE power. This request is only for Silent flight electrically powered planes.

9. I've no objections to the proposal re times of flying model aircraft.

\* Thank you

**10. I agree with Jane Sault about the model aeroplanes.**

a) It's great that the common is used for this purpose and since there is very little if any noise to Ladra residents I hope that their request for extending their flying times might be met.

\* Thank you. Just to re-state....electric planes cannot be heard by LADRA residents. It was hard to see them, let alone hear them, from the Coronation Bar, which some of the working Party Committee can verify.

**11. I am conscious that model aircraft have been flown here for very many years. But in that time the pattern of use of the area has changed dramatically and it is now used much more intensively with greater public access.**

a) There is a real potential for danger to the public from model aircraft crashing and there is a history of model planes crashing on the golf course and indeed one crashed onto the roof of a parked caravan some years ago.

**\* These 'few' incidents over time.....and a good few years ago seem to be what everyone keeps referring to, and have almost become folklore, with the story getting bigger and more catastrophic than ever.**

**\* Let me explain: \* today's technology is very advanced compared to the issues you are speaking about.**

**\* planes were previously run on 35Mhz units which were unreliable to say the least**

**\* today's transmitter / receivers are 2.4Mhz and lock electronically on to each individual model, meaning no intrusion into signals.**

**\* we only fly latest technology Remote Control electronics and electrically powered planes.**

**\* for the caravan incident we are aware of, the plane was what we call 'free flight', meaning no Radio Control.**

**\* we record any incident in a log book following each flying session, including stray golf balls, out of control dogs and forced landings.**

b) Has there been a full risk assessment of allowing the continued flying of model aircraft on this site as part of the current review of the use of St Mary's land and if not, why not?

**\* I do not know of one. Why would one be required after such a long history of flight i.e. 91 years. Does this include risk assessments for the football club, golf club etc etc?**

c) With regard to altering the flying hours, it would be interesting to have a demonstration of current model aircraft and the noise they generate.

**\* the presentation that was issued had a very good noise comparison within the last 2 slides. We would have hoped you had all had the chance to see this via your own particular representative,**

**however, we did offer to give the Working Party...or anyone interested an onsite demonstration.**

d) Clearly the battery driven planes are less noisy; could this be a site for only battery driven 'silent' planes with all petrol driven planes prohibited on this site? If the planes are demonstrably and genuinely silent, a longer flying time for such 'silent' planes may be reasonable.

**\* This is always a possibility. I cannot see ICE planes making any sort of comeback. It is noisy, smelly and polluting.**

e) It is not clear where the flying zone markers will be sited; is it realistic for the model aircraft to take off, land and be flown wholly within the airspace defined by these markers?

**\* The markers and sign board are in fact destined to be situated around the actual airstrip in order to make the public aware for the purposes of health & safety. They are not flight boundaries.**

f) Finally, there is no reference to the flying of drones.... Should it be stipulated they can only be flown within the model aircraft flying zone?

**\* Quadcopters (Drones) are also battery powered, and as far as our Group is concerned, must fly within the set boundary. This boundary will also be clearly displayed on the Airstrip information board.**

***12. I can see that noise will be reduced if the only models flown are battery powered.***

**\* True**

a) Unfortunately they do have a down side as well, you can't hear them coming! Rules concerning users of the 'common' runway need to be enforced. Flight area can be breached easily.

**\* We seem to be damned if we do and damned if we don't.**

b) I remember, although it was 30 years ago, having a glider "land" in my back garden, closely followed by the owner knocking on my door.

**\* 30 years ago !!!!! that could have been 'free flight' or early unreliable 35Mhz radio. As said previously, our technology ensures full 'locked in' control.....and we do fly within our area.**

c) A recently published map shows a typical day of arrivals onto Birmingham Airport Runway 33. A great number of these fly across St Mary's Lands. I don't know just how low they are but would hate for a model to hit one.

**\* Our models have a maximum ceiling of 400feet, Small light aircraft 400 up to 2000 feet and Airliners flying over towns are restricted by the CAA to above 2000 feet. We are in the lowest legal airspace.**

***13. I personally think that there are so many walkers and other people using the common now it is not safe to fly any model aeroplanes.***

**\* We fly most days. over the past 4 years, I have seen no real difference in Public attendance. There are usually 10 to 20 walkers and dog owners over a 2 hour flying period.**

a) They do not keep within the flight area.

**\* Do you mean now.....or years ago? I can assure you we take our flying very seriously and fly within our boundary. Some proof of this would be appreciated.**

b) There is also the problem of policing the rules and regulations, basically they can do as they please.

**\* We largely police the rules ourselves.....we cannot do as we please as we have a duty of care to other users of the site largely for Health & safety reasons.**

c) If they are allowed to continue the time limits should be kept as they are and only battery powered planes allowed.

**\* on what grounds. This is very one sided and not particularly constructive.**

d) Most importantly all flying should be banned when the skylarks are nesting, they are more important and should be protected at all costs!

**\* This is an outdoor activity like many others. You are now suggesting we can only enjoy our pastime in the winter?**

**\* I don't personally like football, horse racing or golf. This is my recreation as a retiree. it gets me out in the fresh air, and with a skill.**

**\* These are not toys, but expensive models (averaging £150 to £300). We certainly do not consider ourselves irresponsible in what we do.**

**\* Will you also ban dog walkers and children who regularly storm through the long grass, for many more hours in the day than we are there.**

**\* Why create a Nature reserve in 2012 when you are fully aware of the fact that model planes are flown on the same ground for 91 years.**

**14 verbal comments:**

There is no policing of the model plane fliers, no control over what they do!

**\* We police ourselves, responsibly. We cannot be in attendance 24-7, but when we are there, we all fly responsibly.**

**15 verbal comment:**

We don't need any extension of flying time, twilight or 11 pm is ridiculous.

**\* Where has 11pm come from, this is not our request???**

**\* Broad statements without backup are not constructive.....reasons please**

**\* There are no restrictions for sport or anything else. Restriction of hours makes it impossible for working folk to charge batteries and get to the Airstrip before kerfew.**

**16 verbal comment.**

Possible to extend times but who is going to police it. I am not near enough to hear it so shouldn't be asked.

**\* We police ourselves, responsibly. We cannot be in attendance 24-7, but when we are there, we all fly responsibly.**

**17 verbal comment.**

They don't keep within their flying area there is no one to check what they do.

**\* Broad statements without backup are not constructive.....reasons please**

It is too busy over there especially at weekends could be dangerous. I worry about the birds.

**\* Do you have statistics available to compare to weekday usage?**

**\* An Ecology study by an independant body, for the BMFA is attached to give some idea of effects on wildlife.**

**Additional email received**

**18) *With regard to the flying club: as a resident, I would have no objection to increased hours providing that there is complete safety to other users of the area.***

a) The LADRA committee which pressed for no flying did so because a plane had crashed near the path where children were walking. The noise was only one factor. **There could have been a fatality.**

**\* Please let me have the full details of this so we can investigate. how long ago: date / Glider, RC or free flight / Exact location**

b) Are remote controls completely reliable? That should be looked into.

**\* as stated previously, the latest technology used by us is directly locked on to each model. Anything in life can fail at some point, that is why we are insured**

**\* batteries are monitored, and a range check is done on every model. i.e. the transmitter is put into very low battery power mode and is expected to still perform well.**

**\* We are more than happy to meet anyone at the strip to discuss their concerns.**

**Finally:**

Most of the comments received are useful and assist us to find an amicable solution. It is difficult to answer comments without any backup.

One of the suggestions regarding policing, prompted us to make a suggestion.

Barry Clay is a formal Model flight instructor.

Another of the things we can do is vet the new flyers / visitors. It may be possible to provide his contact details on the webpage & signage, stating that anyone wishing to fly, must first contact the group to have the plane checked over and perform a basic handling competence check.

All flyers will also be checked for BMFA current membership (therefore insurance cover) and carry their membership cards at all times when attending the site.

We may not be in attendance every time there is a flyer on site, therefore not in a 'catch all' situation, but this may help. At least we will be able to keep records of the flyers that contact us.

If the Group decided they would prefer Silent & electric flight only, and a ban on ICE planes, then we are open to that suggestion, if it means we can revert to the previous flying hours i.e. 9pm or dusk

We are very much Pro Electric Power, actively discouraging ICE flyers. Almost all have now converted their planes to electric motors.