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Directorate of Aerodrome Standards
 Branch AS2

Your ref: TM/KLA/D1/1

Our ref: 10G/28/17/2

Date: 7 July 1983

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 City Planning Officer
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Dear Mr Wark

SOUTHAMPTON AIRPORT

Thank you for your letter and enclosures of 27 June about trees in Marlhill Copse.

Southampton Airport is licensed by this Authority. The criteria against which an aerodrome and its environs are assessed for grant of a licence are set out in CAP 168 'Licensing of Aerodromes'. Those criteria incorporate the relevant Standards and Recommended Practices detailed in Annex 14 to the Convention on International Civil Aviation to which the United Kingdom is a Contracting State.

Following grant of a licence an aerodrome is inspected periodically to confirm that appropriate standards are being maintained. If during an inspection, deficiencies from aerodrome licensing criteria are noted, the aerodrome management is asked to take remedial action. Operational judgement is used by the officers concerned in deciding the degree of urgency required to remedy the item in question.

If, for example, a tree is noted as penetrating one of the surfaces designed to protect aircraft, the aerodrome operator is asked to arrange to have it removed; either by lopping or felling. If the penetration is, say, 1 metre of wispy, spindly growth the deficiency could possibly be accepted for a period of time - whilst negotiations took place with the owner of the tree. However, in the event of a building or other fixed structure penetrating the surface it may be necessary to act immediately and ask airport management to adjust the runway markings/lighting etc. to take account of the obstacle.

The most recent inspection of the aerodrome was on 18 May 1983. The trees in Marlhill Copse were not penetrating the Approach Surface Slope. Previously, on 17 February, a flight inspection of the aerodrome lighting was made. The trees were not obscuring or interfering with the lighting. Trees adjacent to the Chapel (South Stoneham Cemetery) were a minor penetration of Approach Surface Slope.

If a pilot using an aerodrome detects or experiences any untoward event which could be assessed in his/her view as a safety hazard, a procedure exists whereby the occurrence can be reported. I have enclosed for your information

a copy of Article 82 of the Air Navigation Order.

From the above you will see, in terms of safety standards, that licensed aerodromes are adequately covered by measures to ensure appropriate standards are maintained. I make that point because the final sentence in paragraph 2 of the City Secretary and Solicitor's letter of 14 January suggests the aerodrome lighting is sometimes obscured by trees.

Aircraft engaged on flights for the purpose of public transport of passengers are required to comply with The Air Navigation (General) Regulations 1981. As far as take-off is concerned the operator has to take note of obstacles in the take-off path and show by calculation that in the event of failure of a power unit they can be cleared by a specific vertical interval. The fundamental means of adjusting aircraft performance to meet changing conditions and different aerodromes is to adjust the aircraft weight before take-off: this is invariably done by adding/subtracting payload.

It follows that an increase in height of a known obstacle at a given aerodrome has to be matched by a reduction in aircraft weight at take-off.

I hope the above will show how the operating environment at all licensed aerodromes is the responsibility of the aerodrome management. The Authority sets out the licensing criteria; the operator is required to comply.

Taking your questions in the same order as in your letter the answers can be brief:-

1. No
2. No
3. Yes
- 4.1. Any items that are found to penetrate the Approach Surface Slope or infringe other licensing criteria will be brought to attention of the airport management.
- 4.2. This question can be answered only by the aircraft operator.

I think the basic point to remember is that aerodrome licensing criteria have been evolved to provide safety for the aircraft: the aircraft operator has, additionally, to bear in mind the commercial implications of all aspects of the operation.

I hope this information will be useful to you.

Yours sincerely



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H J HEDGES

Encl.