

Clay Pigeon Shooting

The Airshed was commissioned to assess noise for a proposed extension to an existing clay pigeon shooting facility which has operated since 1993. The planning application proposed to extend the area for clay pigeon target shooting to offer clients a wider selection of practice ranges.

The survey and assessment methods were agreed in advance with the Local Authority EHO. The assessment of potential annoyance focused on the shooting noise level (SNL), rather than existing background noise, based on the Code of Practice issued by the Chartered Institute of Environmental Health.

Surveys were conducted during test shoots to measure typical muzzle noise levels, and the SNL at the two nearest dwellings, one ~ 500m behind the direction of firing and one ~ 1km in the main direction of firing. An advanced computer model was used to predict noise at the nearest houses and to help design acoustic bunds.

The bunds were designed to ensure that the noise levels would be acceptable even under worst case conditions. The assessment also demonstrated that the acoustic performance of the existing bunds could be improved.

As part of the consultation process, Scottish Natural Heritage raised concerns about the impact of noise on Bean Geese on the adjacent moorland. The Airshed provided technical advice to the project ecologist. Experience around military firing ranges suggests that wildlife habituates to noise provided it is not perceived as a threat.

The noise predictions provided maximum noise levels across the moorland for the existing and proposed shooting ranges to allow the baseline and proposed scenarios to be compared objectively.

The noise assessment report was accepted by the Local Authority and planning permission is expected to be granted subject to conditions restricting the operating times.

