News

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Morgan Sindall has lift off as £10 million Air Traffic Control Tower reaches completion

Morgan Sindall has completed a new £10 million Air Traffic Control Tower at Birmingham Airport.

The stunning seven storey structure will house the airport's air traffic control provider, NATS, and will become operational in 2013. It will take over from the current control tower at the old Elmdon Airport site, which has been in use since 1939.

Standing at 34 metres, the tower has been an ambitious project in construction terms. Having been constructed without a supporting steel frame, it is one of the tallest unstayed control towers in the UK.

The tower's strength and stability comes instead from a slip form concrete process, which involved the project team pouring concrete continuously for 12 days while the cab was prefabricated off-site and installed.

The tower will provide controllers with a clear view across the runway, terminal and piers, helping them to safely manage the journeys of nine million passengers a year.

Dave Smith, regional managing director at Morgan Sindall, says: "The Air Traffic Control Tower is the fifth major project Morgan Sindall has undertaken for Birmingham Airport – a testament to the expertise we've developed in the aviation sector.

"We are delighted to have reached the completion of construction on the project and have enjoyed working closely with the Airport's in house team and project designers, CPMG Architects. This has been especially good experience for our project team as it has allowed us to work alongside our sister company, Morgan Sindall Professional Services, providing a multi-disciplined approach to this high-tech project."

Will Heynes, Development Director for Birmingham Airport, said: "We are delighted with the Air Traffic Control build and are very pleased with Morgan Sindall's work on this project.

"An extensive fit out will now commence to equip the tower with state-of-the-art avionics that will benefit the airport for many years to come. This latest addition to our impressive infrastructure represents a major step forward for us. With plans to extend our runway currently underway, this is an exciting time of growth for the airport."

The new tower is unstayed and undampened, creating a stable operational structure which will protect air traffic operators and the NATS's sensitive control equipment from the effects of movement.

The 16-sided cab structure at the top of the tower is highly secure with both physical and intelligent controls including access control, CCTV and engineered building security.

The Morgan Sindall Professional Services team integrated sustainability from design through to completion. The project achieved a positive ground recovery rate with no waste land remediation.

The tower's cab has a number of state-of-the-art features, including heated glass, so that rainwater

evaporates and does not affect the control tower team’s view. Heating in the cab is provided by recycled heat, while advanced acoustics ensure that the cab is extremely quiet.

Smoke control was engineered to be more efficient and platforms were designed at staged locations to increase safety in construction and maintenance. The building also includes improved safety and evacuation measures.

The scheme follows Morgan Sindall’s completion of Birmingham Airport’s £13 million One Terminal project in February 2011. The project saw the airport’s two terminals merged into one operation, featuring a large centralised passenger security search area, an enlarged meeting and greeting arrivals point and improved shops and restaurants.

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Pictured: The new Air Traffic Control Tower at Birmingham Airport

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