



Giant Nimrod transported to RAF Cosford through Shifnal streets

Wednesday 14th March 2012, 10:59AM GMT.



Planes and trains, as it passes under the rail bridge

The narrow streets of Shifnal were never built to cope with giant low-loaders transporting 22-tonne planes measuring more than 38m in length.

But that was the problem facing police and the RAF as they attempted to deliver a Hawker Siddeley Nimrod R.1 XV249 fuselage aircraft to the RAF Cosford Museum on Sunday.

Shoppers watched on in amazement as the gigantic delivery inched its way along the town's streets having to negotiate a number of tight bends.

A police escort accompanied the Nimrod, which usually flies at speeds of more than 400mph, on its 100-mile journey from Kemble, Gloucestershire.

The Nimrod, which has a wing span of 35m, was one of 46 aircraft used by the RAF for maritime reconnaissance and signals intelligence work, and was in service for nearly 40 years.

Its final flight took place last year when it flew from RAF Waddington in Lincoln to Kemble before its final journey to Shropshire.

Plane enthusiast Trevor Reoch said that he was lucky enough to catch a glimpse of the Nimrod's fuselage when it arrived in the county.

"Seeing it coming down the main road in Shifnal was quite awesome," he said.

"It came to that bend by the railway station and it took a lot of skill to get it around the corner."

Mr Reoch added: "It was a highly emotional experience seeing the aircraft making its final journey.

"People stood and watched in amazement that such a load could get through the town and under the railway bridge.

"There was a massive police convoy and it was strange seeing it passing by down the M54 driving past Cosford its final destination."

RAF Museum curator Al McLean said: "It was amazing to see such a large aircraft transported by road to Cosford and we are pleased to be receiving a Nimrod aircraft into the RAF Museum collection.

"The aircraft has flown over 11,000 hours during its service with the RAF and we anticipate it being very popular with our visitors."

The aircraft was also used for maritime patrol in Cyprus and the North Atlantic.

The wings and some remaining components of the aircraft are yet to be delivered before it can be re-assembled and put on display later this year.