

Requirements and Guidance on the Airspace Change Process for Permanent Airspace Change Proposals

CAP 1616j (aligned to CAP 1616 version 6)

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Contents

Contents	3
Revision history	8
Chapter 1	9
Introduction	9
Who is this document for?	9
Purpose of this document	9
Definitions	10
Chapter 2	11
Overarching requirements	11
Overview	11
Requirement 1: The sponsor updates the airspace change portal throughout the airspace change process	11
Requirement 2: The sponsor submits and keeps up to date a timeline for completion of the airspace change proposal	12
Requirement 3: The sponsor submits and maintains a multi-deployment delivery plan for the airspace change proposal	18
Requirement 4: The sponsor submits and maintains a change management plan for the airspace change proposal	21
Requirement 5: The sponsor considers whether evidence, analysis or other information gathered in other regulatory processes, such as planning applications, can be utilised and not duplicated in the airspace change process	23
Requirement 6: The sponsor, when requested, provides the CAA with any further information relevant to, or necessary for, consideration of the sponsor's submission	24
Chapter 3	25
Stage 1 – Propose and develop	25
Overview	25
Statement of need	26
Requirement 7: The proposer of an airspace change completes and submits a statement of need (ARF 1916)	26

Briefing and guidance meeting	28
Requirement 8: At the briefing and guidance meeting, the proposer briefs the CAA on the proposed airspace change and produces the outputs from the meeting	28
Requirement 9: The sponsor establishes formal partnership arrangements with each partner involved in the specific airspace change proposal (where there are partners)	36
Current-day scenario	37
Requirement 10: The sponsor describes the current-day scenario	37
Design development	39
Requirement 11: The sponsor gathers the necessary information to identify assumptions and constraints to meet the statement of need, take account of the Airspace Modernisation Strategy and apply the airspace design priorities when developing a draft design(s)	40
Requirement 12: The sponsor identifies and engages with a stakeholder reference group to test the information gathered	43
Requirement 13: The sponsor develops the draft design(s) that address the statement of need, taking account of the Airspace Modernisation Strategy while applying the airspace design priorities	45
Requirement 14: The sponsor develops the inputs required to enable draft design(s) to be assessed	58
Requirement 15: The sponsor submits the required Stage 1 outputs to the CAA for feedback at the milestone review	66
Stage 1 outputs	68
Chapter 4	70
Stage 2 - Consult	70
Overview	70
Draft design(s) assessment	71
Requirement 16: The sponsor conducts an assessment of the draft design(s) scenario compared to the baseline scenario (or the current-day scenario for Level 3 airspace change proposals)	71
Requirement 17: The sponsor conducts the draft design(s) assessment using metrics selected to enable the CAA to decide whether to approve the airspace change proposal in accordance with our statutory functions, duties and the statutory guidance (the Air Navigation Guidance 2026)	72
Consultation preparation	87

Requirement 18: The sponsor produces a consultation strategy setting out how they intend to facilitate an effective consultation	87
Requirement 19: The sponsor identifies which stakeholders are likely to be impacted	88
Requirement 20: The sponsor determines how to tailor their consultation materials and activities to stakeholders' needs and how they will inform stakeholders that the consultation is taking place	89
Requirement 21: The sponsor determines the duration of the consultation, ensuring it is sufficient to support an effective consultation	91
Requirement 22: The sponsor produces an indicative timetable of associated consultation activities	92
Consultation materials	92
Requirement 23: The sponsor produces consultation materials that provide stakeholders with enough information to enable understanding of the proposal and provide an informed response	92
Stage 2 gateway assessment	96
Requirement 24: The sponsor submits the required outputs to the CAA for assessment at the gateway	96
Commence consultation	98
Requirement 25: The sponsor launches their consultation, asking for feedback from stakeholders	98
Requirement 26: The sponsor maintains consultation activity records to evidence that reasonable actions were taken to inform stakeholders of the consultation	99
Requirement 27: The sponsor moderates and publishes consultation responses on the CAA's consultation platform	99
Requirement 28: The sponsor monitors the progress of the consultation and, if necessary, takes action if the progress falls short of expectations	100
Collate and review responses	101
Requirement 29: The sponsor reviews and categorises the consultation responses	101
Stage 2 outputs	102
Chapter 5	105
Stage 3 – Update and submit	105
Overview	105
Finalise the design	106

Requirement 30: The sponsor assesses all consultation feedback to determine whether to amend the draft design(s) to address issues raised in order that it addresses the statement of need, takes account of the Airspace Modernisation Strategy, while applying the airspace design priorities	106
Requirement 31: The sponsor demonstrates how the consultation feedback has been understood and considered, and how this has, or has not, influenced the proposed airspace design	106
Requirement 32: The sponsor finalises the proposed airspace design	107
Requirement 33: The sponsor prepares the final design assessment	108
Requirement 34: The sponsor submits their final proposal to the CAA	109
Stage 3 outputs	112
Chapter 6	113
Stage 4 - Decision	113
Overview	113
CAA document check	114
Provision of further information	115
Requirement 35: The sponsor, when requested, provides the CAA with any further information required for a regulatory decision to be made	115
Public evidence session	116
Submission of statements	117
Format and conduct of the public evidence session	117
Publication and decision making	118
Requirement 36: If a public evidence session is convened by the CAA, the sponsor produces an executive summary of the airspace change proposal	118
CAA decision	119
Modifications	119
Secretary of State call-in	120
Stage 4 outputs	121
Chapter 7	123
Stage 5 – Implement	123
Overview	123
Implement the change	123

Requirement 37: The sponsor fulfils any modifications or conditions set out in the CAA's decision	123
Requirement 38: The sponsor finalises and submits aeronautical data to the CAA for aeronautical data quality validation	124
Requirement 39: The sponsor updates all relevant documentation including, but not limited to, aeronautical publications, charts, operational documentation, letters of agreement and air traffic management systems	124
Requirement 40: The sponsor notifies relevant stakeholders of the airspace change	125
Post-implementation	126
Requirement 41: Following implementation, the sponsor ensures the airspace change maintains a high standard of safety	126
Requirement 42: The sponsor monitors the impacts of the implemented change and identifies whether post-implementation amendment(s) may be required	127
Requirement 43: The sponsor manages minor post-implementation amendments during implementation in accordance with the approved multi-deployment delivery plan (when applicable)	128
Stage 5 outputs	130
List of the airspace change process requirements	131
Airspace change requirements list by level	131
Direction 3.1 airspace performance report	138
Overview	138
Evidence collection and analysis	138

Revision history

CAP 1616j aligns to CAP 1616, version 6, Airspace Change Process.

CAP 1616j replaces CAP 1616f for those permanent airspace change proposals to which the new Air Navigation Guidance 2026 applies. CAP 1616j ensures that the airspace change process is aligned with the Secretary of State's latest directions and guidance to the CAA.

CAP 1616j also takes account of feedback received through the CAA's 2025 consultation on proposed changes to CAP 1616. CAP 1616j continues our ongoing objective to continuously improve clarity, consistency and usability of the guidance, while maintaining the underlying principles of safety, transparency, proportionality and accountability to support evidence-based decision making.

CHAPTER 1

Introduction

Who is this document for?

- 1.1 This document outlines the process for permanent airspace change proposals in the UK. It is primarily intended for the originator of the change proposal (proposers) and those responsible for progressing the airspace change (sponsors). It may also be relevant to anyone impacted by, or interested in, permanent changes to the notified airspace design in the UK.
- 1.2 This document applies to any permanent airspace change proposal to which the [Air Navigation Guidance 2026](#), which is statutory guidance given to the CAA by the Secretary of State for Transport under [section 70 of the Transport Act 2000](#), applies.
- 1.3 CAP 1616j aligns specifically to CAP 1616 version 6. All readers should read [CAP 1616, Airspace Change Process version 6](#) before this document.

Purpose of this document

- 1.4 This document contains the requirements sponsors need to comply with when progressing a permanent airspace change proposal and guidance on how those requirements can be achieved.
- 1.5 Sponsors should note that, as a proposal progresses through the stages of this process, the CAA may, where necessary, impose requirements on the sponsor in addition to those set out in this document to enable the CAA to properly assess the airspace change proposal. This document contains the standard requirements.
- 1.6 Some requirements apply throughout the process, while others are specific to particular stages of the process. Some requirements only apply to certain airspace changes. This is clearly indicated in this document by reference to the level of the airspace change.
- 1.7 The requirements are supported by guidance on how to comply with them. Some guidance is applicable only to specific types of airspace changes such as specific levels, an airspace change sponsored by NERL as the UK Airspace Design Service (UKADS) provider, or an airspace change proposal coordinated by the UK Airspace Coordination Service (UKACS) provider. Where this is the case, this is clearly indicated throughout this document.

Definitions

- 1.8 Terms explained or defined in [CAP 1616, Airspace Change Process](#) have the same meaning in this document.
- 1.9 Throughout this document, the expected degree of compliance with the requirement and associated guidance is defined as:
- 1.9.1 **‘Must’** is used to refer to a mandatory requirement that must be met in full unless it has been agreed in advance with the CAA that it is not necessary to do so. To deviate from a **must** requirement the sponsor must formally write to the CAA in advance of the relevant submission, setting out a valid rationale for deviating from the **must** requirement and outlining any proposed alternative actions. The CAA will formally respond to accept or reject the request. We can request further information to enable us to make such a determination. All correspondence will be published on the airspace change portal.
 - 1.9.2 **‘Should’** is used to refer to a requirement that is expected to be met in full unless the sponsor provides an acceptable rationale that it would be disproportionate to do so. To deviate from a **should** requirement, the sponsor must include a valid rationale for a proportional variation from a **should** requirement in their submitted documentation. There is no need for pre-approval from the CAA. However, sponsors should note that we may not accept the rationale for the variation included in the submission and can require further information from the sponsor and/or the sponsor could be required to return to the relevant requirement to complete it.
 - 1.9.3 **‘May’** is used to refer to an action that the sponsor is encouraged to consider taking. Given the unique circumstances of each airspace change proposal, there may be instances where the CAA might instruct the sponsor to complete a **may** requirement. In these circumstances, the relevant **may** requirement(s) will be identified in the briefing and guidance meeting at Stage 1.
- 1.10 The use of **must**, **should** or **may** in bold throughout this document is as defined above. Any other use of these words throughout this document relates to their common use in the English language and are not shown in bold.

CHAPTER 2

Overarching requirements

Overview

- 2.1 Overarching requirements are those that apply throughout the permanent airspace change process, rather than just at a specific stage.

Requirement 1: The sponsor updates the airspace change portal throughout the airspace change process

Level 1: Must

Level 2: Must

Level 3: Must

Guidance

- 2.2 Relevant information and documentation for each airspace change proposal is published on the airspace change portal. Publication enables transparency for all stakeholders which is a key principle of the airspace change process. Sponsors **must** keep the airspace change portal up to date throughout the process.
- 2.3 Sponsors **must** refer to the required outputs for each stage, set out at the end of each stage in this document, and publish the required outputs on the airspace change portal.
- 2.4 The following information must not be published, or must be redacted in any documents that are published, on the airspace change portal:
- 2.4.1 Personal information such as names, telephone numbers and email addresses.
- 2.4.2 Specific technical data related to the design of instrument flight procedures. This data is submitted to the CAA by approved procedure design organisations, not sponsors, and is subject to a separate CAA review process. A list of useful references, including those related to instrument flight procedure design, can be found on the [CAA website](#).
- 2.5 At the request of the sponsor, the CAA may agree to the sponsor withholding material or redacting information if the CAA agrees that it should not be published (in the same way that we might apply an exemption(s) from the obligation to disclose information in response to a request under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 or the Environmental Information Regulations 2004):
- 2.5.1 for reasons of national security; and/or
- 2.5.2 in some circumstances because disclosing it would be likely to prejudice someone's commercial interests.

- 2.6 We are unlikely to agree to withhold large amounts of information and will only accept the redaction of the minimum information necessary.
- 2.7 Sponsors **should** add a potentially affected area on the airspace change portal and update the area as necessary during the airspace change process. This allows stakeholders to search by location for airspace change proposals that could have an impact on them.

Requirement 2: The sponsor submits and keeps up to date a timeline for completion of the airspace change proposal

Level 1: Must

Level 2: Must

Level 3: Must

Guidance

- 2.8 The timeline for completion of the airspace change process will depend on the complexity of the airspace design and the potential impacts of the airspace change proposal.
- 2.9 At the outset of the airspace change process, sponsors are required to propose a timeline for agreement with the CAA. If subsequent amendments to the timeline are required, for example if a sponsor needs to pause or needs more time to complete a stage of the process, then the sponsor can submit a timeline amendment request. Our ability to meet the proposed timeline depends on the sponsor meeting their own commitments and providing high-quality submissions throughout the process.
- 2.10 Although the sponsor owns the timeline, when preparing it, the sponsor must consider the time the CAA typically needs to undertake our regulatory activities, including the time required for the CAA to make a decision.
- 2.11 The proposed timeline must be agreed with the CAA, including any adjustments that need to be made at any stage of the airspace change process. To enable the CAA to effectively manage all airspace change proposals being progressed, we will consider a number of factors when reviewing sponsors' proposed timelines, and requests to amend timelines. These factors include the complexity of the change and the stage the change is at, while balancing these factors against demand for regulatory oversight across the different technical areas. Therefore, agreement on timelines will take into account submissions by other sponsors, CAA resources and the contents of [CAP 2541, Principles for the prioritisation of airspace change proposals](#). CAP 2541 addresses the requirement placed upon the CAA in the [Air Navigation Directions 2026](#) to publish a prioritisation principles document which sets out our approach to the consideration of airspace change proposals.
- 2.12 Adherence to any agreed timescales will be dependent on:

- 2.12.1 The timeline provided by the sponsor for the submission of the final airspace change proposal at Stage 3, subject to our agreement.
- 2.12.2 The CAA and the sponsor adhering to agreed deadlines.
- 2.12.3 Whether regulatory requirements for instrument flight procedures have been met, where relevant, including validation.
- 2.12.4 Whether the sponsor has fulfilled the requirements set out in the CAA's guidance and submitted a proposal that does not require clarification.
- 2.12.5 Whether we hold a public evidence session.
- 2.12.6 Completion of any dependent parallel work (which may be described in the change management plan, if utilised (see Requirement 4)).

2.13 **Guidance for the UKADS provider and sponsors of airspace change proposals coordinated by the UKACS provider only:** For proposals sponsored by the UKADS provider or coordinated by the UKACS provider, the time required for the CAA decision may exceed the indicative durations. Timelines for such proposals will be agreed with the CAA on a case-by-case basis, reflecting the scope, scale, interdependency and complexity of the submission. These factors may only become fully apparent later in the development of the proposal.

2.14 Sponsors **must** develop a timeline that proposes target dates for:

- 2.14.1 The Stage 1 milestone (**Level 1 and Level 2 only**):
 - Sponsors must submit relevant outputs and related evidence to the CAA at least two weeks in advance of the milestone review. Depending on the size and complexity of the airspace change proposal there may be occasions where a submission period of four weeks (or more) is required.
- 2.14.2 The Stage 2 gateway submission (**Level 1 and Level 2 only**):
 - The CAA publishes a [schedule of gateway assessments](#) which can be used by sponsors to calculate their proposed gateway submission date. Sponsors must propose a gateway submission date taking into account the requirements of the process set out in this document and any additional activities that may inform the development of the airspace change proposal.

- The CAA will typically need at least two weeks between the gateway submission date and the gateway assessment to complete the Stage 2 gateway assessment. Depending on the size and complexity of the change, there may be occasions where four weeks (or more) is required and the gateway submission target date will need to be adjusted accordingly.

2.14.3 The final airspace change proposal submission to the CAA:

- Sponsors must take into account any additional work that may be required prior to submission, including work related to instrument flight procedure design.

2.14.4 The proposed implementation date of the airspace change, taking into account:

- The decision process in Stage 4 and the implementation process set out in Stage 5. We aim to make our decision in Stage 4 within 17 weeks for Level 1 changes (16 weeks plus one week for document check) or 10 weeks for Level 2 and Level 3 changes, subject to the sponsor also meeting their time commitments. However, the time required for the CAA to complete Stage 4 can vary. This reflects the complexity of the proposal, the potential need for a public evidence session, and whether the proposal is in scope for a Secretary of State call-in. A Level 1 airspace change proposal may require up to 32 weeks for a decision, whereas some Level 2 and Level 3 proposals may require fewer than 10 weeks.
- The aeronautical information regulation and control (AIRAC) or aeronautical information circular/supplement schedule.
- Any additional activities that may require completion prior to implementation.

2.15 When planning a timeline, sponsors should allow sufficient time for the following tasks which may impact the timeline for progressing the proposal through this process:

- 2.15.1 Parallel activities, approvals and dependencies set out by the sponsor in their change management plan (see Requirement 4).
- 2.15.2 Dependencies on external organisations (for example, instrument flight procedure design providers, flight validation service providers, navigation database providers).

2.16 **Guidance for the UKADS provider and sponsors of airspace change proposals coordinated by the UKACS provider only:** the timeline developed

must have regard to the Strategic Delivery Plan prepared by NERL in accordance with their licence.

- 2.17 When planning AIRAC implementation and cut-off dates, sponsors **should** engage early with the UK Aeronautical Information Service. The CAA is not responsible for meeting timelines, such as achieving a specific AIRAC cycle, but we can provide advice about how these may affect timelines. The following should be considered:
- 2.17.1 Relevant cut-off and implementation dates contained within the UK Aeronautical Information Service's publication schedule.
 - 2.17.2 Lead times required for change requests to be submitted to the UK Aeronautical Information Service prior to an AIRAC effective date.
 - 2.17.3 Capacity of the targeted AIRAC cycles.
 - 2.17.4 Where additional relevant notification methods will be required, for example, aeronautical information circulars and/or notice to aviation (NOTAM).
 - 2.17.5 Coordination requirements at the UK's international borders and with other civil and military authorities.
 - 2.17.6 Time sensitivities, for example which AIRAC cycles might be unavailable due to the factors above.
 - 2.17.7 Introduction of, or proposed changes to, instrument flight procedures.

Timeline amendments

- 2.18 After a timeline is agreed, sponsors **must** notify the CAA of any proposed amendments at the earliest opportunity so that a revised timeline can be agreed. This includes circumstances where amendments to the timeline are required to meet the process requirements, or where the sponsor is unable to meet an agreed submission date. Timeline amendment request forms can be found on the [CAA website](#).
- 2.19 Any sponsor-led amendment to the agreed timeline must be supported by justification from the sponsor explaining why the amendment is required, before being accepted by the CAA.
- 2.20 Sponsors must publish the new agreed timeline on the airspace change portal.

Pausing an airspace change proposal

- 2.21 Irrespective of the timeline submitted to the CAA in accordance with this requirement, a sponsor can request to pause an airspace change proposal if the proposed timeline cannot be achieved and a proposed amended timeline cannot be provided by the sponsor (and agreed with the CAA) within a reasonable

period of time. The pause request, together with the reason for the pause, **must** be submitted to, and agreed by, the CAA. Following agreement, sponsors must publish the rationale for the pause on the airspace change portal.

- 2.22 Where a proposal has been paused for three months or more, sponsors must provide a quarterly update to the CAA confirming that the paused status is still required.
- 2.23 The CAA will periodically review the status of paused airspace change proposals and may, at any time, request additional information from the sponsor to confirm that the paused status remains appropriate.
- 2.24 Airspace change proposals should not be paused for longer than 12 months. Once a proposal has been paused for 12 months, the CAA will usually require sponsors to withdraw their proposal. We will only agree to an airspace change proposal being paused for more than 12 months by exception. Prior to the end of the original 12-month paused period, sponsors must submit to the CAA a clear explanation of why they consider their proposal should remain paused beyond the 12-month period.
- 2.25 Where sponsors fail to provide the required quarterly updates or any additional information requested by the CAA, we will issue written notice to the sponsor of our intention to require them to withdraw the airspace change proposal. The notice will specify a period, usually 14 days, within which the sponsor must provide the quarterly update or additional information requested. If the sponsor does not respond within the notice period, we will consider the proposal withdrawn. The proposal will then be marked as withdrawn on the airspace change portal.
- 2.26 The CAA reserves the right to determine at any time that the paused status is no longer justified, in which case we will consider the proposal withdrawn and mark it as such on the airspace change portal.

Restarting a paused airspace change proposal

- 2.27 When a sponsor seeks to restart a paused airspace change proposal, the sponsor **must** assess whether there have been any changes in the intervening period to the context within which the airspace change proposal is being prepared. Contextual considerations include:
 - 2.27.1 Any changes to the objectives of the airspace change proposal, the airspace issues or opportunities to be addressed, or the current situation.
 - 2.27.2 Changes to law, government policy or CAA requirements that would affect the development of the airspace change proposal, or parts of the airspace change proposal.

2.27.3 Changes to previously identified, or newly identified, stakeholders.

- 2.28 If there have been no relevant changes to the context, the sponsor must submit a short confirmation statement to the CAA, providing any evidence we have requested. If the CAA agrees there have been no relevant changes to the context, we will invite the sponsor to submit a new timeline to restart the airspace change proposal and to complete the remaining stages of the process.
- 2.29 If there have been relevant changes to the context, the sponsor must consider how these may affect the suitability and validity of work already undertaken in developing the airspace change proposal. The consequence of any change to the context will vary depending on how far through the airspace change process the proposal had progressed before it was paused. The sponsor will need to explain what the changes are and submit evidence to the CAA that one of the following applies:
- 2.29.1 Changes will have no impacts on material already prepared. For example, if there was a change in policy that in the sponsor's view is not relevant to their airspace change proposal.
 - 2.29.2 Changes may be addressed by updating or supplementing existing material already prepared. For example, feedback has been obtained from identified new stakeholders to confirm the validity of previous work.
 - 2.29.3 Changes will require certain process requirements to be revisited. For example, new information has become available that may affect the validity of previous work.
- 2.30 If the CAA concludes that the airspace change proposal can be restarted, we will invite the sponsor to submit an amended timeline for restarting the airspace change proposal and for the remaining stages of the process.

Withdrawing an airspace change proposal

- 2.31 If a sponsor considers that development of their airspace change proposal is no longer required, they may be able to withdraw their statement of need. In such cases, the sponsor **must** notify the CAA of the proposed withdrawal and provide the reasons for it. If the CAA agrees that the proposal can be withdrawn, the proposal will be recorded on the airspace change portal as withdrawn, together with an explanation for withdrawal. A withdrawn airspace change proposal is not the same as an airspace change proposal that the CAA has decided not to approve at Stage 4.

Requirement 3: The sponsor submits and maintains a multi-deployment delivery plan for the airspace change proposal

Level 1: Must

Level 2: Must

Level 3: N/A

Guidance

- 2.32 As noted by the Secretary of State (see the Air Navigation Guidance 2026, paragraph 60), because of the size and complexity of some parts of airspace, it is possible that the safest and most effective approach to making an airspace change operational may be through several phased deployments.
- 2.33 Sponsors may propose that, if approved, an airspace change proposal be implemented through a series of deployments. The CAA will normally only accept implementation through a series of deployments where we agree that, because of the size and complexity of the proposal, delivery would be better achieved in this manner. This is likely to apply to airspace change proposals sponsored by the UKADS provider.
- 2.34 Where the CAA accepts that a multi-deployment approach is appropriate, the sponsor **must** develop and maintain a multi-deployment delivery plan. The requirement for a draft multi-deployment delivery plan will be discussed at the briefing and guidance meeting.
- 2.35 Where an airspace change proposal will be implemented through multiple deployments (and agreed with the CAA at the Stage 2 gateway assessment), it is likely to be a condition of any decision to approve the airspace change that the sponsor ensures relevant stakeholders are informed of the deployments. This includes informing stakeholders how they will be impacted by each deployment phase before they are implemented.
- 2.36 The draft multi-deployment delivery plan should provide a high-level overview of how the airspace change proposal will be delivered if approved. The plan **should** include:
- 2.36.1 A description of each proposed deployment stage and the overall sequencing of deployments.
 - 2.36.2 Indicative timescales and key dependencies.
 - 2.36.3 The roles and responsibilities of the sponsor and any organisations responsible for delivering elements of the change.
 - 2.36.4 The proposed mechanism to determine and manage minor amendments.
 - 2.36.5 The activities, assessments, approvals and criteria that must be satisfied before progressing to a subsequent deployment.

- 2.36.6 A description of how delivery will be monitored and managed throughout implementation.
- 2.36.7 A high-level communications plan for the multiple deployments. A deployment communication is not a re-consultation of the airspace change proposal (or one deployment of it). The communication is intended to inform relevant stakeholders of what to expect during that particular deployment, it is not to seek feedback. The communications outlined in the plan should be appropriate, relevant, and proportionate to each deployment phase, taking account of:
- The scope and timings for each deployment.
 - The impacts of each deployment, including where these may be of a temporary nature, and associated timelines, towards delivery of the final airspace change.
 - The technical or operational constraints which require a specific deployment sequence.
 - Any subsequent changes to the initial proposed deployment timescales and the methods for informing stakeholders.
- 2.37 The CAA will review the draft multi-deployment delivery plan at the Stage 2 gateway assessment. The draft multi-deployment delivery plan may contain indicative information at this stage.
- 2.38 As part of their consultation, sponsors **must** include in their consultation document a summary of:
- 2.38.1 The potential approach, the concept of multiple deployments and the reason why multiple deployments are required, and the intent of the deployment.
- 2.38.2 The multi-deployment communications proposed to inform stakeholders about minor amendments and deployments.
- 2.39 As part of their consultation, sponsors **must** consult on the following aspects of their draft multi-deployment delivery plan:
- 2.39.1 How the sponsor is proposing to manage minor amendments within the multi-deployment plan, including the scope and scale of what a minor amendment is and how it would be handled. This should include examples of:
- What may constitute a minor amendment.
 - What may constitute a non-minor amendment.

- 2.40 As part of our decision whether to approve the change at Stage 4, the CAA will determine whether the airspace change proposal may be implemented through a series of deployments and whether to approve the draft multi-deployment delivery plan. We recognise that elements of the draft multi-deployment delivery plan may need to be updated following approval of the airspace change and during implementation to support the safe and timely delivery of the overall proposal (see Requirement 43).

Mechanism to determine minor amendments

- 2.41 In accordance with the Air Navigation Guidance 2026, paragraph 61, where an airspace change is delivered through multiple deployments, the CAA will agree to minor amendments to the airspace design after the first (and any subsequent) deployment has taken place, without requiring a new airspace change proposal.
- 2.42 Minor amendments are those that do not substantially alter the approved airspace design or the anticipated impacts understood by the CAA when we made our decision and can be demonstrated to remain within the scope, intent or anticipated impacts of the approved airspace change.
- 2.43 Minor amendments may include, amongst others, modifications to instrument flight procedures, air traffic management arrangements and other technical aspects of the design that are developed and assessed after the airspace change approval decision but before a subsequent deployment.
- 2.44 A draft multi-deployment delivery plan **must** distinguish between:
- 2.44.1 minor amendments that may be managed through the approved multi-deployment delivery plan; and
 - 2.44.2 non-minor amendments that cannot be managed through the approved multi-deployment delivery plan and will require further consideration by the CAA.
- 2.45 A draft multi-deployment delivery plan **must** include the process by which the sponsor will identify the need for minor amendments.
- 2.46 The draft multi-deployment delivery plan **must** describe how the sponsor will assess that amendments can be classified as minor and **must** include any safety, operational, environmental and technical assessments that the sponsor will use before determining whether to make a minor amendment.
- 2.47 The draft multi-deployment delivery plan **must** describe the process for implementing minor amendments and should include high-level details of arrangements for stakeholder communication and informing the CAA.
- 2.48 Minor amendments may be made by the sponsor, in accordance with the terms of, and framework set out in, the approved multi-deployment delivery plan. If the sponsor identifies the need for a non-minor amendment after or between

deployments, they **must** inform and discuss this with the CAA. We will determine whether the amendment:

2.48.1 requires additional assessment or consultation; or

2.48.2 requires a new airspace change proposal.

2.49 In accordance with the statutory guidance in the Air Navigation Guidance 2026, neither an amendment to the multi-deployment delivery plan nor a minor amendment implemented in accordance with the approved multi-deployment delivery plan is an amendment to the CAA's airspace change decision, or a new airspace change decision.

Requirement 4: The sponsor submits and maintains a change management plan for the airspace change proposal

Level 1: May

Level 2: May

Level 3: May

Guidance

- 2.50 Sponsors **may** develop and maintain a change management plan to help identify any interdependencies associated with the airspace change proposal. The change management plan may also capture any parallel activities, including those that require regulatory approval from decision-makers other than the CAA, which may be necessary to ensure that the airspace change proposal, if approved, can be implemented at all and on time.
- 2.51 The CAA expects all sponsors to consider having a change management plan, including associated timelines, throughout the airspace change proposal. During Stage 1, we will highlight the use of a change management plan and encourage sponsors to identify any possible parallel activities and interdependencies associated with the airspace change proposal. We will also aim to draw the sponsor's attention to any such activities or interdependencies we are aware of that have not been identified by the sponsor.
- 2.52 Where an airspace change proposal is linked to other regulatory approvals, for example, a spaceflight licence under the Space Industry Act 2018 or an operational authorisation for unmanned aircraft systems under UK Regulation (EU) 2019/947, failure to obtain those approvals may remove the rationale for the airspace change, prevent the CAA from approving it or preclude the sponsor from implementing it.
- 2.53 Where such dependencies exist, sponsors must ensure they are addressed sufficiently early in the process to enable the CAA to make an informed decision. These dependencies should be discussed at the briefing and guidance meeting or recorded as identified. The briefing and guidance meeting minutes will be published on the airspace change portal. The portal will only contain information

relating to the airspace change process. The portal will not include information relating to any ongoing application to the CAA which may be a parallel activity.

- 2.54 The CAA will review the change management plan, if utilised, at the Stage 1 milestone review and the Stage 2 gateway assessment. The change management plan is a tool to support sponsors through the delivery of an airspace change and will not be published.
- 2.55 If an airspace change proposal includes any instrument flight procedure elements, the detailed technical requirements are outlined in the CAP 785 documents¹ but are informed by, and integral to, the airspace change process. The overall approval for instrument flight procedures occurs at Stage 4 of the airspace change process. Some safety activities associated with CAP 785 requirements may occur after Stage 4 with the agreement of the CAA. Instrument flight procedure factors contained within CAP 785 requirements must be factored into the change management plan.
- 2.56 The following items could be considered for inclusion in the change management plan:
- 2.56.1 Compliance with the air navigation service provider's published change management process (including the safety management system).
 - 2.56.2 Updating of local operational documentation such as the Manual of Air Traffic Services Part 2, through the issuing of supplementary instructions/temporary operating instructions, as appropriate.
 - 2.56.3 Updating of any additional related documentation, for example maps, radar displays/overlays, and controller information displays.
 - 2.56.4 Coordination with other air navigation service providers impacted by the change, including the update of relevant letters of agreement.
 - 2.56.5 Training plans and methods of assessment of affected personnel (air traffic control officers, engineers etc.), accounting for the notification and approval period required by CAA Aerodromes and Air Traffic Management.
 - 2.56.6 Consideration of any trial/evaluation period, prior to full implementation.
 - 2.56.7 Updating of equipment and systems including communication, navigation and surveillance and IT systems.

¹ A list of useful references, including those related to instrument flight procedure design, can be found on the [CAA website](#).

- 2.56.8 Changes to ground infrastructure, including the requirement for new equipment such as meteorological apparatus or lighting.

Guidance for the UKADS provider and sponsors of airspace change proposals coordinated by the UKACS provider only

- 2.57 The change management plan developed to meet this requirement **must** have regard to the Strategic Delivery Plan prepared by NERL in accordance with their [licence](#).

Requirement 5: The sponsor considers whether evidence, analysis or other information gathered in other regulatory processes, such as planning applications, can be utilised and not duplicated in the airspace change process

Level 1: Must

Level 2: Must

Level 3: Must

Guidance

- 2.58 Sponsors **must** consider what relevant evidence, analysis or other information gathered in other regulatory processes, such as planning applications, can be utilised and not duplicated in the airspace change process.
- 2.59 Sponsors must provide an explanation of why they consider any evidence, analysis or other information gathered in other regulatory processes to be suitable for use in the airspace change process. Sponsors must also identify which requirements of the airspace change process they consider are satisfied, in whole or in part, by such evidence, analysis or other information, and therefore do not need to be undertaken again.
- 2.60 Sponsors may consider that existing evidence, analysis or other information only partly satisfies the relevant requirement or guidance in the airspace change process. In such circumstances, sponsors must explain what additional work they consider necessary so that, when considered together with the existing evidence, analysis or other information, the purpose of the relevant airspace change process requirement it is satisfying is fully met.
- 2.61 Sponsors must obtain the CAA's agreement to reuse evidence, analysis or other information in this way. Any applicable requirement in the airspace change process will only be satisfied or scaled once that agreement has been obtained.

Requirement 6: The sponsor, when requested, provides the CAA with any further information relevant to, or necessary for, consideration of the sponsor's submission

Level 1: Must

Level 2: Must

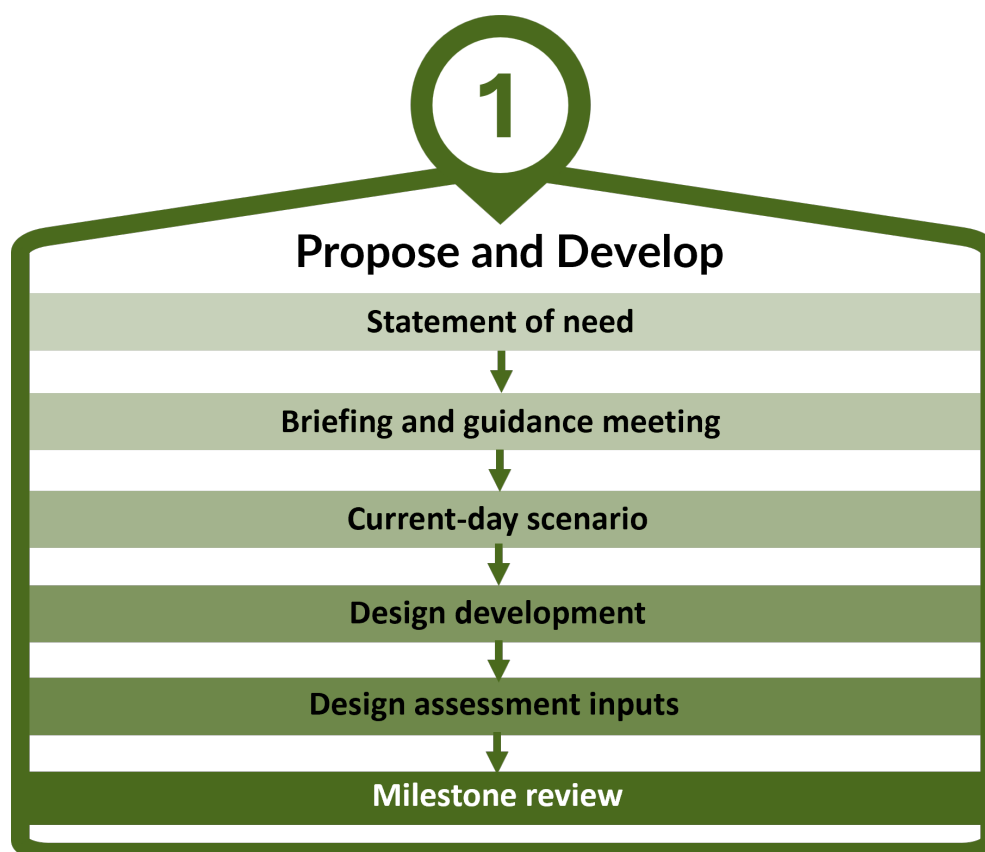
Level 3: Must

Guidance

- 2.62 Sponsors **must** provide the CAA with any supplementary information or technical corrections and clarifications at any time during the airspace change process. Our requests will be made in writing, and the information request, together with the sponsor's response, will be published on the airspace change portal. Where applicable, sponsors must clearly indicate any changes to the documentation already submitted, for example through tracked changes. All revised versions must clearly state the version number and the date of submission.

CHAPTER 3

Stage 1 – Propose and develop



Overview

- 3.1 Stage 1 establishes whether an airspace change proposal under the airspace change process is required. The process begins with the submission of the [statement of need \(ARF 1916\)](#), followed by a briefing and guidance meeting where the proposal's scope, the sponsor, and the level of airspace change are discussed and determined. Following this, the sponsor will publish the agreed outputs of the briefing and guidance meeting on the airspace change portal.
- 3.2 The sponsor will then describe the current-day scenario, gather information on assumptions and constraints relevant to developing draft airspace design(s), and engage a stakeholder reference group. Using information gathered from these sources, addressing the statement of need, taking account of the Airspace Modernisation Strategy and applying the airspace design priorities, the sponsor will produce the draft design(s). During this stage, the sponsor will also prepare the design assessment inputs that they will use to carry out the various assessments required later in Stage 2, depending on the level of the airspace change proposal. These are: the baseline and the design(s) scenarios, traffic

forecast(s), determination of the noise-modelling category for noise assessments, type of flight efficiency assessment, and early screening exercises for protected areas and European sites.

- 3.3 For Level 1 and Level 2 airspace change proposals, Stage 1 outputs are then submitted to the CAA for the Stage 1 milestone review. We will then provide feedback to the sponsor, as required.

Statement of need

Requirement 7: The proposer of an airspace change completes and submits a statement of need (ARF 1916)

Level 1: Must

Level 2: Must

Level 3: Must

Guidance

- 3.4 A statement of need starts the airspace change process by setting out why an airspace change is required. It allows the CAA to determine whether the airspace change process is the appropriate mechanism for the proposed change to airspace design. To make this determination, we need a clear understanding of the proposal's objectives, the issues or opportunities it seeks to address and the current situation.
- 3.5 The statement of need is a high-level summary of the proposal based on information the proposer has, and/or is available through open-source materials (for example, charts, aeronautical information publication entries). Proposers are not required to gather external perspectives at this stage, although they can do so if they consider it is an effective means of obtaining the information needed at this point. More detailed information will be gathered by the sponsor at later stages of the process. The proposer **must** provide in their statement of need the following information, to the extent that it is applicable to their proposal:

Objectives and intended outcomes

- 3.6 A clear statement of the proposal's objectives and intended outcomes. Clear objectives are vital to the successful progression of a proposal through the airspace change process as they establish purpose, scope, and desired outcomes, enable transparent engagement and are a key criterion for assessing the proposal to support consistent decision-making. This statement should also include:
- 3.6.1 the required airspace design change(s); and
 - 3.6.2 a description of the anticipated consequential changes to airspace design to enable that to be achieved.

Issues or opportunities

- 3.7 A summary statement of the airspace issues or opportunities the proposal aims to address. If known at this stage, the following relevant factors should be included:
- 3.7.1 Safety.
 - 3.7.2 Operational.
 - 3.7.3 Technical.
 - 3.7.4 Proposed introduction, change to, or removal, in whole or in part, of an instrument flight procedure, if applicable.

Current airspace design and usage

- 3.8 A brief description of:
- 3.8.1 The existing airspace structure.
 - 3.8.2 Flight procedures.
 - 3.8.3 Typical flight behaviours, patterns and current traffic flows.
 - 3.8.4 Any relevant history of previous airspace design changes.

Airspace Modernisation Strategy

- 3.9 A description of how the proposal takes account of (supports or is not inconsistent with) the delivery of the Airspace Modernisation Strategy. The sponsor may find [CAP 3299, The CAA's Air Navigation Functions Guidance](#) useful when preparing this.

Further information

- 3.10 A brief description of any other factors that the CAA will need to be aware of, including:
- 3.10.1 Applicable aerodrome planning conditions or requirements that relate to the proposed airspace change.
 - 3.10.2 Dependencies on other airspace change proposals.
 - 3.10.3 Any parallel activities, approvals and dependencies that may impact the proposal.
 - 3.10.4 Funding deadlines.
 - 3.10.5 Proposed implementation date(s).
 - 3.10.6 Proximity of protected areas and European sites.

- 3.11 The proposer **must** submit the statement of need to the CAA using the [statement of need \(ARF 1916\)](#) form.

Briefing and guidance meeting

Requirement 8: At the briefing and guidance meeting, the proposer briefs the CAA on the proposed airspace change and produces the outputs from the meeting

Level 1: Must

Level 2: Must

Level 3: Must

Guidance

- 3.12 The proposer **must** deliver a briefing to the CAA on the proposed airspace change at a briefing and guidance meeting. It may be possible to complete the briefing and guidance meeting in various ways (for example, in person or remote meetings). The briefing should be supported by a written and/or visual presentation.

Briefing and guidance meeting agenda

- 3.13 The briefing **must** follow a standard agenda, structured around the content of the submitted statement of need, providing more information and detail, as follows:

Introduction and clarification of roles, responsibilities

- 3.14 This includes:
- 3.14.1 A brief outline of the purpose of the briefing and guidance meeting.
 - 3.14.2 An indication of the potential sponsor for the proposal. In most cases, the proposer will also be the sponsor. There will be circumstances where a different entity will take on the role of sponsor. For example, where the UKADS provider is required (by the terms of NERL's [licence](#)) to prepare the airspace change proposal.
 - 3.14.3 If the proposer, the UKADS provider or the CAA identifies that the UKADS provider may be required to sponsor the proposal, we will ask the proposer to contact the UKADS provider, share their statement of need, and request the UKADS provider's attendance at the briefing and guidance meeting. The UKADS provider must then attend the briefing and guidance meeting and may need to provide input.

Objectives and intended outcomes of the proposed airspace change

- 3.15 This includes:
- 3.15.1 The overall objectives.
 - 3.15.2 The required airspace design changes.

- 3.15.3 A description of the anticipated changes to the airspace.
- 3.15.4 An indication if an airspace change is necessary to enable an existing unmet demand or forecasted growth in air transport demand, and/or enable a proposed increase in capacity (such as an airport planning application).
- 3.15.5 An indication if an airspace change is necessary to facilitate a change in airspace use.

Issues or opportunities

- 3.16 A detailed description of what the proposal is seeking to address, including:
 - 3.16.1 Safety.
 - 3.16.2 Operational.
 - 3.16.3 Technical.
 - 3.16.4 Instrument flight procedures.

Current design and usage of the airspace relevant to the proposal

- 3.17 This description must provide more detail than that contained in the statement of need and **must** include sufficient information for someone unfamiliar with the airspace to gain a full understanding. This description directly informs level assignment, scaling considerations and process requirements. The proposer will need to consider the following areas:
 - 3.17.1 Current airspace design and infrastructure, including existing air traffic management and communication, navigation and surveillance enablers, and relevant history of previous airspace design changes.
 - 3.17.2 Flight behaviours and patterns, including routes and instrument flight procedures.
 - 3.17.3 Safety considerations and safety assessments.
 - 3.17.4 Traffic management, including operational efficiency, complexity and delays.
 - 3.17.5 The impact of the airspace change proposal on the air traffic service route network or other structures, and whether the airspace requires some form of airspace management.
 - 3.17.6 Current traffic flows and airspace usage, current airspace users, aircraft types, frequency and number of movements, typical altitudes, geographic and time distribution. For Ministry of Defence sponsored proposals, traffic flows should include civil air traffic, where applicable. Estimated traffic forecast growth (see Requirement 13 and

Requirement 14 for acceptable sources of such forecasts) may be provided, where relevant.

Any other matters relevant to progressing the proposal

- 3.18 This should expand on the information provided in the statement of need that the CAA needs to be aware of when considering the airspace change proposal and which may have a potential impact on the proposal and its timeline. For example:
- 3.18.1 Interdependencies or parallel activities associated with the airspace change proposal, including those that require regulatory approval from decision-makers other than the CAA, which may be necessary to ensure that the proposed airspace change, if approved, can be implemented on time (see Requirement 4).
 - 3.18.2 Any dependencies or impacts on other airspace change proposals. The CAA can assist in identifying any relevant airspace change proposals, including linked airspace change proposals.
 - 3.18.3 Location specific legal obligations that may impact the development of the airspace design, such as planning conditions or requirements, noise preferential routes or noise abatement requirements, and noise actions plans.
 - 3.18.4 Confirmation that an approved procedure design organisation will be engaged, if the proposed airspace design involves instrument flight procedures.

Airspace Modernisation Strategy

- 3.19 A description of how the proposal takes account of (supports or is not inconsistent with) the delivery of the Airspace Modernisation Strategy. Sponsors may find [CAP 3299, The CAA's Air Navigation Functions Guidance](#) useful when preparing this.

Airspace design priorities

- 3.20 A discussion on the role of the airspace design priorities in the process and the sponsor's emerging thoughts on how the application of the airspace design priorities may impact the designs that will be developed later in the process. Sponsors may find [CAP 3299, The CAA's Air Navigation Functions Guidance](#) useful when preparing this.

Indication of level of airspace change

- 3.21 The proposer **must** indicate the proposed level of the airspace change proposal, supported by a clear rationale. The allocated level determines the expected requirements and guidance a sponsor will need to fulfil for their airspace change proposal. These requirements enable the CAA to assess the proposal and

determine whether to approve the change proposal in line with our legislative duties.

3.22 Level 1 in the permanent airspace change process is:

- 3.22.1 Level 1 will be allocated to airspace change proposals that affect aircraft flight behaviours below 5,000 feet above mean sea level (AMSL) over land.
- 3.22.2 This will normally require the application of the full set of airspace change process requirements, with limited opportunity for scaling due to the need to assess across a broad set of potential impacts.
- 3.22.3 Level 1 airspace changes will require detailed consideration of changes to aircraft noise exposure in the vicinity of the airspace change and an assessment using the Department for Transport's Transport Analysis Guidance (TAG). Level 1 airspace changes will also require an assessment of flight efficiency and an assessment of impacts on protected areas and European sites.
- 3.22.4 Level 1 proposals will be subject to the Stage 1 milestone review and Stage 2 gateway assessment.

3.23 Level 2 in the permanent airspace change process is:

- 3.23.1 Level 2 will be allocated to airspace change proposals that affect aircraft flight behaviours at or above 5,000 feet AMSL over land or that alter flight behaviours over the sea (at any altitude).
- 3.23.2 This will primarily focus on the impacts to airspace users and/or present a greater opportunity for scaling against the airspace change process requirements.
- 3.23.3 Level 2 airspace changes will require an assessment of flight efficiency and an assessment of impacts on protected areas and European sites.
- 3.23.4 Level 2 proposals will be subject to the Stage 1 milestone review and Stage 2 gateway assessment.

3.24 Level 3 in the airspace change process is:

- 3.24.1 Level 3 will be allocated to airspace change proposals at any altitude over the land or sea where the proposal is expected to have a low impact(s).
- 3.24.2 This will present a greater opportunity for scaling.
- 3.24.3 Level 3 may apply:

- for airspace change proposals relating only to instrument flight procedures below 5,000 feet AMSL, where a quantitative and/or qualitative demonstration shows that the change is likely to result in:
- (for existing procedures) no more than a 3 dB L_{ASmax2} change in aircraft noise; and
- no more than an increase by 10% (or a maximum of 3,650 movements per year) in the total number of aircraft movements in the first two years after the implementation of the airspace change; and
- no change in the normal final approach path of aircraft within 1 nautical mile of the aerodrome or landing site; and
- no change in the impacts to noise, flight efficiency, protected areas and European sites from aircraft utilising other aerodromes;

3.24.4 Or if:

- the airspace design has the potential for a low impact on stakeholders; or
- the change relies on CAA policy which outlines the airspace change requirement; or
- there is established precedent that reduces uncertainty, where concepts and impacts are already understood.

3.24.5 Level 3 proposals follow a streamlined application of the airspace change process.

3.24.6 Level 3 airspace changes may require a qualitative assessment of aircraft noise exposure, flight efficiency, impact on protected areas and European sites.

3.24.7 The Stage 1 milestone review and the Stage 2 gateway assessment do not apply.

3.25 The CAA will confirm the level following the briefing and guidance meeting. Level allocation will rely heavily on the quality of information that the sponsor provides within their rationale.

² L_{ASmax} is the maximum sound level measured during an aircraft event, using frequency weighting A and time-weighting S (Slow). Often abbreviated to L_{Amax} or L_{max}.

Scaling requests

- 3.26 Sponsors may request scaling of any requirements and guidance of the airspace change process. Sponsors should refer to Requirement 5 and consider whether evidence, analysis or other information gathered in other regulatory processes, such as planning applications, can be utilised and not duplicated in the airspace change process. The CAA will assess scaling requests on a case-by-case basis. Scaling decisions will be confirmed alongside level assignment after the briefing and guidance meeting.
- 3.27 Any requests for further scaling must be approved by the CAA and will be published on the airspace change portal.

Scaling environmental assessments from the process

- 3.28 Irrespective of the level of the airspace change proposal, sponsors may use a qualitative assessment of noise, flight efficiency, impact on protected areas or impact on European sites to demonstrate to the CAA that the airspace design(s) will cause no impact on that metric. To do so, sponsors **must** provide the CAA with a rationale and supporting evidence. If the CAA agrees, we may scale aspects of Requirement 17, that is, remove the requirement for a quantitative assessment of that metric. In all instances, this **must** also be clearly explained in any consultation material and in the final airspace change proposal submitted to the CAA.

Multiple deployments request

- 3.29 Because of the size and complexity of some parts of airspace, it is possible that the safest and most effective approach to making an airspace change operational may be through a series of deployments rather than a single deployment. Where a sponsor considers that this is the case, they should raise this with the CAA at the briefing and guidance meeting. The sponsor should provide a high-level rationale explaining why a multi-deployment approach may be necessary.
- 3.30 If the CAA agrees that a multi-deployment approach may be appropriate, the sponsor will be required to develop and maintain a multi-deployment delivery plan in accordance with Requirement 3 and submit this at the Stage 2 gateway assessment.
- 3.31 **Guidance for the UKADS provider only:** The UKADS provider as the sponsor of the London Terminal Manoeuvring Area (TMA) airspace change proposal has specific requirements in relation to the design assessment inputs as given in Requirement 14. These will be determined by the CAA at or shortly after the briefing and guidance meeting but before the sponsor commences Requirement 13 (development of the draft design(s)).

Timeline

- 3.32 Sponsors **must** present a requested timeline, including the sponsor's preferred:
- 3.32.1 Stage 1 milestone material submission date and target date for the milestone review.
 - 3.32.2 Stage 2 gateway submission date (based on the sponsor's preferred date of the gateway assessment and the period needed by the CAA to consider the submitted gateway material) and the target date for the gateway assessment.
 - 3.32.3 Final airspace change proposal submission date and target CAA decision date.
 - 3.32.4 Target AIRAC implementation date, including relevant AIRAC cut-off dates and effective dates.

Sponsor outputs from the briefing and guidance meeting

- 3.33 Sponsors **must** produce a record of what was discussed and agreed with the CAA during the briefing and guidance meeting. These outputs must include:
- 3.33.1 The briefing and guidance meeting agenda.
 - 3.33.2 The briefing and guidance meeting minutes.
 - 3.33.3 The proposed timeline.
 - 3.33.4 Any other material, such as presentations.
- 3.34 If following the briefing and guidance meeting the information provided in the original statement of need requires updating, the proposer **must** revise it.
- 3.35 Sponsors must submit the briefing and guidance meeting outputs to the CAA for review within five working days of the briefing and guidance meeting, or within an alternative timeline agreed with the CAA. We will aim to review the documentation within five working days of receipt and provide the sponsor with comments, confirmation of the level and details of any scaling for the proposal.
- 3.36 Following the CAA's review, sponsors **must** publish the statement of need, the briefing and guidance meeting agenda, meeting minutes, agreed timeline and any other relevant material on the airspace change portal.

The airspace change portal

- 3.37 Detailed guidance on how to set up an airspace change portal account and create an airspace change proposal entry will be provided by the CAA following the briefing and guidance meeting. We will also provide a unique reference number for the airspace change proposal (ACP-YYYY-XXX or OTH-YYYY-XXX).

- 3.38 Sponsors **should** add a potentially affected area on the airspace change portal and update the area as necessary during the airspace change process. This allows stakeholders to search by location for airspace change proposals that could have an impact on them.
- 3.39 The potentially affected area can be developed by using a combination of the following shapes:
- 3.39.1 Circle: latitude and longitude of the centre point is recorded, with radius calculated and recorded in metres.
 - 3.39.2 Rectangle: latitude and longitude of northwest and southeast points are recorded.
 - 3.39.3 Polygon with unlimited points: latitude and longitude are recorded for each point entered.
- 3.40 When an airspace change proposal is created, its default status is set to 'pre-published', meaning that the portal page is not visible to stakeholders and the proposal cannot progress through the airspace change process.
- 3.41 After creation, the status **must** be changed to 'in progress' to make it visible to stakeholders accessing the airspace change portal. Sponsors can add a status comment to provide additional context, which will remain visible at each stage until it is removed or replaced.

CAA confirmations following the briefing and guidance meeting

- 3.42 Following submission of the documentation by the proposer after the briefing and guidance meeting, the CAA will use the information provided by the proposer up to this point to confirm:
- 3.42.1 That the objective, issue or opportunity can reasonably be addressed through a change to the notified airspace.
 - 3.42.2 The alternative mechanism that should be used if a change to notified airspace is not the appropriate means to address the objective, issue or opportunity outlined by the proposer.
 - 3.42.3 The sponsor for the proposal.
 - 3.42.4 The allocated level of the airspace change proposal and any scaling of the airspace change process requirements and guidance for the proposed airspace change. If insufficient information is provided for the CAA to determine the level, the briefing and guidance meeting will be rescheduled for when the proposer has the required information. If at any point in the airspace change process the CAA receives information from the sponsor that the scope of the airspace change proposal has altered and this change may affect the allocated level, we will re-

assess the level on a case-by-case basis. A sponsor may be required to return to previous stages to fulfil requirements that were not completed on the basis of the previously allocated level, or a sponsor may be required to submit a new airspace change proposal. This outcome will be published on the airspace change portal.

- 3.43 After the briefing and guidance meeting, the CAA will review the requested timeline, having regard to the CAA's prioritisation principles document ([CAP 2541, Principles for the prioritisation of airspace change proposals](#)) (see the Air Navigation Directions 2026, direction 4(3)), NERL's Strategic Delivery Plan, CAA resources and any dependencies. Timeline adjustments may be needed before the timeline can be agreed by the CAA.

Requirement 9: The sponsor establishes formal partnership arrangements with each partner involved in the specific airspace change proposal (where there are partners)

Level 1: Must

Level 2: Must

Level 3: N/A

Guidance: the UKADS provider only

- 3.44 For airspace change proposals sponsored by the UKADS provider that have partners, after the briefing and guidance meeting and no later than the submission of the Stage 1 milestone material, the sponsor **must** establish formal partnership arrangements with each partner involved in the specific airspace change proposal that make clear:
- 3.44.1 Roles and responsibilities of the sponsor (the UKADS provider).
 - 3.44.2 Roles and responsibilities of the partner.
 - 3.44.3 Governance arrangements for resolving issues.
 - 3.44.4 Variation provisions.
- 3.45 The CAA will seek confirmation the partnership agreements are in place at the milestone review at the end of Stage 1.

Current-day scenario

Requirement 10: The sponsor describes the current-day scenario

Level 1: Must

Level 2: Must

Level 3: Must

Guidance

- 3.46 Sponsors **must** produce a current-day scenario that provides a comprehensive description of the current operations in the airspace. The current-day scenario develops and expands on the initial information provided in the statement of need and the detailed discussion in the briefing and guidance meeting.
- 3.47 The current-day scenario should be a fully developed, formally documented, evidence-based description, including diagrams, surveys and data sources, which describes the operational, noise, fuel efficiency, protected areas and European sites context, as well as the technical context, in order to inform work on the future proposed airspace designs. The information included should reflect the scale, complexity and likely impacts of the proposed airspace change and include the following types of information:
- 3.47.1 Airspace design and infrastructure: details of airspace classification, current airspace structures, routes and instrument flight procedures and communication, navigation and surveillance facilities.
 - 3.47.2 Airspace usage surveys and analysis: current airspace users, aircraft types, number and frequency of movements, typical flight behaviours/patterns and typical operating altitudes.
 - 3.47.3 Airspace operational diagrams: visual representations of current aircraft flows, procedures and structures and locations of aerodromes.
 - 3.47.4 Linked airspace change proposals: some airspace change proposals may be linked where the implementation or benefits of one proposal rely on another proposal being approved and implemented.
 - 3.47.5 Operational efficiency and complexity: including delays and known choke points.
 - 3.47.6 Potential safety risks: any operational or design-related risks in the current operation.
 - 3.47.7 Current noise impacts of aircraft flying below 5,000 feet AMSL (where practicable to determine).
 - 3.47.8 Location of noise sensitive buildings such as schools, places of worship and hospitals³ overflown below 5,000 feet AMSL (where possible to

³ Noise sensitive buildings are defined as all types of primary, secondary and tertiary education establishments,

determine). Sponsors can obtain noise sensitive buildings data from the [Ordnance Survey Points of Interest](#) website.

- 3.47.9 Flight efficiency in terms of current fuel burn per flight for the most representative single-aisle and twin-aisle aircraft types.
- 3.47.10 Protected areas overflown below 5,000 feet AMSL. In this document, we use the term protected areas to mean National Parks, National Landscapes (and National Scenic Areas in Scotland), the Broads and Sites of Special Scientific Interest.
- 3.47.11 European sites overflown below 2,000 feet AMSL. In this document, we use the term European sites to mean Special Areas of Conservation (SAC) and candidate SACs, Special Protection Areas (SPA) and potential SPAs, Ramsar sites and proposed Ramsar sites, and compensatory habitats (areas secured to compensate for damage to SACs, SPAs and Ramsar sites). Sponsors can search for the locations of protected areas and European sites on the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) [MAGIC](#) website⁴.
- 3.47.12 Location specific legal obligations: planning conditions or requirements, including a maximum number of flights and/or passengers permitted from, or a minimum level of capacity required at, an airport, noise preferential routes or noise abatement procedures set by planning authorities (such planning conditions are sometimes referred to as section 106 agreements by reference to [section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990](#)), noise action plans pursuant to [The Environmental Noise \(England\) Regulations 2006](#), and any directions, requirements or prohibitions made by the Secretary of State pursuant to section 78 of the [Civil Aviation Act 1982](#) in relation to airports designated under section 80 of that Act.
- 3.47.13 Other local context: sponsors should also note and describe any existing and any relevant best endeavours commitments or assurances given by a relevant airport operator.

- 3.48 When compiling the current-day scenario, sponsors should use sources including (but not limited to) airspace users, traffic samples, aeronautical information, local agreements, airspace classification and structure, and relevant

places of worship, and hospitals and hospices.

⁴ There is currently no publicly available database which provides information on areas of compensatory habitat (areas secured to compensate for damage to SACs, SPAs and Ramsar sites). We recommend contacting the Statutory Nature Conservation Bodies who may be able to provide further information on these sites.

data analysis. Much of this information will be used or relied upon during later stages of the airspace change process.

Design development

- 3.49 In Stage 1, the sponsor develops draft design(s) that can be taken forward to consultation in Stage 2.
- 3.50 A sponsor's design(s) must address the statement of need, taking account of the Airspace Modernisation Strategy, while applying the Secretary of State's airspace design priorities. A sponsor's design(s) must have due regard to existing planning conditions or requirements that may influence the draft design(s). When a sponsor is developing their design(s) in parallel and at the same time as an ongoing planning application, the design work must proceed on the basis that the design should enable the maximum level of capacity of the planning application or the forecast demand for air transport to and from the applicable runway(s) (whichever is the lower).
- 3.51 To take account of the Airspace Modernisation Strategy the sponsor must consider the Airspace Modernisation Strategy's objectives (safety, integration of diverse airspace users, simplification - reducing complexity and improving efficiency, and environmental sustainability) and delivery elements. Sponsors may find [CAP 3299, The CAA's Air Navigation Functions Guidance](#) useful when doing so.
- 3.52 Design development describes how the sponsor will gather and test information, identify assumptions and constraints, and engage with a stakeholder reference group before developing the draft design(s). This part of the process utilises and builds on information already gathered for the statement of need, the briefing and guidance meeting and the current-day scenario.
- 3.53 Sponsors may undertake conceptual design activities before this point in the process, and in parallel with information gathering, the identification and development of assumptions and constraints, and engagement with relevant stakeholders. Early conceptual design work may be used to support understanding of the issues, test emerging assumptions, inform partner discussions and identify further information requirements. Conceptual design work undertaken at this stage does not remove the need for sponsors to ensure that sufficient information has been gathered and considered before continuing in the process to apply the airspace design priorities and develop draft design(s) suitable for consultation.
- 3.54 The sponsor is responsible for determining when they have gathered sufficient information to apply the airspace design priorities and develop draft design(s) in accordance with the process requirements. Sponsors are not required to revisit sources, unless they consider it would be beneficial.

Requirement 11: The sponsor gathers the necessary information to identify assumptions and constraints to meet the statement of need, take account of the Airspace Modernisation Strategy and apply the airspace design priorities when developing a draft design(s)

Level 1: Must

Level 2: Must

Level 3: Must

Guidance

- 3.55 Before commencing draft design(s) activity, sponsors **must** gather the information needed to understand the operational, geographical and technical context in which the airspace design will operate. While the current-day scenario describes current operations in the airspace, further information is essential for identifying the assumptions and constraints and for applying the airspace design priorities that will inform all subsequent design choices.
- 3.56 Design assumptions are elements that are treated as true for the purpose of the design, for example: communication, navigation and surveillance provision, anticipated occupancy of reserved airspace, fleet equipage, traffic demand and geographic and time distribution, prevailing wind or runway usage patterns.
- 3.57 Design constraints represent the limitations within which the design must operate. Constraints can arise from: adjacent airspace structures, air traffic management/communication, navigation and surveillance limitations, terrain and obstacles, instrument flight procedure design criteria, aerodrome infrastructure or runway capacity, operational procedures, and type of activity being undertaken. Relevant planning conditions and requirements may also constrain designs.
- 3.58 The information sponsors must gather will depend on the specific characteristics and potential impacts of the proposal. The following list is indicative rather than exhaustive:
- 3.58.1 Physical characteristics: terrain, obstacles, runway configuration and aerodrome capacity limitations.
 - 3.58.2 Infrastructure: for example, communication, navigation and surveillance.
 - 3.58.3 Airspace: classification, dimensions, structures, instrument flight procedures and operating protocols.
 - 3.58.4 Safety: relevant audits/assessments and known or potential safety risks.
 - 3.58.5 Airspace users already using, or intending to use, the airspace impacted by the proposal.

- 3.58.6 Air Traffic Services (ATS) considerations: adjacent air navigation service providers, letters of agreement, sector workloads and capacity constraints and network efficiency implications.
- 3.58.7 Movements: traffic flows, operational diagrams containing information on distribution of flights and airspace usage characteristics.
- 3.58.8 National security considerations.
- 3.58.9 Aviation policy and legislation: for example, CAA instrument flight procedure policy, international obligations relating to airspace design and usage. A list of useful references, including CAA airspace policy statements, can be found on the [CAA website](#). Applicable policies will depend on the context of the proposal.
- 3.58.10 Location specific legal obligations, planning conditions or requirements that may impact the development of the design. These will have been identified during Requirement 10 (description of the current-day scenario). Sponsors should identify the impact these obligations will have on draft design(s) such as maximum or minimum number of flights and/or passengers permitted from an airport, noise preferential routes or noise abatement procedures set by planning authorities, noise actions plans, and any directions, requirements or prohibitions imposed on an aerodrome by the Secretary of State under section 78 of the Civil Aviation Act 1982.
- 3.58.11 Location of noise sensitive buildings such as schools, places of worship and hospitals likely to be relevant to the draft design(s), that is, likely to be overflowed below 5,000 feet AMSL where that is different to the current-day scenario (see Requirement 10).
- 3.58.12 Locations of protected areas and European sites likely to be relevant to the draft design(s), that is, likely to be overflowed below 5,000 feet AMSL and 2,000 feet AMSL respectively where that is different to the current-day scenario (see Requirement 10).
- 3.59 Sponsors **must** identify the information necessary to apply each airspace design priority and then gather that information from sources which may include:
 - 3.59.1 Information already used in the statement of need, briefing and guidance meeting or current-day scenario. This should be checked to ensure it remains valid.
 - 3.59.2 Instrument flight procedure design organisations, as many assumptions and constraints may be related to the design of instrument flight procedures.
 - 3.59.3 Airspace users.

- 3.59.4 Aeronautical information publications.
 - 3.59.5 Traffic data and statistical analysis.
 - 3.59.6 Partners' information and records to support the application of the airspace design priorities (for airspace change proposals sponsored by the UKADS provider).
 - 3.59.7 Evidence, analysis and other information prepared for other regulatory processes such as planning applications and Development Consent Orders, where applicable.
- 3.60 This may be desk-based research or sponsors may approach sources if they consider it will assist them to do so. The stakeholder reference group (see Requirement 12) may be approached, individually or collectively, to provide information or contextual insight, or to identify practical issues, interactions or cumulative impacts for the sponsor to consider. The sponsor is responsible for ascertaining the accuracy of the information gathered.
- 3.61 Once information has been gathered, sponsors **should**:
- 3.61.1 Conduct a gap analysis to identify missing, outdated, unreliable, inaccurate or contradictory information and identify assumptions that require clarification, or further evidence that needs gathering.
 - 3.61.2 Plan to close those gaps, identifying how the additional information will be sourced. Actions may include gathering operational or contextual data from the stakeholder reference group, clarifying assumptions, updating evidence, or undertaking proportionate modelling and simulation. The risk of progressing with unresolved gaps is that draft design(s) may not be able to progress because unidentified relevant information, assumptions and constraints will not have been considered.
 - 3.61.3 Ensure the information gathered is up to date so that reliance on outdated information does not hinder design work.
- 3.62 Sponsors **must** provide sufficient explanation in their Stage 1 outputs to demonstrate:
- 3.62.1 What information was gathered and from which sources.
 - 3.62.2 How the gap analysis was conducted and the actions taken to address any information gaps.
 - 3.62.3 How assumptions and constraints were identified, tested and developed, and how they have informed the draft design(s).

- 3.62.4 Why any gathered information has not been taken forward to the application of the airspace design priorities to influence the draft design(s).

Requirement 12: The sponsor identifies and engages with a stakeholder reference group to test the information gathered

Level 1: Must

Level 2: Must

Level 3: Must

Guidance

- 3.63 Having gathered the necessary information, sponsors **must** share this information with a stakeholder reference group.
- 3.64 The purpose of this engagement is to test with relevant specialists the information gathered by the sponsor to date under Requirement 11, and to obtain any additional information necessary to support design work.
- 3.65 The sponsor is responsible for determining the membership of their stakeholder reference group. The size and composition of the group should be proportionate to the circumstances of the airspace change proposal. Where possible the sponsor should consider the use of representative organisations. Stakeholder reference group members will often be stakeholders with whom the sponsor already has existing relationships or communication channels.
- 3.66 The stakeholder reference group should consist only of stakeholders who can provide information which is necessary to address the statement of need, taking account of the Airspace Modernisation Strategy, while applying the airspace design priorities when carrying out design work. Local, parish or town councils may assist in identifying noise sensitive buildings. However, residents impacted by proposed changes to aircraft operations should not be included.
- 3.67 Sources of membership could be taken from the following:
- 3.67.1 Aviation stakeholders (individual entities or existing forums). Aviation stakeholders include airspace users, air navigation service providers, aerodromes/spaceports and Defence Airspace and Air Traffic Management (DAATM). Sponsors must ensure that potentially impacted aviation stakeholders are appropriately represented. This may be through relevant members of the National Air Traffic Management Advisory Committee (NATMAC) or other representative organisations. In some instances, it may be appropriate to include specific airspace users, airline operators, air navigation service providers or adjacent aerodromes/spaceports.
- 3.67.2 Partners for airspace change proposals sponsored by the UKADS provider.

3.67.3 Local, parish or town councils, where relevant, to assist in identifying noise sensitive buildings.

- 3.68 Sponsors **should** adopt the engagement approach that is most appropriate for their stakeholder reference group and proportionate to the scale and potential impacts of the proposal. In some cases, the sponsor may wish to engage with the whole stakeholder reference group together. However, not all stakeholders will be relevant to all the information that needs to be gathered and, in some circumstances, bilateral conversations, or discussions with smaller sub-groups of stakeholders or individuals could be more effective. Where existing stakeholder forums exist, it could be appropriate for sponsors to engage relevant stakeholders as part of regularly scheduled meetings.
- 3.69 More complex airspace change proposals may require ongoing conversations with the stakeholder reference group to ensure the sponsor continues to fully understand the necessary information to address the statement of need, taking account of the Airspace Modernisation Strategy, while applying the airspace design priorities as the sponsor goes through the process and carries out their design work.
- 3.70 Sponsors **should** clearly explain to the stakeholder reference group the criteria that will inform the development of the draft design(s), such as:
- 3.70.1 The objectives of the airspace change proposal.
 - 3.70.2 The information the sponsor has gathered to apply the airspace design priorities.
 - 3.70.3 The assumptions and constraints identified by the sponsor.
- 3.71 The stakeholder reference group **must** be given the opportunity to provide comments to the sponsor on the information provided by the sponsor and asked to identify any information (within scope of Requirement 11) the sponsor has missed or misunderstood, before the sponsor commences design work.
- 3.72 Sponsors of Level 1 and Level 2 proposals **must** provide the following in their Stage 1 milestone submission, and sponsors of Level 3 proposals **must** provide the following in their final submission:
- 3.72.1 The composition of the stakeholder reference group.
 - 3.72.2 Evidence of the information shared with the stakeholder reference group and any comments received. This may take the form of meeting minutes or email correspondence for example.

Requirement 13: The sponsor develops the draft design(s) that address the statement of need, taking account of the Airspace Modernisation Strategy while applying the airspace design priorities

Level 1: Must

Level 2: Must

Level 3: Must

Guidance

- 3.73 Sponsors **must** develop draft design(s), explaining and demonstrating how the draft design(s) address the statement of need, taking account of the Airspace Modernisation Strategy while applying the airspace design priorities.
- 3.74 Information gathered under Requirement 11 will have established the assumptions and constraints that will inform the design. Some of these assumptions and constraints may limit the potential designs.

Updating gathered information

- 3.75 After testing the information with the stakeholder reference group, sponsors **must** update the explanation in paragraph 3.62.
- 3.76 This update **must** be incorporated into the design development, described in the draft design(s) development narrative, and included in the explanation of the draft design(s) development in the consultation materials published in Stage 2. Sponsors **must** provide sufficient explanation to demonstrate:
- 3.76.1 What information was gathered and from which sources.
 - 3.76.2 How the gap analysis was conducted and the actions taken to address any information gaps.
 - 3.76.3 How assumptions and constraints were identified, tested and developed, and how they have informed the draft design(s).
 - 3.76.4 Why any gathered information has not been taken forward to the application of the airspace design priorities to influence the draft design(s).

Airspace design priorities

- 3.77 Using these assumptions and constraints, sponsors should begin identifying potential designs that address the statement of need, taking account of the Airspace Modernisation Strategy while applying the airspace design priorities.
- 3.78 Sponsors **must** apply the airspace design priorities in priority order. These are:
- 3.78.1 Airspace Design Priority 1 (ADP1): ensure safety and viability of the design. only designs that meet ADP1 should progress further. Designs that cannot meet ADP1 should be discontinued.

- A design is viable if it is operationally flyable and/or enables the operational objectives, complies with UK law and international obligations and is capable of incorporation into the performance of the wider aviation network design and overall airspace management in the UK.
- The extent to which a design meets the safety and integration objectives of the Airspace Modernisation Strategy is relevant to whether it is capable of incorporation into the performance of the wider aviation network and overall airspace management in the UK.
- The Secretary of State's statutory guidance (the Air Navigation Guidance 2026) recognises that a key benefit of improved airspace design includes increased opportunity for the systemisation of commercial air traffic and less complexity. Systemisation of airspace enables smoother ascents and descents for aircraft and is a key aspect of making any airspace design safer, while having the potential to reduce noise impacts.

3.78.2 Airspace Design Priority 2 (ADP2): enable aviation activity permitted by planning decisions, including any relevant conditions, and government planning policy statements. If ADP2 has no impact on the design, the sponsor should proceed directly to ADP3.

- Where the relevant planning decision places a cap on the number of aircraft movements, the airspace design must enable that number of aircraft movements to the extent that it is safe to do so.
- Where the relevant planning decision places no cap on the number of aircraft movements, the airspace design must enable the safe maximum number of air traffic movements, having regard to the demand for air transport, to and from the runway.
- The demand for air transport to and from the runway should be that identified by the Department for Transport's National Air Passenger Allocation Model (NAPAM). Sponsors may propose using an alternative forecast (for example, from the airport's own business models where the airport is not covered by NAPAM, EUROCONTROL [STATFOR](#)) with suitable justification subject to agreement with the CAA.

- The Air Navigation Guidance 2026 notes that policies and decisions are made about the construction and operation of airports and aerodromes by the planning process. Planning permissions determine whether new infrastructure may be introduced at a particular location and may include conditions or requirements limiting the scale of operations. Also, that the aim of the airspace change process is to deliver airspace improvements to enable the capacity or other limits set by any planning decision. The government planning policy statement which sponsors and the CAA must consider in their application of ADP2 is any airports National Policy Statement which the CAA ensures is reflected in the Airspace Modernisation Strategy (see the Air Navigation Directions 2026, direction 3(2)(b)).
- 3.78.3 Airspace Design Priority 3 (ADP3): minimise change to the areas where aircraft noise is currently experienced from aircraft below 5,000 feet AMSL. If the design has no impacts below 5,000 feet AMSL, the sponsor should proceed directly to ADP4.
 - The Secretary of State's statutory guidance, the Air Navigation Guidance 2026, which the CAA applies to our airspace change process, states that sponsors must minimise the change to the areas where aircraft noise is currently experienced from aircraft below 5,000 feet AMSL.
- 3.78.4 Airspace Design Priority 4 (ADP4): minimise, as much as is practicable and realistic to do so, the total adverse noise impacts of aircraft below 5,000 feet AMSL. If the design has no impacts below 5,000 feet AMSL, the sponsor should proceed directly to ADP5.
 - That is, when considering the phase of flight of any possible design where aircraft are likely to be below 5,000 feet AMSL, sponsors' designs must prioritise designs that achieve ADP3 and then ADP4 rather than flight efficiency.
 - When applying ADP4 to any potential designs, sponsors should take into account the desirability of minimising noise impacts for noise sensitive buildings, which the sponsor will have identified earlier in Stage 1.
- 3.78.5 Airspace Design Priority 5 (ADP5): prioritise flight efficiency where aircraft are at 5,000 feet AMSL and above.
 - Flight efficiency in this context means the minimum fuel burn per flight. Maximising flight efficiency results in minimising fuel burn for a given flight and is commensurate with minimising greenhouse gas emissions for that given flight.

- 3.78.6 Protected areas and European sites: After applying ADP5, the CAA is guided by the Secretary of State that given the finite amount of airspace available, it will not always be possible to design flight procedures that avoid flying over National Parks, National Landscapes and the Broads, sensitive habitats or Sites of Special Scientific Interest. When considering the phase of flight of any remaining potential designs where aircraft are likely to be below 5,000 feet AMSL, sponsors **should** take into account the desirability of doing so after applying ADP5 to their designs.

How to apply the airspace design priorities

- 3.79 Sponsors of proposals that involve multiple procedures **must** apply the airspace design priorities to each procedure and combine the resulting design(s) for each procedure into a combined overall draft airspace design(s). This is particularly relevant for ADP3, ADP4 and ADP5.
- 3.80 When applying the airspace design priorities sequentially, the CAA recognises that the sponsor may arrive at a single draft design after applying all the airspace design priorities. In that eventuality, the sponsor is not required to demonstrate that it is the only design that satisfies all the airspace design priorities.
- 3.81 In the event the sponsor arrives at a single draft design before applying all the airspace design priorities, the sponsor **must** nonetheless assess that design against the remaining airspace design priorities in accordance with the requirements set out in this process.
- 3.82 The CAA recognises that some airspace design priorities will not affect certain airspace change proposals, for instance a proposed change at or above 5,000 feet AMSL.
- 3.83 Where information is insufficient to determine whether an airspace design priority cannot be applied to a design, in the short term, the airspace design priority should be applied until determined otherwise. In due course, to either progress or discount draft design(s), sponsors **may** need to:
- 3.83.1 Gather additional information.
 - 3.83.2 Refine and re-test assumptions and constraints.
 - 3.83.3 Reassess draft design(s) as new evidence emerges.
- 3.84 To support design development, sponsors **may** use:
- 3.84.1 Modelling.
 - 3.84.2 Simulations.
 - 3.84.3 Live flight trials (noting a separate CAA airspace trial process, [CAP 1616k, Requirements and Guidance on the Airspace Change Process](#))

[for Non-Permanent Airspace Change Proposals](#), will need to be followed, and a CAA decision to proceed with the trial obtained, before the trial can take place).

- 3.85 Sponsors **must** systematically evaluate potential designs against each applicable airspace design priority. This evaluation must be:
 - 3.85.1 Objective.
 - 3.85.2 Repeatable.
 - 3.85.3 Evidence-based.
 - 3.85.4 Applied consistently across all designs.
- 3.86 Sponsors do not need to provide the CAA with every discounted design; however, the Stage 1 milestone submission **must** explain the design development and how the draft design(s):
 - 3.86.1 address the statement of need;
 - 3.86.2 take account of the Airspace Modernisation Strategy; and
 - 3.86.3 apply the airspace design priorities.
- 3.87 This explanation forms the core of the draft design(s) development narrative and is key to demonstrating that the airspace design meets the Secretary of State's environmental objectives alongside the other aims and objectives of government policy for aviation. This explanation must be written so that it can be understood by a person not involved in the aviation industry. This will provide transparency for stakeholders and ensure the draft design(s) goes into Stage 2 with robust foundations.
- 3.88 The application of each airspace design priority is covered in more detail below (see paragraphs 3.97 to 3.125). The assessments sponsors must complete, and submit to the CAA, to demonstrate they have applied the airspace design priorities are set out in Requirements 14, 17 and 33.
- 3.89 When considering the relevance of the airspace design priorities, sponsors should take the following into account:

Direct and indirect impacts

- 3.90 Sponsors **must** include the direct and indirect impacts (that is, consequential changes on the flight behaviour of other airspace users) when completing assessments of noise, flight efficiency, protected areas and European sites. For example, an airspace change may have no direct impacts but could cause a change in the flight patterns of other airspace users at another location. For example, a concentration of flight tracks elsewhere or rerouting around the

proposed airspace change causing an increase in miles flown and thereby decreasing flight efficiency.

Impacts from military operations

- 3.91 Impacts on noise exposure and flight efficiency that are a direct result of aircraft operated by or on behalf of the armed forces (including civil aircraft when carrying out military functions under contract) need not be assessed.
- 3.92 However, the impacts on protected areas and European sites that are a direct result of aircraft operated by or on behalf of the armed forces (including civil aircraft when carrying out military functions under contract) **must** be assessed (including in the early screening exercises in Requirement 14).
- 3.93 Indirect (consequential) impacts on noise, flight efficiency, protected areas and European sites from civil aviation that are impacted as a result of an airspace change proposal associated with military operations **must** be assessed. For example, if the airspace change proposal is likely to have an effect upon general aviation activity and/or traffic patterns, then any impacts on noise, flight efficiency, protected areas and European sites from that effect must be assessed.

Impacts from spaceflight activities

- 3.94 To avoid duplication, the Air Navigation Guidance 2026 states that the CAA is not required to take into account the impacts on the environment when considering a proposal for an airspace change which has been submitted to facilitate spaceflight activities where the environmental impact has already been considered as part of a licence application under the [Space Industry Act 2018](#). However, the CAA is required to take into account any consequential impacts on other aviation activity and airspace users as a result of an airspace change proposal sponsored for the purpose of spaceflight activities. The CAA will also take account of additional guidance under section 70(2)(ca) of the Transport Act 2000: Carrying out air navigation functions for the purpose of spaceflight activities (2021 guidance) when considering airspace change proposals which facilitate spaceflight activity.
- 3.95 Where a spaceflight activity licence application does not exist or has not been progressed, sponsors **must** provide environmental impact assessments for both the direct impacts from spaceflight activities as well as indirect (consequential) impacts on other aviation activity and airspace users.
- 3.96 The information for assessing the indirect (consequential) impacts on other airspace users is unlikely to be available from an applicant's [Assessment of Environmental Effects \(AEE\)](#) for the corresponding spaceport or launch operator licence, and thus sponsors may need to produce their own assessments for those purposes as part of the design(s) assessments.

ADP1: Ensure safety and viability of the design

3.97 To meet ADP1 the airspace design must:

- 3.97.1 Maintain a high standard of safety and seek to maintain or enhance current levels of safety (for example, proposed instrument flight procedures must be safe to be flown).
- 3.97.2 Be operationally flyable and/or enable the operational objectives.
- 3.97.3 Be the minimum volume of airspace necessary to maintain a high standard of air safety.
- 3.97.4 Integrate effectively with other operational airspace users and take account of operators and owners of all classes of aircraft, consistent with the Airspace Modernisation Strategy objective of integration. This includes consideration of whether the design supports the government policy of enabling new users to integrate into the existing aviation system, driving economic growth.
- 3.97.5 Be capable of incorporation into the wider aviation network and be developed in close coordination with relevant airspace management organisations, air traffic services (including those provided on behalf of the Ministry of Defence) and air traffic flow and network capacity management stakeholders. The Airspace Modernisation Strategy states that modernising airspace must facilitate defence and security objectives and we would not normally approve any design that impedes these objectives.
- 3.97.6 Support the simplification of UK airspace, consistent with the Airspace Modernisation Strategy's aim of reducing unnecessary complexity where possible.

3.98 To meet ADP1 the sponsor must demonstrate the design complies with applicable aviation safety legislation, CAA policy and guidance, and international obligations, or explain why not. Sponsors and approved procedure design organisations should refer to the CAA's published technical guidance for the design of instrument flight procedures. Where a design includes instrument flight procedures, they must be compliant with the requirements set out in the CAA's CAP 785 documents. The relevant aspects of these should be described where it is necessary to understand how compliance with these requirements has been assessed, or where there is a need to consider the potential for non-compliance and any associated requests for exemptions or dispensations. A list of useful references, including those related to instrument flight procedure design, can be found on the [CAA website](#).

- 3.99 Where compliance with ADP1 relies on the need for future policy to be developed, a policy trial or a proposed policy update, sponsors should explain the relationship and consider inclusion as a parallel activity.

ADP2: Within the possibilities remaining after prioritising ADP1, enable aviation activity permitted by planning decisions, including any relevant conditions and government planning policy statements

- 3.100 Noting, as set out above, that for airport related airspace change proposals, the design of airspace must safely enable the capacity permitted by the relevant planning decisions:
- 3.100.1 Where the relevant planning decision places a cap on the number of aircraft movements, the airspace design must enable that number of aircraft movements to the extent that it is safe to do so.
 - 3.100.2 Where the relevant planning decision places no cap on the number of aircraft movements, the airspace design must enable the safe maximum number of air traffic movements, having regard to the demand for air transport, to and from the runway.
 - 3.100.3 The demand for air transport to and from the runway should be that identified in the Department for Transport's National Air Passenger Allocation Model (NAPAM). Sponsors may propose using an alternative forecast (for example, from the airport's own business models where the airport is not covered by NAPAM, EUROCONTROL [STATFOR](#)) with suitable justification subject to agreement with the CAA.
- 3.101 In addition, the sponsor's design **must** be, so far as the sponsor is aware, capable of implementation because it will not cause a breach of any existing or draft (for example, proposed within a Development Consent Order application) planning condition requirements or location specific legal obligations such as statutory noise action plans or noise abatement procedures.
- 3.102 When a sponsor is developing their design(s) in parallel and at the same time as an ongoing airport or aerodrome planning application, the design work **must** proceed on the basis that the design should enable the maximum level of capacity of the planning application or the forecast demand for air transport to and from the applicable runway(s) (whichever is the lower). The sponsor should clearly articulate this in the assumptions identified at Requirement 11.
- 3.103 In some cases, more than one airport will have existing planning permission, and/or ongoing planning applications for total movements/passengers numbers which exceed the overall actual (and/or potential) capacity of the network. In such cases, the sponsor should, to the extent possible, design to accommodate forecast demand for the relevant airports.

- 3.104 In some cases, these airports will be subject to a single airspace design proposal sponsored by the UKADS provider.
- 3.105 In other cases, the airports will be progressing individual airspace change proposals, either coordinated by the UKACS provider or not, but nevertheless progressing as identified linked airspace changes.
- 3.106 In whichever scenario, the CAA will apply ADP2 so that the overall airspace design:
 - 3.106.1 First meets the terms of (enables) any minimum increase in capacity required by any planning condition or requirement (that is, in some cases planning decisions require a certain minimum increase in capacity as a condition of building the development that is the subject of the planning application).
 - 3.106.2 Then provides capacity at the airport(s) where the Department for Transport's National Air Passenger Allocation Model (NAPAM) predicts it is needed, up to the limit of any cap in air transport movements in any planning permission/application conditions.
- 3.107 Any proposed airspace change whose statement of need is predicated on the granting of a planning application, and the conditions or requirements on which permission (or a development consent order) is granted, cannot proceed to a decision (Stage 4) until the planning decision is made. However, if applicable, the airspace change decision can be made before any appeal to the planning decision is lodged, heard or decided. If the planning decision is in terms other than those applied for, the sponsor must consider whether any of the requirements of the airspace change process need to be repeated and/or whether any draft design needs to be amended.

ADP3: Within the possibilities remaining after prioritising ADP1 and ADP2, minimise change to the areas where aircraft noise is currently experienced from aircraft below 5,000 feet AMSL

- 3.108 In applying ADP3, the Secretary of State's statutory guidance which we apply to our airspace change process, the Air Navigation Guidance 2026, states that sponsors must minimise the change to the areas where aircraft noise is currently experienced from aircraft below 5,000 feet AMSL. As noted in the Air Navigation Guidance 2026, change in noise exposure, as referred to in the airspace design priorities, should be considered to be where there is a change, plus or minus, 3 dB of noise (i.e. ± 3 dB L_{ASmax}).
- 3.109 Within the possibilities remaining after prioritising ADP1 and ADP2, in order to minimise change to the areas where aircraft noise is currently experienced from aircraft below 5,000 feet AMSL, a sponsor **must** select those procedure

design(s) where the increase in noise of aircraft below 5,000 feet AMSL is less than 3 dB L_{ASmax} (and discard any other procedure design(s)).

- 3.110 If the procedure design(s) remaining after the application of ADP1 and ADP2 cannot apply ADP3, then sponsors **must** continue to ADP4 and then ADP5 with the remaining procedure design(s) that apply after application of ADP1 and ADP2.
- 3.111 In demonstrating their application of ADP3, sponsors may choose to calculate noise levels directly. Alternatively, to assist sponsors in applying ADP3, the CAA has developed a diagram (Figure 1) that defines the geometry associated with a change of noise of 3 dB L_{ASmax} .
- 3.112 Limiting a lateral shift in a route to less than 3 dB L_{ASmax} is achieved by limiting the shift to an angular limit relative to the point on the ground directly beneath the flight path. Following the principles used in [CAP 1498, Definition of overflight](#), the region within which a route could shift laterally and stay within 3 dB L_{ASmax} noise change is shown in Figure 1, all other things being equal (that is, there is no change in traffic or aircraft height associated with the airspace design). Note that the values shown in Figure 1 are rounded to the nearest 100 metres.

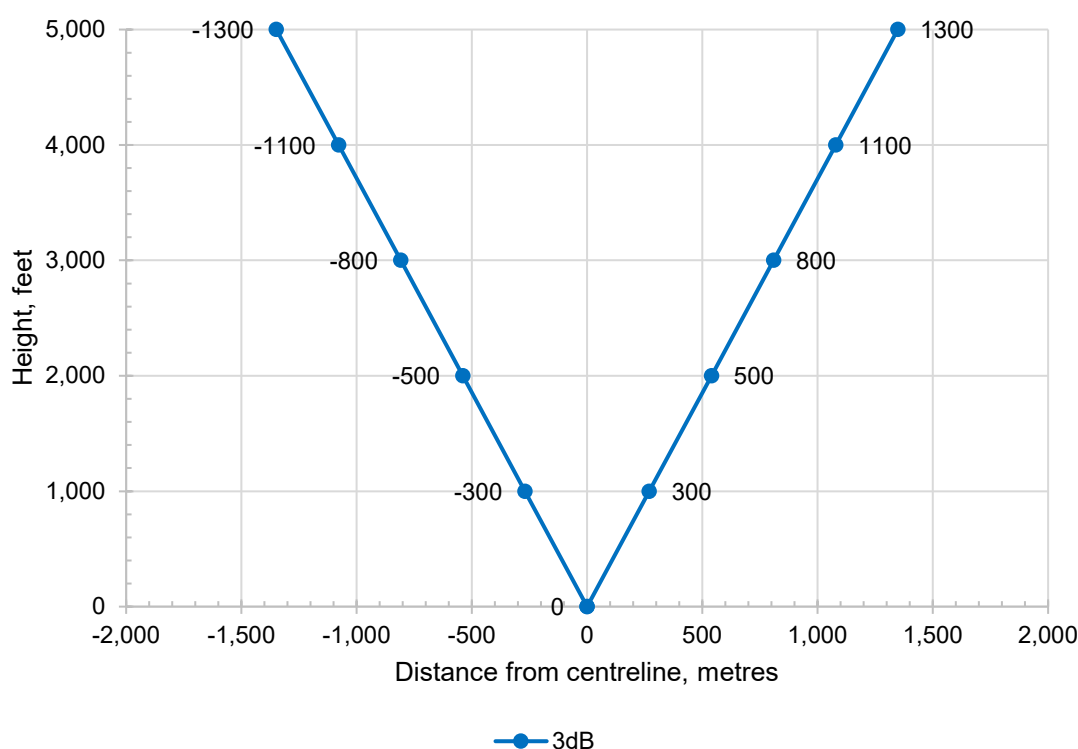


Figure 1: Maximum lateral shift of airspace route, all other things remaining equal

- 3.113 For airspace change proposals solely at and above 5,000 feet AMSL, ADP3 does not apply.

ADP4: Within the possibilities remaining after prioritising ADP1, ADP2 and ADP3, minimise, as much as is practicable and realistic to do so, the total adverse noise impacts of aircraft below 5,000 feet AMSL

- 3.114 Sponsors **must** apply ADP4 for each remaining procedure design after ADP3 (that is, those which do not change areas where aircraft noise is currently experienced from aircraft below 5,000 feet AMSL and if any remain under consideration, those which do).
- 3.115 The CAA has developed the following guidance to aid sponsors in applying ADP4, which reflects the minimum noise modelling categories and proportionality principles set out in [CAP 2091, CAA Policy on Minimum Standards for Noise Modelling](#) that apply to their airport. Recognising that the highest CAP 2091 noise modelling category will not be known until later in this process (Requirement 14), the current category that the airport falls into **must** be used to demonstrate how the design has applied ADP4.
- 3.116 Sponsors **must** demonstrate how they have applied ADP4 to each procedure design(s) using the relevant techniques: population exposure within the noise footprint for each procedure, population overflight calculations or by reference to population density maps. These are given below:
 - 3.116.1 CAP 2091 Category A and B: a count of population and noise sensitive buildings within the Sound Exposure Level (SEL) noise footprint per procedure.
 - 3.116.2 CAP 2091 Category C: a count of population and noise sensitive buildings within the overflight contour/corridor per procedure.
 - 3.116.3 CAP 2091 Category D/E: an operational diagram depicting population and noise sensitive buildings overflown (procedures overlaid on maps, for example, Ordnance Survey).
 - 3.116.4 For airspace change proposals that do not relate to an airport, an operational diagram depicting population and noise sensitive buildings overflown (procedures overlaid on maps, for example, Ordnance Survey).
- 3.117 In applying ADP4 to any potential procedures, where practicable, sponsors **must** first minimise adverse noise impacts for exposed populations and residential properties and then for noise sensitive buildings such as schools, places of worship and hospitals which the sponsor will have identified earlier in Stage 1.
- 3.118 For airspace change proposals solely at and above 5,000 feet AMSL, ADP4 does not apply.

ADP5: Within the possibilities remaining after prioritising ADP1, ADP2, ADP3 and ADP4, prioritise flight efficiency where aircraft are at 5,000 feet AMSL and above

- 3.119 Flight efficiency in this context means the minimum fuel burn per flight. Sponsors **must** demonstrate how they have applied ADP5 (see paragraphs 4.63 to 4.71) for information on fuel burn calculation models). In doing so, to assist sponsors, the CAA has developed the following guidance that defines the flight efficiency calculation to be applied:
- 3.119.1 For airports with 30,000 or more annual air transport movements, ADP5 must be applied by calculating the fuel burn per flight per procedure for the most representative single-aisle and twin-aisle aircraft types.
 - 3.119.2 For airports with less than 30,000 annual air transport movements, ADP5 must be applied by calculating the track distance per flight per procedure.
 - 3.119.3 For airspace change proposals that do not relate to an airport, ADP5 must be applied by calculating the fuel burn per flight per procedure/flight trajectory for the most representative single-aisle and twin-aisle aircraft types. If the sponsor can provide the CAA with robust rationale and supporting evidence, this can be proportionately scaled to track distance per flight per procedure/flight trajectory.
- 3.120 The flight efficiency modelling **must** be considered from the ground calculated to a 'common point', or, where the airspace change is not related to an airport, between two 'common points'. The 'common point' could be beyond the end of the procedure, and thus the fuel burn per flight will need to include other airspace volumes. In certain cases, the 'common point' may extend beyond the London, Scottish or Shanwick Oceanic Flight Information Regions (FIR). This is to enable a common baseline and like-for-like comparisons between airspace designs.

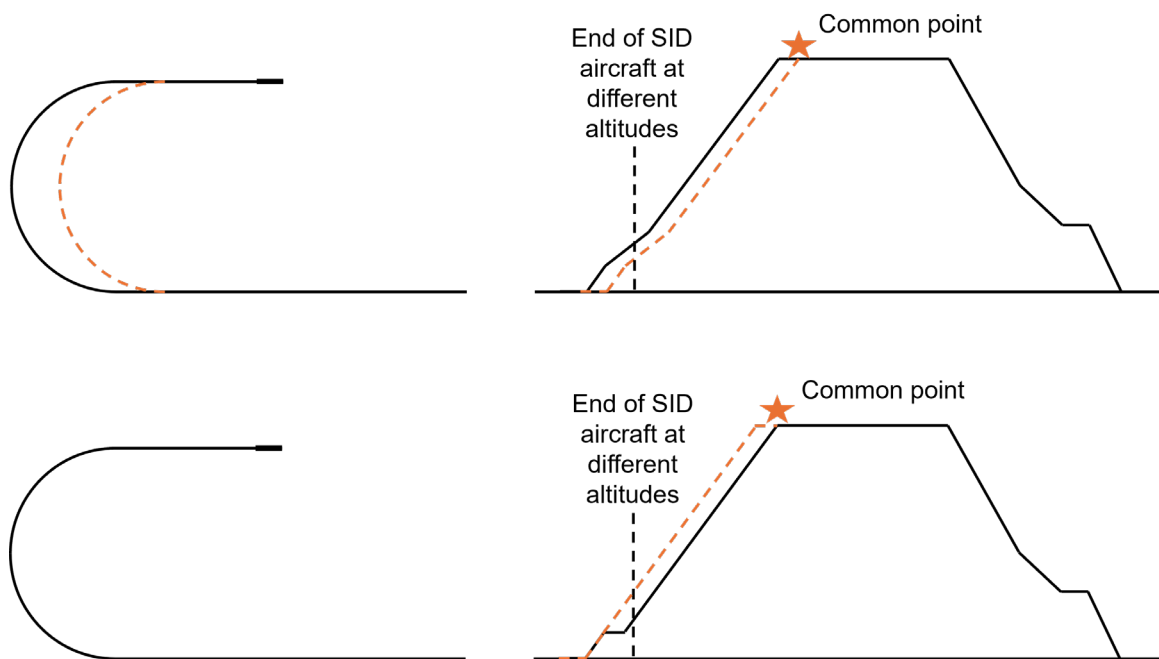


Figure 2: Examples of a 'common point' in case 1 (top): the length of the standard instrument departure (SID) is reduced and case 2 (bottom): the standard instrument departure (SID) is changed to a continuous climb operation (CCO) (all figures are for illustration purposes only, not to scale)

Guidance on applying non-aviation environmental legislation within the airspace design priorities

- 3.121 CAA duties under various non-aviation environmental legislation exist in parallel with the CAA's airspace functions. Sponsors should apply the airspace design priorities in the order they are set out in the Secretary of State's statutory guidance (the Air Navigation Guidance 2026), which is reflected in this process. As noted above, we are guided by the Secretary of State that, given the finite amount of airspace available, it will not always be possible to design flight procedures that avoid flying over protected areas and/or European sites. Consequently, when considering the phase of flight of any remaining potential designs where aircraft are likely to be below 5,000 feet AMSL, sponsors **should** take into account the desirability of doing so after applying all the airspace design priorities to their designs.
- 3.122 Sponsors should not rule out any draft design(s) left after the application of all airspace design priorities which could potentially impact protected areas or cause adverse effects on the integrity of European sites as an assessment of any such impacts will be performed for all draft design(s) taken forward from Stage 1 into Stage 2 in the draft design(s) assessment.

How to apply the airspace design priorities to multi-procedure or multi-airport designs

- 3.123 Sponsors **must** apply the airspace design priorities to each procedure. The sponsor **must** then select a preferred design for each procedure that the sponsor

can demonstrate applies the airspace design priorities. To select the preferred design for each procedure sponsors **must** use the methods set out in Requirement 13.

- 3.124 Sponsors **must** combine the preferred designs for each procedure into a combined overall draft airspace design for the airspace change proposal.

Selection of combined overall draft airspace design(s) taken forward

- 3.125 It is likely that sponsors will have identified one draft airspace design at this stage. However, sponsors can take forward more than one design to Requirement 14 and beyond if they choose to do so.

Proposed instrument flight procedures

- 3.126 Where the proposed change to airspace design involves proposed instrument flight procedures, during their design development sponsors **should** ensure that they engage with their appointed approved procedure design organisation and the CAA instrument flight procedure regulator. The CAA instrument flight procedure regulators can provide guidance on the process requirements for obtaining approval for a flight procedure. Technical requirements outlined in CAA CAP 785 documents⁵ must be completed before we can make a decision on the airspace change proposal, unless otherwise agreed by the CAA, and approval will need to be in place prior to implementation.
- 3.127 At the Stage 1 milestone review, the CAA will expect to see evidence of the engagement with the approved procedure design organisation to ensure that the draft design(s) are maturing in accordance with regulation and policy.

Requirement 14: The sponsor develops the inputs required to enable draft design(s) to be assessed

Level 1: Must

Level 2: Must

Level 3: Must

Guidance

- 3.128 The sponsor **must** develop the inputs listed below to enable the draft design(s) to be assessed through the later stages of the airspace change process:
- 3.128.1 Baseline scenario and design(s) scenario.
 - 3.128.2 Traffic forecast(s).
 - 3.128.3 CAP 2091 noise modelling category.
 - 3.128.4 Type of flight efficiency assessment.

⁵ A list of useful references, including those related to instrument flight procedure design, can be found on the [CAA website](#).

3.128.5 Early screening exercise for protected areas.

3.128.6 Early screening exercise for European sites.

3.129 Guidance on how to develop the inputs depends on the level of the airspace change proposal. Additionally, some guidance is specific to the purpose of the airspace change. For example, an airspace change proposal which has been submitted to facilitate spaceflight activities.

Baseline scenario and design(s) scenario

Baseline scenario and design(s) scenario guidance: Level 1 and Level 2

3.130 Sponsors will need to conduct a draft design(s) assessment at Stage 2 and a final design assessment at Stage 3. The design(s) assessments will be informed by a baseline scenario without the airspace change proposal having been implemented and a design(s) scenario that assumes the proposed airspace change has been implemented.

3.131 The baseline scenario allows sponsors to assess the impacts of the design(s) against a counterfactual future baseline scenario without the implementation of the airspace change so that a comparison can be made. Throughout this guidance, baseline scenario is the term used to refer to the future scenario without the airspace change. Design(s) scenario is the term used to refer to the scenario with the airspace change.

3.132 Both the baseline and the design(s) scenarios will be prepared at the same two future points in time at year 1 and year n . Sponsors **must** therefore determine year 1 and year n and develop the baseline and design(s) scenarios for both years applicable to their airspace change proposal.

3.133 Year 1 is the year of implementation with the airspace change proposal, and year n is either:

3.133.1 the year at which the capacity permitted by planning is reached; or

3.133.2 five years after implementation of the proposed airspace change proposal;

whichever is later.

3.134 Because of the timeframe to reach airport capacity, the baseline scenario and the design(s) scenario at both year 1 and year n must take account of known or anticipated factors that might affect them, for example, the long-term trend for aircraft to get quieter and more fuel efficient over time.

3.135 In cases where no current-day airspace situation exists (that is, there are no airspace structures and traffic flows), the future scenario without the airspace change will need to assume no traffic in the baseline.

- 3.136 Sponsors should not assume that another linked airspace change has already taken place as part of the future baseline scenario, since this would require an airspace change decision to have been made and assuming so would pre-empt a CAA decision. However, where decisions on linked airspace change proposals are likely or imminent, sponsors should discuss and agree their inclusion in the baseline scenario with the CAA on a case-by-case basis.

Baseline scenario and design(s) scenario guidance: multi-deployment single airport design

- 3.137 If the proposed airspace change to a single airport design will be implemented through multiple deployments (identified in Requirement 3), year 1 is the year the first deployment is implemented, and year n is the year when the capacity permitted by planning is reached, as enabled by the last deployment.

Baseline scenario and design(s) scenario guidance: the UKADS provider only

- 3.138 The Secretary of State has guided in the Air Navigation Guidance 2026 that, where planning processes related to airports and aerodromes are underway in parallel with an associated ongoing airspace change process, the CAA should continue progressing the airspace change proposal at the same time. This ensures that the processes can continue in tandem, without delay to the implementation of the associated airspace change (if ultimately approved) should the planning application be granted in due course. We have further been guided that an airspace change proposal can continue through the CAA airspace change process on the basis that the design should enable the maximum level of capacity of the planning application.
- 3.139 For the airspace change proposal sponsored by the UKADS provider for the London TMA, where no current-day airspace situation exists, the assumptions for the baseline scenario, as well as what years will be set as year 1 and year n , will be determined by the CAA at or shortly after the briefing and guidance meeting but before the sponsor commences Requirement 13 (development of the draft design(s)).

Baseline scenario and design(s) scenario guidance: Level 3

- 3.140 Due to the potential low impact of Level 3 airspace change proposals, there is no requirement for sponsors to develop the baseline and design(s) scenarios or determine year 1 and year n .

Baseline scenario and design(s) scenario guidance: spaceflight activities

- 3.141 For airspace change proposals facilitating spaceflight activities, if the spaceport has yet to operate, the description of the baseline **must** assume no spaceflight activities. If the spaceport already has an active permanent airspace structure, then the description **must** include details of the activities including launch

trajectories, frequency of activations, duration, timings and how these might change between year 1 and year n .

- 3.142 Sponsors **must** also provide a description of the current airspace usage by other airspace users in the volumes of airspace likely to be impacted by the airspace change proposal. The description **must** also consider how this usage is likely to change between year 1 and year n without the airspace change, for example, how traffic is anticipated to grow from its current-day usage.

Traffic forecasts

Traffic forecasts guidance: Level 1 and Level 2

- 3.143 Notwithstanding that the CAA is guided by the Secretary of State that:
- 3.143.1 The majority of aviation activity in the UK is enabled by airports and aerodromes;
 - 3.143.2 The CAA's airspace functions do not include policymaking or decision-taking about the scale, location or use of ground infrastructure;
 - 3.143.3 Policies and decisions are made about the construction and operation of airports and aerodromes by the planning process;
 - 3.143.4 Planning permissions determine whether new infrastructure may be introduced at a particular location and may include conditions or requirements limiting the scale of operations;
 - 3.143.5 Changes to airspace design on their own will not lead to increased numbers of air traffic movements;
 - 3.143.6 The numbers of flights to, from and over the UK are set by a number of factors, including airport runway or terminal capacity; and
 - 3.143.7 The aim of the airspace change process is to deliver airspace improvements to enable the capacity or other limits set by any planning decision.

Traffic forecasts **must** be prepared by the sponsor as part of the airspace change process.

- 3.144 Sponsors **must** calculate traffic forecasts for year 1 and year n baseline and design(s) scenarios.
- 3.145 Sponsors **must** assess the draft airspace design(s) that reflects the airport capacity permitted by planning. Where the capacity permitted by planning can be achieved without an airspace change proposal, the traffic forecast for the baseline and the design(s) scenarios will be the same.

- 3.146 Where there is no planning condition, or the condition places no cap on the number of aircraft movements, the airspace design(s) must enable the safe maximum number of movements, having regard to the demand for air transport, to and from the runway.
- 3.147 In some cases, a proposed airspace change specifically intends to act as an enabler and support additional activity permitted by planning that could not otherwise occur or be accommodated beyond business-as-usual growth or changes, for example, due to airspace capacity constraints. Sponsors **must** quantify any additional enabled growth permitted by planning as well as the business-as-usual growth/changes when defining their baseline and design(s) scenarios and reflect it in their subsequent design(s) assessments.
- 3.148 Therefore, only where an airspace change proposal is necessary to achieve the capacity permitted by planning will the traffic forecasts for the baseline and design(s) scenarios differ. In such cases, sponsors **must** present two different traffic forecasts.
- 3.149 The forecasts will need to indicate the traffic growth on the different airspace procedure(s) contained within the airspace change volume. For some airspace change proposals it may be necessary for traffic forecasts to specify not only movement numbers but also the types of aircraft carrying out those movements, particularly if the mix of aircraft types is expected to change over the period of the forecasts. Where such a change in aircraft mix is anticipated, sponsors **should** ensure that it is considered and, if necessary, reflected in the traffic forecasts.
- 3.150 To determine demand, sponsors **must** use the Department for Transport's National Air Passenger Allocation Model (NAPAM) for airports in scope of their airspace change proposal. Sponsors may propose using an alternative forecast (for example, from the airport's own business models where the airport is not covered by NAPAM, EUROCONTROL [STATFOR](#) for en-route airspace change proposals) with suitable justification, subject to agreement with the CAA.
- 3.151 Noting, as above, that sponsors must provide traffic forecasts for year 1 and year *n*, sponsors **may** provide traffic forecasts for the intermediate years as supporting evidence.
- 3.152 There are considerable uncertainties in forecasting growth in air traffic as forecasting is not an exact science. There are many factors outside the control of sponsors, but they should aim to be as robust as possible in their calculations and transparently justify any assumptions made in preparing the forecasts.

Traffic forecasts guidance: Level 3

- 3.153 There is no requirement for sponsors of Level 3 airspace change proposals to develop traffic forecasts beyond what is required to justify the level of the airspace change proposal (see Requirement 8).

Traffic forecasts guidance: spaceflight activities

- 3.154 For airspace change proposals facilitating spaceflight activities, sponsors **must** provide the number of space launches anticipated annually over year 1 to year *n*, describing any differences to the frequency, duration and timings of launches.
- 3.155 Sponsors **must** also provide a traffic forecast depicting other airspace users' movements for year 1 and year *n* from the planned implementation date of the airspace change proposal. The data may be obtained from various sources such as NATS traffic forecasts, EU Network Manager, other airspace change proposals, local airports/aerodromes or air navigation service providers.

CAP 2091 noise modelling category**CAP 2091 noise modelling category guidance: Level 1**

- 3.156 [CAP 2091, CAA Policy on Minimum Standards for Noise Modelling](#) specifies the minimum acceptable level of sophistication of noise modelling that can be used to provide the CAA with the outputs required for an airspace change proposal that impacts arrival and/or departure routes from an airport.
- 3.157 The sophistication with which the CAA require an airport to model noise depends on the number of people exposed to noise at that airport. The more people exposed, the greater the sophistication required.
- 3.158 Sponsors **must** assess which CAP 2091 noise modelling category applies to their proposal, noting that it should be the highest category that applies anytime between year 1 and year *n*. The assessment **must** be accompanied by appropriate supporting evidence. Sponsors will not be permitted to progress their proposal until the CAA agrees that the correct category of noise modelling methodology has been identified and it is at least at the level of the minimum required category as defined in CAP 2091, CAA Policy on Minimum Standards for Noise Modelling.
- 3.159 Where noise modelling is not required, the sponsor will not need to undertake the analysis of their CAP 2091 category.

CAP 2091 noise modelling category guidance: Level 2 and Level 3

- 3.160 There is no requirement for sponsors to perform any noise modelling for Level 2 and Level 3 airspace change proposals, therefore, there is no need to assess the applicable CAP 2091 noise modelling category.

Flight efficiency

Guidance

- 3.161 In Stage 2, sponsors **must** demonstrate how their proposal will impact flight efficiency, which in this context means fuel burn per flight per representative single-aisle and twin-aisle aircraft types. However, in some cases, it may not be proportionate to quantify flight efficiency, and a qualitative assessment may be undertaken instead.
- 3.162 To proceed only with a qualitative assessment, the sponsor **must** provide the CAA with a rationale and supporting evidence. If we agree, we may scale aspects of Requirement 17, to remove the requirement for a quantitative assessment of that metric.

Protected areas: early screening exercise

Guidance

- 3.163 Sponsors will have identified relevant protected areas during Requirement 10 (description of the current-day scenario) and Requirement 11 (gathering information) and tested for accuracy during Requirement 12 (engagement with the stakeholder reference group).
- 3.164 This early screening exercise is only required for airspace change proposals that have the potential to alter flight behaviours below 5,000 feet AMSL.
- 3.165 Sponsors **must** identify whether the baseline and design(s) scenarios overfly any protected areas below 5,000 feet AMSL.
- 3.166 If flying over protected areas cannot be screened out, then an assessment will be required in the later stages of the process (see Requirement 17).

European sites: early screening exercise

Guidance

- 3.167 To determine whether the draft airspace design(s) is likely to have a significant effect on a European site, and therefore whether an appropriate assessment under the habitats regulations assessment is required later in the process, sponsors **must** answer the CAA's early screening criteria questions to perform the early screening exercise. Additional evidence can be requested by the CAA, and all responses must be supported with a clear, evidence-based rationale.
- 3.168 Sponsors will have identified relevant European sites during Requirement 10 (description of the current-day scenario) and Requirement 11 (gathering information) and tested for accuracy during Requirement 12 (engagement with the stakeholder reference group).

- 3.169 For the purposes of these early screening criteria, the overall zone of influence for potential impacts on European sites relates to flights at an altitude of 2,000 feet AMSL and below. For airspace change proposals related to aircraft operations at an airport, this can be approximated to sites within 12 kilometres (km) of the aerodrome reference point. For other types of airspace change proposals, for example, for airspace change proposals that do not relate to an airport or proposals involving operations of unmanned aircraft systems, the altitude of 2,000 feet AMSL will need to be applied to these specific proposals.
- 3.170 This early screening exercise is only required for airspace change proposals that have the potential to alter flight behaviours at and below 2,000 feet AMSL.

Early Screening Criteria Questions

- Q1. For airspace change proposals related to aircraft operations at an airport, are there any European sites within a radius of 12 km of the aerodrome reference point?
- Q2. In the current-day or baseline scenario, are any European sites overflown by an aircraft passing directly overhead or within 1,770 feet⁶ of its boundary at 2,000 feet or below?
- Q3. In the design(s) scenario, do the draft design(s) result in aircraft⁷ overflying European sites directly overhead, or within 1,770 feet of its boundary at 2,000 feet or below?
- Q4. Are there any changes to the air traffic patterns (laterally and vertically) within the zone of influence when comparing the design(s) scenario with the current-day or baseline scenario?
- Q5. Are there any changes to the number of air traffic movements within the zone of influence when comparing the design(s) scenario with the current-day or baseline scenario?
- Q6. In the design(s) scenario, compared to the current-day or baseline scenario, will aircraft altitudes over any European site increase without causing a consequential decrease over another site?

⁶ [CAP 1498, Definition of overflight](#) sets out the metric as it relates to airspace regulation. Adopting this definition, for a 48.5° elevation angle threshold, overflight would be experienced from any aircraft flying at a height of 2,000 feet and within a lateral distance of approximately 1,770 feet from the boundary of a European site.

⁷ Sponsors must consider the environmental impacts resulting from their direct airspace operations as well as any environmental impacts caused due to indirect (consequential) changes on the flight behaviour of other airspace users.

- Q7. In the design(s) scenario, compared to the current-day or baseline scenario, will the number of aircraft overflights decrease over any European site without consequentially increasing over another site⁸?

- 3.171 No further assessment of European sites will be necessary if the answers to the early screening criteria questions mean that the CAA concludes that the proposal is unlikely to have a significant effect on a European site. However, the rationale and supporting evidence must be set out in the sponsor's answers to the screening questions.
- 3.172 If the early screening exercise cannot rule out adverse effects on a European site, the CAA will provide further guidance in the milestone review feedback on the information we will require from the sponsor with respect to the habitats regulations assessment and the process that must later be followed to complete an appropriate assessment.
- 3.173 Sponsors should consider whether any screening exercises or a full assessment under the habitats regulations assessment for the identified European sites has already been prepared for the purpose of another parallel regulatory activity, such as a planning application. This may mean that the CAA can remove this requirement or adapt it, as sponsors should not duplicate work that satisfies this requirement and is still up to date.
- 3.174 The early screening exercise also applies to all airspace change proposals facilitating spaceflight activities for both direct impacts from spaceflight activities, unless this environmental impact has already been considered as part of a licence application under the [Space Industry Act 2018](#), as well as from indirect (consequential) impacts on other airspace users.

Requirement 15: The sponsor submits the required Stage 1 outputs to the CAA for feedback at the milestone review

Level 1: Must

Level 2: Must

Level 3: N/A

Guidance: Level 1 and 2

- 3.175 There is a milestone review at the end of Stage 1 for Level 1 and Level 2 airspace change proposals. This enables the CAA to review the sponsor's documents against the Stage 1 requirements and provide feedback. The Stage 1 milestone review is a feedback-only step and does not result in a decision or require the CAA to provide permission to progress to Stage 2. Sponsors of Level

⁸ If more than one European site is overflown, consideration must be given to whether changes at each individual location are positive, remain the same or are negative. A habitats regulations assessment can only be screened out where there is no change or where there is benefit to all relevant European sites.

1 and 2 airspace change proposals **must** submit their Stage 1 outputs to the CAA for the milestone review.

- 3.176 Sponsors **must** submit their Stage 1 documents and any relevant supporting material to the CAA in accordance with the agreed timeline. A milestone submission checklist is available to assist sponsors in ensuring that material is complete and appropriately evidenced. There is no requirement for sponsors to publish the Stage 1 documents on the airspace change portal when submitted to the CAA for the milestone review.
- 3.177 Where the proposal includes instrument flight procedures, sponsors **should** consider sharing material with the CAA at the time of the milestone submission.
- 3.178 The CAA will acknowledge receipt of the milestone submission and review the material and provide feedback where appropriate. Feedback may include observations where greater clarity, justification or articulation is required to demonstrate how the sponsor has addressed the Stage 1 requirements. Sponsors **must** submit relevant outputs and related evidence to the CAA at least two weeks in advance of the milestone review. Depending on the size and complexity of the airspace change proposal, there may be occasions where a submission period of four weeks (or more) is required.
- 3.179 The sponsor, or the CAA, may request a meeting to discuss the milestone submission, identify any gaps and address initial queries. Where no meeting takes place, we may request supplementary information or clarification from the sponsor.
- 3.180 Feedback relating to instrument flight procedures will be considered on a case-by-case basis, depending on the maturity of the design(s).
- 3.181 Following feedback and during Stage 2, the sponsor should update, where required, and finalise their Stage 1 outputs as detailed in the Stage 2 outputs section. The sponsor must submit these outputs for assessment at the gateway, accompanied by, where required, a completed milestone feedback response form detailing the sponsor's response to the feedback received.
- 3.182 Once the sponsor has received CAA feedback from the milestone review and informed the CAA that they have proceeded to Stage 2, the sponsor **must** update the airspace change portal.

Stage 1 outputs

Before briefing and guidance meeting (produced and submitted to the CAA by the proposer):

- Statement of need (Requirement 7).

After briefing and guidance meeting (produced and published by the sponsor):

- Entry created on the airspace change portal and status set to 'in progress' (Requirement 1 and Requirement 8).
- Potentially affected area (Requirement 1 and Requirement 8).
- Redacted statement of need (Requirement 7).
- Briefing and guidance meeting output: agenda, minutes and any other material such as presentations (Requirement 8).
- Agreed timeline (Requirement 2 and Requirement 8).

After briefing and guidance meeting (produced and published by the CAA):

- Determination on whether the airspace change proposal is in scope of the airspace change process, confirmation of the allocated level for the airspace change proposal and any scaling of requirements and guidance agreed by the CAA.
- Confirmation of the sponsor of the proposal.

Before Stage 1 milestone review (produced and submitted by the sponsor):

- Completed submission checklist.
- Stage 1 documents, including:
 - Confirmation that formal partnership arrangements with each partner are in place, where applicable (Requirement 9).
 - Current-day scenario (Requirement 10).
 - An explanation of how design decisions were made during the draft design(s) development, including the following (Requirement 11):
 - How assumptions and constraints were identified, tested and developed and how they have informed the draft design(s).
 - What information was gathered and from which sources.
 - Gap analysis.
 - Explanation of composition of the stakeholder reference group and who was identified (Requirement 12).

- Evidence of the information shared with the stakeholder reference group, and any feedback received, for example, meeting minutes and email correspondence (Requirement 12).
- The draft design(s), including where applicable, draft instrument flight procedures (Requirement 13).
- Explanation how the draft design(s) (Requirement 13):
 - Addresses the statement of need.
 - Takes account of the Airspace Modernisation Strategy.
 - Applies the applicable airspace design priorities.
- Evidence of the engagement with the approved procedure design organisation (Requirement 13).
- Draft design assessment inputs (Requirement 14), including:
 - Baseline and design(s) scenarios for year 1 and year n (not applicable for Level 3 airspace change proposals).
 - Traffic forecast(s) (not applicable for Level 3 airspace change proposals).
 - CAP 2091 noise modelling category (not applicable for Level 2 and Level 3 airspace change proposals).
 - Type of flight efficiency assessment.
 - Early screening exercise for protected areas.
 - Early screening exercise for European sites.
- Change management plan (where utilised) (Requirement 4).

At Stage 1 milestone review (produced by the CAA):

- Feedback to sponsor, where provided.

At Stage 1 milestone review (produced and published by the CAA):

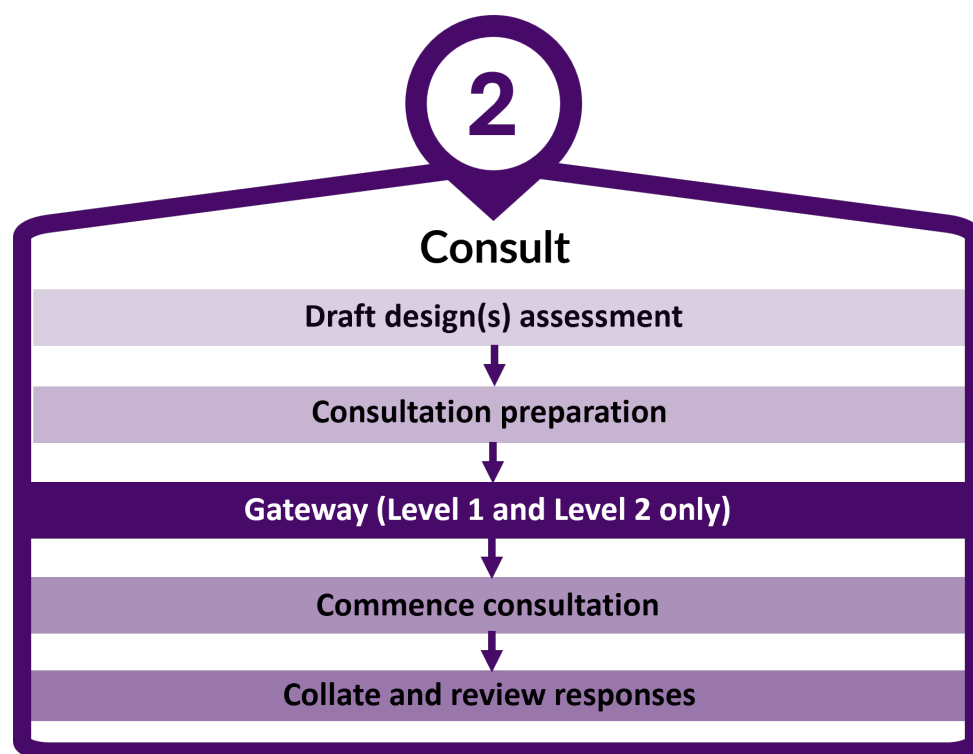
- Confirmation of airspace change proposal level, if not already provided after briefing and guidance meeting, now published on the airspace change portal.

After Stage 1 milestone review (published by the sponsor):

- An update to the airspace change portal to demonstrate that the sponsor has advised the CAA that they have proceeded to Stage 2 (Requirement 15).

CHAPTER 4

Stage 2 - Consult



Overview

- 4.1 In Stage 2, for Level 1 and Level 2 airspace change proposals, the sponsor conducts a quantitative draft design(s) assessment. For Level 3 airspace change proposals, the sponsor conducts a qualitative draft design(s) assessment.
- 4.2 For Level 1 and Level 2 airspace change proposals, the sponsor prepares a consultation strategy and draft consultation materials. The sponsor then submits the draft design(s) assessment, the consultation strategy and draft consultation materials to the CAA for assessment at the Stage 2 gateway.
- 4.3 At the Stage 2 gateway assessment, the CAA will consider the sponsor's submission, determine whether the airspace change process requirements up to this point have been met, and provide relevant feedback. The feedback provided may include observations identifying areas where more information, clarity, or explanation is required to demonstrate how those requirements have been addressed.
- 4.4 Level 1 and Level 2 sponsors must pass the Stage 2 gateway assessment before they can commence their consultation. Passing the gateway assessment does not predetermine the CAA's regulatory decision on the final airspace

change proposal. The Stage 2 gateway assessment is there to determine whether the airspace change process has been followed up to that point.

- 4.5 There is no gateway assessment for Level 3 airspace change proposals.
- 4.6 Sponsors of all levels of airspace change proposals hold their consultation. To be effective, consultees should be able to base their views on a reasonable understanding of the context, along with clear information about what is proposed and the potential impacts. Consultees need to be able to express their views and have confidence that their feedback will be considered in the development of the final airspace change proposal.
- 4.7 Once the consultation has ended, Level 1 and Level 2 sponsors will collate, review and categorise the feedback and submit it to the CAA for review, before including it in their consultation response document in Stage 3.
- 4.8 Sponsors of Level 3 airspace changes will be required to provide evidence of their consultation activities and how they have taken the feedback into account later in the process, in their final submission to the CAA at Stage 3.

Draft design(s) assessment

- 4.9 The design(s) assessment enables comparable assessments of a range of factors for a given airspace design. The sponsor must assess the draft design(s) scenario against the baseline scenario (or the current-day scenario for Level 3 airspace change proposals) for year 1 and year n and compare the results. For airspace change proposals that involve multiple procedures, the draft design will be the combined overall airspace design.

Requirement 16: The sponsor conducts an assessment of the draft design(s) scenario compared to the baseline scenario (or the current-day scenario for Level 3 airspace change proposals)

Level 1: Must

Level 2: Must

Level 3: Must

Guidance: Level 1 and Level 2

- 4.10 Using the scenarios produced in Stage 1 (see Requirement 14) sponsors **must** conduct an assessment of the baseline scenario at year 1 and year n and an assessment of the design(s) scenario at year 1 and year n . Sponsors **must** compare each draft design at year 1 and year n against the baseline scenario at year 1 and year n respectively (and for each additional draft design, if there is more than one). The sponsor **must** assess a number of factors, as outlined in Requirement 17, in the draft design(s) assessment.

Guidance: the UKADS provider only

- 4.11 As outlined in Requirement 14, paragraph 3.139, the baseline scenario of the airspace change proposal for the London TMA sponsored by the UKADS

provider, as well as what years will be set as year 1 and year n , will be determined by the CAA at or shortly after the briefing and guidance meeting but before the sponsor commences Requirement 13 (development of the draft design(s)).

Guidance: Level 3

- 4.12 As sponsors of Level 3 airspace change proposals are not required to develop a baseline scenario, sponsors **must** conduct the draft design(s) assessment using the current-day scenario prepared in Stage 1 (see Requirement 10).

Requirement 17: The sponsor conducts the draft design(s) assessment using metrics selected to enable the CAA to decide whether to approve the airspace change proposal in accordance with our statutory functions, duties and the statutory guidance (the Air Navigation Guidance 2026)

Level 1: Must

Level 2: Must

Level 3: Must

Guidance

- 4.13 Sponsors **must** assess the following aspects of their draft design(s): safety, integration, simplification and the impacts on noise, flight efficiency and, if not screened out at Requirement 14, protected areas and European sites.
- 4.14 Sponsors **must** conduct the assessments using the metrics and level of analysis set out in this requirement that is applicable to their level of airspace change proposal. These metrics have been selected to enable the CAA to make a decision whether to approve the airspace change proposal in accordance with our statutory functions, duties and the statutory guidance that applies to our discharge of those functions and duties. The metrics are designed to assess the impacts of the airspace design on:
- 4.14.1 Safety (including impacts on the safe provision of air navigation services).
 - 4.14.2 Integration (including impacts on other airspace users).
 - 4.14.3 Simplification.
 - 4.14.4 Noise, flight efficiency and, if applicable, impacts on protected areas and European sites.
- 4.15 If a sponsor decides to conduct supplementary assessments, the CAA will only take them into account if they are relevant considerations, having regard to our statutory functions, duties, and the statutory guidance that applies to our discharge of those functions and duties.

- 4.16 Sponsors **should** ensure that the assessments of the baseline scenario (or current-day scenario for Level 3 airspace change proposals) and the design(s) scenario, including the comparisons of those assessments at year 1 and year n , are objective (unbiased and evidence-based), repeatable and consistent.
- 4.17 Sponsors **must** describe what key data and evidence was collected, and how they have used the design assessment inputs (see Requirement 14) to calculate the outputs for each of the metrics in the draft design(s) assessment. The sponsor **must** use up-to-date, credible and clearly referenced data sources, with modelling carried out in line with relevant best practice.
- 4.18 Sponsors **should** identify and explain where significant evidence gaps exist, for example, due to uncertainties in the assumptions made in the design assessment inputs or gaps in the data used for the draft design(s) assessment.

Assessment of safety

- 4.19 Unless the sponsor has undertaken a detailed safety assessment at this stage, an initial indication of safety implications **must** be included in the draft design(s) assessment. We expect the initial indication to include qualitative statements on the potential impacts the draft design(s) could have on maintaining a high standard of safety. Sponsors may find [CAP 3299, The CAA's Air Navigation Functions Guidance](#) useful when preparing these. For the avoidance of doubt, we do not expect those qualitative statements to compare the safety of one design against another where there is more than one draft design. Although the CAA will not expect to sign off a final Air Traffic Management operational assessment simultaneously, if, in Stage 4, we decide to approve the airspace design, we will need to be assured that this is being developed concurrently and that the draft design(s) has been informed by how it can be operated safely if and when it is implemented.

Assessment of integration

- 4.20 Sponsors **must** qualitatively assess how the draft design(s) take account of the 'integration' strategic objective in the Airspace Modernisation Strategy. Sponsors may find [CAP 3299, The CAA's Air Navigation Functions Guidance](#) useful when preparing this.

Assessment of simplification

- 4.21 Sponsors **must** qualitatively assess how the draft design(s) take account of the 'simplification' strategic objective in the Airspace Modernisation Strategy. Sponsors may find [CAP 3299, The CAA's Air Navigation Functions Guidance](#) useful when preparing this.

Assessment of impacts of noise, flight efficiency and, where applicable, impacts on protected areas and European sites

4.22 As set out in Requirement 13 (see how to apply the airspace design priorities) when assessing the impacts of the draft design(s) on noise, flight efficiency and, if applicable, on protected areas and European sites, sponsors **must** apply the specific guidance in that requirement on how and whether to include in their assessment:

4.22.1 Direct and indirect (consequential) impacts.

4.22.2 Impacts from military operations.

4.22.3 Impacts from spaceflight activities.

Operational diagrams

4.23 Operational diagrams portray a representation of how the airspace is to be used. These diagrams are used to illustrate the patterns of current or anticipated aircraft movements on geographical maps and are often based upon radar track data.

4.24 Sponsors **must** produce operational diagrams that are overlaid on high-quality maps showing the extent of the airspace change in relation to known geographical features and centres of population. The maps must be clearly legible and have sufficient detail to enable affected communities to identify their location in relation to the changes in traffic patterns. Sponsors should consider using online or interactive Geographical Information System (GIS) data formats (for example, kml or kmz files and/or ESRI shape files).

4.25 As shown in Figure 3, for each route, a box with information about the distribution of air traffic is shown on a diagram of the airspace overlaid on a map. Each box can include the following information (sponsors may vary the information displayed, provided that the diagram is a fair and accurate representation of the situation portrayed):

4.25.1 Average number of daily movements (possibly further broken down by hour).

4.25.2 Percentage of all aircraft movements at the airport using that route.

4.25.3 Minimum and maximum number of daily movements.

4.25.4 Percentage of days with no movements.

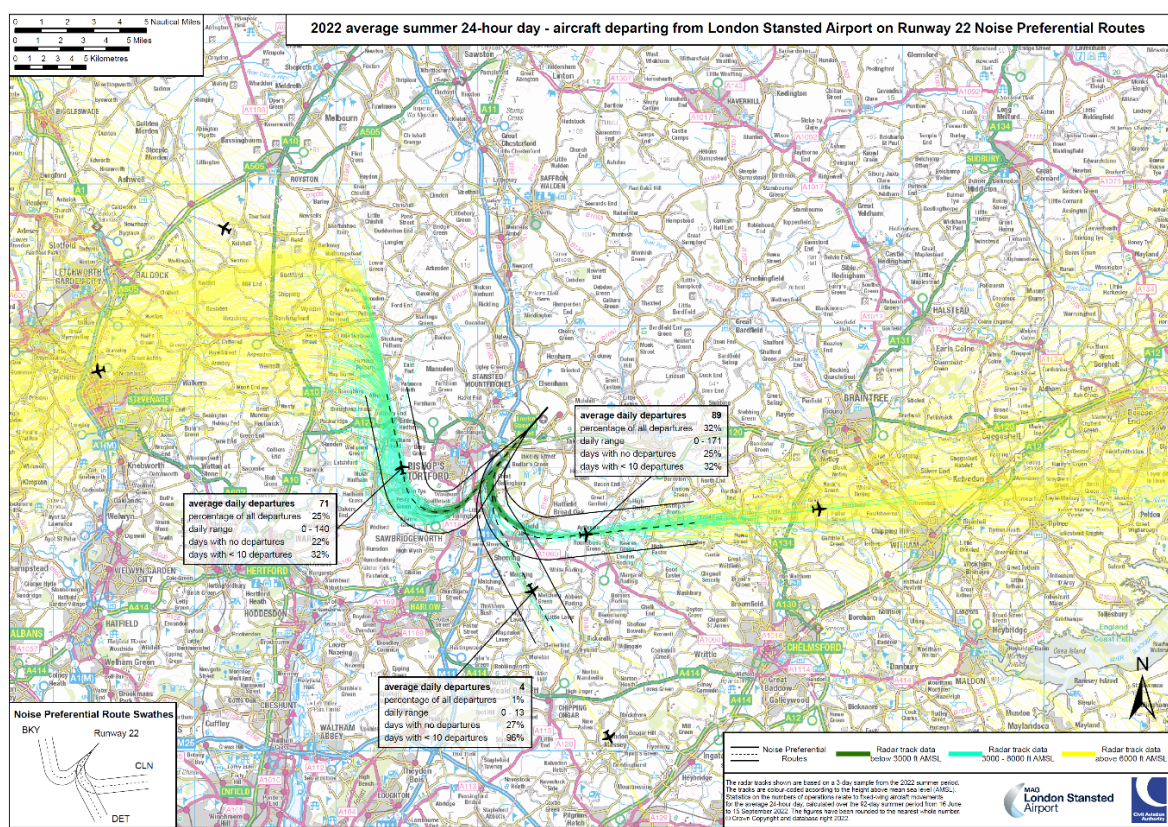


Figure 3: Illustrative example of an operational diagram

- 4.26 Operational diagrams do not portray noise impacts nor use or contain any information about noise levels, but they can assist in people's understanding of the change, especially when viewed in conjunction with noise metrics.

Spaceflight activities

- 4.27 Sponsors **must** present all the trajectories of space launches, including all staged returns. For impacts below 5,000 feet AMSL over any inhabited areas, sponsors **must** provide operational diagrams representing indirect (consequential) impacts on other airspace users when the airspace change proposal results in an alteration to their traffic patterns.
- 4.28 Operational diagrams provide supporting evidence to aid the description of other airspace users' traffic movements. These operational diagrams might include the categories of airspace, typical general aviation traffic patterns at lower altitudes, and air traffic service routes at higher altitudes.

Noise exposure and Transport Analysis Guidance (TAG)

Noise exposure and TAG guidance: Level 1

- 4.29 As detailed in Requirement 13, application of ADP4 requires sponsors to assess the total adverse noise impact of aircraft below 5,000 feet AMSL of the draft design(s). Adverse effects are considered by the government to be those related to health and quality of life. Sponsors of Level 1 airspace change proposals

must assess these by creating noise contours at and above the lowest observed adverse effect level (LOAEL) for daytime and night-time respectively, calculating population noise exposure and assessing the impact of that exposed population using the Department for Transport's [Transport Analysis Guidance \(TAG\)](#).

- 4.30 Conventional noise exposure contours, which are produced regularly for major airports, **must** be calculated for an average summer day over the period from 16 June to 15 September inclusive, for traffic between 0700 and 2300 local time. These are known as equivalent continuous noise exposure contours for a 16-hour average summer day, typically written as $L_{Aeq,16h}$. Where changes to airspace are proposed which will affect night-time operations, aircraft noise must also be calculated for an average summer night over the period from 16 June to 15 September inclusive, for traffic between 2300 and 0700 local time. These are known as equivalent continuous noise exposure contours for an 8-hour average summer night, typically written as $L_{Aeq,8h}$.
- 4.31 Sponsors **must** follow the general principles of noise modelling as set out in [CAP 2091, CAA Policy on Minimum Standards for Noise Modelling](#) while developing their L_{Aeq} contours and confirm that these requirements have been reflected in their noise assessment as per the CAP 2091 category that is applicable to their airspace change proposal. This includes:
- 4.31.1 Noise modelling software.
 - 4.31.2 Runway modal split.
 - 4.31.3 Terrain adjustments.
 - 4.31.4 Flight behaviours and patterns.
 - 4.31.5 Dispersion variation around centrelines.
 - 4.31.6 Flight profiles.
- 4.32 Sponsors **should** provide indications of the likely lateral flight path dispersion and vertical distribution of traffic about the centre line of each procedure in the baseline and design(s) scenarios.
- 4.33 The degree of dispersion and distribution may differ between the baseline and design(s) scenarios. While the baseline scenario is based on historic data of actual tracks and their variation about the centre line of each route is readily available through analysis, this may not be the case for the design(s) scenario due to the difficulty in forecasting different aspects of dispersion, such as vectoring. Therefore, sponsors **may** use outputs from simulations or trials, or bring forward evidence based on actual performance on a similar route, in order to forecast the lateral dispersion of traffic in the design(s) scenario.

- 4.34 If required, sponsors **must** present $L_{Aeq,16h}$ daytime and $L_{Aeq,8h}$ night-time noise exposure contours as a means of explaining noise exposure for airports where the proposed airspace design(s) is likely to result in a change in traffic patterns, traffic volumes or aircraft mix below 5,000 feet AMSL only. In these cases, the noise exposure contours must represent noise from aircraft only up to an altitude of 5,000 feet AMSL. This means that flight paths used as inputs to noise modelling must be curtailed at 5,000 feet AMSL. This may result in truncating noise exposure contours for larger or busier airports.
- 4.35 Contours **must** be presented from the LOAEL for daytime and night-time respectively at 3 dB intervals and overlaid on a suitable map, for example, a 1:25,000 or 1:50,000 Ordnance Survey map. The underlying map and contours **must** be sufficiently clear for those who are affected to be able to identify the extent of the contours in relation to their home and other geographical features. As such, the underlying map should show key geographical features, for example, streets, railway lines and rivers.
- 4.36 Noise exposure contours **must** be produced for each of the following scenarios:
- 4.36.1 Current year, for example, latest available noise contours.
 - 4.36.2 Year 1 without the airspace change proposal having been implemented.
 - 4.36.3 Year 1 with the airspace change proposal for the draft design(s) having been implemented.
 - 4.36.4 Year n without the airspace change proposal having been implemented.
 - 4.36.5 Year n with the airspace change proposal for the draft design(s) having been implemented.
- 4.37 The following numerical data **must** be tabulated for each 3 dB noise contour interval presented for each scenario:
- 4.37.1 Area (km²), rounded to three significant figures.
 - 4.37.2 Exposed residential population, rounded to four significant figures.
 - 4.37.3 Number of households, rounded to four significant figures.
 - 4.37.4 Number of noise sensitive buildings by type (such as schools, places of worship and hospitals).
- 4.38 The data **must** be presented cumulatively. For example, the exposed population presented at the 51 dB $L_{Aeq,16h}$ contour level will include residents located within this and all higher noise level contours.

- 4.39 The source and date of population data used **must** be specified. Population data should be based on the most recent updated population data⁹ or the latest available national census. Sponsors are not required to use forecast population data.
- 4.40 Adverse effects of noise are determined through TAG calculated on the basis of changes in L_{Aeq} noise exposure. TAG is the Department for Transport's suite of guidance on how to assess the expected impacts of transport policy proposals and projects. It includes a series of guides and spreadsheet tools based on up-to-date evidence following the principles of HM Treasury's [The Green Book](#).
- 4.41 During the draft design(s) assessment, sponsors **must** monetise the noise impacts of the airspace change using an aviation specific noise workbook for impacts on health and quality of life. The output from the [TAG noise workbook - aviation](#) will form the primary measure of the noise impact for the purpose of the CAA's decision-making on a proposal. More information on using these tools is given in [TAG unit A3 environmental impacts](#) and in [TAG unit A5-2 aviation appraisal](#).
- 4.42 Sponsors **must** input the number of people experiencing an increase or decrease in 1 dB bands for the baseline and design(s) scenarios at year 1 and year n . Therefore, for every scenario, noise levels at every individual population receptor (usually per postcode) will need to be established. This can be done by interpolating from noise contours at 1 dB intervals or, more accurately and preferably, through interpolation of the noise calculation grid used to create the noise contours, or through direct calculation at each population receptor.
- 4.43 Sponsors must not input changes from or to any noise level below the daytime or night-time LOAEL. While the workbook refers to the night noise metric as L_{night} , the input required is the average summer night, that is, $L_{Aeq,8h}$.
- 4.44 It will be necessary to assume the baseline noise exposure is the minimum level, as defined in TAG, in cases where no current-day airspace situation exists (that is, there are no airspace structures and traffic flows).
- 4.45 The 'assessment method' in the workbook **must** be set to 'individual' and the input data must be changes in population not households. The 'appraisal period (years)' **must** also be set as per the duration of assessment specific to the airspace change proposal (that is, until year n).
- 4.46 A monetary value is assigned for the change in the following health impacts: amenity (annoyance), sleep disturbance, acute myocardial infarction (AMI, commonly referred to as a heart attack), dementia and stroke. Given that

⁹ Sponsors can obtain population data from [Demographic Data | Actionable Insights from Demographics](#).

annoyance due to noise will affect more people than sleep disturbance or any of the acute health impacts (AMI, stroke and dementia), it will typically be the most dominant impact when health and quality of life are assessed using TAG. The monetary value calculated by TAG is the total adverse noise impact from the design(s) which should be minimised, as much as is practicable and realistic.

- 4.47 The noise impacts are therefore monetised as an annual cost or benefit and then integrated over the appraisal period, and the output is the net present value of the change in noise impact. Since the monetary value depreciates over time, the impacts occurring during the first few years after implementation of the airspace change are given more weighting than those occurring towards the end of the appraisal period.
- 4.48 If there is more than one draft design under consideration in Requirement 17, sponsors should compare the outputs from TAG for the different draft design(s) in order to inform the sponsor's preferred design(s) for consultation. For the avoidance of doubt, there is no requirement for sponsors to perform a cost-benefit analysis of the airspace change proposal since noise impacts are the only metric to be monetised and there is no requirement for a trade-off assessment against other metrics such as economic growth or capacity increase.
- 4.49 Airspace change decisions cannot be reduced to a numerical exercise. Numerical values do not replace the statutory guidance on which outcomes are important in the design of airspace, and which apply to the CAA's decisions on an airspace change proposal. However, a systematic process that includes quantification of the costs and benefits of noise of a particular airspace change proposal helps to provide consistency in the draft design(s) assessment. It also provides additional data to help the CAA to give effect in our decision to the statutory guidance on the government's priorities for UK airspace design and therefore what airspace design must achieve.

Noise exposure and TAG guidance: Level 2

- 4.50 Due to the absence of changes that affect aircraft flight behaviours below 5,000 feet AMSL over land for Level 2 airspace change proposals, there is no requirement for the sponsor to perform any assessments for noise exposure and TAG.

Noise exposure and TAG guidance: Level 3

- 4.51 Sponsors **must** only set out the anticipated change in the number of aircraft using the aerodrome or landing site, the change in the types of aircraft using the aerodrome or landing site, changes to the altitude of aircraft using the procedure and the change to areas overflown (avoiding overflight of densely populated areas where possible) caused by the introduction of the airspace change proposal.

- 4.52 There is therefore usually no requirement for quantified and monetised design(s) assessments for Level 3 airspace change proposals, unless the sponsor is unable to screen out impacts and a further assessment is specifically required by the CAA. If that is the case, we will have advised the sponsor at the briefing and guidance meeting in Stage 1.

Spaceflight activities

Direct impacts: spaceflight activities

- 4.53 Noise metrics for assessment of direct impacts from spaceflight activities are necessarily different from those used to assess noise from civil aircraft. The following guidance applies if an assessment of noise impacts of an airspace change proposal which has been submitted to facilitate spaceflight activities is required.
- 4.54 Sponsors **must** consider single noise events.
- 4.55 Noise exposure footprints: sponsors **must** map all areas exposed to spaceflight noise exceeding 80, 85, 90, 95, 100, 105, 110, 115 and 120 dB $L_{A_{\max}}$ ¹⁰. Noise footprints **must** be overlaid on a suitable map background (for example, Ordnance Survey) identifying any exposed dwellings and noise sensitive buildings (for example, schools, places of worship and hospitals).
- 4.56 Structural damage assessment: sponsors **must** map all areas exposed to spaceflight noise exceeding 100, 105, 110, 115 and 120 dB $L_{Z_{\max}}$ ¹¹. The maps **must** illustrate any structures in the area impacted above 100 dB $L_{Z_{\max}}$.
- 4.57 For noise exposure footprints and the structural damage assessment, PC software [RUMBLE](#), which calculates rocket launch noise, is available free of charge from the US Transportation Research Board and is populated with a database of several US launch vehicles.
- 4.58 Sonic boom assessment: sponsors **must** provide an assessment of sonic boom for all phases of flight, including any stages or vehicles that return to the launch pad or area. In general, sonic booms over land should be avoided. Where this is not possible, the maximum overpressure on land should not exceed 47.88 pascals (Pa) or one pound per square foot (psf). Areas exposed to sonic boom **should** be mapped to illustrate the maximum overpressures on land. Software [PC Boom](#), which calculates sonic boom noise, is available free of charge from the US Transportation Research Board.

¹⁰ Slow time weighted $L_{A_{\max}}$

¹¹ Z weighted (unweighted) $L_{\max}$

- 4.59 Probability of awakening¹² (night-time launches, 2300 to 0700 only): sponsors **must** assess the probability of awakening for night-time launches calculated based on $L_{A_{\text{max}}}$ noise exposure and using the awakening estimation function defined in the [Guidance to the regulator on environmental objectives relating to the exercise of our functions under the Space Industry Act 2018](#) (2018 Guidance).
- 4.60 Exposure to repeated noise events: sponsors **must** provide a report on:
- 4.60.1 Human receptors (dwellings and noise sensitive buildings).
 - 4.60.2 Wildlife receptors¹³.
- 4.61 Where there is a difference, all assessments should be modelled assuming predominant meteorological conditions and the weather conditions which are favourable for launch.

Indirect (consequential) impacts from spaceflight activities

- 4.62 For impacts below 5,000 feet AMSL, over any inhabited areas and where more than 10 other airspace users' operations are altered per day, sponsors **must** provide noise exposure contours¹⁴ above the daytime and night-time LOAEL and evaluated by the Department for Transport's [Transport Analysis Guidance \(TAG\)](#) for impacts on health and quality of life.

Flight efficiency

Flight efficiency guidance: Level 1 and Level 2

- 4.63 Sponsors **must** demonstrate how the draft design(s) and operation of the design(s) scenario will impact flight efficiency, which in this context means fuel burn per flight per representative single-aisle and twin-aisle aircraft types.
- 4.64 When calculating impacts on flight efficiency caused as a result of the airspace change, sponsors **must** show the estimated change (increase or decrease) in fuel burn per flight in the design(s) scenario in comparison to the baseline

¹² In the absence of a rocket noise awakening probability function, the probability of awakening is based on [Elmenhorst, E-M. et al. \(2012\)](#), adapted for the faster event rise time typical of a rocket noise event and defined in [2018 Guidance](#).

¹³ Farm animals and any wildlife identified as part of the biodiversity assessment.

¹⁴ $L_{Aeq,16h}$ daytime and $L_{Aeq,8h}$ night-time is defined as being over an average summer's day. However, because of the infrequency of launches, the assessment of the indirect impacts should be assessed for a single launch day, i.e., $L_{Aeq,16h}$ and $L_{Aeq,8h}$ should be evaluated for a launch day and compared with a baseline average summer's day with no launches. If impacts on other airspace users vary depending on launch type and/or trajectory, the assessment of a single day should be evaluated for the worst-case scenario.

scenario. Sponsors **must**, therefore, estimate the fuel burn per flight between the ground and a 'common point' for:

4.64.1 Current year.

4.64.2 Year 1 without the airspace change proposal having been implemented.

4.64.3 Year 1 with the airspace change proposal for the draft design(s) having been implemented.

4.64.4 Year *n* without the airspace change proposal having been implemented.

4.64.5 Year *n* with the airspace change proposal for the draft design(s) having been implemented.

4.65 It is acknowledged that in certain cases, the 'common point' may extend beyond the London, Scottish or Shanwick Oceanic Flight Information Regions (FIR).

4.66 Sponsors should undertake flight efficiency modelling as per best practice, while remaining proportionate to the scale of potential impacts. Sponsors **must** provide the input data for their calculations including any modelling assumptions made such as aircraft mix, track miles and climb or descent profiles flown. The mass of fuel burned can be derived from a range of aircraft performance models and simulators. Some examples are the EUROCONTROL [Base of Aircraft Data \(BADA\)](#) and [IMPACT](#) models. Sponsors **must** state details of the aircraft performance model used including the version numbers of software employed.

4.67 As stated previously, sponsors should endeavour, as far as practicable, to isolate and assess the impacts that arise directly as a consequence of the change in the airspace design alone. This means that the assessment of flight efficiency **must** be based on the changes in track miles and associated fuel burn for planned procedures in the baseline scenario as well as in the design(s) scenario. For the avoidance of doubt, the sponsor is not required to estimate any vectoring that may occur if and when the proposed design is approved and implemented. For the purpose of this assessment the sponsor should assume that aircraft will remain on the designed procedures.

4.68 In some cases where it may not be proportionate to quantify flight efficiency, the sponsor should set out why it has not undertaken specific quantified analysis as part of their assessment. If the CAA agrees (in Requirement 14) to scale the airspace change process in this way, in the absence of quantified analysis, sponsors **must** make a qualitative assessment of flight efficiency.

Flight efficiency guidance: Level 3

- 4.69 Sponsors **must** only set out the anticipated change in the track distance per procedure or route, if applicable, for different types of airspace users caused by the introduction of the airspace change proposal.
- 4.70 There is therefore usually no requirement for flight efficiency assessments for Level 3 airspace change proposals, unless a further assessment is specifically required by the CAA.

Flight efficiency guidance: spaceflight activities

- 4.71 Sponsors are not required to assess flight efficiency for direct impacts from spaceflight activities. However, sponsors **must** assess any indirect (consequential) impacts on the flight efficiency of other airspace users caused as a result of the airspace change proposal. This will be in terms of fuel burn per flight per representative single-aisle and twin-aisle aircraft types (see paragraphs 4.63 to 4.71) and scaled where appropriate (see Requirement 14).

Protected areas**Protected areas guidance**

- 4.72 This requirement only applies if the early screening exercise conducted in Requirement 14 is unable to rule out impacts on protected areas.
- 4.73 The sponsor **must** compare length of flight paths below 5,000 feet AMSL that overfly protected areas in the baseline scenario (or the current-day scenario for Level 3 airspace change proposals) and the design(s) scenario.
- 4.74 Sponsors **must** use operational diagrams to illustrate changes in flight path altitude, flight frequency, or noise levels. Sponsors **should** consider the use of comparisons presented using geographical grids as a visual aid for ease of reference.

Protected areas guidance: spaceflight activities

- 4.75 The requirements and guidance in this section also apply to all airspace change proposals facilitating spaceflight activities for both direct impacts from spaceflight activities (unless this environmental impact has already been considered as part of a licence application under the [Space Industry Act 2018](#)) as well as indirect (consequential) impacts on other airspace users.

European sites**European sites guidance**

- 4.76 This requirement only applies if the early screening exercise conducted in Requirement 14 is unable to rule out adverse effects on European sites.

- 4.77 Sponsors **must** provide any additional assessments for the habitats regulations assessment as specified by the CAA. This may include a secondary screening assessment and, where likely significant effects on European sites cannot be ruled out, an appropriate assessment of the potential adverse effects on the integrity of those European sites.
- 4.78 Sponsors **must** include in their consultations the potential biodiversity implications associated with the airspace design(s) under consideration. Sponsors **must** consult with the relevant Statutory Nature Conservation Body (SNCB) where likely significant effects on European sites cannot be screened out and should be mindful of any potential impacts as are identified by such stakeholders.

European sites guidance: spaceflight activities

- 4.79 The requirements and guidance in this section also apply to all airspace change proposals facilitating spaceflight activities for both direct impacts from spaceflight activities (unless this environmental impact has already been considered as part of a licence application under the Space Industry Act 2018) as well as indirect (consequential) impacts on other airspace users.

Combined impacts

Guidance: the UKADS provider, sponsors of airspace change proposals coordinated by the UKACS provider and other linked airspace change proposals only

- 4.80 For the avoidance of doubt, the UKADS provider, as sponsor of the airspace change proposal for the London TMA, **must** assess the impact of the design(s) scenario on noise, flight efficiency and, if applicable, protected areas and European sites on a combined, as well as on an airport-by-airport basis.
- 4.81 Sponsors of airspace change proposals that are being coordinated by the UKACS provider **must** produce both an airport specific assessment and a combined assessment. For each cluster where NERL is providing UKACS, NERL [CAP 3220, Airspace Modernisation: Requirements for the UK Airspace Coordination Service and associated guidance](#) sets out additional requirements for NERL regarding the combined assessment of impacts on noise, flight efficiency and, if applicable, impacts on protected areas and European sites, using an agreed methodology (see Requirement 2 of CAP 3220). The current agreed methodology is the Cumulative Assessment Framework (CAF) developed by NERL's former unit known as the Airspace Change Organising Group (ACOG), unless an alternative methodology is agreed between NERL and the CAA.
- 4.82 Sponsors of some airspace change proposals that are not coordinated by the UKACS provider may have identified links with other airspace change proposals

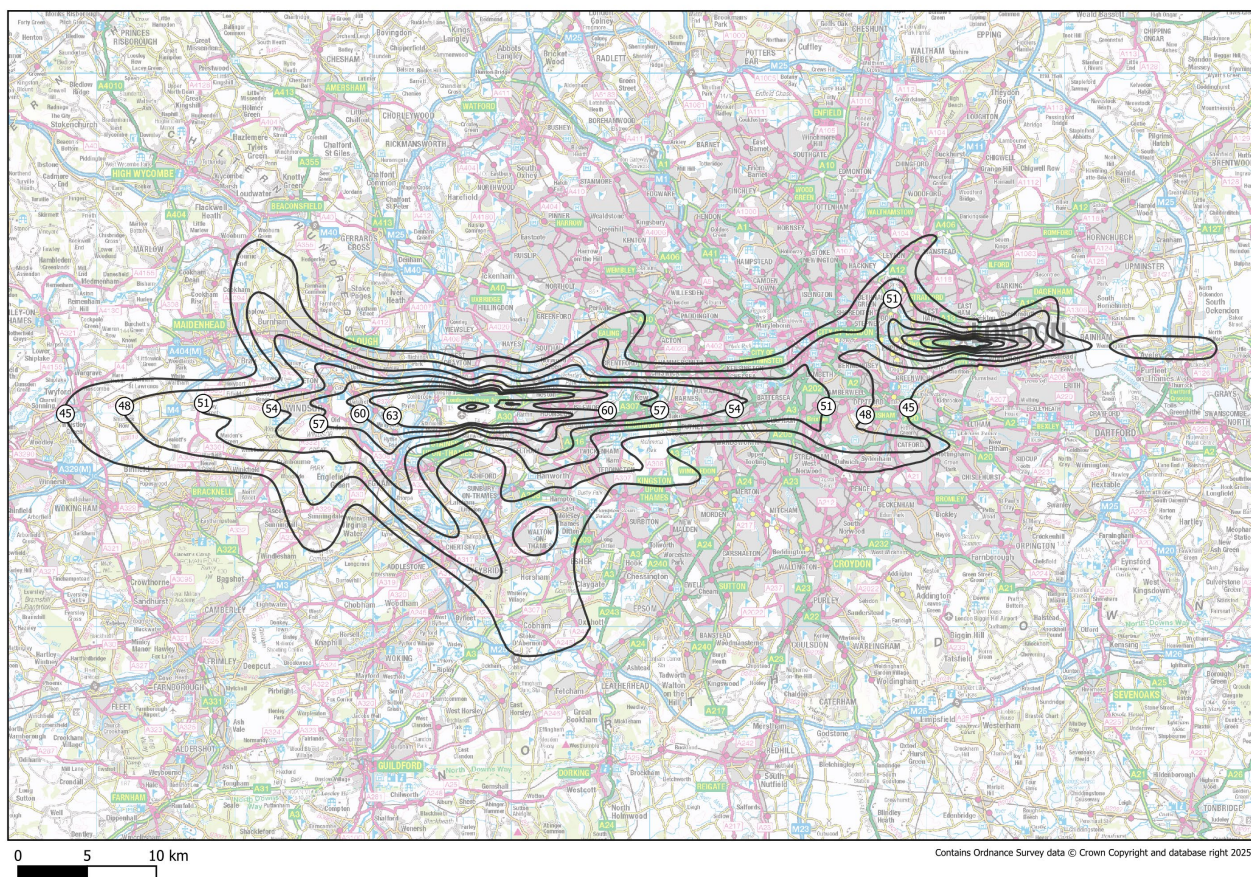
when gathering information on assumptions and constraints (Requirement 11) or when engaging with the stakeholder reference group (Requirement 12).

Sponsors of such linked airspace change proposals **must** also produce an airport specific assessment and a combined assessment. Sponsors of the linked airspace change proposals **must** discuss and agree their methodology for the combined assessment with the CAA.

4.83 Sponsors **must** assess the following impacts of the linked airspace change proposals on a combined basis for the following metrics and effects:

- 4.83.1 Noise exposure for daytime and night-time reflecting the LOAEL and the Department for Transport's [TAG](#) for adverse impacts (that is, on health and quality of life) resulting from noise exposure.
- 4.83.2 Flight efficiency, which in this context means fuel burn per flight per representative single-aisle and twin-aisle aircraft types between the ground and a 'common point'.
- 4.83.3 If applicable, protected areas overflown by multiple flight paths below 5,000 feet AMSL from one or more airports.
- 4.83.4 If applicable, habitats regulations assessment for European sites upon which significant effects are likely to occur due to an airspace change proposal either alone or in combination with other plans or projects.

4.84 In certain cases, noise exposure contours from two or more airports may overlap in areas that are overflown by multiple flight paths or where the logarithmic addition of noise exposure levels from two or more airports exceeds the daytime and night-time LOAEL (see figure 4). Sponsors **must** assess the cumulative impacts of the resulting noise exposure contours from two or more airports. The individual airport noise exposures need not be calculated using a single noise model, they can be calculated using separate models and the resulting noise exposure grids logarithmically added together. The combined population noise exposure can then be input into a single TAG noise workbook – aviation.



Consultation preparation

Requirement 18: The sponsor produces a consultation strategy setting out how they intend to facilitate an effective consultation

Level 1: Must

Level 2: Must

Level 3: May

Guidance: Level 1 and Level 2

- 4.87 Sponsors **must** develop a consultation strategy that reflects the scale and impact of the airspace change proposal. The outputs from Requirements 19 to 22 must form part of the consultation strategy. A template to support the development of the consultation strategy can be found on the [CAA website](#) or sponsors can use their own template.
- 4.88 The extent and nature of consultation required will vary according to the needs of stakeholders and the impact of the proposed airspace change on them. When preparing for consultation, sponsors need to be clear about what they are trying to achieve. The sponsor **must** submit the consultation strategy to the CAA for assessment at the Stage 2 gateway.
- 4.89 Sponsors conducting consultations that include local communities, where proposed airspace changes impact aircraft operations at or below 5,000 feet AMSL, may benefit from discussions with local representatives such as local authorities, airport consultative committees and local groups to shape their consultation strategy.

Guidance: Level 3

- 4.90 Level 3 airspace change proposals are not required to produce and submit a consultation strategy; however, the sponsor will still need to consider how they will run their consultation. The consultation activities should be proportionate to the scale and impact of the proposed airspace change and meet the needs of the identified stakeholders.
- 4.91 Sponsors **may** find it beneficial to produce a consultation strategy that sets out how they intend to facilitate effective consultation. The consultation strategy template on the [CAA website](#) is a helpful starting point.
- 4.92 Sponsors **must** explain their consultation approach and how they conducted their consultation as part of their final airspace change proposal submitted to the CAA at Stage 3.

Requirement 19: The sponsor identifies which stakeholders are likely to be impacted

Level 1: Must

Level 2: Must

Level 3: Must

Guidance: Level 1 and Level 2

- 4.93 Sponsors **must** identify stakeholders who are likely to be positively or negatively impacted by the airspace change proposal. The consultation strategy **must** explain which stakeholders have been identified by the sponsor and how the sponsor has identified them.
- 4.94 Having identified all potentially impacted stakeholders, sponsors should conduct stakeholder mapping by analysing and grouping stakeholders. This will help to determine how best to meet their needs. This process enables the sponsor to manage consultation activities effectively by tailoring their consultation activities to the needs of each stakeholder group.
- 4.95 Sponsors **should** identify relevant stakeholders from the following categories:
- 4.95.1 Impacted aviation stakeholders, including airspace users, airline operators, aerodromes, air navigation service providers, the Ministry of Defence, and spaceports.
 - 4.95.2 Members of an airport's consultative committee, where relevant.
 - 4.95.3 Members of the National Air Traffic Management Advisory Committee (NATMAC).
 - 4.95.4 Aviation national organisations, including those which represent areas/interests likely to be impacted by the proposal.
 - 4.95.5 Non-aviation national organisations, including those which represent areas/interests likely to be impacted by the proposal (**Level 1 only**).
 - 4.95.6 Relevant representative organisations if protected areas and European sites are situated within areas where the proposal is likely to affect operations at or below 5,000 feet AMSL.
 - 4.95.7 Elected representatives, bodies and groups representing communities where the proposal is likely to affect operations at or below 5,000 feet AMSL (**Level 1 must**).
 - 4.95.8 Local communities where the proposal is likely to affect operations at or below 5,000 feet AMSL (**Level 1 must**).
- 4.96 To help identify relevant stakeholders within the categories listed, the sponsor should consider the following questions:
- 4.96.1 Who is likely to be directly impacted, positively or negatively?

- 4.96.2 Who is likely to be indirectly impacted, positively or negatively?
- 4.96.3 Who is likely to be potentially impacted, positively or negatively?
- 4.96.4 Who, while not directly impacted, may have a legitimate interest in the proposal (for example, national interest groups, environmental or noise advocacy organisations)?
- 4.96.5 Who might be able to provide access to specific stakeholders?
- 4.97 In Requirement 20, sponsors go on to identify the range of information different stakeholders will need to understand the proposal and provide an informed response to the consultation, ensuring that the overall consultation strategy and consultation materials are adequate.

Guidance: Level 3

- 4.98 Sponsors **must** identify stakeholders who are likely to be positively or negatively impacted by the airspace change proposal. As a minimum, sponsors should consult relevant aviation stakeholders, specifically airspace users, air navigation service providers, aerodromes, and relevant members of NATMAC who are likely to be impacted. Sponsors must include the list of stakeholders and an explanation of how they were identified in their Stage 3 final submission.

Requirement 20: The sponsor determines how to tailor their consultation materials and activities to stakeholders' needs and how they will inform stakeholders that the consultation is taking place

Level 1: Must

Level 2: Must

Level 3: Must

Guidance: Level 1 and Level 2

- 4.99 Sponsors **must** consider how the consultation materials will be developed to meet the needs of all the different identified stakeholders. Stakeholders will have varying needs, and the sponsor must outline in their consultation strategy how they will provide each identified stakeholder group with the necessary information to enable them to understand the proposal and provide an informed response to the consultation.
- 4.100 Alongside the consultation document, sponsors **must** consider whether to develop supporting materials to suit different stakeholder groups' needs. Stakeholders need to be able to understand the concept of airspace change, as well as the benefits and disbenefits of the proposal. For example, for Level 1 airspace change proposals, the sponsor may need to consider how technical information will be communicated in an accessible way for non-aviation stakeholders.
- 4.101 Sponsors **must** consider how they will respond to requests they might receive for reasonable adjustments for the provision of information in different formats. For

example, requests for printed documents, documents in different languages or accessible formats such as large print.

- 4.102 Respondents **must** be directed to access information from, and respond through, the CAA's approved consultation platform. We do not expect the sponsor to maintain a separate offline process for consultation responses; however, consideration should be given to individuals who need alternative ways to access information and respond to the consultation.
- 4.103 Sponsors **must** set out which consultation methods, approaches, and channels (both online and offline) are most appropriate and proportionate to inform and engage the different stakeholders, and which offer reasonable opportunities for stakeholders to take part in the consultation.
- 4.104 Level 1 sponsors **must** consider stakeholders who are not in regular contact with the sponsor, those without prior aviation knowledge, and seldom-heard audiences. Seldom-heard audiences include under-represented people who may face barriers to participation and may have specific needs during the consultation. Sponsors should consider stakeholders' varying needs, including those who do not have internet access. Depending on the scale and impact of the airspace change proposal, this may include more targeted communication with impacted areas. The sponsor **must** consider whether it is appropriate to use intermediaries to communicate with impacted stakeholders, or whether the nature of the airspace change proposal and stakeholders' needs means direct contact with impacted stakeholders is more appropriate. Examples of intermediaries include airport consultative committees, local authorities, and/or local and national representative organisations.
- 4.105 For airspace change proposals with a wide range of stakeholders who require a variety of communication activities, the sponsor should consider developing a communications plan.
- 4.106 As well as initially informing stakeholders about the consultation, sponsors **should** consider issuing reminders during the consultation period to ensure stakeholders are informed of the consultation and have an opportunity to submit their feedback, should they wish to do so.
- 4.107 Sponsors **must** consider what constitutes a successful consultation and how progress will be reviewed to ensure the chosen methods are effective.
- 4.108 Sponsors **may** consider identifying and assessing risks that could have an impact on the consultation process and outline how these risks will be mitigated.
- 4.109 Sponsors **must** consider how they might respond to unexpected events and challenges during the consultation period. For example, this could include extending the duration of the consultation or escalating to the CAA.

Guidance: Level 3

- 4.110 Stakeholders may have varying needs, and sponsors **must** consider how they will provide different stakeholders with the information necessary to enable them to understand the proposal and provide an informed response.
- 4.111 Sponsors **should** consider:
- 4.111.1 How they will initially inform stakeholders about the consultation.
 - 4.111.2 Issuing reminders during the consultation period to ensure stakeholders are informed of the consultation and have an opportunity to submit their feedback if they wish.
 - 4.111.3 What constitutes a successful consultation and how progress will be reviewed to ensure the chosen methods are effective.
- 4.112 If consultation with non-aviation stakeholders is not required, the sponsor should consider if they need to inform them of the proposed airspace change.

Requirement 21: The sponsor determines the duration of the consultation, ensuring it is sufficient to support an effective consultation

Level 1: Must**Level 2: Must****Level 3: Must****Guidance**

- 4.113 The duration of the consultation **must** be determined by the sponsor and be proportionate to the scale, complexity, and expected impacts of the airspace change proposal, taking account of stakeholders' needs. The length of the consultation should provide all stakeholders with enough time to conscientiously consider the consultation materials and provide feedback. Consideration should be given to allow appropriate time for organisations who may need to undertake internal review and complete their governance processes before submitting a formal response.
- 4.114 Any periods that could affect participation in the consultation, such as major holidays, school holidays or election periods, should also be considered, allowing extra time where appropriate.
- 4.115 Sponsors **must** provide a rationale for the length of the consultation based on:
- 4.115.1 The expected impacts of the change.
 - 4.115.2 The stakeholder map and impacted stakeholders' needs (especially seldom-heard audiences).
 - 4.115.3 Factors outside the sponsor's control, such as legal constraints.
 - 4.115.4 Technical or operational constraints.

4.115.5 Any other relevant considerations.

4.116 Sponsors do not need to consider any responses received after the consultation period has closed.

Requirement 22: The sponsor produces an indicative timetable of associated consultation activities

Level 1: Must

Level 2: Should

Level 3: N/A

Guidance: Level 1 and Level 2

4.117 Where sponsors intend to include communication and participation activities as part of their consultation (such as briefings or outreach activities), they **must** provide an overview of planned activities including when, if known at this point, and where they are intended to take place during the consultation period.

4.118 At this stage, an indicative timeline of when such activities are to be carried out during the consultation period is sufficient.

Consultation materials

Requirement 23: The sponsor produces consultation materials that provide stakeholders with enough information to enable understanding of the proposal and provide an informed response

Level 1: Must

Level 2: Must

Level 3: Must

Guidance: Level 1 and Level 2

4.119 Sponsors **must** produce draft consultation materials aligned to their consultation strategy (see Requirement 18) and submit them to the CAA for assessment at the Stage 2 gateway.

4.120 The draft materials submitted should include (where applicable):

4.120.1 The consultation document and consultation questionnaire.

4.120.2 Fully developed, but unpublished, consultation pages on the CAA's approved consultation platform.

4.120.3 The key messages that will be communicated during the consultation.

4.120.4 Samples of any related consultation materials (for example, frequently asked questions, easy read versions or materials for public events).

4.121 Sponsors will have set out how they intend to facilitate an effective consultation in their consultation strategy and the consultation materials **must** align with this. Having identified stakeholders and their information needs, the consultation materials **must** provide enough information for stakeholders to understand the proposal so they can give informed responses.

- 4.122 The consultation document and supporting materials must be the primary source for all information presented during the consultation. More accessible formats, such as infographics or information booklets, may also be used.
- 4.123 To enable stakeholders to understand the airspace change proposal, sponsors should include the following in their consultation materials:
- 4.123.1 An explanation of the concept of airspace change (**may** include).
 - 4.123.2 The roles and responsibilities of the sponsor and the CAA in the airspace change process as defined in [CAP 1616, Airspace Change Process](#) (**may** include).
 - 4.123.3 The scope of the consultation (**must** include).
 - 4.123.4 An explanation of the design(s) development, including how the draft design(s) addresses the statement of need, taking account of the Airspace Modernisation Strategy, while applying the Secretary of State's airspace design priorities (**must** include).
 - 4.123.5 The draft design(s) being consulted on (**must** include).
 - 4.123.6 Sufficient information to enable stakeholders to understand the rationale for the draft design(s) (**must** include).
 - 4.123.7 Clarity, where relevant, whether the draft design(s) being consulted on is a single route or contains multiple routes and explain how single or multiple routes best achieve the airspace design priorities (**must** include).
 - 4.123.8 An explanation of the baseline scenario (**must** include).
 - 4.123.9 Expected impacts of the design(s) scenario, including, where appropriate, an explanation of the extent to which those impacts may be uncertain due to operational factors, such as aircraft type, operator procedures, weather or the use of tactical vectoring (**must** include).
 - 4.123.10 The draft design(s) assessment. This includes the assessments relating to impacts on noise, flight efficiency and, if applicable, impacts on protected areas and European sites (**must** include).
 - 4.123.11 If instrument flight procedure validation activities have already been undertaken, the result of such activities (**must** include).
 - 4.123.12 Clear labelling and explanation of all data contained in text or graphics, including the source of the data and how up to date it is (**must** include).
 - 4.123.13 Where applicable, a summary explaining the potential approach of implementing the airspace change through multiple deployments, the concept of multiple deployments and the reason why multiple

deployments are required, and the intent of each of the deployments. A brief overview of the multi-deployment communications proposed to inform stakeholders about minor amendments and deployments (this will have been prepared in accordance with Requirement 3) (**must** include).

4.123.14 Where applicable, the following elements of the draft multi-deployment delivery plan:

- How the sponsor proposes to manage minor amendments within the multi-deployment plan, including the scope and scale of what a minor amendment is, how it would be handled and whether any further assessments of its impacts would be performed. This should include examples of what may constitute a minor amendment and a non-minor amendment (this will have been prepared in accordance with Requirement 3) (**must** include).

4.123.15 Instructions that clearly explain (**must** include):

- Where stakeholders can find the consultation materials.
- How to provide feedback.
- How to submit responses in alternative formats (such as email or hard copy) for stakeholders who need alternatives to the online questionnaire.
- How to contact the sponsor with any questions or queries.

4.123.16 An explanation of the next steps, such as how the feedback will be analysed and used (**must** include).

4.123.17 A glossary of terms to assist people without an aviation background to understand some of the more complex terminology. [CAP 1430: UK Air Traffic Management Vocabulary](#) and the [Air Navigation Guidance 2026](#) glossary both provide a good starting point for defining terms (**may** include **Level 1 only**).

4.124 Information on impacts relating to noise, flight efficiency and, if applicable, impacts on protected areas and European sites should be presented clearly and accurately, and be accessible for non-technical readers, without omitting essential detail. The sponsor should consider the proportionate balance between the amount of data produced and the degree to which this information helps the audience to understand the key issues. More detailed information can be shared in supporting consultation materials.

4.125 Any diagrams and maps should be of sufficient clarity and resolution so stakeholders can see what is depicted.

- 4.126 The CAA does not recommend that consultation materials include instrument flight procedure charts that contain unapproved technical information, such as waypoint coordinates, altitudes and flight levels or frequencies, as their public dissemination requires formal CAA assessment and approval. Nevertheless, we recognise that certain stakeholders, including airline operators or service providers, such as Data Houses or Computerised Flight Plan Service Providers, may benefit from reviewing draft versions to provide meaningful feedback. In these cases, we will permit clearly controlled distribution of draft instrument flight procedure charts, provided that each chart is annotated with the statement “Draft charts - procedure not approved, not for operational use”. Sponsors should include a written and explicit statement in their consultation materials clearly confirming that the instrument flight procedure charts have not been reviewed, assessed or approved by the CAA.
- 4.127 If consultation stakeholders include communities or other non-aviation stakeholders, materials **must** be accessible and not require technical knowledge to understand. Materials need to be clear, concise and easy to follow, avoiding jargon, acronyms and unnecessary technical detail. Using plain language and illustrative explanations can help convey complex information. Sponsors may refer to guidance from the [Plain English Campaign](#). While detailed technical content may be needed for technical stakeholders, it should only supplement information that is understandable to a general audience.
- 4.128 Accessibility means different things to different people and is not limited to how consultation materials are written. Sponsors may find best practice guidance, such as that from the [Government Digital Service](#) useful, for example when preparing website content.
- 4.129 The consultation questionnaire will be the primary mechanism for gathering feedback on the airspace change proposal. Stakeholders’ views should be sought using clear, appropriate and unbiased questions.
- 4.130 The questionnaire should be easy to navigate, with clear, logically ordered questions that avoid ambiguity. Sponsors should be clear about what information is being requested and should consider using different types of questions. For example, open questions, closed questions or questions including ratings or scales. Sponsors should be careful not to limit the scope of questions asked, so that stakeholders can raise relevant issues that are important to them.

Guidance: Level 3

- 4.131 Sponsor’s consultation materials **must** include:
- 4.131.1 An explanation of the draft design(s) development, including how the proposed draft design(s) addresses the statement of need, taking account of the Airspace Modernisation Strategy, while applying the

Secretary of State's airspace design priorities, to enable stakeholders to understand the rationale for the proposed airspace design.

4.131.2 A qualitative assessment of the impacts of the draft design(s).

4.131.3 How stakeholders can provide feedback.

4.132 Stakeholders' views should be sought using clear, appropriate and unbiased questions.

Stage 2 gateway assessment

Requirement 24: The sponsor submits the required outputs to the CAA for assessment at the gateway

Level 1: Must

Level 2: Must

Level 3: N/A

Guidance: Level 1 and Level 2

- 4.133 A submission checklist for the Stage 2 gateway assessment has been developed to help sponsors ensure their submission includes all the required information.
- 4.134 The CAA will hold the internal Stage 2 gateway assessment in accordance with our published schedule. Sponsors **must** submit relevant outputs and related evidence to the CAA at least two weeks in advance of the gateway assessment. Depending on the size and complexity of the airspace change proposal there may be occasions where a submission period of four weeks (or more) is required. The submission deadline will be discussed at the briefing and guidance meeting and agreed as part of the overarching timeline for the airspace change proposal.
- 4.135 At the Stage 2 gateway, the CAA will complete our regulatory assessment of the sponsor's submission to determine whether the airspace change process requirements have been met up to this point in the process.
- 4.136 The CAA will also review and, where appropriate, approve that the consultation strategy meets the requirements of Stage 2. We will review a sample of the sponsor's consultation materials and the draft design(s) assessment and provide feedback where appropriate.
- 4.137 The sponsor or the CAA may request a meeting to discuss the outputs and related evidence so that any gaps can be identified, and preliminary queries addressed. In the absence of such a meeting, we may request supplementary information or clarification from the sponsor ahead of the Stage 2 gateway assessment.

Gateway assessment outcomes

- 4.138 Aligned with our regulatory principles of transparency and proportionality there are four possible gateway assessment outcomes:

- 4.138.1 **Passed.** The CAA has concluded that the sponsor has met the requirements of the airspace change process and can therefore commence their consultation.
- 4.138.2 **Decision pending.** The CAA has concluded that minor action(s) are required by the sponsor to enable the CAA to conclude that the requirements of the airspace change process have been met. These actions are generally either for clarification purposes and/or where information has been omitted from the submission. Actions attached to a decision pending will not normally include changes to draft design(s) assessment or require further engagement activities. Decision pending will not normally be the outcome where a substantial number of airspace change process issues have been identified.
- 4.138.3 **Targeted review.** The CAA has concluded that a substantial number, but not all, of the requirements of the airspace change process have been met. We will arrive at a 'targeted review' where we have formed the view that the requirements that need further work by the sponsor can be assessed after that work has been done (without needing to look again at the rest of the requirements) and at an extraordinary gateway assessment (looking only at those elements). Extraordinary gateways are not subject to the published schedule and are at the CAA's discretion. The fact an extraordinary gateway has been scheduled will be published on the airspace change portal (prior to the gateway assessment) by way of completion of a timeline amendment request form and amended timeline. The gateway submission period for an extraordinary gateway assessment will be as required for the original gateway assessment and should be a minimum of two weeks. The exact duration required will be determined by the CAA taking into consideration other work commitments, available resources and the extent of work to be undertaken to assess the information provided in relation to those elements which did not meet the gateway requirements.
- 4.138.4 **Full review.** The CAA has concluded that the airspace change process requirements have not been met, and the submission contains elements that cannot be addressed through a decision pending outcome and falls outside of the criteria for the CAA to offer an extraordinary gateway. In any such case, it is possible that the sponsor may have to revisit requirements from earlier in the process and do further work. Once the sponsor has addressed the reasons why the proposal did not pass the gateway assessment previously and submitted the material required for a new gateway assessment, we will review the submission in full against the airspace change process

requirements at a subsequent gateway assessment on the published schedule.

- 4.139 The CAA will communicate the gateway assessment outcome directly to the sponsor and record it on the airspace change portal. In some cases, we may determine that it would be beneficial to facilitate a post-gateway meeting with the sponsor to provide feedback specifically related to their gateway submission and/or the technical viability of their airspace change proposal.
- 4.140 Once the sponsor has passed through the Stage 2 gateway assessment, they can commence their consultation.

Commence consultation

Requirement 25: The sponsor launches their consultation, asking for feedback from stakeholders

Level 1: Must

Level 2: Must

Level 3: Must

Guidance: Level 1 and Level 2

- 4.141 Having passed through the Stage 2 gateway assessment, the sponsor implements their consultation strategy and publishes their consultation documents.
- 4.142 All consultations **must** be published on the CAA's approved consultation platform, which stakeholders can access through the airspace change portal. The consultation platform will be the primary means for sponsors to share consultation materials with stakeholders. The CAA's approved consultation platform will limit responses to one per individual (verified by email address).
- 4.143 During the consultation period, deviations from the consultation strategy should be minimal. Any changes should align with approved escalation and extension plans detailed in the consultation strategy to address unforeseen issues.

Guidance: Level 3

- 4.144 Using appropriate methods, such as email, sponsors **must** share their draft airspace design(s) with relevant stakeholders and seek feedback.

Guidance: The UKADS provider only

- 4.145 Where the UKADS provider is the sponsor, they can request approval to use an alternative platform to the CAA's approved consultation platform. This **must** be approved by the CAA in advance. Any consultations hosted on an alternative platform **must** also be advertised on the CAA's approved consultation platform.

Requirement 26: The sponsor maintains consultation activity records to evidence that reasonable actions were taken to inform stakeholders of the consultation

Level 1: Must

Level 2: Must

Level 3: Must

Guidance

- 4.146 As the sponsor conducts their consultation, they **must** maintain consultation activity records to evidence the activities undertaken. This evidence should demonstrate that reasonable steps were taken to inform stakeholders of the consultation and offer them an opportunity to provide feedback. These records form part of the evidence the sponsor will submit to the CAA at Stage 3, alongside their final airspace change proposal.

Requirement 27: The sponsor moderates and publishes consultation responses on the CAA's consultation platform

Level 1: Must

Level 2: Must

Level 3: N/A

Guidance: Level 1 and Level 2

- 4.147 Consultation responses **must** be published on the CAA's approved consultation platform after moderation by the sponsor. The content of all responses will be visible on the platform. Publication should ideally occur regularly during the consultation period. Where the volume of responses and time required for appropriate moderation means this is not possible, publication should occur as soon as practicable after the consultation concludes.
- 4.148 The starting point for moderation will be to publish a response in its entirety. Subject to the permissions given by the respondent, the sponsor should publish an unredacted response, including the name of the respondent as long as it:
- 4.148.1 Is not malicious or offensive and does not constitute a personal attack on a person's character.
 - 4.148.2 Does not break the law. This includes potentially libellous (defamatory) material concerning third parties, condoning illegal activity and/or breaching copyright.
 - 4.148.3 Does not incite hatred on the basis of race, religion, gender, nationality, sexuality or other personal characteristic.
 - 4.148.4 Does not include swearing, hate-speech or obscenity.
 - 4.148.5 Does not reveal personal details, such as private addresses, phone numbers, email addresses or other contact details.
- 4.149 A respondent can choose for their response to be anonymised, with their identity withheld from publication and only shared with the sponsor and the CAA.

- 4.150 Sponsors **must** upload and publish any additional consultation responses received, such as those received by email or post, on the consultation platform.
- 4.151 Some feedback may be provided informally, for example at public events or during private meetings. Sponsors will need to determine how to incorporate this feedback transparently. Where appropriate, sponsors may request that such feedback be resubmitted formally via the consultation platform, as recording and uploading every informal comment may not be proportionate. However, informal feedback should only be taken into account where this is made transparent to all stakeholders and the CAA.

Requirement 28: The sponsor monitors the progress of the consultation and, if necessary, takes action if the progress falls short of expectations

Level 1: Must

Level 2: Must

Level 3: Must

Guidance

- 4.152 Sponsors **must** review the consultation as it progresses to assess whether the methods and approaches adopted are delivering the expected results. Where those outcomes are not being achieved, the sponsor should take action to address this.
- 4.153 Reminder notifications **should** be sent at pre-determined intervals during the consultation, with a final reminder towards the end.
- 4.154 If the sponsor identifies that a question raised by a stakeholder can be answered prior to the end of the consultation, they should do so. It may be impractical for the sponsor to respond individually to every question during the consultation. However, where common questions arise, the sponsor should consider publishing frequently asked questions (FAQ) material on the consultation platform.
- 4.155 Sponsors should also consider new and specific issues raised by stakeholders and how they will respond.
- 4.156 If errors or confusion arise during the consultation, the CAA may ask the sponsor for an explanation of how they intend to address the issues. It is for the sponsor to determine the appropriate remedial action, including whether an extension to the consultation period is necessary to maintain effective consultation. We will subsequently assess whether the sponsor's actions were adequate and consistent with Requirements 19-23.

Collate and review responses

Requirement 29: The sponsor reviews and categorises the consultation responses

Level 1: Must

Level 2: Must

Level 3: N/A

Guidance: Level 1 and Level 2

- 4.157 After the consultation has concluded, sponsors **must** carry out a fair, unbiased, transparent and comprehensive review and categorisation of consultation responses. This demonstrates that consultation feedback has been considered and understood.
- 4.158 Sponsors **must** review and categorise consultation responses into responses/themes that 'may impact' and those that 'do not impact' the final airspace change proposal.
- 4.159 When categorising consultation responses, the primary principle is transparency. If similar topics emerge, sponsors should consider grouping these into themes and categorising those themes into those which present information that 'may impact' the final airspace change proposal and those that 'do not impact'. Sponsors **must** ensure that themes are identified using an unbiased and thorough process.
- 4.160 Where a single response includes feedback relating to multiple themes, each element of the response should be captured against the relevant theme. Responses that do not fall within a theme should be categorised individually. If the sponsor chooses to categorise themes rather than individual responses, the analysis linking individual responses to themes **should** be submitted to the CAA for review and published on the airspace change portal.
- 4.161 If identical responses are received from multiple individual respondents, these **should** be considered by the sponsor as part of the consultation responses. The number of duplicate responses should be recorded, and sponsors should consider grouping these into one or more themes.
- 4.162 Where there are reasonable grounds to suspect that a number of responses have been generated by an automated system, such as a bot, the methods used by the sponsor to identify and categorise those responses should be recorded and applied consistently.
- 4.163 Sponsors **must** explain in their consultation response document why they have categorised each response or theme in the way that they have, demonstrating that they have considered and understood the feedback provided.

Responses or themes that may impact the final airspace change proposal

- 4.164 This category includes new information or ideas that the sponsor believes could lead to an amendment to the draft design(s) or to a new design.

Responses or themes that do not impact the final airspace change proposal

- 4.165 This category includes responses or themes that do not present new information or ideas that could lead to an amendment to the draft design(s) or to a new design.
- 4.166 These responses or themes may still contain valuable information, and sponsors should ensure that key themes are captured and identified, even where they are categorised as not impacting the final airspace change proposal.

Categorisation of consultation responses submission

- 4.167 Sponsors **must** submit their categorisation of the consultation responses to the CAA. We will check that the categorised responses have been dealt with by the sponsor appropriately and fairly. If necessary, we will ask the sponsor to change a categorisation. Once the categorisation has been reviewed by the CAA, the sponsor can include their categorisation in the consultation response document prepared later in Stage 3.

Stage 2 outputs

Before Stage 2 gateway assessment (produced and submitted by the sponsor - Level 1 and Level 2 only):

- Completed gateway submission checklist.
- Completed milestone feedback response form (where required).
- Stage 1 outputs updated (where required), finalised and integrated with Stage 2 outputs, submitted for the gateway assessment as a set of documents grouped under the following sections:
 1. Draft design(s) development:
 - Where applicable, confirmation that formal partnership arrangements with each partner are in place, where applicable (Requirement 9).
 - Current-day scenario (Requirement 10).
 - An explanation of how design decisions were made during the draft design(s) development including the following (Requirement 11):
 - How assumptions and constraints were identified, tested and developed and how they have informed the draft design(s).
 - What information was gathered and from which sources.

- Gap analysis.
 - Explanation of composition of the stakeholder reference group and who was identified (Requirement 12).
 - Evidence of the information shared with the stakeholder reference group, and any feedback received, for example, meeting minutes and email correspondence (Requirement 12).
 - Evidence of the engagement with the approved procedure design organisation (Requirement 13).
 - The draft design(s), including where applicable, draft instrument flight procedures (Requirement 13).
 - Explanation how the draft design(s) (Requirement 13):
 - Addresses the statement of need.
 - Takes account of the Airspace Modernisation Strategy.
 - Applies the applicable airspace design priorities.
 - Draft multi-deployment delivery plan, where applicable (Requirement 3).
 - Change management plan (where utilised) (Requirement 4).
2. Draft design(s) inputs and assessment:
- Design assessment inputs (Requirement 14).
 - Draft design(s) assessment (Requirements 16 and 17) containing assessments of:
 - Safety (including impacts on the safe provision of air navigation services).
 - Integration (including impacts on other airspace users).
 - Simplification.
 - Impacts on noise, flight efficiency and, if applicable, impacts on protected areas and European sites.
3. Consultation:
- Consultation strategy (Requirements 18 to 22).
 - Draft consultation materials (Requirement 23).
 - Fully developed (but unpublished) consultation pages on the CAA's approved consultation platform (Requirement 23).

After Stage 2 gateway assessment (produced and published by the CAA – Level 1 and Level 2 only):

- Stage 2 gateway assessment outcome.

At start of consultation (produced and published by the sponsor):

- Consultation Strategy (Requirements 18 to 22).
- Draft design(s) and draft design(s) development narrative (Requirement 13).
- Draft design(s) assessment (Requirement 14, 16 and 17).
- Consultation materials (Requirement 25).

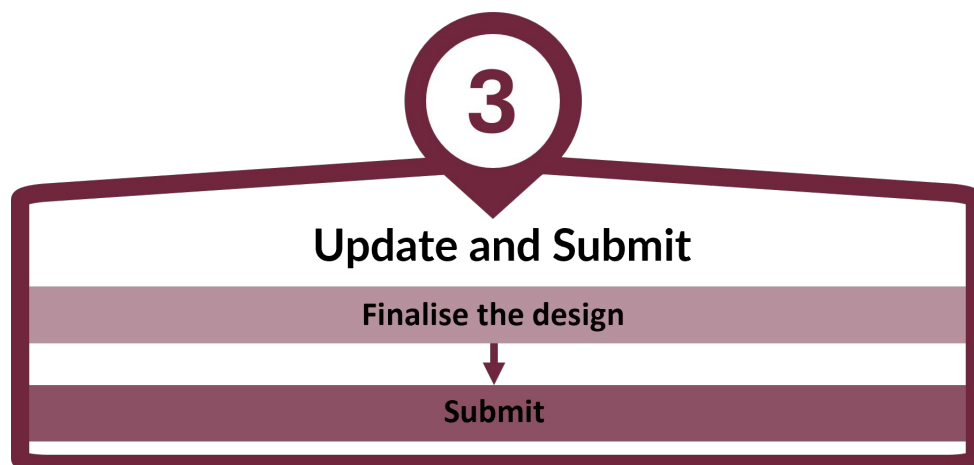
After consultation (published by the sponsor – Level 1 and Level 2 only):

- Moderated consultation responses (Requirement 27).

After consultation (produced and submitted by the sponsor – Level 1 and Level 2 only):

- Categorised consultation responses (Requirement 29).

CHAPTER 5**Stage 3 – Update and submit**

**Overview**

- 5.1 The sponsor reviews the consultation feedback and considers whether any amendments to the draft airspace design should be made. They will need to demonstrate how the consultation feedback has, or has not, influenced the proposed airspace design submitted in the final airspace change proposal. The sponsor must be able to demonstrate that, through targeted stakeholder consultation activity, relevant stakeholders' views have been considered.
- 5.2 A final design assessment is then undertaken, including consideration of the need for additional consultation.
- 5.3 Sponsors are supported by a submission template. This provides a structured framework for preparing the final airspace change proposal and helps to ensure that sufficient information is submitted to enable the CAA to assess, at Stage 4, the process undertaken to develop the proposal.
- 5.4 Stage 3 is completed with the submission of the full, unredacted version of the final airspace change proposal to the CAA, including any supplementary documents, annexes or appendices. Sponsors must also publish the submission (redacted where appropriate) on the airspace change portal.

Finalise the design

Requirement 30: The sponsor assesses all consultation feedback to determine whether to amend the draft design(s) to address issues raised in order that it addresses the statement of need, takes account of the Airspace Modernisation Strategy, while applying the airspace design priorities

Level 1: Must

Level 2: Must

Level 3: Must

Guidance

- 5.5 Sponsors **must** review the responses or themes they have carried forward from the consultation in Stage 2 to assess whether amendments to the draft design(s) should be made to address the statement of need, taking account of the Airspace Modernisation Strategy, while applying the Secretary of State's airspace design priorities.
- 5.6 If the sponsor consulted on more than one draft design, they **must** select only one design to proceed with from this point.
- 5.7 Any amendments to the draft design(s) **must** be consistent with the application of the airspace design priorities (see Requirement 13).
- 5.8 It may not be possible for sponsors to address all matters raised during the consultation by amending the draft design(s). However, other means of mitigating potential issues might be achievable, such as introducing or amending operating procedures defined in a letter of agreement. Having considered this, the CAA recognises that the sponsor may determine that some matters raised cannot be accommodated by amendments to the proposed airspace design.

Requirement 31: The sponsor demonstrates how the consultation feedback has been understood and considered, and how this has, or has not, influenced the proposed airspace design

Level 1: Must

Level 2: Must

Level 3: Must

Guidance: Level 1 and 2

- 5.9 Once the sponsor has assessed the consultation feedback, they **must** produce a consultation response document. This document demonstrates how they have understood and considered the consultation feedback and how this has, or has not, influenced the proposed design. A template to support the development of the consultation response document can be found on the [CAA website](#), alternatively sponsors may use their own template.
- 5.10 The consultation response document **should** include analysis of the feedback received during the consultation. This should include a summary of key feedback

or themes raised by respondents, together with the sponsor's response to those matters. It should also include their categorisation of consultation responses from Stage 2 and those taken forward to Stage 3. No matter the outcome, sponsors **must** record whether the feedback or themes they identified from the consultation did, or did not, lead to an amendment to the proposed design, proposed operating procedures or other aspect. This must include an accompanying rationale for each piece of feedback or for the theme.

- 5.11 The consultation response document **must** be included in the sponsor's Stage 3 final submission to the CAA and published on the airspace change portal. Sponsors should consider the [Cabinet Office's Consultation principles: guidance](#) which states that responses to a consultation should be published within 12 weeks of the consultation closing or, where this is not possible, an explanation should be published stating why this is not possible.

Guidance: Level 3

- 5.12 The sponsor's explanation of the issues raised during consultation and their response to the identified issues **must** be included in their Stage 3 final submission. Sponsors of Level 3 airspace change proposals are not required to produce a separate consultation response document.

Requirement 32: The sponsor finalises the proposed airspace design

Level 1: Must

Level 2: Must

Level 3: Must

Guidance

- 5.13 Sponsors **must** finalise their proposed airspace design, applying amendments to the design consulted on, where applicable (see Requirement 30). Sponsors **must** also ensure their proposed design applies the airspace design priorities.
- 5.14 The proposed design may be amended due to different factors. These could include discoveries from consultation, the results of modelling or simulations, or from technical assessments by the approved procedure design organisation. Sponsors **should** clearly describe all the amendments that have been made and the reasons for them, including clear explanations of design choices (for example, how single or multiple routes best achieve the airspace design priorities).
- 5.15 If the design includes instrument flight procedures, sponsors **should** submit the final proposed design to the CAA, with the associated activities including validation (simulator or flight) having been completed before submission. Where an airspace change proposal includes a draft multi-deployment delivery plan (see Requirement 3), we will not expect all activities to be completed, but we will expect the sponsor to follow the approach described and accepted in that plan.

- 5.16 If instrument flight procedure designs require amendments, associated technical materials may also need to be updated. Consequential requirements of a new instrument flight procedure should be considered as part of the change management plan (Requirement 4) at Stage 1.
- 5.17 Once the final proposed design has been developed, sponsors **must** assess the need to re-consult in light of any amendments that substantially alter the proposed design and/or its impacts previously consulted on. If any additional activity is necessary, it should be proportionate to the changes to the design and/or its impacts, and the original scope of the airspace change proposal. The consultation could be limited in scope and targeted to specific stakeholders, where appropriate. Where a sponsor identifies a potential need to re-consult, the CAA can provide further guidance on the scope and target of any re-consultation.

Requirement 33: The sponsor prepares the final design assessment

Level 1: Must

Level 2: Must

Level 3: Must

Guidance

- 5.18 An assessment of the final proposed airspace design **must** be completed. The final design assessment evolves from the draft design(s) assessment, including any updates made in response to the amendments to the draft design(s) following consultation. Sponsors should therefore update the analysis undertaken in the draft design(s) assessment (see Requirements 16 and 17) to reflect the final proposed design and prepare the final design assessment.
- 5.19 This will include updating the assessments of safety, integration, simplification, impacts on noise, flight efficiency and, where applicable, impacts on protected areas, in the manner required by Requirements 16 and 17 and, if applicable, conducting an appropriate assessment under the habitats regulations assessment for European sites. For example, sponsors **must** assess whether changes below 5,000 feet AMSL have been made to any draft design(s), or whether there have been any changes to the underlying data used to undertake those assessments. Depending on the scale of any such change to the draft design(s) consulted on, a qualitative and/or quantified and monetised re-assessment may be required. Sponsors must note that, even if the final proposed design has not been subjected to any amendments following the consultation, updates for the final design assessment may still be required if there have been significant changes to input data.
- 5.20 Following any updates to the final proposed design and safety assessment during the final design assessment, sponsors **must** update and submit their applicable related safety case, safety assessments and details of any relevant parallel activities undertaken as part of the final airspace change proposal submission.

Guidance: scaling

- 5.21 Sponsors may be able to justify why analysis conducted in the draft design(s) assessment remains valid, depending on what factors had been incorporated previously and the extent of any changes made to the final proposed design. In such cases, the CAA may be able to conclude that updating some of the assessments is not necessary.

Requirement 34: The sponsor submits their final proposal to the CAA**Level 1: Must****Level 2: Must****Level 3: Must****Guidance**

- 5.22 Sponsors **must** prepare the final airspace change proposal, using the CAA submission template format that can be found on the [CAA website](#), presenting the main characteristics of the proposal and drawing from the earlier outputs in the process to demonstrate how the design has evolved.
- 5.23 Sponsors **should** include in their final airspace change proposal a description of the process undertaken to develop the final proposed design and provide clear details of any changes and the anticipated impacts.
- 5.24 Not all those who may need to understand the airspace change will have an aviation background. Sponsors **must** include in their final airspace change proposal sufficient information, written in plain English, to ensure that non-aviation stakeholders can understand the proposal and its anticipated impacts.
- 5.25 As well as targeting non-aviation stakeholders, sponsors **must** provide sufficient technical detail to enable the CAA and aviation stakeholders to understand the airspace change proposal and its anticipated impacts, including:
- 5.25.1 The development of the final proposed design.
 - 5.25.2 The concept of operations.
 - 5.25.3 The final design assessment that has led to the conclusions regarding the anticipated impacts on:
 - Safety (including impacts on the safe provision of air navigation services).
 - Integration (including impacts on other airspace users).
 - Simplification.
 - Noise, flight efficiency and, if applicable, impacts on protected areas and European sites.
 - 5.25.4 For Level 1 and Level 2 sponsors, a summary of the consultation and actions taken, including the consultation response document. For Level

3 sponsors, where there is no consultation response document, sponsors **must** include supplementary consultation information explaining the comments raised and how this feedback was considered.

- 5.26 It is likely that supplementary documents, annexes or appendices may need to be used to present technical information for stakeholders who require it.
- 5.27 Sponsors **must** include in their final airspace change proposal sufficient detail such that the CAA can assess the airspace change proposal against the CAA's statutory duties and statutory guidance to determine whether the proposal addresses the statement of need, taking account of the Airspace Modernisation Strategy, while applying the Secretary of State's airspace design priorities.
- 5.28 Sponsors **must** include in their final airspace change proposal sufficient details such that the CAA can assess the airspace change proposal against any applicable CAA policies, including requests for dispensations against CAA airspace policies or relevant aviation legislation.
- 5.29 Depending on the nature of the final proposed design, there may be several CAA airspace policies that are key considerations for the sponsor. The relevant aspects of these should be described where it is necessary to understand how compliance with these requirements has been assessed, or where there is a need to consider the potential for non-compliances and any associated requests for exemptions/dispensations.
- 5.30 Sponsors **may** also need to describe matters relating to non-airspace regulations/policies where they are relevant to the understanding of the proposed new operation. Applications for exemptions or dispensations to these will need to be pursued outside the airspace change process. However, this information should have been highlighted in any change management plan (see Requirement 4) and should be included within the final airspace change proposal, especially where there are dependencies for the new operation and/or the timeline for implementation.
- 5.31 Sponsors **must** include in their final airspace change proposal a realistic target implementation date that takes into account the decision process in Stage 4, the implementation process set out in Stage 5, and any parallel activities.

Secretary of State call-in

- 5.32 Sponsors **must** include in their final airspace change proposal an explanation of why their airspace change proposal does or does not meet the Secretary of State call-in criterion (see the Air Navigation Directions 2026, direction 5, and any guidance given to the CAA by the Secretary of State on the call-in criterion).
- 5.33 The Department for Transport will be notified once the final airspace change proposal is submitted to the airspace change portal, and the Secretary of State

for Transport may determine, through the call-in process, that the airspace change decision will be made by the Secretary of State rather than by the CAA. Although any call-in occurs in Stage 4, sponsors must include their assessment whether their airspace change proposal does or does not meet the Secretary of State call-in criterion in their final airspace change proposal.

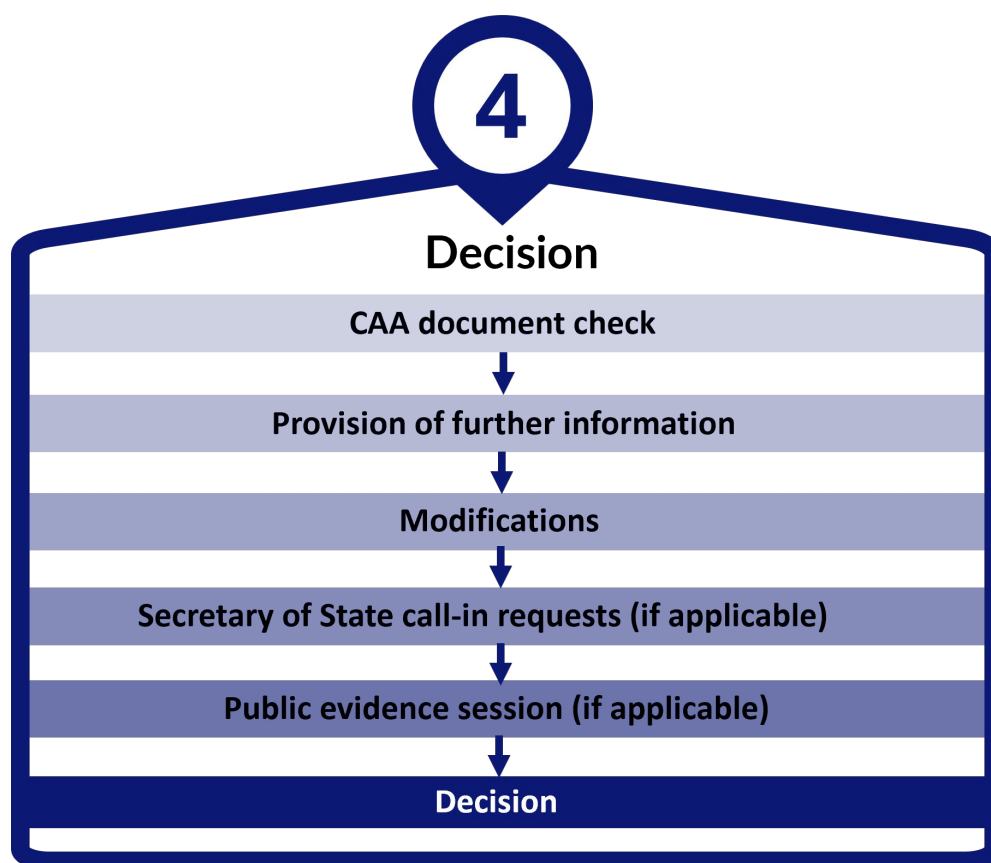
Submitting the final airspace change proposal

- 5.34 Sponsors **must** submit their final airspace change proposal to the CAA. The technical instrument flight procedure submission (where applicable) **must** be submitted by the sponsor's approved procedure design organisation at the same time (unless agreed otherwise by the CAA).
- 5.35 The CAA will expect submission of the full and unredacted final airspace change proposal no later than the submission date stipulated in the agreed timeline and will allocate resources accordingly.
- 5.36 The final airspace change proposal documents are normally submitted by email, but this may not be practicable where the documents are very large.
- 5.37 Sponsors **must** publish their final airspace change proposal on the airspace change portal at the same time as it is submitted to the CAA, or shortly after. This must not include any technical instrument flight procedure documentation provided via the approved procedure design organisation.
- 5.38 As part of the development of the final airspace change proposal, sponsors will need to identify where aeronautical information needs to be updated, for example, in the UK aeronautical information publication and charts. This is likely to be through their own reviews as well as from engagement with affected stakeholders and discussions with the CAA. Where the sponsor is not the data owner of the affected part of the aeronautical information publication, additional engagement may be required.
- 5.39 The requirements for achieving aeronautical data quality requirements are set out in [CAP 1054, Aeronautical Data Quality – Guidance for the provision and maintenance of aeronautical data and aeronautical information in UK Aeronautical Information Products](#). It is recommended that sponsors discuss these aspects with the CAA prior to completing the final airspace change proposal to gain a comprehensive understanding of what is required and to obtain the latest version of the aerodata spreadsheet.
- 5.40 Not all changes to aeronautical information will be presented in an aerodata spreadsheet. Where this is the case, the anticipated changes can be included in the final airspace change proposal as a supplementary document, annex or appendix.
- 5.41 Where the CAA has agreed the proposal would be a multi-deployment airspace change proposal (see Requirement 3) and the sponsor has submitted a draft

multi-deployment delivery plan, this **must** be updated as required and re-submitted at the same time as the final proposal.

Stage 3 outputs

- Final airspace change proposal submission (**produced and published by the sponsor**), including:
 - Consultation response document (Level 1 and Level 2 only) (Requirement 31).
 - Final airspace change proposal (in accordance with the standard template format) and all required evidence/material (Requirement 32).
 - Final design assessment (Requirement 33).
 - Draft multi-deployment delivery plan, where applicable (Requirement 3).
- Instrument flight procedure submission, if applicable (**produced and submitted by the sponsor's approved procedure design organisation**) (Requirement 34).
- Change management plan, where utilised (Requirement 4) (**produced and submitted by the sponsor**).

CHAPTER 6**Stage 4 - Decision****Overview**

- 6.1 The decision stage is where the CAA reviews and assesses the final airspace change proposal. We may request further information from the sponsor. The CAA, or in certain cases the Secretary of State for Transport, then decide whether to approve the airspace change proposal (with or without modifications or conditions) or reject it.
- 6.2 For airspace change proposals that meet the Secretary of State's call-in criterion, stakeholders may request for the Secretary of State to call-in the decision. If the proposal is called-in by the Secretary of State, the CAA will prepare a 'minded to' decision.
- 6.3 For some Level 1 airspace change proposals that meet the Secretary of State call-in criterion, the CAA may convene a public evidence session before a decision is made on whether to approve the airspace change proposal, where there is sufficient interest to justify it and the CAA decides it is proportionate to do so.

- 6.4 The CAA is required to continuously review whether UK airspace design reflects the Airspace Modernisation Strategy, that the volume of controlled airspace is the minimum required to maintain a high standard of air safety and, subject to overriding national security or defence requirements, secures the most efficient use of airspace. This is referred to as a Direction 3.1 airspace performance report.
- 6.5 The CAA may consider that a Direction 3.1 airspace performance report will take place at some point after implementation of an approved airspace change. In this case, the CAA will require the sponsor to complete an airspace performance report, normally one year after implementation of any decision to approve the airspace change, or at another specified date (see Annex B). We will inform the sponsor during Stage 4 whether an airspace performance report is required and, if so, when it is required. We will also include the reasons for this requirement as part of our decision.

CAA document check

- 6.6 Once the sponsor has submitted their final airspace change proposal to the CAA, we will normally allow one week for the CAA to check the submission contains the required documents before commencing our review.
- 6.7 Sponsors may request a meeting to present the document set to the CAA to explain the various elements. We may agree to such a meeting where it has been arranged in advance and we consider it proportionate to do so. This is intended to reduce the risk of needing to extend the document check period.
- 6.8 During the document check, the CAA may require the sponsor to clarify information contained in the document set or provide additional documents. In such cases, the document check period will pause and will resume once the requested documentation is received.
- 6.9 Failure to provide a logical index of the document set, or to include all required documents, is likely to extend the document check period and delay the decision.
- 6.10 Once the document check is complete, the CAA will commence our review of the airspace change proposal, supporting documentation and accompanying evidence.

Provision of further information

Requirement 35: The sponsor, when requested, provides the CAA with any further information required for a regulatory decision to be made

Level 1: Must

Level 2: Must

Level 3: Must

Guidance

- 6.11 In addition to the overall requirement set out in Requirement 6, sponsors **must** provide any supplementary information, technical corrections or clarifications requested by the CAA. In some cases, this may result in the sponsor making an amendment to their airspace change proposal. Any such amendments should not substantially alter the proposal.
- 6.12 This requirement is intended to reduce the risk of an airspace change proposal not being approved due to small errors in documentation or technical issues, rather than matters of substance. Where appropriate, the CAA may give the sponsor an opportunity to provide more information, clarify matters or make corrections, rather than referring them back to an earlier stage of the process.
- 6.13 If the request for information is material to the CAA's ability to continue to progress our review and assessment, we may, in agreement with the sponsor, pause the process to allow the sponsor to complete the required work.
- 6.14 Where a request for information is likely to impact the target implementation date, the CAA will normally publish a delay explanation statement on the airspace change portal.
- 6.15 The CAA's expectation is that additional consultation is unlikely to be required. However, sponsors **must** consider whether any amendments made to their airspace change proposal as a result of clarifications/questions substantially alter the design and/or its impacts previously consulted on, such that additional consultation could be required. Where they believe this to be the case, the sponsor **must** inform the CAA.
- 6.16 The need for any additional consultation will be determined in discussion with the CAA and will be considered on a case-by-case basis. The requirement for any additional consultation will be considered proportionately, informed by the scope of the original proposed airspace design and the nature of the amendment.
- 6.17 Where the CAA determines that additional consultation is required, we will inform the sponsor. Depending on the extent of additional consultation required, the CAA may publish a statement on the airspace change portal explaining the requirement.

- 6.18 To maintain transparency, where additional consultation is not required, the sponsor **should**:
- 6.18.1 Ensure that clarifications/questions are answered and published on the airspace change portal within any agreed period.
 - 6.18.2 Resubmit any updated documents as 'version 2.0' (and subsequent versions, where required), with all changes clearly identified.
 - 6.18.3 Once the matter has been resolved, publish the CAA's request and the sponsor's correspondence log and/or meeting minutes relating to any revisions on the airspace change portal.

Public evidence session

- 6.19 For Level 1 airspace changes that may meet the Secretary of State's call-in criterion, the CAA may convene a public evidence session before making a decision on whether, or not, to approve the airspace change proposal.
- 6.20 A public evidence session is not an extension of consultation. It is a structured public meeting at which stakeholders can make representations directly to the CAA. This ensures their views are formally heard and considered before a decision is made. The CAA's role in the public evidence session is to listen.
- 6.21 In deciding whether to convene a public evidence session, the CAA will balance public interest considerations against the sponsor's reasonable expectation of a predictable assessment timeline.
- 6.22 Public evidence sessions will apply only to airspace change proposals that meet the Secretary of State's call-in criterion, whether or not a request to call-in the proposal is made. At this stage in the process, it may not be known whether a call-in request will be made or whether the Secretary of State will decide to exercise their discretion to call the proposal in.
- 6.23 Following the sponsor's consultation, the CAA will confirm with the sponsor if we intend to hold a public evidence session.
- 6.24 A public evidence session will extend the overall assessment process. Sponsors of relevant airspace change proposals should build the possibility of a public evidence session into their proposal timeline. Following the closure of the sponsor's consultation, the CAA will engage with sponsors on scheduling a public evidence session as early as practicable.
- 6.25 Where a public evidence session is to be held, the sponsor must produce the materials required to support the session (See Requirement 36).

Submission of statements

- 6.26 Once the sponsor has submitted their final airspace change proposal to the CAA and published it on the airspace change portal, the CAA will announce if a public evidence session will be held. If one is to be held, a statement submission period will open; normally for four weeks.
- 6.27 Written statements must be submitted and published via an online platform and are subject to the following conditions:
- 6.27.1 Written statements must not exceed 500 words.
 - 6.27.2 Only one statement may be submitted per individual (verified by email address).
 - 6.27.3 Statements will be moderated by the CAA before publication to remove any unacceptable material.
- 6.28 Upon submission, the author of the statement will be asked to confirm if they wish to attend the public evidence session to read their statement.
- 6.29 Where the number of statements received is very low, the CAA may reconsider whether a public evidence session remains necessary.

Format and conduct of the public evidence session

- 6.30 A public evidence session may be held online, face-to-face or both. Sessions will be recorded. The public evidence session will be chaired either by a CAA employee or an independent facilitator.
- 6.31 Where a high volume of statements has been submitted, statements may be grouped thematically to ensure coverage of a wide range of substantive matters. A representative selection of stakeholders will be invited to read their respective statements at the public evidence session. Invitations will be based on the volume of submissions, thematic coverage, fairness and representation across stakeholder groups.
- 6.32 Only those invited by the CAA to do so will be permitted to speak. Speakers may read only their submitted statement. The Chair may ask clarifying questions where necessary to ensure that a point is understood. There will be no dialogue or debate between participants and attendees will have no opportunity to debate or disagree with submissions made by others.
- 6.33 The public evidence session is attended by the CAA decision-maker and specialist colleagues who work on airspace matters. It is not a legal proceeding with formal rules of evidence, but a facilitated evidence-giving session at which speakers will be expected to speak on their own behalf, without legal representation, reflecting the information-receiving purpose of the session.

- 6.34 Stakeholders will be expected to give their views in public. The CAA will agree to private meetings only with representative stakeholders such as MPs. Where we identify a situation that warrants a meeting with a stakeholder, the CAA decision-maker and the sponsor (if attending) will be present. We will publish the minutes of any such meeting on the airspace change portal.

Publication and decision making

- 6.35 The CAA will publish a recording and/or transcript of the public evidence session on the online portal, normally within two weeks.
- 6.36 The CAA will consider the evidence presented during the public evidence session when reaching a decision at Stage 4. The decision-maker will address the public evidence session within the CAA's decision document.

Requirement 36: If a public evidence session is convened by the CAA, the sponsor produces an executive summary of the airspace change proposal

Level 1: Must

Level 2: N/A

Level 3: N/A

Guidance: Level 1

- 6.37 Sponsors **must** produce an executive summary in the form of a layperson's guide. This should provide a clear, accessible summary which can be understood by all stakeholders, including those from a non-aviation background. The summary should focus on:
- 6.37.1 A summary of the airspace change proposal, which includes the use of clear graphics.
 - 6.37.2 What, if anything, has changed since the consultation.
 - 6.37.3 The potential impacts the proposed airspace change may have.

CAA decision

- 6.38 The CAA decision will be set out in the assessment reports and decision log.
- 6.39 The CAA's approach in carrying out our Air Navigation Functions (which include making airspace change decisions), incorporating how we will take account of the Airspace Modernisation Strategy and how we apply our statutory duties in section 70 of the Transport Act 2000, which includes taking account of the statutory guidance in the Air Navigation Guidance 2026, is described in [CAP 3299, The CAA's Air Navigation Functions Guidance](#).
- 6.40 If the CAA approves the airspace change proposal, where required, we will issue a change request authority to the sponsor, confirming that they can submit a change request to the UK Aeronautical Information Service via the [Aurora Data Originators Portal](#).
- 6.41 Where the CAA requires the sponsor to complete an airspace performance report, we will specify the sponsor's requirements for the report. This will include the timeframe and the extent of evidence and data that the sponsor will gather and analyse, set out in a data request form. An airspace performance report may cover a year after implementation of any decision by the CAA to approve the change, or another specified period. The need for a report will be confirmed when the CAA makes our decision whether to approve the proposal.
- 6.42 If an airspace change proposal is rejected, the sponsor may request a meeting with the CAA to discuss the reasons for the decision. We may agree to such a meeting where it is proportionate to do so. Sponsors must prepare and publish minutes of the meeting unless there are reasons not to do so. The same meeting process may apply where modifications or conditions are attached to an approval.

Modifications

- 6.43 When the CAA makes a decision on an airspace change proposal, we may make an approval subject to such modifications and conditions as we consider necessary (see the Air Navigation Directions 2026, direction 4(4)(a)). The required modifications will not normally substantially alter the design as consulted upon, and the modifications will normally better achieve the expected impacts and outcomes. If conditions are applied, they will be intended to ensure the change is implemented in accordance with relevant legislation, regulation and policy.
- 6.44 If the CAA requires modification or attaches conditions to an airspace change decision, the sponsor may request a meeting with the CAA to discuss the reasons for those modifications or conditions. We may agree to such a meeting where it is proportionate to do so. Sponsors must prepare and publish minutes of the meeting unless there are reasons not to do so.

Secretary of State call-in

- 6.45 The Secretary of State has directed (see the Air Navigation Directions 2026, direction 5) that permanent airspace change decisions of strategic national importance may be called in to be decided by them rather than by the CAA. Once the Department for Transport has published further guidance the CAA will update this section with any process requirements and guidance on those requirements necessary as a result.

Impact of a decision

- 6.46 Whether the decision is made by the CAA or the Secretary of State, the decision is the end of the airspace change process decision stage.

Stage 4 outputs

Before decision

- Confirmation that the document check is complete (**produced and published by the CAA**).
- Date of any public evidence session – relevant to some Level 1 airspace changes only (**produced and published by the CAA**).
- If required for a public evidence session, an executive summary of the airspace change proposal with associated guide and graphics – relevant to some Level 1 airspace changes only (Requirement 36) (**produced and published by the sponsor**).
- Transcript/recording of any public evidence session – relevant to some Level 1 airspace changes only (**produced and published by the CAA**).
- Minutes of any additional meetings between the CAA and stakeholders that form part of the public evidence session – relevant to some Level 1 airspace changes only (**produced and published by the CAA**).
- Request for any further technical details or minor amendments, if any (**produced and published by the CAA**).
- Response or revised airspace change proposal as ‘version 2.0’, and so on, if any further revisions are needed (Requirement 35) (**produced and published by the sponsor**).
- Secretary of State call-in requests, where applicable (**submitted by stakeholders, published by the CAA after moderation**).
- Assessment of whether the airspace change proposal meets the call-in criterion, only where a call-in request has been made (**produced and published by the CAA**).
- Notification that a request for an eligible airspace change proposal to be called-in is accepted by the Secretary of State, if applicable (**produced and published by the Department for Transport**).
- If an airspace change proposal is called in by the Secretary of State, the CAA’s ‘minded to decision’, if applicable (**produced and published by the CAA**). In these cases, the CAA assessment referred to below will be published as CAA assessments for consideration by the Secretary of State.

After decision (**produced and published by the CAA and/or the Department for Transport as applicable**)

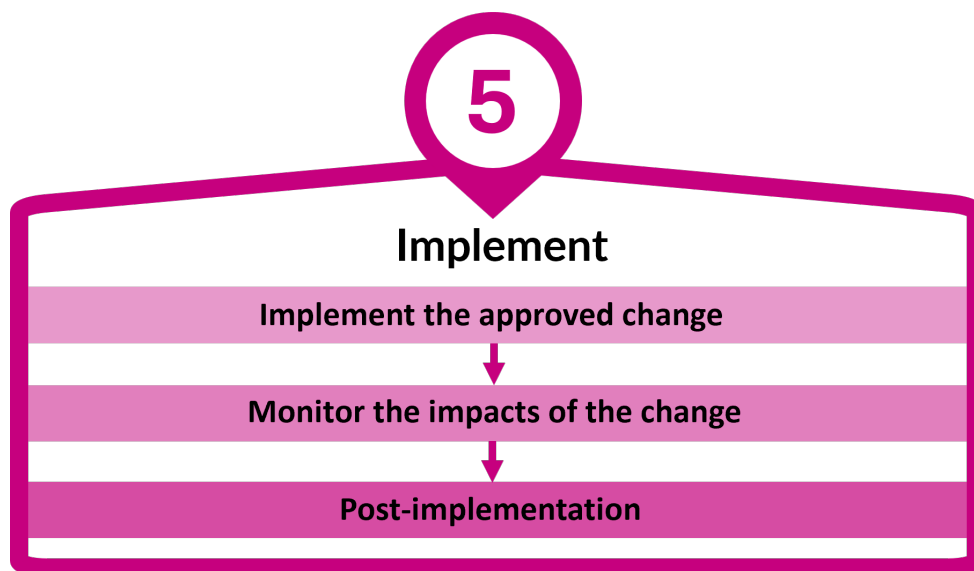
- Decision statement.

- CAA safety review: assesses whether the proposed airspace design will maintain a high standard of safety as a whole design.
- CAA operational assessment: assesses whether the design including its associated operational arrangements and impacts, meets the statement of need, takes account of the Airspace Modernisation Strategy and applies the airspace design priorities.
- CAA consultation assessment: considers if the airspace change proposal has been adequately consulted upon in accordance with the CAA's requirements and guidance in this document (which have been developed to meet the terms of the statutory guidance to the CAA in the Air Navigation Guidance 2026). This assessment includes whether the sponsor has categorised the responses appropriately, correctly identified the issues arising from the consultation and responded to those issues appropriately.
- CAA environmental assessment: verifies that noise, flight efficiency and impact on protected areas and European sites have been considered in line with relevant government policy reflected in the Air Navigation Guidance 2026, in compliance with the requirements and guidance on them set out in this document and any (if applicable) other request placed upon the sponsor by the CAA or the Secretary of State.
- CAA decision log: contains the CAA's decision, with reasons, on the airspace change proposal. It is structured to identify how we reached our decision within the context of our statutory functions, duties and the statutory guidance that applies to our airspace change decision (the Air Navigation Guidance 2026). If the CAA's decision includes requirements for modifications or attaches conditions, these will be set out in the decision log together with reasons¹⁵. The CAA's decision log will also state whether or not an airspace performance report is required, together with reasons. The decision log will reference the documentation considered as part of the CAA's assessment.

¹⁵ Some sponsors require airspace decisions to be made by other states' national aviation authorities (NAA). In those cases, some NAAs request that the CAA provide a recommendation whether that NAA approve the change with regards to the aspects of the design that extend into that state's airspace. In such circumstances, these recommendations will normally be published in the decision log.

CHAPTER 7

Stage 5 – Implement



Overview

- 7.1 If the CAA approves the airspace change, the sponsor progresses to Stage 5, where they will fulfil any modifications or conditions set out in the CAA's decision. The sponsor must also engage with the UK Aeronautical Information Service to make the necessary changes in the aeronautical information publication and other national regulatory documents. Once implemented, the sponsor monitors the safety of the airspace.
- 7.2 Stage 5 is completed when the airspace change is implemented, as agreed by the CAA.

Implement the change

Requirement 37: The sponsor fulfils any modifications or conditions set out in the CAA's decision**Level 1: Must****Level 2: Must****Level 3: Must****Guidance**

- 7.3 When the CAA approves an airspace change proposal there may be modifications or conditions attached to the decision. Sponsors **must** address the relevant modifications or conditions during implementation of the airspace change.

- 7.4 Where an airspace change is to be implemented through multiple deployments (as agreed by the CAA), the sponsor **must** meet all modifications or conditions specified in the decision relating to each deployment before any subsequent deployments are implemented.

Requirement 38: The sponsor finalises and submits aeronautical data to the CAA for aeronautical data quality validation

Level 1: Must

Level 2: Must

Level 3: Must

Guidance

- 7.5 Sponsors **must** finalise the aeronautical data submitted to the CAA at Stage 3. The requirements for achieving aeronautical data quality requirements are detailed in [CAP 1054, Aeronautical Data Quality – Guidance for the provision and maintenance of aeronautical data and aeronautical information in UK Aeronautical Information Products](#).
- 7.6 Once finalised, the aeronautical data **must** be submitted to the CAA for validation.
- 7.7 Following aeronautical data quality validation, the aeronautical data **must** be submitted to the UK Aeronautical Information Service for publication in accordance with the approved AIRAC cycle.
- 7.8 For Level 1 airspace change proposals, or airspace change proposals being implemented through multiple deployments, the sponsor **may** elect to begin the aeronautical data quality compliance work before Stage 5. However, they do so at their own risk as any decision to approve the airspace change proposal will not be made until the end of Stage 4.

Requirement 39: The sponsor updates all relevant documentation including, but not limited to, aeronautical publications, charts, operational documentation, letters of agreement and air traffic management systems

Level 1: Must

Level 2: Must

Level 3: Must

Guidance

- 7.9 Sponsors **must** update all relevant documentation including, but not limited to, aeronautical publications, charts, operational documentation, letters of agreement and air traffic management systems.
- 7.10 Proposed amendments to the aeronautical information publication that do not require aeronautical data validation should be submitted to the CAA in a format that clearly identifies the paragraph or table number, the current text and the proposed change. We will verify and approve the aeronautical information

publication changes. Once approved, the information can be sent to the UK Aeronautical Information Service in accordance with the approved AIRAC cycle.

Requirement 40: The sponsor notifies relevant stakeholders of the airspace change

Level 1: Must

Level 2: Must

Level 3: May

Guidance

- 7.11 As part of the implementation process, sponsors **must** bring the airspace change to the attention of the aviation community. This must include the extent of the aeronautical information publication amendments, including those of adjacent aerodromes and/or neighbouring states. The CAA's (or, if applicable, the Secretary of State's) decision will have been published on the airspace change portal and will therefore be publicly available.
- 7.12 Sponsors should publicise a forthcoming airspace change to as many airspace users and, where relevant, service providers as possible. Depending on the nature and scale of the airspace change, this could include:
- 7.12.1 Notifying the Ministry of Defence including Defence Airspace and Air Traffic Management (DAATM).
 - 7.12.2 Briefing airport consultative committees or flight operations groups.
 - 7.12.3 Using relevant press, appropriate aviation publications, websites, online platforms or general aviation events to raise awareness.
- 7.13 This will often initially take the form of an aeronautical information circular setting out the details of the airspace change, including the effective date and, where appropriate or feasible, a map of the revised airspace structure. Sponsors should aim to publish any such aeronautical information circular at least one month before the distribution of the aeronautical information publication amendment containing the airspace change.
- 7.14 Sponsors should consider the extent of the aeronautical information publication amendments required by their airspace change. Changes that result in flight planning arrangements **should** be coordinated with NATS Operations Policy.
- 7.15 Airspace changes in the vicinity of an aerodrome may require amendments beyond the sponsor's entry in the aerodrome (AD) section and require changes to the en-route (ENR) and general (GEN) sections, or the aerodrome entries of adjacent aerodromes, in the aeronautical information publication. Similarly, en-route or off-route changes may impact upon standard instrument departures, standard instrument arrivals, instrument flight procedures and terminal airspace structure charts within the aerodrome section and en-route sections of the aeronautical information publication respectively. En-route or off-route changes

may also impact upon the airspace structures of adjoining states. Sponsors should therefore consider the impacts upon the aeronautical information publication as a whole and, where relevant, the aeronautical information publications of neighbouring states. The CAA can provide advice on request, but responsibility remains with the sponsor.

7.16 Sponsors **should** also consider how to notify relevant stakeholders, including local communities and other stakeholder groups, of the outcome of the consultation and the CAA's decision.

7.17 Sponsors **must** notify impacted stakeholders:

7.17.1 When changes may begin to be experienced.

7.17.2 Where the CAA decision can be found.

7.17.3 How the sponsor intends to manage the transition from implementation to business as usual.

Post-implementation

Requirement 41: Following implementation, the sponsor ensures the airspace change maintains a high standard of safety

Level 1: Must

Level 2: Must

Level 3: Must

Guidance

7.18 Following implementation, sponsors **must** ensure the airspace change maintains a high standard of safety and take any necessary actions to achieve this. Such actions may or may not affect the approved airspace design.

7.19 If a sponsor needs to take an unexpected action to maintain a high standard of safety as a consequence of the airspace change, they **must** immediately inform the CAA and provide details of the actions taken. There are two possible outcomes:

7.19.1 the CAA accepts the action was necessary and does not alter the approval of the original decision; or

7.19.2 the sponsor may need to make a minor post-implementation amendment to the approved design (see Requirement 42).

Requirement 42: The sponsor monitors the impacts of the implemented change and identifies whether post-implementation amendment(s) may be required

Level 1: Must

Level 2: Must

Level 3: Must

Guidance

- 7.20 Following implementation of an airspace change, sponsors **must** monitor its impacts. Where an unexpected outcome is identified within the first 12 months, the sponsor may determine that a post-implementation amendment(s) to the design is required.
- 7.21 Sponsors **must** notify the CAA immediately that an unexpected outcome has been identified.
- 7.22 Within six weeks of notifying the CAA, sponsors **must** submit a report to the CAA setting out:
- 7.22.1 The issue identified through monitoring.
 - 7.22.2 The proposed amendment(s).
 - 7.22.3 The evidence supporting the proposed amendment(s).
 - 7.22.4 The expected impacts on safety, noise, flight efficiency, protected areas and European sites, as well as operational, technical and any other impacts of the amendment(s).
 - 7.22.5 A justification explaining why the amendment(s) remains consistent with the scope, intent and objectives of the original airspace change approval, and why it does not substantially alter the approved design or the anticipated impacts considered by the CAA when making our decision.
 - 7.22.6 An explanation of how the amendment(s) would better achieve, or support delivery of, the outcomes expected from the original approval.
- 7.23 The report will be published on the airspace change portal by the sponsor.
- 7.24 The CAA will review the sponsor's report and determine whether the proposed amendment(s):
- 7.24.1 Remains within the scope and intent of the original airspace change approval;
 - 7.24.2 Better achieves the objectives, impacts or outcomes anticipated by the original approval; and
 - 7.24.3 Would not substantially alter the approved airspace design or its anticipated impacts.

- 7.25 Where the CAA is satisfied that the proposed amendment(s) meets the criteria listed above, we will accept the proposed amendment(s).
- 7.26 If the CAA agrees that a post-implementation amendment(s) should be made, we will publish a statement to that effect on the airspace change portal. This agreement does not constitute a new airspace change decision, as the amendment(s) remains consistent with the original approval.
- 7.27 If the post-implementation amendment(s) is accepted by the CAA, the sponsor **must** inform stakeholders of the amendment(s) and its expected effects.
- 7.28 Where the CAA determines that a proposed amendment falls outside the scope or intent of the original approval, substantially alters the approved design, or results in materially different impacts from those considered when the original decision was made, the amendment will not be approved. In such cases, we will provide guidance to the sponsor.
- 7.29 If the sponsor is required to submit a new statement of need and commence a new airspace change proposal, the CAA will consider how best to expedite that proposal (as directed by the Secretary of State). This will include consideration of how to scale the process and how to avoid duplication of work already carried out by the sponsor (or others), as guided by the Secretary of State.

Requirement 43: The sponsor manages minor post-implementation amendments during implementation in accordance with the approved multi-deployment delivery plan (when applicable)

Level 1: Must

Level 2: Must

Level 3: N/A

Guidance

- 7.30 Where an airspace change proposal is being delivered through multiple deployments, the sponsor **must** manage minor amendments during implementation in accordance with the approved multi-deployment delivery plan.
- 7.31 The sponsor can implement minor amendments, in accordance with the terms of the agreed multi-deployment delivery plan.
- 7.32 Before implementing a minor amendment, the sponsor **must**:
- 7.32.1 Assess the proposed amendment in accordance with the process set out in the approved multi-deployment delivery plan.
 - 7.32.2 Satisfy any requirements related to the assessment of safety, noise, flight efficiency, protected areas and European sites, as well as operational, technical and any other requirements identified in the approved multi-deployment delivery plan.

- 7.33 The sponsor **must** maintain records of all assessments undertaken in support of a minor amendment and make those records available to the CAA upon request.

Updates to the multi-deployment delivery plan post decision

- 7.34 The sponsor **must** update the multi-deployment delivery plan to reflect any implemented minor amendments and any consequential changes to deployment activities, timescales or dependencies.
- 7.35 Any proposed change to the approved multi-deployment delivery plan **must** be submitted to the CAA (via the airspace change portal) for acceptance before implementation.
- 7.36 When requesting a change to the multi-deployment delivery plan, the sponsor must provide:
- 7.36.1 A description of the proposed change.
 - 7.36.2 The reason for the change.
 - 7.36.3 An assessment of the effects for subsequent deployments.
 - 7.36.4 An assessment of any changes to the impacts for stakeholders.
 - 7.36.5 An assessment that the change to the multi-deployment delivery plan does not alter the scope or intent of the approved airspace change.
- 7.37 The CAA will determine whether the proposed change to the multi-deployment delivery plan is accepted or rejected.
- 7.38 If the proposed change to the multi-deployment delivery plan is accepted, the sponsor **must** publish an update on the airspace change portal.

Stage 5 outputs

- Final aeronautical data verification completed and returned to the sponsor (including instrument flight procedure details or aerodata sheet if applicable) or submitted directly to the UK Aeronautical Information Service where relevant (**produced and submitted by the CAA**).
- Aeronautical information publication change request authority completed and sent to the sponsor (**produced by the CAA**).
- Aeronautical information publication change request submitted to the UK Aeronautical Information Service including any other attachments (instrument flight procedure details or aerodata sheet). The aeronautical information publication change request authority should also be attached (**produced and submitted by the sponsor**).
- Aeronautical information publication updated and published (on implementation date) in accordance with AIRAC cycle (**produced and published by the UK Aeronautical Information Service**).

ANNEX A

List of the airspace change process requirements

Airspace change requirements list by level

- A1 The airspace change process requirements outlined in this document are listed below.
- A2 The CAA will consider scaling the airspace change process further within the requirements of each level when there is a good reason, and it is proportionate to do so.
- A3 Overarching requirements:
- Requirement 1, see paragraphs 2.2 to 2.7.
 - Requirement 2, see paragraphs 2.8 to 2.31.
 - Requirement 3, see paragraphs 2.32 to 2.49.
 - Requirement 4, see paragraphs 2.50 to 2.57.
 - Requirement 5, see paragraphs 2.58 to 2.61.
 - Requirement 6, see paragraph 2.62.
- A4 Stage 1 requirements:
- Requirement 7, see paragraphs 3.4 to 3.11.
 - Requirement 8, see paragraphs 3.12 to 3.43.
 - Requirement 9, see paragraphs 3.44 to 3.45.
 - Requirement 10, see paragraphs 3.46 to 3.48.
 - Requirement 11, see paragraphs 3.55 to 3.62.
 - Requirement 12, see paragraphs 3.63 to 3.72.
 - Requirement 13, see paragraphs 3.73 to 3.127.
 - Requirement 14, see paragraphs 3.128 to 3.174.
 - Requirement 15, see paragraphs 3.175 to 3.182.

A5 Stage 2 requirements:

- Requirement 16, see paragraphs 4.10 to 4.12.
- Requirement 17, see paragraphs 4.13 to 4.86.
- Requirement 18, see paragraphs 4.87 to 4.92.
- Requirement 19, see paragraphs 4.93 to 4.98.
- Requirement 20, see paragraphs 4.99 to 4.112.
- Requirement 21, see paragraphs 4.113 to 4.116.
- Requirement 22, see paragraphs 4.117 to 4.118.
- Requirement 23, see paragraphs 4.119 to 4.132.
- Requirement 24, see paragraphs 4.133 to 4.140.
- Requirement 25, see paragraphs 4.141 to 4.145.
- Requirement 26, see paragraph 4.146.
- Requirement 27, see paragraphs 4.147 to 4.151.
- Requirement 28, see paragraphs 4.152 to 4.156.
- Requirement 29, see paragraphs 4.157 to 4.167.

A6 Stage 3 requirements:

- Requirement 30, see paragraphs 5.5 to 5.8.
- Requirement 31, see paragraphs 5.9 to 5.12.
- Requirement 32, see paragraphs 5.13 to 5.17.
- Requirement 33, see paragraphs 5.18 to 5.21.
- Requirement 34, see paragraphs 5.22 to 5.41.

A7 Stage 4 requirements:

- Requirement 35, see paragraphs 6.11 to 6.18.
- Requirement 36, see paragraph 6.37.

A8 Stage 5 requirements:

- Requirement 37, see paragraphs 7.3 to 7.4.
- Requirement 38, see paragraphs 7.5 to 7.8.
- Requirement 39, see paragraphs 7.9 to 7.10.

- Requirement 40, see paragraphs 7.11 to 7.17.
- Requirement 41, see paragraphs 7.18 to 7.19.
- Requirement 42, see paragraphs 7.20 to 7.29.
- Requirement 43, see paragraphs 7.30 to 7.38.

Requirement		Level 1 airspace change	Level 2 airspace change	Level 3 airspace change
Overarching requirements				
1	The sponsor updates the airspace change portal throughout the airspace change process	Must	Must	Must
2	The sponsor submits and keeps up to date a timeline for completion of the airspace change proposal	Must	Must	Must
3	The sponsor submits and maintains a multi-deployment delivery plan for the airspace change proposal	Must	Must	N/A
4	The sponsor submits and maintains a change management plan for the airspace change proposal	May	May	May
5	The sponsor considers whether evidence, analysis or other information gathered in other regulatory processes, such as planning applications, can be utilised and not duplicated in the airspace change process	Must	Must	Must
6	The sponsor, when requested, provides the CAA with any further information relevant to, or necessary for, consideration of the sponsor's submission	Must	Must	Must
Stage 1: Propose and develop requirements				
7	The proposer of an airspace change completes and submits a statement of need (ARF 1916)	Must	Must	Must
8	At the briefing and guidance meeting, the proposer briefs the CAA on the proposed airspace change and produces the outputs from the meeting	Must	Must	Must
9	The sponsor establishes formal partnership arrangements with each partner involved in the specific airspace change proposal (where there are partners)	Must	Must	N/A
10	The sponsor describes the current-day scenario	Must	Must	Must
11	The sponsor gathers the necessary information to identify assumptions and constraints to meet the statement of need, take account of the Airspace Modernisation Strategy and apply the airspace design priorities when developing a draft design(s)	Must	Must	Must
12	The sponsor identifies and engages with a stakeholder reference group to test the information gathered	Must	Must	Must
13	The sponsor develops the draft design(s) that address the statement of need, taking account of the Airspace Modernisation Strategy while applying the airspace design priorities	Must	Must	Must
14	The sponsor develops the inputs required to enable draft design(s) to be assessed	Must	Must	Must
15	The sponsor submits the required Stage 1 outputs to the CAA for feedback at the milestone review	Must	Must	N/A

Requirement		Level 1 airspace change	Level 2 airspace change	Level 3 airspace change
Stage 2: Consult requirements				
16	The sponsor conducts an assessment of the draft design(s) scenario compared to the baseline scenario (or the current-day scenario for Level 3 airspace change proposals)	Must	Must	Must
17	The sponsor conducts the draft design(s) assessment using metrics selected to enable the CAA to decide whether to approve the airspace change proposal in accordance with our statutory functions, duties and the statutory guidance (the Air Navigation Directions 2026)	Must	Must	Must
18	The sponsor produces a consultation strategy setting out how they intend to facilitate an effective consultation	Must	Must	May
19	The sponsor identifies which stakeholders are likely to be impacted	Must	Must	Must
20	The sponsor determines how to tailor their consultation materials and activities to stakeholders' needs and how they will inform stakeholders that the consultation is taking place	Must	Must	Must
21	The sponsor determines the duration of the consultation, ensuring it is sufficient to support an effective consultation	Must	Must	Must
22	The sponsor produces an indicative timetable of associated consultation activities	Must	Should	N/A
23	The sponsor produces consultation materials that provide stakeholders with enough information to enable understanding of the proposal and provide an informed response	Must	Must	Must
24	The sponsor submits the required outputs to the CAA for assessment at the gateway	Must	Must	N/A
25	The sponsor launches their consultation, asking for feedback from stakeholders	Must	Must	Must
26	The sponsor maintains consultation activity records to evidence that reasonable actions were taken to inform stakeholders of the consultation	Must	Must	Must
27	The sponsor moderates and publishes consultation responses on the CAA's consultation platform	Must	Must	N/A
28	The sponsor monitors the progress of the consultation and, if necessary, takes action if the progress falls short of expectations	Must	Must	Must
29	The sponsor reviews and categorises the consultation responses	Must	Must	N/A

Requirement		Level 1 airspace change	Level 2 airspace change	Level 3 airspace change
Stage 3: Update and submit requirements				
30	The sponsor assesses all consultation feedback to determine whether to amend the draft design to addresses issues raised in order that it address the statement of need, takes account of the Airspace Modernisation Strategy, while applying the airspace design priorities	Must	Must	Must
31	The sponsor demonstrates how the consultation feedback has been understood and considered, and how this has, or has not, influenced the proposed airspace design	Must	Must	Must
32	The sponsor finalises the proposed airspace design	Must	Must	Must
33	The sponsor prepares the final design assessment	Must	Must	Must
34	The sponsor submits their final proposal to the CAA	Must	Must	Must
Stage 4: Decision requirements				
35	The sponsor, when requested, provides the CAA with any further information required for a regulatory decision to be made	Must	Must	Must
36	If a public evidence session is convened by the CAA, the sponsor produces an executive summary of the airspace change proposal	Must	N/A	N/A
Stage 5: Implement requirements				
37	The sponsor fulfils any modifications or conditions set out in the CAA's decision	Must	Must	Must
38	The sponsor finalises and submits aeronautical data to the CAA for aeronautical data quality validation	Must	Must	Must
39	The sponsor updates all relevant documentation including, but not limited to, aeronautical publications, charts, operational documentation, letters of agreement and air traffic management systems	Must	Must	Must
40	The sponsor notifies relevant stakeholders of the airspace change	Must	Must	May
41	Following implementation, the sponsor ensures the airspace change maintains a high standard of safety	Must	Must	Must
42	The sponsor monitors the impacts of the implemented change and identifies whether minor post-implementation amendment(s) may be required	Must	Must	Must

Requirement		Level 1 airspace change	Level 2 airspace change	Level 3 airspace change
Stage 5 requirements continued				
43	The sponsor manages post-implementation amendments during implementation in accordance with the approved multi-deployment delivery plan (when applicable)	Must	Must	N/A

ANNEX B**Direction 3.1 airspace performance report**

Overview

- B1 As part of our obligation to review whether UK airspace design reflects the Airspace Modernisation Strategy, that the volume of controlled airspace is the minimum required to maintain a high standard of air safety and, subject to overriding national security or defence requirements, secures the most efficient use of airspace, the CAA's decision at Stage 4 of the CAP 1616 process will state whether a Direction 3.1 airspace performance report will be conducted after a change has been implemented. The decision will also confirm, if a report is required, the timings of the report and the length of time for the evidence collection.
- B2 If an airspace performance report is to be conducted, the sponsor's requirement to participate in that review and to prepare a report, will be a condition of the Stage 4 decision. The requirements for such a report are set out in this section.
- B3 Once the report is published by the sponsor on the airspace change portal, the CAA will review the report and publish a response.

Evidence collection and analysis

- B4 Where the CAA determines that an airspace performance report is required following implementation of a change, the requirement for the sponsor to produce the airspace performance report will be published on the airspace change portal during the Stage 4 decision of the airspace change process.
- B5 The CAA will clarify the reporting requirements with the sponsor, and may, where appropriate, amend the timeframe or scope of the data request to ensure the report provides the required evidence and data. The CAA will publish any updates on the airspace change portal.
- B6 Sponsors must analyse the gathered evidence and data. The data-gathering exercise must take account of any relevant stakeholder feedback received by the sponsor in the period post-implementation.
- B7 At an agreed date, the sponsor must publish the analysis as a report on the airspace change portal and share it with the CAA. We will normally allow the sponsor up to three months to complete the report. This is to ensure that the evidence and data collected provide the information needed for the CAA to assess whether the changed airspace design reflects the Airspace Modernisation Strategy, that the volume of controlled airspace is the minimum

required to maintain a high standard of air safety and, subject to overriding national security or defence requirements, secures the most efficient use of airspace.

- B8 Following publication of the report by the sponsor, the CAA will normally review it within 12 weeks and publish our response.