









Meeting Minutes

Project Title	Space Hub Sutherland Airspace Change Proposal
Client	HIE/G&T
Purpose of Meeting	Design Principles Focus Group – Non-Aviation Stakeholders
Date of Meeting	9 October 2019
Held at	Kyle Centre, Tongue, Sutherland
Present	 Project Director, Space Hub Sutherland, HIE  Senior Project Manager, Space Hub Sutherland, HIE  Nuclear Decommissioning Authority (NDA)  Melness Grazing Committee  Melness Crofters Estate  Tongue, Melness and Skerray Community Council  Osprey CSL  Osprey CSL
Osprey Reference	71270/011
Issue	Draft B for HIE Review

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Glossary

Acronym	Meaning
ACP	Airspace Change Proposal
ATC	Air Traffic Control
ATM	Air traffic Management
CAA	Civil Aviation Authority
CAP	Civil Aviation Publication
CAT	Commercial Air Transport
FUA	Flexible Use of Airspace
ft	feet
GA	General Aviation
NOTAM	Notice to Airmen
ScACC	Scottish Area Control Centre, Prestwick

Meeting Summary

Item	Action
<p>Opening introductions</p> <p>██████████ welcomed participants, thanked them for their attendance and outlined the current plans for, and anticipated benefits of, the Space Hub Sutherland.</p> <p>██████████ then described the requirement for a Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) Airspace Change Proposal (ACP), in compliance with the regulatory guidance in Civil Aviation Publication (CAP) 1616 “<i>Airspace Design: Guidance on the regulatory process for changing airspace design including community engagement requirements</i>”. He explained that there is engagement with local communities throughout the airspace change process and that the Focus Group was a component of Stage 1 ‘DEFINE’. This informal engagement is the first of seven stages in the process that included four CAA Gateways, each of which had to be passed before moving on to the next Stage. The product of Stage 1 would be Design Principles.</p> <p>Although a timescale for the process was not laid down in CAP 1616, the ACP process could take around 24 months to complete. ██████████ mentioned that in the event that a launch from Sutherland was required before the ACP process was complete, there is a possibility that an application for temporary airspace could be made, which would run in parallel with the permanent application.</p> <p>It was stressed that the Focus Group was concerned solely with the airspace aspects of the Space Hub Sutherland programme and not, for example, with the planning application process, that was running concurrently, or with future applications for a Spaceport or Range Licence. Nevertheless, each of these elements is recognised as having a potential impact on the ACP and will be monitored accordingly. Furthermore, where assessments have already been made, on environmental considerations for example, there is potential to reuse this information to avoid duplication. This principle has been promoted by the UK government in their ‘Launch UK’ Regulation & Legislation Plenary events.</p> <p>Design Principle: The ACP will take into account other regulatory requirements associated with Space Hub Sutherland and, where appropriate, reuse existing assessments.</p>	
<p>Appropriateness of Level</p> <p>As part of his presentation, ██████████ described the CAA requirement to ‘scale’ the process by assigning a level to the ACP. Although a final decision would not be taken until step 2B, the CAA considered that this ACP would be a Level 1 change. He then gave attendees the chance to express their opinion on the appropriateness of the level allocated.</p>	

Item	Action
<p>There were no disagreements to the consideration made by the CAA that this ACP would be a Level 1.</p> <p>Open Forum Discussion</p> <p>Safety and Flexible Use of Airspace</p> <p>To begin the open forum discussion, [REDACTED] stated that the safety of other airspace users was paramount in the development of the proposal, which would likely involve the segregation of airspace to allow rockets to be launched, safely separated from other airspace users. Such airspace users comprised Commercial Air Transport (CAT), military aircraft and General Aviation (GA). GA is described as “all civil aviation operations other than scheduled air services and non-scheduled air transport operations for remuneration or hire”¹. Participants mentioned that hang gliders, microlights and other GA occasionally operated in the area and asked how they, and commercial aircraft, would be notified of planned rocket launches. [REDACTED] described the Notice to Airmen (NOTAM) system and explained that all pilots were expected to check the safety of their route before flight.</p> <p>In addition, CAT is controlled by NATS Air Traffic Controllers at the Scottish Area Control Centre (ScACC), Prestwick, who would be notified of rocket launches and a volume of airspace would be ‘closed’ to commercial and military aircraft and displayed on NATS’ systems.</p> <p>[REDACTED] asked about the impact on other aircraft of closing large areas of airspace to allow rocket launches? [REDACTED] briefly described the airspace management planning function at both national and European level. [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] showed aeronautical charts depicting existing airspace restrictions over the north of Scotland and briefly explained the high level principles of Flexible Use of Airspace (FUA), where airspace is ‘reserved’ for the minimum amount of time required to complete the required task.</p> <p>[REDACTED] explained that after launch, a rocket would quickly reach altitudes in excess of 300,000 ft and asked at what point commercial aircraft would be permitted to fly beneath the rocket’s track? SW commented that this would depend on the evidence provided in the safety case for the launch and may vary between launch service providers.</p> <p>Design Principle: In accordance with FUA principles, segregated special use airspace for rocket launch will be of the minimum dimensions and duration required to ensure the safety of third parties.</p> <p>In a follow on question, [REDACTED] asked whether, if segregated airspace had been established for an imminent launch, and there was a subsequent safety of life incident that required a Search and Rescue (SAR) or Air Ambulance flight to enter that airspace, if the launch would be postponed or</p>	


¹ [https://www.skybrary.aero/index.php/General_Aviation_\(GA\)](https://www.skybrary.aero/index.php/General_Aviation_(GA))

Item	Action
<p>cancelled? [redacted] confirmed that existing nationwide protocols were in place that would apply to the spaceport and, if life was endangered, the Range Safety Officer would suspend the rocket launch to allow emergency service aircraft to operate safely.</p> <p>It was noted that while the ACP would take account of the safety of airspace users, the issue of other licences would be responsible for the safety of uninvolved third parties on the ground.</p> <p>Design Principle: The safety of other airspace users is the paramount consideration of the ACP.</p> <p>Environment</p> <p>Launch site noise and the potential for night operations were both a concern for local residents, with anecdotal evidence provided of the noise generated by military bombardments conducted within the MoD Cape Wrath Danger Areas ranges to the west of the proposed space launch site.</p> <p>[redacted] was unsure whether the ACP environmental assessment would include the impact of noise from rocket launch, which will be regulated under the Space Industry Act (2018), rather than the Transport Act (2000), from which CAP 1616 is derived. He agreed to seek confirmation from the CAA on the division of responsibility between the various licence applications for environmental factors, including noise, under the Acts.</p> <p>Action: Osprey, on behalf of the HIE will confirm with the CAA which Environmental topics are in scope for the ACP and, where possible, avoid the duplication of assessments conducted under the existing environmental and planning framework.</p> <p>Conclusion</p> <p>[redacted] and [redacted] thanked all attendees for giving their time and for their engagement in the process. [redacted] reminded participants that questionnaire responses were due by 20th October 2019 and that minutes of this FG meeting would be published, with names redacted, on the CAA website (https://airspacechange.caa.co.uk/PublicProposalArea?pID=125).</p>	<p>Osprey</p>

Summary of Potential Design Principles arising from the meeting

No	Design Principle
1	The ACP will take into account other regulatory requirements associated with Space Hub Sutherland and, where appropriate, reuse existing assessments
2	In accordance with FUA principles, segregated special use airspace for rocket launch will be of the minimum dimensions and duration required to ensure the safety of third parties
3	The safety of other airspace users is the paramount consideration of the ACP

Summary of Actions

Action	Description	Status	Owner(s)	Due Date
1.1	Osprey, on behalf of the HIE will confirm with the CAA which Environmental topics are in scope for the ACP and, where possible, avoid the duplication of assessments conducted under the existing environmental and planning framework.	Open		04/11/19