
From:

Sent: 04 September 2019 15:00

To:

Subject: My Company - The Future of Manchester Airport Airspace

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The Future of Manchester Airport Airspace

This email is for: all Manchester based colleagues

Colleagues,

You may have heard the Airport Leadership Team and I talking about a national programme to modernise airspace across the whole of the UK.

This reflects the fact UK airspace is among the busiest in the world, having been designed for a different era. Our skies will become increasingly congested unless something is done about it.

As part of this, the Government requires us to lead a process of changing the airspace around Manchester Airport, which relates to flight paths used by aircraft arriving at or departing from Manchester Airport and flying at heights of up to 7,000ft.

This will involve us following a clear process, set out by our regulator the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA), called CAP1616, which will take more than two years.

I am writing to you today, as we prepare to embark on the first phase of this process and to give you a bit more background, as well as an overview of how we will be going about it.

What is Airspace Modernisation?

The UK Government has developed a programme to modernise airspace across the UK which covers all parts of the country and all sections of the sky. As part of a co-ordinated

national programme, all airports are now in the process of taking a fresh look at the paths that aircraft take below 7,000ft. National Air Traffic Control Services (NATS) is responsible for reviewing flight paths above 7,000ft.

Currently flight paths are not as efficient as they could be, and do not enable us to realise the benefits of modern aircraft, which have developed over time to be quicker and quieter, and to reduce emissions. Alongside this, some of the technology we use to operate our airspace system is out of date and needs replacing.

What does this mean for our Airport?

For Manchester Airport, this means specifically looking at aircraft arriving into, or departing at heights of up to 7,000ft.

The process of modernising this section of airspace will involve us working through a number of stages, which require us to do different things in order to comply with CAP1616.

The first of these “gateways” is called “Define,” which requires us to agree the broad principles we will adopt when we come to design new flight paths.

This is not a formal consultation, but we are required to develop a good understanding of the principles that matter most to the people and organisations affected by our operations.

As you know, we have a long history of talking to and working with the communities we serve, and our approach to this project will be no different.

During this first phase – known as step 1B – we will be holding a series of focus groups, organised by independent research organisation YouGov. They will involve a wide range of stakeholders from surrounding communities to ensure that we get a representative view on what matters to people when we are designing the options for future flight paths.

They will be asked a series of questions to help us gather their views on the “principles” we should consider, things like whether to avoid built-up areas or rural areas, or whether paths should be concentrated or spread out.

It is also important to us that anyone who is interested or has a view can join the conversation, and we have therefore created a document outlining our approach and asking people questions we would like to consider at this stage. This is on our dedicated website; www.manchesterairport.co.uk/futureairspace and we have an online form where people can answer the questions; www.manchesterairport.co.uk/designquestions

The document also includes further background and a series of FAQs, which you may find useful if you have further questions yourselves, or if you are asked about the process.

Regards

Andrew Cowan

Chief Executive Officer, Manchester Airport



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