

Gatwick Airport Northern Runway Project Airspace Change Assigned Level Decision

CAP 1908

A large, abstract graphic composed of overlapping, semi-transparent blue shapes in various shades, ranging from light cyan to deep navy blue, creating a dynamic, layered effect that fills the bottom two-thirds of the page.

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Chapter 1

Executive Summary

Background

1. Gatwick Airport currently operates in a single runway configuration, predominantly using the southern runway (08R/26L). The northern runway (08L/26R) is used when the southern runway is temporarily non-operational owing to maintenance or incident. Both runways share the same conventional Standard Instrument Departures (SIDs).
2. In July 2019 Gatwick Airport Ltd announced its intention to prepare a planning application (Development Consent Order (DCO)) to bring into operation the routine use of its existing northern runway (currently the standby / emergency runway) at the same time as its existing southern runway.
3. Whilst not a requirement of the CAP 1616 Process, owing to significant public interest surrounding any developments at Gatwick Airport and the unusual nature of the proposal the CAA has decided to publish its detailed reasons (this document) and the ACP Level assigned to the proposal after the Assessment Meeting. Details on Levels assigned to Airspace Change Proposals (ACPs) to scale the process can be found in Table 2 of CAP 1616 located [here](#).

Objective of the Proposal

4. The proposal seeks to amend Gatwick Airport's entry in the Aeronautical Information Publication (AIP) Part 3 – Aerodromes (AD) at 'EGKK AD 2.20 Local Aerodrome Regulations, 6. Use of Runways'. This entry currently states that the northern runway will only be used when the southern runway is non-operational for maintenance or incident. It also states that the northern runway cannot be used simultaneously with the southern runway due to insufficient separation between the two runways.
5. To achieve the required separation between the two runways and conform with runway certification regulations¹, the proposal seeks to move the runway centreline datum for the

¹ EASA Specification CS ADR-DSN.B.050

- northern runway (08L/26R) 12 metres to the north. This will require an amendment to AIP Part 3 EGKK AD 2.12 Runway Physical Characteristics. It does not seek to change any Standard Instrument Departures or Standard Terminal Arrival Routes or any other aspect of airspace design.
6. Prior to amending the AIP, infrastructure works are required to physically move the northern runway 12 metres to the north. The impact of these works may require additional AIP Part 3 entries to EGKK AD 2.9 Surface Movement Guidance and Control System and Markings; AD 2.10 Aerodrome Obstacles; AD 2.11 Meteorological Information provided; AD 2.13 Declared Distances; and AD 2.14 Approach and Runway Lighting, and associated charts.
 7. It must be stressed that the objective of this proposal is not to commence dual runway operations, it is solely to amend Gatwick Airport's AIP entry relating to runway use and centreline datum and amend the recorded physical distance between the two runways. It does not approve any physical works or change to operations.
 8. This proposal is one element which facilitates a potential move towards dual runway operations being a possibility in the future, it does not authorise them. The introduction of dual runway operations at Gatwick Airport is a Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project as detailed in Section 23 of the [Planning Act 2008](#), and as such the airport is required to submit a Development Consent Order (DCO) to authorise changes to the physical infrastructure and use. The DCO process is front-loaded with a number of pre-application consultation requirements and will be subject to environmental assessment. Gatwick Airport are in the DCO pre-application stage but have confirmed their intention for public consultation on their DCO in 2020. Further information on Gatwick Airport's Future Plans can be found on their website [here](#), where the links to their DCO consultation webpages will also be published in due course.
 9. In addition a separate [ACP](#) from Gatwick Airport regarding the redesign of departure and arrival routes and procedures which is part of the much larger Future Airspace Strategy Implementation South (FASI-S) development is currently in the Develop and Assess stage². This ACP is a Level 1 and will also be subject to public consultation and environmental assessment.

² CAA CAP 1616 Airspace Change - Stage 2 (of 7) Develop and Assess

10. The DCO proposal seeks to physically move the northern runway 12 metres to the north to achieve the required safety separation between the two runways and this proposal seeks to update the AIP to reflect those physical changes. Whilst in use when the main southern runway (08R/26L) is non-operational, the associated arrivals/departures from the northern runway will be shift laterally by 12 metres. A displacement of movements may be considered a Planned and Permanent Redistribution (PPR) of air traffic and can be subject to an Airspace Change Proposal in its own right, as detailed in CAP 1616 Part 2. However, Government policy states that only certain types of PPR, known as a 'relevant PPR', which have the potential to have a particular noise impact on the ground should be subject to the CAP1616 ACP process and a CAA decision. The minimum requirement for a relevant PPR is a lateral shift of flight track greater than 300 metres at 1000 feet altitude. Therefore, this proposal is not a 'relevant PPR' as defined by Government policy, as the air traffic lateral movement is significantly less than the minimum distance required. Additional information on what is considered a 'relevant PPR' can be found in CAP 1616 at Appendix I.

Chapter 2

Decision Process and Analysis

Chronology of Proposal Process

Statement of Need and Assessment Meeting

11. Gatwick Airport Ltd submitted a Statement of Need (SoN) on 12 November 2019. An Assessment Meeting was held on 15 January 2020 at which Gatwick Airport Ltd (GAL) outlined the following drivers for the ACP:
 - In July 2019 GAL announced its intention, in accordance with Government Policy on making best use of existing runways ('Beyond the Horizon – The Future of UK Aviation' June 2018) to prepare a Development Consent Order to bring into operation the routine use of its existing standby/emergency runway at the same time as the existing main runway.
 - To enable dependant dual runway operations, it was proposed the northern runway centreline datum be repositioned 12 metres to the north to ensure European Aviation Safety Agency specifications for required centreline spacing is adhered to.
 - To allow for the future application for dual runway operations and the repositioning of the runway centreline datum, amendments to Gatwick Airport's AIP entry are required.
12. The CAA determined that the proposal was in scope of the ACP process but elected not to provide an indicative Level at the meeting as they required more time to assess this in detail. A Decision Letter (this document) was created detailing the CAA's decision on the assigned ACP Level. Minutes of the Assessment Meeting together with a copy of the slide presentation were published on the CAA Airspace Change Portal.

CAA Analysis of the Material Provided

13. As a record of our analysis of this material the CAA has produced this Decision Letter which will be published on the CAA Airspace Change Portal.

CAA Consideration of Factors Material to our Decision

Explanation of statutory duties

14. The CAA's statutory duties are laid down in Section 70 of the Transport Act 2000.

Conclusions in respect of safety

15. The CAA's primary duty is to maintain a high standard of safety in the provision of air traffic services and this takes priority over all other duties.³

16. In this respect, with due regard to safety in the provision of air traffic services, the CAA is satisfied that the proposals maintain a high standard of safety for the following reasons:

- a. Movement of the northern runway centreline datum is in accordance with European Aviation Safety Agency specifications.
- b. Operations will continue in their current form with the northern runway only being used when the main southern runway is non-operational owing to maintenance or incident.
- c. Displacement of the northern runway is only 12 metres from its present location enabling the current conventional SIDS to continue to be used.
- d. Displacement for arrivals/departures to the northern runway is not a 'relevant PPR'.

Conclusions in respect of securing the most efficient use of airspace

17. The CAA is required to secure the most efficient use of the airspace consistent with the safe operation of aircraft and the expeditious flow of air traffic.⁴

18. The CAA considers that the most efficient use of airspace is defined as 'secures the greatest number of movements of aircraft through a specific volume of airspace over a period of time so that the best use is made of the limited resource of UK airspace'.

19. The CAA considers the expeditious flow of air traffic to involve each aircraft taking the shortest amount of time for its flight. It is concerned with individual flights.

20. In this respect, the CAA is satisfied that the proposal offers no change to current operations in regard to efficient use of airspace.

³ Transport Act 2000, Section 70(1).

⁴ Transport Act 2000, Section 70(2)(a).

Conclusions in respect of taking into account the Secretary of State's guidance to the CAA on environmental objectives

21. In performing the statutory duties, the CAA is obliged to take account of the extant guidance provided by the Secretary of State,⁵ namely the 2017 Guidance to the CAA on Environmental Objectives.
22. The proposal does not look to increase aircraft movements or alter traffic patterns aside from a 12 metre lateral shift to aircraft departure/arrival points to the northern runway. The shift will not be differentiable from ordinary traffic dispersion of aircraft utilising a conventional SID and there will therefore be no change to tracks over the ground. In this respect, the environmental impact relating to this proposal is assessed as nil.
23. It must be stressed that the objective of this proposal is not to commence dual runway operations or increase aircraft movements, it is solely to amend Gatwick Airport's AIP entry relating to runway use and centreline datum and amend the recorded physical distance between the two runways. It does not approve any physical works as these are a Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project and require Gatwick Airport to submit a DCO. It is the DCO submission which will apply to physically move the runway 12 metres to the north, and the DCO process which has the public consultation requirements and is subject to environmental assessment. This ACP is solely seeking to update the AIP to reflect the DCO changes if they take place and after they are approved.

Conclusions in respect of aircraft operators and owners

24. The CAA is required to satisfy the requirements of operators and owners of all classes of aircraft.⁶
25. In this respect, the CAA is content that the lateral movement to the northern runway (08L/26R) and 12 metre displacement of departures/ arrivals to this runway does not impact the current requirements of owners and operators of all classes of aircraft.

Conclusions in respect of the interests of any other person

26. The CAA is required to take account of the interests of any person (other than an owner or operator of an aircraft) in relation to the use of any particular airspace or the use of airspace generally.

⁵ Transport Act 2000, Section 70(2)(d)

⁶ Transport Act 2000, Section 70(2)(b).

27. In this respect, the CAA considers that the impact of the proposal will not be discernible to other persons as there will be no change to aircraft tracks over the ground.
28. As already stated a maximum displacement of aircraft by 12 metres is not a relevant PPR as defined by Government Policy, and it is significantly contained within the swathe of the conventional SIDs for this runway. A change to tracks over the ground of this distance will not be discernible as this is less than the length of a single aircraft wing of the most popular aircraft types operating out of Gatwick⁷. With the normal effects of wind and pilot/aircraft input taken into consideration, variations of this small a magnitude will already be present today; therefore, it is the opinion of the CAA that in this instance there is no change to tracks over the ground.

Integrated operation of ATS

29. The CAA is required to facilitate the integrated operation of air traffic services provided by or on behalf of the Armed Forces of the Crown and other air traffic services.⁸
30. In this respect, the CAA is content that the proposal will not impact the operational requirements of the MoD or impact on other Air Traffic Service Providers.

Interests of national security

31. The CAA is required to take account of the impact any airspace change may have upon matters of national security.⁹
32. In this respect, the CAA is satisfied that the proposal has no impact on national security.

International obligations

33. The CAA is required to take account of any international obligations entered into by the UK and notified by the Secretary of State.
34. In this respect, the CAA is satisfied that the proposal has no impact on international obligations.

⁷ Airbus A320 and Boeing 737 wingspan 35.8 metres; Airbus A319 and A321 wingspan 34 metres.

⁸ Transport Act 2000, Section 70(2)(e).

⁹ Transport Act 2000, Section 70(2)(f).

Chapter 3

CAA's Regulatory Decision

CAA's Regulatory Decision

CAA's Regulatory Decision

35. Noting the anticipated impacts on the material factors we are bound to take into account, and that the proposal will not alter traffic patterns, we have decided to assign the Gatwick Airport Northern Runway Project Airspace Change Proposal as a Level 0 ACP.
36. The CAA is satisfied that in accordance with the requirements of CAP 1616¹⁰ as a Level 0 ACP there is no requirement for the sponsor to conduct consultation for this proposal. The CAA notes that public consultation and environmental assessment will be required for the DCO application and the Level 1 FASI-S ACP.
37. It must be stressed that the objective of this proposal is not to commence dual runway operations or increase aircraft movements, it is solely to amend Gatwick Airport's AIP entry relating to runway use and centreline datum and amend the recorded physical distance between the two runways. It does not approve any physical works as these are a Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project and require Gatwick Airport to submit a DCO. It is the DCO submission which will apply to physically move the runway 12 metres to the north, and the DCO process which has the public consultation requirements and is subject to environmental assessment. This ACP is solely seeking to update the AIP to reflect the DCO changes if they take place and after they are approved.

Conditions

38. The sponsor will provide data required by the CAA to confirm regulations, aeronautical data quality and safety assurance are adhered to when implementing the change. This includes, but is not limited to, the 5 yearly Instrument Flight Procedure (IFP) review of the runway 08L/26R SIDs and Instrument Approach Procedures (IAPs) being conducted in accordance with CAP 785 prior to reintroduction of the newly located northern runway (08L/26R). This is to ensure the obstacle environment of the IFPs is reassessed for the amended IFP obstacle protection areas, and the 08L/26R RNAV IAP waypoint

¹⁰ CAP 1616, Appendix A, A14.

coordinates are amended as required for the 12 metre offset. The Gatwick Airport Aerodrome AIP entry and associated charts are to be updated accordingly.

Period Regulatory Decision Remains Valid for Implementation

39. The ACP is to be implemented in accordance with the target date of AIRAC 01/2026, 22 January 2026. The sponsor may request to amend this implementation date.
40. If this decision has not been implemented by 23 January 2029, it will cease to be valid unless the sponsor requests and the CAA accepts an extension to that date, subject to such conditions or modifications as the CAA sees fit.

Implementation

41. Implementation of the AIP amendments can be notified by Gatwick Airport Ltd to AIS through a single AIRAC cycle. However, the AIP amendment cannot occur until after the physical infrastructure changes; which are subject to planning process and construction projects. The sponsor does not anticipate this occurring until AIRAC 01/2026 and will become effective on 22 January 2026. Owing to the significant lead in time this date is subject to change.
42. The revised AIP entry will become effective on 22 January 2026 unless amended. Any queries are to be directed to the SARG Project Leader via airspace.policy@caa.co.uk.

Post Implementation Review

43. In accordance with CAP 1616 a Level 0 ACP is not subject to a Post Implementation Review.

Civil Aviation Authority

25 March 2020