

MAG Press Release

London Stansted begins initial phase of national airspace upgrade

02 March 2020



As part of the Government's Airspace Modernisation Programme, London Stansted has begun the process of re-designing the network of corridors and flightpaths that aircraft use when travelling to and from the airport.

The Government has requested that all UK airports review how new technology can best be used to make the airspace that they use more efficient.

Like the road and rail networks, airspace is a critical part of the UK's national infrastructure but much of its design has remained unchanged since the 1950s. In addition, new technology such as satellite navigation systems is now available which has the potential to make more efficient use of airspace, helping to reduce the need for stacking and delays and helping to cut emissions.

All UK airports are responsible for reviewing their operations up to an altitude of 7,000 feet, with the UK's national air traffic service provider, NATS, looking at aircraft routings above that altitude. The process is being overseen by the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA).

This week, the airport will host a series of focus groups including members of the public, aviation industry, local businesses, elected representatives, special interest groups, national organisations and community representatives who will be providing their views on the broad principles that Stansted should follow when designing any change to its airspace. Examples include whether it is better to concentrate flights over one area or spread them out more evenly, and how it should account for other airspace users such as gliders and drones.

A full public consultation on Stansted's future airspace design will begin in 2021.

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When delays start to build up on our roads or rail network, the impact it can have on the ground is all too obvious. It's easy to forget that we have a similar network in the sky, which our airlines and other airspace users rely on to get from A to B.

This upgrade of the UK's airspace is long overdue and will help make flying much more efficient and environmentally friendly. But we understand the impact aircraft can have on those people living near an airport, which is why we are undertaking a thorough programme of engagement to understand what matters most to our neighbours.

This initial phase will help us frame the way we develop our proposals, which will be subject to full public consultation next year. The views of stakeholders and local residents are central to this process, and anybody who wishes to take part is welcome to submit their views.

Nick Millar, Operations Director at London Stansted Airport

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Proposed timeline for the airspace modernisation programme:

2020 Gather early views on design principles

2021 Full public consultation

2022 Submit updated proposal to CAA

Early 2023 CAA to assess proposal for Stansted's airspace modernisation

Late 2023 The earliest new flight paths could start to be introduced

The airport is working with the leading market research company YouGov to gather a representative selection of views as part of the early stages of the process. Anyone who wishes to contribute to this stage of the process can do so by visiting the airport's dedicated future airspace website at

<https://www.stanstedairport.com/futureairspace/> where further details about the programme, including the questions being asked and how to respond, can be found. A short video explaining more about the project is available to view on YouTube: **<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kvAlvtKFTEQ&t=2s>**

Bishop's Stortford Independent Press Release

Stansted Airport prepares for 'once-in-a-lifetime' chance to redraw flight paths

By Sinead Corr - sinead.corr@liffemedia.co.uk

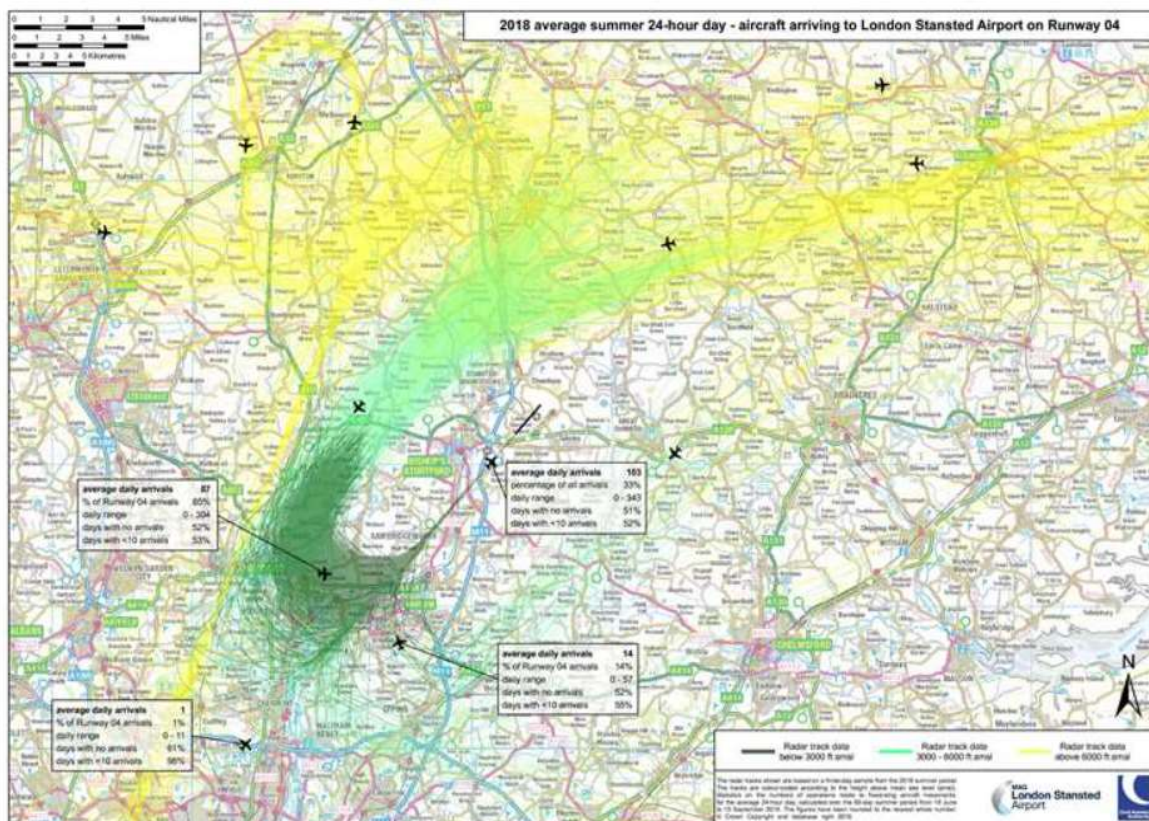
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The first overhaul of flight paths in more than 50 years could have profound implications for those living around Stansted Airport.

The Department for Transport (DfT) and the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) are working together to deliver quicker, quieter and cleaner journeys, extra resilience and more capacity by switching ground-based radar for satellite systems.

At the latest meeting of Stansted Airport watchdog STACC (Stansted Airport Consultative Committee), a representative of the DfT told members that the new Government was eager to complete the process and deliver benefits both for airlines and for the public.

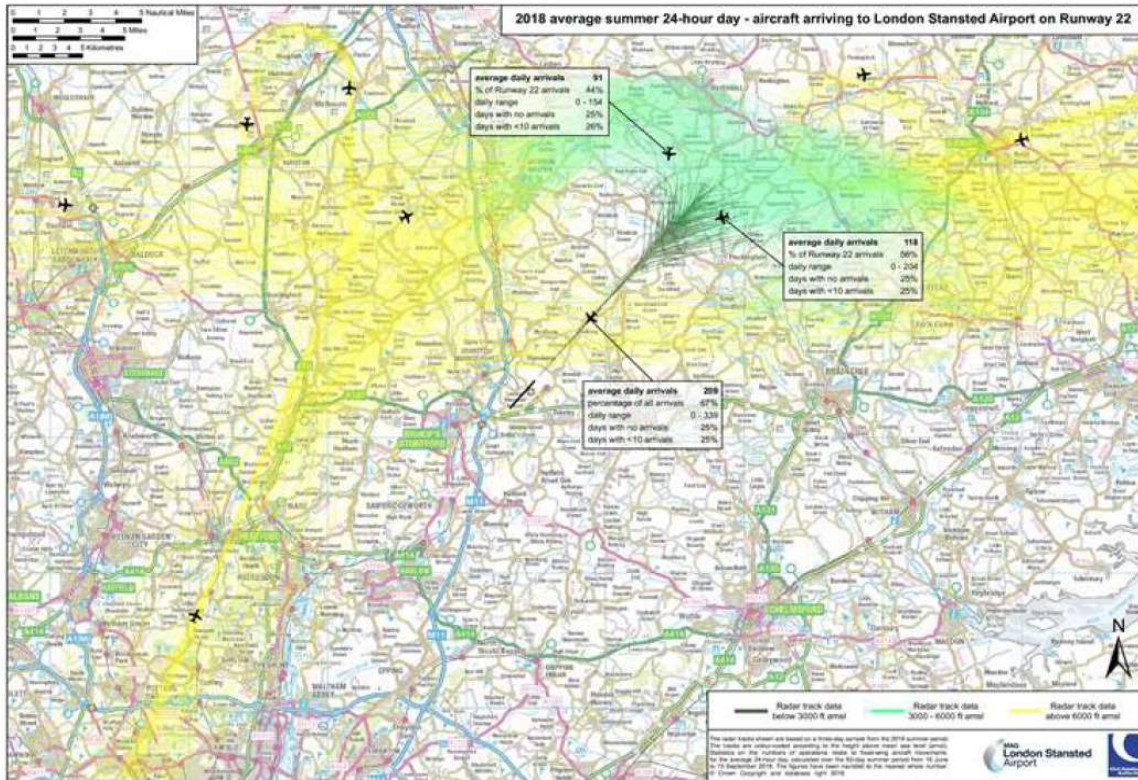


Arrivals towards the north east (28071814)

NATS, the UK's main air navigation service provider, will take the lead in formulating flight paths for aircraft flying above 7,000ft, but at lower altitudes for landings and departures, airports like Stansted will drive the strategy.

Neil Robinson, group corporate social responsibility and future airspace director for Stansted owner Manchester Airports Group (MAG), said: "We're moving away from traditional technology from ground-based navigation in favour of satellite guidance, and that gives us a lot more choice.

He stressed Stansted was at the very start of the process and would be using focus groups to establish the principles for the review.



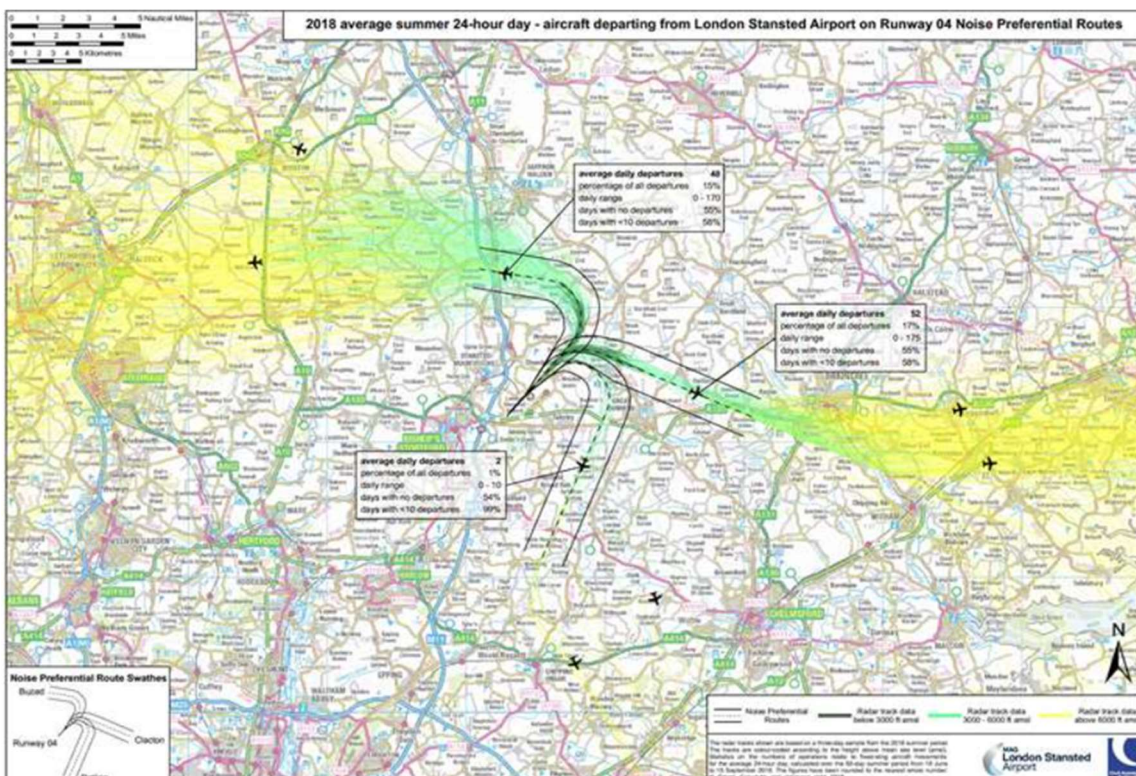
Arrivals towards the south west (28071812)

Key initial questions could include whether it is better to overfly a greater number of homes to share the noise burden or it is more environmentally friendly – reducing fuel consumption and emissions – to use the most direct route for all arrivals and departures, even if that concentrates disturbance.

Once those guiding principles have been established, a long list of options will be drawn up and evaluated to form a short list from which the preferred option will emerge. There will then be extensive public consultation.

Mr Robinson said: “At this stage, we literally have a clean sheet of paper.”

He anticipated the first phase would be completed by the end of June; subject to CAA approval, the design stage can then begin. Plans should be ready for scrutiny by residents and other stakeholders in 2021 and they would be implemented in 2023.

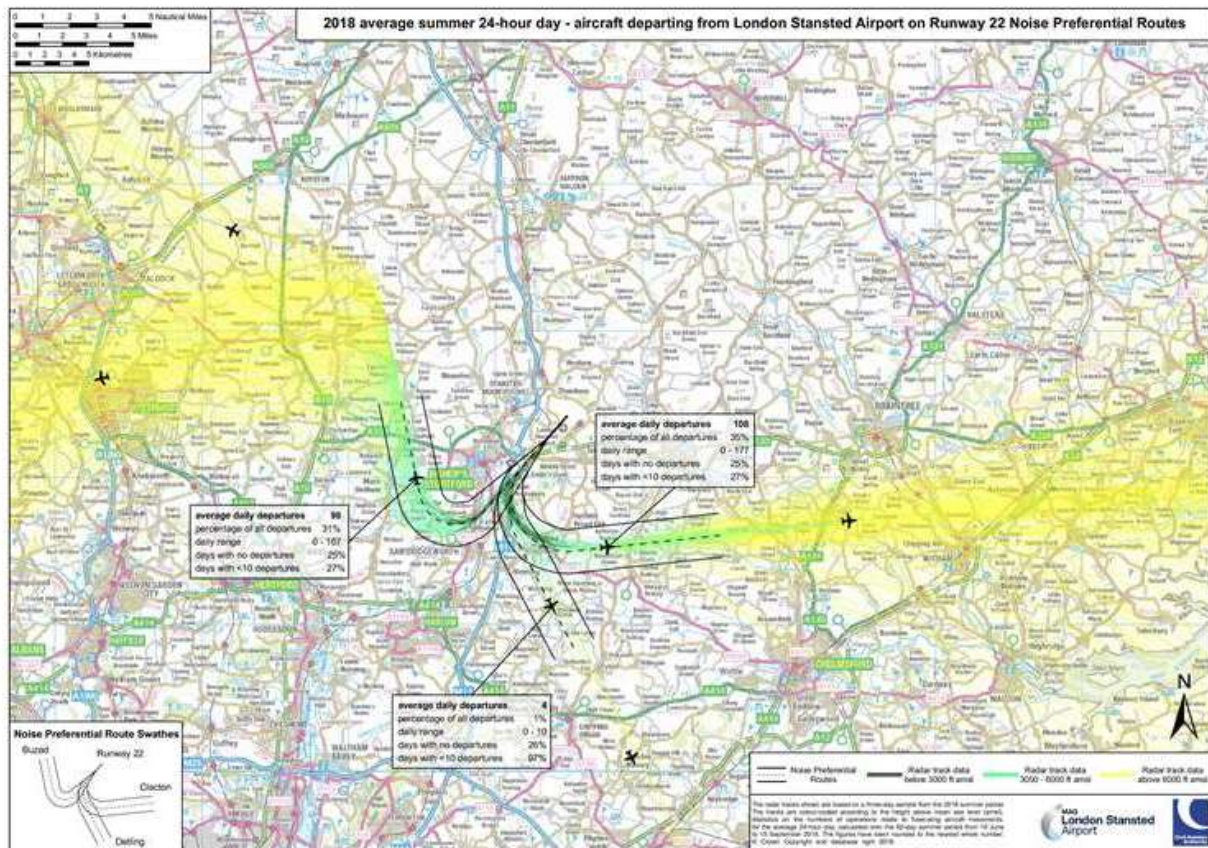


Easterly NPR for departures (28071831)

Stansted was the first airport in the UK to employ PBN – precision-based navigation – which forces aircraft to follow a narrowly defined line within the existing flight paths to cut noise.

Cllr Danny Purton, a member of Harlow District Council, said: “Is this a win-win or will there be winners and losers? We must be careful not to cover up any issues which could be negative and look at what is the possible downside of all of this.”

Mr Robinson said there would have to be a trade-off to get the best balance. “The whole philosophy of this is that the modern way of flying is better because it gives us lots of choices, but you have to look at how we use them. Further down the road, it will be clear what the trade-offs are.”



Westerly NPR for departures (28071820)

Stop Stansted Expansion’s Brian Ross said that it was a long-standing convention that noise was the priority below 7,000ft while carbon emissions took precedence at higher altitudes. He said that flight paths should not be changed unless there were clear and compelling reasons to do so and there was no provision for compensation for anyone adversely affected by changes.

Mr Richardson said there was a choice between changing flight paths only if there was no other choice or “a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to design what would be the very best flight paths with the best technology”.

Stansted currently has four flight paths: departing on the easterly or skirting Bishop’s Stortford on the westerly noise preferential routes and arriving towards the north-east and south-west.

Bishop's Stortford Independent Press Release

Have your say on changes to the airspace above Stansted Airport

👤 By Sinead Corr - sinead.corr@iliffemedia.co.uk

🕒 **Published:** 16:27, 12 March 2020 | **Updated:** 20:54, 30 March 2020

A once-in-a-lifetime chance to change the flightpaths in and out of Stansted Airport has begun.

Manchester Airports Group has set up a digital portal so residents and other stakeholders can track the progress of proposals and have their say.

Neil Robinson, director of sustainability, is leading the process which he hopes will provide benefits for the community, commercial interests and climate change.

"Ultimately we are doing this with the interests of our neighbours and stakeholders in mind. It gives us an opportunity to reduce noise, improve environmental impacts and make services more reliable for all.

"What we want from the process is the same as the other interested parties and what the community wants as well.

"We will be really clear and even-handed in the process and make sure people can understand everything we do."

As part of the **Airspace Modernisation Programme**, the Government has requested that all UK airports review how new technology can best be used to make the airspace that they use more efficient.

Much of its design has remained unchanged since the 1950s, but innovations such as satellite navigation systems rather than ground-based radar systems can reduce the need for stacking and delays and help to cut emissions.

All UK airports are responsible for reviewing their operations up to an altitude of 2,133.6m (7,000 feet) with the UK's national air traffic service provider, NATS, looking at aircraft routings above that altitude. The process is being overseen by the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) and it will be the final arbiter of any changes made at Stansted and elsewhere.

This month, the airport has been hosting focus groups, including members of the public, aviation industry, local businesses, elected representatives, special interest groups, national organisations and community representatives.

They have been asked for their views on the broad principles that Stansted should follow when designing any change to its airspace.

However, Mr Robinson was keen to emphasise that anyone who wishes to contribute to this stage of the process can do so by visiting the airport's new dedicated future airspace website at <https://www.stanstedairport.com/futureairspace/>

Currently, protocols dictate that when aircraft fly below 1,219m (4,000ft) the primary concern is creating the least amount of noise for residents while above 2,133.6m (7,000ft) reducing emissions is the target.

New technology will be able to reduce the 3km (9,842ft) swathe currently flown by departing aircraft to just 400m (1,312ft) if the consensus is that concentrating flight paths is the best option for the greater good.

The review is also set to resolve conflicts with aircraft departing from other airports, such as Luton, which currently causes some flights to remain lower for longer.

Mr Robinson said: "The thing we should not lose sight of is there is a lot of opportunities. If we make the right choices, there should be benefits for all."

increase capacity but Mr Robinson stressed Stansted's current airspace can accommodate its growth to 43m passengers a year.

Instead, the changes will mean fewer delays. "It's not about growing the airport, it's about taking advantage of the new technology to do things in a better way," he said.

Crucially, Mr Robinson said that along with green aviation technologies including sustainable aviation fuels and electric flight, the airspace changes could have a key role in plans to **cut aviation's net carbon emissions** to zero by 2050, in line with UK Government targets, while accommodating 70% growth in passenger numbers by the same date.

Mr Robinson said: "I want people to get involved in this process. If you get involved, you will understand what's going on and you will be reassured."