

CAP1616 ACP Restart: Sponsor Evidence & Justification for Restart of a Paused ACP

Sponsor: Aberdeen International Airport Ltd

ACP ID: ACP-2019-82

ACP Title: Aberdeen Airport Airspace Change

Link to CAA Policy Statement: [Guidance for Sponsors](#)

Background

Aberdeen International Airport Limited (AIAL) took the decision to pause ACP-2019-82 in April 2020 as the devastating effects of the COVID-19 pandemic and its associated impact on the demand for aviation became clear. Prior to the pandemic, Aberdeen International Airport Ltd was participating in the FASI programme with 20 UK airports and NATS to develop a Masterplan for airspace modernisation. AIAL's ACP was paused (alongside the other Masterplan proposals) when the pandemic hit and the airport's ability to continue investing in the airspace change was severely restricted.

Some existing ground-based navigation aids, to which a number of procedures at Aberdeen are attached are being withdrawn by NATS En-Route Limited (NERL) as part of the national modernisation programme. This means that any procedures reliant on those conventional aids are required to be updated to remove the reliance.

Following the announcement in March of 2021 from The DfT and CAA of short-term financial support for the next phase of the FASI programme (see statement below), AIAL intends to restart ACP-2019-82 in July 2021.

Statement from DfT and CAA as Airspace Modernisation Co-sponsors (March 2021): *"We are pleased to announce that we will be providing funding to enable FASI airspace change sponsors through a grant administered by the CAA. This will enable sponsors to continue through Stage 2 of the airspace change process (ACP) known as CAP1616 as part of the government's commitment to supporting restart in the aviation sector and decarbonisation". "The investment has been made available to airports involved in the Airspace Modernisation Strategy to ensure this vital project remains on track, reflecting the government's commitment to modernising the airways while supporting the aviation sector as we recover from the pandemic".*

Sponsors ACP restart proposal

Q1) Have there been any changes to the issue or opportunity in the Statement of Need, the operating environment or geographical area in which the ACP is being developed?		
1A) Changes to the issue or opportunity in the Statement of Need	No	Confirmation statement There are no material changes to the issues and opportunities that the ACP is intended to address that would require AIAL to revisit the Statement of Need (SoN). The (SoN) describes that the ACP is taking place to enable the UK to modernise its airspace by 2025 in accordance with the Future Airspace Strategy Implementation North (FASI

		<p>North) programme. This includes the introduction of PBN routes in order to meet regulatory requirements and to remove the reliance on outdated ground-based navigation aids by introducing procedures that are designed to advanced Global Navigation Satellite Systems (GNSS) standards.</p> <p>AIAL will consider opportunities to introduce operational and environmental benefits in the form of reduced fuel burn, CO₂ emissions and effects of aircraft noise. The ACP will support a sustainable recovery in traffic levels following the pandemic and at the same time enable a review of the airport's Controlled Airspace (CAS) boundaries.</p> <p>The airport understands that whilst the Airspace Modernisation Strategy (AMS) is expected to undergo a review to create a new regulatory framework in line with UK law, not EU law, the FASI programme is expected to deliver as close as possible to the original timescales. This is because the fundamental objective of airspace modernisation, namely to enable sustainable growth whilst meeting UK Net Zero ambitions for the aviation sector is a key UK policy objective.</p> <p>These issues remain to be addressed if the airspace is to be fit for the future.</p> <p>The SoN also references increases in traffic growth and whilst the current pandemic has seen traffic levels decrease, the expectation is for them to return to pre-covid levels and beyond.</p> <p>Whilst EU 2018-1048 referred to within the SoN is no longer a specific driver for the Airspace Change because the legislation no longer applies in the UK post-Brexit, the objective of the AIAL Statement of Need is also driven by several similar outcomes that relate to the deployment of PBN procedures:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduce RNP APCH (LNAV, LNAV/VNAV and LPV) procedures to runways 34 and 16. (AIAL acknowledges the current inability to introduce LPV procedures requiring use of the EGNOS (or similar) network in the UK.) • Redefine the ADN conventional hold with one based on PBN • Remove Aberdeen's reliance on the ADN and PTH VORs • Take the opportunity to review existing controlled airspace boundaries, classifications and Flexible Use of Airspace (FUA) requirements. <p>We understand that the objectives of EU 2018-1048 and ICAO A37-11 are likely to be a requirement of future UK legislation in due course.</p>
1B) Changes to the operating environment or geographical area	No	<p>Confirmation statement</p> <p>The operating environment or geographical area in which the ACP is being developed has not changed.</p>

		AIAL considers that the airspace Design Principles developed through extensive stakeholder engagement during Stage 1b of the ACP remain a comprehensive and balanced framework to guide the upcoming airspace options development and assessment activities.
Q2) Have there been any changes to law, government policy or CAA requirements that would affect the development of an ACP or parts of an ACP?		
2A) Changes to law or government policy	No	<p>Confirmation statement</p> <p>There are no material changes to the issues and opportunities that the ACP is intended to address that would require AIAL to revisit the Statement of Need (SoN).</p> <p>With respect to the European PBN-IR which was a driver for airspace change but which is no longer applicable to UK aviation, AIAL understands that there is still a need to remain compliant with the potential future UK embodiment of this policy that is currently subject to a Government consultation</p>
2B) Changes to CAA requirements	No	<p>Confirmation statement</p> <p>AIAL is not aware of any changes to the CAA's requirements linked to the development of ACP-2019-82 that have arisen since the proposal was paused.</p> <p>The CAP1616 process has recently been updated to version 4 on 1st March 2021. AIAL has reviewed the amendments made as part of the v4 update and find no material impact on the work conducted on ACP-2019-82 to reach Stage 2a. It is noted that the CAA recommend that AIAL consider any relevant best practice published by ICCAN.</p> <p>Similarly, the recent publication of CAP2091, Policy on Minimum Standard for Noise Modelling, in January 2021, has no material impact on the work conducted on the ACP. AIAL understand the need to meet the requirements of this policy going forward.</p>

Q3) Have there been any changes to the list of identified stakeholders?		
3A) Stakeholder changes	No	<p>Confirmation statement</p> <p>AIAL has reviewed the stakeholders engaged during Stage 1 of the ACP and found no required changes to the list of identified stakeholders. AIAL have not identified any additional stakeholders who require engagement since this ACP paused. However, some key industry stakeholders are no longer present. In addition, following local elections, there have been some changes to MSPs and councillors. These changes will be reflected in an updated version of the engagement plan.</p> <p>As part of the ACP restart process, a short stakeholder engagement exercise will take place to re-confirm all points of contact and advise representatives of AIAL's approach to remobilising the proposal as part of the FASI programme and Airspace Masterplan process</p>