Aviation Focus Group – Record of Discussion

Project Title	Exeter Airport Airspace Change Proposal
Client	Exeter and Devon Airport Ltd
Purpose of Meeting	Stage 2 Design Options Focus Group (Aviation)
Date of Meeting	8th December 2021
Held at	Exeter Airport
Present	[redacted] Airport Consultative Committee (ACC) [redacted] Hangar 52 Resident, Exeter Airport [redacted] Devon & Somerset Gliding Club (DSGC) [redacted] Farway Common Airfield [redacted] TUI [redacted] National Police Air Service (NPAS) [redacted] Dartmoor Gliding Club [redacted] DSGC [redacted] Bath, Wilts & North Dorset Gliding Club [redacted] Exeter Airport Managing Director [redacted] Exeter Airport Air Traffic Services Manager [redacted] Exeter Airport Management Systems Coordinator [redacted] Osprey CSL [redacted] Osprey CSL
Via Microsoft Teams	[redacted] NATS [redacted] Royal Naval Air Station (RNAS) Yeovilton [redacted] General Aviation Alliance (GAA) [redacted] DSGC [redacted] DSGC [redacted] Devon Strut [redacted] NATS [redacted] Defence Airspace and Air Traffic Management (DAATM)– Airspace Strategy [redacted] British Gliding Association (BGA)

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Glossary

Acronym	Meaning
ACC	Airport Consultative Committee
ACP	Airspace Change Proposal
ADS-B	Automatic Dependent Surveillance–Broadcast
AIS	Aeronautical Information System
ATC	Air Traffic Control
BGA	British Gliding Association
CAP	Civil Aviation Publication
CAS	Controlled Airspace
CDA	Continuous Descent Approach
CTA	Control Area
DAATM	Defence Airspace and Air Traffic Management
DSGC	Devon & Somerset Gliding Club
EC	Electronic Conspicuity
ft	feet
FUA	Flexible Use of Airspace
GA	General Aviation
GAA	General Aviation Alliance
IAF	Initial Approach Fix
IAP	Instrument Approach Procedure
ICAO	International Civil Aviation Organisation
MOD	Ministry of Defence

Acronym	Meaning
NATS	formerly National Air Traffic Services
NPAS	National Police Air Service
RMZ	Radio Mandatory Zone
RN	Royal Navy
RNAS	Royal Naval Air Station
SID	Standard Instrument Departure
SSR	Secondary Surveillance Radar
TMZ	Transponder Mandatory Zone

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Meeting Summary

Item
Opening Introductions [redacted] welcomed everyone and thanked them for their attendance. He then provided an introduction which described the purpose of the Focus Group and outlined the current operations at Exeter Airport, including the impact of the current Covid-19 pandemic and the expected operational recovery. [redacted] then described the reasons why Exeter Airport is seeking an airspace change before [redacted] provided further information on the Civil Aviation Publication (CAP) 1616 process and described the comprehensive list of options that had previously been shared with stakeholders.
Open Forum Discussion Question – how does the proposed Standard Instrument Departure (SID) routes differ from the routes flown today? **Our Response:** the routes are very similar to those that are flown today with airways joining points being very similar. Question – how do the safety incidents compare to other airports of a similar size? It would be useful to understand the safety issues at Exeter Airport. **Our Response:** we do not have that information readily available. Exeter Airport is the second largest airport in the UK that does not have any Controlled Airspace (CAS). Question – at what height and ranges from the airport did the incidents occur? It would help to determine which of the options are more appropriate. **Our Response:** again, we do not have that information readily available, but it can be plotted on a map for future reference. Comment – there is no mention of the CAA drive for the use of Electronic Conspicuity (EC) and how to embrace EC to enhance safety. **Our Response:** Air Traffic Control (ATC) are currently not permitted to use other methods of EC, such as FLARM and ADS-B for air traffic management but would consider it if regulatory permission allowed in the future. Question – can we, as stakeholders, state what we consider to be unviable options? How have Exeter Airport predicated viability of options shown in the document? **Our Response:** Stakeholders may also state which options they feel would be unviable. We consider that the use of a Transponder Mandatory Zone (TMZ) on its own would not provide an adequate solution to the safety issues being encountered. There continues to be incidents of *transponding* aircraft operating across the runway approach paths, against which ATC have to provide separation for inbound commercial aircraft. Question – could the use of a Frequency Monitoring Code be included?

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Our Response: this is not considered a design option but could be considered for use as an additional aid to creating the known traffic environment. Question – what is the definition of Class E+? **Our Response:** Class E plus a TMZ or Radio Mandatory Zone (RMZ). Comment – the current RNP Instrument Approach Procedure (IAP) is flown by relatively few aircraft. The Initial Approach Fixes (IAF) are further out than they need to be and would require a large amount of CAS. If the IAP was raised to a 3.5° glidepath, the procedure would be shorter and would therefore require less airspace and be better environmentally. Comment – the original ACP[1] had bases of the Control Areas (CTA) at 1,700 feet (ft). The document has bases at 1,500 ft. **Our Response:** all heights can be looked at in more detail as the designs progress and the use of 1,700 ft , or other heights, could be an option if they are within the acceptable design parameters. Question – the heights shown on the options are based on an 8% climb gradient. Is there a possibility of increasing the climb gradient to reduce the amount of CAS required to contain? **Our Response:** this could be looked at but would depend on the capability of the fleet of aircraft operating at Exeter Airport. The International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO) design criteria also has to cater for a general minimum performance climb rate / gradient. Comment – feedback from the Royal Navy (RN) noted that a number of options encroached the D012 Danger Area. Military aircraft routing along the coast to the Plymouth Danger Areas would like continuous access; the Ministry of Defence (MOD) and RN would like continued engagement with Exeter Airport to resolve any issues that may arise with D012. . Comment – NPAS noted that the establishment of airspace will increase the crew workload of emergency helicopters operating in the area, particularly close to the city. There will need to be an increase in communication between the units. **Our Response:** Exeter Airport acknowledges the issues and notes that access, aircrew and controller workload could be balanced by fewer unknown aircraft operating in and around any proposed CAS. Question – option 19 in the document has airspace extending to FL105. Will aircraft be at this altitude within the airspace? If not, why the need for a large block of impenetrable airspace? Blocking airspace drives airspace users into a narrow pinch point, which is a safety issue. Question – why not just make a radio call to facilitate entry to CAS? Comment – Gliders are generally unable to respond to ATC instructions. Pilots are concentrating on flying the aircraft and using the radio is a low priority. Flying a glider is not like taking a powered aircraft into CAS.

[1] ACP-2016-11 submitted December 2017

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Our Response: Commercial aircraft will be able to climb to FL105 to adjoin contiguous CAS and join established routes. However, the height of the airspace is more to facilitate an environmentally efficient Continuous Descent Approach (CDA) to both ends of the runway. All aircraft would follow a CDA where possible. Comment – The arrival procedures and profiles flown will be similar for all aircraft types. The departure procedures will be dependent on the aircraft type and its performance capability. Comment – more complex airspace designs may result in more incursions to CAS. **Our Response:** this issue is understood and will be considered. Comment – some European airspace is very complex resulting in numerous incursions. It is difficult for General Aviation (GA) to navigate without high-level equipment. Need to avoid overly large and overly complex designs. **Our Response:** this issue is understood as there is a balance required and this will be part of the factors considered. Comment – the further the CAS extends north from the airport, the more problems there are. Specifically, there will be a threat to operations at both Dunkeswell Airfield and the DSGC at North Hill. In addition, it will create a pinch point and funnelling for cross-country flying, making it more dangerous. Question – has the use of Flexible Use of Airspace (FUA) been considered. Having different classification of airspace at different times (day and night) or activating by NOTAM are options, as long as operators are aware of what the restrictions are. **Our Response:** options will be explored further for the use of FUA within the airspace design, although this may need to be a local arrangement. Instant visibility of airspace classification is required but this is not currently available within the UK Aeronautical Information System (AIS). Flexible arrangements could be considered on a local basis initially, including Dunkeswell and the DSGC. Comment – caution against vast swathes of airspace to the east of the airport due to problems with radio communications and the type of terrain, which is quite high, creating issues with turbulence at low level. Any airspace restrictions may create an unknown environment in a narrower area outside of CAS, which would create a safety issue. Comment – there are numerous areas of Class D CAS across the UK that ATC do not let GA fly through. The use of an RMZ or TMZ appears to be a very good idea. Question – some of the options have airspace going over the Dartmoor area, and the Non-Secondary Surveillance Radar (SSR) Glider Area 5 (Dartmoor Wave Box) which has the potential for non-SSR aircraft operating up to FL195. Has this area been considered? **Our Response:** poor radio communication to the east has not been a previously highlighted problem and the Dartmoor Wave Box has not been considered so far but will be looked at in light of this comment. Question – what has been the effect on airport-based GA of airports introducing Class D CAS?

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Our Response: we have no data on this. Comment – choke points exist because of the existence of CAS. Question – how does the airport feel about introducing different classifications of airspace above and below 3,000 ft? **Our Response:** choke points and different classifications of airspace are something that will be looked at during the process and all options are on the table at the moment. Comment – changing the approach procedures will create options that are more acceptable to the GA community. Removing the northern IAFs and biasing approaches from the south would reduce the amount of airspace required. Comment – keep the airspace as small and simple as it possibly can and avoid pinch points and choke points. These will cause a lot of danger to GA. Keep the solution proportionate for all users. **Our Response:** choke points, different classifications of airspace and avoiding complex airspace constructs are something that will be looked at during the process and all options are on the table at the moment.
[redacted] closed the meeting by thanking the participants for their attendance and contribution. All parties agreed that it had been a very useful and productive discussion.