



## **ACP-2020-026 – Future Combat Airspace (FCA) (Permanent)**

### **Stage 3 Gateway Outcome – 25 November 2022**

As part of Stage 3 of the CAP 1616 airspace change process, the UK Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) has completed a Stage 3 Gateway Assessment of the MoD's airspace change proposal (ACP) 2020-026 Future Combat Airspace (FCA) (Permanent).

In order for the CAA to allow an ACP to pass through the stage 3 Gateway:

- 1) the change sponsor must have produced a consultation strategy
- 2) the change sponsor must have produced appropriate and effective consultation documents and supporting materials
- 3) the change sponsor must have produced a full options appraisal (phase II)
- 4) the CAA must have published a statement approving the consultation documents and supporting material as satisfactory against the requirements in Appendix C
- 5) the CAA must have completed and published an assessment that the options appraisal is satisfactory against the requirements in Appendix E

At the Gateway assessment for this proposal, the CAA concluded that Criteria 2, 4 and 5 has not been met for the following reasons:

#### **Consultation Strategy:**

- The Consultation Strategy did not contain clearly referenced sources of data.

#### **Consultation Document and associated material:**

- The questions on the feedback form do not provoke and/or encourage stakeholders to provide meaningful feedback that will support the change sponsor achieve the stated aims and objectives that are referenced throughout the Consultation Document.
- The submission in places contained a high degree of technical information that would make it difficult for those stakeholders from a non-aviation background to understand what is being proposed.

#### **Full Option Appraisal (FOA):**

- The submission lacked detail on the description of the current-day scenario and the civil airspace activity taking place in the area concerned (i.e. the baseline).
- The submission did not contain sufficient evidence to support the change sponsor's rationale for scoping out quantitative environmental assessments due to no anticipated change in traffic patterns below 7,000 ft.
- Consequential environmental impacts upon tranquility and biodiversity from other airspace users (i.e. civil aviation) were not assessed.
- The FOA should present a full NPV for the monetised parts of the design option unless sufficient justification is provided to descope this.
- The submission did not contain traffic forecasts for all civil airspace users impacted.

The CAA has informed the change sponsor of this decision. In line with CAP 1616, the change sponsor is now able to reconsider its submission before resubmitting it for further review by the CAA at a future Gateway.

It is important to note that whether an ACP passes a gateway successfully or not does not predetermine the CAA's later final decision on whether to approve the airspace change proposal. This decision is not an explicit or implicit comment on the merits or otherwise of this ACP. This will come at the decision-making stage (Stage 5 - DECIDE).