

ACP-2020-024 E-7 Wedgetail AEW Orbit Areas

Stage 2 'Develop & Assess' Gateway Outcome – 23rd February 2023

[STATEMENT]

As part of Stage 2 'Develop & Assess' of the CAP 1616 airspace change process, the UK Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) has completed a 'Develop & Assess' Gateway Assessment of E-7 Wedgetail AEW Orbit Areas airspace change proposal (ACP).

In order for the CAA to sign-off the Stage 2 Develop & Assess Gateway, the following criteria must have been met:

1. The change sponsor must have produced a comprehensive list of airspace change design options;
2. The change sponsor must have engaged with relevant stakeholders to explore those options to the CAA's satisfaction against the requirements in Appendix C;
3. The change sponsor must have produced a design principle evaluation that the CAA has accepted, showing how its design options have responded to the design principles;
4. The change sponsor must have produced an Initial options appraisal (phase I);
5. The CAA must have produced and then 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 1, 2, 3 and 4 were not met for the following reasons:

Criterion 1 The change sponsor is required to include a 'Do Nothing' baseline that is clear about the current airspace construct and usage. If there is a consideration of using the existing airspace design and ATM arrangements for E7 Wedgetail, then this should be considered as a separate 'Do Minimum' option.

Criterion 2 The change sponsor is required to provide an explanation of how feedback from stakeholders influenced decisions taken in relation to the design options.

Criterion 3 The change sponsor is required to provide clear 'ACCEPT/REJECT' indications against each option in the Design Principle Evaluation. In addition, the change sponsor is required to present their analysis so far on the options, showing any inter-dependencies and how they have assessed the potential impacts, albeit qualitatively at this stage.

Criterion 4 The sponsor is required to include and use the 'Do Nothing' baseline reflecting the impacts of the current-day scenario as a comparator for environmental assessments of the sponsor's design options in the Initial options appraisal (phase I).

Criterion 4 The sponsor is required to provide a plan for evidence gathering to fill in any data gaps identified in the Initial options appraisal (phase I) or present a rationale and

supporting evidence to scale down the level of assessments.

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 Develop & Assess 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).

[END STATEMENT]