

**Aberdeen International  
Airport**



**Aberdeen  
International  
Airport (AIAL)**

# **Airspace Change Proposal**

**Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)**

**Date: April 2024  
Document Version: 1.0  
Status: Public**

## Frequently Asked Questions

<b>AIRSPACE CHANGE PROCESS</b> .....	<b>3</b>
WHAT IS AIRSPACE? .....	3
WHAT IS AIRSPACE CHANGE?.....	3
WHAT IS CAP1616?.....	3
HOW DOES AIRSPACE CHANGE WORK? .....	4
WHAT IS THE AIRSPACE MODERNISATION STRATEGY?.....	4
WHY IS ABERDEEN’S ACP NO LONGER PART OF THE MASTERPLAN? .....	5
<b>OUR PROPOSALS</b> .....	<b>6</b>
WHAT IS ABERDEEN AIRPORT PROPOSING AND WHY? .....	6
WHAT IS PERFORMANCE BASED NAVIGATION (PBN)?.....	6
WHERE ARE WE NOW?.....	6
HOW HAS THE PROPOSAL BEEN DEVELOPED? .....	6
HOW HAS THE PROPOSAL BEEN ASSESSED?.....	7
<b>IMPLEMENTATION (IF SUCCESSFUL)</b> .....	<b>8</b>
WHEN IS THE PROPOSAL LIKELY TO BE IMPLEMENTED? .....	8
WILL THERE BE A POST IMPLEMENTATION REVIEW? .....	8
CAN THE CHANGE BE REVERSED IF IT DOESN’T DELIVER THE EXPECTED BENEFITS? .....	8
<b>ENGAGEMENT</b> .....	<b>9</b>
WHAT ENGAGEMENT HAS ALREADY BEEN DONE, AND WHEN?.....	9
HOW HAVE YOU DETERMINED WHICH STAKEHOLDERS ARE RELEVANT AT STAGE 3? .....	9
WHAT ARE THE TIMESCALES FOR YOUR CONSULTATION? .....	9
WHAT HAPPENS TO THE FEEDBACK RECEIVED? .....	10
WHERE CAN I FIND OUT MORE INFORMATION? .....	10
HOW DO WE KNOW YOU’LL LISTEN TO US?.....	10

## ***Airspace Change Process***

### **What is Airspace?**

Airspace is the 'invisible infrastructure' in the sky which helps aircraft operate safely. It includes the flight paths that aircraft take when arriving and departing from an airport, which are usually the responsibility of an airport up to 7000ft above ground level. The routes on the airspace network above 7000ft are the responsibility of National Air Traffic Services (NATS).

Airspace can be controlled and uncontrolled; this means that in some areas there are restrictions on which aircraft and/or pilots can fly in the airspace to protect other airspace users such as commercial airliners. To enter most controlled airspace, pilots must get permission from Air Traffic Control. There are different classifications of controlled airspace that have varying requirements. For more information about different types of controlled airspace, please see [here](#).

### **What is Airspace Change?**

Airspace Change is the process through which flight paths, routes, controlled airspace boundaries and controlled airspace classification can be changed. The Department for Transport (DfT) is responsible for all aviation policy in the UK, including airspace. The Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) is responsible for its regulation and for the Airspace Change Process which all airports must follow where changes to airspace are proposed. Aberdeen Airport is responsible for the design of any changes to flight paths into and out of the airport up to approximately 7,000ft, and National Air Traffic Services (NATS) is responsible for changes to airspace above 7,000ft.

### **What is CAP1616?**

The aviation industry is regulated by the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) in the UK, and they ensure that the environmental impact of aviation on local communities is managed through efficient use of airspace. When changes to airspace are proposed, an airport is required to follow the CAA's Airspace Change Proposal (ACP) process, this is known as **CAP1616**.

CAP1616 is a 7-stage process which places great importance on engaging and consulting on airspace proposals throughout the process with a wide range of stakeholders, including potentially affected communities.

Aberdeen Airport successfully passed Stage 2 of the CAP1616 process in January 2023. More information on Stage 1 and Stage 2 can be found on the [CAA's Airspace Change Portal](#).

Aberdeen Airport's consultation is based on Version 4 on the CAP1616 guidance, which can be [viewed here](#). Once the Airport has passed Stage 3, it will be assessed against **Version 5** which came into effect in January 2024.

### How does Airspace Change work?

Airspace Change is conducted in line with a process set out by the Civil Aviation Authority, termed CAP1616. Initially, in Stage 1, a 'sponsor' (the party trying to change the airspace) needs to produce a Statement explaining why the change is needed. Design Principles are then worked up in collaboration with key stakeholders.

Stage 2 'Develop and Assess' sees multiple options worked up and then assessed against the Design Principle established in Stage 1. Following this assessment, a shortlist of options is taken to the first of three phases of appraisal called the 'Initial Options Appraisal'. After the Initial Options Appraisal, the options may be shortlisted before moving onto the Stage 3 'Full Options Appraisal'. The full options appraisal identifies the options for public consultation and this consultation forms one of the main parts of Stage 3. This is where we are now.

### What is the Airspace Modernisation Strategy?

The Airspace Modernisation Strategy (AMS), also known as **CAP1711**, is a document published by the DfT and CAA in December 2018. The document describes how the airspace within the UK is reaching capacity and, due to the age of the design, includes features that restrict the aviation industry's ability to improve its operational and environmental performance.

The AMS sets out a new shared objective between the CAA and the DfT for modernising airspace which is to deliver quicker, quieter, and cleaner journeys and create more capacity for the benefit of those who use and are affected by UK airspace.

### Why is Aberdeen's ACP no longer part of the Masterplan?

Aberdeen Airport was approved by the CAA to withdraw from the UK Airspace Change Masterplan. Aberdeen Airport was originally part of the wider UK airspace change programme which involved coordination between different airport sponsors who shared interdependencies within the airspace. As the proposal has progressed, it became clear that due to the geographical position of Aberdeen Airport, there were no interdependencies between our proposed changes and those of the other programme participants. Aberdeen Airport remains part of the National Airspace Change Programme, but withdrawal from the Masterplan means we are able to progress independently of the wider changes being proposed by other airports across Scotland and the UK.

## ***Our Proposals***

### **What is Aberdeen Airport proposing and why?**

Aberdeen Airport is consulting on two changes to the airspace surrounding the airport. These proposals are part of an industry-wide drive, led by the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) who regulate the UK’s airspace, to modernise UK airspace infrastructure.

As part of this consultation, we are asking for your feedback on the following two proposals:

- 1. The introduction of modern satellite-based (PBN) arrival procedures which would be used by a very small percentage of arrivals for resilience and training purposes**
- 2. The release of a section of the Controlled Airspace (CAS), which is not routinely used by the aircraft arriving or departing from Aberdeen Airport, for the benefit of other airspace users**

**More information about our proposals can be found in the Consultation Summary Document.**

The PBN arrival procedures proposed as part of this ACP are intended to be operated alongside the existing approaches at Aberdeen Airport and we expect the vast majority (95%+) of arrivals will continue to arrive as they do today. This proposal will not increase the number of arrivals at Aberdeen Airport.

### **What is Performance based navigation (PBN)?**

Performance based navigation (PBN) is a type of navigation that uses satellite-based technology. This is similar to the type of technology used in car sat-navs, or in GPS based sports watches. PBN is being introduced across the world and Aberdeen Airport are required to consider implementing it as part of meeting the requirements of the Airspace Modernisation Strategy.

### **Where are we now?**

We are now in Stage 3, where we have carried out our second appraisal on the remaining options, called the Full Options Appraisal (FOA), and have planned and prepared for this Consultation by producing a Consultation Strategy and this Consultation material. The material is available to view on our Citizen Space Consultation website [\*\*here\*\*](#).

### **How has the proposal been developed?**

Airspace change options are required to be developed throughout various stages of the CAP1616 process. The table below gives a high level overview of the stage and links to where further information can be found:

<b>CAP1616 Stage</b>	<b>Link to further information</b>
At Stage 1B Aberdeen Airport developed a set of design principles with identified stakeholders.	<a href="#"><b>Stage 1B Design Principle</b></a>

<p>The aim of the design principles is to provide high-level criteria that the proposed airspace design options should meet. They also provide a means of analysing the impact of different design options and a framework for choosing between or prioritising options.</p>	<p>Submission Report</p>
<p>Stage 2A requires change sponsors to develop and assess options for the airspace change.</p> <p>In Stage 2A, the change sponsor develops a Comprehensive List of Options that address the Statement of Need and that align with the design principles from Stage 1.</p> <p>Those options are then shared with stakeholder representatives (the same ones engaged with on the design principles). Feedback from the engagement was then used to generate further options where feasible.</p> <p>Finally, all options were qualitatively assessed against the design principles and a Design Principle Evaluation (DPE) was produced. Aberdeen Airport’s Comprehensive List of Options is then shortlisted before progressing to Stage 2B.</p>	<p>Stage 2A DPE Submission Document</p>
<p>Stage 2B requires the Change Sponsor to carry out an Initial Options Appraisal of the (IOA) of the airspace change options which proceed from Stage 2A.</p> <p>The initial appraisal described the options under assessment and the baseline options, before explaining the methodology used to assess each option and the IOA outcome. Following this the document explained, based on the IOA, which options have been taken forward to Stage 3 and the preferred option(s).</p>	<p>Initial Options Appraisal</p>

### How has the proposal been assessed?

As part of Stage 3 of CAP1616 we undertake a Full Options Appraisal (FOA). This is where we assess a baseline “do nothing” pre-implementation scenario and then compare it against the options to understand the benefits and impacts of each option. CAP1616 sets out the assessment categories including Safety, Noise, Greenhouse Gas Emissions/Fuel burn, Air quality, tranquillity, biodiversity, impacts to general aviation, and other costs associated with the change. For more information, please see our [Full Options Appraisal](#) document or alternatively there is a summary in the [main consultation document](#).

## ***Implementation (if successful)***

### **When is the proposal likely to be implemented?**

If our airspace change proposals are approved, we expect the changes to be implemented in quarter 1 (Q1) 2026.

### **Will there be a Post Implementation Review?**

Subject to CAA decision, the ACP would then move onto Stage 6 implementation. A year after implementation, a Stage 7 post implementation review is undertaken to ensure the ACP is meeting the objectives.

### **Can the change be reversed if it doesn't deliver the expected benefits?**

CAP1616 requires sponsors to be clear with stakeholders the extent to which the proposed airspace change once implemented is reversible if it does not meet the objectives it is designed to achieve as part of the post implementation review at Stage 7.

As this ACP looks to introduce PBN approaches for resilience alongside the existing conventional procedures, it is possible for this change to be reversed if required.



## Engagement

### What engagement has already been done, and when?

A list of the stakeholder representatives we have previously engaged as part of earlier stages of the process, is available to view [here](#) in our Consultation Strategy.

The previously engaged stakeholders included relevant parliamentarians, local authorities, National Air Traffic Management Committee (NATMAC), Aberdeen Airport Flight Operations Performance and Safety Committee (FLOPSC), Aviation Industry, Community Councils, and Interest Groups.

### How have you determined which stakeholders are relevant at Stage 3?

As the design has progressed through the options appraisal phases of the CAP1616 process, the geographical region of those potentially impacted has evolved; and as we moved into Stage 3 it became evident that with our chosen option the impact on many stakeholders, particularly for communities on the ground, is expected to be very limited.

However, to ensure that we still reach the correct audience for our consultation, we carried out an assessment of where these very limited/negligible impacts of our new arrival routes are likely to be experienced and created a geographical area to identify the audience. These stakeholders, along with our previously engaged stakeholders, will be directly contacted as part of this consultation however we welcome responses from anyone with an interest in the proposal.

### What are the timescales for your consultation?

Our consultation began on Monday 29 April 2024, and runs for 12 weeks. During this period, there is an in person drop in event and four online webinars where there will be an opportunity to ask questions. The details of these sessions are below.

The in-person event is open to all and will be a drop-in session on **Tuesday 21 May 2024 between 2pm-8pm** at the **Aberdeen Science Centre, 179 Constitution Street, Aberdeen, AB24 5TU**.

The webinars will run for 1hr30s mins as per the table below.

Webinar	Audience	Details
Webinar 1	Community consultees	Tuesday 14 May 2024 at 6pm
Webinar 2	Aviation/industry consultees	Monday 3 June 2024 at 1pm
Webinar 3	General Aviation consultees	Thursday 13 June 2023 at 6pm
Webinar 4	Open to all	Friday 21 June 2024 at 4pm

We will continue to accept consultation feedback via our [Citizen Space consultation website](#) until Sunday 21 July 2024 (23:59hrs).

### What happens to the feedback received?

All the feedback received is published on the [Citizen Space Consultation website](#). Once the consultation closes, Aberdeen Airport will then collate, review and categorise the consultation responses. Responses will be categorised into those which may lead to a change in the design and those which would not. We will then produce a Consultation Response document which summarises the consultation and our response to issues raised. This will also be published on the [CAA's Airspace Change Portal](#).

### Where can I find out more information?

You can find out more about this airspace change on the [Citizen Space Consultation website](#). As part of the consultation, we will be holding an in person drop in event and four online webinars where there will be an opportunity to ask questions. For further details of how to join these, please see the [Citizen Space Consultation website](#).

### How do we know you'll listen to us?

Following CAP1616 guidance, we will produce a Consultation Response document that will summarise the consultation, the responses we received, and how these have influenced the final proposal. This document will be assessed by the CAA to ensure we have accounted for stakeholder concerns.