



London Health Bridge Synlab Expansion

ACP-2023-061 Assessment Meeting - 11 February 2026

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Apian is a healthcare logistics company working in partnership with NHS Trusts and UAS operators to deliver faster, smarter and greener healthcare.

What we have done so far:

Solent

- First flight of chemotherapy by drone
- UK's first prescription medicine delivery

Northumberland

- First patient pathology sample in Northumberland
- First BVLOS blood pack flight in collaboration with NHSBT
- Flew the UK's first medical device by drone
- Flew the UK's longest drone delivery flight (80km)

London

- Over **6,000** patient samples transferred from Guy's Hospital to St.Thomas' Hospital





Statement of Need (discussion & review)



The purpose of this proposal is to make a modification to the airspace design of TRA 196 created under ACP-2023-061. This airspace adjustment would allow the inclusion of the SYNLAB Blackfriars Hub Laboratory ('SYNLAB Hub'), a healthcare laboratory that provides diagnostic services for the NHS, within the existing London Health Bridge (LHB) operations.

Apian, the airspace change sponsor, provides UAS delivery services to the NHS. The existing LHB operation has demonstrated feasibility and operational benefit, and the addition of this particular healthcare laboratory represents a minor, practical extension of the established structure that will deliver significant service improvements for the NHS.

The proposed adjustment does not alter the concept of operations or objectives of the original ACP. It aims to enhance productivity and resilience and unlock new capabilities for the NHS by adding one crucial additional medical partner location into the approved network.

Opportunities - Healthcare

- Enhances the existing London Health Bridge (LHB) operation by adding the SYNLAB Hub as an additional drone-served location, improving efficiency and resilience of the established medical logistics network.
- Builds on the proven LHB trial, demonstrating further integration of BVLOS UAS into routine NHS logistics through a proportionate operational adjustment.
- Improves NHS efficiency, staff productivity, and patient care by accelerating the movement of priority medical samples and supporting faster diagnostics and treatment decisions.
- Reduces reliance on road transport, minimising congestion-related delays and strengthening health system resilience.



Continued Opportunities – Healthcare

- Provides more direct and reliable access to centralised, gold-standard diagnostics, including time-critical testing such as Rapid Pathogen Metagenomics.
- Supports the development of a scalable and procurable medical drone logistics model for the NHS, aligned with centralised laboratory services.
- Delivers sustainability and cost benefits through reduced carbon emissions and transport costs, supporting NHS net zero objectives.
- Enables continued data collection to support medical case studies and robust health-economic analysis.
- Represents a proportionate enhancement with no new safety, technical, or environmental risks beyond those already assessed under ACP-2023-061.

Opportunities - Aviation

- Proposal reviewed and confirmed within the Future Flight Phase 4 framework.
- Supports Government ambitions for advanced aviation to deliver public benefit, including NHS services.
- Support the vision of the Airspace Modernisation Strategy (AMS) by trialling safe integration of BVLOS UAS operations using technology and procedures to remove the need for segregated airspace.
- Support the Aviation 2050 Net Zero targets with fully-electric UAS services that have zero tailpipe emissions.
- Demonstrate how UAS could be safely and routinely integrated into future UK airspace operations.
- Continue gathering operational data to support Beyond Visual Line of Sight (BVLOS) medical deliveries in the UK.
- Support CAA airspace policy development by demonstrating and validating procedures for the safe integration of UAS in controlled airspace.

Issues

- Segregated airspace
- Timelines for adding a new site

1

Stakeholder engagement

- a. Engagement will continue with key aviation stakeholders, including emergency services, the military and London Heliport.
- b. Stakeholder engagement is ongoing and will continue throughout the ACP process. This includes affected community groups.
- c. Community stakeholders will be informed following approval of the added site.

2

Noise Impact Assessment

- a. Noise assessment already provided as part of the ACP adjustment and UAS operator SORA.
- b. Stakeholder communications to be submitted as part of the ACP.

3

Safety Assessment

- a. Airspace Safety Assessment to be coordinated with NATS and the UAS operator.
- b. SORA to be completed by the selected UAS operator and assessed by the CAA RPAS Sector Team.

Provisional Process Timescales

Task	Date
Targeted Stakeholder Engagement	20 Feb 2026
Submission	13 Mar 2026
Decision	10 Apr 2026
AIC Publication	28 May 2026
Implementation	29 May 2026



Next Steps

- Apian to draft minutes for CAA review.
- Apian and partners to commence targeted stakeholder engagement.



AOB

