

17th June 2026

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Manager Airspace Regulation
Civil Aviation Authority
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Dear ██████████

London Biggin Hill Airport's reasoning for keeping the trial RNP APCH RWY03 in service whilst an ACP is progressed for its permanent introduction.

Ref:

CAA (Air Navigation) Directions 2023

Airspace Trials 8. (5)

The CAA may extend the period approved for an airspace trial, provided that it is satisfied that such an extension is not sought as a means to avoid making a proposal for a permanent change to airspace design.

The trial of LBHA's RNP APCH RWY 03 procedure ([ACP-2023-075](#)) ran successfully throughout Phase B and continues this success through the early stage of Phase C, demonstrating exceptional actual navigation performance on the Radius-to-Fix (RF) leg and exceptionally favourable feedback from pilots. The trial is scheduled to run until 14th October 2026. As a result of its success, LBHA has submitted a Statement of Need to commence an Airspace Change Proposal (ACP) for its permanent introduction.

A seamless transition between the Runway 03 RNP ACP Trial (AIP SUP 036/2026) and permanent implementation of the Instrument Approach Procedure (IAP) is essential in the interests of safety and operational continuity. Ceasing the procedures following the conclusion of the trial period would create avoidable human factors risks, including knowledge fade and skill fade amongst Air Traffic Control Officers (ATCOs) within both London Terminal Control Centre (LTCC) Thames Director and London Biggin Hill Airport ATC.

The withdrawal of the procedures, followed by a delayed reintroduction, would also necessitate further controller training and competency assurance activity, placing unnecessary demand on operational resourcing and training capacity within both LTCC and London Biggin Hill Airport. Reverting from the trial arrangements before subsequently reinstating them has the potential to create confusion amongst airspace users (e.g. Gatwick Airport, Redhill Aerodrome, Kenley Gliding Site and other airspace users) who have already built awareness of the established procedures and operating environment.

UK ADS and NATS both endorse the trial extension across the ACP period as this continues to enhance operations and removes a requirement to deliver a controller re-training programme in the future. This assumes the trial continues to demonstrate safe operation of the procedure across the remainder of the trial period.

Most importantly, we consider that withdrawing a safe Instrument Approach Procedure and therefore reversion to a sole reliance on a visual circling approach would be a retrograde step in safety for LBHA's operators.

We would strongly ask you to support our request to maintain the trial of LBHA's RNP APCH RWY 03 procedure throughout the ACP, thereby supporting the preservation of controller competence, reducing unnecessary operational risk, minimising disruption to airspace users, and ensuring a stable and predictable operating environment for all stakeholders.

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Chief Executive Officer