

Committee: Stansted Airport Advisory Panel
Title: General update on aviation matters
Report Author: Jeremy Pine, Senior Planning Policy Officer
jpine@uttlesford.gov.uk

Date:
Wednesday, 19
May 2021

Summary

1. This report updates the Panel on what has happened since the last formal meeting on 26th February 2019 and what is likely to come up in the near future.
2. There was an informal meeting of Panel members on 16th February this year to discuss the Council's response to the first part of Stage 1 of the night flights consultation. The response to the second part is the subject of a separate report to this meeting.

Recommendation

3. That the Panel notes the update.

Financial Implications

4. None

Background Papers

5. None

Impact

- 6.

Communication/Consultation	None.
Community Safety	None.
Equalities	None.
Health and Safety	None.
Human Rights/Legal Implications	None.
Sustainability	None.

Ward-specific impacts	Airport operations have the most effect on those wards closest to the airport, but aviation is a high-profile national issue.
Workforce/Workplace	Since the last Panel meeting, responsibility for monitoring compliance with planning agreements and conditions now lies with the development management team. The planning policy team will deal with aviation related consultations, be they either at a national or local level, with input from other specialisms as required.

Situation

Monitoring of Planning Agreements

7. The Panel has received periodic monitoring reports on the two existing planning agreements that relate to previous grants of planning permission for expansion at Stansted Airport. These are:
 - An agreement signed on 14th May 2003 in relation to expansion to 25mppa (UTT/1000/01/OP)
 - A unilateral undertaking dated 26th September 2008 in relation to expansion to 35mppa (UTT/0717/06/FUL – “Generation 1”).
8. Monitoring information has been reported to the Panel using a summary table. Most recently, and with the Panel’s consent, reporting concentrated on Generation 1. There was a delay in the implementation of Generation 1 due to the economic downturn in 2008-9, which occurred shortly after the planning permission was granted. This delay pushed back many of the unilateral undertaking trigger points.
9. Should planning permission be granted for expansion to 43mppa following the recent public inquiry, officers intend to devise a new comprehensive monitoring spreadsheet for planning obligations. Should planning permission not be granted for 43mppa, officers anticipate that the existing monitoring arrangements will continue.

Forthcoming issues

Aviation strategy

10. In June of 2019, Cabinet ratified the Council’s response to the Government’s Aviation Strategy Green Paper entitled “Aviation 2050: The

future of UK aviation”. Since that date the pandemic struck, and the Government says that it is continuing to develop a strategic framework for the longer-term recovery of the sector, which will focus on building back better and ensuring a successful aviation sector for the future. This strategic framework will be published later this year. The Government’s focus is very much at the moment on restart and recovery, which has included the establishment of a Global Travel Task Force to consider a safe return of international travel.

11. Many Department for Transport (DfT) staff were seconded to restart and recovery roles, leading to delays in many projects deemed non-essential. Staff are now returning to their original roles.

Airspace modernisation

12. The Government and the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) have developed a new shared objective for modernising UK airspace, which is currently governed by ground-based technology devised 40 or 50 years ago, requiring a high degree of air traffic controller intervention. The overall objective for airspace modernisation is to deliver quicker, quieter and cleaner journeys and more capacity for the benefit of those who use and are affected by UK airspace.
13. The Government has recognised that airspace modernisation up to 2040 is a national infrastructure programme, and it will be initiated via the CAA’s Airspace Modernisation Strategy (AMS) published in 2018. The AMS sets five parameters to achieve the overall objective. Summarising, these are:
 - sufficient airspace capacity to deliver safe and efficient commercial aviation growth,
 - quieter operating procedures and consideration of noise impacts of growth airports through the airspace design process,
 - use of the minimum volume of controlled airspace consistent with safe and efficient operation,
 - to facilitate safe and ready access to airspace for all airspace users, and
 - no conflict with national security requirements.
14. In relation to the first parameter, the Government has stated that airspace capacity will not become a constraint to airport growth – that will be determined via the planning process. As a result of the pandemic, the CAA is reviewing the AMS and a revised version is expected towards the end of this year.
15. Airspace modernisation will involve changes to flightpaths to one degree or another. Applications for an airspace change proposal are submitted to the CAA for determination under its consultative seven-stage airspace change process which was also introduced in 2018. [Appendix A](#) to this report sets out

more detail of this process. Each change is proposed by an airspace change sponsor, usually an airport operator (up to 7,000ft) or a provider of air navigation services (such as NATS En-Route plc – NERL, which manages upper airspace and its design). In the crowded airspace in the south of the UK, it is likely that there will be a number of co-dependent changes being proposed more or less at the same time by up to 16 airports.

16. To coordinate these changes, the Government and the CAA commissioned NERL to establish an independent Airspace Change Organising Group (ACOG) to create an implementation plan (masterplan) for airspace changes in the south of the UK. This airspace change programme is known as Future Airspace Implementation South (FASI-S). The masterplan becomes, on acceptance by DfT and CAA, part of the CAA's Airspace Modernisation Strategy. Acceptance of the masterplan into the Strategy makes it, together with CAP 1616, the legal basis against which the individual airspace change decisions will be made by the CAA. The first iteration of the masterplan was published in February of this year, although by that time it was regarded as out-of-date due to the impact of the pandemic. ACOG is currently reviewing the masterplan with a view to publishing iteration 2 later this year.

17. The main purpose of the masterplan is to set out where airspace change could be taken forward to provide benefits, to consider potential conflicts, trade-offs and dependencies, and set out a preferred implementation plan. The masterplan does not set the detail of individual airspace designs or solutions – these will be determined via CAP 1616. It identifies where any airspace changes are needed to deliver a range of benefits, including to reduce noise, deliver air quality or fuel efficiency benefits or where more direct routes are possible that could reduce the amount of controlled airspace that needs to be provided. Airspace change sponsors will have to take the masterplan into account when drawing up their airspace change proposal(s), particularly in understanding the cumulative impacts with the proposals of other sponsors.

18. Under CAP 1616, it is anticipated that there will be a single consultation on any series of co-dependent changes proposed by sponsors, but there is no confirmation of this at the moment. In July of last year, DfT and CAA issued a joint statement confirming a continued commitment to airspace modernisation and the need to consider how individual organisations may progress airspace change in response to a report from ACOG on remobilising the airspace change programme post-pandemic. Airspace modernisation remains critical, but airports looking to sponsor an airspace change have paused their activities during the pandemic, mainly due to furlough. This is particularly so at Heathrow, which has the highest level of co-dependency of airspace change. Restart will require short-term funding, and the CAA is working with ACOG and change sponsors regarding the distribution of funds.

19. Due to delays caused by the pandemic, it is not known when any single consultation would be run. The intention is to complete the roll-out of airspace modernisation in the south of the UK by 2025. Any changes that are not co-dependent could be consulted upon earlier by the relevant sponsor.
20. The CAA has set up an on-line airspace change portal where airspace change proposals are submitted and monitored, stakeholder comments can be made and relevant documentation viewed. Officers are monitoring the portal for proposed changes that could affect the district.
21. One active proposal for airspace change at Stansted Airport is for the modernisation of airspace arrangements for arriving and departing aircraft at altitudes of 7,000 ft and below. This proposal was commenced in February 2019 and is currently at Stage 2A (Develop & Assess). There was member-level involvement as a stakeholder in Stage 1 (Define) in 2020. At the meeting of the Stansted Airport Consultative Committee in April this year, the Managing Director indicated that Stage 2 stakeholder engagement will be in two phases, June and September this year. He also said that Stage 2 gateway sign-off will be in March 2022. Full public consultation under Stage 3 will be after that date. The CAA portal describes the purpose of this airspace change proposal as:

“London Stansted Airport wishes to modernise airspace arrangements for aircraft operating to and from the Airport at altitudes of 7,000 feet and below. In 2017, London Stansted introduced performance based navigation (PBN) to two existing departure routes. The Airport now seeks to make further use of the new technologies so that the operational efficiency and environmental benefits that modern aircraft offer can now be fully realised. In so doing, the optimised procedures that will be developed will integrate fully with other airports and the wider changes to the airspace system and remove the Airport’s reliance on ground based navigational aids”.
22. The two PBN routes introduced in 2017 were 22 Clacton and 04 Detling.

Carbon

23. On 9th December 2020, the Climate Change Committee (CCC) published its advice on the level at which to set Carbon Budget 6 (CB6) covering 2033-2037. The CCC recommended that CB6 should be set at 965MtCO_{2e}, reducing emissions by 78% from 1990 to 2035, including international aviation and shipping (IAS) emissions. Previous carbon budgets have formally excluded IAS emissions, instead leaving “headroom” for them. The Government says that CB6 will ensure the UK remains on track to end its contribution to climate change while remaining consistent with the Paris Agreement temperature goal to limit global warming to well below 2°C and pursue efforts towards 1.5°C.

24. IAS emissions are included in the Government's 2050 net zero target, which was set on a whole economy basis.
25. On 21st April, the Government laid a draft Statutory Instrument (Carbon Order 2021) to set CB6 at the level recommended by the CCC, and subject to Parliamentary approval this will become law by the end of June. The Government emphasises that setting CB6 relates to the ambition to cut emissions rather than announcing specific policies that will deliver the emissions reduction.
26. The Air Navigation (Carbon Offsetting and Reduction Scheme for International Aviation - CORSIA) Order 2021 has been published. This implements the monitoring, reporting and verification requirements of CORSIA adopted by the Council of the International Civil Aviation Organisation on 27 June 2018. This Order extend to the whole of the United Kingdom. It comes into force on 26th May 2021.
27. In the coming months, the Government is intending to consult on a Net Zero Aviation Strategy. This could include the role of technology, and the role of capacity constraint in the meantime or until technology is cost effective. Another main issue could be what is the budget for allowable aviation emissions, and what can be offset or extracted to reach net zero. Later this spring, the Government will publish a Transport Decarbonisation Plan setting out its vision for transitioning to net zero and how the public can be supported to take up low carbon technologies. DfT says there is likely to be some overlap between the two.
28. The cross-government Net Zero Strategy will also be published ahead of COP26, which is due to take place in Glasgow later this year.

Other matters

29. Periodically, the Chair of the Panel has invited representatives from Stansted Airport Limited and Stansted Airport Watch (formerly Stop Stansted Expansion) to give an update on their recent activities, but not necessarily at the same Panel meeting. These updates have taken place before Panel meetings commence. These updates did not take place during the assessment of the 43mppa planning application and subsequent appeal but could recommence once the final post Inquiry hearing opportunities for further written representations have closed.

Risk Analysis

- 30.

Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigating actions
None	None	None	None

1 = Little or no risk or impact

2 = Some risk or impact – action may be necessary.

3 = Significant risk or impact – action required

4 = Near certainty of risk occurring, catastrophic effect or failure of project.
