

STANSTED AIRPORT ADVISORY PANEL

General update on aviation matters

Appendix A The Airspace Change Process

1.1. The new seven-stage process was introduced in 2018 mainly because of concerns over a lack of transparency about how the CAA used to make airspace change decisions. The new process is summarised in Paragraphs 54-56 of CAP 1616 Airspace Change (March 2021 version). There are “gateways” at three points in the process where the change sponsor must satisfy the CAA via a sign-off procedure that it has followed the process correctly before advancing to the next stage.

1.2. Paragraphs 54-56 of CAP 1616 state as follows:

*“The seven stage process begins with the change sponsor preparing a Statement of Need setting out what issue or opportunity it is seeking to address and meeting the CAA to discuss it. This is followed by engagement by the change sponsor with those potentially affected by the proposed change on the underlying design principles (**Stage 1 – completion of the “Define” gateway**). At this point, the CAA will agree with the change sponsor the timeline against which we can accept the proposal, having regard to submissions by other parties. This is essential if we are to give certainty to the timescales set out in this guidance.*

*Continuing to liaise with stakeholders, the change sponsor develops one or more options and carries out an initial appraisal of the impacts, both positive and negative (**Stage 2 – completion of the “Develop and Assess” gateway**). The change sponsor then prepares a consultation and assesses who should be consulted (**Stage 3 – Steps 3A and 3B – completion of the “Consult” gateway**). The change sponsor consults with those interested parties, including, where appropriate, local communities (**Stage 3 – Step 3C**). In the light of responses (categorized in **Stage 3 – Step 3D**), the change sponsor may modify the proposals before making a formal submission of the proposal to the CAA for a decision (Stage 4).*

*The CAA assesses the proposal, may hold a “Public Evidence Session”, may issue a draft decision and subsequently will issue a final decision, or alternatively a “minded to” decision at the request of the Secretary of State who may have called-in the proposal (**Stage 5**). If the proposal is approved, and after it has been implemented (**Stage 6**), the CAA carries out a review of the change (**Stage 7**), usually after 12 months of operation”.*

1.3. A typical timeline for the full seven-stage process is 110 weeks given a 12-week consultation period in Stage 3 - Step 3C.

1.4. The CAA has set up an airspace change portal which gives full details of all airspace change proposals that are under development, including all relevant documents and information. The database can be searched by postcode, place or airport. The portal address is www.airspacechange.caa.co.uk