

Airspace Change Proposal

Main Consultation Documents

Appendix A: Overview of CAP1616 process to date



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1. Appendix A: Overview of CAP1616 process to date

1.1 Introduction

This appendix provides an overview of the CAP1616 process to date which has been followed to develop the Doncaster Airport Airspace Change Proposal. It is intended to be read in conjunction with either the main [Communities and Local Interest consultation document](#) or the [Aviation Interest consultation document](#).

It is presented in chronological order, to help stakeholders understand the history behind the need for Doncaster's ACP, and then subsequent Stages of the CAP1616 process.

1.2 DSA airport closure (November 2022)

In November 2022, DSA closed after the previous airport operator withdrew. At the time of closure, DSA operated with a full controlled airspace construct, departure routes and arrival procedures.

1.3 CAA starts process to remove DSA airspace (October 2022)

In October 2022, the CAA started the process to remove DSA's airspace and flight procedures. More information can be found here: [ACP-2022-082](#).

1.4 CDC secures lease (March 2024)

In March 2024, City of Doncaster Council (CDC) secured a 125-year lease for the site, and began work to reinstate the airport license, establish a local air traffic control service, and prepare for scheduled passenger and cargo services to return from 2027/28.

1.5 CDC notifies the CAA about the planned re-opening (August 2024)

In August 2024, CDC formally notified the CAA about the plans to re-open. A statement of need was submitted which said:

This change proposal is about the restoration of the DSA airspace that has been subject to a CAA-sponsored ACP for the 'Consideration of the removal of Doncaster-Sheffield Airport Airspace' (ACP-2022-082). It will include the RNP Arrivals and Departures predicated on existing Noise Preferential Routes (NPRs) that form part of the Airports Section 106 Agreement, as previously consulted upon in 2016-17 and introduced in 2018. This proposal does not conflict with the stated aims of the UK Airspace Modernisation Strategy.

City of Doncaster Council (CDC) acknowledges the ongoing CAA-sponsored Airspace Change application to dismantle the extant airspace that served DSA and they have made representation to the Secretary of State for the application to be called in, citing a variety of grounds that it believes are justifiable. This SoN is therefore submitted by CDC on a 'without prejudice' pre-emptive basis, acknowledging that whilst they believe the case for call-in is strong, they cannot pre-judge the outcome of that process. As time is of the essence in their project to re-open the Airport, CDC believes that the protection of the timeline to the restarting of commercial services is best served by commencing a new ACP to cover the eventuality that the CAA sponsored ACP to dismantle the airspace is not concluded in their favour.

Details of the ACP were published on the CAA portal here: [ACP-2024-039](#).

1.6 DSA submits a new Statement of Need for [ACP-2024-039](#) (4 August 2025)

Following the CAA's decision to remove DSA's airspace (May 2025), a new [Statement of Need](#) (SoN) was submitted to the CAA in August 2025.

The following summarises the SoN and full details can be found using the link above:

- Re-establish controlled airspace to support the airports safe and efficient return to operation.
- Re-establish Standard Instrument Procedures (SIDs, STARs and IAPs) to serve Doncaster Sheffield Airport.

The updated SoN was published on the airspace portal in September following the assessment meeting with the CAA (see next section).

1.7 Assessment Meeting held with the CAA (3 September 2025)

As part of the [assessment meeting](#) the CAA agreed that it was appropriate for CDC to work through Stages 1 and 2 of the process together which meant the required outputs from both stages were developed and submitted for a CAA Gateway assessment at the same time. This combined approach helped keep the ACP on track for DSA's planned reopening, while remaining fully compliant with the CAP1616 requirements.

1.8 CAA removes airspace (September 2025)

In May 2025 the CAA made the decision to remove the airspace and then in September 2025, the controlled airspace and flight procedures which supported the airports operations were removed. More information about the CAA's airspace change proposal can be found here: [ACP-2022-082](#).

1.9 CAP1616 Stage 1: Design Principles

As part of CAP1616 Stage 1, we engaged with representative stakeholders on the development of Design Principles. These stakeholders included representatives for local communities, the Aviation Industry and the military as well as political representatives and environmental groups.

Design Principles provide a framework against which design options can be developed and evaluated. The CAA mandates some design principles and then working with stakeholders, further principles were developed. The final list of 6 Design Principles are shown in Table 1 below.

Table 1 DSA Design Principles

Design Principle	Description
DP1 Safety (Mandatory)	The airspace change proposal must maintain a high standard of safety and should seek to enhance current levels of safety.
DP2 Policy (Mandatory)	The airspace change proposal should not be inconsistent with relevant legislation, the CAA's airspace modernisation strategy, or Secretary of State and CAA policy and guidance.
DP3 Environment (Mandatory)	The airspace change proposal should deliver the Government's key environmental objectives for air navigation as set out in the Government's Air Navigation Guidance 2017.
DP4 Technical	The ACP should consider impacts on air navigation service providers and other aviation stakeholders, such as nearby airport operators and other airspace users.
DP5 NPRs	This ACP should not change DSA's existing Noise Preferential Routes (NPRs) unless necessary to support safe operations or integration with other airspace structures.

Design Principle	Description
DP6 Airspace Structure	Any airspace structure(s) should be the minimum size and lowest classification needed to achieve its aims, minimising disruption and maximising integration with other airspace users.

Outside of the mandatory Design Principles which must be used, the DSA design principles have not been prioritised - they have been numbered for ease of reference only.

More details about how we developed the Design Principles are included in our [Stage 1 submission document](#) on the CAA's Airspace Change Portal.

Doncaster passed Stage 1 on 30 April 2026.

1.10 CAP1616 Stage 2: Options development

As part of the Stage 2 work, 1 option (Option 1) was shared with stakeholder representatives for their feedback at the same time as the Design Principles described above. This option proposed to re-instate the previous arrival and departure routes and the previous controlled airspace (CAS).

Stakeholder representatives were asked to feedback on Option 1 and pages 20 – 35 of the [Stage 2A submission document](#) provide details of the feedback received. Following this engagement, 3 further options were developed:

Proposed as part of Stakeholder engagement	Option 1 Reinstate the same controlled airspace structure and flight procedures that were in operation before the airport closed in 2022. CDC considered this to be the most practical starting point because the previous airspace structure was developed in line with airline requirements, informed by widespread consultation on an earlier ACP, and operated safely for many years. Reinstating it is likely to provide a stable foundation for the return of passenger, cargo and general aviation flights, whilst acknowledging that refinements can be explored through stakeholder engagement.
	Option 0 No Controlled Airspace This option was proposed by some stakeholders (BGA, GAA, LBA, LAA and DEA Aviation (Gamston)) and considers DSA opening and operating commercial passenger operations without any controlled airspace protection. As a minimum DSA would need an Aerodrome Traffic Zone (ATZ) which would retain the background airspace classification (Class G), Instrument Approaches and an appropriate level of Air Traffic Service to be provided. Option 0 was discounted ahead of the Design Principle Evaluation, as it did not meet the objective of the proposed change, as set out in the Statement of Need, which is to re-establish controlled airspace, Standard Instrument Departures (SIDs), Standard Terminal Arrival Routes (STARs), and Instrument Approach Procedures (IAPs) serving Doncaster Sheffield Airport (DSA).
Developed following stakeholder engagement	There is further information around the justification of the requirement for CAS, in order to safely open DSA, within Section 4.7 of the Stage 2A submission document.
	Option 2 Refinement of Option 1 due stakeholder feedback or to align with CAA policy Option 2 was based on a refined version of Option 1 following stakeholder feedback, with the aim to reduce the volume and/or classification of controlled airspace, integrate with the network airspace, and meet CAA policy. Option 2 also removed one of the previous departure routes because historic data showed that it was never used when DSA was previously operational. There's more information about Option 2 in section 4.8 (page 43) of the Stage 2A submission document.
	Option 3 Use of Radius-to-Fix to create less restrictive CAS structures and to aid future MTMA integration. Option 3 was developed following stakeholder feedback which said that DSA should consider a more radical solution which will reduce the volume and/or classification of CAS required. In addition to this, there

was feedback around how the DSA designs would integrate into the wider Manchester Terminal Manoeuvring Area (MTMA) airspace, which is currently being modernised in accordance with the CAA's Airspace Modernisation Strategy.

Option 3 was therefore developed as a brand-new option. It aims to use a very accurate type of PBN specification to:

- Reduce the numbers of people affected by noise and overflight and remain aligned with DSA's existing NPRs (which was subject to further analysis as part of the next stages of the process).
- Contain flight paths within the smallest amount of controlled airspace
- Position departures to the south of DSA as much as technically possible to aid existing and future MTMA integration
- Enhance systemisation for both DSA ATC and the surrounding MTMA network design

There's more information about Option 3 in section 4.8 (page 45) of the Stage 2A submission document.

1.11 CAP1616 Stage 2: Design Principle Evaluation

The Design Principle Evaluation (DPE) assesses how each option performs against each design principle. CAP1616 requires sponsors to define a methodology for whether an option has 'met', 'partially met', or 'not met' a design principle. At the end of the DPE, there is an opportunity to shortlist options ahead of the next stage of process.

Option 1 was evaluated to be inconsistent with relevant legislation, the CAA's airspace modernisation strategy and Secretary of State and CAA's policy and guidance with regard to CAA's Policy for the Design Controlled Airspace Structures. It was therefore evaluated as not meeting mandatory design principle 2 and was discontinued. In addition to this, NATS NERL, stated that they cannot support the Option 1 proposed approach to reinstate DSA's previous airspace, procedures, NPRs and associated arrangements exactly as they were when the airport was last operational for a number of reasons, that are outlined on page 59 of the Stage 2A document.

Option 2 and Option 3 were also assessed in the DPE and the outcome was that both options were taken to the Initial Options Appraisal,

1.12 CAP1616 Stage 2: Initial Options Appraisal

The next assessment was called the '[Initial Options Appraisal](#)' (IOA). It is the first of three phases of appraisal as part of the CAP1616 process. The IOA requires each option to be compared against 'without airspace change' scenarios based on year of implementation and 10 years following implementation. The 'without airspace change' scenario (sometimes called the 'do nothing') for DSA means no commercial operations (passenger and cargo arrivals and departures) and no controlled airspace.

There are a number of categories that require assessment as part of the CAP1616 process, including:

- | | |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| • Safety | • General Aviation |
| • Noise, | • Fuel burn |
| • Greenhouse Gas Emissions, | • Capacity |
| • Air Quality | • Resilience |
| • Biodiversity | • Airline, airport, and ATC costs |
| • Tranquillity | |

Option 2 and Option 3 were both assessed in the IOA and continued into Stage 3. This was because DSA wanted to further investigate how Option 3 would integrate with the existing airspace network, as well as undertake further, more detailed quantitative assessments on both of the options. DSA had also invited stakeholder to provide feedback on the two options with the opportunity to refine the designs ahead of the Stage 3 Full Options Appraisal.

1.13 CAP1616 Stage 1 and 2: Gateway (May 2026)

In March 2026 DSA submitted the Stage 1 and Stage 2 documentation to the CAA. The documents are available on the CAA's Airspace Change Portal: <https://airspacechange.caa.co.uk/PublicProposalArea?plID=656>

Following CAA feedback at the end of April, there was a targeted review of the Stage 2 documents and on 11 May 2026, the CAA passed DSA and approved the sponsor to proceed to Stage 3.

1.14 CAP1616 Stage 3: Full Options Appraisal

The [Full Options Appraisal \(FOA\)](#) assesses against the same CAP1616 categories and 'without airspace change' scenarios as the IOA, however the detail level of the assessment builds, with more quantitative assessments. Ahead of undertaking the assessment, Option 2 and option 3 were refined based on more detailed airspace integration, preliminary Instrument Flight Procedure (IFP) design, and safety requirements. Stakeholders were invited to feedback at the end of Stage 2, but no feedback was received that would impact the design of the two options.

Before discussing the outcomes of the FOA, it's important to provide a summary of the assessment methodology. Note, this is a summary only and the table provides details of where to find out further information.

Table 2 Overview of FOA methodology for each CAP1616 assessment category

CAP1616 assessment category	Overview of assessment methodology	Where to find out further information about methodology
Noise	Quantitative (data based) noise modelling of primary and secondary noise metrics required by the CAP1616 process. The outcomes from the primary metrics are also input into the Government's TAG spreadsheet, in order to monetise some of the impacts of change in noise exposure.	Section 9.2 of Communities and Local Interest main consultation document . Full technical details in FOA section 4.6.
Air Quality	Quantitative (data based) assessment.	Detailed Air Quality assessment is included as part of section 4.6 of the Full Options Appraisal.
Fuel burn & Greenhouse gas emissions	Quantitative (data based) assessment which was used to input into the Government's TAG spreadsheet, in order to monetise some of the impacts of the change.	Section 9.4 of Communities and Local Interest main consultation document . Full technical details in FOA section 4.6.
Tranquillity	Quantitative (data based) assessment.	Section 9.5 of Communities and Local Interest main consultation document . Full technical details in FOA section 4.6.
Biodiversity	Quantitative (data based) assessment.	Section 9.6 of Communities and Local Interest main consultation document . Full technical details in FOA section 4.6.
Capacity and economic benefit	Quantitative (data based) assessment. This included a monetised assessment of the value of passenger flights informed by recommendations set out by EUROCONTROL in	Full technical details in FOA section 4.6.

CAP1616 assessment category	Overview of assessment methodology	Where to find out further information about methodology
	the Standard Inputs for Economic Analysis document (Section 25).	
General aviation	Quantitative (data based) assessment of the changes in volumes and/or classifications of CAS. This was supported by qualitative analysis.	See section 7 of the Aviation Interest Main Consultation Document. Full technical details in FOA section 4.6.
Commercial airline training and other costs	Qualitative assessment as no costs were identified.	FOA section 4.6
Airport/air navigation service provider infrastructure costs	Qualitative assessment. These costs are not expected to be materially different between the two options and therefore they were not monetised.	FOA section 4.6
Airport/air navigation service provider operational costs and deployment costs	Part quantitative, part qualitative assessment. These costs are not expected to be materially different between the two options and therefore they were not monetised. On going operational costs to maintain the Instrument Flight Procedures were however quantified.	FOA section 4.6
Airport/air navigation service provider other costs	Quantitative assessment of potential costs for the airport to provide financial assistance towards acoustic insulation where residents are newly exposed to noise at the 63 dB LAeq,16h level or above.	Section 9.2 of Communities and Local Interest main consultation document. Full technical details in FOA section 4.6.
MTMA	Qualitative assessment of the potential impacts of DSA's options on the existing and future operations of adjacent airports and ANSPs..	See section 6.5 of the Aviation Interest Main Consultation Document. Full technical details in FOA section 4.6.
Safety	Qualitative conclusions determined following detailed safety assessments	FOA section 4.6

As per the CAP1616 requirements, the monetised assessment categories were presented as a 'Net Present Value' (NPV) using calculations as required by CAP1616. This includes adjustments taking into account inflation and discounting using the Government's Social time Preference Rate over the 10-year assessment period. More information around this can be found in the FOA section 6.1.

The NPV outcomes are shown in Table 3 Overall NPV outcomes from FOA (2025 prices) The outcomes showed around a 2% difference between the options with both options offering substantial benefits.

Table 3 Overall NPV outcomes from FOA (2025 prices)

	Option 2	Option 3
NPV (2025 prices)	£554,703,972 (Benefit)	£541,930,776 (Benefit)

It's important to note that NPV only presents the outcome of the monetised assessments noted in Table 2. It therefore cannot be used alone to make a decision on the preferred option, as we need to balance the outcomes of all the assessments across the CAP1616 categories. It's also important to note that this assessment does not

take into account the full long-term benefits of re-opening DSA. Re-opening Doncaster Sheffield Airport (DSA) is expected to contribute to long-term economic growth for South Yorkshire. Those estimates show that reopening the airport could boost the economy by approximately £5 billion by 2050, as well as provide wider economic benefits of around £2 billion over the same period¹.

Furthermore, the plans are forecasted to support thousands of jobs, with estimates suggesting more than 5,000 direct employment opportunities could be created across aviation, logistics, engineering, construction and local businesses.

How did the two options perform against the assessment categories in the FOA?

There is lots of information about how the two options performed against the assessment categories within section 5 of the FOA document. The following information within Table 4 is taken from the FOA conclusion which aims to summarise the main differentiating outcomes of the assessments to help explain why we selected Option 3 over Option 2 to bring to this consultation.

The green colour highlights where one option performs better than the other; it does not show how the option performed against the baseline. Please note that this is not an exhaustive summary of the overall assessments; for full assessment details please see section 5.2 and 5.3 of the FOA.

Table 4 Summary of many differentiators between Option 2 and Option 3

FOA metric	Option 2	Option 3
Safety		Option 3 is more systemised that option 2 with a lower reliance on controller intervention therefore controller and pilot workload should be lower than Option 2.
	As Option 2 is mainly based on the previous procedures which were safely in operation it is less likely to have IFP design and validation issues compared to Option 3. However, Option 3 has now undergone further design development and there is no evidence to suggest that there are any IFP concerns at this stage.	
	Both options have instances where the procedures with turns are contained within less than CAA's recommended 3nm from the edge of CAS, however it is anticipated that a suitable safety assessment can be made to justify this CAS containment. The planned PBN specification of Option 3 will help to support the safety case compared to Option 2.	
	No material differences between the options have been identified in terms of the safety of operations inside or outside controlled airspace.	
Noise (Primary metrics)	Option 2 (2023 prices)	Option 3 (2023 prices)
	Full TAG workbook outcome	
	-£9,916,396	-£9,684,884
	CAA adjusted TAG workbook outcome	
	-£6,854,005	-£6,984,581
	The TAG outcomes show that both options have a disbenefit in terms of noise (as expected when the 'without airspace change' is 0 arrivals and departures from DSA). The full TAG workbook results show Option 3 has marginally better performance than Option 2. The adjusted TAG results (to meet CAA requirements) show that Option 2 is marginally better than Option 3. In both cases the difference between the options was around 2%.	
The following table shows the difference in L_{Aeq} performance:		

¹ [Government backs mayor to reopen Doncaster Sheffield Airport - GOV.UK](#) and [i9 Cabinet 051125 SYAC report.pdf](#)

FOA metric	Option 2			Option 3																																
	Option 2			Option 3																																
	Contour	Total population	Number of schools	Contour	Total population	Number of schools																														
	LAeq,16h (Daytime) 2037																																			
	51	3,400	0	51	3,800	0																														
	54	1,300	0	54	1,400	0																														
	LAeq,8h (Nighttime) 2028																																			
	45	700	0	45	600	0																														
	LAeq,8h (Nighttime) 2037																																			
	45	13,500	4	45	11,400	3																														
	48	4,900	0	48	5,100	0																														
	51	2,300	0	51	2,500	0																														
	In the L_{Aeq} daytime contours, Option 2 has 400 less people (c.12%) in the 51dB 2037 contour and 100 less people (c.8%) in the 54dB 2037 contour. In the L_{Aeq} nighttime contours Option 3 has 100 less people (c.17%) in the 45dB 2028 contour. By 2037, Option 3 has 2100 people less in the contour (c.18%). Within the higher 48db and 51dB contour bands, Option 2 has 200 less people (c.4% and c.9% respectively). Given this mixed performance it is very difficult to draw a conclusion between the two options in terms of L_{Aeq}; this is supported by the overall TAG results which show a very small 2% difference between the options.																																			
Noise (Secondary metrics – N65)	<table><tr><td colspan="6">2037 N65 (only contours where there is a difference between the options)</td></tr><tr><td></td><td colspan="2">Option 2</td><td colspan="3">Option 3</td></tr><tr><td>Contour</td><td>Total population</td><td>Number of schools</td><td colspan="2">Total population</td><td>Number of schools</td></tr><tr><td>5</td><td>29,800</td><td>8</td><td colspan="2">30,200</td><td>7</td></tr><tr><td>10</td><td>22,500</td><td>5</td><td colspan="2">15,600</td><td>3</td></tr></table> Within the 2037 N65 rate 5 contour, there are 400 fewer people in Option 2 than Option 3 however this is a c.1% marginal difference between the options. Within the rate 10 contour, there are 6,900 fewer people in Option 3 than Option 2 which equates to around a 30% difference between the options.						2037 N65 (only contours where there is a difference between the options)							Option 2		Option 3			Contour	Total population	Number of schools	Total population		Number of schools	5	29,800	8	30,200		7	10	22,500	5	15,600		3
2037 N65 (only contours where there is a difference between the options)																																				
	Option 2		Option 3																																	
Contour	Total population	Number of schools	Total population		Number of schools																															
5	29,800	8	30,200		7																															
10	22,500	5	15,600		3																															
Noise (Secondary metrics – N60)	<table><tr><td colspan="6">2037 N60 (only contours where there is a difference between the options)</td></tr><tr><td></td><td colspan="2">Option 2</td><td colspan="3">Option 3</td></tr><tr><td>Contour</td><td colspan="2">Total population</td><td colspan="3">Total population</td></tr><tr><td>5</td><td colspan="2">16,500</td><td colspan="3">16,600</td></tr></table> Within the 2037 N60 rate 5 contour, there are 100 fewer people in Option 2 than Option 3 however this is a c.<1% marginal difference between the options.						2037 N60 (only contours where there is a difference between the options)							Option 2		Option 3			Contour	Total population		Total population			5	16,500		16,600								
2037 N60 (only contours where there is a difference between the options)																																				
	Option 2		Option 3																																	
Contour	Total population		Total population																																	
5	16,500		16,600																																	

FOA metric	Option 2			Option 3	
Noise (Secondary metrics – overflight)	2037 Overflight contour rate	Option 2 Overflights (Daytime) Total population	Option 2 Overflights (Nighttime) Total population	Option 3 Overflights (Daytime) Total population	Option 3 Overflights (Nighttime) Total population
	5	59,400	1,200	130,700	1,000
	20	0	0	400	0
	Within the 2037 daytime overflight contours, there's around a 55% difference between Option 2 and Option 3 with Option 3 overflying 71,300 more people during the day than Option 2 (below 7,000ft). The overflight contours extend across the airspace but one of the main differences between Option 2 and Option 3 is due to RWY 20 arrivals in Option 3 overflying Doncaster city centre. This is because Option 3 aims to minimise the volume of CAS required and the smaller volume of CAS to North-West results in aircraft needing to fly over the city rather than flying north-west of it, as they are expected to do in Option 2 owing to the larger airspace volume in that option. Over the city centre in Option 3, we expect RWY 20 arrivals to be around 6,000ft or above. Within the 2037 nighttime overflight contours, Option 3 offers better performance than Option 2, overflying 200 less people (around a c.17% difference).				
Air quality	There would be no difference between the two options; with both options, there would be no possibility of pollutants breaching legal limits and target values following the implementation of the airspace change proposal or worsening an existing breach of legal limits and target values.				
Fuel burn and Greenhouse Gas emissions	When compared to Option 3, Option 2 results in improved fuel efficiency and lower greenhouse gas emissions due to the shorter average route mileage and lower fuel burn intensity per ATM. Both options have a disbenefit in terms of Greenhouse gas emissions however Option 2 offers c.£5.5m better performance than Option 3 in terms of NPV (based on 2023 prices).				
Tranquillity	Neither option will overly any National Parks or National Landscapes.				
Biodiversity	No significant effects on habitats, flora or fauna are expected for either option.				
Capacity / resilience	There would be no difference between the options in terms of capacity and/or resilience.				
General aviation access	Option 3 overall requires 15.8nm ³ less CAS compared to Option 2 and Option 3 is much less restrictive to GA operations to the west of DSA, a region which the BGA identified as having particular importance to the BGA, claiming that the 2022 design created "narrow, shallow corridors".				
Economic impact	There is no material difference between the options in terms of economic impacts.				
Airline training costs	There is no material difference between the options in terms of training costs.				
Other airline costs	There is no material difference between the options in terms of other airline costs.				
Airport / ANSP infrastructure,	There is no material difference between the options in terms of infrastructure, deployment, operational and other costs. Option 2 does have £40k less IFP review cost than Option 3				

FOA metric	Option 2	Option 3
deployment, operational and other costs	but given this cost is across a 10-year period, it is not considered significant enough to differentiate between the options.	
Interdependencies with current MTMA airspace		Option 3 offers less interdependency with Leeds Bradford Airport compared to Option 2 due to the location of the departure routes to the south of DSA.
Interdependencies with future MTMA airspace		Option 3 offers greater compatibility with the future MTMA airspace compared to option 2 owing to the location of the routes to the south of DSA and the use of the RNP+RF specification,

Deciding which option(s) to take to consultation

At the end of the Full Options Appraisal, we looked to the outcomes of the assessments to understand which option(s) to take to consultation. A key part of the CAP1616 process is to have a transparent approach when establishing which options to take forward, although CAP1616 does not define a shortlisting methodology.

Overall, when determining which option to take to consultation, DSA is required to balance interests across many stakeholders along with the requirements of the CAA and government. It is really important to note that the threshold for discontinuing an option cannot be based on quantitative assessments alone, but must also come down to the qualitative appraisals and professional judgment, as there are many factors and FOA categories to balance.

Air Navigation Guidance

When considering the environmental assessments within the FOA, we have looked to the Air Navigation Guidance (ANG) 2017 (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/uk-airnavigation-guidance-2017>). The ANG is guidance to the CAA on its environmental objectives when carrying out its air navigation functions, and to the CAA and wider industry on airspace and noise management. The ANG outlines the Government's altitude-based priorities for consideration of the environmental impacts arising from airspace change proposals.

The altitude priorities say "In the airspace from the ground to below 4,000 feet, the Government's environmental priority is to limit and, where possible, reduce the total adverse noise effects on people". Both options have a disbenefit in terms of adverse noise impacts. This is inevitable as the 'without airspace change' scenario has 0 flights and therefore the introduction of flights will increase noise at DSA. Comparing the two options, when we look to the TAG outcomes there is only a 2% difference between the options (and there is mixed performance depending on the TAG calculation used). Within the L_{Aeq} contour population information, there is also mixed performance. As a 2% difference is marginal, we did not consider the differences in the primary metrics alone to be significant enough to determine decision making. Instead, we factored in the L_{Aeq} outcomes alongside the wider assessment of the options across the various categories.

Beyond 4,000ft, the ANG says "In the airspace at or above 4,000 feet to below 7,000 feet, the environmental priority should continue to be minimising the impact of aviation noise in a manner consistent with the Government's overall policy on aviation noise, unless the CAA is satisfied that the evidence presented by the sponsor demonstrates this would disproportionately increase CO₂ emissions".

There are marginal (c.1%) differences between the options in terms of the N65 rate 5 and N60 rate 5 contour, however within the N65 rate 10 contour, Option 3 impacts c.30% less people than Option 2.

Within the overflight contours, which are not a measure of noise, Option 2 does overfly significantly fewer people in the daytime than Option 3, and it is also noted that Option 2 offers better GHG emission performance than Option 3, with a c.15% difference between the options. Although the ANG altitude-based priorities note that, above 4000ft, impacts to CO₂ emissions should be balanced against noise, in the case of DSA the reasons for the Option 3 flight paths above 4,000ft being advantageous go beyond noise, i.e. this is not just a CO₂ v noise

assessment but we also need to consider CAA Policy for the Design Controlled Airspace Structures and other Government objectives when determining route placement.

Airspace Modernisation Strategy

To understand this further, we've looked to the objectives of the Government's Airspace Modernisation Strategy (AMS) [CAP1711](#) to understand how the two options perform. Just like above, this is not an exhaustive summary of the assessments but instead Table 5 aims to pick out the key differences between the two to options.

Table 5 Option performance against the objectives of the Airspace Modernisation Strategy

AMS objective	Option 2	Option 3
Safety Maintaining and, where possible, improving the UK's high levels of aviation safety has priority over all other 'ends' to be achieved by airspace modernisation		As noted above, Option 3 is more systemised than option 2 with a lower reliance on controller intervention therefore controller and pilot workload should be lower than Option 2.
Integration of diverse users Airspace modernisation should wherever possible satisfy the requirements of operators and owners of all classes of aircraft, including the accommodation of existing users (such as commercial air transport, General Aviation operations, military, taking into account interests of national security) and new or rapidly developing users (such as remotely piloted aircraft systems, advanced air mobility (aerial taxis), spacecraft, high-altitude platform systems)		Both options accommodate commercial air transport however Option 3 proposes less CAS than Option 2 which is considered to be advantageous to GA operators and other new and rapidly developing airspace users. Option 3 more closely aligns with the CAA's SARG Policy 126: Policy for the Design Controlled Airspace Structures which requires that "...the amount of controlled airspace is the minimum required to maintain a high standard of air safety and, subject to overriding national security or defence requirements, that the needs of all airspace users is reflected on an equitable basis"
Simplification - reducing complexity and improving efficiency Consistent with the safe operation of aircraft, airspace modernisation should wherever possible secure the most efficient use of airspace and the expeditious flow of traffic, accommodating new demand and improving system resilience to the benefit of airspace users, thus improving choice and value for money for consumers		Both options accommodate new demand and improve system resilience however Option 3 offers a more systemised airspace than option 2. This helps create an efficient airspace for ATC and airlines whilst also reducing complexity outside of CAS (by proposing less CAS than Option 2). Option 3 also offers better integration with the wider existing airspace, minimising interactions with Leeds Bradford Airport. The design is also more likely to have greater compatibility with the modernised Manchester Terminal Manoeuvring Area (MTMA) airspace.

AMS objective	Option 2	Option 3
		Finally, the MOD have noted that Option 3 offers benefits for their operations compared to Option 2.
Environmental sustainability Environmental sustainability will be an overarching principle applied through all airspace modernisation activities. Airspace modernisation should deliver the Government's key environmental objectives with respect to air navigation as set out in the Government's Air Navigation Guidance and, in doing so, will take account of the interests of all stakeholders affected by the use of airspace	As discussed above, there is mixed performance in terms of environmental sustainability when considering the primary and secondary noise metrics, and the GHG assessment.	

Overall outcome

Taking into account the performance against the AMS, we recognise that there is mixed performance between the two options in terms of the environmental objectives, however when we balance the overall objectives of the AMS, Option 3 offers many other benefits compared to Option 2.

Along with considering the Government's Altitude based priorities and the Airspace Modernisation Strategy, we also considered stakeholder interests. We recognise that there is an environmental impact from re-opening Doncaster Airport however, for some communities within the local area, the positive economic and social benefits that the airport creates in the region go some way to offset the negative environmental impacts. When considering CAS, the impacts for GA may be seen by some as only negative and we have considered this when balancing which option to take to consultation as the preferred. We also considered the interests of other stakeholders, such as the MOD, NERL and Leeds Bradford Airport whereby we believe Option 3 offers a better solution.

Given all of the assessment above against the ANG Altitude Based Priorities, the AMS, and considering stakeholder interests, on balance, DSA selected Option 3 as the preferred option to take to this Consultation.

1.15 CAP1616 Stage 3: Consultation (August / September 2026)

This brings us to where we are now – this Consultation.

We are consulting on our proposed design. We have chosen to bring one core option forward to consultation to be able to clearly present to consultees the very detailed information around how the proposal could benefit or impact compared to the 'without airspace change' scenario.

Your feedback will be used to help shape our proposal and develop the final design. For example, you may tell us that it would be advantageous to move a route slightly to avoid a noise sensitive area, or a boundary of Controlled Airspace would benefit from a lateral change to better suit a visual reference point. You may also wish to provide feedback around the assumptions, assessments and conclusions from the FOA (summarised in this document).

All your feedback will be considered by DSA, and we will document this process so that you can understand how your feedback has been considered as part of the final proposal. Your feedback will also help us to further understand the benefits and impacts of the proposal and where possible we will incorporate this into future options appraisals.

What if the design fundamentally changes following Consultation?

Depending on the scale of the changes, we may either undertake targeted engagement or, if the design changes are significant, we may carry out further consultation activities. As part of Stage 4 of the CAP1616 process, this will be agreed with the CAA ahead of any engagement/consultation activities taking place.