

Welcome to our consultation on the future of Route 4.

Today's event is to help you find out more about London Gatwick's Route 4, the Airspace Change Process, and how you can have your say on London Gatwick's proposals.

If you have any questions, please speak to a member of the team. We are accepting feedback until 23:59 on Tuesday 28 April 2026.



Map of the current position of Route 4

What is Route 4?

Route 4 is one of the departure routes for aircraft flying out of London Gatwick.

Aircraft flying on Route 4's departure routes take off in a westerly direction, before turning 180 degrees northwards and then heading east towards their destination, as shown on the map below left.

Background to this airspace change

Airspace in the UK was designed in the 1950s using old forms of ground-based navigation technology.

This technology is being replaced by more modern satellite-based navigation procedures as part of a government-led drive to modernise the UK's airspace.

All UK airports are required to adopt the new navigational procedures so that aircraft can fly along existing routes using the new technology.

The new navigation procedures will help to deliver wider benefits, including reduced noise and environmental impacts for communities.

The history of Route 4

Satellite-based navigational procedures were first introduced on all nine departure routes from the Main Runway at London Gatwick in 2013, including Route 4.

However, due to regulatory and legal challenges, this technology was subsequently withdrawn on Route 4 in 2019.

Since then, London Gatwick has undertaken extensive work to progress an Airspace Change Proposal (ACP) to reintroduce the new navigational procedures on Route 4 and overcome issues identified previously.

The airspace change process

Before changes to airspace can be made, a rigorous process must be undertaken to identify different options and assess these against a range of criteria.

The process – which is regulated by the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA), the UK's airspace regulator – also includes engagement with communities and stakeholders affected by the changes.

The airspace change process is made up of seven stages. London Gatwick is at Stage 3, where it is required to undertake a public consultation to give communities and stakeholders the chance to view and comment on its shortlisted options.

After this consultation, London Gatwick may update its designs to reflect feedback received and submit a final proposal to the CAA, who will then make a final decision on whether to approve the changes.

History of Route 4 Airspace Change Proposal

- 2013**
 - London Gatwick submits ACP to introduce new navigation procedures on all nine of its departure routes following public consultation.
- 2013**
 - CAA approves the changes.
- 2014**
 - New navigation procedures are introduced on all departure routes.
- 2015**
 - CAA reviews all the redesigned routes and approves the majority. However, it finds that Route 4 has not delivered the aim of the airspace change and requires the route to be modified.
- 2016**
 - London Gatwick submits an amended Route 4 proposal to the CAA. CAA approves the amended Route 4 proposal.
- 2018**
 - CAA quashes its decision to approve amended Route 4 following a legal challenge.
- 2018**
 - London Gatwick restarts the ACP process for Route 4.
- 2022**
 - London Gatwick re-engages stakeholders to develop shortlist of route options for Route 4.
- 2026**
 - Public consultation on short-listed options for Route 4 (where we are today).



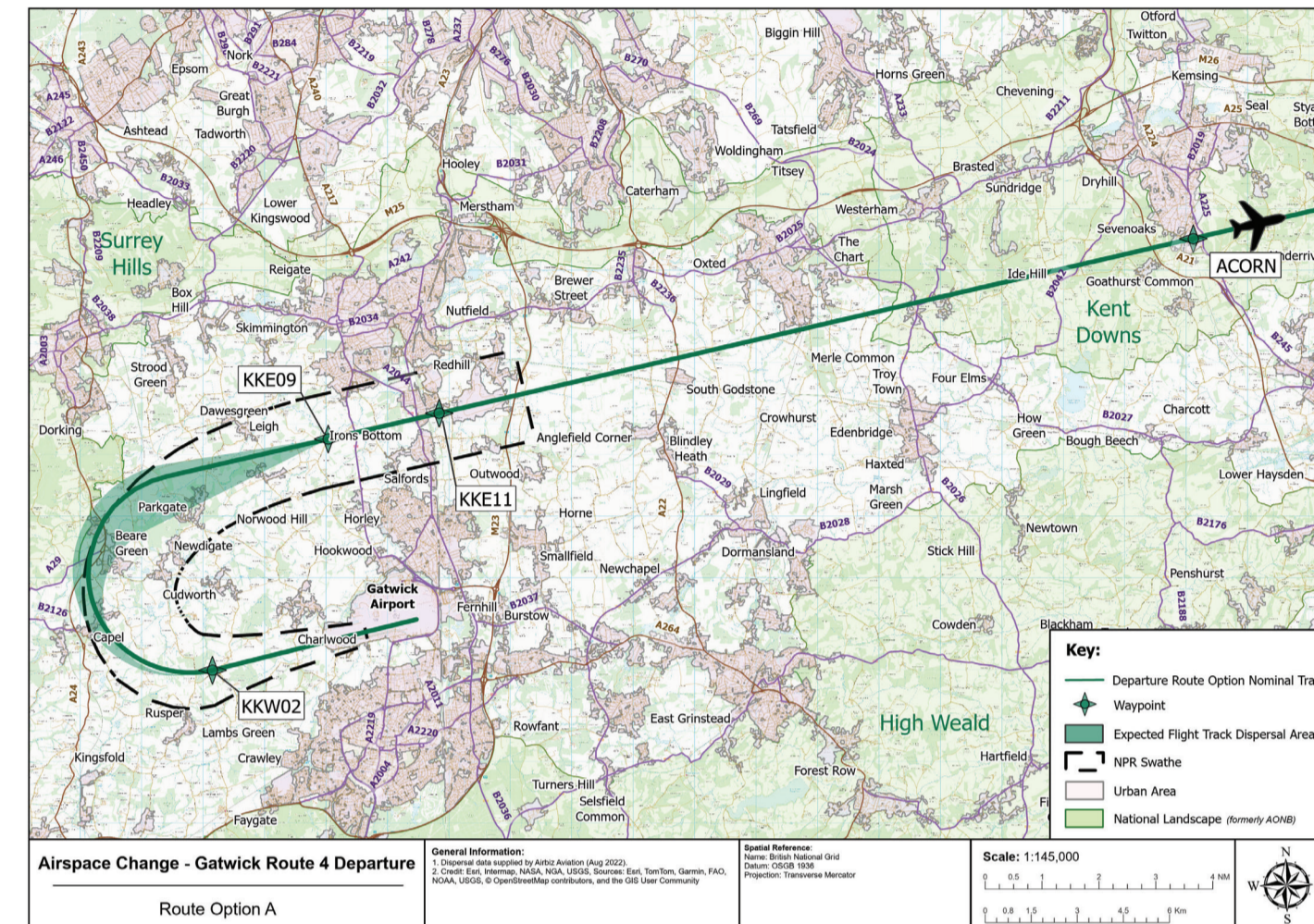
LONDON GATWICK

The shortlisted options.

Four options have been developed by London Gatwick through engagement with community representatives and industry stakeholders during earlier stages of the process. All options have been subject to a rigorous technical and environmental assessment against a range of criteria as part of the options appraisal process to identify the likely impacts (positive and negative).

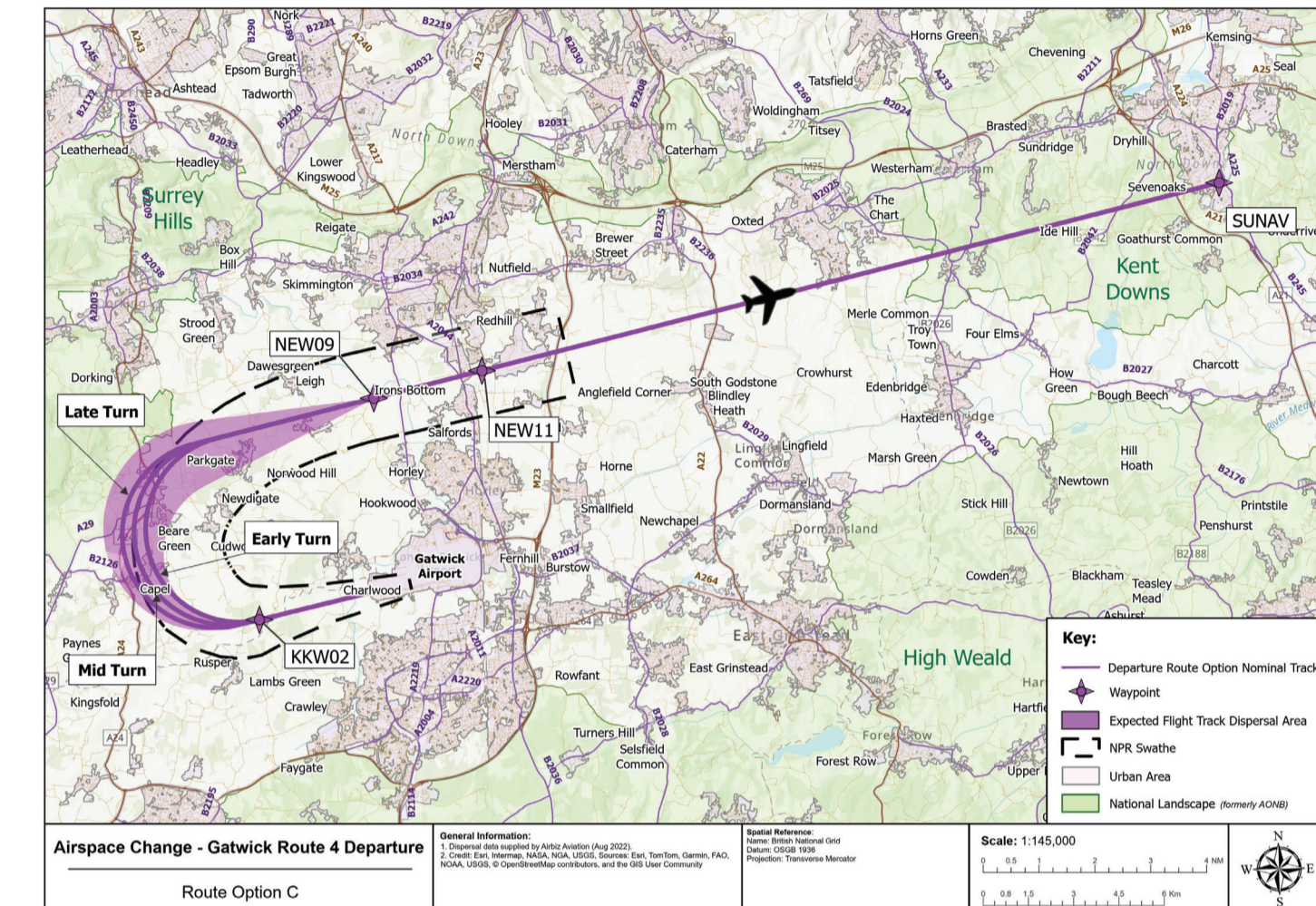
Option A

Option A aims to closely replicate the existing conventional procedure. Aircraft depart straight ahead, then turn at waypoint KKW02, following a path designed to match the conventional route as closely as possible. After the initial turn, aircraft proceed through waypoints KKE09 and KKE11, before routing via ACORN to their destination. This is the only option that retains the ACORN waypoint.



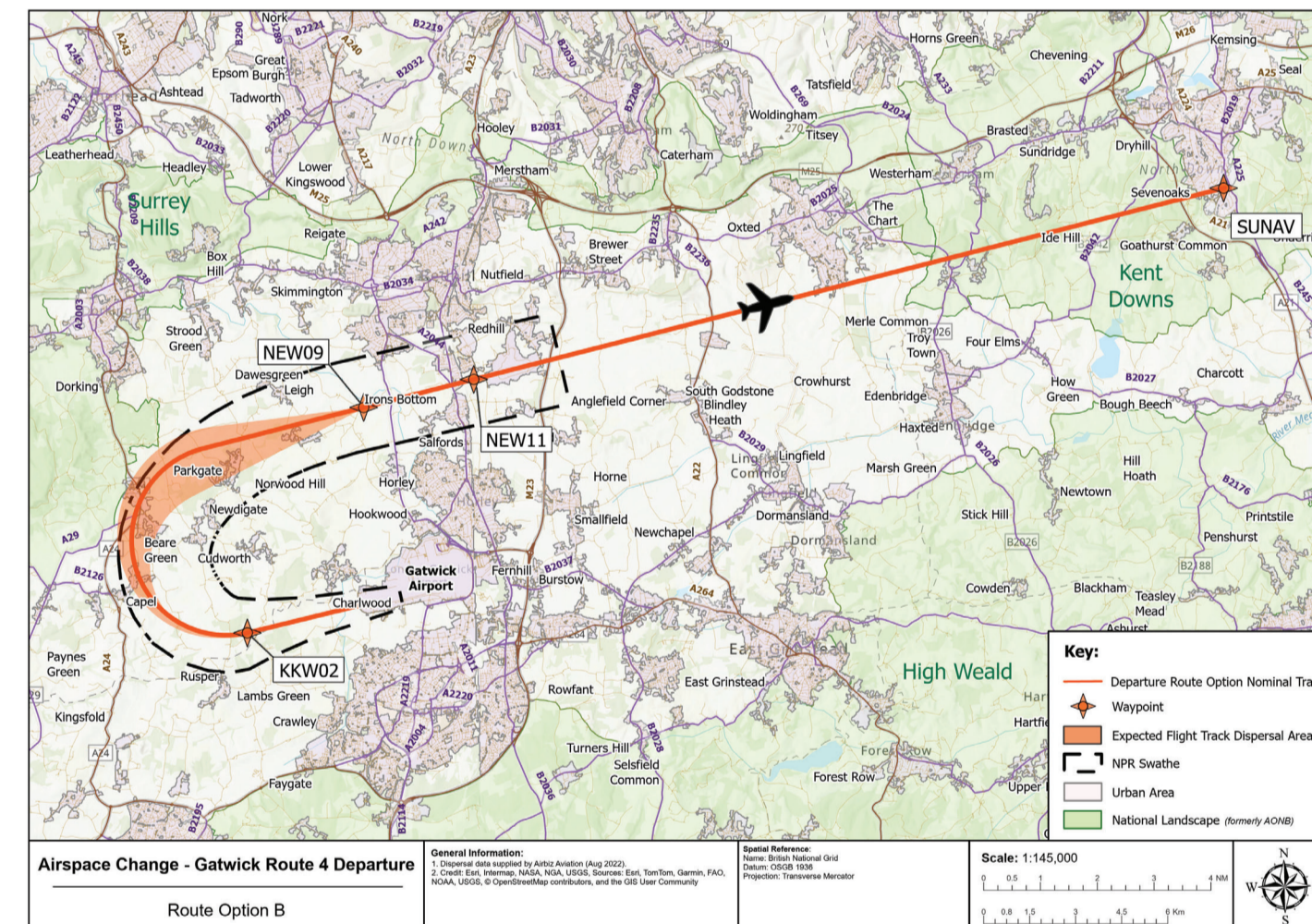
Option C

Option C introduces as much dispersion in the turn as possible in line with feedback received during Stage 2 of the ACP process. It features three sequential turn points, spaced 400m apart and rotated periodically to vary departure paths. After the chosen turn, aircraft converge at waypoint NEW09 and continue through NEW11 to SUNAV. This option increases variability in flight paths, but this variation will need to take place at pre-agreed periods for safety and operational reasons.



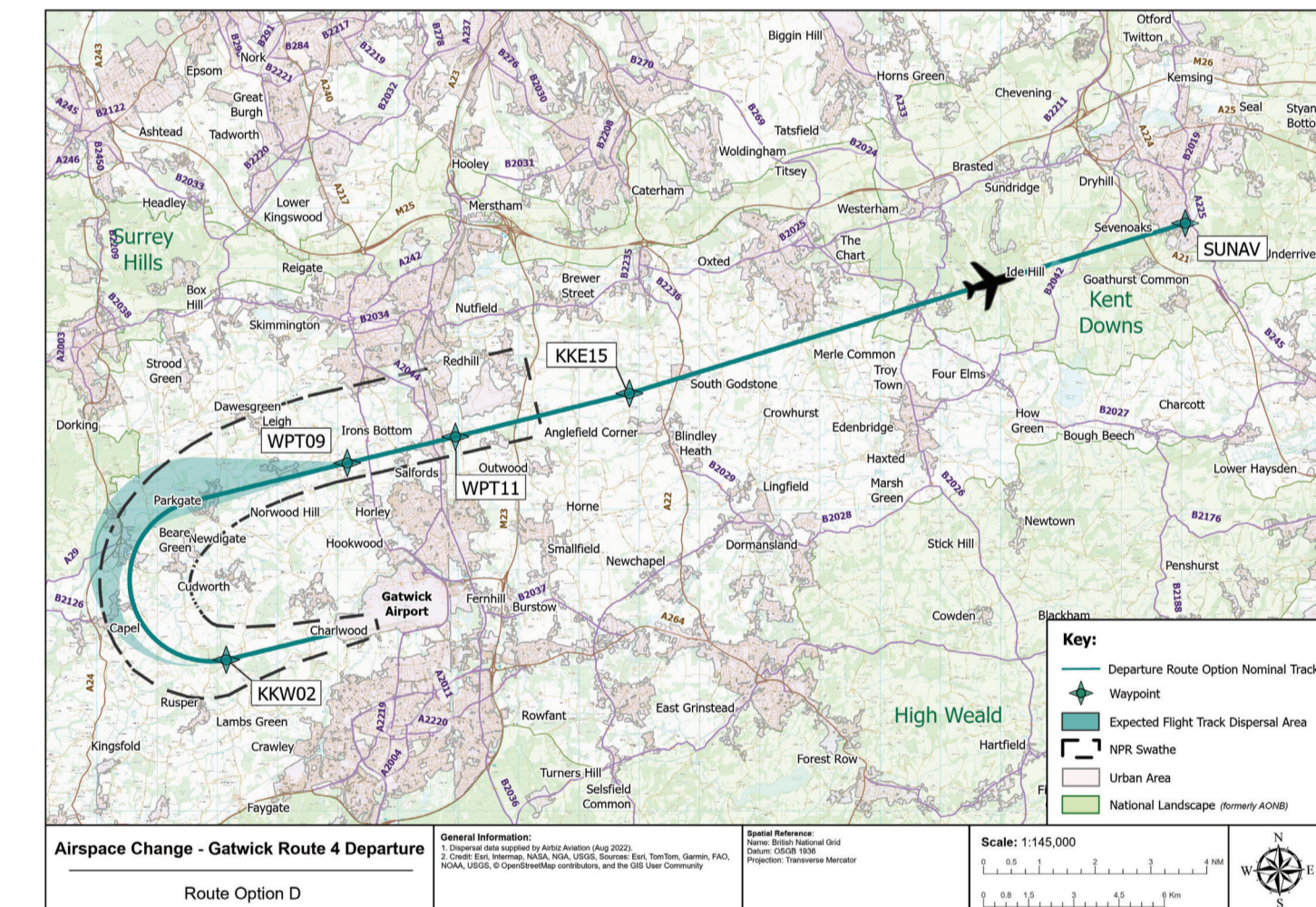
Option B

Option B is based on the previous satellite-based navigation procedure introduced in 2016 but keeping the straight portion after the turn as per the existing conventional procedure, unlike Option D (right). Aircraft follow the same initial departure and turn at waypoint KKW02, then proceed through NEW09 and NEW11 waypoints towards SUNAV.



Option D

Option D replicates the satellite-based navigation procedure as published in 2016, including a tighter initial turn at waypoint KKW02 resulting in more pronounced track overshoot. After the turn, aircraft pass through waypoints WPT09 and WPT11, then adjust left at KKE15 before heading to SUNAV. The route tracks further south than other options.



Explore the route options in more detail

Several tools are available to help you understand the route options in greater detail.

This includes a video which illustrates how each option differs, and a noise tool which allows you to explore the noise impact of each option from a given address.

Scan the QR code to access these tools.

Assessing the impacts.

Each of the options has been subject to rigorous technical and environmental assessments (against an agreed baseline) to identify their likely impacts.

The assessment criteria cover a wide range of topics, including noise, CO₂ emissions and fuel burn. In the Full Options Appraisal each option is analysed, quantified, and monetised. A positive figure indicates a net benefit to society versus the baseline. A negative figure indicates a net impact to society versus the baseline.

The table below sets out the key findings from the appraisal process. The results have been RAG (Red, Amber, Green) rated to provide a visual indication of the positive and negative impacts of each option.

The CAA requires London Gatwick to identify a preferred option at this stage in the process. London Gatwick has identified Option D as the preferred option – as it is the best performing option, based on the assessments to date.

However, your feedback is important and will influence which option is taken forward to the next stage of the process.

Assessment Criteria	Option A – compared to the baseline	Option B – compared to the baseline	Option C – compared to the baseline	Option D – compared to the baseline
Noise impact on health and quality of life	£3,214	£109,812	£24,977	£301,183
Air quality	No change	No change	No change	No change
Greenhouse gas impact	-£42,287	£67,465	-£79,904	£325,159
Tranquility	No change	No change	No change	No change
Biodiversity	No change	No change	No change	No change
Capacity and resilience	No change	No change	No change	No change
Access	No change	No change	No change	No change
Economic impact from increased effective capacity	No change	No change	No change	No change
Fuel burn	-£19,380	£12,540	-£30,780	£90,060
Training costs	No change	No change	No change	No change
Other costs	No change	No change	No change	No change
Infrastructure costs	No change	No change	No change	No change
Operational costs	No change	No change	No change	No change
Deployment costs	No change	No change	No change	No change

London Gatwick's preferred option based on the results of the options appraisal



Next steps.

After this consultation, London Gatwick will carefully consider all the feedback and make a decision on which option to submit to the CAA for approval.

The CAA will then review and assess the final ACP and may request further information or clarification ahead of making the regulatory decision.

The CAA will then decide whether to approve the final ACP. This decision may be subject to modifications to, and conditions on, the final ACP.

At Stage 6, the approved final ACP will be implemented.

At Stage 7, the Post Implementation Review will analyse the impact of the implemented airspace change to allow the CAA to determine if it has produced the intended outcomes.

Have your say

Your feedback is important as it will help influence which option is selected.

You can share your views by completing the feedback form on our Citizen Space consultation hub at route4acp.co.uk or by scanning the QR code below.

Alternatively, you can send your comments in writing to FREEPOST ROUTE 4 CONSULTATION.

The deadline for submitting feedback is 23:59 on Tuesday 28 April 2026.



Any questions?

Speak to a member of the project team here today, or contact us via:

PHONE: 0808 303 4560

EMAIL: LGWairspace.Rte4@gatwickairport.com

CITIZEN SPACE WEBSITE: route4acp.co.uk

The Airspace Change Process

Stage 1 Define

Assess requirement

Design principles

DEFINE GATEWAY

Stage 2 Develop and Assess

Options development

Options appraisal

DEVELOP AND ASSESS GATEWAY

Stage 3 Consult/ Engage

Consultation/engagement preparation

CONSULT/ENGAGE GATEWAY

Commence consultation/engagement

Collate & review responses

WE ARE HERE

Stage 4 Update and Submit

Update design

Submit proposal to CAA

Stage 5 Decide

CAA assessment

CAA DECISION

Stage 6 Implement

Implement

Stage 7 PIR

Post implementation review