

Decision Maker: EXECUTIVE

Date: Wednesday 8 February 2023
For pre-decision scrutiny at ERC PDS on Thursday 2 February 2023

Decision Type: Non-Urgent Executive Key

Title: BIGGIN HILL AIRPORT NOISE ACTION PLAN REVIEW

Contact Officer: Matthew Amer, Airport Monitoring Officer
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Chief Officer: Director of Housing, Planning, Property and Regeneration

Ward: (All Wards);

1. Reason for report

At the meeting of the Executive Committee on 19 October 2022, an update was brought to the Executive on the Biggin Hill Airport Noise Action Plan review. At the time of the report, one of the key commitments of the Noise Action Plan, the new approach to Runway 03, was yet to be approved by the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA). As this commitment was deemed to be one of the most important for residents, the committee asked for a further report to be brought to the Executive Committee in January 2023, once the CAA had made its decision on this issue.

The CAA has now issued its decision refusing the new approach to R03. This report recommends moving forwards with the revision of the NAP with a view to making improvements without the benefit of the new approach to R03 for the next five years.

2. **RECOMMENDATION(S)**

2.1 Note that the CAA has made a decision not to approve the new Instrument Approach Procedure for Runway 03

2.2 Agree that BHAL in association with the Council need to work on the revision of the NAP and produce a new NAP for the following five years

2.3 Authorise officers to work with BHAL to produce a revised NAP, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Resources, Commissioning and Contract Management taking into account the fact that the new Instrument Approach Procedure for Runway 03 will not be delivered in the short to medium term future

2.4 Note the officers' suggestions of possible improvements set out in this report to be discussed with BHAL along with other suggestions from residents and other parties in the next few months

- 2.5 Note that sufficient time will need to be allowed to discuss and agree feasible improvements and codify them in a clear and agreed legal document**
- 2.6 Note that an update on progress of the commercial aspects of the NAP revision will be reported in six months, with a long stop date of end of the year to complete the legal agreement.**

Impact on Vulnerable Adults and Children

1. Summary of Impact: N/A
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Corporate Policy

1. Policy Status: Existing Policy
 2. BBB Priority: Excellent Council Vibrant, Thriving Town Centres Regeneration
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Financial

1. Cost of proposal: Not Applicable
 2. Ongoing costs: Not Applicable
 3. Budget head/performance centre: N/A
 4. Total current budget for this head: £N/A
 5. Source of funding: N/A
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Personnel

1. Number of staff (current and additional): 1
 2. If from existing staff resources, number of staff hours: N/A
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Legal

1. Legal Requirement: Statutory Requirement
 2. Call-in: Applicable
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Procurement

1. Summary of Procurement Implications: N/A
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Customer Impact

1. Estimated number of users/beneficiaries (current and projected): Residents in wards overflowed by aircraft using Biggin Hill Airport are affected by its operations.
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Ward Councillor Views

1. Have Ward Councillors been asked for comments? As this is a Borough Asset individual Wards have not been consulted, however this report has been circulated to all Councillors.

3. COMMENTARY

CAA Decision on Runway 03

- 3.1 The CAA published its decision on the Airspace Change Proposal on 21 December 2022. The CAA decided not to approve the new Instrument Approach Procedure as they deemed “it will not maintain a high level of safety”. The CAA state that “the final proposed design does not address the concerns raised by the CAA over the complexity and nonstandard nature of the proposed design.”
- 3.2 The full CAA report is in the public domain and is published on the CAA website.
- 3.3 The decision on this new approach to Runway 03 effectively means the reduction of flights of 30%-40% and therefore alleviation of aircraft noise suffered by residents living under or near the Airport’s Instrument Landing System (ILS) to the north of the airport will not be delivered.
- 3.4 We understand BHAL will renew its application to the CAA for a new approach to Runway 03. However, the timeframe for its delivery is unknown at this time. This means that matters will have to be progressed taking the lack of a new approach to Runway 03 into account.

Proposals for a Revision of the NAP or a New NAP

- 3.5 No doubt the decision of the CAA is a huge set back and will be disappointing for all concerned. The Council has received correspondence from Flightpath Watch and officers met with representatives of the Group recently.
- 3.6 It is clear that all parties now wish to move to a revised NAP to look at improvements, some of which have been discussed and debated in formal and informal meetings.
- 3.7 In order to progress this work officers are seeking authority to work in association with BHAL and continue to engage with residents and Flightpath Watch to produce a revised NAP. It is envisaged that this process could take six months or more to work out the practicalities of implementing measures and prepare a legal document which will also need to be an improvement on the previous documents, in terms of clarity and the ability to deliver positive and measurable commitments
- 3.8 In this report officers have set out some of the improvements that the Council will suggest on its behalf and on behalf of residents. It may well be that BHAL will not be able to accept all of the Council’s asks, however, we envisage this to be an iterative process.
- 3.9 In addition, the Council will also consider the documents submitted by Flightpath Watch on 4 January 2023. It is a lengthy and detailed document, which officers will consider carefully when devising the conditions of the revised NAP.
- 3.10 As a guiding principle, where possible, every opportunity to reduce noise disruption for residents affected by the operation of Biggin Hill Airport should be investigated and, if viable, implemented.
- 3.11 Due note should be given to practices of other airports that may set a precedent and offer further opportunities for London Biggin Hill Airport to advance measures taken to reduce

detrimental impact on residents and the borough.

- 3.12 As suggested by the CAA Environmental Research and Consultancy Department report (paragraph 66), improvements to the Noise Action Plan should be, where possible, “specific, measurable, achievable, realistic, and timely” (“SMART”). In taking these requests forward, this acronym should be adhered to, with the alterations honed accordingly.
- 3.13 Before embarking on this programme of work officers will seek to clarify the terms of engagement with a view to producing a SMART new NAP focused on outcomes which make a real and tangible difference to residents living under the flightpath.

Suggested revisions to the Noise Action Plan / Commitments for consideration in revision of NAP

- 3.14 Take action to reduce impact on residents of ‘circling approach’ to Runway 03. This noise disruption was expected to be reduced by the new approach to Runway 03 that was not approved by the CAA in December 2022. Action could be taken quickly to offer protection and respite to those residents affected by this approach, as promised.
- 3.15 Update noise modelling software used to create noise footprints to a newer, more appropriate version, as suggested in RSK Acoustics report (paragraph 3.3-3.5) & CAA report paragraph 56.
- 3.16 Alter quarterly noise footprints to include 51db Laeq 16hr & 54db Laeq 16hr contours, and set new appropriate targets to control and reduce this area over the next five years.
- 3.17 As suggested by the CAA Environmental Research and Consultancy Department (paragraph 57), in an effort to encourage the use of aircraft that create less noise disruption, introduce sliding tariff scheme for Chapter 3, 4 and 14 aircraft, with those of a lesser chapter (or equivalent) paying a greater amount.
- 3.18 As suggested by the CAA Environmental Research and Consultancy Department (paragraph 58), introduce a premium tariff for using the airport during the hours of 06:30-07:00 and 22:00-23:00.
- 3.19 Publish accurate diagrams of Noise Sensitive Areas, Noise Preferential Routes and Track Violation Limits for greater transparency and understanding.
- 3.20 Explore possibility of reducing TVLs as suggested in RSK Acoustics report paragraph 5.9
- 3.21 Set timetable for phasing out of aircraft not compliant with ICAO Chapter 3.
- 3.22 As suggested in RSK Acoustics report paragraph 8.2, confirm in writing new limits on circuit training and testing flights that are being applied, with regards to timing and decision making. Publish clear directions on how circuit flights should be flown with relation to NSAs, to be enforced if deviated from. Introduce quota on the number of circuit training and testing flights that may be flown on the BHA circuit in a given period of time, including a ban on weekend circuit flights and reduced hours during the summer months.
- 3.23 Examine NSAs to see if improvements can be made and new protection introduced for areas not currently protected by NSA status.

- 3.24 Agree target for use of mobile noise monitor to understand noise disturbance created for Bromley residents.
- 3.25 Explore ways in which training and testing flights can be conducted over areas of low population density at as high an altitude as possible.
- 3.26 Introduce Air Quality monitoring to the airport.
- 3.27 As suggested by the CAA Environmental Research and Consultancy Department (paragraph 65), explore the implementation of low power low drag approaches.
- 3.28 Update sanction/fine system to better reflect the businesses now using Biggin Hill Airport
- 3.29 To increase transparency, report on the amount of fines added to the Community fund and on what community activity that fund is spent.
- 3.30 Reduce non-essential use of APUs
- 3.31 As suggested in RSK Acoustics report paragraph 7.5, act to enhance the LASIS scheme to encourage more light aircraft owners to install noise-suppressing technology.
- 3.32 Carry out and publish an annual survey of Bromley residents to understand the attitude of those whose lives may be affected by the airport, to inform decisions about ongoing improvements. Work with community to prioritise action points.
- 3.33 Review helicopter flight procedures to reduce the impact of helicopter operations on residents under their flight paths.
- 3.34 Further suggestions not detailed within this report may also be brought forward as part of the process of revising and improving the Noise Action Plan.

Cap on movements

- 3.35 The RSK Acoustics report paragraph 7.4 states: "To ensure the NAP area or contour limits are met, it is likely the 50,000 movement cap will need to be retained."
- 3.36 Therefore, a cap of 50,000 movements per annum should be retained for the lifetime of the lease.

Air Quality

- 3.37 The NAP does not deal with air quality, as the title suggest, the NAP is about noise. However, BHAL is keen or willing to look at the issue of air quality.
- 3.38 The issue of air quality, and the effect of Biggin Hill Airport on the quality of the borough's air quality has been raised by residents. This is a relatively new query regarding the airport and has emerged as an area of concern in the last two years.
- 3.39 While it is important, it does not currently come under the remit of the Noise Action Plan. There were no stipulations within the NAP that covered the monitoring or control of air quality, so there is no way of measuring success in this regard at this time.

- 3.40 The council does not currently measure air pollution around the airport. Air quality data modelled in 2020 placed areas to the north-west of the borough in an Air Quality Management Area. Biggin Hill remained outside that area.
- 3.41 Moving forwards, if Members were minded to move towards a revision of the NAP, the question of air quality monitoring at targets is one that could be encompassed in those revisions.

4. IMPACT ON VULNERABLE ADULTS AND CHILDREN

- 4.1 There is no impact to Vulnerable Adults and Children in respect of the services the Council delivers in this regard.

5. POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 An Authority that manages its Assets well.

6. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 Please refer to the full legal implications set out in the Executive report of 12 January 2022.

Non-Applicable Sections:	Financial, Personnel, Procurement and Property
Background Documents: (Access via Contact Officer)	Executive Report on Biggin Hill Airport Noise Action Plan Review Dated 12 January 2022 and Appendices