
REPORT TO:	FINANCE AND MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE	AGENDA ITEM: 12
DATE OF MEETING:	25 NOVEMBER 2004	CATEGORY: DELEGATED
REPORT FROM:	DEPUTY CHIEF EXECUTIVE	OPEN PARAGRAPH NO:
MEMBERS' CONTACT POINT:	RICHARD GROVES (EXTN. 5738)	DOC:
SUBJECT:	NOTTINGHAM EAST MIDLANDS AIRPORT: PROPOSED CHANGES TO CONTROLLED AIRSPACE, PHASE 2: CONSULTATION PROCESS	REF: u:/Richard/COMMITTEES/EDS6
WARD(S) AFFECTED:	ALL WARDS	TERMS OF REFERENCE: FM14

1.0 Recommendations

1.1 It is recommended that:

(i) the proposed changes be welcomed, particularly with regard to the relocation of the holding area to the south west of Melbourne and potential reductions in noise affecting South Derbyshire residents from easterly arrivals and departures and that

(ii) disappointment be expressed with regard to the fact that the proposals will not contribute towards reducing the noise impact of westerly departures on South Derbyshire residents.

2.0 Purpose of report

2.1 To obtain a committee response to the consultation document "Proposed Changes to Controlled Airspace, Phase 2: Consultation Process" published by Nottingham East Midlands Airport (NEMA).

3.0 Executive Summary

3.1 The Report sets out the reasons for the Phase 2 consultation exercise and describes the proposed changes to the management of aircraft movements into and out of NEMA that will affect South Derbyshire, their purpose and their implications for the district. It concludes that the proposals are broadly beneficial, but do not help to address the noise impact of westerly departures on local residents.

4.0 Detail

4.1 In September 2002 the then East Midlands Airport consulted on proposed changes to the movements of aircraft using the airport. The Finance and Management Committee of 17 October 2002 referred the matter to a Task and Finish Working Panel, which agreed to accept the proposed changes to controlled airspace (minute FM/51 refers). However, Oadby and Wigston Borough Council, whose area will be affected by the changes, was omitted from the consultation process and other authorities expressed the view that more could have been done to explain changes in respect of arriving aircraft. As a result of these criticisms the current document has

been prepared to complete the consultation process. All comments made previously in respect of the earlier consultation phase remain valid and will be taken into account before any decisions are made.

4.2 The proposed changes have been prepared with the following principles in mind:

- (i) to ensure safe separation and management of air traffic;
- (ii) minimise the environmental impact of air traffic, by reference to the number of people impacted and the height of aircraft over them; and
- (iii) improve the efficiency of the air traffic control system so that it can cope safely with the growth in traffic.

4.3 Aircraft normally take off and land into the wind, thus routes taken by aircraft landing at or taking off from the airport vary according to wind direction. The term "westerly arrivals/departures" refers to aircraft taking off to the west or landing at the airport from the east and vice versa for "easterly arrivals/departures". Typically over a year 70% of operations are in westerly conditions i.e. with aircraft taking off or landing into a westerly wind.

Departures

4.4 The routes flown by westerly departing aircraft are unaffected by the proposed changes. Changes for easterly departures are shown on the plan at Annexe A. Flights using the current "Trent 1" route, which passes just to the north of Shardlow and Elvaston would be diverted to a new "Trent 2" route, which will pass to the north of Breaston and Borrowash and a route passing to the east of Ilkeston to be known as "Pole". All departing flights in this vicinity will be further away from South Derbyshire settlements than at present.

Arrivals

4.5 Westerly arrivals currently fly east over the north western parishes of South Derbyshire, Derby and Shardlow before turning west to the south of Nottingham to line up with the runway (Annexe B). Proposed westerly arrivals would fly along roughly the same route, but farther to the north and at higher altitudes (Annexe C).

4.6 Current easterly arrivals (Annexe D) approaching from the south pass over Swadlincote before turning east to line up with the runway and passing over Repton and Melbourne. Proposed changes to this route (Annexe E) will not have any substantial effect on South Derbyshire. Flights approaching from the west and north fly in a very wide swathe passing over the north west of the district before turning east to fly over Repton and Melbourne. In the new proposal aircraft would fly further east than at present over the north side of Derby, before turning back westwards and then turning east once again over the north western parishes of South Derbyshire to line up for landing. These changes are not expected to have any significant impact on South Derbyshire residents, although aircraft will pass over villages such as Church Broughton and Sutton on the Hill at higher altitudes than at present.

Holding areas

4.7 At busy times aircraft sometimes have to be retained in a holding area or "stack" prior to making a final approach. Typically, aircraft are currently held at an altitude of around 4000 feet. In 2003 the airport held aircraft for a total of 17 hours, but this is expected to increase as traffic levels grow. Presently there are two stacks at NEMA, one of which is located over South Derbyshire to the south west of Melbourne (Annexe F). The proposed changes involve moving both holding areas further away from the airport. Aircraft approaching from the north would be held in an area to the

north of Derby and those approaching from the south would be held in an area to the south east of Leicester.

Continuous descent approaches

- 4.8 Currently airspace in the Midlands is congested and as a consequence arriving aircraft are commonly instructed to descend to low altitudes at considerable distance from the airport. This is necessary to allow departing aircraft to fly safely above them. As a result the arriving aircraft create greater noise impact. The airspace changes will allow the altitude of arriving aircraft to be increased significantly. NEMA estimates that that this increase in altitude will reduce by over 90% the number of people overflowed by aircraft at 3000 feet or below. Aircraft would then be able to descend using minimal engine power, reducing noise impact by up to 5 decibels.

Context

- 4.9 The consultation paper includes a discussion of noise impacts and shows the position of critical noise contours as at 2003. The paper indicates that the critical daytime noise contour of 57 dB_{L_{Aeq}} (Annexe G) and the night-time noise contour of 55dB_{L_{Aeq}} (Annexe H) lie very close to the airport and do not impinge upon settlements within South Derbyshire. However, these contours represent average noise levels over given periods and do not account for the disturbance that can be caused by individual aircraft movements. It should also be borne in mind that average noise levels are likely to increase with growth in numbers of aircraft movements, although there will probably be a reduction in the level of noise emitted by individual aircraft as a result of improving technology.
- 4.10 The table below shows the average number of flights per day on routes passing over or close to South Derbyshire in 2003 and forecasts based on the assumption of a 50% growth in passenger and freight movements, which can be taken as an upper band estimate of the position five years from now.

Route	Average no. per day 2003	Average no. per day assuming 50% growth
Arrivals		
Easterly (from south)	15	23
Easterly (from north)	8	12
Westerly (from north)	19	28
Departures		
27 South (westerly)	35	52
27 North (westerly)	19	29
Trent 1 (easterly)	8	0
Trent 2 (easterly)	0	4

- 4.11 NEMA operates a noise and track monitoring system that automatically records the height, position and altitude of all aircraft using the airport and this will be expanded to cover areas affected by the proposed changes.

5.0 Financial Implications

- 5.1 None.

6.0 Corporate Implications

- 6.1 The proposed changes have implications relating to the corporate key aims to:

- safeguard and enhance a sustainable environment and
- develop a vibrant an sustainable economy.

7.0 Community Implications

7.1 As described in Section 3.0.

8.0 Conclusions

- 8.1 The proposed changes are not in themselves expected to have a significant impact on South Derbyshire particularly since westerly departures, which account for most of the noise disturbance within parishes close to the airport, will not be affected. The main benefit to local residents will be the relocation of the holding area that currently lies to the south west of Melbourne and the reduction in noise levels from easterly arrivals.
- 8.2 The report indicates that without the proposed changes congestion at the airport will grow leading to an increase in delays and growth in the stacking of aircraft in the current holding areas at low altitudes. Increasing congestion would also mean that the current practice of flying in at low altitude would become more common. These considerations assume that growth in air traffic at NEMA will be permitted to continue and this would appear to accord with the White Paper on "The Future of Air Transport", published in December 2003. Members may recall that a report on the consultation exercise undertaken pursuant to the preparation of the Paper was considered at Finance and Management Committee on 28 November 2002 (minute FM/ 66 refers). As part of its resolution the Council considered that there was a need to accommodate controlled growth in air transport, but to restrict night-time noise generated by NEMA flights to current levels.
- 8.3 In paragraphs 9.27 and 9.28 the White Paper states:

"On the evidence available to us, and in line with the balanced approach we are taking to new runways across the country, whilst we can support the expansion of passenger operations suggested in the Government's forecasts, we could not at this stage justify approval of, nor safeguarding for, a second runway. However, if growth at the airport in future years proves to be more rapid than we currently expect, this issue will be kept under review.

"At the same time, given the particular importance of air freight to the future national and regional economy, and of East Midlands Airport as a centre of these operations, we consider that the projected expansion of air freight operations at East Midlands should be permitted. However, this would need to be accompanied by stringent controls on night noise in particular and increasingly generous noise insulation and other mitigation measures. These measures should build on those applying currently."

- 8.4 In light of the above and with the additional explanation of the potential benefits of the proposals included in the Phase 2 consultation, it would seem appropriate to welcome the changes, particularly in relation to the relocation of the holding areas and potential reductions in noise from easterly arrivals and departures, but to express disappointment that the proposals will not contribute towards reducing the noise impact of westerly departures on South Derbyshire residents.

9.0 Background Papers

"Proposed Changes to Controlled Airspace
Phase 2: Consultation Process"

East Midlands International
Airport Ltd. October 2004

"The Future of Air Transport White Paper"

Department for Transport
December 2003