Heathrow

EXPANSION
CONSULTATION 2026

Land and property acquisition and compensation policies

Interim Property Hardship Scheme

OCTOBER 2026

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1. Introduction

1.1 Purpose of this document

1.1.1 This policy document sets out the terms of the interim Property Hardship Scheme (PHS), which we have introduced to support proposals for the development of a new Northwest Runway and associated infrastructure at Heathrow Airport (the Project). These proposals are currently being prepared for application for a Development Consent Order (DCO) under the Planning Act 2008. It is intended that this document will inform interested parties, including applicants, about the principles and process of the interim PHS.

1.1.2 We have developed a set of discretionary property compensation schemes, including enhanced compensation, for eligible owners or occupiers of affected properties. The schemes are set out in our interim property policies, which we continue to consult on. We have prepared these policies to explain our general approach to buying properties and land, as well as the discretionary compensation offers available for eligible properties.

1.1.3 The interim PHS is one of our discretionary policies. It aims to assist eligible property owners who have a compelling need to sell their property but can only do so at a substantially reduced price, as a direct result of the Project proposals. Consequently, they are facing significant hardship. Under the scheme, property owners who can demonstrate that they meet certain eligibility criteria will be able to have their property purchased by us.

1.1.4 Our discretionary interim policies are intended to supplement, and operate in parallel with, the existing statutory regime governing compensation for the compulsory purchase of land. This interim PHS policy goes beyond the statutory compensation regime.

1.1.5 The interim PHS opened for applications on 1 February 2017 and we have supported applications and purchases under the scheme since its launch. Following the Government's designation of the Airports National Policy Statement (ANPS) on 26 June 2018, we implemented an amended version of our interim PHS policy for those properties falling within the boundary of the area identified within the Airports NPS (the ANPS site boundary). The amended interim PHS policy has applied since then. The ANPS site boundary is shown in **Appendix B: Map of areas covered by this interim policy**. The map is also available at:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/719224/annex-a-of-the-airports-nps-heathrow-north-west-runway-scheme-boundary-map.pdf.

1.1.6 This interim PHS policy has been developed and updated to take account of responses to our Airport Expansion Consultation One (January 2018). It supersedes all previous versions.

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2. Overview of the Property Hardship Scheme

2.1 How the scheme works

2.1.1 We recognise that our proposals for the Project may create uncertainty for property owners in the local area, so we have introduced the interim Property Hardship Scheme (PHS) to ensure there is assistance for those who are eligible. The scheme is available to owners who have a compelling need to sell their property but can only do so at a substantially reduced price, as a direct result of the Project proposals. Consequently, they are facing significant hardship.

2.1.2 To qualify under the interim PHS, a property owner will need to make an application demonstrating that they meet the eligibility criteria set out in **paragraph 3** of this interim policy. An applicant who meets the eligibility criteria will be able to have their property purchased by us at its unaffected open market value (the market value ignoring any impacts from the Project on the property value and excluding any development value). For those properties falling wholly or partly within the ANPS site boundary, further enhanced compensation will also be paid as set out in **paragraph 4.7.**

2.1.3 The interim PHS application process is illustrated in **Appendix A: Interim Property Hardship Scheme application process flowchart**. It is also explained in **paragraph 4** of this interim policy. In broad terms, applications will be assessed by a majority independent panel to determine whether or not the eligibility criteria have been satisfied. On the basis of that assessment, the panel will make a recommendation to us either to accept the application and offer to purchase the property, or reject the application. We must follow the recommendation of the panel, but may (in our absolute discretion) accept an application that the panel decides does not meet all the criteria, so should be refused, if we consider there is a strong overall case for doing so. If an application is accepted by us, the property will be independently valued and we will make a formal offer to purchase it in accordance with the process set out in **paragraph 4**.

2.1.4 The interim PHS opened for applications on 1 February 2017 and it will remain open until construction has started on the new Northwest Runway, described in the draft Government's Airport National Policy Statement. .At that point, the need to continue a hardship scheme will be considered. The interim PHS and any associated agreements that have not yet been satisfied will cease if the Development Consent Order application is refused, or a decision is taken to not proceed with the Project.

2.1.5 The application form for the interim PHS is available by emailing the Heathrow Community Relations Team at communityrelations@heathrow.com or calling 0800 307 7996.

2.1.6 As noted above, the interim PHS is one of the discretionary compensation policies being put in place to supplement the statutory compensation regime. Before deciding

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to apply to us under the interim PHS scheme, owner-occupiers of residential properties may wish to consider whether they would be eligible for the compensation proposed in other discretionary draft land and property acquisition and compensation policies once they have been launched. These cover properties located in the Compulsory Purchase Zone (CPZ) and Wider Property Offer Zone (WPOZ). A map that identifies the CPZ and WPOZ boundaries is available in **Appendix B: Map of areas covered by this interim policy**. It can also be reviewed in more detail at: https://www.aec.heathrowconsultation.com/topics/topic-groups/compensation/

2.1.7 Further information about the compensation offer for properties in the CPZ and WPOZ can also be found at: https://www.aec.heathrowconsultation.com/topics/topic-groups/compensation/

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3. Eligibility criteria

3.1 General approach

3.1.1 To qualify to have a property purchased by us under the interim Property Hardship Scheme (PHS), an applicant must satisfy ALL five criteria set out in this section. These are:

(a) Qualifying interest

(b) No prior knowledge

(c) Proximity

(d) Efforts to sell

(e) Hardship

Each criterion is explained below.

3.1.2 Applicants will need to provide evidence to demonstrate that they satisfy each individual criterion.

3.2 (a) Qualifying interest

3.2.1 An applicant must have a qualifying interest in the property on the date we receive the application (the relevant date). This means they must fall within one of the categories defined in **paragraphs 3.2.2** to **3.2.7**.

a Owner-occupier of a private residential property

3.2.2 To qualify as an owner-occupier of a private residential property, an applicant must (on the relevant date):

a. Be the freeholder or the long leaseholder under a tenancy for a certain term of years, of which not less than three years remain unexpired; and

b. Either:

i. Be living in the property and have owned and lived at the property as their main residence for at least the six months immediately before that date.

ii. If the property is empty, have lived there for at least six consecutive months prior to it being empty, provided it has not been empty for more than 12 months before the relevant date.

b Owner-occupier of small commercial premises

3.2.3 To qualify as an owner-occupier of small commercial premises, namely business premises with an annual rateable value not exceeding the amount prescribed by the

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Government for the service of a blight notice (currently £44,200 for the Greater London Area and £36,000 elsewhere), an applicant must on the relevant date:

a. Own a freehold interest in the premises or a long leasehold interest under a tenancy for a certain term of years, of which not less than three years remain unexpired; and

b. Either:

   i. Have owned the premises for at least the six months immediately before that date and operated a business from there throughout this time.

   ii. If the premises are empty, have operated a business from there for at least six consecutive months prior to them being empty, provided they have not been empty for more than 12 months before the relevant date.

c Owner-occupier of an agricultural unit

3.2.4 To qualify as an owner-occupier of an agricultural unit, an applicant must on the relevant date:

a. Be a freeholder or the long leaseholder under a tenancy for a certain term of years, of which not less than three years remain unexpired; and

b. Either:

   i. Have occupied the agricultural unit for at least the six months immediately before the relevant date.

   ii. If the agricultural unit is not occupied, have occupied it for at least six consecutive months prior to it being empty, provided it has not been unoccupied for more than 12 months prior to the relevant date.

c. Have their main residence located on the agricultural unit.

d Mortgagees

3.2.5 A mortgagee with a right to sell the property and who can give immediate vacant possession will have a qualifying interest.

e Personal representatives

3.2.6 A personal representative of a deceased person who had a qualifying interest in the property at the time of death will have a qualifying interest.

f Reluctant landlords

3.2.7 To qualify as a reluctant landlord, an applicant must on the relevant date:

a. Own only one property, which they have been forced to let to enable an essential relocation. (See **paragraph 3.6**, which provides examples of potential circumstances that would give rise to a compelling need to sell. We

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consider these circumstances could also potentially give rise to a need for an essential relocation).

b. Not have become an owner-occupier of a separate property following the letting of the rented property.

c. Have lived in the property for at least six months before it was let.

d. Not have let the property for longer than 12 months.

3.3 (b) No prior knowledge

3.3.1 On 17 December 2013, the Northwest Runway scheme at Heathrow Airport was shortlisted by the Airports Commission in its interim report as one of three options to be investigated for increasing the UK's aviation capacity. There was considerable media coverage of the report and short-listing, both on and after the day the interim report was published. It is considered that from 17 December 2013, purchasers of properties in the local area could reasonably be expected to have been aware of the proposals for the Project and that a new Northwest Runway was a realistic prospect.

3.3.2 Applicants who acquired their property prior to 17 December 2013 will be deemed not to have had prior knowledge of the prospect of a new Northwest Runway when they made their purchase, so will meet this criterion. It is considered that such applicants could not reasonably be expected to have been aware of the Northwest Runway proposals.

3.3.3 Applicants who acquired their property on or after 17 December 2013 will be presumed to have had prior knowledge of the prospect of the new Northwest Runway when they made their purchase, so will be presumed not to meet this criterion. Such applicants may provide evidence as part of their application to rebut this presumption by demonstrating that, at the time of purchase, they were unaware of the Northwest Runway proposals and could not reasonably have been expected to have known about them. Whether or not the evidence they provide demonstrates both that they were unaware and that they could not reasonably have been expected to be aware will be for the panel to decide.

3.4 (c) Proximity

3.4.1 To meet this criterion, an applicant's property must be located in such close proximity to the proposed Northwest Runway, or associated infrastructure, that it is likely it would be substantially adversely affected by the construction or operation of the runway.

Properties will be deemed to meet the proximity criterion if they are located in the Compulsory Purchase Zone (CPZ) and Wider Property Offer Zone (WPOZ) as shown on the map at: https://www.aec.heathrowconsultation.com/topics/topic-groups/compensation/

Alternatively, properties must fall wholly or partly within the Airports National Policy Statement (ANPS) site boundary, as shown on the ANPS site plan at: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/719224/annex-a-of-the-airports-nps-heathrow-north-west-runway-scheme-boundary-map.pdf)

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3.4.2 In cases where a property is located outside the CPZ, WPOZ and ANPS boundaries, the panel will use their judgement when considering whether or not the proximity criterion is met. In exercising that judgement, the panel must have regard to the following factors as they relate to the application:

a. The distance of the property to the proposed Northwest Runway, associated infrastructure and future flight paths as currently understood.

b. The relationship of the property to the existing airport and other infrastructure, for example motorways and other major roads.

c. The particular characteristics of the property and the nature of the local area, including its position and surroundings.

d. The likely impacts from the construction or operation of the Northwest Runway and associated infrastructure on the property and locality.

e. Any other matters that the panel thinks are relevant.

3.4.3 To inform the panel's consideration, an applicant whose property is outside the CPZ, WPOZ and ANPS boundaries can provide evidence concerning the proximity of their property to the proposed Northwest Runway or associated infrastructure, as well as the impact construction or operation of these would have on the property.

3.5 (d) Efforts to sell

3.5.1 An applicant must have made reasonable efforts to sell the property and not have received an offer within 10% of its unaffected open market value (this ignores any impacts from the Project on the property value and excludes any development value).

3.5.2 An applicant will need to provide evidence to demonstrate that reasonable efforts have been made to sell the property. This will normally mean being able to establish that:

a. The property is on the market with a recognised local estate agent.

b. Before the application to the interim PHS, the property has been continuously marketed:

i. For a minimum period of three months if the asking price is less than £450,000 or if the property falls wholly or partly within the ANPS site boundary (regardless of its value or asking price).

ii. For a minimum period of six months if the asking price is between £450,000 and £1 million.

iii. For a minimum period of 12 months if the asking price is over £1 million.

c. That advice was sought from at least three recognised local estate agents as to a realistic current unaffected asking price, and the asking price adopted reflected reasonable professional judgement as to the sale price the property could be expected to achieve and was competitive in the market.

3.5.3 The minimum period for marketing higher value properties is longer than for lower value properties as it typically takes more time to sell a higher value property given the smaller market for them.

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3.5.4 The purpose of the efforts to sell criterion is to identify whether the proposed Northwest Runway is the reason that a property has not sold, or cannot be sold except at a substantially reduced price. An applicant should provide evidence such as feedback from viewings carried out during the marketing of the property, and information from estate agents that shows potential purchasers did not want to view or consider the property due to the perceived impact of the Northwest Runway.

3.5.5 If an applicant has evidence that three local estate agents have refused to market the property due to the Northwest Runway proposals, they will not be expected to demonstrate that the property has been fully marketed in the manner set out in **paragraph 3.5.2**.

3.5.6 It is acknowledged that 'self-marketing' – for example via a website that allows an owner to list and advertise their property themselves – might form part of an applicant's efforts to sell. While self-marketing would not be ignored when considering whether an application meets this criterion, it cannot replace the requirement that the property is marketed by at least one recognised local estate agent. Applicants should note that self-marketing will carry less weight than evidence from a recognised estate agent.

3.6 (f) Hardship

3.6.1 An applicant will need to demonstrate that they have a compelling need to sell their property and that they would suffer significant hardship if they were unable to sell as quickly as might be expected were the Northwest Runway not a prospect.

3.6.2 There is no definitive list of circumstances that would give rise to a compelling need to sell. However, those most likely to meet the criterion include:

a. Medical – where the applicant or a dependant or family member living in the property has, or develops, a medical condition that necessitates selling.

b. Employment – where there is a need to relocate for a new or different job (evidenced by a contract of employment or equivalent) or due to the loss of a job (written evidence of the loss of a job will be required).

c. Family – where there is a need to move to accommodate a larger family.

d. Financial – where there is a need to sell because of significant financial pressure, for example a requirement to divide assets as part of a divorce settlement or the dissolution of a civil partnership.

e. Winding up of an estate – where the applicant is the personal representative of a deceased person who had a qualifying interest in the property at the time of their death.

3.6.3 The panel will consider each application on its merits using their judgement. Applicants should provide satisfactory evidence to demonstrate that their particular circumstances give rise to a compelling need to sell, and that they would suffer significant hardship if they did not sell as quickly as might be expected were the Northwest Runway not proposed.

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4. Evaluation, decision and purchase process

This section explains the process that will be employed to assess and determine applications made under the interim Property Hardship Scheme (PHS) and, where applications are successful, for the valuation and purchase of eligible properties.

4.1 Overview of the process

4.1.1 The interim PHS has been designed to provide an impartial, transparent and fair process for applicants. It consists of the following five main stages:

a. Application submission

b. A panel assessment of, and recommendation on, the application

c. Our decision on the application

d. A pre-purchase valuation of the eligible property

e. Purchase of the eligible property

Each of these main stages is explained in further detail in this section and the process is illustrated in **Appendix A: Interim Property Hardship Scheme application process flowchart**.

4.1.2 The interim PHS is a paper-based process that will be administered with the support of a Secretariat. The Secretariat will manage the processing of applications, assist applicants in submitting complete applications, provide administrative support to the panel and ensure the proper functioning and operation of the interim PHS. The Secretariat will not be involved in assessing the merits of individual applications or in determining the panel's recommendations. The panel guidance contains further information on the role of the Secretariat.

4.2 (a) Application submission

4.2.1 Applicants will need to submit a completed application form together with supporting evidence. A copy of the application form can be obtained by emailing the Heathrow Community Relations Team at: communityrelations@heathrow.com or by calling 0800 307 7996. The application must be sent either via email to communityrelations@heathrow.com or by post to Heathrow Community Relations, The Compass Centre, Nelson Road, Hounslow TW6 2GW.

4.2.2 An application will need to be accompanied by satisfactory supporting evidence to demonstrate that the eligibility criteria, as set out in **paragraph 3**, have been met. It is the applicant's responsibility to supply this evidence.

4.2.3 As soon as practicable after receiving an application, the Secretariat will provide the applicant with written acknowledgement of receipt. The Secretariat will then check that all sections of the application have been completed and that supporting evidence

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has been provided to enable the panel to make an assessment. The Secretariat will not assess the merits of the application. The Secretariat may contact the applicant's estate agent(s) or other persons to independently verify information contained in the application.

4.2.4 If the Secretariat considers that the application is incomplete or does not contain supporting evidence, the applicant will be contacted and asked to provide further information.

4.2.5 If the Secretariat considers that the application is complete, it will notify the applicant to this effect.

4.2.6 Information within and accompanying an application under the interim PHS will be held in accordance with the requirements of the Data Protection Act 1998.

4.3 (b) Panel assessment of the application

4.3.1 As soon as practicable after notifying an applicant that their application is complete, the Secretariat will convene a meeting so the panel can assess it.

4.3.2 The panel is majority independent. For each application made under the interim PHS, the panel will be made up of five members – three independent members, one of our senior representatives and one airline representative. The three independent members will be called on by the Secretariat from a pool of suitably qualified and experienced members appointed to the interim PHS panel.

4.3.3 The quorum for all meetings is five members, which must include three independent members. Heathrow may (in using its absolute discretion) accept a positive recommendation from an inquorate panel. One of the independent members will act as Chair of the meeting.

4.3.4 The panel will assess each application to determine whether or not the eligibility criteria have been satisfied. On the basis of that assessment, it will make a recommendation to us either to accept the application and offer to purchase the property, or to reject it.

4.3.5 The panel will determine its recommendation on a simple majority basis. This means that for each application, the panel's recommendation will be based on the views of at least three of the five members. The Chair will not have a casting vote and his or her view will carry no additional weight.

4.4 (c) Decision on the application

4.4.1 We are responsible for deciding whether to accept or refuse an application based on the recommendation of the panel. We must follow the panel's recommendation but may (in our absolute discretion) accept an application that the panel has concluded does not meet all the criteria, so should be refused, if we consider there is a strong overall case for doing so.

4.4.2 Subject to the volume of applications submitted and the availability of panel members, a decision on an application made under the interim PHS will normally be

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made within 12 weeks of the date the Secretariat notifies the applicant that their application is complete.

4.4.3 If an application is accepted by us, the applicant will be notified of this decision and that we agree in principle to offer to purchase the property. Independent valuations of the property will then be arranged and carried out in accordance with the process set out in **paragraph 4.5**.

4.4.4 If an application is refused, the applicant will be notified of this decision and given reasons why their application was not successful.

4.4.5 Applicants can re-apply under the interim PHS if there has been a material change in their circumstances, or they are able to provide new or additional evidence that is relevant to the reason(s) why the original or previous application was refused. However, re-applications cannot be submitted (and will not be processed by the Secretariat) until three months after the date the original or previous application was rejected. A re-application that is submitted within six months of refusal need only address the criteria that were not met by the previous application, and any criteria that may have changed. If a re-application is submitted more than six months after refusal, it must address all five criteria.

4.5 (d) Pre-purchase valuation

4.5.1 If Heathrow decides to accept an application, the Secretariat will arrange for the property to be independently valued.

4.5.2 Two valuations will be carried out by two independent chartered surveyors, chosen from a panel of chartered surveyors who are familiar with the area and have appropriate expertise. The applicant will select one; the other will be chosen by us. If the valuations are within 10% of each other (calculated by taking the difference between the two values as a percentage of the higher value), we will offer a price that is the average of the two. If the valuations differ by more than 10% (calculated in the same way), an additional valuation will be obtained from a third chartered surveyor, selected by us from the panel. The offer will then be made based on the average of the closest two. If three valuations have been carried out and there are no two closest figures (for example, the highest and lowest figures are equidistant from the middle one), the middle valuation will be used as the offer price. The costs of the valuations will be paid by us.

4.5.3 The panel of valuers has been appointed by us following an exercise to identify those who can demonstrate the resource, capability and professional and local knowledge to carry out valuations that may be required under the interim PHS. They are independent chartered surveyors registered with the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors (RICS). The valuations will be independent. Valuers will be instructed to provide an open market valuation of the property in accordance with RICS guidance.

4.5.4 As an alternative to using the panel, owners can choose to commission an independent valuation of their own. This must be carried out on the same basis as our valuations and must take into account our draft Professional Fees Policy. We will take this as the owner's valuation. If an owner chooses to commission their own

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valuation, we will contribute a capped figure in accordance with the current panel rates towards the cost. As before, in the event the two valuations differ by more than 10%, a third valuation from the panel will be introduced by us.

4.5.5 The valuation date will be the date Heathrow agrees to purchase the property. The valuation will be based on the unaffected open market value (the market value ignoring any adverse effect from the Northwest Runway proposals) at that date.

4.5.6 Any payment made by us would not include additional disturbance costs, such as the seller's agent and legal fees or removal costs, unless the property is located wholly or partly within the Airports National Policy Statement (ANPS) site boundary. This is because the property owner was already looking to sell, so would have expected to incur these costs in any event.

4.6 (e) Purchase

4.6.1 Following the pre-purchase valuation process described in **paragraph 4.5**, we will make a formal written offer to buy the property as follows:

a. For properties outside the ANPS site boundary, the offer will be to buy at the valuation price but with no additional premium on top.

b. For applications from owners of property that falls wholly or partly within the ANPS site boundary, an enhanced compensation offer will apply as detailed in **paragraph 4.7**.

The offer will remain open for six months, starting from the date it is made.

4.6.2 If the offer is accepted by the property owner, the purchase process will be handled in the same way as a typical private house purchase. Following acceptance of the offer, we will instruct our solicitors and property managing agents to proceed. Surveyors will be appointed to carry out structural and condition surveys. The surveyors will contact applicants directly to arrange inspections of the property.

4.6.3 Provided that the surveyor's report and legal report on title do not identify any serious issues, the solicitors will be instructed to complete the conveyancing process. If the survey results indicate that the valuation needs to be adjusted, the applicant will be notified of this and the independent valuers will be instructed to review the valuations. We will then revise our offer and issue a new offer letter, as necessary.

4.6.4 If an offer made by us to purchase a property under the interim PHS is rejected, the property owner will be unable to reapply under the scheme. They will, however, still be able to apply under the draft Residential Property Policies for the compensation offers that apply to properties in the Compulsory Purchase Zone or Wider Property Offer Zone (subject to meeting the eligibility criteria) once they have been launched.

4.6.5 If, between the decision on an application and the exchange of contracts, we become aware of any information or a material change in circumstances that would affect the decision on whether or not all the criteria have been met, we reserve the right to review that decision. This could result in the offer to purchase being retracted. In those circumstances, the applicant will be entitled to reapply under the interim PHS,

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so that their application reflects the change in circumstances or additional information.

4.7 Purchase of property falling wholly or partly within the ANPS site boundary

4.7.1 Under this interim policy, the formal written offer from us to purchase a property that falls wholly or partly within the ANPS site boundary will comprise the following enhanced compensation:

a. The unaffected open market value (excluding development value) of the property.

b. A 25% home loss payment calculated based on the unaffected open market value (excluding development value).

c. Stamp Duty costs for purchase of a replacement home of equivalent value (not including the home loss payment).

d. Reimbursement of reasonable legal fees and removal and other disturbance costs incurred in the sale of the existing property, as well as for an associated purchase.

The calculation of the reasonable legal fees and disturbance costs will be based on the equivalent costs that would be payable to the applicant had the property been subject to a valid blight notice served as a consequence of the designation of the ANPS.

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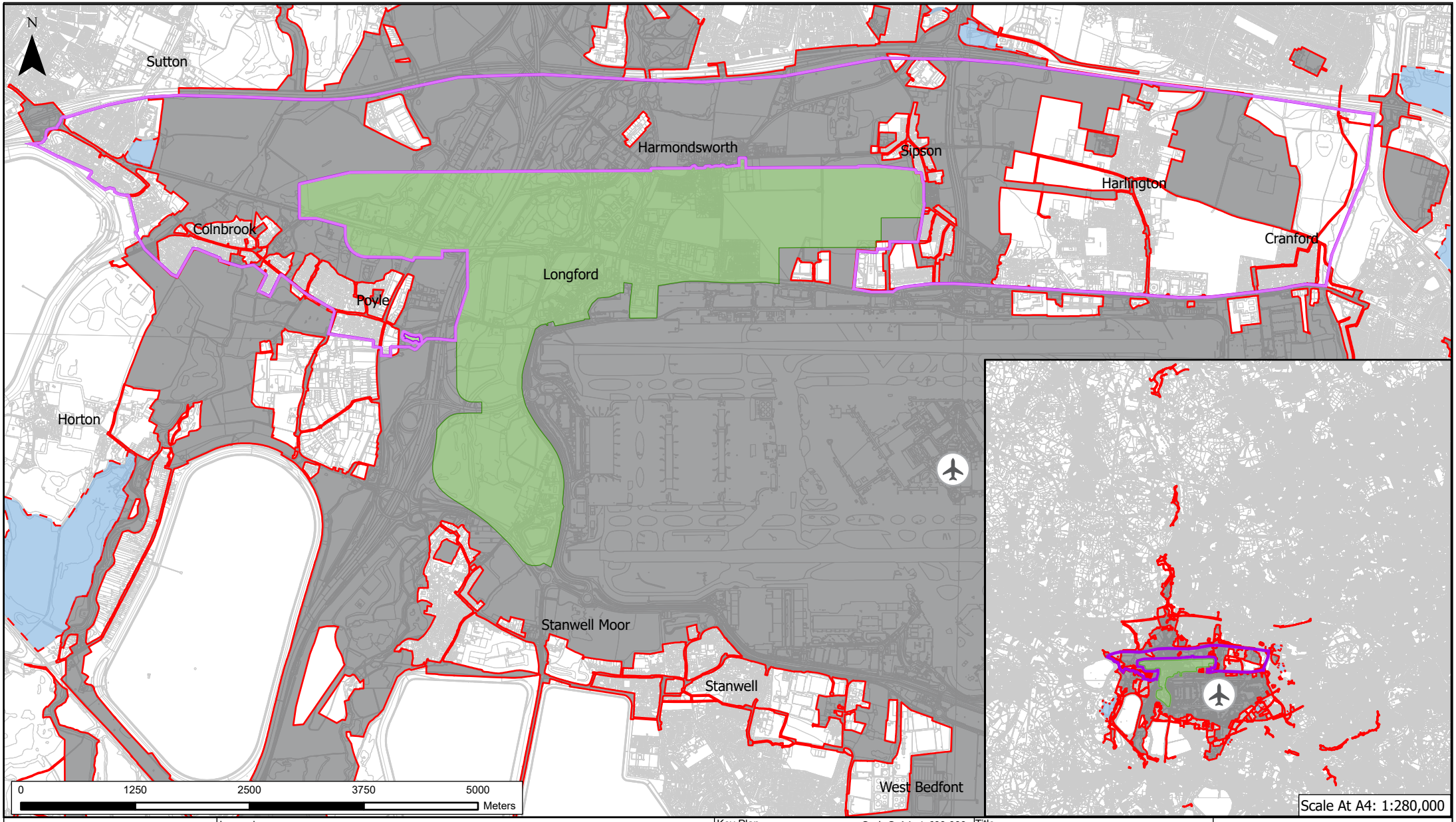
Appendix A Interim Property Hardship Scheme Application Process Flowchart



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Appendix B Map of Areas Covered by This Interim Policy

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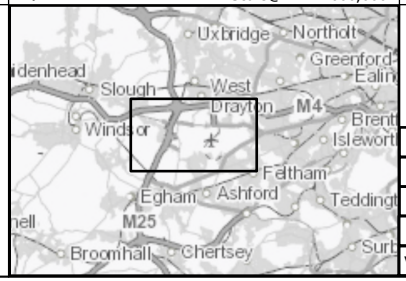
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Legend

- London Heathrow Airport
- Compulsory Purchase Zone (CPZ)
- Wider Property Offer Zone (WPOZ)
- Draft Development Consent Order Limits
- Draft Development Consent Order Limits - Optionality

Key Plan

Scale@ A4: 1:600,000



Title

Compulsory Purchase Zone, Wider Property Offer Zone and Draft Development Consent Order Limits

Version	Date	Description Of Change	Drawn By
1	25/09/26	Updated CPZ	TB
0.1	20/07/26	Draft Issue	TB

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Project Name			Heathrow Project No.	
Heathrow Expansion - DCO Directorate			PRJ-002086	
Programme No			Originator Project No.	
PRG-000079			PRJ-002085	
WSP	TB	MF/SW	30/09/2026	Review
Company	Drawn By	Chk/Approved	Drawn Date	Status
Location-Level_Sub Series/System-Identifier				Version
xxxxxxx-xxxxx-xxxxxx-xxxxxx-xxxxx				V1.0

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