

Noise Insulation Policy

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Glossary

Term	Definition
Action level	Action levels are the noise levels that can trigger the actions in the Noise Insulation Schemes.
Airports NPS (or ANPS)	Airports National Policy Statement (2018)
APF	Airports Policy Framework
BPM	Best Practicable Means
BS 5228	British Standard 5228 (2014): Code of practice for noise and vibration control on construction and open sites Part 1: Noise
BS 8233	British Standard 8233 (2014): Guidance on sound insulation and noise reduction for buildings
CAA	Civil Aviation Authority
CoCP	The draft Code of Construction Practice included in the 2026 Public Consultation documents.
CRTN	Calculation of Road Traffic Noise – a guidance document for road noise referred to in the Noise Insulation Regulations
CRN	Calculation of Railway Noise – a guidance document for railway noise referred to in the Noise Insulation Regulations
dB (or dBA)	Decibel is used to measure noise level on logarithmic scale relative to a standard reference. Usually ‘A’-weighted to approximate the response of the human ear.
DCO	Development Consent Order
DfT	Department for Transport
Double glazing	This is a windowpane with two sheets of glass giving better noise insulation (and thermal insulation) performance than a pane of single glazing. The double glass units are factory sealed and installation will usually require the removal of the existing windows and frames. Acoustic double glazing, for example using laminated glass, can provide better noise reduction than standard thermal double glazing.
ENG	Environmental Noise Guidelines for the European Region (2018)
Funding envelope	This is the money allocated for noise and vortex schemes over a defined period. Funding envelopes are used within delivery planning.
GCN	Guidelines for Community Noise (WHO 1999)
HRAS	Home Relocation Assistance Scheme
ICCAN	Independent Commission on Civil Aviation Noise
L_{A10} or L₁₀	The noise level exceeded for 10% of a measurement period. This is traditionally used to measure road traffic noise.

Term	Definition
L_{Aeq, 16hr}	The noise level averaged over the 16-hour day period (07:00-23:00) and over the 92-day summer period. This daytime aircraft noise metric has been used in the UK since the 1980s
L_{Aeq 8hr}	The noise level averaged over the 8-hour night period (23:00-07:00) and over the 92-day summer period. This night time aircraft noise metric has been used in the UK since the 1980s
L_{Aeq,T} or L_{eq,T}	The energy equivalent noise level over a specified period, T-, and A-weighted to approximate the response of the human ear
L_{den}	The annual average energy equivalent noise level, A-weighted to approximate the frequency response of the human ear and time-weighted for day, evening and night time periods. This annual aircraft noise metric was adopted as the standard noise metric in the EU in 2002
L_{Amax} or L_{max}	The maximum noise level occurring during a measurement period, A-weighted to approximate the frequency response of the human ear
L_{night}	The A-weighted noise level averaged over the eight-hour night period (23:00-07:00) and over the calendar year
LOAEL	Lowest Observable Adverse Effect Level
Noise Insulation Policy	The policy set out in this document to address the ANPS requirements for Heathrow expansion
Noise Insulation Regulations	Noise Insulation Regulations (1975) as amended by Noise Insulation Regulations (Amended) 1988 and Noise Insulation (Railways and Other Guided Transport Systems) Regulations 1996
Noise insulation schemes	The schemes providing acoustic treatment to address aircraft, road, rail and construction noise as set out in this policy
Noise Insulation Strategy	Heathrow's wider and long-term approach to the insulation of homes and community buildings for existing activities, airspace changes and the expansion project
NPPF	National Planning Policy Framework (2025)
NPSE	Noise Policy Statement for England (2010)
PPG or PPNN	Planning Practice Guidance Noise (2019)
QNS	Quieter Neighbourhood Support
QRS	Quieter Relocation Scheme
QSP	Quieter Schools Programme
RIS	Residential Insulation Scheme
Secondary glazing	This is an upgrade of the acoustic performance of an existing window, by the installation of an addition glazing pane in its own frame on the existing sill of the window
SOAEL	Significant Observable Adverse Effect Level

Term	Definition
The Project	Proposals for Heathrow expansion
UAEL	Unacceptable Adverse Effect Level
VIPS	Vortex Impact and Prevention Scheme
Vortex	A vortex is a circulating current of air generated by planes.
WHO	World Health Organization

Preface: Development of the Noise Insulation Policy

This document sets out the proposed policy for consultation relating to noise and vortex schemes to be provided in connection with the development and operation of a new Northwest Runway and associated infrastructure to expand Heathrow Airport.

This policy is a consultation document, and we will take your feedback into account before finalising it. The final policy document will inform our proposed noise and vortex schemes, which will be implemented should development consent be granted and Heathrow expansion proceed to construction. We welcome your comments on this proposed policy.

You can find more information about how to provide feedback and engage with this consultation in **Chapter 11. Have your say** of the **Consultation Document**.

1. Introduction

1.1 Purpose of this document

This document sets out the Noise Insulation Policy for Heathrow expansion (the Project). It outlines the proposed noise and vortex schemes, which are mitigation and compensation packages designed to reduce impacts on those most affected by the Project. The document provides information about each scheme's eligibility, what is provided under each scheme and how each scheme will be delivered. It also sets out how the proposed approach aligns with the requirements of Government policy, specifically the Airports National Policy Statement: new runway capacity and infrastructure at airports in the South East of England (2018) (ANPS).

This policy sets out action levels, eligibility criteria and the process for how the noise and vortex schemes will be delivered. It defines the criteria used to determine eligibility but does not identify specific noise contours or the eligibility of individual properties. Further information on the predicted noise contours and the identification of eligible properties will be provided in the Environmental Statement (ES). The proposed noise and vortex schemes set out in this Noise Insulation Policy will be secured through legal means for example a Development Consent Order (DCO) requirement and/or a planning obligation.

This policy describes schemes which are designed to provide noise insulation measures to address noise from aircraft movements (both in the air and on the ground), as well as road, rail and construction noise associated with the Project. This policy also addresses vortex impact and prevention measures.

The Noise Insulation Policy forms part of the extensive noise control measures included within Heathrow expansion proposals to meet the aims of Government noise policy. Within the context of Government policy on sustainable development, the control measures on the aircraft fleet and operations first mitigate and minimise potential adverse noise impacts arising from expansion and reduce existing noise from the airport. This Noise Insulation Policy provides compensatory mitigation measures, which in combination with the mitigation controls, is intended to avoid significant adverse effects on health and quality of life from existing and predicted noise.

The parameters for many of our noise insulation schemes have already been set for us either by regulation or by policy. Whilst these parameters are already established, there may be more than one way in which the schemes could be delivered. **Section 5** of this document considers how we propose to deliver these schemes and seeks your views on this.

1.2 What is covered by this document

This document covers the following:

- An outline of proposed noise insulation schemes that will be provided to address aircraft movements in the air and on the ground, as well as road, rail and construction noise associated with the Project.

- Policy context and airport commitments that inform ‘action levels’ (for example, thresholds) that will be used to identify properties eligible for noise insulation.
- How schemes will be delivered, sequenced and managed with the Project.
- How funding, engagement controls, exceptions, quality assurance, monitoring and dispute resolution will operate.
- How the proposed noise and vortex schemes address the requirements of the ANPS.
- This document does not cover other property compensation schemes. Further information relating to other schemes can be found in the Property Information Paper (PIP) and the Residential Property Policies Explained document which also form part of this consultation.

This document also outlines the related, non-insulation programmes with respect to the Heathrow expansion, such as the Quieter Relocation Scheme (QRS), the Vortex Impact and Prevention Scheme (VIPS) and the Temporary Home Relocation Scheme - Construction.

1.3 Draft Heathrow Expansion National Policy Statement

The Government recently concluded its consultation on proposed amendments to the 2018 Airports National Policy Statement (ANPS), to be known once amended as the Heathrow Expansion National Policy Statement (HENPS). The Government is now considering consultation feedback, alongside the outcome of parliamentary scrutiny. It is expected to publish the amended form of what will then be the HENPS by the end of 2026, subject to parliamentary approval of its proposed amendments. In preparing its consultation materials, Heathrow has reviewed the proposed amendments to the ANPS and is continuing to consider the potential implications for its preferred scheme and accompanying assessments.

Where relevant, the requirements of the ANPS are referenced in this document together with any potential changes arising from the proposed amendments, recognising that current policy in the ANPS remains the starting point for the consideration of Heathrow expansion until the amendments to the ANPS have been finalised and the amended version published as the HENPS. Once the ANPS has been amended and published as the HENPS, Heathrow will engage with relevant stakeholders on the policy amendments as part of our ongoing programme of pre-application engagement and also consider if targeted consultation is necessary.

1.4 How this document fits with wider expansion materials

The measures set out within the Noise Insulation Policy sit within a broader hierarchy of noise mitigation measures for the Project. Heathrow is seeking to mitigate and reduce noise exposure and impacts through controls such as the Noise Envelope, runway alternation, improved flight procedures and limits on night flights. In addition to these measures, noise

insulation provides mitigation for eligible homes and community buildings that are most affected by noise.

This Noise Insulation Policy document forms part of the wider suite of consultation materials for Heathrow expansion. It should be read alongside other key related documents such as:

- **Environmental Information Consultation Document (EICD)**, including **Chapter 9: Noise and Vibration**
- **Future Runway Operations (FRO)**
- **Environmentally Managed Growth (EMG)**
- **Draft Code of Construction Practice (CoCP)**

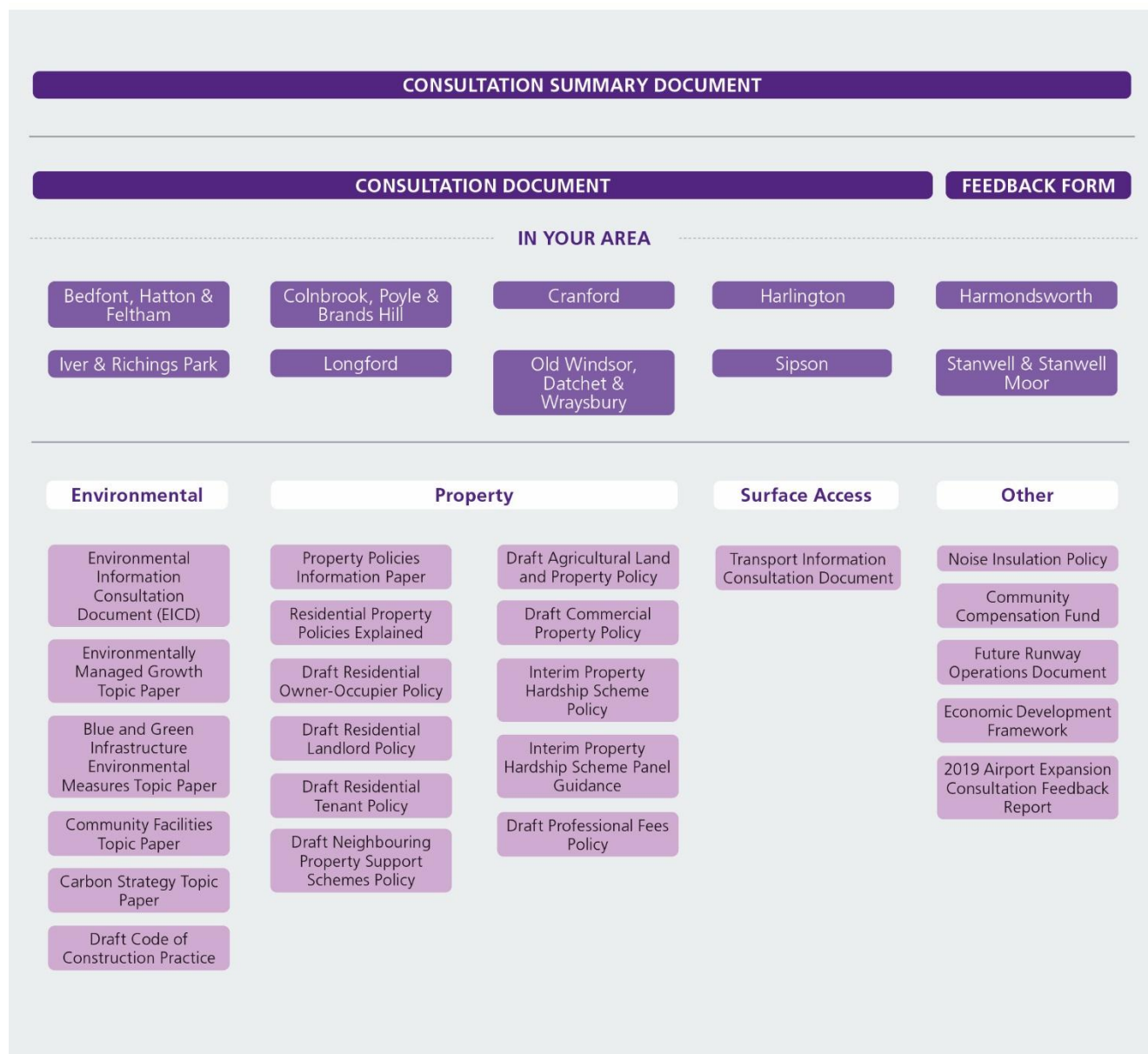
Together, these documents provide a comprehensive picture of the expansion proposals.

This document focuses specifically on the proposed noise insulation provisions.

More detailed information on broader topics, including anticipated environmental effects, operational mitigation measures, growth assumptions and wider impacts are set out in the accompanying consultation documents.

Respondents are encouraged to review the full range of consultation materials to gain a complete understanding of the proposals. All supporting documents, along with details on how to provide feedback, are available through the consultation website and associated online platforms.

Figure 1.1: Map of consultation documents



1.5 Consultation feedback

This Noise Insulation Policy has been developed taking account of responses to the 2019 consultation. Changes from the 2019 consultation have been introduced in several areas.

The **2019 AEC consultation report** summarises the responses into key themes regarding noise insulation schemes. The report provides our response as to how we have taken this into account or responded to the feedback in developing our proposals.

2. Policy context and commitments

2.1 Overview

Key policy that has informed this Noise Insulation Policy includes the Noise Policy Statement for England (NPSE) and the Airports National Policy Statement (ANPS).

The policy requirements and commitments outlined within the draft Heathrow Expansion National Policy Statement (HENPS) relating to the provision of noise insulation broadly align with the requirements set out within the ANPS.

Further details setting out the policy context and commitments relevant to noise insulation, including wider Government policy, are provided in **Appendix A**. Legislation, policy and guidance have informed the Noise Insulation Policy requirements, action levels and delivery methods.

Heathrow remains committed to meeting policy requirements and providing noise insulation schemes that mitigate noise for communities surrounding the airport.

2.2 Meeting the Airports National Policy Statement commitments

This Noise Insulation Policy has been developed to support delivery of the first objective of the ANPS (paragraph 5.68) and Noise Policy Statement for England (NPSE) with the Project. The first aim is “*within the context of Government policy on sustainable development: to avoid significant adverse impacts on health and quality of life from noise*”.

The ANPS refers to the *Noise Mitigation – Noise Control Hierarchy*. This hierarchy and noise mitigation relevant to the Project are described in the **EICD Chapter 9: Noise and Vibration**. Within the control hierarchy, noise insulation will be relied upon where other higher priority mitigation is not practical or sustainable.

To avoid significant adverse noise impacts, delivery of the Noise Insulation Policy will prioritise those properties and populations that will be newly exposed to noise levels above the Significant Observable Adverse Effect Level (SOAEL), including any properties that will be newly exposed to noise levels above Unacceptable Adverse Effect Level (UAEL).

The SOAEL values for aircraft noise are daytime 63dB $L_{Aeq,16hr}$ and night time 55dB $L_{Aeq,8hr}$. The daytime UAEL is 71dB $L_{Aeq,16hr}$ and the night time UAEL is 66dB $L_{Aeq,8hr}$. All these values are 92-day summer averages.

The ANPS (paragraph 5.245) explicitly reiterates public commitments for noise insulation made by Heathrow, which are a key part of the strategy to avoid significant noise impacts for areas newly above the SOAEL.

This Noise Insulation Policy will meet the requirements of the first aim of ANPS 5.68 for the following reasons:

- Homes that will be newly exposed above any SOAEL value will have insulation offered (and installed where practicable, if accepted) in advance of the new runway opening.
- As the number of aircraft movements increases after the opening year to a point when the airport's noise impact is forecast to be highest, homes newly exposed above the SOAEL values due to the Project will have insulation offered (and installed where practicable, if accepted) in advance of the SOAEL value being exceeded.
- Heathrow will extend the offer of noise insulation to homes that are already exposed to levels above the SOAEL values and will continue to be exposed above the SOAEL values after the new runway opens and as the air traffic to and from the expanded airport increases.
- After the opening of the new runway, fully funded insulation will be progressively offered to homes out to the action level of 60dB $L_{Aeq,16hr}$. As this is lower than the 63dB SOAEL for aircraft, this means more people and properties will be eligible for insulation.
- We have made the commitment to use a combined contour based on both full single-mode contours, namely the easterly and westerly mode contours. This produces a noise contour area larger than the area for the actual averaged east-west operations and will treat areas impacted by one mode as if it occurred for the entire year.
- As use of the new runway grows after its proposed opening, further areas for insulation will be sequenced to treat homes in advance of any air traffic growth and any associated noise forecast to newly exceed SOAEL.

The other two aims of paragraph 5.68 will be addressed by other measures, mitigations, compensations and outcomes. These will be described further in the environmental assessment submitted with the DCO.

3. Existing noise insulation schemes

3.1 Quieter Neighbourhood Support

In 2024 Heathrow launched a new package of noise insulation measures under the QNS programme [[Quieter neighbourhood support | Heathrow](https://www.heathrow.com/company/local-community/noise/what-you-can-do/quieter-neighbourhood-support)¹]. This package includes residential and community building noise insulation schemes, a Vortex Impact and Prevention Scheme and a noise-related Home Relocation Assistance Scheme that aims to have a positive impact on the communities around the airport and is intended to improve the wellbeing of those living in areas most affected by noise.

It delivers on the commitments made in Heathrow's latest Noise Action Plan (2024-2028) [[Noise action plan | Heathrow](https://www.heathrow.com/company/local-community/noise/making-heathrow-quieter/noise-action-plan)²], that sets out a range of improvements to reduce the impact of noise.

The QNS provides schemes that offer protection to residential and community buildings, which are summarised in the following sections.

3.2 Residential buildings

a Residential Insulation Scheme (RIS)

The RIS is an investment by Heathrow Airport to improve the property's resistance to noise by implementing insulation measures within eligible homes in close proximity to the airport.

Homes in eligible areas are assessed on their individual requirements and brought up to an appropriate level of acoustic performance.

The RIS currently provides funding covering 100% of qualifying works up to £34,000 (adjusted for inflation) to better protect homes with noise insulation measures.

The RIS, dependent on eligibility, includes supply and installation of replacement primary windows or secondary glazing, doors, new ventilation, loft insulation and upgrading of ceilings (ceiling over boarding).

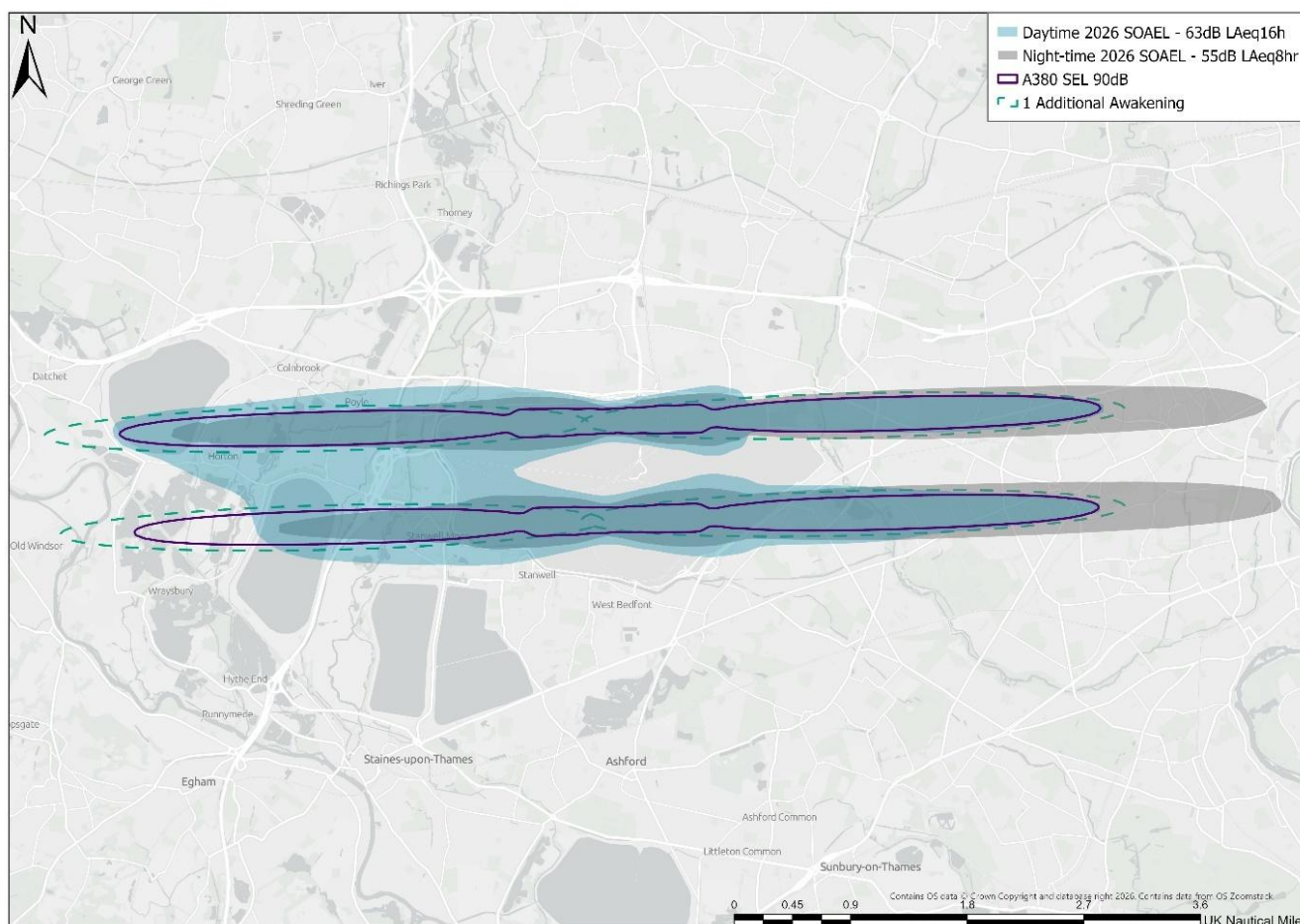
Eligibility for existing noise insulation schemes (both residential and community schemes) is determined from a single noise contour area. The single contour area is formed from the combination of four separate contours relating to different noise parameters or metrics to determine a single eligibility 'footprint'. The combined area is shown in **Figure 3.1**. The four discrete contours are determined from policy requirements or Heathrow commitments:

¹ <https://www.heathrow.com/company/local-community/noise/what-you-can-do/quieter-neighbourhood-support>

² <https://www.heathrow.com/company/local-community/noise/making-heathrow-quieter/noise-action-plan>

- Heathrow 2026 forecast daytime SOAEL 63 dB LAeq (0700-2300)³.
- Night time 2026 SOAEL 55 dB LAeq (2300-0700)⁴.
- 90 dBA SEL for the noisiest scheduled aircraft (Airbus A380-800) arriving before 6:00 am (2300-0700).
- The footprint of calculated probability of >1 awakening (scheduled operations between 23:30 and 06:00).

Figure 3.1: Noise contours used to define the composite eligibility boundary for the Residential Insulation Scheme



b Home Relocation Assistance Scheme

The Home Relocation Assistance Scheme (HRAS) provides financial help to eligible homeowners living in the noisiest areas around Heathrow to move away from the area if they wish. People who meet the criteria can get financial assistance with the costs of moving.

³ The Significant Observable Adverse Effect Level (SOAEL) is a concept introduced in Government noise policy. Government policy and guidance however does not explicitly define SOAEL. A daytime SOAEL of 63 dB LAeq,16hr has however been determined through various airport projects and is consistent with Government policy with respect to the provision of noise insulation.

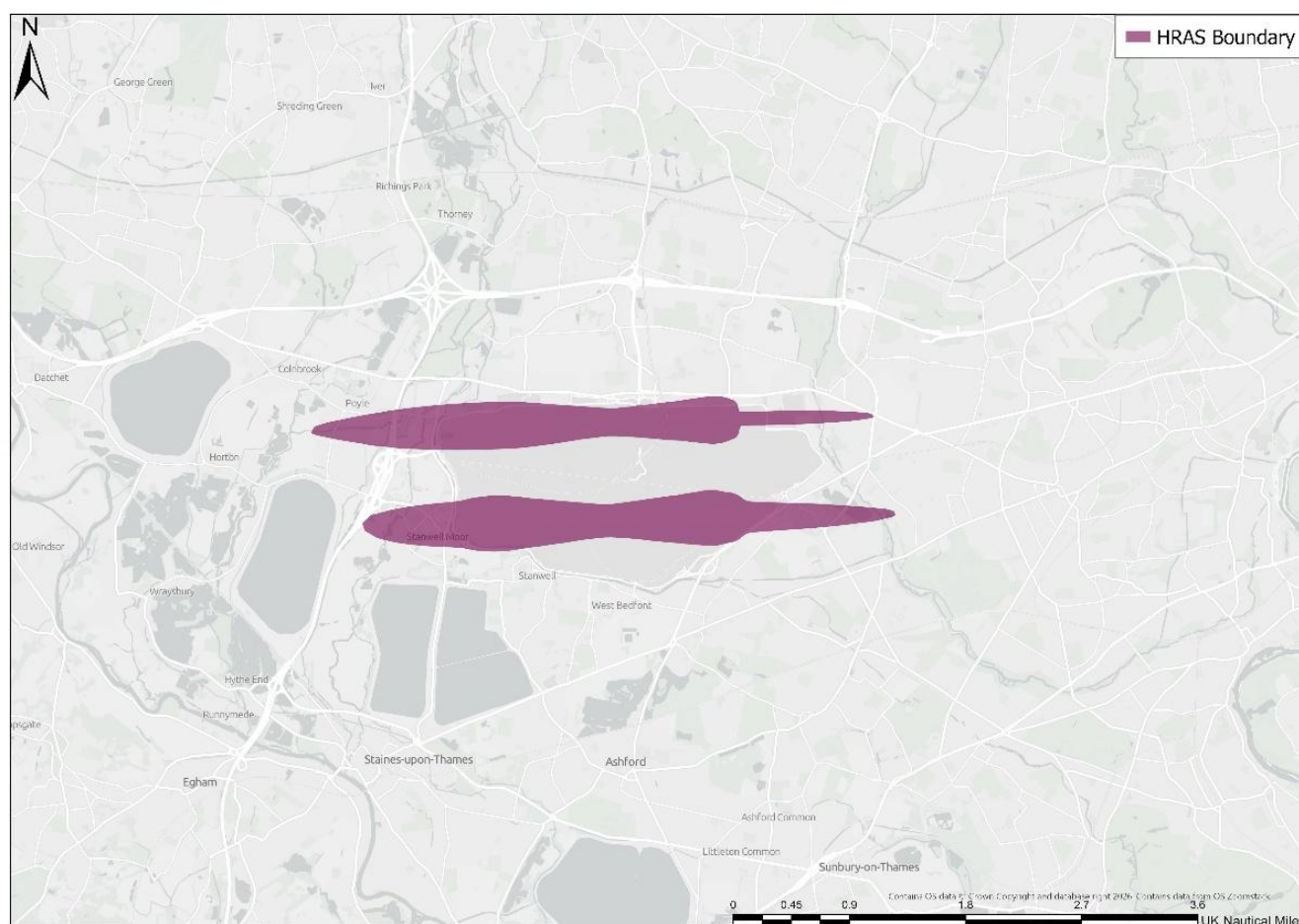
⁴ A night-time SOAEL of 55 dB LAeq,8hr has been derived from the World Health Organization (WHO) – 'Night Noise Guidelines for Europe' (2009)

The HRAS applies to residential properties around Heathrow that are exposed to a high level of noise (within the 2019 69 dB LAeq noise contour). This is in accordance with the Aviation Policy Framework (2013) as amended, which states that: *“The Government continues to expect airport operators to offer households exposed to levels of noise of 69 dB LAeq,16h or more, assistance with the costs of moving.”*

To be eligible for the scheme, applicants must meet these criteria:

- Own the property when applying (If they currently live elsewhere, it must be the only property they own in the UK).
- Plan to move to a quieter area outside the boundaries of the scheme.
- Not retain a beneficial interest in, or right of occupation to, the property after moving.
- Applicants must have owned and/or been living in the property prior to 31 December 2022.

Figure 3.2: Current Home Relocation Assistance Scheme boundary (2019 69 dB LAeq 16hr noise contour)



c Vortex Impact and Prevention Scheme (VIPS)

A vortex is a circulating current of air generated by planes. It can sometimes strike and damage the roofs of houses located under a flight path. Pitched roofs with loose-laid tiles are prone to vortex damage.

The VIPS includes provision for repairs for vortex strikes and proactive protection for homes in high impact areas. Every house, school, church or hospital affected by a vortex strike is eligible for the vortex protection scheme. This includes homes situated above commercial properties. The scheme does not cover damage to other property, such as cars, from roof tiles dislodged by a vortex.

3.3 Community buildings

The community buildings element of the QNS programme provides a framework for supporting eligible noise-sensitive community buildings located around Heathrow. It is intended to help reduce the effects of aircraft noise in buildings where people may spend extended periods of time, or where the use of the building means that the internal acoustic environment is particularly important.

Sensitive buildings within this programme include schools, colleges, community halls, libraries, healthcare settings, hospices, day nurseries and other similar community uses where eligibility and need are established. The scope of any support is considered on a building-by-building basis, taking account of the building's use, location, existing condition, previous interventions, practical deliverability and the potential for meaningful noise benefit. Noise insulation measures are provided to eligible buildings to reduce aircraft noise in sensitive rooms. The eligibility criteria are currently aligned to a 2026 63 dB $L_{Aeq,16hr}$ noise contour.

The existing community buildings scheme is made up of a number of related activities within the wider QNS programme. These include the close-out of legacy community building commitments, the Quieter Schools Programme (QSP), the Community Buildings Noise Insulation Scheme and the ongoing maintenance of previously installed noise insulation and ventilation measures.

a Quieter Schools Programme

The QSP scheme is offered to schools in eligible areas to improve noise insulation and ventilation.

The QSP supports eligible schools where aircraft noise may affect teaching, learning or other sensitive internal activities. The programme is intended to improve the internal acoustic environment of relevant spaces while supporting appropriate ventilation arrangements, so that schools are not required to rely on opening windows on a regular basis and being more susceptible to aircraft noise.

The measures available under the programme may vary depending on the needs of each school and the nature of the existing building. They may include acoustic window improvements, secondary glazing, ventilation measures, mechanical ventilation, cooling or other associated measures where these are considered necessary and appropriate. The exact solution for each school is not predetermined and will be developed following assessment of the building, its existing fabric, previous interventions and operational requirements.

The programme also recognises that some schools may already have benefited from previous Heathrow schemes. In such cases, the focus will be on understanding whether any further intervention is required to maintain or improve the overall effectiveness of the existing acoustic treatment, rather than assuming a standard package of works.

b Community Buildings Noise Insulation Scheme

The Community Buildings Noise Insulation Scheme provides support for eligible noise-sensitive community buildings beyond the schools portfolio. This may include, for example, community halls, libraries, healthcare settings, hospices, nurseries and other buildings where the use is considered sensitive to aircraft noise.

The purpose of the scheme is to assess whether practical and proportionate noise insulation measures can provide a meaningful improvement to the internal environment of eligible buildings. Measures may include improvements to windows, doors, ventilation or associated building elements, depending on the findings of the assessment and the suitability of the building for intervention.

c Community Building Maintenance Programme

The current QNS community buildings portfolio also includes an annual maintenance and asset care cycle for previously installed community building noise insulation and ventilation measures. This activity is intended to help protect the ongoing performance and usability of any measures provided, recognising that mechanical, ventilation and associated systems may require periodic inspection, servicing or minor remedial attention over time.

Heathrow have provided this ongoing support through the equipment lifecycle of the measures provided. The maintenance cycle supports the continued benefit of past investment and helps ensure that installed solutions remain operational, accessible and aligned with their intended purpose. This may include planned inspections, servicing, condition checks and responsive maintenance where appropriate, subject to the nature of the equipment installed and the agreed responsibilities for each building.

This asset care approach is separate from new major works but forms an important part of the overall community buildings offer.

4. Proposed new noise insulation schemes

4.1 Overview

The overall package of proposed noise and vortex schemes aims to provide measures to mitigate noise and vortex impacts for communities surrounding the airport. In addition to aircraft noise, the Project will generate construction noise and noise from new or altered roads and railways that may cause potential adverse effects on communities.

The Noise Insulation Schemes for each source vary in terms of action levels and the insulation provided. Properties exposed to higher levels of aircraft noise closer to the airport will be eligible for a full package of insulation. A contribution to insulation will also be available as a wider elective commitment to mitigate and minimise adverse noise effects.

Action levels are described in **Section 4.2**. An overview of the proposed noise insulation schemes is provided in the following figure, and each scheme is described further in **Sections 4.2 to 4.6**.

Figure 4.1: Summary of noise insulation schemes

Noise Source	Schemes	Description
Aircraft	Residential Insulation Scheme - Fully Funded	Full insulation for habitable rooms with acoustic glazing, upgraded external doors, possible ceiling or loft works, and suitable ventilation.
	Residential Insulation Scheme - Contribution	£3000 contribution toward windows, external doors, or ventilation.
	Community Buildings Noise Insulation Scheme	Provision of replacement acoustic double glazing or secondary glazing, external doors and ventilation.
	Quieter Relocation Scheme	People who meet the criteria can get financial assistance with the costs of moving.
	Vortex Impact and Prevention Scheme	Repair and protection of property roofs due to vortex strikes.
Road	Residential Insulation Scheme - Road	Acoustic double glazing with acoustic ventilation or secondary glazing. External doors replaced if exposed.
Rail	Residential Insulation Scheme – Rail	Same treatments as road. Works applied only to the facade facing the source.
Construction	Residential Insulation Scheme - Construction	Same treatments as road. Works applied only to the facade facing the source.
	Temporary Home Relocation Scheme - Construction	Provision of temporary accommodation for those most impacted by short term construction noise.

The proposed schemes include a combination of existing schemes that will be updated and extended to include the impacts of Heathrow expansion, and new schemes that address specific noise sources and impacts relevant to the Heathrow expansion proposals.

Proposed schemes that will be updated and extended as part of Heathrow's expansion proposals include:

- Residential Insulation Scheme – Fully Funded
- Residential Insulation Scheme – Contribution
- Community Buildings Noise Insulation Scheme
- Quieter Relocation Scheme (previously named the 'Home Relocation Assistance Scheme')
- Vortex Impact and Prevention Scheme

New schemes for Heathrow expansion include:

- Residential Insulation Scheme – Road
- Residential Insulation Scheme – Rail
- Residential Insulation Scheme – Construction
- Temporary Home Relocation Scheme – Construction

The schemes will remain available until they cease to be relevant (for example, at the end of the construction period for the construction noise insulation), or a scheme is updated (for example, if noise mitigation means that a property is no longer within a relevant contour).

The proposed noise and vortex schemes will be integrated under the existing Quieter Neighbourhood Support (QNS) programme. If, as part of this process, an existing scheme is closed, properties in those areas will be informed and advised of the scheme closure and possible eligibility for proposed new schemes. The contact period, of at least 12 months, will allow time for applications under the existing schemes before they close.

4.2 How eligibility is defined

Action levels are the noise levels that can trigger the actions in the noise insulation schemes. They are the threshold levels used to initiate the identification of eligibility for the Project's different schemes and noise sources. Action levels are designed to meet relevant policy requirements and airport commitments described in **Section 2** of this document.

The action levels will be presented geographically as 'contour lines,' identifying the boundary of land where the action levels are exceeded.

This policy sets out action levels, eligibility criteria and the process for the noise and vortex schemes. It defines the criteria used to determine eligibility but does not identify specific noise contours or the eligibility of individual properties. Further information on the predicted noise contours and the identification of eligible properties will be provided in the Environmental Statement.

a Scheme action levels

Action levels for air, road, rail and construction noise are provided in the following table. The action levels for each noise and vortex scheme are based on policy requirements as described in the table. Further information on each of these policy requirements and commitments are provided in **Appendix A: Legislation, policy and guidance**. The aircraft noise action levels are also applicable to ground noise associated with the airport.

Table 4.1: Aircraft noise action levels under an expanded airport

Noise Insulation Scheme	Time period	Action levels	Requirement reference
Residential Insulation Scheme – fully funded	Daytime	71 dB $L_{Aeq\ 16hr}$	UAEL
		63 dB $L_{Aeq\ 16hr}$	SOAEL and Aviation Policy Framework
		60 dB $L_{Aeq\ 16hr}$, full single mode, easterly and westerly	ANPS
	Night time	66 dB $L_{Aeq\ 8hr}$	UAEL
		55 dB $L_{Aeq\ 8hr}$	SOAEL – ANPS
Residential Insulation Scheme – contribution	Daytime	57 dB $L_{Aeq\ 16hr}$ full single mode, easterly and westerly	ANPS
	24hr	55 dB L_{den} (annual average)	ANPS
Community Buildings Noise Insulation	Daytime	60 dB $L_{Aeq\ 16hr}$	ANPS
Quieter Relocation Scheme	Daytime	69 dB $L_{Aeq\ 16hr}$	Aviation Policy Framework

Note – All parameters are 92-day summer average unless otherwise stated

Figure 4.2 shows the indicative area for the composite daytime and night time SOAEL for an expanded Heathrow.

Figure 4.2: Composite daytime and night time SOAEL contour



Table 4.2: Road noise action levels under an expanded airport

Noise Insulation Scheme	Time period	Action levels	Requirement reference
Residential Insulation Scheme – Road Façade specific (i.e. facing the noise source)	Daytime	63 dB L_{Aeq} 16hr (and a change of at least 1 dB from before airport expansion)	Noise Insulation Regulations, EIA Scoping Report Addendum
	Night time	55 dB L_{Aeq} 8hr (and a change of at least 1 dB from before airport expansion)	

Table 4.3: Rail noise action levels under an expanded airport

Noise Insulation Scheme	Time period	Action levels	Requirement reference
Residential Insulation Scheme – Rail Façade specific (i.e. facing the noise source)	Daytime	65 dB L _{Aeq} 16hr (and a change of at least 1 dB from before airport expansion)	Noise Insulation Regulations, EIA Scoping Report Addendum
	Night time	55 dB L _{Aeq} 8hr (and a change of at least 1 dB from before airport expansion)	
		80 dB L _{max} for >20 passbys per night	
		85 dB L _{max} for <20 passbys per night	

Table 4.4: Construction Noise Action Levels Under an Expanded Airport

Noise Insulation Scheme	Time period	Action levels	Requirement reference
Residential Insulation Scheme – Construction Façade specific	Daytime or Night time	Refer to Code of Construction Practice	Draft Code of Construction Practice (CoCP) and BS 5228
Temporary Home Relocation Scheme – Construction	Daytime or Night time	Refer to Code of Construction Practice	

4.3 Aircraft noise mitigation schemes

a Residential insulation schemes

The noise insulation schemes due to aircraft noise will provide additional noise insulation within residential properties that are exposed, or likely to be exposed, to noise above the action levels set out in **Section 4.2**. Residential properties include nursing homes and care homes.

Provision of insulation aims to improve the internal acoustic amenity of the property in accordance with the Noise Policy Statement for England (NPSE) and the Airports National Policy Statement (ANPS). The schemes are not intended to improve the noise environment outside of the property or building such as in gardens.

To ensure the schemes are sustainable and will provide lasting benefit for people and properties, Heathrow will provide work packages from agreed suppliers with suitable quality management procedures and aim to meet or exceed the minimum requirements of ANPS.

The schemes will provide 'like for like' replacement of existing windows, doors etc, where reasonably practicable. This means that existing PVC windows will be replaced with PVC, aluminium with aluminium and white with white. Approved contractors may be able to offer upgrades (for example, timber effect or painted frames) as an extra cost option to the applicant. Cat flaps cannot normally be fitted to acoustic doors and windows but may be moved to doors or walls of non-habitable rooms.

The schemes will not be provided to properties that currently meet or exceed the benefit of the eligible package to avoid disruption without benefit, or even degradation, of existing properties. Insulation will only be offered where it can be demonstrated to provide a material improvement in the acoustic performance of the building.

Roofs are not replaced in the noise insulation schemes. Due to complications associated with existing roof conditions it is also not practical to replace roof windows or skylights. Generally, roof windows are replaced when a vortex protection roof is installed under the Vortex Protection Scheme.

Residential insulation schemes will comprise two types: fully funded or contribution, depending on noise exposure levels of the property.

A property qualifies for the residential insulation scheme only if it existed on or before 20 December 2013, on the basis that developments completed after this date should reasonably be expected to incorporate appropriate acoustic design in order to protect future occupants from noise.

Residential Insulation Scheme – fully funded

This includes a full package of noise insulation to habitable rooms, including bedrooms, living rooms and dining rooms. This may include kitchens, toilets and bathrooms, but does not include porches, conservatories, outbuildings and rooms solely for leisure activities.

Windows may be upgraded to acoustic double glazing or by the addition of secondary glazing or both. External doors to habitable rooms may be upgraded. Ceilings or lofts may be over-boarded with additional lining. Acoustic thermal insulation batts (or equivalent) may be installed above ceilings in lofts. Suitable ventilation may be provided so that windows can be kept closed in warm weather. Where reasonably practicable, the design of insulation measures will seek to provide an appropriate indoor environment in terms of acoustics, air quality and thermal considerations including consideration of climate change projections.

The scheme will be prioritised in the following order to:

- a. Prevent exposure above UAEL due to the Project
- b. Avoid exposure newly above SOAEL due to the project
- c. Avoid exposure above SOAEL due to the project or existing operations and
- d. Deliver Heathrow's wider noise insulation commitments

Residential Insulation Scheme – contribution

This is a contribution of up to £3,000 towards a package of noise insulation measures. For example, an owner might choose to replace certain windows or external doors or install ventilation. This contribution scheme is offered in accordance with the requirements of paragraph 5.245 of the ANPS (paragraph 5.346 of the Heathrow Expansion National Policy Statement (HENPS)).

b Community Buildings Noise Insulation Scheme

The current Community Buildings Scheme, which includes the Quieter Schools Programme, will be extended to cover noise-sensitive community buildings impacted by the Heathrow expansion proposals.

Noise-sensitive community buildings include schools and colleges, hospitals, hospices and libraries. The definition may also include community halls and places of worship.

The scheme will identify potentially eligible community buildings within the noise contour whose owners will be invited to apply. Unsolicited applications will also be considered.

As per the ANPS (5.245), the action level for schools and community buildings will be 60 dB $L_{Aeq,16hr}$.

Prioritisation for provision of noise insulation within this scheme will focus on community buildings where noise has the greatest potential to result in adverse effects based on best available evidence and research. For schools and educational facilities this will consider the proportion of high listening need associated with each type of facility and the socio-economic data (level of deprivation) associated with the local area, along with the noise level exposure for each site.

The action level for schools and community buildings serves as mechanism to identify potential eligibility for insulation measures, subject to further assessment to ensure noise insulation is providing meaningful noise benefits and a reduction in noise effects whilst considering other factors such as value for money, practicality, sustainable design and relevant research.

A desktop or drive-by initial assessment may be used to determine if a site inspection is needed. Each eligible community building will receive an assessment including site inspection and possible surveys to identify a suitable package of measures that will be carried out by an approved installer.

The scheme may include the provision of replacement acoustic double glazing or secondary glazing, external doors and ventilation.

Insulation will only be offered if the building is not already insulated to an equivalent level to that of our scheme.

A building qualifies for the Community Building Insulation Scheme only if it existed on or before 20 December 2013, on the basis that developments completed after this date should reasonably be expected to incorporate appropriate acoustic design in order to protect future occupants from noise.

c Quieter Relocation Scheme

The Quieter Relocation Scheme (QRS) is the new name for the Home Relocation Assistance Scheme which will continue as it is currently operating as part of the QNS programme.

We will continue to offer financial help to eligible homeowners living in the noisiest areas around Heathrow to move away from the area if they wish. People who meet the criteria can get financial assistance with the costs of moving.

The relocation assistance scheme applies to residential properties around Heathrow that are exposed to a high level of noise (within the 69 dB L_{Aeq} noise contour). To be eligible for the scheme, applicants must meet these criteria:

- Own the property when applying (If they currently live elsewhere, it must be the only property they own in the UK).
- Plan to move to a quieter area outside the boundaries of the scheme.
- Not retain a beneficial interest in, or right of occupation to, the property after moving.
- Have owned or are living in the property prior to 31 December 2022 (being the date adopted in the existing Home Relocation Assistance Scheme).

Homeowners may receive financial assistance with the costs of moving away from high levels of airport noise. Eligible homeowners may receive a lump sum of £10,000, plus 1% of the sale price of the property (up to a maximum of £20,000). There is only one payment per property. No other assistance is provided, and the property is no longer eligible for a noise insulation scheme⁵. The property is sold in the open market by the owner.

As with the Noise Insulation Schemes, QRS eligibility will require that some part of a property lies within the relevant, calculated noise contour.

Eligibility for QRS will continue to be based on the 69 dB $L_{Aeq,16hr}$ contour as per the current QNS programme. With expansion, the intention is that the QRS will be based on an updated noise contour, which will be produced by the airport on a periodic basis to identify updated eligibility.

Where a property was previously eligible for HRAS but falls outside a revised QRS contour following publication of updated noise contours, eligibility will continue for a period of 12 months from the date of publication.

d Vortex Impact and Prevention Scheme

We will continue and extend the current Vortex Impact and Prevention Scheme, which includes repairs for vortex strikes and the provision of proactive protection for homes in high impact areas. Every house, school, church or hospital affected by a vortex strike is eligible for the scheme. This includes homes situated above commercial properties. The scheme does not cover damage to other property, such as cars, from roof tiles dislodged by a vortex.

⁵ Under the “agent of change” and “caveat emptor” principles, the open market buyer of a property should consider any noise insulation requirements within their purchase price offer. For houses purchased by Heathrow, any noise insulation scheme would normally be provided before the property is returned to the market.

Damage repair

If a home has been damaged by a vortex strike, Heathrow operates a 24-hour emergency service and will repair it. Although legal liability for vortex damage rests with the airlines, Heathrow voluntarily funds this scheme as part of its commitment to its local communities.

An assessor will inspect a roof reported as damaged. The damage caused by vortex strikes is very specific and the assessor will quickly be able to confirm whether one has occurred. Once approved, remedial repairs to the roof are carried out at no cost to the homeowner.

Vortex protection

If a roof is repaired under the VIPS, the property is eligible for permanent protection. This involves strengthening the roof by fixing down tiles with metal clips that have passed stringent wind tunnel tests. This has proven to be the most effective way to protect roofs from vortex damage. The work will be completed as soon as possible and free of charge.

Because the majority of vortex strikes are concentrated in small areas near the end of runways, Heathrow offers blanket vortex protection for homes in these high-risk areas. This currently includes streets where 50% of the homes on a given road have been struck, in which case all of the homes are invited to register under a blanket scheme.

To date, no further vortex damage has been recorded at any home that has had its roof strengthened under the VIPS.

Expanded Vortex Prevention Scheme

For the Project, a new blanket area based on the new runway layout has been defined that identifies homes where vortex damage may occur. After granting of the Development Consent Order (DCO) and a decision to proceed, Heathrow will undertake vortex protection of all the roofs in the defined area that are eligible within a blanket roll out.

After opening of the new runway, the VIPS will continue as it does today. We will respond to reports of vortex damage, and areas with many confirmed reports of damage will be considered for blanket protective treatments.

4.4 Road and rail noise insulation schemes

Residential insulation scheme

In accordance with the requirements and eligibility criteria of the Noise Insulation Regulations, provision of noise insulation measures are made to reduce noise from changes in rail or road traffic. Existing windows may be upgraded with replacement acoustic double-glazed units with “acoustic ventilation” or by the addition of secondary glazing, and external doors to habitable rooms may be replaced with doors.

Works are usually only to the façade (side) of the house that is closest to (or has line of sight of) the road or railway line.

4.5 Construction noise insulation schemes

Residential insulation scheme

To comply with the requirements of the CoCP and BS 5228, provision of noise insulation measures is made to reduce noise from construction activities. Existing windows may be upgraded with replacement acoustic double-glazed units with ‘acoustic ventilation’ or by the addition of secondary glazing, and external doors to habitable rooms may be replaced with new doors.

Works are usually only to the façade (side) of the house that is closest to (or has line of sight of) the construction site/activity.

Temporary Home Relocation Scheme

We are proposing to provide a Temporary Home Relocation Scheme for those most impacted by construction noise.

Where, after applying control measures including Best Practicable Means* (BPM), construction noise at any residential receptor is predicted to exceed the construction noise insulation action levels for a temporary period, Heathrow would offer an option of temporary rehousing for the duration of the works affecting that particular area. The action level will be based on the UAEL for construction noise, which depends on the time of day.

Heathrow will contact the owners or occupiers of properties affected before the works are due to start to allow residents to find alternative property and move before the noisy works begin. Temporary rehousing could be a similar rental property or a hotel.

Heathrow will provide a help desk and work with local property agents to identify suitable temporary accommodation and support applicants who choose to find their own temporary housing. Applications will be assessed for:

- Property location and eligibility
- Ownership/occupancy
- Accommodation requirements including any special needs or adaptations

Eligible applicants will receive information setting out what range of temporary accommodation will be provided within the scheme, details of local letting agents, removal and storage companies and the Heathrow helpdesk support.

Subject to eligibility, Heathrow would pay the reasonable costs of:

- Equivalent temporary accommodation based on reasonable market rates
- Packing and removal costs, and storage of personal goods if required
- Kennel/cattery or equivalent housing for pets
- Works to secure the vacated property when empty, including disconnection and re-connection of services
- Additional insurance for temporary accommodation and vacated property

Applicants will be able to make their own arrangements, but payments will be audited and claimants must receive approval from Heathrow for the supplier and for costs before using suppliers not previously audited by the scheme.

Heathrow will usually seek to support temporary accommodation as close as practical to the vacated property, but sufficiently distant to avoid significant noise impacts. Where temporary accommodation is a significant distance from the permanent location, assistance with travel costs (for example, workplace or school) may be provided.

4.6 Combined noise source

The combined effect of different noise sources on health and quality of life is difficult to evaluate, especially where different noise metrics are used.

As a starting point, the noise level for each source (aircraft, road, rail or construction) will be assessed separately using the relevant action level. Where a resident is affected by more than one noise source (for example, construction noise and aircraft noise) a review of combined sources will be undertaken, in order to take account of when insulation may be triggered for the different sources and possible combined effects. Details of the assessment methodology, including consideration of cumulative effects, will be defined in the Environmental Statement supporting the DCO application and this document will be updated.

Noise from natural sources, such as wind and rain, is not included in the NPSE definition of environmental noise. Furthermore, other noise sources that are not associated with the airport activity such as existing roads and railways are also excluded from this Noise Insulation Policy. When assessing a house site for noise insulation, any noise measurements or calculations will be undertaken or adjusted to exclude noise sources that are not caused by airport operations or expansion.

5. How the schemes will be delivered

5.1 Delivery overview

Where reasonably practicable, noise and vortex schemes will be made available before the operational impact arises as a result of Heathrow expansion.

We plan to prioritise providing noise insulation for eligible homes that will be exposed to the highest noise levels from the Project and that are already exposed to similar noise from existing Heathrow operations.

Homes expected to be exposed to early construction noise from the Project as well as existing high levels of aircraft noise will also be prioritised. If the Development Consent Order (DCO) is approved, we will prioritise those forecast to be newly exposed to high levels of construction, road and rail traffic and aircraft noise. We will use reasonable endeavours to ensure that the insulation is offered and, if accepted, installed before the new noise occurs.

Home and community building owners identified as being within the relevant eligibility contours will be contacted and invited to apply for the schemes. We will continue to use our existing insulation scheme engagement model under the Quieter Neighbourhood Support (QNS) to ensure property owners are aware of their eligibility and are encouraged to apply.

Once we have received an application, an assessment will be conducted to confirm eligibility. Approved contractors will deliver a standard package of noise insulation measures within a quality management scheme, including sample completion testing.

A dedicated support team will be provided to assist applicants throughout the process, including investigation of complaints during and after completion. Applicants will also be able to appeal to the Prioritisation Panel.

Where practical, we will seek to identify opportunities to coordinate noise insulation measures with other home improvement programmes, such as energy efficiency and climate resilience schemes. This will help maximise benefits for residents and minimise unnecessary disruption.

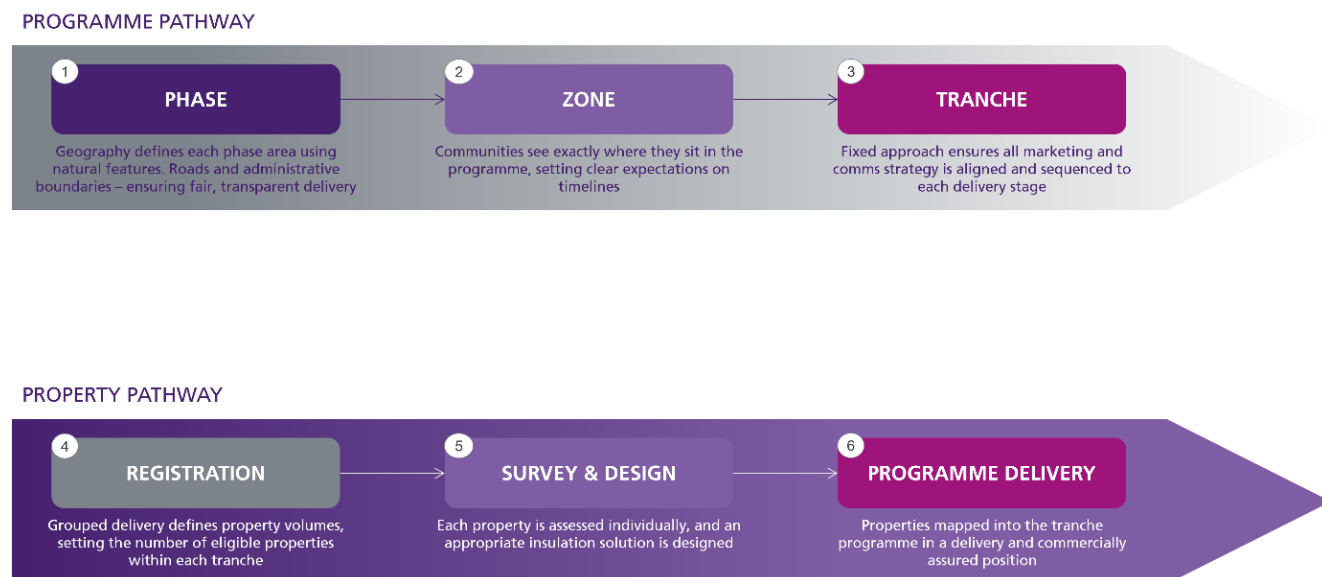
5.2 Phasing and delivery of schemes

The proposed noise and vortex schemes will be included in Heathrow's existing scheme delivery framework, developed under the QNS.

The approach will use a phased roll-out, moving from initial high-level geographic planning through to delivery at each property.

Delivery will be sequenced through a series of defined stages, progressing from Phase → Zone → Tranche → Registration → Survey and design → Programme delivery. This structure makes it easy to see progress, keep communication aligned, and coordinate operations at each stage.

Figure 5.1: Delivery programme and property pathways



Phases will be defined based on location and geography considering natural features, roads and administrative boundaries. Within each phase, separate zones will help communities understand their relative position within the programme and indicative sequencing.

The tranche stage enables planning for delivery into manageable packages. This helps align marketing, communications and engagement activity without setting fixed timelines for individual properties.

Delivery will be initiated through scheme registration. This provides indicative property volumes within each tranche and an initial view of eligible participation. This will be followed by survey and design, during which properties are assessed individually, and potential insulation measures are developed.

Finally, if measures have been identified, the homeowner is informed, contractors will be mobilised and the dates of installation of noise insulation will be agreed.

Across all stages, the sequencing of delivery will be informed by several factors including:

- Forecast noise exposure and potential impact
- Opportunities for efficient, area-based delivery (including clustering of activity)
- Delivery capacity and readiness of the supply chain
- The availability of registered and progressing properties in each area

This structured, geography-based approach helps manage delivery in a controlled and coordinated way. It supports clear communication and efficient mobilisation, while keeping flexibility as the programme evolves. The approach follows QNS principles and can be adapted to support the effective delivery of the proposed schemes.

5.3 Identification of eligible buildings

Identification of eligible properties will be informed by noise modelling to define contours for each scheme's action level.

Existing or forecast noise contours, modelled using the latest version of the UK Civil Aviation Authority's noise model ANCON or a comparable alternative, will be used to identify the properties that may be eligible for the noise insulation schemes. Noise contours will be calculated based on expected air, road, rail and construction traffic movements and the modelling of construction plant noise.

The aircraft noise contours are expected to evolve over time and be updated as the airport grows, and the process of airspace change develops. This may result in some changes to the predicted future contours, meaning that some homes indicated as being within a certain noise contour may later fall outside that contour and vice versa. The aim will be to reduce the noise impact, in line with the Airports National Policy Statement (ANPS) and the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) 'balanced approach', which would also reduce or change the homes within the contours, as far as reasonably practicable.

Projected noise contours will be updated periodically in conjunction with the noise envelope and noise action planning processes. This will mean that future eligibility for noise insulation schemes will be continually reviewed.

In densely developed areas such as those with terraced homes, there are likely to be adjacent properties exposed to similar noise levels with one property inside the contour whilst its neighbour is outside. For this policy any residential property with any part of its curtilage (land immediately surrounding the house/dwelling) within the contour will be assessed to be within the contour.

5.4 Application process

a Resident journey

Eligible residents will be invited to apply through a clear and structured process. Invitations to register will be issued to residents when their area becomes open for delivery, in line with a phased delivery programme. This will mean those most impacted or impacted earlier on in the Project will receive invitations to register first.

Heathrow will implement a proactive engagement programme to ensure eligible residents, are aware of the relevant schemes and understand the support available. Engagement will include online eligibility checking tools and scheme information, direct written notification, follow-up contact and targeted local outreach where required. Where properties are rented, Heathrow will engage with both landlords and tenants as appropriate to ensure occupiers are informed of the scheme and that any permissions or arrangements required to deliver insulation measures are identified and managed efficiently.

Appropriate adjustments will be made in communication for households where it becomes apparent that they do not have English as a main language, have low literacy or where there are particular vulnerabilities due to age, disability or poor health. Such vulnerability may be identified through Heathrow's, or its contractors', investigations, or due to local authority or other relevant agency notification to Heathrow as part of dialogue on noise or vortex schemes.

Following registration, Heathrow and its delivery partner will arrange a survey to assess the property and its insulation needs and confirm any specific case details where further support may be required (vulnerability/access needs). The survey will inform a property proposal that will be prepared and shared with the resident, confirming the scope of insulation they are eligible for against the relevant scheme.

Appropriate safeguarding and clear communication protocols will be implemented for surveys and works in the homes of vulnerable persons. Such vulnerability may be identified through Heathrow's, or its contractors', investigations, or due to local authority or other relevant agency notification to Heathrow as part of dialogue on noise or vortex schemes.

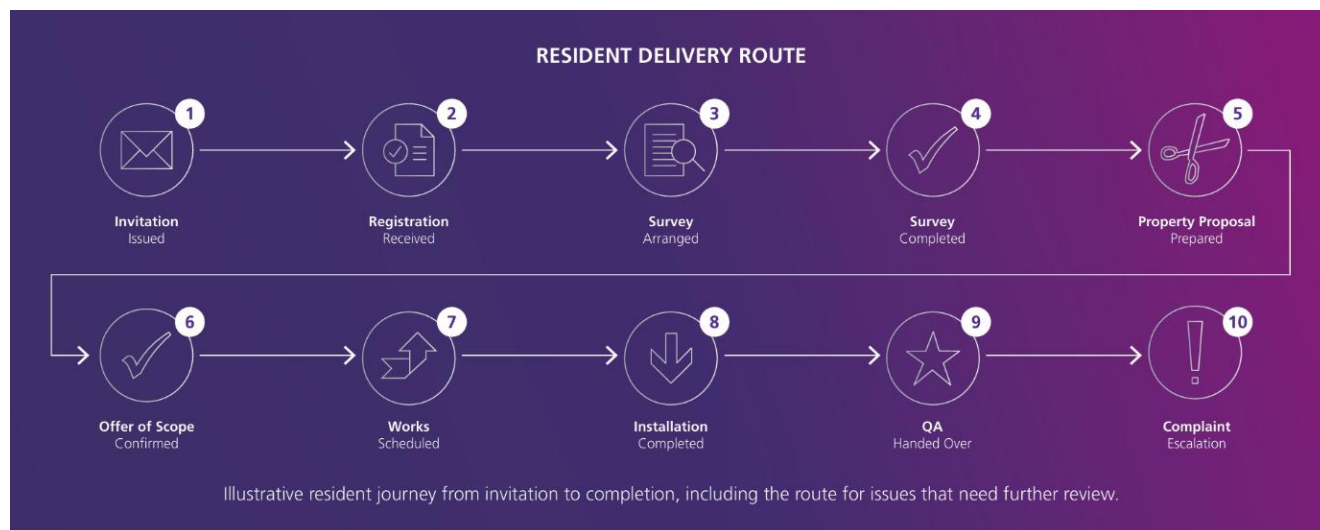
Subject to the resident's agreement on the scope, works will be scheduled and installation undertaken. Following completion of the installation the resident will receive a handover pack (installed measures, operating guidance, warranties) and confirm completion route for any residual snagging. Finally, the resident will receive a report providing a complete quality assurance and close out of snagging issues. Where issues are still outstanding, there will be a complaint resolution process (see **Section 5.4**).

For a residential contributory insulation scheme (such as up to a £3,000 contribution towards a package of noise insulation treatment as per the Airport National Policy Statement and the Heathrow Expansion National Policy Statement), residents may opt to use their own supplier. This supplier will need to be approved by us to ensure suitable quality management, and funds will be released upon quality assurance and approval by Heathrow that the works undertaken have been completed to a satisfactory standard.

Where consents are required for the installations proposed by the noise insulation schemes, for example, planning, listed building or conservation area consents and building control, it will be the responsibility of the homeowner to obtain these consents. Where reasonably practicable, Heathrow and its delivery partner will provide support with consents applications if required.

Figure 5.2 provides an overview of the resident journey from invitation through to completion of works.

Figure 5.2: Resident delivery process



Where eligible residents do not respond to initial contact, Heathrow will issue follow-up communications and will keep the case eligible for later progression, subject to phasing and capacity. Heathrow will record non-response status and will continue to signpost residents to the eligibility tools and helpdesk should they wish to register at a later point.

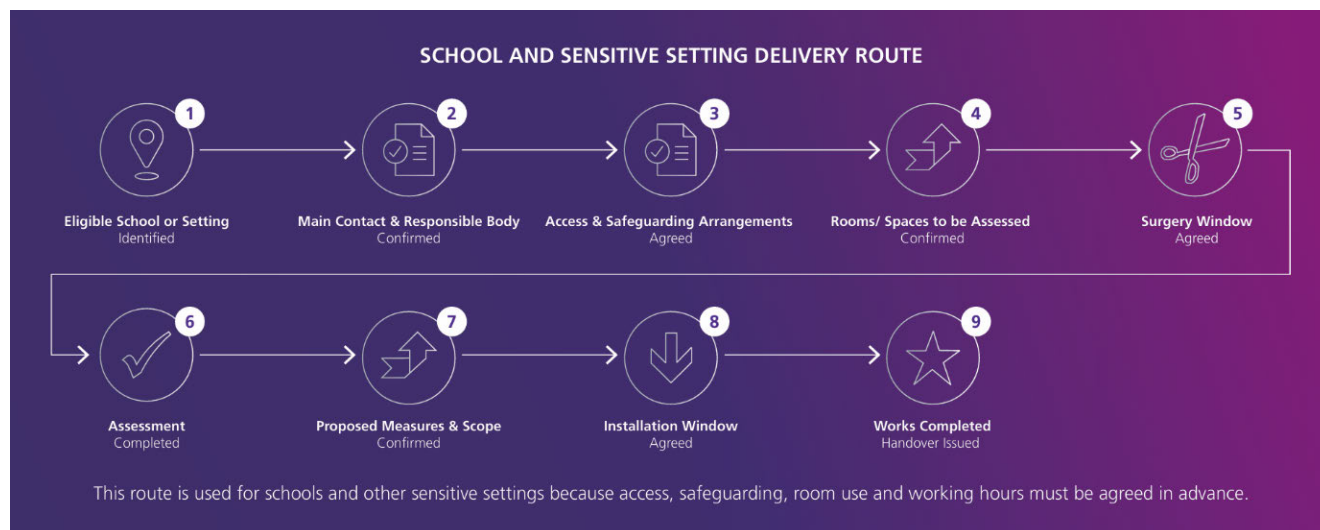
b Community buildings

Once a property is identified as potentially eligible for the scheme, Heathrow will engage with the school or community building operator and, where relevant, the local education authority.

Heathrow will deliver surveys and works for community buildings through a specific route rather than following the residential process. This reflects the need to agree in advance access, safeguarding (for buildings such as schools), room use and operating hours for each facility. It also reflects the need to plan surveys and works around term time for schools and other operational constraints. Heathrow will therefore plan the delivery route with each community building so that assessment and installation can be carried out with minimal disruption to normal operations.

For each relevant community building, Heathrow will work with the owner/operator and, where relevant, the local education authority to agree the main contact and confirm access and safeguarding arrangements. Heathrow will identify the eligible buildings and the rooms or spaces to be assessed. It will also agree suitable survey and installation windows. Heathrow will record the agreed arrangements, responsibilities and key dates and use them to plan and schedule the assessment and works.

Figure 5.3: Schools and noise sensitive community buildings delivery process



5.5 Appeals and exceptions

Heathrow has set up a Prioritisation Panel for the QNS to provide scrutiny and recommendations to Heathrow regarding the progress and implementation of the noise insulation scheme. The panel advises Heathrow on the prioritisation of works, considers resident concerns and special case applications and provides recommendations on escalated disputes. The panel is independently chaired and membership currently includes representatives from each of the following stakeholder groups; local communities, local authorities, the airline community operating at Heathrow, independent public health and environmental noise expertise and Heathrow Airport.

The Prioritisation Panel meets quarterly to review the implementation and performance of Heathrow's noise insulation schemes. During each meeting, Heathrow provides updates on programme delivery, including progress against agreed objectives, emerging risks, and any issues requiring independent advice.

The panel reviews and provides recommendations on specific programme matters, including policy interpretation, eligibility criteria, prioritisation approaches, and operational challenges that arise during scheme delivery. The panel's role is advisory, providing independent scrutiny and expert input to support fair, transparent and consistent scheme delivery.

The panel also considers special case applications submitted for further review. These cases typically involve circumstances that fall outside the standard scheme criteria or where applicants have requested additional consideration due to exceptional circumstances. Following review, the panel makes recommendations to Heathrow on the appropriate outcome, taking account of the evidence presented, the objectives of the scheme, and the need to maintain consistency across all applications.

Heathrow will continue to use the Prioritisation Panel as part of the oversight and dispute resolution approach for the expansion noise insulation schemes. The panel's role is to consider the issues referred to it and provide its recommendation or determination in accordance with the relevant scheme parameters.

Where reasonably practicable, Heathrow will act in accordance with recommendations and determinations provided by the Prioritisation Panel.

Appeals

Residents will be able to raise enquiries, complaints and disputes through established Heathrow routes, including online, email and phone. Delivery issues will be addressed first through the helpdesk and delivery partner. The Prioritisation Panel will be available to applicants who do not accept an eligibility decision or the insulation measures identified for their property.

Exceptions and special cases

Although Heathrow will seek to identify all eligible homeowners and invite them to apply, cases that fall outside standard eligibility criteria, or where exceptional circumstances apply, can be reviewed through the Prioritisation Panel. These may be people who are not in the current phase of delivery, or who are outside the contours, or who have a special case for consideration.

The policy and schemes described within this document meet or exceed the minimum requirements of the ANPS and the Noise Policy Statement for England (NPSE) and provide sustainable and practical schemes for the majority of people and properties.

However, there may be exceptional cases where a bespoke alternative performance standard to meet the requirements could be considered. Examples may include:

- A person with a specific health or disability issue associated with noise.
- A property that is not suitable for the standard schemes, such as some listed or historic buildings.

Bespoke assessments and schemes are inherently costly and can be disproportionate to the effort and funds required for assessment and design compared to delivery. For this reason, they may not be considered practicable or sustainable other than in exceptional circumstances. The Prioritisation Panel will review cases where bespoke assessments may be justified and recommend the most appropriate treatment options.

For the very few properties that will be newly exposed above the UAEL, an enhanced noise insulation package may be required to address circumstances where standard insulation measures may not provide sufficient mitigation. Once these properties have been identified by the Heathrow Noise Team, the owners will be contacted with a view to agreeing the scope of work required and access to the property to complete the installations.

Where an application is not received or an offer not accepted, we may need to obtain compulsory rights to provide bespoke treatments to prevent exposure above UAEL.

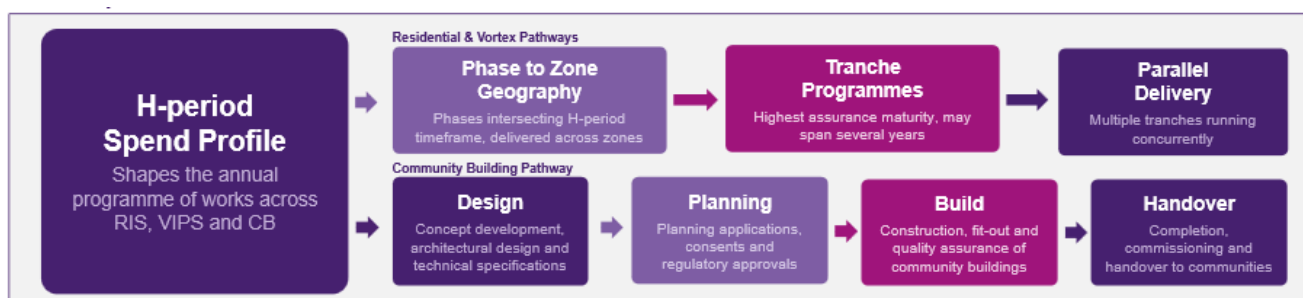
This package of measures may also need to include temporary rehousing to allow the work to be done to those homes. This will be addressed in the DCO application.

Further information will be provided within the Environmental Statement (ES) to identify these locations, and affected residents will be contacted through the DCO process.

5.6 Funding considerations

Existing QNS schemes are funded through a combination of regulatory allowances and approved investment mechanisms, informed by the commitment adopted as part of the Noise Action Planning process. These arrangements shape the overall spend profile during the regulatory period (H-period), which in turn defines the scale and distribution of insulation that can be delivered across both the residential and community schemes.

Figure 5.4: Regulatory funding period and residential and community building delivery pathways



Funding decisions affect the pace and sequencing of delivery. Insulation schemes are planned to match the funding available, creating a structure that allows delivery to be planned, phased (to ensure sufficient capacity and materials are available for all eligible works), tracked and adjusted to meet regulations and investment controls.

Figure 5.4 illustrates that funding moves from the spend profile into geographic delivery. Within this structure, activity is grouped into tranche programmes, representing packages of work that can then be scheduled based on certain priorities.

At later stages, subject to readiness and available funding, tranches may be delivered at the same time (parallel delivery). This flexible and scalable approach allows the programme to adjust to changes in capacity, funding and operating conditions.

For community and non-residential buildings, delivery follows a similar but separate path through design, planning, construction and handover. This ensures that development, approvals and construction activity are sequenced appropriately.

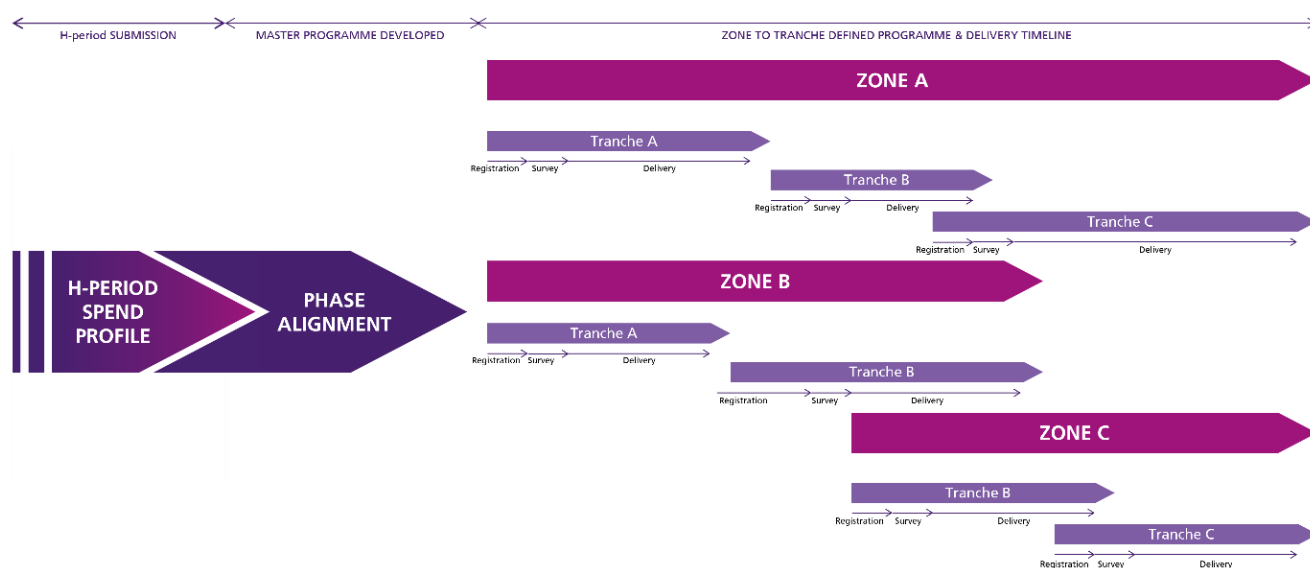
Delivery planning is typically undertaken on an annual basis within defined funding envelopes. This supports a balance between providing forward visibility and maintaining flexibility to respond to change. Within this context, delivery planning may take account of factors such as

- Annual volumes of surveys and installations
- Geographic sequencing and tranche structuring
- Transition management between schemes or delivery phases
- Compliance with regulatory requirements and to meet value-for-money expectations

Proposed noise and vortex schemes will link funding allocation to programme structure and delivery sequencing, while retaining flexibility in how delivery is phased and progressed over time.

Overall, the approach is intended to support a stable and sustainable delivery profile, where the pace and scale of activity are aligned to funding availability, enabling consistent standards and avoiding over-commitment while maintaining the ability to adapt as programme conditions evolve.

Figure 5.5: Illustrative example of phased delivery of zones and tranches



As illustrated, the delivery framework links funding to how the programme is carried out. Funding is organised in stages to support controlled and effective delivery.

Investment is first set at a phase level, giving a broad time and location-based structure for activity. This is then broken down into zones, which define where and when works will happen across the programme timeline. Within each zone, activity is organised into tranche programmes, representing defined packages of work that progress through registration, survey and delivery stages.

Over time several tranches may be in development or delivery at the same time. This creates an overlapping approach rather than a strict step-by-step process, helping maintain progress while allowing for differences in readiness across areas.

The illustration also shows that effective delivery depends on aligning funding availability, phase progress and tranche readiness. If these are not aligned, it can affect efficiency, continuity and overall programme assurance.

To manage this, the programme is set up to convert funding into deliverable work in a controlled and phased way, while staying flexible enough to adjust timing and sequencing as conditions change.

5.7 The role of research

Research underpins both the design and continuous improvement of the existing QNS. We are committed to using robust and up to date evidence to ensure our proposed noise insulation schemes deliver meaningful and measurable improvements to health and quality of life.

Research findings will be used to inform development of the insulation scheme's design, prioritisation for delivery of both residential and community building schemes, eligibility thresholds, technical standards and future policy review.

Existing research indicates that insulation interventions can significantly reduce sleep disturbance and annoyance. Ongoing work continues to strengthen the evidence base, addressing long-term outcomes, credibility of findings and value for money. Research insights are used to refine delivery and inform future scheme evolution.

6. Next steps

6.1 Next steps

You can find more information about what will happen next in **Chapter 12. Next steps** of the **Consultation Document**.

6.2 Have your say

You can find more information about how to provide feedback and engage with this consultation in **Chapter 11. Have your say** of the **Consultation Document**.

Appendix A: Legislation, policy and guidance

Noise Policy Statement for England

The Government published the Noise Policy Statement for England (NPSE) in March 2010. The NPSE policy aims, are:

“Through the effective management and control of environmental, neighbour and neighbourhood noise within the context of Government policy on sustainable development:

- Avoid significant adverse impacts on health and quality of life
- Mitigate and minimise adverse impacts on health and quality of life and
- Where possible, contribute to the improvement of health and quality of life.”

The NPSE explanatory notes define the following concepts relevant to noise impacts:

- LOAEL (Lowest Observed Adverse Effect Level). The level above which adverse effects on health and quality of life can be detected
- SOAEL (Significant Observed Adverse Effect Level). The level above which significant adverse effects on health and quality of life occur

NPSE Section 2.22 states *“It is not possible to have a single objective noise-based measure that defines SOAEL that is applicable to all sources of noise in all situations. Consequently, the SOAEL is likely to be different for different noise sources, for different receptors and at different times. It is acknowledged that further research is required to increase our understanding of what may constitute a significant adverse impact on health and quality of life from noise. However, not having specific SOAEL values in the NPSE provides the necessary policy flexibility until further evidence and suitable guidance is available.”*

Planning Practice Guidance – Noise was first published in 2014 and includes the concept of Unacceptable Adverse Effect Level (UAEL). This is the level of noise exposure that would be perceived as *“intrusive and very disruptive”* and that *“at the highest extreme, noise exposure would cause extensive and sustained changes in behaviour without an ability to mitigate the effect of noise. The impacts on health and quality of life are such that regardless of the benefits of activity causing noise, this situation should be prevented from occurring.”*

The LOAEL, SOAEL and UAEL values being applied to the Project were set out within the EIA Scoping Report Addendum and will be used within the environmental assessment submitted with the Development Consent Order (DCO) application. These values will be adopted in this document when published.

We consider that this Noise Insulation Policy is one aspect of “avoiding” significant adverse noise effects on health and quality of life and “preventing” unacceptable noise effects.

Airports National Policy Statement

The Government designated the Airports National Policy Statement: new runway capacity and infrastructure at airports in the South East of England (ANPS) as primary policy on noise when considering the Heathrow Northwest Runway scheme in June 2018.

The ANPS addresses a range of issues including Heathrow airport expansion and noise insulation. For noise impacts ANPS says:

“5.47 The Government wants to strike a fair balance between the negative impacts of noise (on health, amenity, quality of life and productivity) and the positive impacts of flights...”

“5.48 The International Civil Aviation Organisation introduced the concept of a ‘Balanced Approach’ to noise management (resolution A33/7). This is given legal effect in the UK through EU Regulation 598/2014...”

“5.68 Development consent should not be granted unless the Secretary of State is satisfied that the proposals will meet the following aims for the effective management and control of noise, within the context of Government policy on sustainable development:

- *Avoid significant adverse impacts on health and quality of life from noise;*
- *Mitigate and minimise adverse impacts on health and quality of life from noise; and*
- *Where possible, contribute to improvements to health and quality of life. ...*

“5.244 People are entitled to know what steps will be taken to help protect them against aircraft noise and, where appropriate, to help them to move house.

“5.245 In addition to statutory requirements, Heathrow Airport has publicly committed to a community compensation package comprising a number of more generous offers:...

- *Following a third-party assessment, to provide full acoustic insulation for residential property within the full single mode easterly and westerly 60dB $L_{Aeq,16hr}$ noise contour of an expanded airport;*
- *Following a third-party assessment, to provide a contribution of up to £3,000 for acoustic insulation for residential properties within the full single mode easterly and westerly 57dB $L_{Aeq,16hr}$ or the full 55dB L_{den} noise contours of an expanded airport, whichever is the bigger; and*
- *To deliver a programme of noise insulation and ventilation for schools and community buildings within the 60dB $L_{Aeq,16hr}$ contour.”*

Draft Heathrow Expansion National Policy Statement

The Government published the proposed draft Heathrow Expansion National Policy Statement (HENPS) in June 2026. Further description how the HENPS has been considered within this Noise Insulation Policy is provided in **Section 1.3**.

Government policy on aviation noise

The Civil Aviation Act (1982, 2006, 2012) introduces powers for the Government to regulate and control noise from aircraft at “designated aerodromes”. Heathrow Airport is a designated airport for this purpose. The ‘controls’ are contained within Section 78 and 79 of this Act and include statutory provisions to enable the delivery of schemes for noise insulation.

Government policy on aviation noise has evolved to accommodate changes in legislation, wider policy and new research. The following summarises Government policy on aviation noise in relation to noise insulation that may need to be considered in addition to ANPS requirements in the final Noise Insulation Policy submitted with the DCO.

The Government published the Aviation Policy Framework (APF) in March 2013, which included the statement:

“3.17 We will continue to treat the 57dB $L_{Aeq,16\text{ hr}}$ contour as the average level of daytime aircraft noise marking the approximate onset of significant community annoyance. However, this does not mean that all people within this contour will experience significant adverse effects from aircraft noise. Nor does it mean that no-one outside of this contour will consider themselves annoyed by aircraft noise.”

The Draft UK Airspace Policy published by the Department for Transport (DfT) in February 2017 and the consultation response that the DfT published in October 2017 has modified the APF.

“Consistent with the Noise Policy Statement for England, our objectives in implementing this policy are to: ... limit and, where possible, reduce the number of people in the UK significantly affected by the adverse impacts from aircraft noise.” (para 2.69 Oct 2017)

“The Government acknowledges the evidence from recent research which shows that sensitivity to aircraft noise has increased, with the same percentage of people reporting to be highly annoyed at a level of 54dB $L_{Aeq,16\text{ hr}}$ as occurred at 57dB $L_{Aeq,16\text{ hr}}$ in the past. The research also showed that some adverse effects of annoyance can be seen to occur down to 51dB $L_{Aeq,16\text{ hr}}$.” (para 2.70 Oct 2017)

“We will set a LOAEL at 51dB $L_{Aeq,16\text{ hr}}$ for daytime and based on feedback and further discussion with CAA we are making one minor change to the LOAEL night metric to be 45dB $L_{Aeq,8\text{ hr}}$ rather than L_{night} to be consistent with the daytime metric.” (para 2.72 Oct 2017).

However, the Government published the Aviation 2050 consultation in December 2018 which proposes the following noise insulation measures:

- *“To extend the noise insulation policy threshold beyond the current $L_{Aeq,16\text{ hr}}$ 63dB contour to $L_{Aeq,16\text{ hr}}$ 60dB.*
- *To require all airports to review the effectiveness of existing schemes. This should include how effective the insulation is and whether other factors (such as ventilation) need to be considered, and also whether levels of contributions are affecting take-up*
- *The Government or ICCAN to issue new guidance to airports on best practice for noise insulation schemes, to improve consistency*

- *For airspace changes which lead to significantly increased overflight, to set a new minimum threshold of an increase of L_{AeqT} 3dB, which leaves a household in the $L_{Aeq,16hr}$ 54dB contour or above as a new eligibility criterion for assistance with noise insulation.”*

Flightpath to the Future is a further Department for Transport policy document that sets out a strategic framework for the aviation industry over the next 10 years, building on responses to the Aviation 2050 consultation. It supports the use of noise management practices to reduce and mitigate aircraft noise including noise insulation schemes.

In March 2023 the Department for Transport published the Overarching Aviation Noise Policy Statement (OANPS) which states:

“The Government’s overall policy on aviation noise is to balance the economic and consumer benefits of aviation against their social and health implications in line with the International Civil Aviation Organisation’s Balanced Approach to Aircraft Noise Management. This should take into account the local and national context of both passenger and freight operations, and recognise the additional health impacts of night flights.”

Other standards and regulations

Other notable regulations and standards associated with noise insulation referred to within this Noise Insulation Policy include the following.

The Noise Insulation Regulations (1975) – The Noise Insulation Regulations provide a schedule of noise insulation measures to be provided if noise levels from a highway or road development are predicted to exceed action levels predicted using the Government method, known as Calculation of Road Traffic Noise (CRTN). CRTN is a historic calculation method that uses a different metric to those normally used for aircraft noise, $L_{A10,18hr}$, but this metric can be converted to $L_{Aeq,T}$ for normal highway noise.

The Noise Insulation (Railways and Other Guided Transport Systems) Regulations 1996 – The Noise Insulation (Railways etc) Regulations provide a schedule of noise insulation measures to be provided if noise levels for a rail or similar development are predicted to exceed action levels predicted using the Government method, Calculation of Rail Noise (CRN).

British Standard BS 8233:2014 – Guidance on sound insulation and noise reduction for buildings. British Standard BS 8233 provides guidance on the control of sound in and around new buildings, including noise from aircraft, roads and construction sites.

For residential buildings, guideline internal noise levels are provided as annual average levels. BS 8233 recognises that it may be desirable to build houses or flats above the guideline values for other reasons, such as access to transport, shopping etc, and that a relaxation of the guidance values may provide reasonable living conditions.

For non-residential buildings, BS 8233 refers to a number of sector guidelines, including Building Bulletin BB93 for schools and Health Technical Memorandum HTM 08-01 for hospitals, and recommends that a suitably qualified acoustician is retained for specialist uses, such as theatres, concert halls and cinemas.

Note BS 8233 is currently under review and revision.

British Standard BS 5228-1:2009 and A1:2014 – Code of practice for noise and vibration control on construction and open sites – Part 1: Noise. British Standard BS 5228-1 provides guidance on the calculation and control of noise at construction sites. Annex E of the code addresses significance of effects with example method 1 being the “A-B-C method” that produces a table of threshold levels at various times of the day and night. The standard also provides guidance on the eligibility for noise insulation and temporary rehousing due to construction noise.

