

Environmental Information Consultation Document (EICD)

Chapter 1

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1. Setting the scene for consultation – environmental information

1.1 Introduction

- 1.1.1 This Environmental Information Consultation Document (EICD) forms part of a set of publicly accessible documents that support the 2026 Heathrow Expansion Consultation (referred to as the ‘2026 Public Consultation’). The 2026 Public Consultation is being undertaken as part of the pre-application stage of the Development Consent Order (DCO) process, which is required for Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects (NSIPs).
- 1.1.2 The Planning and Infrastructure Act enacted at the end of 2025 indicates that consultation is non-statutory and therefore not a mandatory requirement for NSIPs. As such, this document is entitled the ‘Environmental Information Consultation Document’ as it supports this non-statutory consultation. This document is not a Preliminary Environmental Information Report (PEIR) as would have been prepared to support consultation prior to the 2025 Planning and Infrastructure Act in accordance with the requirements of The Infrastructure Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017.
- 1.1.3 We are undertaking consultation regarding Heathrow expansion (referred to as the ‘Project’). This EICD and the assessments it presents have been prepared by a team of environmental assessment specialists.
- 1.1.4 As noted within the Consultation Document, following the Airport Expansion Consultation (AEC) undertaken in 2019, we have reviewed and refined the details of the Project and are now consulting further on the proposals for airport expansion. We will continue to advance the proposals and environmental assessment, considering ongoing design evolution and the feedback received through the 2026 Public Consultation.
- 1.1.5 This EICD is supported by a **Glossary of terms**.

1.2 Purpose of this Environmental Information Consultation Document (EICD)

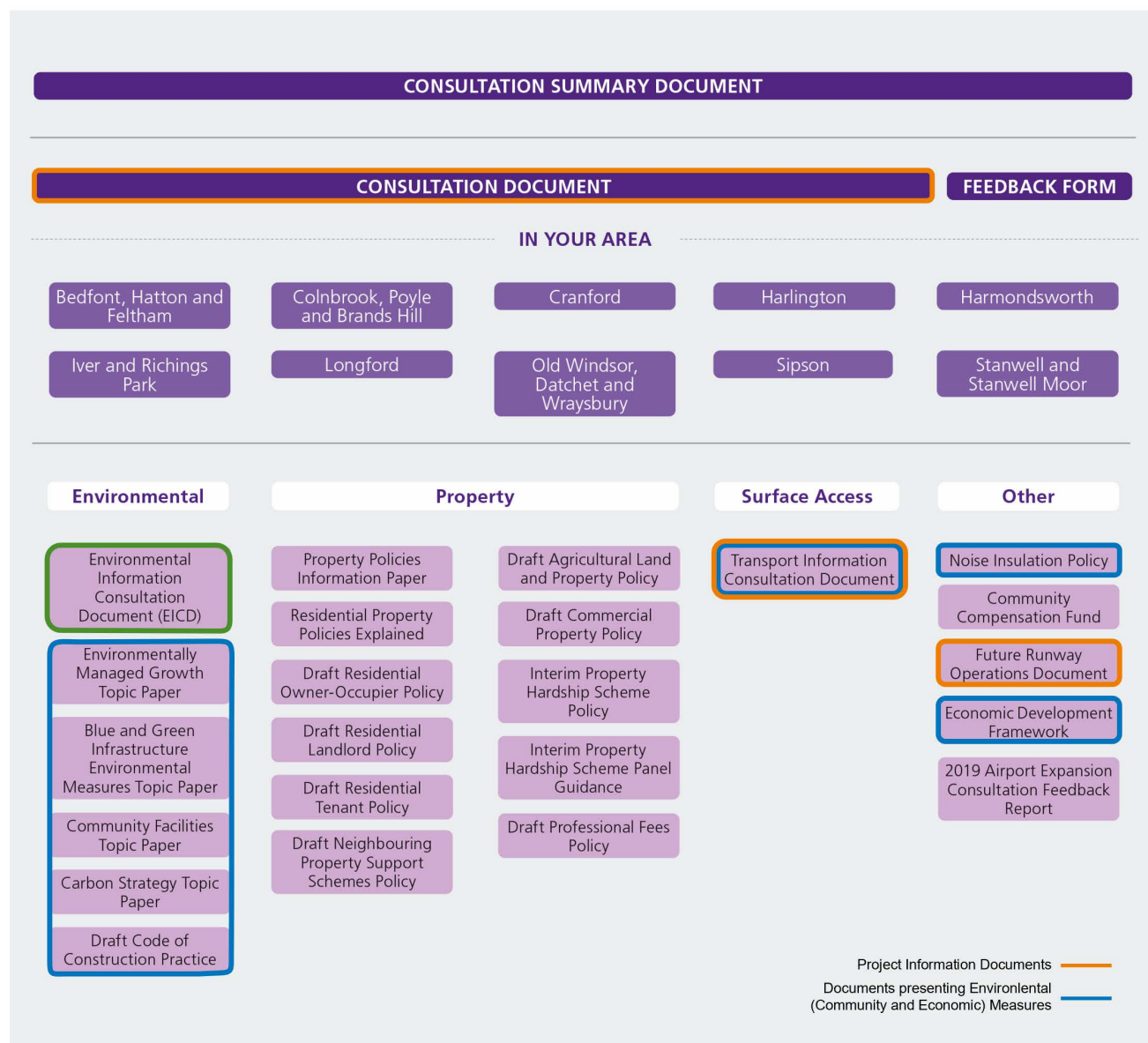
- 1.2.1 The purpose of this Environmental Information Consultation Document (EICD) is to help communities understand the environmental effects (both beneficial and adverse) of the Project over the course of its construction and operation. The information is provided to enable communities to provide us with feedback, and for this feedback to inform the ongoing design evolution. This EICD sets out details of the environmental assessment that has been undertaken at this point in the Development Consent Order (DCO) process.

- 1.2.2 Further in the DCO process, as noted in **Section 1.3**, an Environmental Statement (ES) will be provided as part of the DCO application and will set out a detailed assessment of the environmental effects of the Project.

Relationship of this EICD with the consultation materials

- 1.2.3 This EICD focuses on the assessment and reporting of environmental effects. The assessments within this EICD take into account and are presented on the basis that certain environmental measures would be implemented as part of the Project. An environmental measure is something which ensures the design, construction and operation of the Project will be undertaken in such a way as to avoid, prevent or reduce, mitigate or, if possible, offset adverse environmental effects. Environmental measures are described as being ‘embedded’. By being embedded, these measures are already incorporated into the plans, procedures and design of construction, built infrastructure, and operational management of the Project. **Figure 1.1** presents the titles of the set of consultation documents and their relationship to the EICD.

Figure 1.1: Summary of materials supporting consultation and their relationship with the EICD



- 1.2.4 As shown by **Figure 1.1**, there are differing types of consultation documents that provide further information relevant to the aspects covered in this EICD, as follows:
- Project information documents – These documents describe what is proposed in terms of built infrastructure (such as the runway, terminal buildings, road realignments), how the Project will be constructed and how it will operate. They present information on which the assessments in this EICD are based, and a summary of the Project. The content of these documents is described in **Chapter 2: Description of the Project**, and they include:
 - **Consultation document**
 - **Future Runway Operations (FRO) document**
 - **Transport Information Consultation Document (TICD)**
 - Environmental measures documents – These documents provide information on how the design, construction and operation of the Project would be undertaken to avoid, prevent or reduce, mitigate and, if possible, offset adverse environmental effects, and enhance beneficial effects. The EICD considers environmental measures within the assessments undertaken, and effects are assessed on the basis that environmental measures would be implemented as part of the Project. Where environmental measures are embedded within the design, approach to construction and operational management controls of the Project, they are also documented within the project information documents:
 - **Noise Insulation Policy**
 - **Economic Development Framework**
 - **Environmentally Managed Growth Topic paper**
 - **Blue and Green Infrastructure Measures Topic paper**
 - **Community facilities Topic paper**
 - **Code of Construction Practice**
 - **TICD**
- 1.2.5 In addition to these documents, as indicated by **Figure 1.1**, a community compensation fund will be available and applicable where specific adverse environmental effects of the Project cannot be minimised, offset or mitigated by environmental measures.

1.3 Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA)

- 1.3.1 Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) is a mandatory process which is being undertaken for the Project, as required by the Infrastructure Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017 [1] (referred to as the 'EIA Regulations') and supporting government guidance.

- 1.3.2 The Planning Inspectorate (PINS) published a scoping opinion in relation to the Project in 2018. A Preliminary Environmental Information Report (PEIR) was then prepared and consulted on as part of the Airport Expansion Consultation (AEC) in 2019, in accordance with the EIA Regulations at the time. The PINS published a further scoping opinion in relation to the Project in 2025. This Environmental Information Consultation Document (EICD) does not reflect a stage of the EIA process and has been prepared to provide an updated summary of the environmental effects associated with the Project, to enable consultees to understand and provide feedback on the Project. An Environmental Statement (ES) will be provided as part of the Development Consent Order (DCO) application and will set out a detailed assessment of the environmental effects of the Project.
- 1.3.3 Further detail on the approach taken to the environmental assessments presented within this EICD is set out in **Chapter 3: The approach to environmental assessment** in the EICD and within **Chapters 5 to 18** of the environmental aspect chapters.

1.4 National policy

- 1.4.1 As set out within the consultation document, there are several government policy documents relevant to the Project.
- 1.4.2 The Airports National Policy Statement (ANPS) provides the primary basis for making decisions in relation to the application for development consent for the Project. It sets out planning policy relevant to the Project, including policies relating to environmental assessments and considerations in the context of the Development Consent Order (DCO) application. For example, the ANPS includes policies on establishing and enhancing green infrastructure and requires a noise insulation programme to be put in place. Ensuring consistency with these policy requirements has been a key consideration in the design development of the Project, including the environmental measures.
- 1.4.3 The Government recently concluded its consultation on proposed amendments to the 2018 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 once concluded. Subject to parliamentary approval of the Government's final form of the proposed amendments, the amended form – which will then be known as the HENPS – is expected to be published by the end of 2026. In preparing our consultation materials, we have reviewed the proposed amendments to the ANPS and are continuing to consider the potential implications for our preferred scheme and accompanying assessments. Where relevant to the assessments, the requirements of the ANPS are referenced in this Environmental Information Consultation Document (EICD) together with any potential changes arising from the proposed ANPS amendments. We recognise that current policy in the ANPS is the starting point for the consideration of Heathrow expansion until the amendments have been finalised and published as the HENPS. Following publication, we will engage with relevant stakeholders on the policy amendments as part of our ongoing programme of pre-application engagement.

- 1.4.4 In addition to the ANPS, the National Policy Statement for National Networks (NPSNN) applies to the Project. The NPSNN sets policy for nationally significant road and rail schemes. For Heathrow, it frames how any changes to the strategic road network, such as works to the M25, M4 and associated junctions, and rail connections should be assessed. It requires that development does not compromise the primary function, safety or performance of these networks.
- 1.4.5 Other policy at a national, regional and local level is referenced where relevant in the aspect chapters of this EICD, as well as relevant legislation and guidance.

1.5 What is consultation and engagement?

- 1.5.1 Consultation and engagement are distinct methods for gathering feedback and involving stakeholders in influencing project outcomes.
- 1.5.2 Consultation typically refers to the presentation of information to members of the community or members of the public, at a set point in time, to request and facilitate informed feedback.
- 1.5.3 Engagement, by contrast, involves more targeted, continuous interactions that are focused on specific technical matters. Engagement enables Heathrow to seek feedback on technical issues from statutory bodies, such as the Environment Agency or Historic England, and other stakeholders, including community organisations.
- 1.5.4 This Environmental Information Consultation Document (EICD) presents information to allow meaningful and constructive public consultation to take place. It is not intended to provide information at the level of detail that is needed for technical engagement, or that would be provided in the Environmental Statement (ES) submitted with the Development Consent Order (DCO) application.
- 1.5.5 We continue to undertake detailed technical engagement with the relevant statutory bodies and technical stakeholders, and this will continue throughout the pre-application stage of the DCO process.

1.6 Structure of this Environmental Information Consultation Document (EICD)

- 1.6.1 The structure of this Environmental Information Consultation Document (EICD) is outlined below:
 - **Chapter 1: Setting the scene for consultation – environmental information:** This chapter introduces the EICD, explains how it relates to the other consultation materials, and summarises the key national policy documents applicable to the Project.
 - **Chapter 2: Description of the Project:** This chapter provides a summary of the new infrastructure that is to be built, how it will be built, and how the expanded airport will operate.

- **Chapter 3: The approach to environmental assessment:** This chapter explains how the environmental information in this EICD has been prepared, clarifies the meaning of the technical term ‘significance’ in assessing environmental effects, and sets out how **Chapters 5 to 18** should be understood. It also explains what an in-combination and cumulative effects assessment is and why this is required.
- **Chapter 4: People, place and Community Areas:** For some aspects – particularly health, air quality, noise, recreation and amenity, landscape and visual, and community – environmental effects are best presented at a community level. This chapter explains how community areas have been defined and described to facilitate this. It also provides baseline information on the economy and labour market across local authority areas.
- Environmental aspect chapters:
 - **Chapter 5: Socio-economics and employment**
 - **Chapter 6: Community**
 - **Chapter 7: Recreation and amenity**
 - **Chapter 8: Noise and vibration**
 - **Chapter 9: Air quality and odour**
 - **Chapter 10: Carbon (greenhouse gases)**
 - **Chapter 11: Health**
 - **Chapter 12: Biodiversity**
 - **Chapter 13: Water environment**
 - **Chapter 14: Historic environment**
 - **Chapter 15: Landscape and visual**
 - **Chapter 16: Land quality**
 - **Chapter 17: Waste and materials**
 - **Chapter 18: Climate resilience and adaptation**
 - **Chapter 19: Next steps and preparation of the Environmental Statement (ES)**