



Department
for Transport

AECOM

Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) for the draft Heathrow Expansion National Policy Statement

Scoping and Baseline Report: Main Report

Department for Transport

Quality information

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1. Introduction

1.1 Purpose

- 1.1.1 The Department for Transport (DfT) has commissioned AECOM to produce an Equality Impact Assessment (EqlA) to inform the Government's review of the Airport National Policy Statement (ANPS). As announced by the Secretary of State for Transport in November 2025, the scheme put forward by Heathrow Airport Limited for a Northwest Runway at Heathrow Airport will inform the review. Thus, the ANPS has been renamed the Heathrow Expansion NPS, reflecting that the document does not reconsider the appropriate location for additional runway capacity in the South East of England decided in the 2018 Airports NPS. Instead, the Government has considered whether there remains a strong case for expanding hub capacity at Heathrow, via the Heathrow Northwest Runway scheme, that it can meet its four tests and that the requirements it places on an applicant are robust and up to date.
- 1.1.2 As a public body, DfT must, in the exercise of its functions have due regard to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and promote equality and cohesion between those with protected characteristics¹ and all others in the manner described at section 149 of the Equality Act 2010. This duty is referred to as the 'public sector equality duty' (PSED).
- 1.1.3 The HENPS is intended to replace the Airports National Policy Statement (ANPS) designated in 2018. The renaming of the policy statement reflects changes in policy, legislation and evidence since that time and clarifies that the document does not reconsider the strategic decision to support expansion at Heathrow Airport. Instead, the draft HENPS provides an updated, Heathrow-specific framework that builds on the strategic conclusions of the ANPS while strengthening and updating policy requirements and safeguards.
- 1.1.4 An EqlA was carried out when the ANPS was first developed and therefore should be updated to reflect any proposed amendments to the ANPS. The EqlA provides a systematic assessment of how the draft HENPS may affect groups with protected characteristics as defined by the Equality Act 2010 and demonstrates how the aims of the PSED have been considered through relevant mitigating measures. An EqlA will support decision-making on the basis of an informed, evidenced understanding of relevant equality issues.
- 1.1.5 The purpose of this EqlA Scoping and Baseline Report is to support the Government in preparing the draft HENPS. In doing so, it builds on the previous EqlA prepared for the ANPS in 2018 and identifies where updates need to be made. This includes a review and update of relevant evidence on protected characteristic groups, study areas, priority groups, and the screening and assessment methodology.

¹ Protected characteristics are defined under the Equality Act 2010: age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, and marriage/civil partnership.

- 1.1.6 This scoping report will inform a new EqlA for the HENPS which will assess differential and disproportionate impacts across protected characteristic groups.

Note to reader:

- 1.1.7 The EqlA Scoping Report was originally prepared and consulted upon in support of the 'Airport National Policy Statement Update' (ANPS Update). Since completion of the scoping consultation, the National Policy Statement has been renamed the draft Heathrow Expansion National Policy Statement (HENPS). This updated version of the Scoping Report reflects the revised title and incorporates updates arising from the scoping consultation.

1.2 Context

- 1.2.1 National Policy Statements (NPS) are designated under the Planning Act 2008 to set out policy that must be taken into account in the design of that description of development when determining Development Consent for Nationally Significant Infrastructure Proposals (NSIP).
- 1.2.2 The current ANPS, designated in June 2018² under the Planning Act 2008, sets out the UK Government's policy framework for delivering additional runway capacity in the Southeast of England. The ANPS sets out that additional capacity is best met by a Northwest runway at Heathrow Airport, and the requirements that need to be met for a new Northwest runway to gain Development Consent. These requirements also apply to 'associated development', such as terminal infrastructure, road and rail links. They are a material consideration for other airport infrastructure in London and the Southeast of England. In January 2025, the Government confirmed support for a third runway at Heathrow Airport and invited proposals to be brought forward by Summer 2025.
- 1.2.3 The 2018 ANPS outlines the Government's case for additional airport capacity in the Southeast of England. It highlights that Heathrow and other London airports are operating near full capacity, limiting connectivity and resilience. The growing demand for air travel is projected to continue, and without expansion, the UK risks losing routes to emerging markets and its economic competitiveness. The Government concludes that a new Northwest runway at Heathrow is the most effective solution to meet future demand, while ensuring environmental and community impacts are managed responsibly.
- 1.2.4 The 2018 ANPS confirms that the Airports Commission identified the need for one additional runway to be in operation in the Southeast of England by 2030 in its 2013 Interim Report.³ The Airports Commission shortlisted three schemes for Appraisal of Sustainability: a new full-length second runway at Gatwick Airport; a new full-length Northwest runway at Heathrow Airport; and an extension of the existing northern runway at Heathrow Airport.

² Department for Transport (2018). Airports National Policy Statement: new runway capacity and infrastructure at airports in the South East of England. Available at: [Airports National Policy Statement: new runway capacity and infrastructure at airports in the South East of England](#)

³ Airports Commission (2013). Airports Commission: Interim Report. Available at: [Airports Commission: interim report - GOV.UK](#) [accessed 16/01/2026]

- 1.2.5 The 2018 ANPS outlines the Airports Commission appraisal and consultation process, including the Appraisal Framework. The Framework was designed as part of the appraisal process in 2014 comprising detailed appraisal objectives originating from the eight sift criteria used to shortlist the three schemes: strategic fit; economy; surface access; environment; people; cost; delivery and operational.⁴
- 1.2.6 The 2018 ANPS outlines the outcomes of the Appraisal of Sustainability for these shortlisted schemes. The Final Report, produced in 2015 by the Airports Commission, concluded that the Northwest runway at Heathrow Airport would offer the strongest strategic and economic benefits to the UK, accompanied by supporting measures to address the environmental and community impacts of the new runway. The Government supported the conclusions of the Airports Commission and endorsed the proposed Northwest runway at Heathrow as its preferred scheme.
- 1.2.7 Although the 2018 ANPS is current Government policy and continues to support a third runway, the Government has acknowledged the need for review following submission of proposals for a third runway in summer 2025. This is to ensure the ANPS remains fit for purpose, reflecting latest legislation and policy, and aligns with the Government's commitments to the appropriate development of additional airport capacity at Heathrow Airport. This review requires an Appraisal of Sustainability and will be subject to public consultation, and Parliamentary scrutiny and approval. The review will consider how any proposed scheme must meet the Government's four tests:
- It contributes to economic growth across the country;
 - It meets our air quality obligations;
 - It is consistent with our noise commitments; and
 - It aligns with our legal obligations on climate change, including net zero.

Heathrow Expansion

- 1.2.8 The revised ANPS focuses on the expansion of Heathrow, in line with the Chancellor's announcement in January 2025. Accordingly, the Airports NPS has been renamed the Heathrow Expansion NPS (hereafter referred to as "the HENPS") to reflect that the document does not reconsider the strategic location of additional runway capacity, and to clarify that the document was, and continues, to have direct effect in relation to the provision of a Northwest Runway at Heathrow Airport only.
- 1.2.9 The Government supports the expansion at Heathrow to deliver potential benefits for passengers, staff, airlines, local communities and businesses in the neighbouring area and wider country. According to Heathrow Airport Limited⁵, the scheme informing the draft HENPS includes the following proposals:
- An up-to 3,500-metre third runway located Northwest of the airport delivering core capacity uplift required to meet national demand and

⁴ Airports Commission (2015). Airports Commission: Final Report. Available at: [Airports Commission: final report](#) [accessed 16/01/2026]

⁵ Heathrow Airport Limited (2025). Our proposal for expanding Heathrow. Available at: [Expanding-Heathrow-proposal-summary-31-07-25.pdf](#)

need; 276,000 additional flights per year reaching up to a total of 756,000 per year;

- A new terminal complex to the West of Terminal 5, modernised Central Terminal Area and extended Terminal 2, increasing overall capacity up to 150 million passengers per year;
- Upgrading and modernising existing infrastructure including increasing cargo capacity by 50%, reconfiguring surface access, the realignment of the M25 motorway below the new runway and parking facilities;
- Expanded Public Transport Interchange within the Central Terminal Area to improve access to public transport across the airport and delivering high-capacity, low-carbon travel options; including bus priority lanes in the new Southern Road Tunnel and walking and cycling infrastructure; and
- Phased closure of Terminal 3, which is Heathrow's oldest terminal.

1.2.10 The UK Government has set targets to make a decision on development consent for expanding Heathrow by 2029 and enabling delivery of an operational third runway by 2035. According to Heathrow Airport Limited⁶, Heathrow expansion is expected to deliver outcomes as per Table 1-1. As part of the HENPS review, the Government is carrying out its own analysis of the expected outcomes.

⁶ Heathrow Airport Limited (2025). Our proposal for expanding Heathrow. Available at: [Expanding-Heathrow-proposal-summary-31-07-25.pdf](#)

Table 1-1: Heathrow expansion expected outcomes (according to Heathrow Airport Limited)

Economic growth	Expanding Heathrow would add 0.43% to UK GDP by 2050, create thousands of jobs and enable even more businesses across the UK to access the global economy through Heathrow. ⁷
Opportunities for the UK	Increasing capacity will deliver more supply chain opportunities, domestic connectivity, inward investment and inbound tourism across the country; 60% of the economic benefit will be felt by communities outside London and the Southeast.
Environmental commitments	Expanding Heathrow will contribute towards reaching net zero by 2050.
Local communities	Heathrow is the largest single-site employer in the UK, supporting over 800,000 jobs. Expanding Heathrow would deliver local economy growth, jobs and skills to those living closest to the airport.
Passengers and airlines	Passenger benefits delivered through more direct aviation links and lower air fares; and growth potential for airlines delivered through the opportunity to operate to more destinations and increase passenger capacity.
Value for money	The Heathrow expansion will be privately financed to deliver value for money to customers.

1.3 Approach to scoping

1.3.1 The approach for undertaking this scoping report has involved:

- Reviewing the 2018 WSP EqlA and identifying where updates are required;
- Reviewing relevant legislation, policy and guidance;
- Defining study areas appropriate to the draft HENPS and updating baseline data on protected characteristic groups;
- Identifying key equality issues through research and evidence aligned with the ANPS four tests;
- Identifying priority groups for assessment;
- Establishing a methodology for screening and assessment; and
- Identifying evidence data and evidence gaps and consultation needs.

1.4 Report structure

1.4.1 Following on from this introduction section, the remainder of the report is structure as follows:

⁷ Frontier Economics (2025). Heathrow Expansion Benefits: Executive Summary. Available at: [Heathrow-Net-Benefits-Summary-29-01-2025-STC.pdf](#)

- **Chapter 2:** Summary of suggested updates – sets out a summary of updates required to prepare the revised EqlA;
- **Chapter 3:** Policy and legislation review – providing context through relevant national, regional, and local policy and legislation associated with equalities and planning;
- **Chapter 4:** Evidence review – comprises a capture of all relevant and current evidence for the update of the EqlA, including demographic data and key equality issues;
- **Chapter 5:** Scope of full assessment – sets out the approach to undertaking the full EqlA, including priority equality groups and an assessment framework, and next steps.
- **Appendix A:** A detailed demographic profile of the study area including data from the Census 2021 and Index of Multiple Deprivation 2025 on protected characteristics, socioeconomics, and local services and amenities.

2. Summary of required updates

2.1 Introduction

2.1.1 The EqIA prepared by WSP in 2018 provided a robust foundation for understanding the potential equality impacts of the ANPS. However, since its publication, there have been changes in policy, legislation, evidence, and research that need to be considered within the update of the EqIA. In addition, the draft HENPS focuses on the third runway, and as such, there is a need to tailor the EqIA study area and assessment accordingly.

2.1.2 A review of the 2018 EqIA has been undertaken as set out in Table 2-1. This identifies for relevant sections of the report:

- Changes that have occurred since 2018;
- Elements of the 2018 EqIA that remain valid; and
- The additional updates to be incorporated into the EqIA.

Table 2-1 Summary of suggested updates since 2018 ANPS EqIA

Theme	Changes since 2018	Valid components of the 2018 WSP EqIA	Suggested updates	Suggested revisions to EqIA
Purpose and PSED Framework	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No relevant legislative change to the Equality Act 2010 or PSED. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Purpose of EqIA and PSED and Identification of protected characteristics. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Minor refresh for clarity and alignment with the purpose of the draft HENPS. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clearer introduction of how the EqIA supports the draft HENPS and the four Government tests.
Policy and Legislative Context	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> New policy documents or changes, including Jet Zero Strategy, Flightpath to the Future, NPPF, strengthened climate and air quality commitments, and Levelling Up agenda. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Relevant aspects of equality Act 2010 and PSED remain unchanged. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The 2018 policy context is outdated and does not reflect new national commitments. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> An updated equality-focused policy review aligned with the review of the ANPS.
Study Area	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Further detail on directly affected areas plus areas of wider impact. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The impacts of Heathrow Airport expansion are relevant at multiple geographic levels. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2018 study area based on Airports Commission contours and 2018 assumptions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A five-level study area approach: Direct Study Area (Land-take and construction), Wider Study Area (wider construction and operational impacts, Regional, South East and National (economic benefits)).
Demographic and Socioeconomic Evidence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> New Census, IMD and health inequalities datasets Post-COVID socio-economic changes Possible changes to equalities resources i.e. schools, 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Structure of baseline data remains relevant. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Update of equalities baseline Further evidence to reflect the focus on Heathrow, draft HENPS and four tests' criteria. Community facilities in the study area 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A refreshed evidence base identifying key issues in line with the Government's four tests' criteria and equality groups and facilities in the study areas.
Equality themes and issues (evidence on differential effects)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> New evidence on noise health effects WHO air quality guidance and climate adaptation impacts. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Key themes of noise, air quality, surface access to the airport and employment are still relevant. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Require updating to reflect new evidence and policy requirements in line with the four Government Tests. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A revised set of evidence themes aligned to the draft HENPS and the four Government tests.
Priority Groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Changing demographics and evidence 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Protected characteristics correctly identified. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Further priority groups based on a refreshed evidence review. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A refined set of priority groups based on updated evidence
Methodology and Assessment Framework	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Updated ANPS and evidence review will impact the assessment framework. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Basic structure of screening and assessment. Key assessment concepts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Thematic assessment to be included to align with tests. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A revised methodology, thematic assessment framework, and priority group framework added.
Mitigation and Enhancement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Changes to policy, construction, and environmental standards Updated CPO guidance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> High-level mitigation themes remain relevant. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Requires updating to reflect new evidence, standards, policy, and mitigation proposals 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Updated mitigation measures to be included as part of full impact assessment.

3. Legislation and policy review

3.1 Legislation

Equality Act 2010 and Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED)

3.1.1 The Equality Act 2010⁸ is a major piece of UK legislation which provides the framework to protect the rights of individuals with the following nine protected characteristics⁹ against unlawful discrimination and to advance equal opportunities for all:

- **Age:** This refers to persons defined by either a particular age or a range of ages;
- **Disability:** A disabled person is someone who has a physical or mental impairment (lasting more than a year) that has a substantial adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities;
- **Gender Reassignment:** This refers to a person who is proposing to undergo, is undergoing, or has undergone a process for the purpose of reassigning their gender identity;
- **Marriage and Civil Partnership:** Marriage can be between a man and a woman or between two people of the same sex. Civil partners must not be treated less favourably than married couples;
- **Pregnancy and Maternity:** Pregnancy is the condition of being pregnant and expecting a baby. Maternity refers to the period after the birth. In the non-work context, protection against maternity discrimination is for 26 weeks after giving birth;
- **Race:** Under the Equality Act 2010 race includes colour, nationality (including citizenship) and ethnic or national origins;
- **Religion or Belief:** Religion means any religion and a reference to religion includes a reference to a lack of religion. Belief means any religious or philosophical belief and a reference to belief includes a reference to a lack of belief;
- **Sex:** This refers to a man or to a woman, or to a group of people of the same sex; and
- **Sexual Orientation:** this means a person's sexual orientation towards persons of the same sex, persons of the opposite sex, or persons of either sex.

3.1.2 Section 149 of the Equality Act sets out the PSED to which DfT, as a public body, is subject to when carrying out all its functions. Those subject to the PSED must, in the exercise of their functions, have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act;

⁸ UK Parliament (2010). Equality Act 2010. Available at: [Equality Act 2010](#)

⁹ For more details on the protected characteristics, see Part 2, Chapter 1 of the Equality Act 2010 available here: [Equality Act 2010](#)

- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not; and
 - Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- 3.1.3 These are sometimes referred to as the three aims or arms of the PSED. The Act at s 149 (3) explains that having due regard for advancing equality involves:
- Removing or minimising disadvantages suffered by people due to their protected characteristics;
 - Taking steps to meet the needs of people from protected groups where these are different from the needs of other people; and
 - Encouraging people from protected groups to participate in public life or in other activities where their participation is disproportionately low.
- 3.1.4 The Act describes fostering good relations as tackling prejudice and promoting understanding between people from different groups. It states that compliance with the duty may involve treating some people more favourably than others.
- 3.1.5 Public authorities also need to have due regard to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination against someone because of their marriage or civil partnership status. This means that the first arm of the duty applies to this characteristic, but that the other arms (advancing equality and fostering good relations) do not apply.

Planning Act (2008)

- 3.1.6 The Planning Act 2008¹⁰ established a system for approving NSIP such as airport-related developments. Under Section 5, the Act provides the ability for the Secretary of State to designate National Policy Statements. This requires formal consultation, sustainability appraisal, and parliamentary scrutiny.
- 3.1.7 Following designation, a relevant NPS must be taken into account in the design of a development for which development consent is sought. An NPS sets out the need for infrastructure (such as additional airport capacity) and assessment principles and requirements for Development Consent applications. For example, the ANPS was designated in June 2018, confirming government policy support for a third runway at Heathrow.
- 3.1.8 Under Section 104 of the Act, amongst other things, the Secretary of State must have regard to the relevant NPS and local impact reporting when making a decision on a Development Consent application.

3.2 National Policy

Flightpath to the future: a strategic framework for the aviation sector (2022)

- 3.2.1 'Flightpath to the Future'¹¹ is the UK government's strategic framework for the aviation sector. It sets out a long-term vision for how aviation will recover

¹⁰ UK Parliament (2008). Planning Act 2008. Available at: [Planning Act 2008](#)

¹¹ Department for Transport (2022). Flightpath to the Future. Available at: [Flightpath to the future](#)

from COVID-19, grow sustainably, and support economic and social goals. The strategy aims to balance economic growth, environmental responsibility, and social inclusion so that aviation contributes to the UK's prosperity while meeting climate and equality commitments.

- 3.2.2 The policy focuses on the following key themes, delivered through a series of objectives: building a resilient, innovative aviation sector; delivering net zero aviation; enhancing global connectivity and regional benefits; and developing skills and careers for the future.
- 3.2.3 The following objectives within the Framework are particularly relevant to EqlA considerations, as they influence factors such as employment, community connectivity, accessibility, and wellbeing:
- **Objective 5 'Capture the potential of new technology and its uses'** – Airspace modernisation initiatives aim to reduce journey times, as well as noise and air pollution to deliver health and wellbeing benefits to communities near airports;
 - **Objective 6 'Unlock local benefits and level up'** – identifies the role of aviation in boosting regional economies and supporting local employment through improved connectivity, including Public Service Obligation routes to sustain remote communities reliant on air links;
 - **Objective 7 'Unleash the potential of the next generation of aviation professionals'** – focused on building talent pipelines, enhancing inclusion in career paths and supporting diversity through training and upskilling initiatives; and
 - **Objective 9 'Improve the consumer experience'** – focused on making aviation accessible and inclusive for all to build consumer confidence and a smooth travelling experience.

Jet Zero: Strategy for Net Zero by Aviation by 2050 (2022)

- 3.2.4 The Jet Zero Strategy¹² sets out the UK government's plan for achieving net zero aviation by 2050, balancing environmental goals with economic growth. The Strategy sets out three core principles and five policy measures to achieve this ambition.
- 3.2.5 Through one of its core principles '**maximising opportunities**', the Strategy outlines a commitment to developing the skills needed and encouraging long-term diversity through the Reach for the Sky outreach programme. This may include upskilling and reskilling the existing workforce, as well as creating 25,000 new apprenticeship starts within Aerospace by 2030. The Strategy recognises the importance of raising awareness of aviation careers and opportunities to promote diversity, inclusion, accessibility, and innovation in the sector, including in areas that support decarbonisation.

¹² Department for Transport (2022). Jet Zero Strategy: delivering net zero aviation by 2050. Available at: [Jet Zero strategy: delivering net zero aviation by 2050 - GOV.UK](#)

National Planning Policy Framework (2024)

- 3.2.6 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)¹³ was adopted in July 2018 and updated with minor revisions in February 2019, July 2021, September 2023, December 2023 and most recently, December 2024.
- 3.2.7 The NPPF (2024) consolidates the Government's economic, environmental, and social planning policies for England into a single document and describes how it expects these to be applied. The NPPF supersedes the majority of National Planning Policy Guidance and Planning Policy Statements and provides overarching guidance on the Government's development aims.
- 3.2.8 While the NPPF does not contain specific guidance on equalities, it does emphasise the importance of sustainable development and the need to support a healthy and just society. This is reflected in the key dimensions of sustainable development which relate to the economic, social, and environmental roles of the planning system:
- The economic role contributes to building “a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right types is available in the right places and at the right time to support growth, innovation and improved productivity; and by identifying and coordinating the provision of infrastructure”;
 - The social role supports strong, vibrant and healthy communities by “ensuring that a sufficient number and range of homes can be provided to meet the needs of present and future generations; and by fostering well-designed, beautiful and safe places, with accessible services and open spaces that reflect current and future needs and support communities' health, social and cultural well-being”; and
 - The environmental role contributes to protecting and enhancing the “natural, built and historic environment; including making effective use of land, improving biodiversity, using natural resources prudently, minimising waste and pollution, and mitigating and adapting to climate change, including moving to a low carbon economy”.
- 3.2.9 Chapter 9 ‘promoting sustainable transport’ recognises the importance of maintaining a national network of general aviation airfields and their need to adapt and change overtime to serve business, leisure, training, and emergency service needs.

3.3 Regional Policy

The London Plan (2021)

- 3.3.1 The London Plan¹⁴ was adopted with amendments in March 2021. The Plan includes strategic and planning policies to encourage equal life chances for all, in recognition of social inequalities existing within Greater London. This Plan aims to influence how major infrastructure projects address social, economic, and environmental equality considerations:

¹³ Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government (2024). National Planning Policy Framework. Available at: [National Planning Policy Framework](#)

¹⁴ Greater London Authority (2021) The London Plan. Available at: [the_london_plan_2021.pdf](#)

- **Employment and skills:** the London Plan prioritises inclusive economic growth and skills development, requiring major projects to provide local employment opportunities and support training and apprenticeships, especially for underrepresented groups;
- **Equality and inclusion:** the Plan embeds the PSED, requiring developments to address the needs of people with protected characteristics and promote inclusive design of airport facilities and transport connections;
- **Health and wellbeing:** the Plan demonstrates a strong focus on air quality, noise reduction, and green infrastructure; and
- **Education and opportunity:** the London Plan encourages partnerships between developers and education providers to deliver skills for future industries.

3.3.2 In particular, Policy T8 ‘Aviation’ acknowledges airports as drivers of spatial growth, particularly in Opportunity Areas that are well-connected by public transport and capable of accommodating significant housing and employment growth. The policy highlights the need to protect public health, particularly for communities near airports, by addressing noise, air pollution, and associated health risks, and states that any airport-related development should prioritise sustainable transport modes (rail, bus, cycling) to reduce congestion and emissions.

3.4 Local policy

Hillingdon Local Plan (2012, 2020)

- 3.4.1 The Hillingdon Local Plan is the foundation for how planning will be controlled in Hillingdon.¹⁵ The Local Plan Part 1 sets out the overall level and broad locations of growth up to 2026. The Local Plan Part 2 comprises Development Management Policies, Site Allocations and Designations and the Policies Map.¹⁶
- 3.4.2 Heathrow Airport is a central strategic consideration in the Hillingdon Local Plan. The Plan recognises Heathrow’s role as a major economic driver while managing its substantial environmental and community impacts. Policy E3: Strategy for Heathrow Opportunity Area sets the framework for development within airport boundaries, protecting land for airport-related uses, ensuring local benefits, and requiring climate change mitigation, air-quality improvements, and cross-boundary cooperation with the Greater London Authority and Hounslow.
- 3.4.3 The Plan’s environmental policies provide strong protections for communities near Heathrow, including stringent controls on air quality, noise, contaminated land, flood risk, and water quality. These measures directly respond to airport-related environmental pressures.

¹⁵ Hillingdon Council (2012). Local Plan: Part 1 Strategic Policies. Available at: [https://www.hillingdon.gov.uk/media/3080/Local-Plan-Part-1---Strategic-Policies/pdf/npLocal Plan Part 1 Strategic Policies 15 feb 2013 a 1 1.pdf?m=1598370401647](https://www.hillingdon.gov.uk/media/3080/Local-Plan-Part-1---Strategic-Policies/pdf/npLocal%20Plan%20Part%201%20Strategic%20Policies%2015%20feb%202013%20a%201.pdf?m=1598370401647)

¹⁶ Hillingdon Council (2020). Local Plan: Part 2 Development Management Policies. Available at: [https://www.hillingdon.gov.uk/media/3084/Hillingdon-Local-Plan-Part-2-Development-Management-Policies/pdf/pdLPP2 Development Management Policies - ADOPTED VERSION JAN 2020 1.pdf?m=1598370641570](https://www.hillingdon.gov.uk/media/3084/Hillingdon-Local-Plan-Part-2-Development-Management-Policies/pdf/pdLPP2%20Development%20Management%20Policies%20-%20ADOPTED%20VERSION%20JAN%202020%201.pdf?m=1598370641570)

Slough Local Plan (2016-2036)

- 3.4.4 The emerging Slough Local Plan¹⁷ sets out the spatial strategy for long-term development across the Borough, including Colnbrook with Poyle. Central to the strategy is directing most new development to the highly accessible Centre of Slough, while safeguarding suburban areas and protecting parks and open space. The Plan's core aims include delivering sustainable housing growth, enhancing neighbourhood centres, protecting environmental assets, and maintaining the Borough's distinct identity.
- 3.4.5 The emerging Slough Local Plan places Heathrow's expansion at the heart of its spatial strategy, particularly in Colnbrook and Poyle, the Borough's only area directly bordering the airport. The Plan prioritises protecting the Strategic Gap between Slough and Greater London to prevent coalescence driven by Heathrow-related development pressure.
- 3.4.6 Slough's Emerging Spatial Strategy for accommodating growth at Heathrow outlines how development – such as airport-related employment, logistics, and supporting infrastructure – should be planned if the proposed third runway proceeds. The document sets guiding principles for land-use change, environmental mitigation, rerouting of major roads (including the M25), and safeguarding communities affected by construction and transport impacts.

Hounslow Local Plan (2020-2041)

- 3.4.7 The emerging Hounslow Local Plan (2020-2041, submitted for examination in 2025)¹⁸ provides a long-term framework for shaping growth across the Borough, focusing on housing delivery, economic development, climate action, and regeneration. It sets ambitious targets, including at least 28,800 new homes and 50% affordable housing – with 70% of that being socially rented – to address community needs and contribute to London-wide housing requirements. Hounslow's Local Plan identifies Heathrow Airport as one of the most influential factors shaping the Borough's economy, housing needs, transport strategy, and environmental conditions. The Plan supports significant employment growth – 20,000 new jobs – much of which is tied to Heathrow-related sectors and the airport's west-of-borough Opportunity Area.
- 3.4.8 The Local Plan embeds sustainability and public health protections, addressing air quality, noise, and climate challenges arising from proximity to Heathrow. These include strict environmental standards, improved access to green space, and infrastructure investment to mitigate airport pressures. Consultation documents in the ongoing Local Plan Review reveal extensive coordination with Transport for London, Network Rail, and the GLA due to the airport's regional transport implications.

¹⁷ Slough Borough Council (2016). Slough Local Plan 2016-2036. Available at: <https://www.slough.gov.uk/downloads/file/5296/cd-12-01-emerging-spatial-strategy-accommodating-growth-at-heathrow-proposals-for-development-in-colnbrook-and-poyle-2018->

¹⁸ London Borough of Hounslow (2026). Local Plan review. Available at: [Local Plan Review - Examination Introduction & News | Local Plan review | London Borough of Hounslow](#)

Windsor & Maidenhead – Borough Local Plan (2013-2033)

- 3.4.9 The Borough Local Plan (BLP) for Windsor & Maidenhead, adopted in 2022¹⁹, is the primary statutory planning document guiding growth up to 2033. It establishes the Borough's development strategy, addressing housing need, employment land, infrastructure delivery, sustainability objectives, heritage protection, and environmental enhancement. The Plan supersedes earlier policy documents and now carries full weight in decision-making.
- 3.4.10 Although Windsor & Maidenhead does not border Heathrow directly, the Borough Local Plan (2013–2033) acknowledges indirect impacts of airport activity on traffic, air quality, housing demand, and strategic infrastructure. The BLP's spatial strategy emphasises safeguarding the Borough's historic environment – including Windsor Castle and the Great Park—from cumulative development pressures partly linked to Heathrow-related growth in neighbouring authorities.
- 3.4.11 The BLP's sustainability framework requires mitigation of regional environmental pressures, including air quality and climate impacts, which may be exacerbated by increased aviation activity. Policies on transport, green infrastructure, and design standards strengthen resilience against growing through-traffic and commuter flows influenced by airport employment patterns.
- 3.4.12 The Plan works alongside the Central & Eastern Berkshire Minerals & Waste Plan and several neighbourhood plans to ensure cross-boundary compliance on infrastructure and environmental protection – important as Heathrow-related growth affects waste, freight, and transport networks extending into the Borough.

Spelthorne Local Plan (2022-2037)

- 3.4.13 The Spelthorne Local Plan (2022–2037)²⁰, currently undergoing examination, sets out a comprehensive strategy for managing future development while balancing housing need, environmental constraints, and infrastructure capacity. It provides policy direction for major issues including Green Belt boundaries, flood risk management, sustainable transport, biodiversity protection, and high-quality design. The resumed 2025 hearings aim to resolve outstanding matters and ensure compliance with national planning policy.
- 3.4.14 Spelthorne lies immediately south of Heathrow and is significantly shaped by airport-related pressures. The emerging Local Plan (2022–2037) addresses Heathrow's influence through policies on flood risk, Green Belt, housing, and transport, acknowledging the airport's impacts on congestion, noise, and demand for employment space.
- 3.4.15 Staines-upon-Thames – Spelthorne's main town – is treated as a strategic regeneration area partly because of its connectivity to Heathrow and associated economic opportunities.

¹⁹ Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead (2022). Borough Local Plan 2013-2033. Available at: https://consult.rbwm.gov.uk/file/5967538?_gl=1*mjmco8*_ga*OTczNDI3MDQ5LjE3NzE0MTM2ODQ.*_ga_B1S76ZFQXK*czE3NzE0MTM2ODMkbzEkZzAkDE3NzE0MTM2ODMkajYwJGwwJGgw

²⁰ Spelthorne Borough Council (2022). Local Plan. Available here: [Local Plan | Spelthorne Borough Council](#)

- 3.4.16 The Borough has also introduced Borough-wide Article 4 Directions controlling HMOs, responding to housing market distortions influenced by transient airport-related workforces.
- 3.4.17 Overall, the Plan balances economic gains from Heathrow (jobs, supply chains, transport links) with robust measures to protect residents from environmental harm, flooding, and pressure on local services.

3.5 Guidance

- 3.5.1 The following guidance documents have been used to inform the EqlA process, including the scoping stage, outlining legal frameworks, best practice principles to embed equality considerations throughout policy development and decision-making:
- **Equality and Human Rights Commission ‘How to consider equality in policy making: A 10-step guide for public bodies in England’²¹**: supports public authorities and those delivering public functions in England to systematically integrate equality considerations throughout every stage of policy development and review through a 10-step framework; and provides practical guidance on data evidence, engagement and case studies to demonstrate application.
 - **Equality and Human Rights Commission ‘Technical guidance on the Public Sector Equality Duty: England’²²**: provides a guide to understanding and applying the requirements of the PSED under section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 and elaborates on the general duty (three overarching aims) and specific duties introduced by the 2017 regulations.
 - **Department for Transport ‘Equality and Diversity’²³**: outlines how the DfT fulfils its obligations under the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) as set out in the Equality Act 2010.

²¹ Equality and Human Rights Commission (2024). How to consider equality in policy making: A 10-step guide for public bodies in England. Available at: [How to consider equality in policy making: A 10-step guide for public bodies in England | EHRC](#)

²² Equality and Human Rights Commission (2023): Technical Guidance on the Public Sector Equality Duty: England. Available at: [Technical guidance on the Public Sector Equality Duty: England | EHRC](#)

²³ Department for Transport (2025). Equality and Diversity. Available at: [Equality and diversity - Department for Transport - GOV.UK](#) [accessed 15/01/26]

4. Evidence review

4.1 Introduction

4.1.1 This chapter summarises the key evidence relevant to the EqlA for the draft HENPS. Its purpose is to establish the EqlA baseline and identify relevant issues and priority groups to inform the assessment framework and full assessment of impacts. It draws upon:

- **Updated demographic and deprivation data** – from Census 2021 and the Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD 2025), with full datasets provided in **Appendix A**.
- **National and regional labour market evidence** – including current employment data for Heathrow and its wider supply chain.
- **Health and wellbeing evidence** – particularly relating to the effects of noise, air quality, and climate change on protected characteristic groups.
- **Information on current transport infrastructure** – alongside research on accessibility and connectivity barriers and issues associated with congestion.
- **Research on land-take and major infrastructure projects** – summarising how displacement, severance and construction impacts have affected protected groups in comparable schemes.
- **Airports Commission evidence and Heathrow-specific studies**, including community impact assessments, people assessments, and socio-economic analysis.

4.1.2 This evidence provides the basis for identifying relevant equality themes, issues, priority groups to inform the assessment and scope of the full EqlA. Detailed baseline tables are presented in **Appendix A**, with supporting research and literature summarised in the relevant sections.

4.1.3 The evidence is structured using the four Government tests that define the scope of the draft HENPS, further equality themes to be considered and cross-cutting issues identified at the end of the chapter.

4.1.4 The following geographical areas have been used in this evidence review. These were informed by the most recent red line boundary of the Heathrow expansion (see figure 4-1), the local study area identified in the Equality Assessment undertaken by WSP to support the designation of ANPS (June 2018), the outcomes of the Community Impact Assessment undertaken by Airports Commission (January 2014), and the outcomes of the People Assessment presented in the Airports Commission in the Final Report (July 2015):

- **Direct study area:** The wards of Heathrow Villages and Colnbrook with Poyle, from which there is expected to be residential land take to support the project; i.e., the project's Compulsory Purchase Zone (CPZ) includes residential properties in Heathrow Villages and Colnbrook with Poyle. Together, these wards represent the Direct Study Area (DSA). The 2022 ward layouts were used.

- Some baseline evidence (e.g., Census data) is not available at the ward level. In this case, the local authority districts of Hillingdon and Slough were considered representative of the DSA, as these are the local authority districts in which Heathrow Villages and Colnbrook with Poyle are located, respectively.
- **Wider study area:** The local authority districts of Hillingdon, Hounslow, Slough, Windsor and Maidenhead, and Spelthorne, which represent the extent beyond the CPZ where Development Consent Order (DCO) powers may need to be exercised to support the project. Together, these districts represent the Wider Study Area (WSA). The 2023 local authority districts were used.
- **Regional and national comparator:** London, Southeast England, and England have been used for regional and national comparison.

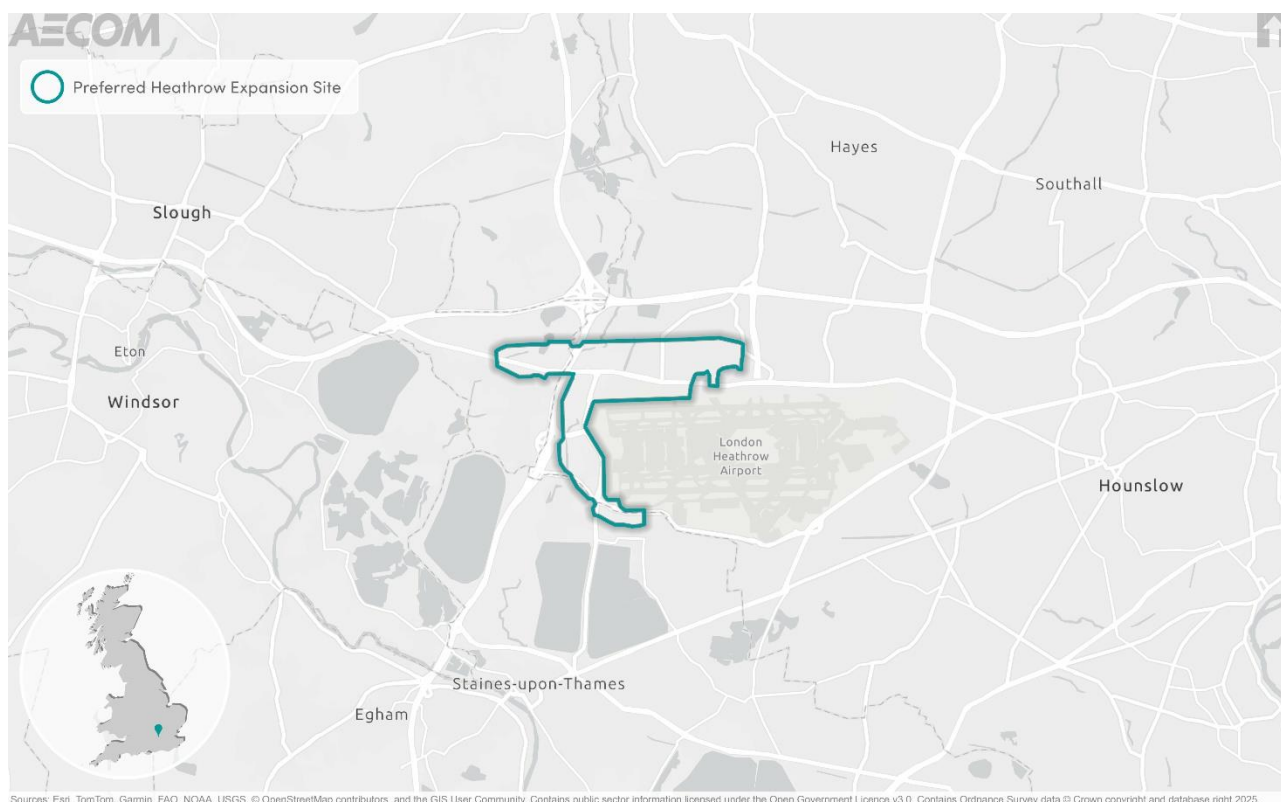


Figure 4-1. Geographical Area Boundaries

4.2 Evidence relating to the four tests

Test 1: Contributing to economic Growth Across the Country

4.2.1 Economic growth is a central objective of the ANPS. Evidence indicates that the distribution of economic benefits from airport expansion is shaped by:

- regional labour market disparities
- access to employment and training
- socio-economic disadvantage
- workforce diversity and inclusion
- transport connectivity

4.2.2 Nationally, economic opportunities are unevenly distributed, with persistent gaps in employment, income, and skills between regions.²⁴ These disparities intersect with protected characteristics, particularly ethnicity, disability, age, and sex.²⁵

Employment and Skills

4.2.3 Employment rates vary significantly by protected characteristic, with lower participation among disabled people²⁶, some ethnic minority groups²⁷, and women with caring responsibilities.²⁸

4.2.4 Young people and low-income households are more likely to be unemployed or in insecure or low-paid work.²⁹

4.2.5 Aviation and associated sectors (logistics, hospitality, retail) employ a diverse workforce.³⁰

4.2.6 Evidence for Heathrow Airport shows that the workforce is characterised as supporting generally younger workers, an ethnically diverse workforce, male employment indicating a gender imbalance, and part-time employment.³¹

Regional Inequalities

4.2.7 As evidenced in **Appendix A.2**, residents of the DSA more often have a lower level of qualification and serve in lower-skilled jobs than residents of the surrounding regions and the nation.

4.2.8 Connectivity improvements can support regional economic inclusion, but benefits may not be evenly distributed.³²

Income and poverty

4.2.9 Low-income households are disproportionately represented among ethnic minority groups³³, lone parents (predominantly women)³⁴, and disabled people.³⁵

4.2.10 Cost-of-living pressures have increased vulnerability since 2020.³⁶

4.2.11 **Appendix A.1** shows that the DSA has the highest proportion of residents who identify as ethnic minorities (57%), significantly higher than that within Southeast England (14%) and the whole of England (19%). The WSA (47%) and London (46%) also have a relatively large ethnic minority population.

²⁴ Stansbury, A., Turner, D., & Balls, E. (2023). Tackling the UK's regional economic inequality: binding constraints and avenues for policy intervention. *Contemporary Social Science*, 18(3–4), 318–356. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1080/21582041.2023.2250745>

²⁵ Yang Yu, Where are inequalities produced? Comparing the variations of graduate employment between the UK's districts and universities, *Socio-Economic Review*, Volume 23, Issue 1, January 2025, Pages 283–307. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1093/ser/mwae052>

²⁶ UK Government. The employment of disabled people 2024. Available at: [The employment of disabled people 2024 - GOV.UK](#)

²⁷ UK Government. Employment. Available at: [Employment - GOV.UK Ethnicity facts and figures](#)

²⁸ ONS. Diversity in the labour market, England and Wales: Census 2021. Available at: [Diversity in the labour market, England and Wales - Office for National Statistics](#)

²⁹ The Health Foundation. Inequalities in insecure work. Available at: [Inequalities in insecure work | The Health Foundation](#)

³⁰ British Aviation Group. [Diversity, Equity & Inclusion - British Aviation Group](#)

³¹ Oxford Economics (2024). The Economic and Social Impact of Heathrow Airport. Available at: [The economic and social impact of Heathrow Airport](#)

³² Local Government Association (2024). How local transport infrastructure influences economic inclusion. Available at: [How local transport infrastructure influences economic inclusion | Local Government Association](#)

³³ UK Government. Ethnicity Facts and Figures. Available at: [People in low income households - GOV.UK Ethnicity facts and figures](#)

³⁴ Joseph Rowntree Foundation (2025). UK Poverty 2025. Available at: [UK Poverty 2025: The essential guide to understanding poverty in the UK | Joseph Rowntree Foundation](#)

³⁵ The Health Foundation. Inequalities in Poverty. Available at: [Inequalities in poverty | The Health Foundation](#)

³⁶ ONS. Cost of Living Latest Insights (2024). Available at: [Cost of living latest insights - Office for National Statistics](#)

Summary of equality issues

4.2.12 Economic benefits associated with the ANPS may be experienced unevenly across protected groups. Groups with lower labour market participation or limited access to training may be less able to benefit from new opportunities. Conversely, groups facing socio-economic disadvantage may benefit from targeted skills and employment initiatives.

Test 2: Meeting Air Quality Obligations

4.2.13 Air quality is a key determinant of health and wellbeing. There is a strong correlation between poor air quality, deprivation, and ethnic minority populations.³⁷ As referenced above, the DSA has a relatively large ethnic minority population.

4.2.14 There is evidence for increased respiratory vulnerability among children, older people, and disabled people.³⁸ Evidence in **Appendix A.2** shows that the DSA has the highest proportion of children (22% aged under 16) compared to the WSA and comparators.

4.2.15 Pregnant people and those with cardiovascular conditions face a heightened risk from poor air quality.³⁹ Evidence as listed in **Appendix A.1** shows that the Hillingdon and Slough local authority districts have higher birth rates than the wider study area, surrounding region, and nation.

4.2.16 Communities around Heathrow experience varying levels of air pollution. Whilst London as a whole no longer exceeds UK legal limits for nitrogen dioxide (NO₂) on a citywide annual basis⁴⁰, there are some local pollution hotspots in several Boroughs that exceed World Health Organisation guidelines. Hillingdon for example is amongst London's ten worst-emitting Boroughs for both fine particulate matter (PM_{2.5}) and nitrogen oxides (NO_x)⁴¹.

Health Inequalities

4.2.17 Children and older people are more susceptible to respiratory and cardiovascular impacts. There are a number of playgrounds, schools and parks identified in the study as evidenced in **Appendix A.2**.

4.2.18 Disabled people, particularly those with chronic health conditions, face higher risks. **Appendix A.2** lists a school for students with special needs in the study area and a centre for people with special needs in the study area. **Appendix A.2** highlights evidence for notable variation in the prevalence of behavioural risk determinants of health across the five local authority districts relative to the national prevalence.

³⁷ Nathan R. Gray, Alastair C. Lewis, Sarah J. Moller (2024). Evaluating disparities in air pollution as a function of ethnicity, deprivation and sectoral emissions in England, *Environment International*, Volume 194. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.envint.2024.109146>.

³⁸ Institute for Fiscal Studies (2024), 'Exposure to air pollution in England, 2003-23', Available at <https://ifs.org.uk/sites/default/files/2024-12/Exposure-to-air-pollution-in-England-2003-23.pdf>

³⁹ Leiser, C. et al. (2019). Acute effects of air pollutants on spontaneous pregnancy loss: a case-crossover study. *Fertility and sterility*, 111(2), 341-347

⁴⁰ Defra (2025). Air Pollution in the UK 2024. Available at: [Annual Report 2024 Issue 1 Online Viewer - DEFRA UK Air - GOV.UK](#)

⁴¹ Greater London Authority (updated in 2025). London Atmospheric Emissions Inventory LAEI 2022. Available at: [London Atmospheric Emissions Inventory LAEI 2022 - London Datastore](#)

4.2.19 Pregnant people are more vulnerable to air pollution exposure^{42, 43}. As referenced above, Hillingdon and Slough local authority districts have higher birth rates than the wider study area, surrounding region, and nation.

Spatial Patterns

4.2.20 Ethnic minority groups are more likely to live in areas with poorer air quality nationally and in parts of West London or on flightpaths. The evidence as presented in **Appendix A.1** shows that the study area has the highest proportion of residents who identify as ethnic minorities (57%), significantly higher than that within Southeast England (14%) and the whole of England (19%). The WSA (47%) and London (46%) also have a relatively large ethnic minority population.

4.2.21 Deprived communities often have fewer options for accessing cleaner air (e.g., less access to green space, poorer housing quality, less opportunity to change living arrangements). As evidenced in **Appendix A.2**, the DSA shows the greatest deprivation with respect to housing and services, and is relatively deprived respect to living environment.

Equality implications

4.2.22 Changes to air quality resulting from policy amendments may disproportionately affect groups with higher exposure or greater vulnerability. The EqlA will need to consider both localised impacts and national distributional effects.

Test 3: Consistency with Noise Commitments

Noise and health evidence

4.2.23 Updated WHO and Public Health England evidence highlights strong links between noise exposure and sleep disturbance, stress, cardiovascular disease, and cognitive impacts.^{44,45}

4.2.24 There is evidence for heightened sensitivity among children, older people, and disabled people.⁴⁶ As referenced above, the DSA has a higher proportion of children than the WSA, the region, and the nation.

4.2.25 Shift workers and night-time workers are affected in particular.^{47,48}

Children and education

4.2.26 Noise exposure can affect concentration, learning and cognitive development.⁴⁹

⁴² Leiser, C. et al. (2019). Acute effects of air pollutants on spontaneous pregnancy loss: a case-crossover study. *Fertility and sterility*, 111(2), 341-347

⁴³ Heathrow Airport Limited (2015). Air quality assessment confirms Heathrow can expand within environmental limits. Available at: [Air quality assessment confirms Heathrow can expand within environmental limits](#)

⁴⁴ Van Kempen, E. et al (2018) WHO Environmental Noise Guidelines for the European Region: A Systematic Review on Environmental Noise and Cardiovascular and Metabolic Effects. Available at: [WHO Environmental Noise Guidelines for the European Region: A Systematic Review on Environmental Noise and Cardiovascular and Metabolic Effects: A Summary | MDPI](#)

⁴⁵ Razai, M. et al (2025) The Impact of Noise Pollution on Health, *BMJ*. Available at: [The impact of noise pollution on health | The BMJ](#)

⁴⁶ Halonen, J. et al (2015). Road Traffic noise is associated with increased cardiovascular morbidity and mortality in London. *European Heart Journal*. 36(39), 2653-2661

⁴⁷ TUC (2024) The Health and Safety Effects of Night Work. Available at: [nightworkresearchreportssummary.pdf](#)

⁴⁸ Badea, D. (2025) Circadian Disruption from Urban Night-Time Noise and Endocrine Health Risks in Shift Workers. Available at: [Circadian Disruption from Urban Night-Time Noise and Endocrine Health Risks in Shift Workers - PMC](#)

⁴⁹ Gheller, F. et al (2024) The Effects of Noise on Children's Cognitive Performance: A Systematic Review. Available at: [The Effects of Noise on Children's Cognitive Performance: A Systematic Review - Flavia Gheller, Gaia Spicciarelli, Pietro Scimemi, Barbara Arfé, 2023](#)

4.2.27 Schools in noise-affected areas may require additional mitigation. There are a number of schools in the area which are listed in **Appendix A.3**.

Older people

4.2.28 Older people are more likely to face increased sensitivity to noise due to health conditions and time spent at home. Care homes and hospitals in the area are listed in **Appendix A.3**.

Disabled People

4.2.29 People with sensory or cognitive impairments, mental health conditions or chronic illnesses may experience greater impacts. A number of relevant services and centres in the area are listed in **Appendix A.3**.

Shift Workers

4.2.30 Heathrow and associated sectors employ large numbers of shift workers, who are disproportionately affected by night-time noise.

Implications for Equality

4.2.31 Noise impacts are likely to be unevenly distributed across protected groups and priority groups. The EqlA will need to consider how policy changes may alter exposure patterns.

Test 4: Aligning with Legal Obligations on Climate Change, Including Net Zero

Energy and Fuel Poverty

4.2.32 Low-income households face higher energy costs and are less able to adapt to climate impacts.⁵⁰

Workforce Transition

4.2.33 Net zero policies may create new skills and employment opportunities, but access may be uneven.⁵¹

Climate Change equality issues

4.2.34 Climate change impacts are not evenly distributed. Evidence shows that older people, disabled people and low-income households are more vulnerable to heat, cold and extreme weather.⁵² As this is often related to quality of housing, it is important to consider that the DSA faces relatively higher housing deprivation as set out in **Appendix A.2**.

Transport

4.2.35 Access to low-carbon transport varies by income, disability, and geography.⁵³

4.2.36 Evidence shows that Heathrow Airport is highly accessible via public transport, with London Underground (the Picadilly and Elizabeth Lines), bus (13 different routes), and express rail services from central London (Paddington station). The main Airport complex (consisting of Terminals 1, 2, 3 and 5) has a connectivity score of 6a, as assessed via Transport for London's Public Transport Access Tool (PTAL). The PTAL assesses

⁵⁰ Joseph Rowntree Foundation (2026). Ethnicity, poverty, and in-work inequalities in the UK. Available at: [Ethnicity, poverty, and in-work inequalities in the UK | Joseph Rowntree Foundation](#)

⁵¹ Reay D (2024) The uneven foundations of a just transition for workers: a UK perspective. *Front. Clim.* 6:1498156. Available at: [Frontiers | The uneven foundations of a just transition for workers: a UK perspective](#)

⁵² UK Health Security Agency (2024). Adverse Weather and Health Plan. Available at: [Adverse Weather and Health Plan: Supporting evidence](#)

⁵³ Government Office for Science (2019). Inequalities in Mobility and Access in the UK Transport System. Available at: [Future of mobility: inequalities in mobility and access in the UK Transport System](#)

connectivity by considering walk time to the public transport network with service wait times, and the highest possible score (i.e., highest level of connectivity) is 6b.⁵⁴ Considering the area surrounding the Airport, only the parts of the study area with London Underground, multiple bus routes and/or National Rail service are also considered well-connected by the PTAL. These include Uxbridge (the Picadilly and Metropolitan Lines and 20 bus routes), Hayes & Harlington (the Elizabeth Line, 10 bus routes, and Great Western Rail service), and Hatton Cross (the Picadilly Line and 10 bus routes) in the Borough of Hillingdon; and Hounslow (the Picadilly Line and 18 bus routes).

- 4.2.37 Most of the aforementioned transport services operate via central London, and transport services connecting other parts of the study area are more limited; there are large parts of the London study area with a PTAL connectivity score of 0. The Elizabeth Line continues west of the airport, with stations in Hayes & Harlington, West Drayton, Iver, Burnham, Taplow, and Maidenhead. Great Western Rail also operates along this track, with a branch extending south to Windsor, and north to Furze Platt and Cookham. Finally, Southwestern Railway serves the area south of Heathrow, also with a terminal station in Windsor.⁵⁵
- 4.2.38 The Elizabeth Line, Great Western Rail, and Southwestern Railway all primarily operate east-west. There is no direct north-south rail connection between parts of the study area.

⁵⁴ Transport for London (2022). WebCAT Planning Tool. Available at: [WebCAT 3.0 - Web-based Connectivity Assessment Toolkit](#)

⁵⁵ National Rail (n.d.). All Stations Interactive Route Map. Available at: [National Rail All Stations Interactive Route Map](#)

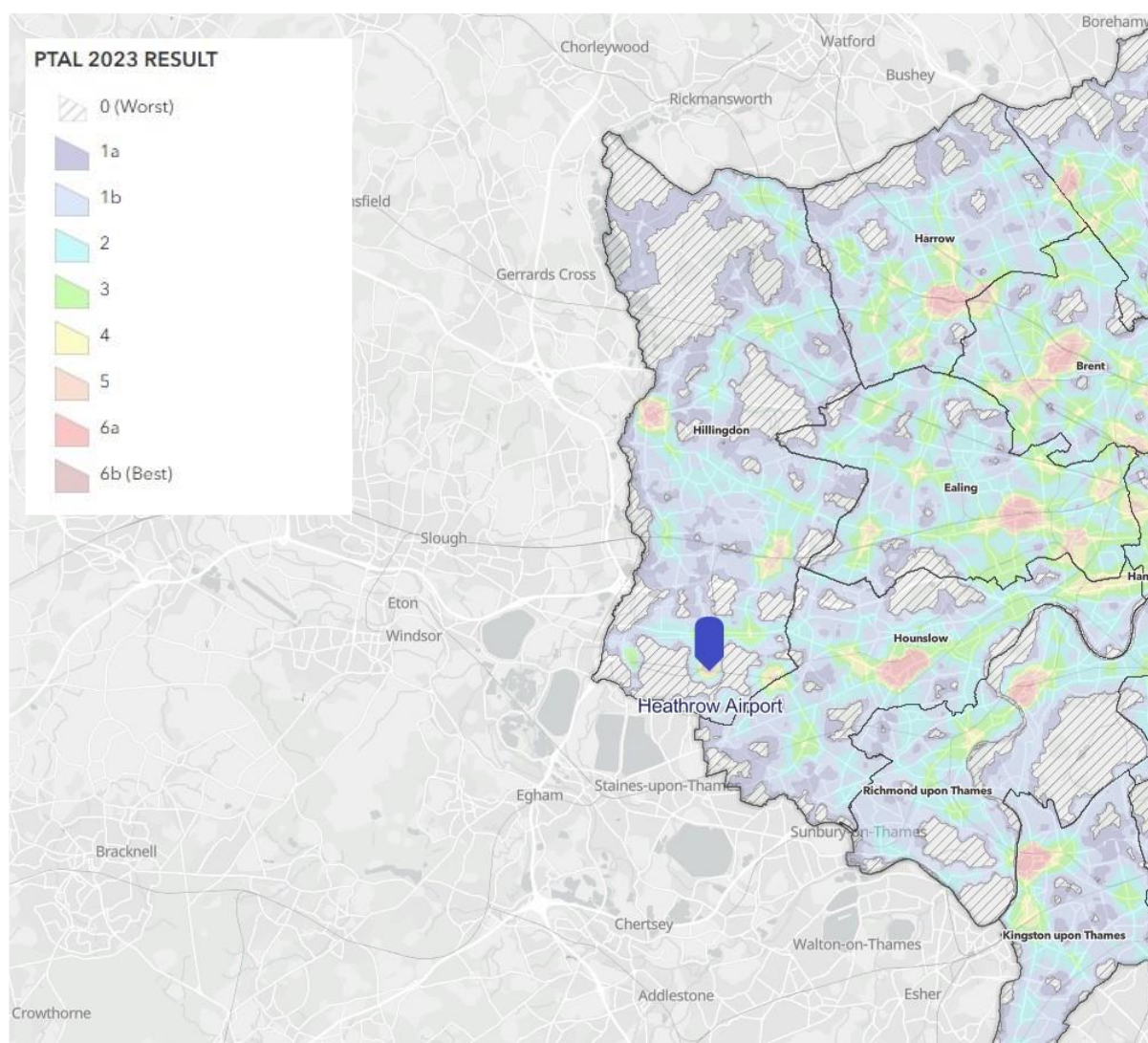


Figure 4-2 PTAL Map of the Study Area

Land-take

4.2.39 There is a need to identify potential equality effects in relation to land acquisition required for the new third runway. The potential land take as of 2019 for the Heathrow Airport Expansion is defined by the Compulsory Purchase Zone (CPZ), which includes all residential properties anticipated to be required by the Project.⁵⁶

Implications for Equality

4.2.40 Climate-related policy changes may create both risks and opportunities for protected groups. The EqIA will assess how the revised ANPS aligns with net zero while ensuring equitable outcomes.

⁵⁶ Heathrow Airport Limited (2019). Heathrow Expansion Consultation. Available at: [Heathrow-Expansion-Consultation-June-2019.pdf](#)

Cross-cutting equality themes

4.2.41 Across the four tests' criteria, several cross-cutting themes emerge:

- **Health inequalities:** some protected characteristic groups experience higher vulnerability to the adverse health effects of air and noise pollution.
- **Accessibility and mobility:** transport access remains a barrier for disabled and older people.
- **Socio-economic disadvantage:** deprivation intersects with protected characteristics.
- **Digital inclusion:** affects access to information, services, and travel.
- **Intersectionality:** overlapping characteristics (e.g., ethnicity, deprivation, and disability) exacerbate vulnerabilities.
- **Cumulative impacts:** noise, air quality and socio-economic issues often combine to increase negative effects.

Priority Groups

4.2.42 Based on the evidence, the following groups are likely to experience differential or disproportionate impacts:

- women and men
- children and young people
- older people
- disabled people including people with limited mobility and those vulnerable to air and noise impacts
- pregnant people
- ethnic minority groups
- low-income households
- carers (predominantly women)

4.2.43 While the full impact assessment will include an assessment of all protected characteristic groups, the above groups will be the priority focus.

Summary of Implications for the EqlA

4.2.44 The evidence indicates that:

- The positive and negative impacts associated with the draft HENPS are likely to be unevenly distributed across groups.
- Certain protected groups face higher exposure or vulnerability to negative impacts, resulting in differential effects.
- Socio-economic disadvantage may exacerbate negative impacts across groups further.
- Wider national and regional differential effects should be considered in addition to local impacts.

- Updated evidence and modelling work will be essential for a robust assessment.

4.3 Consultation and engagement

4.3.1 The Government's announcement that the preferred option for delivering airport expansion in the Southeast of England was a new Northwest runway at Heathrow Airport in February 2017 was followed by a 16-week consultation on the draft ANPS. This consultation period received over 72,000 responses.

4.3.2 A further eight-week consultation period on the revised draft ANPS was launched by the Secretary of State for Transport in October-December 2017. The purpose of this consultation period was to present the revised Appraisal of Sustainability, including an updated evidence base, demand forecasts, and the Air Quality Plan.

4.3.3 DfT used various methods to raise awareness of the consultation:

- Contacted over 65,000 people who responded to the earlier draft ANPS consultation (50,000 via letter and 15,000 via email);
- Working with 30 local authorities to raise awareness of the consultation among local residents. This included the provision of advertising materials, a press release, and digital tools.
- Social media platforms, including Facebook pop-up adverts and DfT Twitter channel; and
- Press adverts in newspapers.

4.3.4 This consultation received 11,028 responses, of which 10,851 came from members of the public, and 177 came from recognisable organisations or elected representatives.⁵⁷ Consultation responses relevant to the consideration of equality impacts include the following:

- Consultation respondents expressed concern about the demolition of homes, a loss of sense of community and the displacement of long-established communities.
- Respondents frequently raised concerns that increased aircraft noise would negatively affect health and wellbeing, especially for people living and attending schools within flight paths.
- Many respondents commented that air pollution could worsen, with associated respiratory and cardiovascular impacts.
- Respondents also linked carbon emissions to long-term environmental and health impacts, which can disproportionately affect vulnerable and future populations.
- Respondents were concerned about the potential for additional airport-related road traffic and congestion, particularly in areas where local traffic is already a problem.

⁵⁷ OPM (2018). Consultation on revised draft Airports National Policy Statement: Summary report of consultation responses. Available at: [Consultation on revised draft Airports National Policy Statement](#)

- There were also concerns regarding possible delays or congestion for various public transport networks linked to the airport, including rail and the underground.
- Some respondents felt that the language used in consultation materials was technical and challenging to understand, which may have discouraged those most likely to be affected by the proposal from engaging.

5. Scope of the full assessment

5.1 Assessment overview

- 5.1.1 A screening and a full EqlA will be undertaken on the draft HENPS, which focuses on a third runway at Heathrow airport.
- 5.1.2 The assessment framework has been updated since the 2018 EqlA, providing a thematic approach that aligns with the themes outlined in the Government's tests. This will help align the EqlA with the overall draft HENPS process whilst supporting the DfT with its PSED.
- 5.1.3 For each framework theme, the assessment of potential impacts is based on whether related impacts are likely to have differential effects (positive or negative) on any priority group. This evaluation is based on the following key concepts:
- **Differential effects:** Those impacts that potentially affect a priority group differently from the rest of the general population because of specific needs or a recognised sensitivity or vulnerability associated with their protected characteristics.
 - **Disproportionate representation:** Those impacts that have a greater effect on members of a priority group than on other members of the general population due to a higher proportional representation of a priority group at a particular location.
 - **Direct impact:** Direct impacts are those which could potentially result in direct effects on a priority group.
 - **Indirect impact:** Indirect impacts are those that would result as a consequence of direct impacts.
 - **Cumulative Impacts:** Where a priority group may be affected by more than one positive or adverse impact. Cumulative impacts are identified in the following ways:
 - where a person may experience multiple sensitivities (i.e. children are sensitive to environmental changes such as air quality and noise);
 - where more than one impact is found to affect the same priority groups; and
 - where one or more impacts are experienced in the same geographical area and within this area where a priority group is over-represented.
- 5.1.4 This section sets out the thematic assessment framework and the priority groups that will be used for the EqlA screening and full impact assessment.

5.2 Thematic assessment framework

- 5.2.1 Table 5-1 outlines the proposed assessment framework. This framework will be used to assess the equality effects associated with the potential direct and wider impacts of the draft HENPS, with a focus on a new third runway at Heathrow Airport.

- 5.2.2 The assessment framework is based on themes that align with the Government's four tests' criteria for the ANPS as well as other key areas identified in the updated evidence review (Chapter 4 of this report). These themes also align with the objectives of the Airports Commission's Appraisal Framework, as set out in the Final Report (July 2015)⁵⁸. The table sets out example considerations for assessing the direct and wider impacts and outcomes for each theme.
- 5.2.3 It also sets out the proposed questions for the EqlA screening of the draft HENPS.

⁵⁸ Airports Commission (2015). Airports Commission: Final Report. Available at: [Airports Commission: final report - GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/444444/Airports-Commission-Final-Report-2015.pdf) [accessed 16/01/2026]

Table 5-1: EqIA assessment framework

EqIA theme	Aligned appraisal objective	Example impacts to be considered	Screening questions
<p>Economic Growth</p> <p>Contributes to economic growth across the country</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To promote employment and economic growth in the local area and surrounding region. To produce positive outcomes for local communities and the local economy. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Creation of employment and training opportunities for local people and businesses Changes to existing local businesses and jobs National economic growth impacts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is the ANPS likely to result in significant new employment and training opportunities at local, regional, and national levels? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Are these opportunities likely to promote equality for those who currently face barriers to participation? Does the ANPS have the potential to change local, regional, and national economies? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Are these changes likely to disproportionately disadvantage priority groups?
<p>Health and Wellbeing</p> <p>Meets air quality obligations</p> <p>Consistent with noise commitments</p> <p>Aligns with legal obligations on climate change, including net zero</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To minimise and, where possible, reduce air, carbon, and noise impacts. To reduce or avoid disproportionate impacts on any social group. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Changes to noise and air quality for local communities Wellbeing impacts associated with the construction and operation of Heathrow expansion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is the ANPS likely to result in significant air quality and noise changes at local or regional levels? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is this likely to differentially affect priority groups? Is the ANPS likely to result in wellbeing changes for local communities? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Could these changes disproportionately affect priority groups? Is the ANPS likely to contravene climate change obligations?
<p>Transport and Connectivity</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To enable access to the airport from a wide catchment area. To maximise the number of passengers and workforce accessing the airport via sustainable modes of transport. To accommodate other users such as commuters, intercity travellers, and freight. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Changes to the local transport network and connectivity Changes to regional and national transport networks Improved access to Heathrow sustainable modes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is the ANPS likely to result in changes to the local, regional, national, and international transport network and connectivity? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is this likely to worsen or improve access to services for priority groups?
<p>Residents and communities</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To maintain and, where possible, improve the quality of life for local residents and the wider population. To manage and reduce the effects of housing loss on local communities To reduce or avoid disproportionate impacts on any social group. To actively engage local groups in scheme progression, design, and management. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Potential loss of homes and community facilities Changes to local communities and social connections 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is the ANPS likely to result in the displacement of local residents? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is this likely to differentially or disproportionately affect priority groups? Is the ANPS likely to result in the displacement of or changes to local community facilities? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is this likely to differentially or disproportionately affect priority groups?

5.3 Priority groups

5.3.1 The priority groups that have the potential to experience impacts as a result of the draft HENPS and new third runway are set out in Table 5-2. The following evidence has been used to identify the priority equality groups to be scoped into the assessment:

- The target priority groups identified by WSP in the Equality Assessment undertaken to support designation of the ANPS (June 2018)⁵⁹;
- Equalities baseline undertaken for this scoping exercise set out in Appendix A of this report;
- Findings from the evidence review set out in Chapter 4 of this report;
- Summary of consultation responses undertaken on the Draft ANPS (June 2018)⁶⁰; and
- Airports Commission evidence and Heathrow-specific studies, including community impact assessments, people assessments, and socio-economic analysis.

5.3.2 Table 5-2 identifies for each of the protected characteristic groups, the priority groups that are expected to be impacted by the draft HENPS and the new third runway. The table includes a definition of each group and a justification for its inclusion. The justifications in Table 5-2 are not exhaustive, and emerging evidence on the impacts and effects on these groups will be explored in further detail in the full EqIA.

⁵⁹ WSP (2018). Airports National Policy Statement: Equality Assessment. Available at: [Airports National Policy Statement: equality assessment](#)

⁶⁰ OPM Group (2018). Consultation on revised draft Airports National Policy Statement. Available at: [Consultation on revised draft Airports National Policy Statement](#)

Table 5-2: Overview of priority groups scoped into the assessment

Protected Characteristic	Priority group	Definition	Justification
Age	Children	Children are commonly defined as those aged 15 and under by the Office for National Statistics (ONS). ⁶¹	Children are more vulnerable to the adverse health effects of air and noise pollution at home and in educational settings. The DSA also has a higher proportion of children than the surrounding regions and the nation as a whole. There are also several playgrounds, schools and parks identified in the study area. The loss or relocation of nursery and primary schools could also lead to negative impacts on children.
	Young people (18-24 years)	Young people are defined as those aged 16-24 in ONS labour market statistics. ⁶²	The additional jobs created by the Heathrow expansion are expected to be low-skilled, and so may be accessible to young people seeking first-time employment. Young people may also be subject to the same vulnerabilities as children, including air quality and noise impacts.
	Working-age people	The ONS defines the working-age population as those aged 16 to 64 years old. ⁶³	The DSA has a higher proportion of working-age residents than the surrounding regions and nation, who may benefit from the new jobs expected as a result of the Heathrow expansion.
	Older people	Older people are typically defined as those aged 65 and over, a term commonly used in the UK as the marker for the start of older age. ⁶⁴	Older people are more sensitive to noise due to health conditions and increased time spent at home. They are also more susceptible to respiratory and cardiovascular impacts of air pollution. Loss or relocation of housing and community facilities may increase older adults' risk of social isolation.

⁶¹ Office for National Statistics (2020). Age groups. Available at: [Age groups - Office for National Statistics](#) [accessed 16/01/2026]

⁶² Office for National Statistics (2024). Young people not in education, employment or training (NEET), UK: February 2024. Available at: [Young people not in education, employment or training \(NEET\), UK](#) [accessed 16/01/2026]

⁶³ Office for National Statistics (2025). Working Age Population. Available at: [Working age population - GOV.UK Ethnicity facts and f](#) [accessed 16/01/2026]

⁶⁴ Office for National Statistics (2019). Living longer is age 70 the new age 65? Available at: [Living longer: is age 70 the new age 65? - Office for National Statistics](#) [accessed 16/01/2026]

Protected Characteristic	Priority group	Definition	Justification
Sex	Women	Women are individuals whose protected characteristic is sex as defined by the Equality Act 2010; this includes women of all ages, backgrounds, and circumstances. ⁶⁵	Women are more often the primary caregivers of young children. ⁶⁶ Changes to housing and community facilities (including childcare facilities and community playgrounds) may make balancing childcare and employment more difficult for women caregivers and reduce community cohesion.
	Men	Men are individuals whose protected characteristic is sex as defined by the Equality Act 2010; this includes men of all ages, backgrounds, and circumstances. ⁶⁷	Men are often more highly represented in certain employment sectors, such as construction, transport, and aviation, as well as at Heathrow Airport. Therefore, this group may be disproportionately affected by changes to employment and economic impacts.
Pregnancy and maternity	Pregnancy and maternity	This includes individuals who are pregnant and expecting a baby. Maternity refers to the period after the birth. In a non-work context, protection against maternity discrimination is for 26 weeks after giving birth and protection from unfavourable treatment because a woman is breastfeeding.	The airport expansion can impact pregnant and maternity-period residents through noise, air pollution, and sleep disruption; stress, reduced mobility, and mental wellbeing effects; and environmental disturbances and loss of local amenities. These factors increase vulnerability, which is why pregnancy and maternity are treated as protected characteristics under the Equality Act.
Religion/belief	Minority religious groups	Minority religious groups include those with non-Christian beliefs, such as Islam, Hinduism, Judaism, Sikhism, and Buddhism, as well as those with no religion, reflecting the protected characteristic of religion or belief under the Equality Act 2010. ⁶⁸	The DSA has a higher proportion of residents who identify as practising a religion than the surrounding regions and nation, including a higher proportion of minority religious groups. Major construction works may impact on access to places of worship and loss of community cohesion for affected faith groups. Air-quality impacts can disproportionately affect religious communities if places of worship or community centres are located in areas of higher exposure.

⁶⁵ UK Parliament (2010). Equality Act 2010. Available at: [Equality Act 2010](#)

⁶⁶ Scottish Executive (2002). Women and transport guidance and checklist. Available at: [National Records of Scotland](#).

⁶⁷ UK Parliament (2010). Equality Act 2010. Available at: [Equality Act 2010](#)

⁶⁸ UK Parliament (2010). Equality Act 2010. Available at: [Equality Act 2010](#)

Protected Characteristic	Priority group	Definition	Justification
Race	Ethnic groups	Ethnic minority groups refer to people who identify with an ethnic background that is not part of the majority population. This includes (but is not limited to) individuals from Black, Asian, Mixed, and Other ethnic groups, as recognised in national statistical classifications (e.g., ONS ethnicity categories). ⁶⁹	The DSA has a significantly higher proportion of residents who identify as belonging to an ethnic minority group than the whole of England. Ethnic minority groups are more likely to live in areas with poorer air quality, both nationally and in parts of West London and on flightpaths. Loss and relocation of housing may disproportionately impact minority ethnic groups' quality of life as they are more likely to experience barriers to affordable housing, poor quality housing, and overcrowding.
Disability	Disabled people	As defined by the Equality Act 2010, disabled people are defined as those who have a physical or mental impairment (lasting more than a year) that has a substantial adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities. ⁷⁰	Disabled people, particularly those with chronic health conditions, face higher risks from air pollution. The loss or relocation of community facilities and care homes developed to meet the needs of disabled people – such as the Landon Harmondsworth School for students with special needs and Heathrow Special Needs Centre – may affect community participation for this group. The relocation of residents may also impact disabled people who have requirements for specialist homes. Disabled people further have different needs in accessing or using transport due to their disability and as such should be treated as a priority group. Changes to transport services, connections and accessibility may have differential impacts on this group.

⁶⁹ Office for National Statistics (2022). Ethnic group, England and Wales: Census 2021. Available at: [Ethnic group, England and Wales - Office for National Statistics](#) [accessed 16/01/2026]

⁷⁰ UK Parliament (2010). Equality Act 2010. Available at: [Equality Act 2010](#)

Protected Characteristic	Priority group	Definition	Justification
Other groups	Carers	Carers are individuals who are personally responsible for the care of another dependent person, typically children under 16 (or up to 19-20 if in education), older adults, disabled people or those with a long-term limiting illness, or other vulnerabilities. ⁷¹	Including carers as a priority equality group allows the full EqIA to capture how changes affecting a protected characteristic group (e.g. children, older people, disabled people) may disproportionately affect those who care for them. For example, the loss of nurseries, schools and community facilities may have a differential impact on primary carers of young children, who are predominantly women.
	Low-income groups	Low-income groups include individuals or households living on less than 60% of the national median income as defined by the Department for Work & Pensions ⁷² , or where local income data is not available, those residing in areas identified as experiencing higher levels of income deprivation according to IMD (2025) (e.g. within the 30% most deprived lower-super output areas). ⁷³	The additional jobs created by the Heathrow expansion are expected to be low-skilled and accessible to those without higher-level qualifications, benefitting those from areas of relatively high unemployment and deprivation. These jobs will be a skill match for the DSA population, which has lower levels of qualification than the regional and national populations. Low-income households face higher energy costs and are less able to adapt to climate impacts.
Gender reassignment, sexual orientation and marriage and civil partnership	Not identified as priority groups at this stage	These groups have not been identified as a priority at this stage.	There is no evidence that these groups are likely to experience any significant disproportionate or differential effects as a result of the ANPS and expansion of Heathrow Airport. For example, these priority groups do not appear to have any differential vulnerability regarding the EqIA themes, nor are they identified as users of community facilities to be lost/relocated as part of the Heathrow expansion. However, if further evidence or consultation feedback identifies use of these facilities by these groups, their inclusion should be considered within the assessment at a later stage.

⁷¹ Northern Ireland Office (2021). Section 75: Equality Screening Form. Available at: [NIO-Equality-Screening-Form - Hybrid working FINAL - FOR PUBLICATION.pdf](#) [accessed 16/02/2026]

⁷² Department for Work & Pensions (2016). How low income is measured in households below average income. Available at: [How low income is measured in households below average income - GOV.UK](#) [accessed 16/01/2026]

⁷³ Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government (2025). English indices of deprivation 2025: statistical release. Available at: [English indices of deprivation 2025: statistical release - GOV.UK](#) [accessed 16/01/2026]

5.4 Next steps

5.4.1 This Scoping Report has defined the scope of the EqlA, including:

- An updated evidence review incorporating an equality baseline and evidence base. This will be updated as further modelling and assessment work becomes available;
- The direct and wider study areas on which the assessment will be undertaken;
- A thematic assessment framework outlining the key EqlA themes for assessing the direct and wider impacts on priority equality groups within the assessment area; and
- The priority groups to be included in the assessment. This will be updated if further evidence identifies additional priority groups for inclusion in the assessment.

5.4.2 The next step is to undertake a screening update of the draft HENPS. This will be based on the screening questions in Table 4-1 and will confirm the requirement for a full EqlA.

5.4.3 A full EqlA will be prepared on the draft HENPS setting out:

- The methodology for undertaking the assessment;
- Relevant legislation and policy context;
- A complete evidence review containing an equality baseline profile for the study area, and any new feedback received in the public consultation in the summer;
- A full assessment of direct and wider impacts on priority equality groups, including proposed mitigation measures to minimise negative impacts and enhance positive impacts, where applicable; and
- Conclusions on how due regard is being paid to the PSED in the development of the ANPS and the expansion of Heathrow, as well as recommendations for further mitigating measures.

5.4.4 The EqlA should be treated as a live document, and should be updated, refreshed, and proposed mitigations monitored as proposals for the third runway at Heathrow develop.

Appendix A Study area demographic profile

A.1 Protected characteristics

Sex

The DSA has a slightly higher proportion of male residents (51%) compared to all other geographies (49%).⁷⁴

Age

Table A-1 provides an age breakdown by geographical area using data from the 2021 Census.⁷⁵

Among all the geographies covered in this Scoping Report, the DSA has the highest proportion of children (22% aged under 16) and the lowest proportions of both young people (9% aged 16–24) and older residents (9% aged 65+). The most notable difference across the geographies is in the share of elderly residents: whilst they account for 9% of the population in the DSA, they make up 14% of the WSA, 12% of London, 19% of Southeast England, and 18% of England overall.

The proportion of working-age residents (16-64 years old) is comparable throughout the region (67-69%), but higher than the national proportion (63%).

Table A-1. Age Breakdown by Geographical Area, 2021

	DSA	WSA	London	Southeast England	England
Children (0-16)	22%	20%	19%	19%	19%
Young People (16-24)	9%	11%	11%	10%	11%
Working Age (16-64)	69%	67%	69%	69%	63%
Elderly (65+)	9%	14%	12%	19%	18%

Disability

The DSA has a noticeably lower proportion of residents that are considered disabled under the Equality Act (11%) compared to the Southeast of England (16%) and England (17%). The proportion of residents that are considered disabled in the DSA is relatively comparable to the WSA and that of London (13%).⁷⁶

In both the DSA and WSA, a slightly smaller proportion of residents (5%) report that their day-to-day activities are significantly limited by their disability compared to the surrounding regions (6%) and nation (7%). Table A-2 further illustrates how illness or disability impacts the population of each geographical area using data from the 2021 Census.

⁷⁴ Nomis (2021). Sex. Available at: [Nomis - Query Tool - TS008 - Sex](#)

⁷⁵ Nomis (2021). Age by five-year age bands. Available at: [Nomis - Query Tool - TS007A - Age by five-year age bands](#)

⁷⁶ Nomis (2021). Disability. Available at: [Nomis - Query Tool - TS038 - Disability](#)

Table A-2. Limiting Long-term Illness or Disability by Geographical Area, 2021

	DSA	WSA	London	Southeast England	England
Day-to-day activities limited a lot	5%	5%	6%	6%	7%
Day-to-day activities limited a little	6%	7%	7%	10%	10%
Day-to-day activities not limited	89%	87%	87%	84%	83%

Ethnic Group

Table A-3 summarises ethnic group representation across each geographical area using data from the 2021 Census.⁷⁷

The DSA has the highest proportion of residents that identify as ethnic minorities (57%), significantly higher than that within Southeast England (14%) and the whole of England (19%). The WSA (47%) and London (46%) also have a relatively large ethnic minority population.

The largest non-White population in both the DSA and WSA are residents of Asian, Asian British, or Asian Welsh descent, at 41% and 31% of the areas' populations, respectively. This is a much higher proportion than in London (21%), Southeast England (7%), and whole of England (10%).

The DSA and WSA also have a higher proportion of residents that are Black, Black British, Black Welsh, Caribbean or African (6%), from Mixed or Multiple Ethnic Groups (4%), or report belonging to another ethnic group (5%) than the Southeast and whole of England; however, these ethnic groups each have the greatest representation in London.

Table A-3. Ethnic Group by Geographical Area, 2021

	DSA	WSA	London	Southeast England	England
Asian, Asian British, or Asian Welsh	41%	31%	21%	7%	10%
Black, Black British, Black Welsh, Caribbean, or African	6%	6%	14%	2%	4%
Mixed or Multiple Ethnic Groups	4%	4%	6%	3%	3%
White	43%	53%	54%	86%	81%
Other Ethnic Group	5%	5%	6%	1%	2%

⁷⁷ Nomis (2021). Ethnic group. Available at: [Nomis - Query Tool - TS021 - Ethnic group](#)

Religion

The DSA has the highest proportion of residents that identify as practicing a religion (80%), followed by the WSA (73%). Across all geographies, Christianity is the most practiced religion, however the DSA and WSA have greater religious diversity. In the DSA, 35% of residents practice a religion other than Christianity, and in the WSA, this proportion is 33%. Both the DSA and WSA areas have a relatively high proportion of residents identifying as Muslim (15%), Hindu (7-8%), and Sikh (8-11%).⁷⁸

Table A-4 provides a complete breakdown of religious participation across each geography using 2021 census data.

Table A-4. Religious Breakdown by Geography, 2021

	DSA	WSA	London	Southeast England	England
No Religion	15%	21%	27%	40%	37%
Christian	45%	41%	41%	46%	46%
Buddhist	1%	1%	1%	1%	0%
Hindu	7%	8%	5%	2%	2%
Jewish	0%	0%	2%	0%	0%
Muslim	15%	15%	15%	3%	7%
Sikh	11%	8%	2%	1%	1%
Other Religion	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%
Not Answered	5%	6%	7%	6%	6%

Pregnancy and Maternity

Both the Hillingdon and Slough local authority districts have higher birth rates than the wider study area, surrounding region, and nation. Hillingdon recorded 12.9 live births per 1,000 residents, and Slough 14.1 live births per 1,000 residents. Hounslow has the next highest birth rate (12.4), followed by Spelthorne (10.3) and Windsor and Maidenhead (8.5).

For comparison, the London birth rate is 11.7 live births per 1,000 residents, Southeast England birth rate is 9.1 live births per 1,000 residents, and England birth rate is 9.7 live births per 1,000 residents.⁷⁹

Gender Identity

Table A-5 provides a breakdown of residents' gender identity across each geographical area using 2021 census data. Census data was available at the local authority district only; not at the ward level.⁸⁰

In Hillingdon and Slough, 0.88% and 0.91%, respectively, of the population identifies as a different gender than their sex registered at birth. This is comparable to London (0.91%). This includes transgender women, transgender men, non-binary individuals, those who indicated they identify differently from their sex registered at birth but did not provide a specific identity, and all other gender identities. Only

⁷⁸ Nomis (2021). Religion. Available at: [Nomis - Query Tool - TS030 - Religion](#)

⁷⁹ Office for National Statistics (2024). Births in England and Wales: birth registrations. Available at: [Births in England and Wales: birth registrations - Office for National Statistics](#)

⁸⁰ Nomis (2021). Gender identity. Available at: [Nomis - Query Tool - TS078 - Gender identity](#)

0.55% of the total English population identifies as a different gender than their sex registered at birth.

Within the WSA, Hounslow has the highest gender diversity of all five local authority districts, with 1.02% identifying as a different gender than their sex registered at birth; Windsor and Maidenhead has the lowest, at 0.33% of the population.

Table A-5. Gender Identity by Geographical Area, 2021

	DSA	WSA	London	Southeast England	England
Gender Identity the Same as Sex Registered at Birth	91.27%	91.79%	91.21%	94.12%	93.47%
Gender Identity Different from Sex Registered at Birth but No Specific Identity Given	0.49%	0.42%	0.46%	0.18%	0.25%
Trans Woman	0.17%	0.15%	0.16%	0.09%	0.10%
Trans Man	0.18%	0.17%	0.16%	0.09%	0.10%
Non-binary	0.03%	0.03%	0.08%	0.07%	0.06%
All Other Gender Identities	0.02%	0.02%	0.05%	0.04%	0.04%
Not Answered	7.85%	7.42%	7.88%	5.42%	5.98%

Sexual Orientation

All the local authority districts comprising the DSA and WSA have a smaller proportion of residents that identify as belonging to the LGBTQ+ community as the surrounding regions and nation. In this assessment, Gay or Lesbian, Bisexual, Pansexual, Asexual, Queer, and all other sexual orientations are considered part of the LGBTQ+ community.⁸¹

Hounslow has the greatest proportion of LGBTQ+ residents (2.7%), and Slough the least (1.7%). The national proportion is 3.0%.

Legal Partnership Status

The proportion of residents in both the DSA and WSA that are married or registered in a civil partnership (49%) is higher than that of the surrounding regions. For comparison, 40% of London, 48% of Southeast England, and 45% of England residents are married or registered in a civil partnership.⁸²

⁸¹ Nomis (2021). Sexual orientation (detailed). Available at: [Nomis - Query Tool - TS079 - Sexual orientation \(detailed\)](#)

⁸² Nomis (2021). Legal partnership status. Available at: [Nomis - Query Tool - TS002 - Legal partnership status](#)

A.2 Socioeconomic profile

The socio-economic profile considers several factors including levels of deprivation, employment, education, health, housing, transport, and connectivity; as well as access to services and facilities; public realm and open space; safety, security, and well-being; and community cohesion. These factors are pertinent to those with protected characteristics and inequality and, as such, provide additional baseline information relevant to the assessment of equality impacts.

Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD)

IMD is assessed at the lower layer super output area (LSOA) level. LSOAs are geographical units in England used for statistical purposes, and each LSOA typically has a minimum population of 1,000 residents and an average of 1,500 residents. The 33,755 LSOAs in England are ranked by their quantified level of deprivation, where a lower rank represents a more deprived LSOA. The LSOAs also are assigned to deciles, such that an LSOA in the first decile is in the top 10% most deprived of LSOAs; the 50% decile represents the median (middle) level of deprivation assessed by the IMD.⁸³

The Heathrow Villages ward is comprised of seven LSOAs, and the Colnbrook with Poyle ward of four. All but two of the LSOAs are more deprived than the England median. Four of the LSOAs are within the top 20% most deprived LSOAs in England.

The IMD considers seven domains of deprivation: income; employment; education; health; crime; barriers to housing and services; and living environment. In computing the IMD, each of the LSOAs is assigned a score and associated percentile for each of these domains. Of these domains, the DSA shows the greatest deprivation with respect to housing and services. Eight of the eleven LSOAs fall in the first decile with respect to this domain (i.e., are in top 10% most deprived of LSOAs with respect to this domain), and the remaining three LSOAs are in the second decile. The DSA also is relatively deprived respect to living environment, as ten of the eleven LSOAs are within the top 30% of the most deprived LSOAs with respect to this domain (i.e., their deprivation scores for this domain fall between the first and third deciles).

On the contrary, the DSA enjoys a relatively low prevalence of poor health, illness, disability, and premature death. The LSOAs fall between fourth to ninth deciles for health deprivation domain.

⁸³ Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government (2025). English indices of deprivation 2025: statistical release. Available at: English indices of deprivation 2025: statistical release - GOV.UK

Table A-6. IMD Rankings

LSOA Name	Ward	Rank							
		IMD	Income	Employment	Education and Skills	Health and Disability	Crime	Barriers to housing and Services	Living Environment
Hillingdon 029A	Heathrow Villages	4,178	4,476	7,883	5,502	10,890	3,272	330	9,956
Hillingdon 031A	Heathrow Villages	6,626	7,093	16,408	8,593	15,673	22,352	12	1,903
Hillingdon 031B	Heathrow Villages	13,068	12,602	26,371	10,594	27,578	11,185	1,461	7,083
Hillingdon 031C	Heathrow Villages	8,232	9,950	16,709	7,085	21,391	15,312	336	3,710
Hillingdon 032A	Heathrow Villages	9,065	10,214	18,322	10,682	27,189	10,426	437	3,030
Hillingdon 032B	Heathrow Villages	9,114	8,469	18,780	6,459	24,651	7,810	1,893	5,571
Hillingdon 032C	Heathrow Villages	6,714	6,276	13,380	8,722	19,282	9,854	164	6,227
Slough 014A	Colnbrook with Poyle	13,989	10,947	17,706	13,292	28,475	11,743	4,474	11,516
Slough 014B	Colnbrook with Poyle	6,236	6,164	8,439	9,138	11,329	2,186	4,922	9,599
Slough 014C	Colnbrook with Poyle	10,773	10,234	16,712	12,661	22,253	4,570	4,021	7,159
Slough 014D	Colnbrook with Poyle	17,492	16,598	22,875	14,581	27,874	27,259	3,159	8,888

Income

Relative low-income is defined as a family whose equivalised income is below 60% of contemporary median income. Gross income measure is Before Housing Costs (BHC) and includes contributions from earnings, state support, and pensions.

The median gross annual income of all five local authority districts comprising the DSA and WSA are above the national median (£33,080). Spelthorne has the highest median gross annual income (£37,918) and Hounslow the lowest (£35,301). The mean gross annual income for all five local authority districts is higher than the median, meaning there are greater outliers in higher income brackets. Windsor and Maidenhead has the greatest difference between its mean and median gross annual incomes (£20,013) and Slough the least difference (£3,745). Slough is the only local authority district of the five to have a lower mean gross annual income (£39,266) than the English average (£41,038).⁸⁴

Importantly, both Heathrow Villages (22.8%) and Colnbrook with Poyle (21.9%) have higher percentages of children living in low-income families than the surrounding regions (17.8% in London and 14.5% in the Southeast of England).⁸⁵

⁸⁴ Office for National Statistics (2025). Earnings and hours worked, place of residence by local authority: ASHE Table 8. Available at: [Earnings and hours worked, place of residence by local authority: ASHE Table 8 - Office for National Statistics](#)

⁸⁵ Department for Work and Pensions (2024). Children in low income families: local area statistics 2014 to 2024. Available at: [Children in low income families: local area statistics 2014 to 2024 - GOV.UK](#)

Employment

Employment within the DSA is skewed towards less skilled professions than elsewhere in the region and nation. Nearly double the proportion of residents in the DSA (20%) are in elementary occupations compared to the WSA (11%), surrounding regions (9%), and nation (10%); the DSA also has a higher proportion of residents serving as process, plant, and machine operatives (12%). Conversely, nearly half the population of residents in the DSA (11%) are in professional occupations as compared to the WSA (21%), surrounding regions (21-26%) and nation (20%); the DSA also has a lower proportion of residents serving as managers, directors, and senior officials (10%).⁸⁶

However, the DSA has a higher proportion of residents that are economically active (70%) than the WSA (65%), surrounding regions (62-67%) and nation (61%). Of those within the DSA that are economically inactive, most are retired (10%) or looking after home or family (7%). Table A-7 provides a further breakdown of resident economic activity across each geography using 2021 Census data.⁸⁷

⁸⁶ Nomis (2021). Occupation. Available at: [Nomis - Query Tool - TS063 - Occupation](#)

⁸⁷ Nomis (2021). Economic activity status. Available at: [Nomis - Query Tool - TS066 - Economic activity status](#)

Table A-7. Economic Activity Breakdown by Geography, 2021

	DSA	WSA	London	Southeast England	England
Economically Active (Excluding Full-time Students)	67%	63%	64%	60%	59%
Economically Active and a Full-time Student	3%	2%	3%	2%	2%
Economically Inactive: Retired	10%	16%	13%	22%	21%
Economically Inactive: Student	5%	6%	7%	5%	6%
Economically Inactive: Looking After Home or Family	7%	6%	6%	4%	5%
Economically Inactive: Long-term Sick or Disabled	3%	3%	4%	3%	4%
Economically Inactive: Other	5%	4%	4%	3%	3%

Education, skills, and training

DSA residents are less educated than elsewhere in the region and nation. A greater proportion of residents in the DSA have no qualifications (21%) or Level 1 and entry level qualifications (10%) compared to all other geographies, and a notably lower proportion have Level 4 qualifications or above (32%).⁸⁸

Health

The life expectancy for both men and women is higher than the national average in four of the five local authority districts comprising study area; only Slough has lower life expectancies. Slough also is the only local authority district with overall (i.e., from all causes) and cardiovascular under 75 mortality rates above those of England, though its under 75 mortality rate for cancer is lower than that of England and some of the neighbouring local authority districts. Spelthorne and Hillingdon both have higher under 75 mortality rates for cancer. With respect to mental health, all five local authority districts have a suicide rate lower than the national rate, and lower prevalence of emergency hospital admissions for intentional self-harm.

There is notable variation in the prevalence of behavioural risk determinants of health across the five local authority districts relative to the national prevalence. Hounslow (590 admissions per 100,000 residents), Spelthorne (571), and Hillingdon (525) have a higher rate of admissions for alcohol-related conditions than that of England (504), whereas Slough (459) and Windsor and Maidenhead (389) have

⁸⁸ Nomis (2021). Highest level of qualification. Available at: [Nomis - Query Tool - TS067 - Highest level of qualification](#)

lower admissions rates. Smoking is slightly more prevalent in adults aged 18 and over in Spelthorne (10.8%) and Hillingdon (10.6%) than nationally (10.4%), but less prevalent in Hounslow (8.1%), Slough (6.8%), and Windsor and Maidenhead (6.7%). Only Windsor and Maidenhead has a higher percentage of physically active adults (74.1%) than in England (67.4%); Hillingdon has the lowest percentage of the remaining local authority districts (56.2%). Finally, only Slough has a higher percentage of overweight adults (70.6%) than in England (64.5%); of the remaining local authority districts, Spelthorne has the lowest percentage (55.3%).⁸⁹

Interestingly, despite these measured differences in health, DSA and WSA residents would categorise themselves—when asked to rate their health and very good, good, fair, bad, or very bad—as being in similar overall health to the surrounding regions and nation. Within both study areas, 86% of residents rated their health as very good or good, compared to only 4% as bad or very bad.⁹⁰

Population

Both the DSA and WSA experienced greater population growth (11%) than that of the region and nation (7-8%) between 2011 and 2021. The most notable increase was within Heathrow Villages. The ward's population increased by 15% between 2011 and 2021.^{91,92}

A.3 Local services and amenities

The DSA is home to a number of local services and amenities, including:

- Wonderland Day Nursery and Heathrow and Harmondsworth Primary Schools;
- Harmondsworth & Longford and Sipson Community Centres;
- Harmondsworth Moor, Harmondsworth and Sipson Recreation Grounds, and Heathrow Close Children's Playground;
- Heathrow Medical Centre;
- The Landon Harmondsworth School for students with special needs and Heathrow Special Needs Centre;
- Skyport Trade Park, Compass Centre, and Heathrow Boulevard office parks; and
- Heathrow Polar Park Police Station.

These local services and amenities were identified from a Google Maps search of the area coinciding with the preferred expansion site, roughly bounded by the M4 to the north and east, M25 to the west, and Airport Way and Heathrow Airport to the south.

Relocation of housing and community facilities can decrease accessibility of these key services and amenities, as well as reduce community cohesion.

⁸⁹ Department of Health and Social Care (2025). Local Authority Health Profiles. Available at: [Local Authority Health Profiles - Data | Fingertips | Department of Health and Social Care](#)

⁹⁰ Nomis (2021). General health. Available at: [Nomis - Query Tool - TS037 - General health](#)

⁹¹ Nomis (2011). Usual resident population. Available at: [Nomis - Query Tool - KS101EW - Usual resident population](#)

⁹² Nomis (2021). Number of usual residents in households and communal establishments. Available at: [Nomis - Query Tool - TS001 - Number of usual residents in households and communal establishments](#)

