

Melbourne Airport Noise Sharing and Airspace Concept Plan

Proposed Airspace and Flight Path Design

PHASE 2

October 2026

Executive summary

The Federal Government required Australia Pacific Airports (Melbourne) Pty Ltd (APAM), the owner and operator of Melbourne Airport, to prepare a Noise Sharing and Airspace Concept Plan (NSACP) as part of the approval for the third runway.

The Draft Noise Sharing and Airspace Concept Plan explains how runways and flight paths will be used once construction associated with the Third Runway project and Eastern Extension project are complete. The Plan will be implemented only after all construction works are finished.

After the new third runway becomes operational (circa 2031), further works will be needed on the existing north-south runway as part of the broader Third Runway project. During this period, the Noise Sharing and Airspace Concept Plan will not be fully implemented because changes to runway availability will affect how runways and flight paths are used. Airspace changes will be implemented when the third runway becomes operational.

The Draft Noise Sharing and Airspace Concept Plan can be found at [Noise Sharing Plan | Major Projects Hub | Melbourne Airport](#)

The Phase 2 concept reflects the current stage of NSACP development and should not be interpreted as the final airspace or flight path design.

This engagement is split in two distinct sections:

- Section 1 - **Proposed Airspace and Flight Path Design** (Options for airspace dimensions or classifications of Airspace and Flight Paths servicing the existing and new runway)
- Section 2 – **Operational Impact Analysis** (Proposed Priority order for Runway Mode usage and associated mode usage impacts for Melbourne and Essendon Fields Airports)

This engagement also seeks the ongoing support and input of industry stakeholders as the Noise Sharing and Airspace Concept Plan (NSACP) continues to be developed. This collaborative approach is intended to support the development of a balanced and sustainable outcome that appropriately integrates airspace requirements, operational performance, community outcomes and the impacts on aviation industry stakeholders.

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1. Introduction

This engagement forms part of the Melbourne Airport Noise Sharing and Airspace Concept Plan (referred to as the Noise Sharing Plan, or NSACP), which is being developed in response to the Ministerial Conditions of Approval for the Melbourne Airport Third Runway (M3R) Major Development Plan (MDP), approved on 10 September 2024.

The implementation of Melbourne Airport's third runway will require a revised airspace design to support independent parallel runway operations and the associated flight procedures. This includes modifications to the Melbourne Terminal Control Area (TMA) and surrounding controlled airspace to safely integrate new arrival and departure flows while balancing the operational needs of commercial and general aviation users. Ongoing engagement with industry is a key component of this process, ensuring operational expertise informs the development and refinement of the initial airspace concept. This stage of the project is focused on the minimum containment for Melbourne Airport's flight paths and has not considered further airspace changes to Essendon and Avalon.

Engagement is being undertaken in multiple phases to progressively develop and refine the proposed airspace design in collaboration with industry, the timeline for the NSACP has been extended by 12 months with a new completion date planned for Q4 2027.

Phase 1 (November 2025) introduced the initial Airspace Concept and sought feedback from general aviation operators across the Melbourne Basin to assess how the proposed design aligned with current operational practices and access requirements.

Phase 2 (August to October 2026) presents the feedback received during Phase 1, the airspace concept refinements made to date in response to that feedback and the minimum containment of instrument approach procedures within controlled airspace. It provides a further opportunity for aviation stakeholders to review the evolving airspace concept and provide feedback regarding operational requirements, constraints or safety considerations.

Phase 3 (throughout 2027) will present an updated Airspace Concept, informed by the outcomes of industry engagement and the technical validation and assurance activities undertaken as the design progresses. This may involve multiple rounds of engagement throughout 2027.

This document supports Phase 2 of the industry engagement program and presents the airspace concept at this stage of its development. It outlines how the Phase 1 concept has been refined following consideration of stakeholder feedback, explains the rationale for those changes, and presents the Phase 1 and Phase 2 concepts side by side to enable comparison.

The Phase 2 concept represents a point-in-time concept and should not be interpreted as the final airspace or flight path design. Further refinement will occur as the design progresses through air traffic control simulation, airline simulator validation, instrument

flight procedure development, safety assurance and further aviation stakeholder and community engagement. Industry stakeholders are therefore invited to review the Phase 2 concept and provide feedback on whether the refinements address the operational issues identified during Phase 1, and to identify any additional matters that should be considered as the NSP design progresses.

2. Engagement process

2.1. Phase 1

Phase 1, undertaken in November 2025, established the foundation for industry engagement by seeking to:

- Introduce the initial Airspace Concept to aviation stakeholders operating across the Melbourne Basin.
- Validate the preliminary airspace concept against current operational practices and user requirements.
- Develop a detailed understanding of how aviation operators utilise the airspace, including typical routes, operating altitudes, training areas and flight profiles.
- Identify operator-specific operational requirements, constraints and safety considerations to inform the ongoing refinement of the proposed airspace concept.

What we heard

Phase 1 reached 283 aviation stakeholders through industry forums, airline advisory groups, online briefings and operator-specific sessions, and recorded 25 feedback items (12 from discussions and 13 written submissions). Four themes emerged: airspace access and safety; operational efficiency and training; emergency and critical operations; and engagement and transparency. For general aviation, the most consistently raised theme was airspace access and safety, concentrated in three areas:

North of Melbourne Airport

- Terrain and rising ground around Mount Macedon
- Lowering of controlled airspace near Romsey
- Reduced weather margins in poor conditions
- Impact on several smaller aerodromes

South of Melbourne Airport

- Established low-level flying over Port Phillip Bay
- Recreational and training operations
- Point Cook operating environment
- Avalon operations

General feedback

- Maintaining access for priority status flights
- Access in Class C airspace
- Operational efficiency and flight planning options
- Industry engagement evidence and transparency

2.2. Phase 2

Based on feedback received during Phase 1, the airspace concept has been further developed and refined. This document:

- Explains the options previously presented to industry;
- Outlines changes to airspace primarily driven by the minimum containment of instrument approach procedures within controlled airspace; and
- Seeks further industry feedback on whether the proposed refinements address the operational issues previously identified and whether there are any additional considerations that should inform the next stage of development.

3. Airspace concept

3.1. Phase 1 proposal

Phase 1 identified two areas of the Melbourne Terminal Control Area (TMA) that require targeted refinement, these being to the north and to the south of the airport (Figure 1).

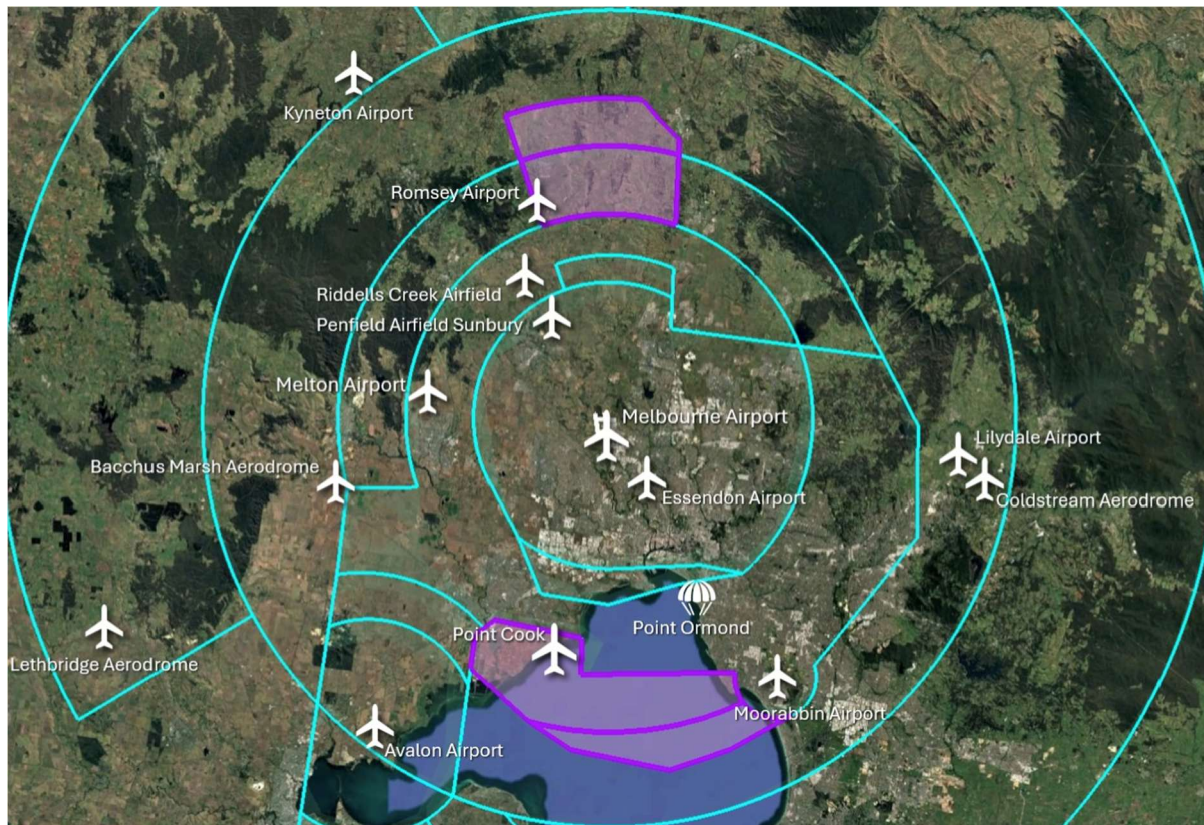


Figure 1: PHASE 1 - Existing controlled airspace (teal) and initial potential airspace changes (purple)

Changes to this initial proposal are addressed in turn in the sections that follow.

3.2. Phase 2 proposal

Following consideration of the feedback received from the Phase 1, the airspace concept has been further refined. The current Phase 2 concept overview is presented in Figure 2, overlaid on the current Melbourne Visual Terminal Chart (VTC). The sections that follow outline the key drivers for the proposed changes in each area and how Phase 1 feedback has informed the response.

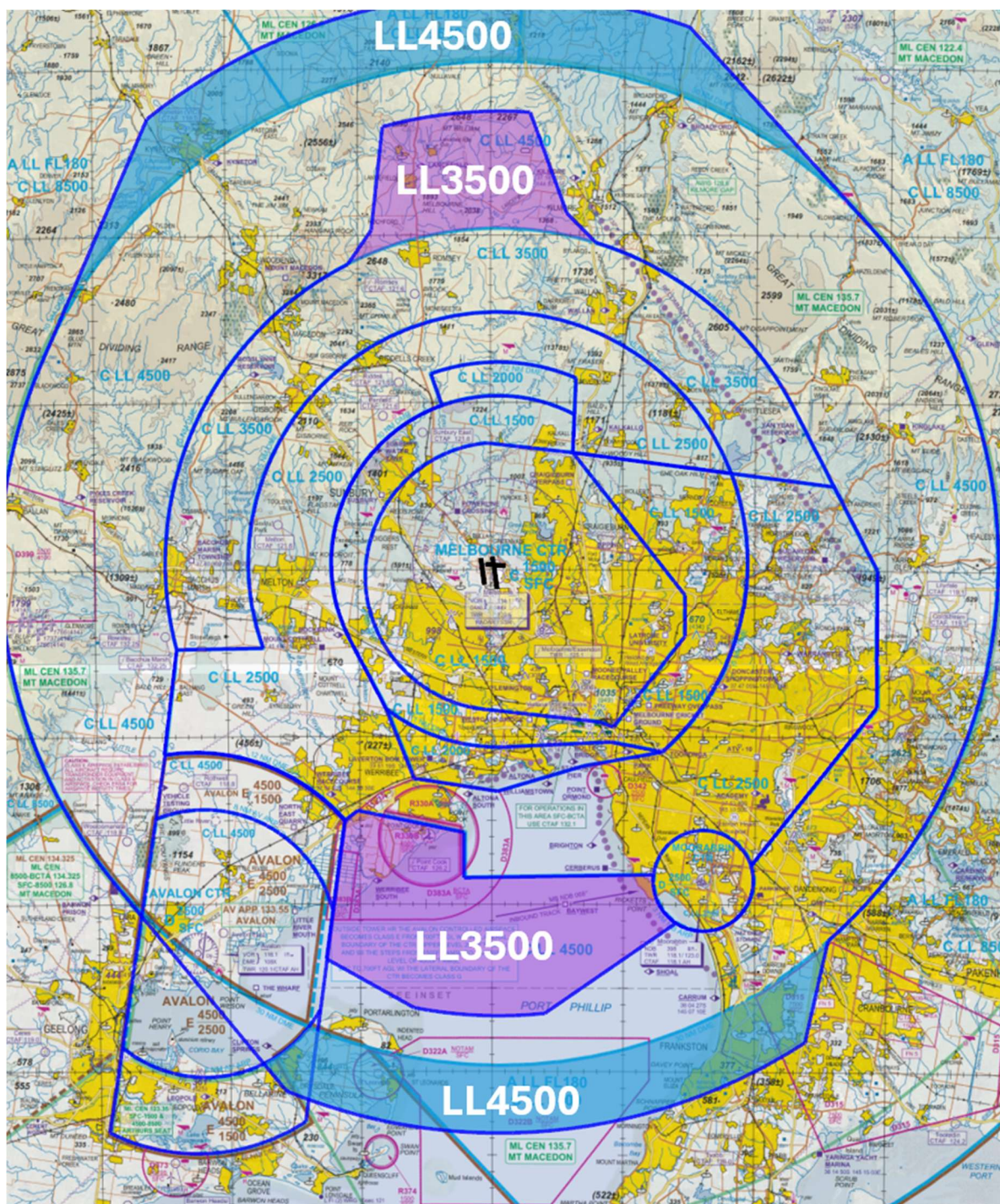


Figure 2: PHASE 2 proposed airspace changes shown on the Melbourne VTC (Note: LL refers to the lower limit of controlled airspace)

3.3. Northern airspace

Why change is required

North of the airport, the existing airspace concept was designed around a single stream of arrivals to Runway 16 (RWY 16). A new runway which allows for parallel operations adds a second, independent stream, and the current airspace steps are not deep enough to contain both while keeping aircraft safely separated. The northern steps therefore need to change.

Phase 1 proposal

The proposed changes to the northern controlled airspace that formed the basis of Phase 1 industry engagement is shown at Figure 3.



Figure 3: PHASE 1 – Initial proposed changes to control area steps to the north along with indicative aircraft altitudes for parallel arrivals

The Phase 1 concept proposed the reduction of the lower level of controlled airspace in two areas:

- From 3,500FT to 2,500FT around Romsey and to the west of Wallan
- From 4,500FT to 3,500FT west of Kilmore

A popular Visual Flight Rules (VFR) corridor links the Melbourne Basin with northern Victoria in this same area. The corridor is frequently used by both northbound and southbound traffic which runs between Sugarloaf Reservoir and Kilmore. A representative subset of 2024 Essendon and Moorabbin aircraft tracking under the controlled airspace steps to the east of Melbourne is shown at Figure 4. As shown in the diagram, the current lower level of controlled airspace is currently 3,500FT for the majority of this VFR route.



Figure 4: PHASE 1 - Essendon and Moorabbin 2024 radar tracks

What we heard

Industry told us

- Lowering controlled airspace from 3,500FT to 2,500FT around Romsey and to the west of Wallan, about 20NM north of the airport, would cut into General Aviation (GA) operations and reduce safety margins.
- In poor weather it would leave little room to stay clear of low cloud near the rising terrain around Mount Macedon.
- The reduction would also affect several smaller aerodromes used by a range of operators as the base of controlled airspace is now already at circuit height.

The driver for the proposed airspace change in this area was to contain the parallel approaches onto RWY 16L and RWY 16R above the rising ground in the vicinity of Mount Macedon. These changes raised concerns from industry due to the impacts that the lowering of controlled airspace has on general aviation operations – this feedback was received consistently across engagement sessions and in written submissions during Phase 1.

Phase 2 proposal – how the concept has changed

Following consideration of Phase 1 stakeholder feedback, refinements have been made to the proposed northern airspace concept for Phase 2, while continuing to meet the project's safety, operational and airspace design requirements. The key changes include:

- Increase to the ILS joining altitude for the new arrivals to RWY 16L from 3,500FT to 4,000FT, and similarly, for RWY 16R from 4,500FT to 5,000FT;
- Removal of the reduction of the lower limit of controlled airspace to 2,500FT around Romsey – no controlled airspace within 20NM would be changed;
- Reduction in the lower level of controlled airspace outside 20NM for an amended area from 4,500FT to 3,500FT;
- Reduction in the lower level of controlled airspace between 30NM and 34NM for an area from 8,500FT to 4,500FT; and
- A simplified arrival path to a straight in, runway aligned track that removes turns close to the ground.

As the base of controlled airspace is designed to contain instrument arrival procedures, increasing the altitude at which arrivals commence results in a corresponding increase in the lower limit of controlled airspace. By increasing the commencement altitude for northerly arrivals to RWY 16L and RWY 16R, the Phase 2 proposal ensures containment of these new procedures and restores terrain and weather operating margins for GA and provides a more consistent and predictable controlled airspace boundary for flight planning and day-to-day operations.

Changes to the northerly arrival concept are shown in Figure 5. The revised Phase 2 arrival concept is shown in blue, contrasted with the Phase 1 arrival concept shown in teal. These same changes are shown overlaid on the Melbourne VTC at Figure 6, and with historic Essendon/Moorabbin traffic operating in the area at Figure 7.

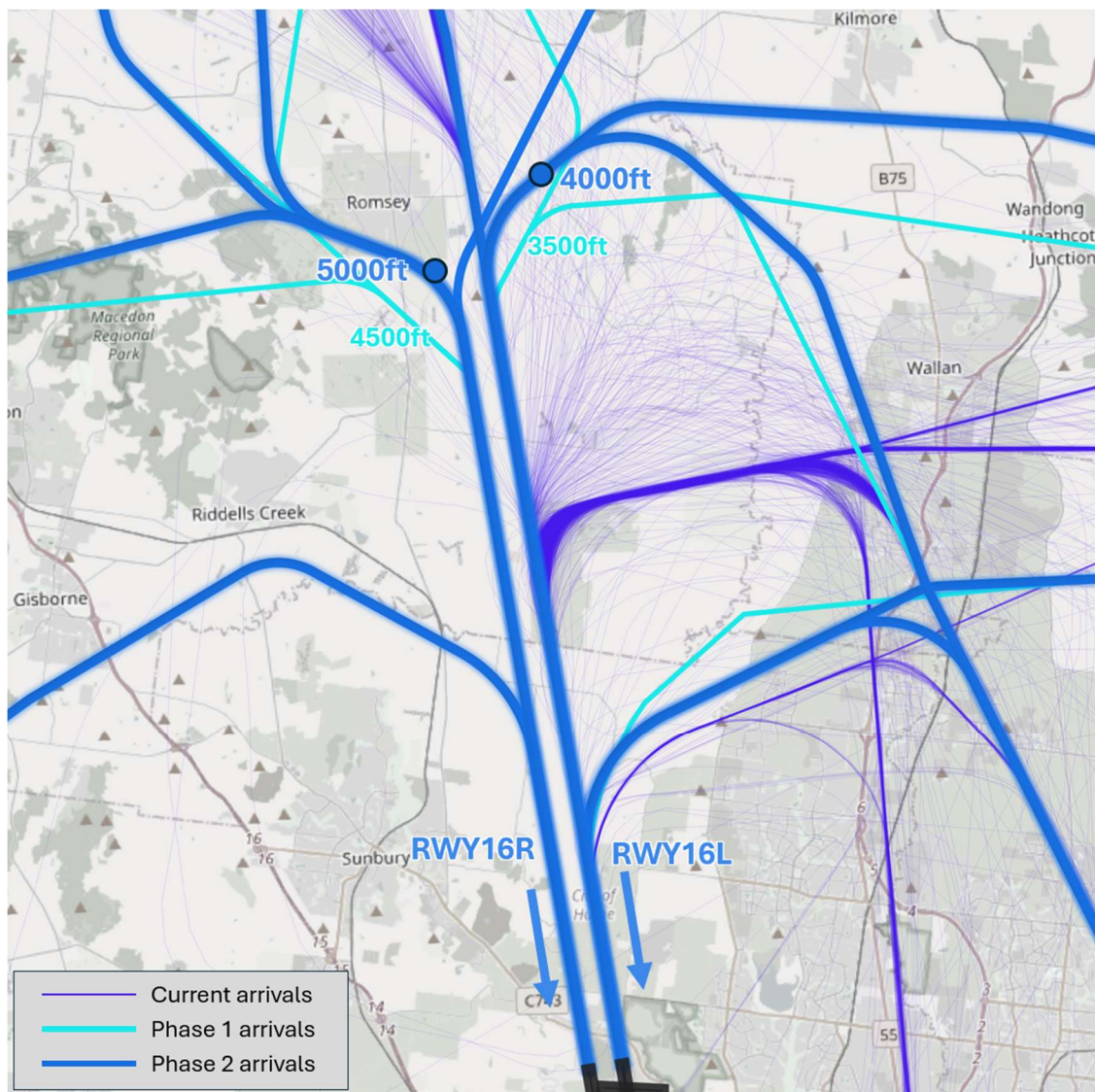


Figure 5: PHASE 2 - Revised northern airspace concept - updated arrivals shown in blue, Phase 1 arrivals shown in teal

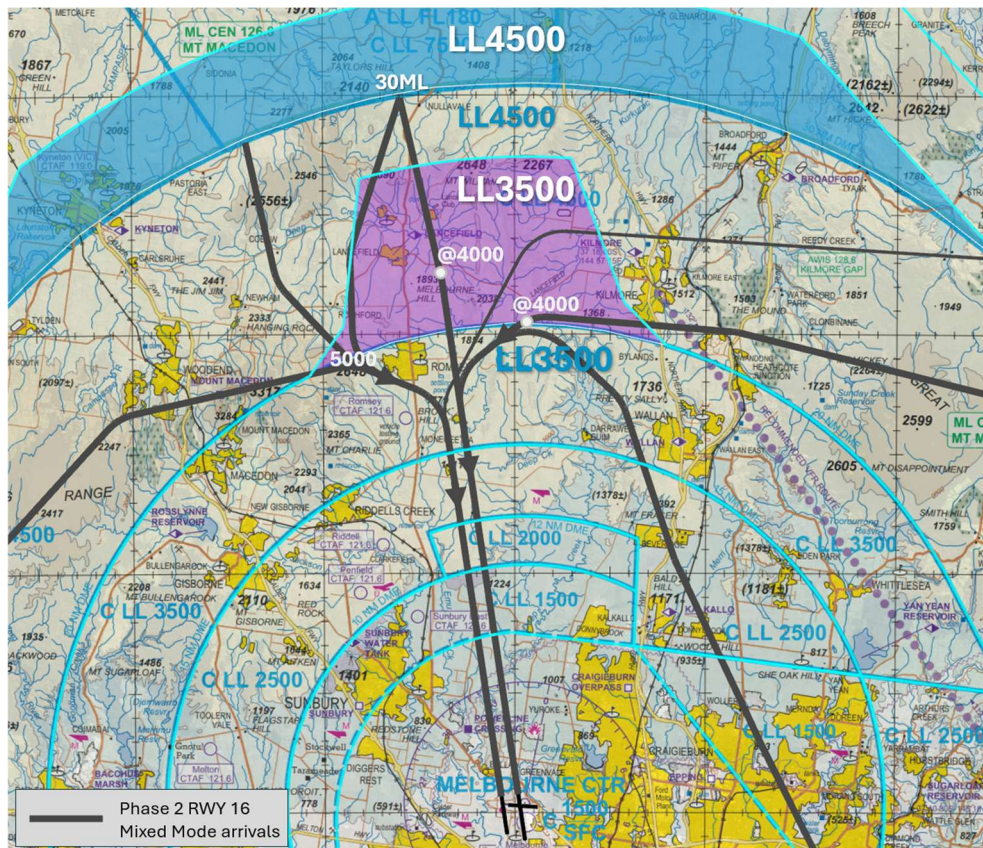


Figure 6: PHASE 2 – Revised Independent Parallel Arrivals and proposed controlled airspace north of Melbourne Airport

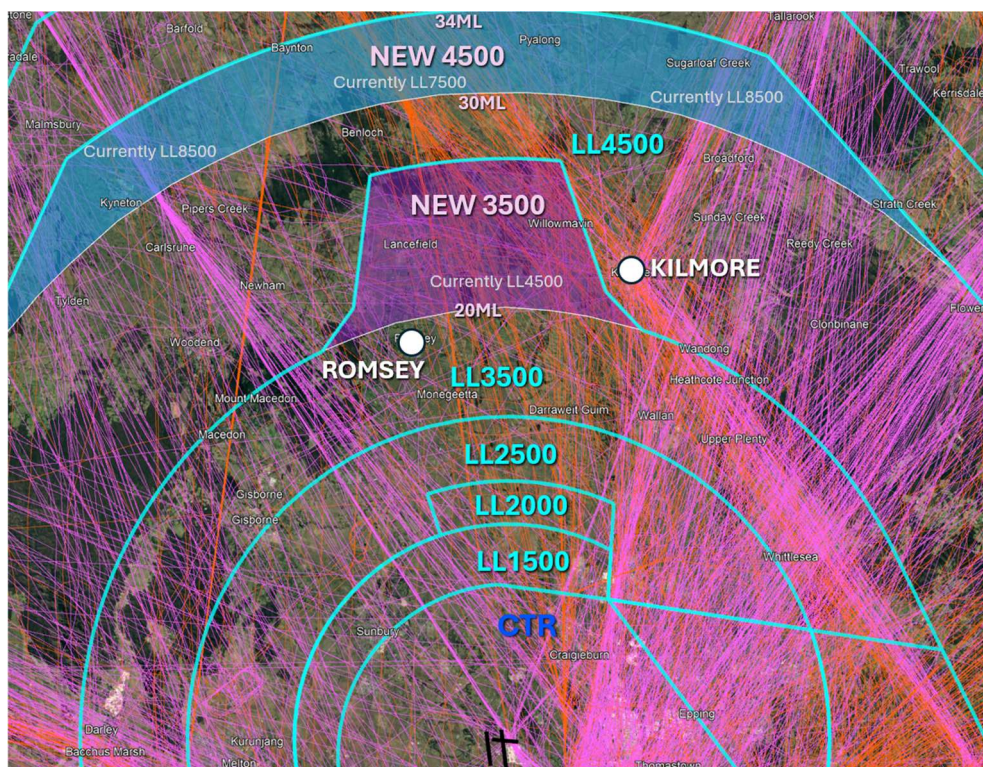


Figure 7: PHASE 2 – proposed controlled airspace north of Melbourne Airport, with Essendon and Moorabbin traffic displayed. Historic aircraft tracks using the published VFR route shown in orange and magenta.

3.4. Southern airspace

Why change is required

The existing airspace to the south was designed around a single stream of arrivals to RWY 34, and parallel operations again need deeper containment than the current steps provide. The southern steps therefore also need to change.

Phase 1 proposal

The proposed changes to the southern controlled airspace that formed the basis of Phase 1 industry engagement are depicted at Figure 8.



Figure 8: PHASE 1 - Initial proposed changes to control area steps to the south along with indicative aircraft altitudes for parallel arrivals.

The Phase 1 concept proposed the reduction of the lower level of controlled airspace in two areas:

- From 4,500FT to 2,500FT between Point Cook and Moorabbin airfields, following the existing control step boundary and out to ~23NM
- From 4,500FT to 3,500FT for a segment of airspace outside of ~23NM

Historic VFR tracking patterns for current operations around the coastline of Port Phillip Bay show a consistent flow of recreational and training flights using VFR routes and generally operating in this area, as depicted in Figure 9.



Figure 9: PHASE 1 - Historic aircraft tracks in Port Phillip Bay using the published VFR route - initial proposed airspace changes shown in purple.

Radar data from 2024 identified numerous VFR flights operating directly between Avalon Airport (YMAV) and Moorabbin Airport (YMMB), typically at altitudes between 1,500FT and 4,000FT (Figure 10). The implications of the Phase 1 airspace concept are that these aircraft would be required to operate at or below 2,500FT to remain outside controlled airspace.

The Phase 1 proposal also identified that the planned changes to controlled airspace in the vicinity of Moorabbin Airport would require a corresponding amendment to the initial altitude associated with the NDB-A instrument approach procedure. It was proposed that this be achieved through subdivision of the Minimum Sector Altitude (MSA), maintaining vertical containment of the instrument procedure while allowing VFR aircraft to continue operating outside controlled airspace with the revised airspace design.

As part of the Phase 1 engagement, operators and flight training organisations were asked to provide information on the current and anticipated future use of the NDB-A procedure at Moorabbin Airport. This feedback was sought to better understand the ongoing operational requirement for the procedure and to inform future refinement of the airspace and instrument flight procedure design.



Figure 10: PHASE 1 - Historic aircraft tracks for Avalon to Moorabbin flights - initial proposed airspace changes shown in purple.

What we heard

Industry told us

- The Phase 1 proposed changes to controlled airspace would conflict with established low-level flying over Port Phillip Bay.
- Lowering the base of controlled airspace would compress the height available to recreational and training flights that use the Bay.
- The NDB at Moorabbin is still used for flight training schools.

Phase 2 proposal – how the concept has changed

The driver for the proposed airspace change in this area was to contain the parallel approaches onto RWY 34L and RWY 34R.

Following consideration of the feedback received during Phase 1, refinements have been made to the proposed southern airspace concept for Phase 2, while continuing to meet the project's safety, operational and airspace design requirements. The key changes include:

- Increase to the ILS joining altitude for arrivals to RWY 34R and RWY 34L during segregated operations from 2,500FT to 3,000FT;
- Change to the final approach intercept angle to a shallower 60 degrees from 90 degrees, resulting in the tracks moving further south over Port Phillip Bay;

- Increase to the ILS joining altitude for arrivals to RWY 34L and RWY 34R during mixed mode operations by 1,000FT;
- Reduction in the lower limit of controlled airspace for an amended area to the south from 4,500FT to 3,500FT to maintain vertical containment of the revised arrival profiles while reducing the impact on VFR operations;
- Reduction in the lower level of controlled airspace outside 30NM for an area from 8,500FT to 4,500FT; and
- Retaining the existing VFR transit opportunities where practicable, while preserving the operational integrity of the instrument arrival procedures.

As in the north, increasing the altitude at which arrivals commence will allow a corresponding increase in the lower limit of controlled airspace above the Bay, enabling general aviation operations at higher altitudes than the Phase 1 concept allowed.

Changes to the southerly arrival concept are shown in Figure 11. The revised Phase 2 arrival concept is shown in blue, contrasted with the Phase 1 arrival concept shown in teal.

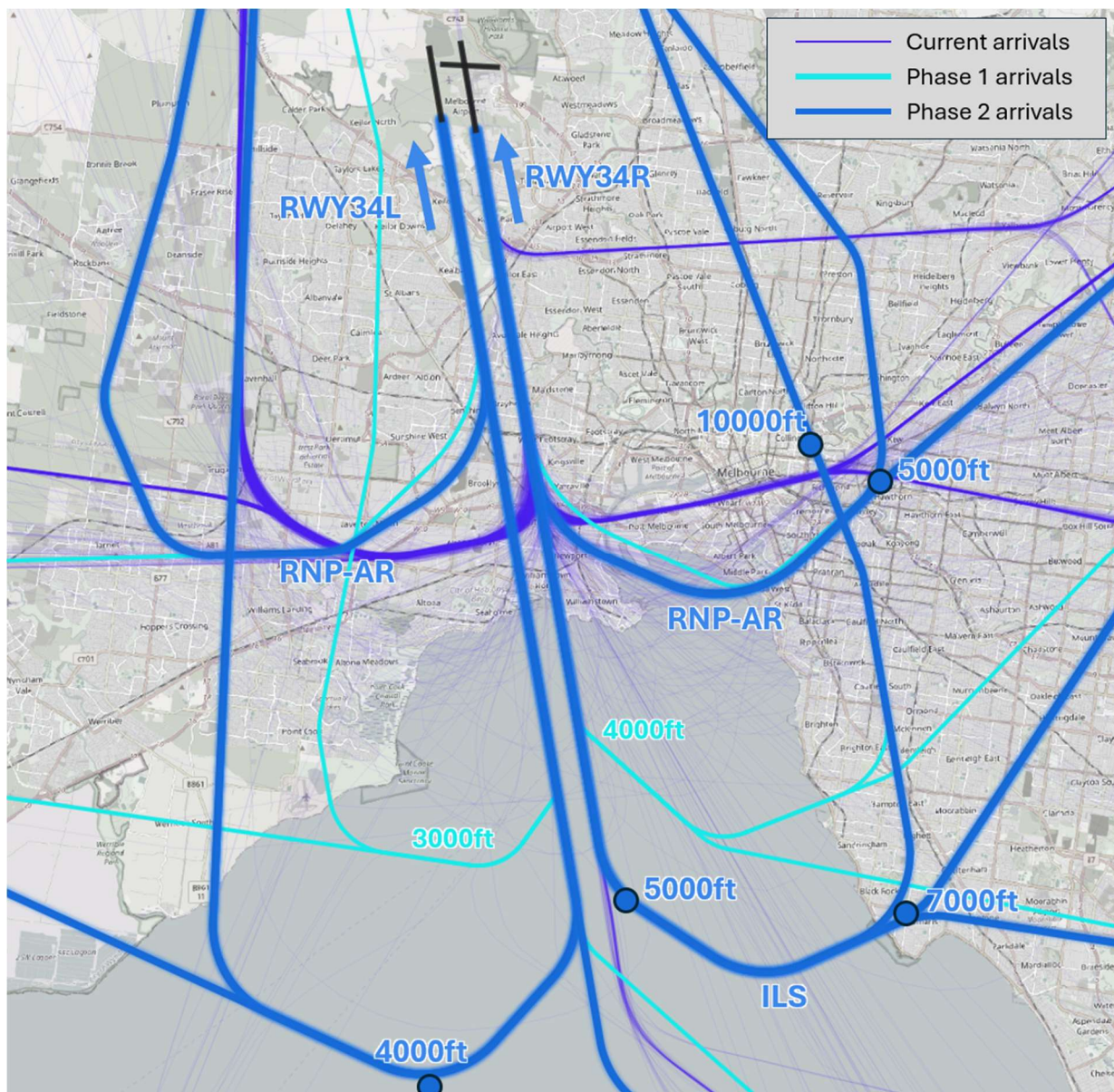


Figure 11: PHASE 2 - Revised southern airspace concept - updated arrivals shown in blue, Phase 1 arrivals shown in teal

These same changes are shown overlaid on the Melbourne VTC at Figure 12, and with historic Essendon, Moorabbin and Avalon traffic operating in the area at Figure 13.

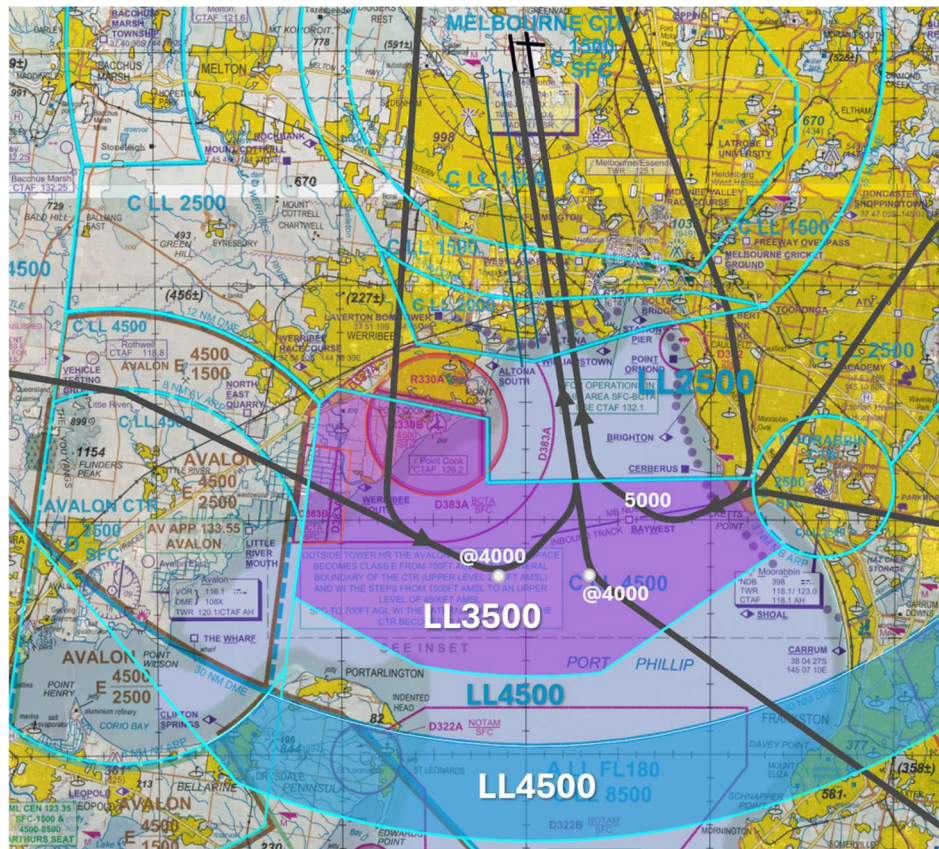


Figure 12: PHASE 2 - Revised Independent Parallel Arrivals and associated controlled airspace south of Melbourne Airport.

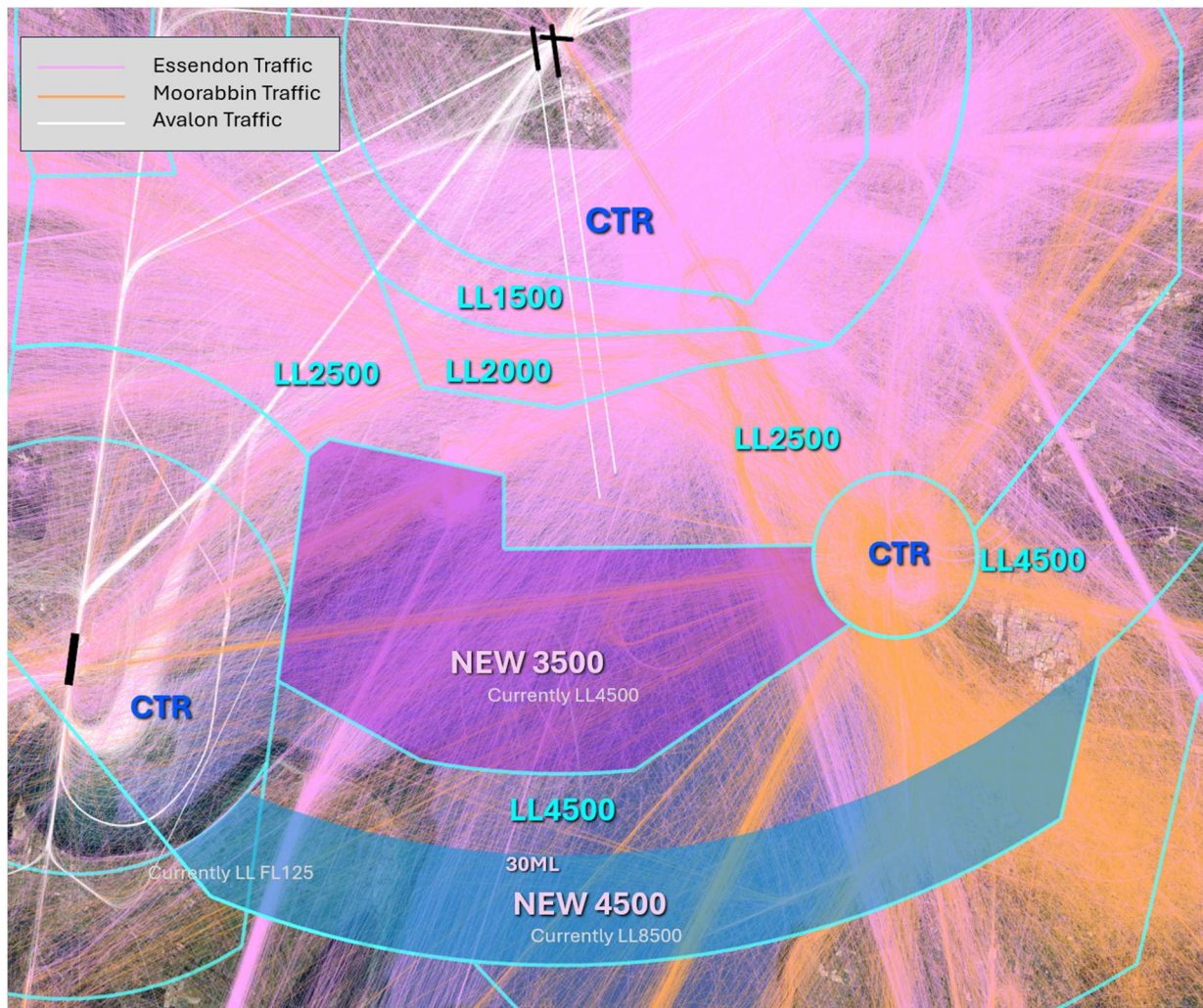


Figure 13: PHASE 2 - Revised controlled airspace south of Melbourne Airport, with Essendon, Moorabbin and Avalon traffic displayed.

4. Operational Impact Analysis – location-specific operational considerations

This section explains how aircraft operations are expected to change once the third runway becomes operational circa 2031, with a focus on runway use, operating modes and the practical implications for noise distribution. It outlines the recommended runway mode priorities for day, high capacity and overnight periods.

After the new third runway becomes operational, further works will be needed on the existing north-south runway as part of the broader Third Runway project. During this period, the Noise Sharing and Airspace Concept Plan will not be fully implemented as changes to runway availability will affect how runways and flight paths are used.

4.1. Noise Sharing Plan

The draft Noise Sharing Plan sets out the runway operating modes, the associated flight paths, and the indicative frequency with which each mode is expected to be used across the daytime, high capacity and overnight periods. Together, these determine how aircraft noise is distributed across Melbourne once the third runway is operational.

The Plan is intended to support long term growth at Melbourne Airport while managing aircraft noise in a more balanced and transparent way for communities across Melbourne.

Status of the draft Noise Sharing Plan

The runway operating modes set out in this draft are not expected to change. The forecast frequency of use for each mode, and the flight paths themselves, remain subject to further refinement. The indicative usage ranges presented here have been developed using current modelling, forecast demand and planning assumptions, and may be updated as additional technical analysis, operational assessment and validation work is completed. The final distribution of aircraft movements across runway operating modes and associated flight paths may therefore differ from the ranges presented in this draft.

4.2. Recommended runway mode priority

Once the third runway becomes operational, Melbourne Airport will operate two parallel north-south runways (RWY 16L/34R and RWY 16R/34L) and a cross runway (RWY 09/27).

The runway mode priority order informs the sequence in which the runway configurations will be operated, working from the most preferred through to the least preferred, subject to safety requirements, wind conditions, and traffic demand as set out in Section 4.3.

4.3. Operating principles

The operating principles that guide how the runway operating modes will be selected once the third runway is operational are described below, and provide a transparent

framework for decision-making, explaining how safety, capacity, efficiency, noise sharing objectives and ministerial requirements are balanced under different operating conditions. Separate principles apply to daytime and night-time periods to reflect differences in traffic demand, operational needs and community sensitivity to aircraft noise.

Daytime operating principles (0600-2300)

The priority order for selection of runway operating modes during the daytime period is based on the following principles (in no specific order):

- **Capacity-driven mode selection** - high-capacity operating modes are to be utilised where required to meet increased traffic demand. High-capacity modes are prioritised according to separate criteria.
- **Efficient use of existing modes during off-peak periods** - during lower demand periods, existing cross runway operating modes and established priority order should be applied for noise sharing purposes.
- **Preference for segregated operations when required** - where weather conditions necessitate the use of north-south runways, segregated modes are to be prioritised over single runway operations to maintain higher levels of operational capacity.
- **Preference for northerly modes on north-south runways** - northerly operations (RWY 34L and/or RWY 34R) are to be prioritised over southerly operations (RWY 16L and/or RWY 16R), consistent with the Third Runway MDP. This directs departures over the less densely populated areas to the north of the airport, with arrivals flying over the more densely populated areas to the south.
- **Segregated Mode alternation** - during off-peak periods and where operationally possible, alternation between like segregated modes should be utilised.

Night-time operating principles (2300-0600)

The priority order for runway operating modes during the night period is guided by the following principles (in no specific order):

- **Reduced requirement for high-capacity modes** - traffic demand during night hours does not typically require the use of high-capacity operating modes.
- **Prioritisation of Simultaneous Opposite Direction Parallel Runway Operations (SODPROPS) where feasible** - due to the specific weather and traffic conditions required for SODPROPS, this mode is to be prioritised when conditions permit.
- **Use of existing modes where SODPROPS is unavailable** - where SODPROPS cannot be implemented, existing cross runway operating modes should be applied for noise sharing purposes.
- **Preference for single runway operations on north-south runway** - single runway operations are to be retained on the existing north-south runway during the night

period, as traffic demand during night hours does not typically require the use of segregated operating modes.

4.4. Current runway mode priorities

The following tables set out Melbourne Airport's current runway mode priority arrangements across the three operational periods. These arrangements have been in place for a number of years and form the baseline against which the Noise Sharing Plan changes are assessed. The tables also include historical runway mode usage data, along with the proportion of arriving and departing aircraft that have operated on a non-nominated runway using data recorded between January 2023 and March 2025.

Operations both today and in the future are dependent on a number of factors and won't always reflect the priority order below.

Current day priorities (0600 to 2300) - % of movements

Priority	Name	Landing	Take-off	Historic day usage	Arrivals on non-active runway	Departures on non-active runway
1	Cross Runway 1	RWY 16L	RWY 27	38.1%	3.2%	16.3%
	Cross Runway 2	RWY 27	RWY 27 and RWY 34R	14.7%	25.4%	<1%
2	Cross Runway 3	RWY 09	RWY 16L	1.6%	17.1%	<1%
3	SRO 27	RWY 27	RWY 27	4.3%	9.4%	14.4%
4	SRO 16L	RWY 16	RWY 16	17.1%	<1%	2.6%
	SRO 34R	RWY 34	RWY 34	19.5%	1.0%	1.3%
5	SRO 09	RWY 09	RWY 09	0.3%	9.8%	21.3%

Current day high-capacity priorities - % of movements

Priority	Name	Landing	Take-off	Historic day usage	Arrivals on non-active runway	Departures on non-active runway
1	High-Capacity – Land and Hold Short Operations (LAHSO)	RWY 27 and RWY 34R	RWY 27	3.1%	<1%	20.8%

Current night priorities (2300 to 0600) - % of movements

Priority	Name	Landing	Take-off	Historic night usage	Arrivals on non-	Departures on non-
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					active runway	active runway
1	Cross Runway 1	RWY 16L	RWY 27	40.1%	3.0%	31.8%
2	Cross Runway 2	RWY 27	RWY 27 and RWY 34R	24.7%	40.3%	0.6%
3	SRO 27	RWY 27	RWY 27	10.3%	13.0%	12.1%
4	SRO 34R or 16L	RWY 34R or RWY 16L	RWY 34R or RWY 16L	24.3%	3.6%	3.8%
5	SRO 09	RWY 09	RWY 09	0.1%	3.6%	7.1%

4.5. Proposed runway Noise Sharing Plan mode priorities

The proposed mode priorities introduce a number of new configurations along with retention of the existing modes (with the exception of LAHSO). The foundation of the current arrangement with cross-runway modes at the top of the priority list has been retained. Key changes are targeted at achieving outcomes in response to the conditions of approval or specific operational or noise sharing objectives.

Note that the priority lists that follow assume the availability of all runways for operational use. Should any runway or associated infrastructure be unavailable for maintenance or for any other reason, priority order will be adhered to as far as is operationally practicable. All flight paths associated with individual modes at this stage of development can be found in [Noise Sharing Plan | Major Projects Hub | Melbourne Airport](#).

Shaded rows represent new modes.

Proposed day priorities (0600 to 2300)

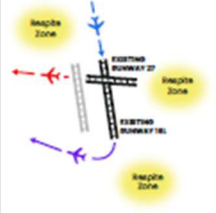
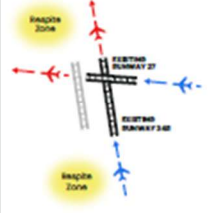
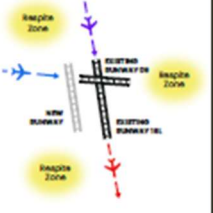
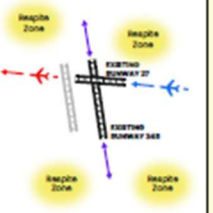
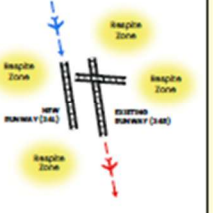
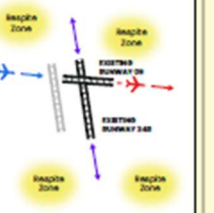
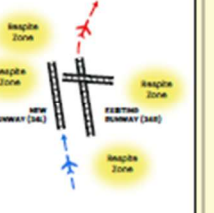
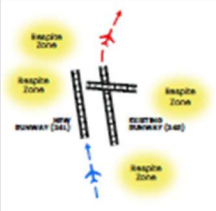
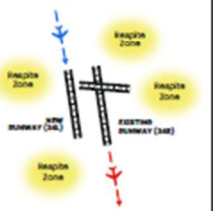
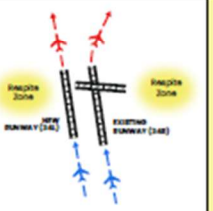
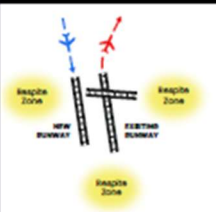
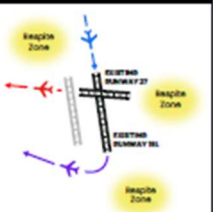
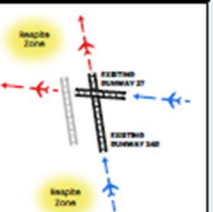
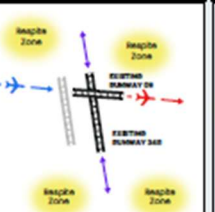
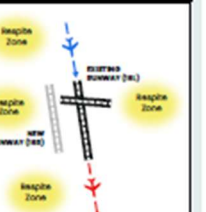
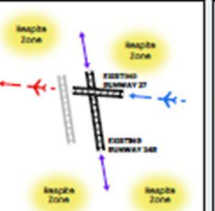
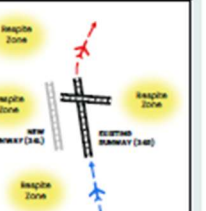
	Priority	Name	Landing	Take-off
Cross runway	1	Cross Runway 1	RWY 16L	RWY 27
		Cross Runway 2	RWY 27	RWY 27 and RWY 34R
	2	Cross Runway 3	RWY 09	RWY 16L
Weather dependent	3	SRO 27	RWY 27	RWY 27
		SM1 or SM3	RWY 34R or RWY 34L	RWY 34R or RWY 34L
		SM2 or SM4	RWY 16L or RWY 16R	RWY 16L or RWY 16R
		SRO 09	RWY 09	RWY 09

Proposed high-capacity day priorities

Priority	Name	Landing	Take-off
1	Segregated Mode 3	RWY 34L	RWY 34R
2	Segregated Mode 2	RWY 16R	RWY 16L
3	Mixed Mode 34	RWY 34R and RWY 34L	RWY 34R and RWY 34L
4	Mixed Mode 16	RWY 16L and RWY 16R	RWY 16L and RWY 16R

Proposed night priorities (2300 to 0600)

Priority	Name	Landing	Take-off
1	SODPROPS	RWY 16R	RWY 34R
2	Cross Runway 1	RWY 16L	RWY 27
3	Cross Runway 2	RWY 27	RWY 27 and RWY 34R
4	SRO 27	RWY 27	RWY 27
	SRO 34R	RWY 34R	RWY 34R
	SRO 16L	RWY 16L	RWY 16L
	SRO 09	RWY 09	RWY 09

PRIORITY 1		PRIORITY 2		PRIORITY 3		PRIORITY 4	
CROSS RUNWAY 01 	CROSS RUNWAY 02 	CROSS RUNWAY 03 	SEGREGATED RUNWAY 02 	SEGREGATED RUNWAY 01 	SEGREGATED RUNWAY 03 	SEGREGATED RUNWAY 04 	
SEGREGATED RUNWAY 03 	SEGREGATED RUNWAY 02 	MIXED MODE RUNWAY 34 					
SODPROPS 	CROSS RUNWAY 01 	CROSS RUNWAY 02 			SINGLE RUNWAY 09 	SINGLE RUNWAY 16 	
				SINGLE RUNWAY 27 	SINGLE RUNWAY 34 		

4.6. Melbourne Mode forecasts

The following section outlines forecast runway mode usage, represented as the percentage of total aircraft movements in each mode over a period of one year. This approach will enable comparison of actual against forecast usage over a reporting year and will provide a clear indication of how modes have been implemented and how effectively noise has been shared. A $\pm 20\%$ tolerance has been applied to forecast usage, based on historical operational data, to account for variability driven by weather conditions and operational requirements.

Mode	Implementation	+5 years	2047
Cross Runway 1 (CR1)	23% – 36%	12% – 19%	4% – 7%
Cross Runway 2 (CR2)	7% – 11%	4% – 7%	2% – 5%
Cross Runway 3 (CR3)	2% – 5%	1% – 2%	0% – 1%
Segregated Mode 1 (SM1)	4% – 7%	1% – 3%	3% – 6%
Segregated Mode 2 (SM2)	6% – 11%	7% – 12%	4% – 7%
Segregated Mode 3 (SM3)	12% – 20%	10% – 16%	4% – 7%
Segregated Mode 4 (SM4)	1% – 2%	0% – 1%	1% – 3%
Mixed Mode 16	5% – 8%	16% – 25%	25% – 38%
Mixed Mode 34	11% – 17%	21% – 32%	29% – 45%
Single Runway Mode RWY 09 (SRO09)	0% – 1%	0% – 1%	0% – 1%
Single Runway Mode RWY 16L (SRO16L)	0% – 1%	0% – 1%	0% – 1%
Single Runway Mode RWY 27 (SRO27)	2% – 5%	2% – 4%	2% – 4%
Single Runway Mode RWY 34R (SRO34R)	0% – 1%	0% – 1%	0% – 1%
SODPROPS (Simultaneous Opposite Direction Parallel Runway Operations)	1% – 3%	1% – 3%	1% – 2%

The Melbourne runway mode forecasts show a progressive increase in north–south (parallel) runway usage as demand grows towards 2047. As traffic volumes increase, opportunities to use cross-runway modes reduce, as longer periods of high demand require Melbourne to operate in higher-capacity north–south configurations for extended periods.

These periods are primarily accommodated by Segregated Modes 2 and 3, together with Mixed Modes 16 and 34. Cross-runway modes will continue to form part of Melbourne's operating mode suite, particularly during periods of lower demand and when conditions allow. However, their overall use is expected to reduce as traffic grows and demand for the parallel runway system increases.

This shift towards greater parallel runway use also changes the interaction between Melbourne and Essendon Fields operations. In particular, longer periods of north–south operations may affect the availability of some Essendon Fields runway modes. These operational dependencies and their implications for both airports will be assessed further as the preferred airspace concept is developed.

5. Essendon Fields Airport and associated airspace

The interaction between Melbourne Airport and Essendon Fields Airport operations remains an important consideration in the ongoing development of the airspace concept. The proposed Melbourne Airport runway modes and associated arrival and departure flows have the potential to influence how operations at the two airports interact within the shared airspace environment.

5.1. Current runway mode priorities and usage

Preferred runway use at Essendon Airport is an important component of the airport's noise management framework and is closely linked to the operating configuration at Melbourne Airport. The preferred runway arrangements seek to direct aircraft to nominated runways where operationally practicable, while recognising the constraints associated with operating within the shared Melbourne Basin airspace.

Melbourne Airport operations typically take priority when determining the available operating configuration. As a result, runway availability and selection at Essendon can be influenced by the runway mode and associated arrival and departure flows in use at Melbourne. This operational dependency is particularly relevant where flight paths from the two airports interact or where separation requirements limit the simultaneous use of particular runway configurations.

During the daytime period (6:00 am–11:00 pm), Essendon preferentially uses RWY 26 and RWY 17 for arrivals and RWY 26 and RWY 35 for departures, with RWY 08 available as a secondary option. The preferred runway arrangements are summarised in the following table.

Mode	% of use	Use of the non-nominated runway (% movements)			
		Arrivals		Departures	
RWY 26 Arrivals, RWY 17 Departures	45%	12%		8%	
		RWY17 11%	RWY35 1%	RWY08 4.6%	RWY26 3.5%
Single RWY 35	20%	6%		8%	
		RWY26 5.4%		RWY08 6.4%	RWY17 1.2%
Single RWY 17	16%	7%		5%	
		RWY26 6.5%		RWY08 3.5%	
Single RWY 26	11%	8%		16%	
		RWY35 7.6%		RWY17 8%	RWY08 5.8%
Single RWY 08	<1%	25%		30%	
RWY 35 Arrivals, RWY 08 Departures	<1%	32%		4%	
RWY 26 Arrivals, RWY 08 Departures	<1%	0%		0%	

Current Preferred runways (0600 to 2300)

Priority	Landing	Take-off
1	RWY 26 or 17	RWY 26 or RWY 35
2	RWY 35	RWY 17
3	RWY 08	RWY 08

Current Night preferred runways (2300 to 0600)

Priority	Landing	Take-off
1	RWY 17	RWY 35
2	RWY 26	RWY 26
3	RWY 35	RWY 17
4	RWY 08	RWY 08

5.2. Future mode usage (Indicative)

The following section outlines indicative runway use, represented as the percentage of total aircraft movements in each mode over a period of one year. A $\pm 20\%$ tolerance has been applied to forecast usage, based on historical operational data, to account for variability driven by weather conditions and operational requirements.

The table is indicative only, based on modelled forecast mode operations at Melbourne, and further technical discussions will refine the forecast into Essendon's Master Plan.

Mode	Current use	2031	2036	2047
RWY 26 Arrivals / RWY 17 Departures (26A 17D)	45.11%	28% - 44%	23%-35%	13% - 21%
Single RWY 35 (SRO35)	20.43%	23% - 36%	25% - 38%	30% - 46%
Single RWY 17 (SRO17)	15.92%	12% - 20%	16% - 26%	20% - 31%
Single RWY 26 (SRO26)	11.26%	8% - 14%	8% - 13%	8% - 12%
Tower Closed	6.64%	5% - 8%	5% - 8%	5% - 8%
RWY 35 Arrivals / RWY 08 Departures (35A 08D)	0.26%	0% - 1%	1% - 2%	1% - 3%
RWY 26 Arrivals / RWY 08 Departures (26A 08D)	0.17%	0% - 1%	0% - 1%	1% - 2%
Single RWY 08 (SRO08)	0.08%	0% - 1%	0% - 1%	0% - 1%
RWY 26 Arrivals / RWY 35 Departures (26A 35D)	0.06%	0% - 1%	0% - 1%	0% - 1%
RWY 35 Arrivals / RWY 17 Departures (35A 17D)	0.03%	0% - 1%	0% - 1%	0% - 1%
RWY 17 Arrivals / RWY 08 Departures (17A 08D)	0.01%	0% - 1%	0% - 1%	0% - 2%

At this stage, the operational dependencies between Melbourne and Essendon Fields have not been fully resolved. As Melbourne transitions to increased parallel runway activity, the availability and use of Essendon Fields Runway 26 is expected to reduce due to the interaction between Essendon operations and Melbourne arrival and departure flows. This may result in a corresponding increase in the use of Essendon Fields Runways 17/35 and Runway 08 departures, changing the distribution of aircraft movements and associated overflight across surrounding communities.

Further assessment will be undertaken to identify and quantify these operational dependencies, including the potential effect of Melbourne runway mode usage on the availability of Essendon Fields runway modes, airspace configuration, traffic flows, separation requirements and airport users. This work will also consider potential operational and airspace options to manage these interactions while maintaining safe and efficient operations across the Melbourne Basin.

The findings will inform the development and refinement of the preferred airspace concept. Potential impacts and options will be discussed with Essendon Fields Airport,

aircraft operators, Airservices Australia and other affected stakeholders before the design is finalised.

Accordingly, the Phase 2 concept should be considered a point-in-time representation. The future Melbourne–Essendon Fields operational interface, including the potential change in use of Runways 08/26 and 17/35 at Essendon Fields, remains subject to further assessment and stakeholder consultation.

6. Moorabbin Airport and associated training areas

The proposed airspace concept has been developed to minimise changes to operations at Moorabbin Airport wherever practicable.

While most existing procedures can be retained, some targeted changes are proposed to ensure ongoing compatibility with the future airspace design. In particular, the existing NDB approach procedure will require amendment to support its continued operation while maintaining safe and efficient integration with the wider Melbourne airspace environment.

Further assessment is required to understand the interaction between proposed airspace concepts, including any implications for airspace configuration, traffic flows and Flight Training Areas.

NDB Approach

The Moorabbin NDB approach is being reviewed in response to recent proposed changes to the surrounding controlled airspace. The current procedure brings arriving aircraft in on a track of 070° from Port Phillip Bay at 4,000FT, however it is proposed to reduce the lower limit of controlled airspace in this area to 3,500FT. To maintain the approach outside controlled airspace when outside 3NM Moorabbin, the draft revision proposes rotating the NDB approach within Port Phillip Bay so that it remains in an area where the lower limit of controlled airspace sits at 4,500FT.

The realignment is intended to preserve the containment of instrument traffic on the NDB approach while accommodating the reconfigured airspace boundaries in the region.

Further validation will be required to operationalise the revised NDB procedure and confirm its suitability within the future airspace and operating environment.

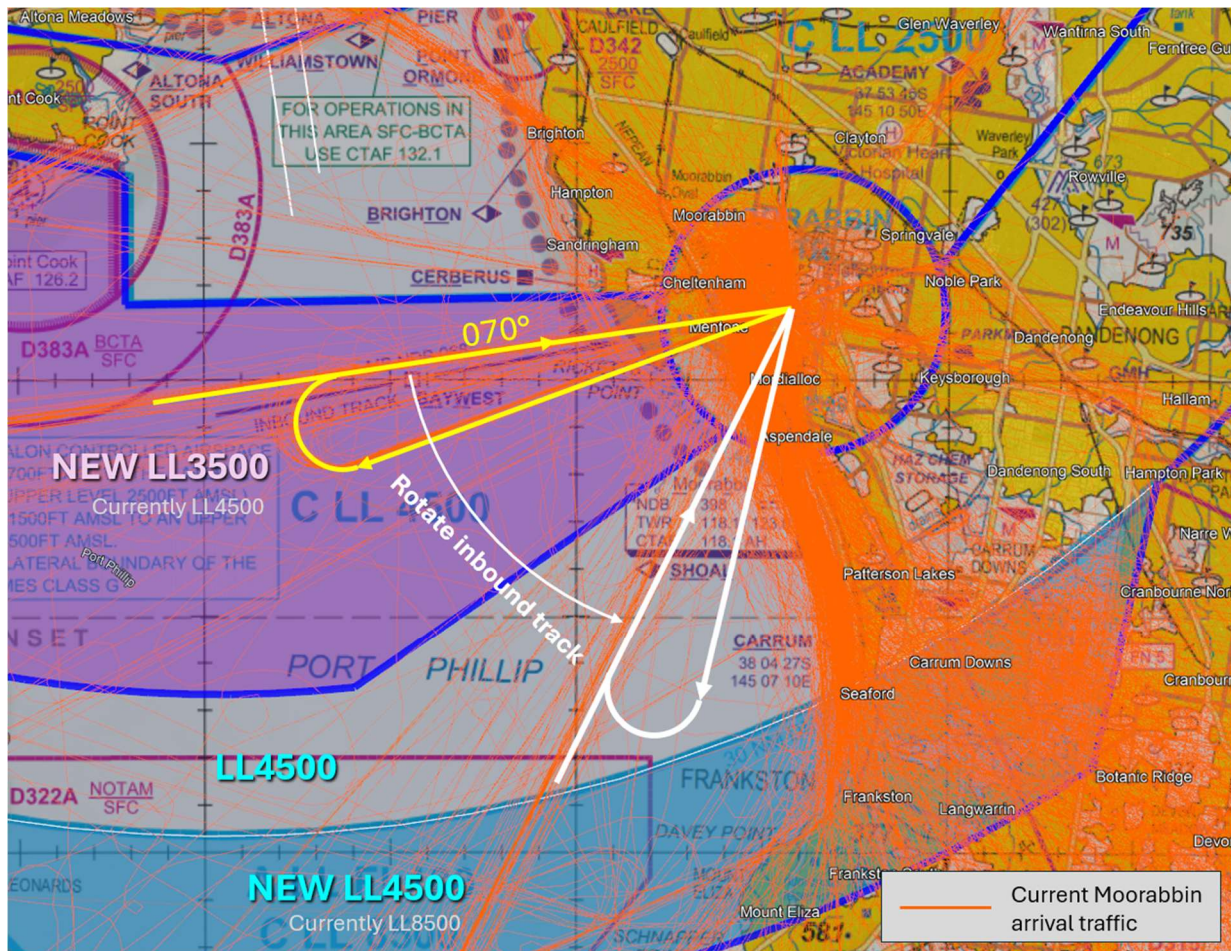


Figure 14: PHASE 2 – NDB alignment for Moorabbin (Proposal)

7. Avalon

Operations into Avalon are often complementary with the mode in use at Melbourne Airport due to the similar direction of the main runways. At this stage, the operational dependencies between Melbourne and Avalon have not been fully resolved.

Further assessment is required to understand the interaction between complementary and non-complementary runway modes, including any implications for airspace configuration, traffic flows and separation requirements.

Traffic management for RWY 36 at Avalon during Mixed Mode 34 operations at Melbourne has been considered and will form part of future iterations of the design.

For operations into Avalon, a reduction to the lower limit of controlled airspace in the Bay to contain Melbourne's flight paths may affect flights transiting across the bay to Moorabbin.

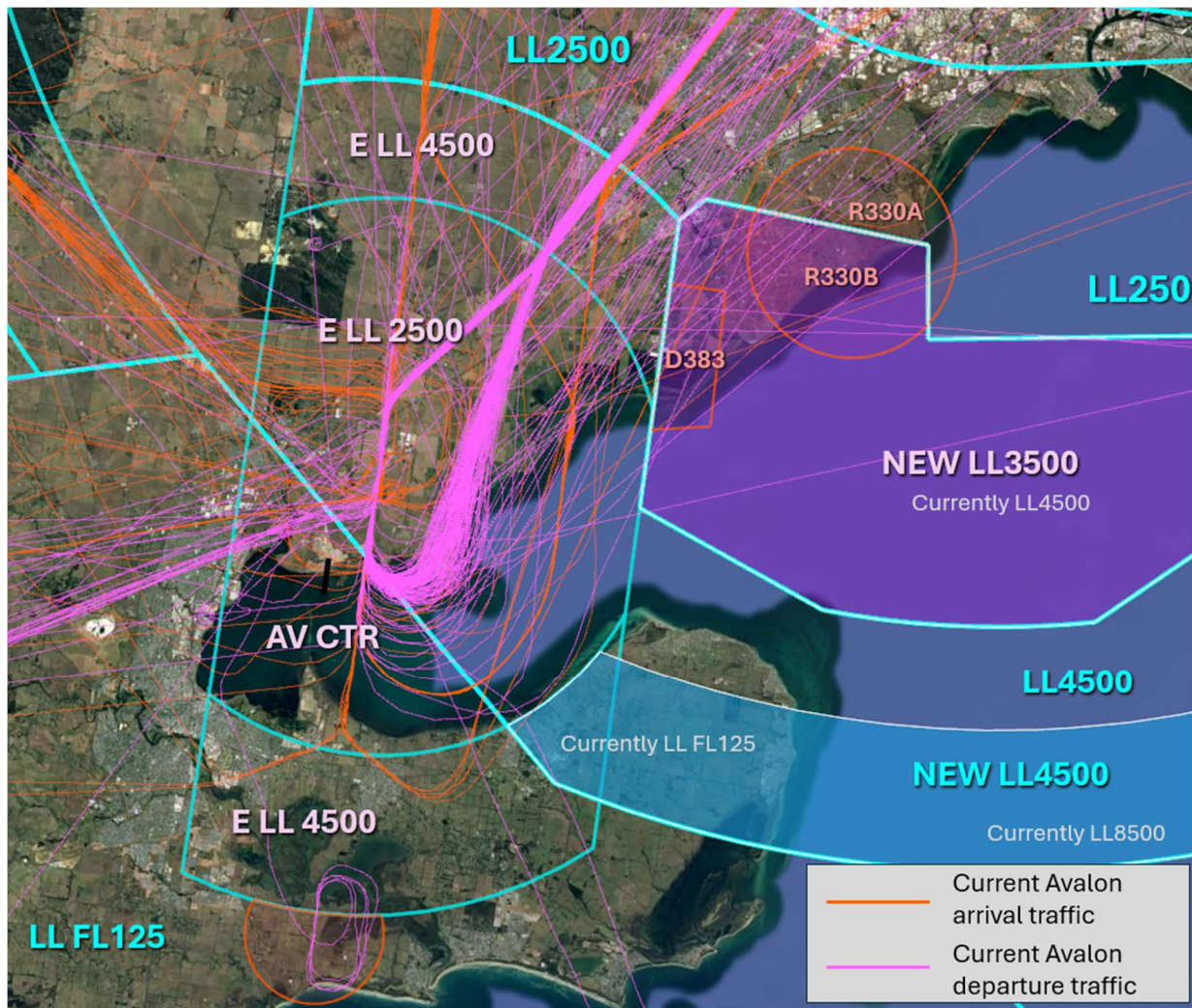


Figure 15: PHASE 2 - Avalon traffic (arrivals in orange, departures in magenta)

8. Point Cook

The Point Cook area is associated with Restricted Areas R330A (from surface to 2,500FT) and R330B (from surface to 4,500FT), which overlay the aerodrome within a 3NM radius of the aerodrome reference point (Figure 167). These restricted areas extend from the surface to the base of controlled airspace to support military flying activities and special events such as flying displays and are activated by NOTAM. Point Cook is also encircled by Danger Area D383A/B, which also extends from the surface up to the base of controlled airspace and is typically active during daylight hours, or as modified by NOTAM.

When R330A is inactive, VFR transit is available at 2,500FT within 3NM of Point Cook, or alternatively by remaining outside the 3NM boundary, subject to weather conditions. Proposed changes to accommodate Melbourne Airport's new third runway and associated independent parallel runway operations would see the lower limit of controlled airspace above R330B lowered from 4,500FT to 3,500FT.

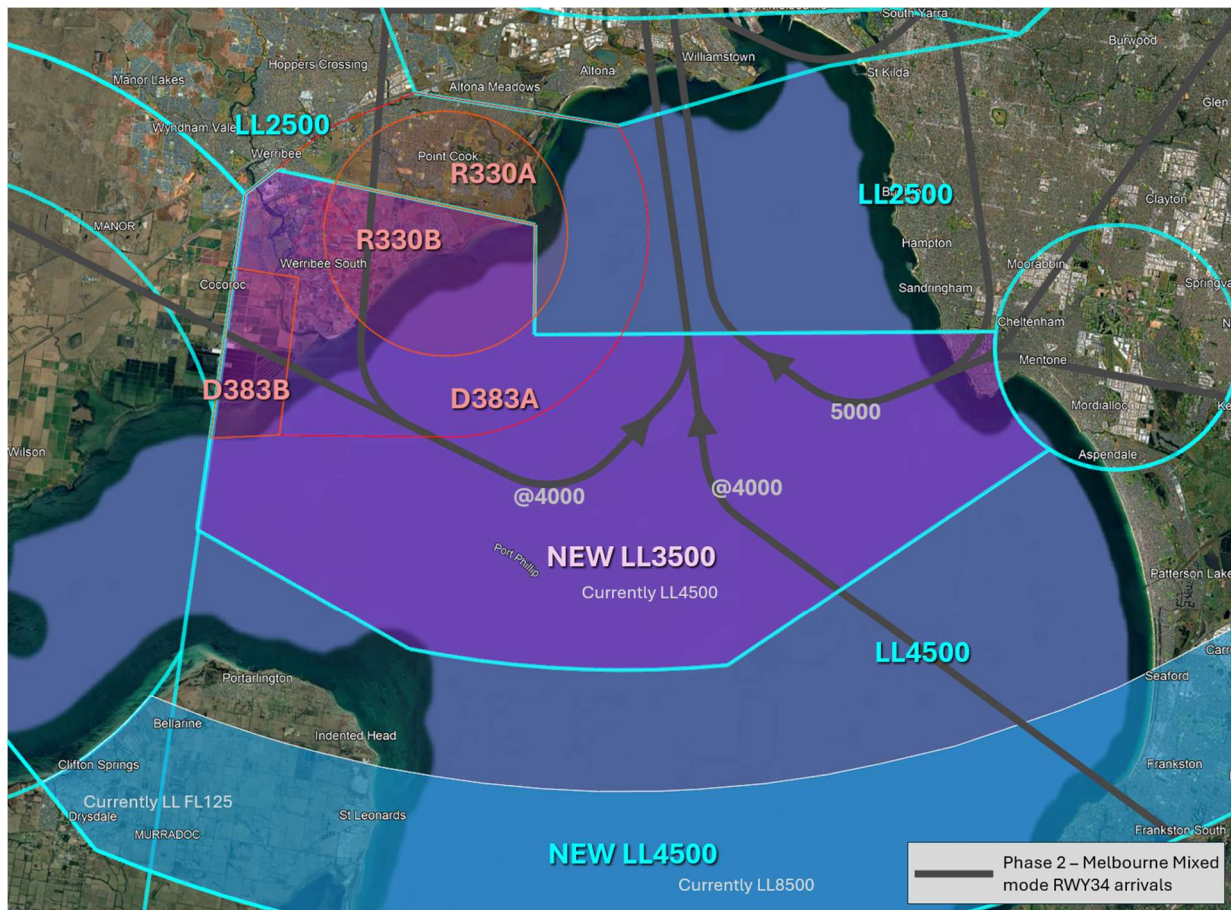


Figure 16: PHASE 2 - Point Cook restricted airspace

9. Parachuting in D342

Danger Area D342 is used to support parachuting operations near St Kilda in Melbourne. Aircraft servicing the drop zone typically depart Moorabbin and require a clearance to climb into controlled airspace to reach the drop altitude. D342 is managed by agreement with, and on request to, Melbourne Approach air traffic control. The updated operating modes introduced with the third runway may affect the conditions and scenarios under which D342 can be safely used.

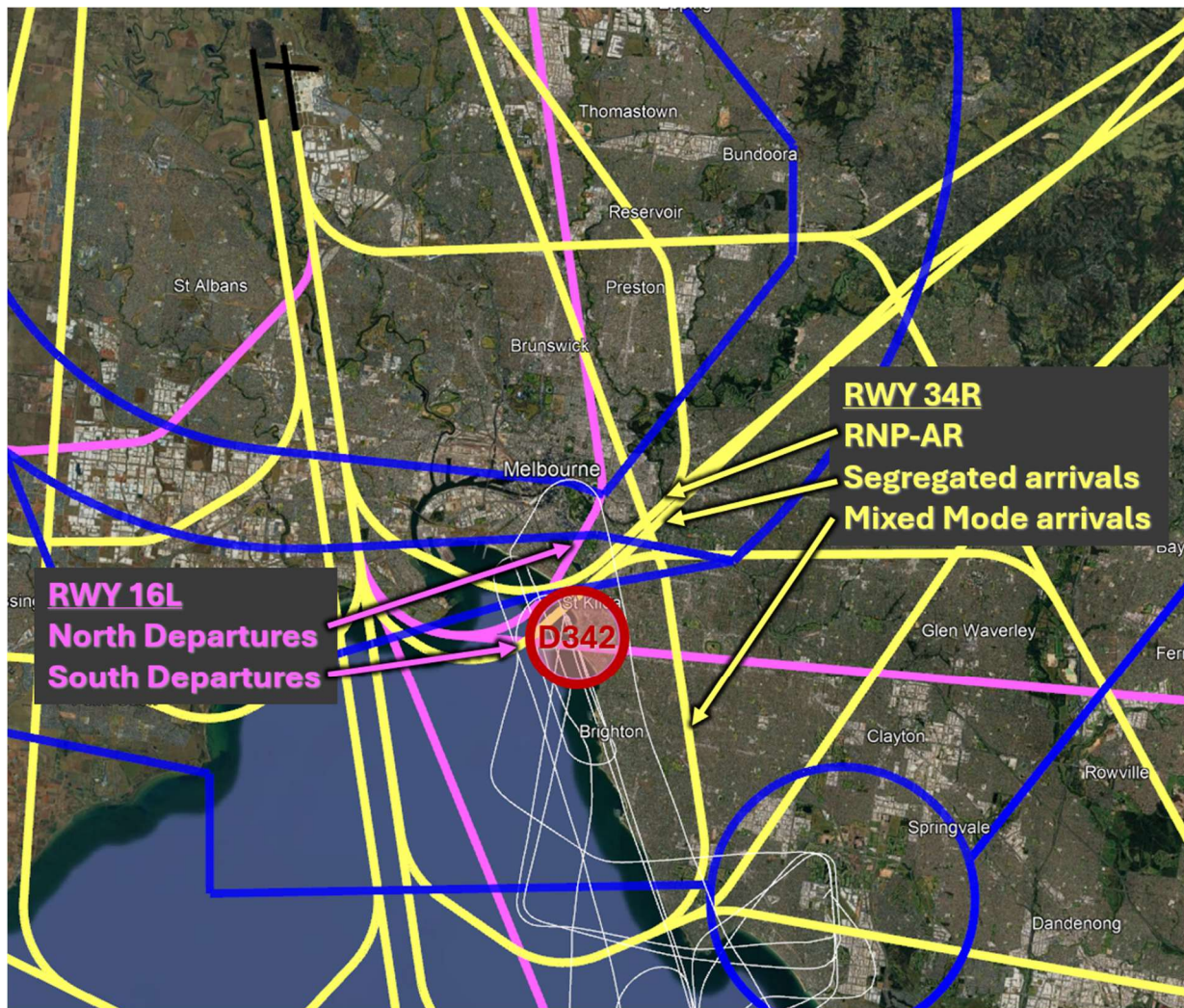


Figure 17: PHASE 2 – Arrivals and Departures shown in the vicinity of D342

10. Summary

This Phase 2 engagement reflects the direct influence of industry feedback received during Phase 1 consultation.

Stakeholders are invited to review the revised proposal and provide feedback on whether the updated design appropriately reflects operational requirements within the Melbourne Basin. Submissions are invited until 11th Dec 2026 and can be sent to info@traxasiapacific.com.au

Full information on Melbourne Airport's new third runway project, the associated Noise Sharing and Airspace Concept Plan, and for how you can be involved in the engagement sessions, visit the Melbourne Airport Major Projects Hub through the link below.

[Melbourne Airport](#)
[Major Projects Hub](#)
[Aviation Industry](#)

