



Councillors and Parish Councillors
of Lightwater, Windlesham, Bagshot;
Mike Goodman, David Mansfield

BY EMAIL

25 September 2019

Dear Councillors and Parish Councillors cc: MP Surrey Heath

Heathrow's Presentation Friday 6th September

Just 6 months ago, about 200 residents attended a similar meeting with Heathrow in the Briars Centre. The low attendance at the above meeting was due to the very short notice and because residents have become disillusioned by the continuing failure of our MP and Conservative councillors to represent them.

There were many relevant facts which Heathrow omitted to tell us. It is already by far the noisiest airport in Europe. Another 700 flights a day (equivalent to current Gatwick Airport operations) will undoubtedly further damage the environment in many ways.

A 3-runway operation is much more complicated than a 2-runway operation. It will require strict adherence to totally new Performance Based Navigation flightpaths for the 2000 daily air movements.

What this means for residents unfortunate enough to be under one of the new flightpaths is a concentrated stream of aircraft overhead which our own CAA has termed 'noise sewers'. Increasing the **frequency of disturbance** has a significant detrimental effect on people's ability to tolerate noise.

Heathrow has again failed to show where the new flightpaths will be but claims there will be less noise. Surely 50% more flights mean 50% more noise? Their contestable claim that fewer people will be affected means Heathrow knows exactly where the new flightpaths will be and has chosen not to show them.

It is true that in recent years – because of severe criticism – Heathrow has attempted to reduce the noise impact of its operations on communities. These initiatives will only be truly effective when the jet engine is superseded by an as yet undiscovered technology. The relatively new A380 was recently classed as the noisiest aircraft and will be around for another 30 years, the approximate life of a passenger aircraft.

Jane Dawes spoke about Heathrow becoming carbon neutral. This is a gross distortion of the truth. Only 3% of Heathrow's emissions are attributable to surface operations so using electric vehicles only provides a small improvement. The remaining 97% is pumped into the atmosphere by aircraft. Heathrow is already the biggest UK producer of CO² and we, as a nation, already have the most flights per capita in the world.

Emissions from International flight departures are shamefully not yet included in a nation's carbon footprint and due to a 1944 agreement there is still no tax on aviation fuel.

Jane also spoke of electric aircraft in the context of Heathrow operations. It is true that small electric aircraft carrying a few passengers a few hundred miles are possible through battery

power. Battery power would need to be 187 times stronger i.e. an increase of 18,700% to power an international airliner! So was she talking about an undiscovered technology such as clean hydrogen power from water?

The real problem for international aviation is that it is dependent on fossil fuels to provide the power necessary to get airliners into the sky. There are no alternative fuel sources. Air travel already accounts for 9% of UK emissions and is set to increase. There is no evidence that the carbon offsetting and biofuels she mentioned will have any significant impact.

There are better alternatives to an immensely destructive scheme (761 houses will be demolished and a further 5,500 in the Wider Property Zone could become unusable) which compromises the 2018 recommendations by the Government's Committee on Climate Change (CCC).

Why Heathrow's location is relevant

The Heathrow site was not purpose-built for passenger aircraft operations. Its two main runways were extended during World War II to enable Lancaster bomber take-offs and landings. When it was handed back to Civil Aviation, flying was available only to the very rich. No-one could have predicted how much this industry would grow and how successful the jet engine would be.

Many countries such as France and Japan have successfully transferred airport operations away from urban locations in their capital city. This is important because damage by noise and pollution from major airports is now acknowledged to be very significant. Heathrow said pollution from take-offs and landings did not affect local residents. This is untrue. There is now compelling evidence that people living downwind of major airports are damaged by Ultra Fine Particles from aircraft engines.

Surrounded by densely populated areas, Heathrow is in the worst possible location for a modern airport. If it was a greenfield site, planning permission for 280,000 flights each year (i.e. 3rd runway scheme – 700 flights per day) would **not** be granted because of its location. So why is it even being considered as an option?

Heathrow development history has been ignored

When approval was given in 1979 for Terminal 4 the Planning Inspector reported that the noise climate around Heathrow was "unacceptable in civilised society". He recommended that it be built only if it was the last significant expansion of Heathrow. A year later the government effectively ruled out expansion by limiting flights to 275,000 per year.

But this did not stop further development. When planning approval for Terminal 5 was given, it was on the understanding that flights would be capped at 480,000 per year and there would be no further expansion because of its location.

The brief for additional runway capacity given to the now discredited Airports Commission (AC) by the last Coalition government had Heathrow stamped all over it. The AC (led by a man with known connections to Heathrow) and the former Transport Secretary chose to ignore earlier recommendations by sponsoring the current project taking Air Traffic Movements up to 756,000 flights per year.

3rd runway project summary

Economic Benefits

The AC said there would be a £211 billion benefit over 60 years. The DfT's updated Appraisal Report shows the NPV (Net Present Value) a metric including all benefits and

costs to be just £3.3 billion to minus £ 2.2 billion over the same period. Any development cost overrun will produce negative benefits.

Finance

Heathrow's gearing is already 87%. Its ability to finance the project is very much in doubt.

Noise

1)The Transport Select Committee concludes an additional 323,684 people will be newly affected by noise and 419,803 already affected will receive a **doubling** of flights overhead. 1,193,227 people will fall within the new 51 dBLAeq. The CAA workbook reveals 2.2 million people will experience an increase in noise by 2050. 460 schools around Heathrow are already exposed to aircraft noise above 54db which is above the threshold that impairs children's memory and learning ability. Noise modelling is based on indicative flightpaths because Heathrow has not provided new flight path details.

2)The CAA's noise metric (SoNA) does not comply with the World Health Organisation's modelling parameters and failed to include areas where noise had recently been introduced (see Teddington Action Group's website).

Air Pollution

Hillingdon already regularly breaches NO² legal limits. The Government admit that if expansion proceeds there is a **high risk** of not complying with legal limits

Connectivity Between UK Airports

The National Policy Statement forecast that growth at **non-London** airports between 2026 and 2050 would be reduced by the 3rd runway. The Transport Select Committee also concluded there would be 170,000 fewer flights from non-London airports if the 3rd runway is built. Heathrow's charges to passengers are **already** very expensive – approx. double Gatwick's – and mitigate against regional connectivity.

Impact of 3rd runway on residents close to the airport

A 3-runway operation necessitates totally new flightpaths. It will have a **massive** impact. Hundreds of thousands of people living near the airport will be **newly** affected by noise from the new flightpaths and 419,803 already affected will see a **doubling** of overhead flight numbers.

This month, Spelthorne Council withdrew its long-term unconditional support for the project. It will now only continue to support a 3rd runway and associated airport expansion if 16 conditions are met.

Impact on the 3 Villages

There is no doubt that the unannounced 2014 trials which caused considerable public distress and outrage were associated with potential 3rd runway operations. Many residents had chosen to live in the 3 Villages precisely because these locations were quiet being 4-5 miles to the west of the flight path and protected by regulations – *see attachment* – How noise from departing aircraft was deliberately introduced into previously quiet areas.

When the 3rd runway opens in 2026, any new PBN flightpaths near or over the 3 Villages will have devastating consequences for many residents. The effect of aircraft noise is more pronounced in quieter/ more rural areas compared to noisier urban, built up locations.

Those who support the 3rd runway scheme will also be supporting Heathrow's Early Growth proposals (IPA + extra 25,000 flights), which will almost certainly have dire consequences for residents in 2022. At the very least residents will want to know why support was given to

a scheme with negative benefits where the only beneficiaries are frequent flyers, foreign-owned airlines and a foreign-owned Heathrow which has paid only £24 million in corporation tax over the last decade.

Conclusion

Only one of the recommendations of the CCC has been adopted by the government. If all 25 were implemented the 3rd runway would not be built.

Even without the very real prospect of rapid climate change there are no good reasons for implementing this appallingly destructive project because:

- 1)The project offers little or no economic benefit based on NPV.
- 2)The project will have an immensely destructive impact on the local environment.

The UK already has the most flights per capita in the world. To curb demand an escalating frequent flyers tax should be levied against the 15% who take 70% of the flights.

In the light of all the information above, we urge Surrey Heath to reconsider its position.

Yours sincerely

Aircraft Noise 3 Villages campaign

* Please note the content in this section is a brief summary of information obtained from the No Third Runway Coalition website except where indicated. This organisation has conducted very thorough investigation and appraisal of the NPS and Heathrow's proposals.