



Rt Hon Michael Gove MP
House of Commons
London
SW1A 0AA

Surrey

By email

15 June 2018

Dear Mr Gove

With MPs likely to be asked to vote on plans to expand Heathrow shortly, there are a number of areas which remain unclear and a clarification of your specific position on these is appreciated. Amongst the many concerns insufficiently addressed, the main areas are:

ENVIRONMENT

- Please advise what policies the Government (and your Department in particular) needs to introduce to ensure that expansion at Heathrow airport does not result in further increases and continued breaches of legal limits on air quality.
- Have you, or Ministers or officials of your Department met with the Department for Transport and Heathrow Airport Limited to discuss air pollution and what specific actions are to be undertaken as a result?
- Evidence illustrating the reasons contributing to the increase in noise since 2014 which many of your constituents now face on a daily basis has failed to be addressed by the aviation industry (lowering of aircraft heights, concentrated flying patterns etc). In 4 years of discussion with the HCNF, not a single action has been taken by the industry to improve noise. It is already a disgrace that the DfT can 'account' for the cost of increased health impacts of an expanded Heathrow and that Parliament's Environmental Audit Committee issued a damning report on the health and environmental impacts that will put more pressure on the overloaded NHS. If Heathrow has convinced you it can operate more quietly, why have you not insisted they demonstrate this ability now as a precondition to considering expansion?

Please explain specifically how you consider a further 260,000 aircraft every year will not adversely impact the lives of those beneath.

- With responsibility for the Environment in particular, please advise how you are reconciling the view of the Committee on Climate Change's (CCC) position that a limit of 37.5Mt is all that can be accommodated to be compatible with the Climate Change Act – and the DfT's prediction that emissions will reach 47Mt by 2050 if Heathrow is expanded.

SURFACE ACCESS

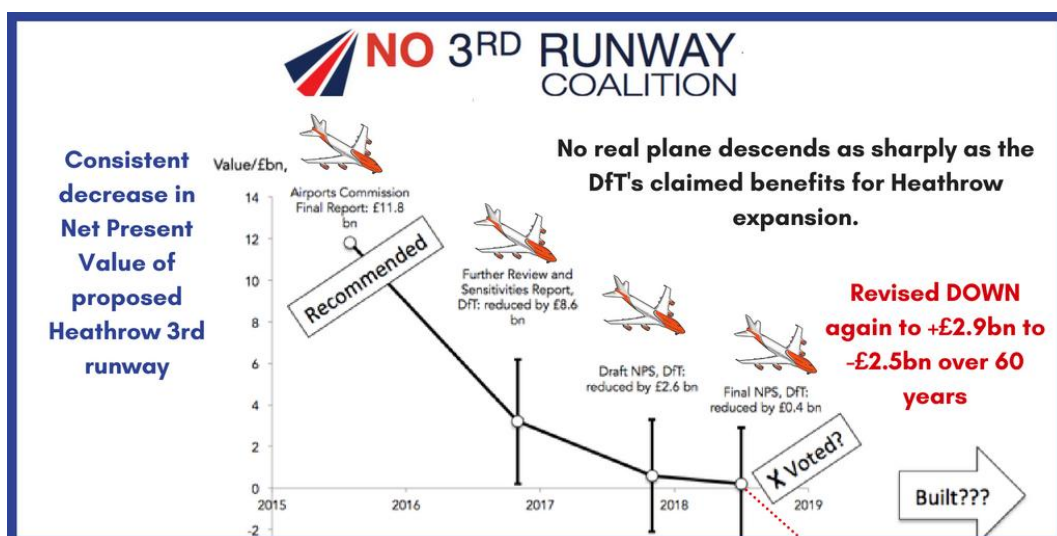
- Heathrow assumes the majority of future passengers will arrive by public transport. Aside from that being totally impractical for the vast majority of travellers, why then is Heathrow continuing to invest in parking? If the Government believes Heathrow's estimate, who is legally bound to pay for improved public transport links required? Please provide exact details of costs and who will be legally responsible for meeting those costs including the cost of overrun which these projects typically experience (HS2 estimates, Olympics as just two examples).

FINANCE

- What is the total liability to the public purse of the proposal to expand Heathrow Airport? Justine Greening has rightly exposed wording in the 'Statement of Principles' which showed Heathrow had a right to cost recovery in the event of an alternative preferred scheme or the Government withdraws support for Heathrow expansion. Leaving aside the ineptitude of the DfT for allowing such wording to be agreed, what guarantee can you give your constituents that as taxpayers, they will not be picking up the bill?

To be clear, the taxpayer is now likely to underwrite costs whether Heathrow expands or not, at a time when front line services are being cut and people are being asked to tighten their belts!

- As the DfT yet again revises down the Net Present Value (NPV) by a further £2.5 billion, this project is left with a NPV of only £2.9 billion. When this negligible economic benefit is compared against the many very serious negative impacts such as the health of the population adversely affected by Heathrow's current as well as future operation, a massive environment impact, the cost to the taxpayer as well as the impact on regional economies, please explain your arguments to support why this project is justified and warrants your backing.





NIGHT FLIGHTS

Despite the growing evidence that people require 8 hours unbroken sleep, Mr Grayling confirmed there would only be a six-and-a-half-hour period at night when flights would be banned, to protect residents living in the flight path. Aircraft noise until past 11pm and from as early as 5.30 renders the recommended 8 hours sleep unattainable. Thousands of families robbed of any choice in the matter. In the face of growing evidence of the severe detrimental health consequences of disturbed sleep or sleep loss, please explain why you consider the commercial interests of a private company outweigh the health of the population whose interests and well being you have been elected to protect.

Finally, there is the question of trust. Heathrow has a disgraceful record of broken promises, no application for another runway if T5 approved is an all too recent example. Disingenuous CEOs being trotted out to make public apologies for the promises of their predecessors. These individuals represent the company which employs them, not their personal beliefs and as such, the company itself should be held to account. Heathrow is already trying to back pedal on commitments to a night time ban. Is the Government so naive that it considers the public will not oppose any move which results in yet further deterioration to its health and well being, as well as being asked to foot the bill to fund the hubris and greed of a commercial company? A privately owned entity which does not have the financial resources to fund its own commercial ambitions so is instead getting the Department for Transport to do its bidding. Meanwhile, the aviation industry continues to run amok in plain sight, flying as and when it pleases resulting in noise misery for families across huge swathes of the South East.

In any other walk of life, anti-social or polluting behaviour is penalised to alter behaviour and protect society from individual acts or corporate excesses. Politicians appear to prefer to learn the hard way, consistently ignoring public concerns and evidence, usually at great cost to the electorate. The public has no appetite for this state of affairs to continue and will challenge any deeply flawed and myopic decision to expand Heathrow.

I do not wish these questions to be passed to another Department to respond, I can use the services of Royal Mail to solicit their views. It is **your** views I seek as after all, it will be **your** vote which will determine whether the folly to pursue expansion is permitted to continue to the Courts where it will rightly be defeated once again.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Rosalie James'.

Rosalie James

