

The Coalition

Set up in March 2017 bringing together a number of community groups who oppose expansion at Heathrow. Our [members](#) include residents, NGOs, environmental campaigners and local authorities. The Coalition asserts that there are number of omissions from the Government's draft National Policy Statement (NPS) for Airports and this briefing sets out our key concerns.

Third Runway Impacts

- 28% of all people across Europe affected by aircraft noise are those under Heathrow flight paths. A third runway would see the number of people affected leap from 725,000 to 1.1 million.
- **3,750 homes** will have to be either demolished or rendered unliveable to make way for a third runway.
- The **draft NPS does not indicate where flight paths** will be. This will not be known until 2018/19 at the earliest and MPs may be asked to vote on the NPS before this information is in the public domain. For local communities this is unacceptable and calls into question the legitimacy of the consultation.
- A 3rd runway will provide no more than seven additional long-haul destinations by 2030, and twelve by 2050. In the meantime, without intervention, domestic airport connections to Heathrow could reduce from seven to only four.

Economic Cost

- The Airport Commission (AC) report estimated that £147bn of total economic benefit could be delivered by a third runway at Heathrow. The Government based its support for expansion on this report.
- In October 2016 the DfT revised down the estimate of total economic benefit to £61bn. It can be shown that even this revised figure is misleading because it is a measurement of 'gross' economic benefit that does not include the actual economic and financial costs of the proposal.
- The DfT's Further Review and Sensitivities Report concludes that the Net Present Value of the Heathrow proposal to be just £0.2bn to £6.1bn over a 60-year period.¹ This calculation does not take into account the full cost of meeting climate targets².
- The report also revised down the wider economic impacts to just £2.0 to £3.9bn. This is because many of the benefits have already been claimed as passenger benefits and therefore cannot be counted again. The report indicates that an overrun in Heathrow's costs of just one per cent could be enough to negate the overall benefits of the scheme.
- It is not clear that Heathrow's promises to local communities in terms of mitigation, the regions in terms of connectivity and to the country in terms of jobs remain the same given the reduction in wider economic benefit.
- The draft NPS has not sufficiently addressed the considerable legal, environmental, financial, planning and construction risks facing the Heathrow Northwest Runway, which are likely to result in the economic benefits being delayed, not materialising as assumed or not materialising at all.
- It is worth noting that 14,000 long-term jobs were promised when Terminal 5 opened in 2008, yet Heathrow have failed to provide 2016 figures to show if any were actually created.

¹ https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/562160/further-review-and-sensitivities-report-airport-capacity-in-the-south-east.pdf, p.9

² <https://www.theccc.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/11/CCC-letter-to-Rt-Hon-Greg-Clark-on-UK-airport-expansion-November-2016.pdf>

- It is still unclear what the cost of the road and rail infrastructure needed to serve a third runway will be. The Airports Commission put the cost at £5-£6bn, whilst the DfT suggest it will be around £3.5bn and TfL estimates it could be £15-£18bn. Heathrow told the Environmental Audit Committee that it would contribute only £1.1bn. Without this investment it will not be possible for Heathrow to meet its air quality commitments.

Air Pollution

- The Environmental Audit Committee said in its February 2017 report that the Government is still not doing enough to mitigate the air pollution impacts of the planned new runway at Heathrow.
- To meet the air pollution limits, there will need to be a significant move away from diesel vehicles on the surrounding roads, no increased airport-related traffic on the roads, and a possible congestion charge in the area. It is not clear how this would operate in practice.
- A third runway at Heathrow will result in at least 250,000 more planes using the airport. It seems likely that the only way not to exceed legal limits on air pollution will be to limit the number of planes using the third runway.

Climate Change

- Growth would need to be curbed at all other UK airports if a third runway were to be built at Heathrow in order for the UK not to breach the maximum level that would be consistent with the Climate Change Act 2008. The Committee on Climate Change (CCC) estimate that the number of flights in the UK should grow by no more than 55% by 2050 if the Government is to meet its overall targets to reduce CO2 emissions.
- If flights numbers grow as predicted at all UK airports, the targets would only be met if demand were deliberately restricted through a carbon tax or a tough emissions trading scheme with a carbon price of over £600 per tonne³. Neither policy initiative is on the horizon.
- The limit recommended by the CCC is already generous to aviation, as by 2050 emissions from aviation would constitute around 25% of total UK emissions. Consequently, there would need to be serious reductions and restrictions in other sectors of the economy. This would include the complete decarbonisation of the transport sector and significant moves to renewable and clean energy production. CCC has said that allowing aviation emissions to overshoot the limit (as would be inevitable with a new runway) would imply other sectors making cuts beyond the limit of what is feasible⁴.
- The Environmental Audit Committee has repeatedly asked the government what it is intending to do, to ensure that the CCC's advice is taken. The DfT repeatedly refuses to answer this question, even as recently as 28 April 2017.⁵

Conclusion

Ultimately, MPs will be voting on the Airports NPS without knowing what the cost of the new runway could be to the taxpayer. The proposals for expansion at Heathrow are not fully costed, the impacts not properly assessed and the flight paths of the planes not known. There should be a full debate on whether this public money might be better spent on infrastructure elsewhere in the country.

³ https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/374660/AC05-forecasts.pdf#page=219 OR <http://www.aef.org.uk/uploads/The-MBM-the-Climate-Change-Act-and-the-emissions-policy-gap.pdf>

⁴ https://www.theccc.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2013/07/CCC_letter_aviation_commission.pdf

⁵ <https://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201617/cmselect/cmenvaud/560/56002.htm>