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It's All About Boris

by John Stewart, Chair of AirportWatch

Boris may not get his island – certainly for the foreseeable future – but he could be decisive in where a new runway will go. The Airports Commission has now dropped the Estuary option. But possibly what will be more decisive in the airports debate is Boris Johnson's bid to become the next MP for Uxbridge. It's on the cards he will do so. If he does, his influence on the Heathrow decision will be huge. I think it is inconceivable that he will do a U-turn on the third runway. It means that the next Government will have the blond bombshell breathing down its neck from his seat just up the road from Heathrow when it makes a decision about future runways. Throw in implacable opposition from the likes of Zac Goldsmith and Justine Greening, Uxbridge Boris would make it virtually impossible for a Conservative Government to give the green light to a third runway. He would have less influence over a Labour-led Government but clearly would be a consideration for them too.

It will be fascinating in the coming months to see whether Boris edges towards Gatwick as a solution to his runway conundrum. He may need to do so for his own political expediency, even having rightly rubbished the Gatwick option in the past, because the voters of Uxbridge are clear: they don't want a third runway but, equally, they don't want the closure of Heathrow that an estuary airport would entail. There are indications that, in the longer-term, neither Boris nor sections of the Conservative Party have given up on an Estuary-type solution. The Daily Telegraph recently reminded us that "Mr Johnson has stressed that he won't give up on the idea of a new hub airport to the east of London, even if the Airports Commission rules in favour of either Heathrow or Gatwick." At a press conference in May he said: "I will respect the findings of the Davies Commission but I will not abide by them."

We don't know how things will develop over the next two or three years but, despite Davies' decision about the Estuary, Boris is still very much in the game.

Airports Commission gives comprehensive & unambiguous decision not to short-list a Thames estuary airport

As widely leaked beforehand, on 2nd September the Airports Commission publicly rejected short listing an inner Thames estuary airport scheme, for further consideration. The Commission had intended not to short



list the scheme back in December 2013 but were persuaded to give the concept further thought. The wording in the Commission's report is unambiguous. They say, to take a few direct quotes: "we are not persuaded that a very large airport in the Thames Estuary is the right answer to London's and the UK's connectivity needs." Also: "To roll the dice on a very risky project, where delays and overruns are highly likely, would be reckless."

They continue: "...Commission has concluded that the proposal for a new ITE airport has substantial disadvantages that collectively outweigh its potential benefits. Cumulative obstacles to delivery, high costs and uncertainties in relation to its economic and strategic benefits contribute to an assessment that an ITE

airport proposal does not represent a credible option for short-listing.” Tellingly, they also say “...if UK carbon emissions are to be kept within the overall cap, concentrating a very high number of flights in one location could limit the scope for growth elsewhere and hence reduce the overall diversity of the UK airports system.” A resounding NO. <http://www.airportwatch.org.uk/?p=22830>
The report is at <http://tinyurl.com/no-to-estuary>

Just as a reminder of the long history of attempts to get an airport built in the Thames Estuary, this is summarised (with thanks to Andre Farrar of the RSPB) at http://www.airportwatch.org.uk/?page_id=307 The idea has been rejected about, on average, every 10 years since around 1946.

Boris Johnson: 3rd runway at Heathrow would be a ‘disaster’ – adamant on “need” for new estuary airport

Boris Johnson has rebuffed calls to back a 3rd runway, saying it would be a “disaster.” He said Heathrow’s plans were “desperately short-sighted” and “barbarically contemptuous of the rights of the population,” whose health he said would be put at risk. A few days earlier, Heathrow’s new chief executive John Holland-Kaye has written him an open letter asking him to back a 3rd Heathrow runway, if the Commission rejected the estuary – quite an “ask” bearing in mind Boris’ forceful opposition to it in the past.

Writing in the Daily Telegraph Boris said: “We need scale and ambition to compete, and Heathrow is no answer.” He said a Heathrow 3rd runway would be “a disaster for hundreds of thousands of people living under new flight paths, who currently have no idea of the peril.....Heathrow is already by far the noisiest airport in Europe, about a hundred times worse than Paris. A 3rd runway will mean there are more than a million people in the city affected by noise pollution of more than 55db.” He has also described Heathrow as “a dead duck” and said he will “fight to my dying breath” to halt a 3rd runway.

Boris also opined that: “Gatwick can’t be the long-term solution, because you don’t get the hub capacity.”



Whatever Boris decides to do, back or not back, it will be certain that forests, or large woodlands will be cut down to provide the column inches that will be devoted to speculation, punditry, political machinations and self-promotion that will give the blonde bombshell the publicity he wants. 1.9.2014
<http://www.airportwatch.org.uk/?p=22808>

Plans to fit a new south east runway within UK climate targets are based on a ‘wing & a prayer’ – rather than reality

Two new reports have been produced, which seriously challenge the Airports Commission's claim that it is possible to build a new runway and still meet the UK Government's climate change targets. The reports also argue that building a new runway in the south east would worsen the north/south divide, as growth at the regional airports would need to be constrained in order to ensure CO2 emissions from aviation fall to their 2005 levels by 2050.

The RSPB report, "*Aviation, climate change and sharing the load*" and the WWF report, by the AEF "*The implications of a new South East runway on regional airport expansion*" demonstrate that if a new runway is built, commitments under the Climate Change Act cannot be met unless significant constraints are imposed on the level of activity at regional airports.

RSPB report at <http://tinyurl.com/sharing-the-load> AEF/WWF report at <http://tinyurl.com/regional-airports>
Both reports illustrate that if aviation emissions were allowed to soar, that would impose costs on the rest of the economy rising to perhaps between £1 billion and £8.4 billion per year by 2050 as non-aviation

sectors would need to make even deeper emissions cuts. The regulatory regime for aviation carbon emissions is still just aspirational. Contrary to the impression given by the government and the Airports Commission, the issue of climate in relation to airport expansion has not been resolved.

The AEF analysis found (based on DfT figures) that a new runway – wherever it is situated – would contribute approximately an additional 8.2 Mt of carbon emissions per year, making meeting the 37.5Mt target “effectively impossible.” The AEF study found that in order to build a new runway and still meet the 37.5 Mt target, air travel at regional airports would need to be reduced.

The study concluded: “Not only would this be politically very difficult to implement and have significant economic consequences, it would also run directly counter to the Government’s support for regional airport growth set out in the 2013 Aviation Policy Framework.” 15.7.2014

<http://www.airportwatch.org.uk/?p=22367>

Southampton University study shows air traffic growth would outpace CO2 reduction efforts unless demand is cut by higher air fares

Experts warn that cheap air travel needs to end if the air industry is to honour its pledges to reduce its carbon footprint. Airfares will need to increase by a third over the next 30 years if airlines are to cut their passenger numbers, in order to hit their 'carbon neutral' targets. The Southampton study shows that unless fares rise, the demand for air travel will rise continuously. Air fares have become 1.3 % cheaper every year, on average, since 1979.

The researchers estimate that air ticket prices need to increase by at least 1.4% per year, even if the airlines invest in more efficient aircraft and manage to introduce slightly lower-carbon fuels. The average air fare would need to rise (at 2013 prices) from £170 in 2013, to £195 in 2023, to £225 in 2033, and to £258 by 2043.

The growth in demand for flights will outpace fuel efficiency improvements if the annual increase in air passengers worldwide is around 4-5% per year. Though ICAO hopes to improve aircraft fuel efficiency by 2% per year up to 2050, it realises the higher growth in passenger numbers is causing a considerable net increase in aviation carbon emissions. IATA pledged, more realistically, to achieve annual improvements in aircraft fuel efficiency of 1.5% per year between 2009 and 2020. 8.8.2014

<http://www.airportwatch.org.uk/?p=22537>

Thousands of Londoners would hear a plane “every 90 seconds for 13 hours/day” if Heathrow 3rd runway is built

Heathrow knows it cannot get a 3rd runway unless it can somehow persuade people that there will be less noise from 50% more aircraft than there is today. In order to try and achieve this miraculous result, some massaging of figures is needed, and some clever use of statistics. In reality, it is likely that with three runways, tens of thousands of people in west London would lose half of their daily “noise-free” period (from runway alternation - switching runway at 3pm).



HACAN, the group campaigning against the noise impacts of Heathrow, and thus against Heathrow's expansion, say some areas would have planes passing overhead every 90 seconds for a “nightmarish” 13 hours per day. HACAN discovered the noise data “buried” in an appendix to one of Heathrow’s reports sent to the Airports Commission and “slipped out” before the

holidays. (Like the image here, not easy for non-experts to decipher.) It appears likely that residents under the southern flight path, including areas such as Richmond, would lose almost 4 hours of their 8 hour quiet period. People living under the current northern flight path would continue to get about 8 hours of respite but HACAN claim this would be spoiled for many because they would hear aircraft from one of the two other runways on either side of them. 5.8.2014 <http://www.airportwatch.org.uk/?p=22517>

Heathrow campaign, HACAN, won't be taking part in the consultation on noise compensation, for a 3rd runway

On 21st July Heathrow published a consultation on how it hopes to persuade thousands of people, who would be badly affected by increased aircraft noise from its operations, to accept money as compensation. It is offering £550 million, if it is allowed to build a 3rd runway, in various schemes. The £550 million is a one-off, not an annual sum. The aim is to buy off opposition. The existence of the consultation aims to convey the impression that a 3rd runway is inevitable, and that Heathrow is being stunningly generous. Neither is true.

HACAN has had numerous complaints from residents who are furious about the assumptions being made in the Heathrow consultation. They do not like being steamrollered into discussions about compensation for something they deeply oppose. HACAN will not be taking any part in the consultation, and not encouraging its members to do so. They feel the compensation discussion "puts the cart before the horse". Providing Heathrow with assistance in how best to win over residents, whose quality of life will be reduced by a new runway, is not in the interests of those overflown, not now nor in the future. 2.8.2014

<http://www.airportwatch.org.uk/?p=22496>



“Grow Heathrow” squatters in Sipson pledge ‘peaceful’ resistance to bailiffs, due to evict them

The remarkable "Grow Heathrow" squatter community, occupying land near Heathrow in protest at the airport's expansion, were expecting to be evicted by bailiffs on 15th August. Preparations were made to peacefully resist arrest. The press arrived in force, and the community got huge media coverage. There was no eviction. However, Grow Heathrow remains under threat of eviction, and bailiffs could arrive any day. Grow Heathrow would like to buy the land. However, the land owner wants the land back, perhaps for sale to Heathrow airport (their 3rd runway plans would make most of Sipson impossible to live in).



There are plans to non-violently resist eviction, by a range of non-violent means, including digging tunnels and people locking themselves onto items. In 2010 Grow Heathrow, which includes some 15 families, moved onto what was a privately owned derelict site. It had been a wasteland, and an area for anti-social activities. Grow Heathrow cleared rubbish from the site, and created a garden, as well as

being as self-sufficient in food as possible. They ran creative and artistic workshops, and a positive and productive community. More about Grow Heathrow <http://www.transitionheathrow.com/grow-heathrow>

Many local people in Sipson have been delighted to have Grow Heathrow as neighbours, rather than a derelict site. The local MP, John McDonnell said he "wholeheartedly" supported the activists. "These are people who not only helped us fight off the third runway, they've actually occupied a site which would have been the sixth terminal for the expanded Heathrow Airport." 15.8.2014

<http://www.airportwatch.org.uk/?p=22606>

Heathrow flight path changes / trial inflict more noise misery on Ascot area

Heathrow airport and NATS are experimenting with flight path changes and new technology systems for Heathrow flights. The aim is to reduce 'stacking' of aircraft waiting to land, and to speed up departure times, getting more planes in the air per hour - in order make the airport more efficient (or more

profitable). There is a series of trials, over a period of years from 2012 to 2017, advertised on Heathrow's website. They are to inform the London Airspace Management Programme (LAMP) consultation. One trial, for departures to the west, started on 28th August and will last till January 2015. 'Trial' is almost the wrong word. It will test how sharply aircraft are able to turn on take-off and how fast they can climb. The results will be factored into Heathrow's revision of flight paths that are required under the European 'SESAR' programme. The reality for people being over-flown is that there are now more aircraft passing over Ascot, Sunningdale and Sunninghill, and these planes are low (around 3,000 feet) and climbing. The gaps between planes are also shorter than before.

A petition has been set up by people in the Ascot area, to get the trial ended immediately.

<http://tinyurl.com/petition-ascot> The new noise barrage has created new fears in those areas of the impact of a 3rd runway. 1.9.2014 <http://www.airportwatch.org.uk/?p=22880>

Flight path change protest & petition also from Windlesham, Lightwater and Bagshot



In the 3 Villages area residents have been impacted both by the latest trials - that started on 28th August - as well as those which ended on 15th June. With local feelings running high, people in this began a campaign and have an online petition <http://tinyurl.com/3-villages-petition> with links from their website www.aircraftnoiselightwater.co.uk The petition says: "Flights are passing overhead, lower, louder and later than ever before disturbing all aspects of everyday life."

Flights continue as late as 11.30pm and as early as 6am - a period when a reasonable person expects the right to peace and quiet. Local residents are now opposed to any more expansion at Heathrow and call for an IMMEDIATE end to the flight path trial."

HACAN is taking a pro-active approach to the prospective flight path changes and will shortly be launching a major 'FAIR Flight Paths' Campaign. More details in the next bulletin.

"Scrap new flight paths," says GACC in their response to Gatwick's airspace consultation

Gatwick Airport's consultation on new flight paths ended on 16th August. GACC (the Gatwick Area Conservation Campaign, the well regarded main environmental group concerned with Gatwick, with nearly 100 Borough, District & Parish Councils plus environmental groups in the area as members) has submitted a powerful response. <http://tinyurl.com/gacc-response>

The consultation has been almost universally regarded as highly inadequate, giving no flight path detail, and GACC is therefore asking the CAA to declare it void. GACC is demanding that all the new routes should be scrapped. They are asking that Gatwick and NATS should issue a new joint consultation, with detailed maps, showing all proposed flight paths at Gatwick for arrivals and departures up to 10,000 feet.

GACC is also asking that the CAA should refuse permission for any new route outside existing NPRs until Gatwick agrees to a scheme for compensation. Where flight paths are now concentrated on a single narrow line GACC is calling for compensation to be given to people whose houses are devalued. According to Brendon Sewill: "The law says that, when a new motorway is built, people with houses nearby must receive fair compensation. The same should apply to new motorways in the sky."

GACC also comments that the consultation gives only half the picture because it excludes the new proposed point-merge system for arriving aircraft, and is therefore misleading. Also that there is no evidence that concentrated routes have any environmental advantage compared to dispersed routes: research is needed so that policy can be evidence based. 13.8.2014

<http://www.airportwatch.org.uk/?p=22569>

Highly critical responses to the Gatwick airspace consultation

The airspace consultation, launched on 23rd May has been deemed to be badly written and presented, and effectively almost impossible for ordinary people - unused to the jargon and the technicalities - to either understand or respond to. Many organisations, councils and MPs, have asked for the consultation to be considered void, due to its deficiencies, and for it to be re-done to include maps, showing all proposed flight paths at Gatwick for arrivals and departures up to 10,000 feet. These were not included before, making responses difficult.

There are links to some of the consultation responses sent in from local councils and parishes, representing their members. <http://www.airportwatch.org.uk/?p=22737>



All comment negatively on the quality of the consultation. One says: "The air travel industry appears to be in total denial of the collateral damage which would be caused by these proposals." The reactions of many local MPs in the area are also on the above link.

For example, **Francis Maude** commented: "What is intolerable is when fewer people are very intensively overflown, to the extreme detriment of their lives" (see below). **Greg Clark** urged Gatwick to "go back to the drawing board." **Paul Beresford** said: "It's quite a disaster. People who

bought houses under the previous flight path knew what they were buying. People who have bought under the new flight path did not know. the whole thing is totally unacceptable."

Francis Maude says it is intolerable for some people to be very intensively overflown, "to the extreme detriment of their lives"

Francis Maude, MP for Horsham, wrote that the ADNID trial has been almost six months of intense misery for many of his constituents. He has been liaising with the airport, the CAA, NATS and the Secretary of State for Transport on the trial and its impacts. Gatwick is aiming to increase potential take-offs at peak times from 55 to 58 per hour from its single runway, and to do this it claims to need more focused flight paths, allowed by better aircraft on-board navigation systems. Gatwick says it needs to use new NPR routes, rather than the established ones. Government policy is that the decision about new routes, which rests with the Secretary of State, will be based on reducing the numbers of people overflown, in a simple headcount exercise. But there are local circumstances which allow for other considerations - background noise, altitude above sea level - to be taken into account, and Francis says "this is our best hope of seeing off this threat."

Sharing of the noise misery burden may be tolerable but "What is intolerable is when fewer people are very intensively overflown, to the extreme detriment of their lives." He adds: "I have sought reassurance that the consultation being run by IpsosMori will be independently scrutinised by the CAA, using the raw data if necessary." 8.8.2014 <http://www.airportwatch.org.uk/?p=22580>

Gatwick's runway consultation shows some 85% of respondents oppose a 2nd Gatwick runway

Gatwick Airport held a consultation over April and May 2014, to try to get backing for its plans for a 2nd runway, and the option the airport wants - the wide spaced option with the runway used for both arrivals and departures. This has always been what the airport wanted, and the proposal the Airports Commission short listed. The consultation gave two options that the airport did not want, and has no interest in.

The consultation also initially had no means for respondents to express their opposition to any new Gatwick runway, but eventually a "none of these options" box was added - difficult to locate, far into the document.

The survey results have been released. They are deeply irritating to the airport, as they show huge opposition to any runway. Of about 7,700 respondents, well over 80% said NO. Of the 7,700 or so, only 733 backed Option 3 (the runway option Gatwick wants) and 2,165 did not want a runway at all. The survey results are at <http://tinyurl.com/Gatwick-consultation>

4,003 responses came through the Woodland Trust and these are being discounted, unjustifiably, as though they were part of an e-campaign, many contained specific comments added personally by the respondents. Taking all the responses for no runway, they amount to some 85% of the total. Even discounting the Woodland Trust responses, 66% opposed a new runway.

Most of those who preferred none of these options were opposed outright to an additional runway. A key reason for opposition related to concerns about noise impact. Other concerns included issues about land-take, and general disruption to local people, communities and businesses. 29.7.2014
<http://www.airportwatch.org.uk/?p=22447>

Campaigners in Tunbridge Wells / Penshurst area link up to oppose Gatwick plans

New flight paths introduced by Gatwick Airport are causing a wave of protest across large parts of East and West Sussex, Kent and Surrey. MPs including Nick Herbert, Francis Maude, Paul Beresford, Crispin Blunt, John Stanley, Greg Clark, and Charles Hendry all report that they are overwhelmed with correspondence from upset constituents. New anti-noise groups, all welcomed and supported by GACC, have sprung up in Crowborough, Sevenoaks Weald, Tunbridge Wells, Penshurst, Chiddingstone, Beare Green, and Warnham.

GAL called an emergency meeting of the airport noise committee (NATMAG) on 29th August to try to calm the situation – before it takes the shine off their extravaganza campaign for a 2nd runway. The public annoyance and anger have been caused not only by the ADNID flight path trial, over Warnham etc, but also new concentrated departure flight paths over Holmwood, Brockham and Reigate, as well as over the Penshurst and Tunbridge Wells area. There have also been more, and lower, arrivals over parts of Kent and East Sussex – and people there fear a concentrated merge point in future.



On 27th August, under the auspices of new group, **Gatwick Obviously Not**, twelve groups from all over Kent and Sussex got together in Penshurst to discuss the next steps in dealing with problems relating to Gatwick. <http://www.gatwickobviouslynot.org/>
The meeting noted that the CEO of Gatwick, Stewart Wingate, had said the same day: “Expansion at Gatwick is the obvious choice” and can be delivered to our country “at an environmental cost it can afford” – a statement which those attending the meeting found perplexing and very disturbing.

The meeting demonstrated clearly the determination of people in previously quiet areas of Kent and Sussex not to allow Gatwick to destroy their peace, and their quality of life. The new groups are articulate, determined and organised – and by working together, and with the older established campaign, they are a force to be reckoned with.

There has been criticism of the decision to remove information about the ownership of Gatwick from the airport’s website. People have been greatly angered by the way Gatwick has done its consultation, and this has spurred communities to working together in a concerted manner. The airport is not succeeding to "divide and rule" between communities. 14.8.2014 <http://www.airportwatch.org.uk/?p=22593>

Two letters to Stewart Wingate on flight path changes, showing extent of anger

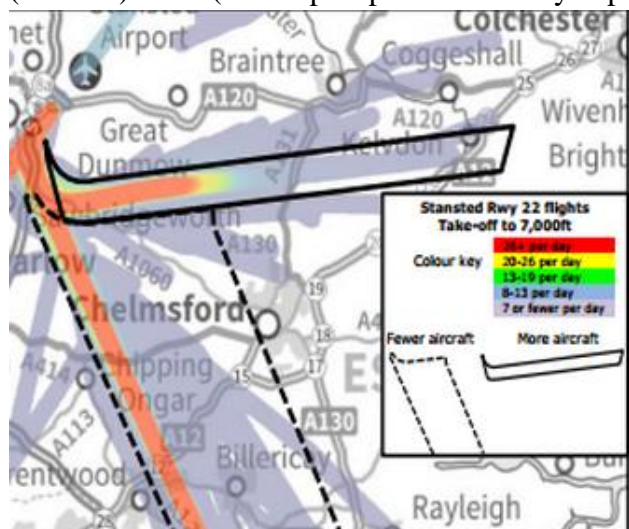
AirportWatch does not endorse the letters, nor has the accuracy of any claims been checked. However, the letters illustrate the degree of anger and upset that has been generated across wide areas from perceived changes to Gatwick flight paths. This summer has caused people to wake up to the implications for noise, and local quality of life, for thousands of people if a 2nd Gatwick runway was built.

Letter 1. <http://www.airportwatch.org.uk/?p=22862>

Letter 2. <http://www.airportwatch.org.uk/?p=22894>

Stop Stansted Expansion supports call to take part in flight path consultation, and says changes should be postponed

Stop Stansted Expansion (SSE) has welcomed NATS' call to local residents to have their say and respond to the proposed transfer of traffic on departure routes from Stansted. The proposed change involves switching daytime traffic from the existing south-east (Dover) departure route to the existing east (Clacton) route (see map of part of westerly departures).



The consultation closes on 8th September. Traffic on the Clacton route would double if this proposal were implemented. NATS' own figures show 1,470 fewer people would be overflown, but 2,400 people would be overflown more intensively. NATS says that the driver for change is network performance and to avoid Heathrow traffic congestion.

SSE says significant changes to Stansted's airspace are likely to come in the next airspace review phase scheduled for 2018/19. If there is a new south east runway, that will mean significant redesign of Stansted routes in future. Therefore SSE says there must be clear and compelling benefits for local residents before any changes are implemented. They recommend that

NATS' proposed changes should be postponed until the 2018/19 airspace redesign. 18.8.2014

<http://www.airportwatch.org.uk/?p=22623>

Stansted publishes consultation on draft plan for future development, staying a one runway airport

Stansted Airport has published its draft Sustainable Development Plan (SDP), for consultation until 7th November. The plan sets out the airport's ambition to grow (it is always thus in this industry – perpetual growth....) But at least the airport is not planning on a second runway.

It anticipates getting up to 45 million passengers per year on one runway, while it had about 17.8 million passengers in 2013, and has planning permission for up to 35 million. The timing of the consultation is apt, being the same day as the Airports Commission rejected an estuary airport. Boris has threatened schemes to expand Stansted in the past.

Stansted says its "important role has already been recognised by the Airports Commission, and the plan will help inform its final recommendations to Government on the vital contribution that Stansted's existing capacity will make to meeting demand over the next 10-15 years." SSE (Stop Stansted Expansion) commented on the SDP that they welcomed the plan being only for a single runway airport; they want a gradual phasing out of night flights; and they want the approximately 270 properties near the airport, bought by BAA, to be returned to private ownership. 2.9.2014 <http://www.airportwatch.org.uk/?p=22856>

CCC confirm UK air passenger rise of 60% by 2050 only possible if carbon intensity of flying improves by one third

The Committee on Climate Change has reported to Parliament on progress on the UK's carbon budgets. They say: "Under the current rate of progress future budgets will not all be met." Carbon budgets do not currently include emissions from international aviation and shipping, but these are included in the 2050 carbon target. The government will review aviation's inclusion in carbon budgets in 2016.

In 2012 the UK's international aviation emitted 32 MtCO₂, and domestic aviation 1.6 MtCO₂. The CCC and the Airports Commission say a new runway can fit within climate targets, but their own figures show aviation growth exceeding the target for decades in future. Growth in passengers of "around" 60% above 2005 levels could only fit within the carbon target if there is an improvement in the carbon intensity of aviation of around one-third by 2050.

The Airports Commission's own interim report says there can only be 36% growth in flights by 2050, to stay within targets. They say any more growth than that should not happen, "unless and until" there are the necessary technology improvements, cutting aviation emissions. But neither the government, nor the CCC, nor the Airports Commission can pin down what these will be, or when they will happen.

UK aviation emissions remain the highest in Europe. 19.7.2014

<http://www.airportwatch.org.uk/?p=22376>

Restrictions on UK 'night flights' at Heathrow, Gatwick and Stansted extended until 2017

In the Government's response to the Airports Commission's December 2013 interim report Transport Secretary of State, Patrick McLoughlin, announced that plans to more than double the number of 'night flights' at Heathrow, Gatwick and Stansted airports have been postponed until 2017.

Under proposals outlined in the Commission's interim report the number of planes allowed to land at Heathrow before 6am each day would have increased from 16 to 35 from 2015. In return, residents living under the flight paths would have been guaranteed respite from early morning arrivals, with a different runway used each week.

However, transport secretary Patrick McLoughlin has said he would wait for the Airports Commission's final recommendations next summer before deciding whether to introduce the measure, known as 'smoothing.' The government now says it wants to ensure "regulatory stability" at south east airports while the Commission deliberates on its new runway advice.

The government is also extending the ban on "rare movements made by older noisier types of aircraft." McLoughlin said: "This decision will help give certainty around the night noise environment for those living near the airports, as well as ensuring operational capacity at these airports is not affected pending decisions on any new airport capacity."

He added: "The government has also postponed the Commission's recommendation for an Independent Aviation Noise Authority. 17.7.2014 <http://www.airportwatch.org.uk/?p=22403>

New EU rules on airports seen as too timid to reduce extent of aircraft noise

There is serious concern in the UK and other European countries that new rules on aviation noise, due to take into force across the EU in 2016, will fall short of what is needed to protect people living near airports. The EU's new regulation calls for creating a "balanced approach" (ie. balancing the protection of citizens living near airports with the freedom to travel, and economic development). The industry is meant to be using less noisy planes, and making various other minor changes - while allowing a growing number of flights. Heathrow already has the largest number, of any European airport, of people affected by aircraft noise.

The community group HACAN believes the new regulations offer little relief as the law lacks binding noise reduction rules. "Until there is a definite target to be met, and a date by which that target has to be met, and legal limits, there really is very little incentive for airports or national governments to significantly reduce noise."



It has been noted that Heathrow is more inclined to engage with those suffering from aircraft noise, and make efforts to deal with their problem, in their bid for another runway.

14.7.2014 <http://www.airportwatch.org.uk/?p=22362>

Court orders end to 2 flight paths over Brussels, which have been strongly opposed since February

In response to the heated opposition by thousands of Francophone residents of Brussels, and the successful "Pas Question" campaign, a court in Brussels ordered that two of the new flight paths over the city should be stopped. These are a flight path called "Canal" and one called "turn left" from the airport. These flight paths came into operation on 6th February this year, under the "Plan Wathélet" and reflect the complicated politics of Belgium. The judgement, by the Brussels Court of First Instance, must be

applied within 3 months or otherwise there is a penalty of a fine of €50,000 per day.



The ordinance imposes in effect a return to the situation prior to February 6th. "Pas Question" describes the judgement as an "immense relief" that what they describe as a nightmare of living with the aircraft noise for 175 days has ended. They expect the Prime Minister and Secretary of State for Mobility to take "immediate" measures required to implement the court decision and change flight paths away from heavily populated routes. There need to

be impact assessment studies, and consultation, before flight paths are changed - a broader solution for all residents affected by the airport. 31.7.2014 <http://www.airportwatch.org.uk/?p=22482>

Aeroflot, to challenge fines for non-payment of EU ETS charges for 2012

The European Emissions Trading System charged airlines, during 2012, for their emissions while flying into or from European airports, in EU airspace. For non EU countries, a European country administered the payments. The payments from Russian airlines are administered by Germany. Three Russian airlines paid in full for their emissions. However, Aeroflot did not.

Germany has confirmed that Aeroflot is being fined for its non-payment. Aeroflot has sent a "protest" letter to the European Parliament and is preparing to lodge an appeal at being asked to pay a €215,600 fine. Aeroflot says: "In response to the IATA recommendations and like other air companies, Aeroflot has prepared a protest letter to the European Parliament" ...and they are "preparing to file an appeal on the unacceptability of issuing fines against the air company." The payments are only for 2012, before "stop the clock" brought an end to payments.

The compromise deal agreed by the European Parliament in early April 2014 means that, until 2017, only flights between EU airports will be regulated, not flights to or from the EU. Now the ETS only covers about 25% of the total EU aviation carbon emissions. About 75% of the total emissions, which were covered in the first year of the ETS, are now not covered – and will not be for years.

30.7.2014 <http://www.airportwatch.org.uk/?p=22472>

Caroline Spelman MP calls for end to Birmingham flight path trials

Meriden MP Caroline Spelman has demanded the Transport Secretary, Patrick McLoughlin, calls a halt to Birmingham Airport's flight path trials across her borough, since 1st May, after being handed a petition with over 1,500 signatures. The petition, signed by a number of local action groups, calls on him to intervene in the trial following complaints over noise. The airport has been trialling two options for new flight paths for the past 6 months as part of the new runway extension.

Residents claim that aircraft are not sticking to the routes accurately, causing planes to fly closer to their homes. Caroline Spelman says the fact the planes are not flying the accurate routes has invalidated the trial, and a review is needed of what has gone wrong. "If the airport plumps for a compromise route which is different from the original two options there would need to be a further consultation." The airport claims its new runway extension, as well as creating distressing noise and disruption for several thousand people, will "deliver global connectivity and thousands of new jobs in the future for local people." The CAA will finally decide on the flight paths. 30.7.2014

<http://www.airportwatch.org.uk/?p=22459>

Work on Carlisle airport revamp for freight centre could start soon, if there is no legal challenge

Work on the redevelopment of Carlisle Airport could begin in 6 weeks from 20th August, unless there is another legal challenge to the planning approval granted by Carlisle City Council councillors. Their development control committee has given the scheme – which includes the creation of a huge freight distribution depot – full approval. It was the 4th time that the matter has gone to committee for decision.

Work can start, if there is no application by opponents of the scheme for a judicial review of the planning approval. That application would have to be lodged within 6 weeks. The planning law has recently changed, so the council did not need to consider whether the airport would be commercially viable, nor whether Stobart would actually keep the airport open - rather than just use the land for freight storage and transfer. One key opponent, Peter Elliott, has stressed that the runway should be realigned, to take it away from Irthington village, due to safety.

Supporters of the scheme hope it will create jobs, but that is uncertain. Stobart shareholders had previously been told that the huge freight distribution centre would reduce rather than create jobs. Stobart hope 40,000 people per year would fly from Carlisle to Southend Airport, plus 20,000 per year to Dublin. 20.8.2014 <http://www.airportwatch.org.uk/?p=22683>

Farnborough Airport airspace consultation results - 98% said change unjustified

TAG Farnborough Airport has released a feedback report from its 3 month consultation (ended 12th May) on controversial plans to change its airspace, restricting access by other users. There were 13,000 comments, including around 2,500 from stakeholders. They are overwhelmingly negative, with 99% of responses from general aviation negative; 98% of responses to the justification of the changes negative; and 99% negative on the alleged environmental benefits. 31.8.2014

<http://www.airportwatch.org.uk/?p=22790>

Indignation in Frankfurt at the approval of the 3rd Terminal, for yet more flights and yet more noise

Frankfurt airport protesters continue their huge gatherings on most Monday evenings (they have a break in the summer, and do vigils instead). There have now been 108 Monday protests and 34 vigils, with around 1,000 at the protests and around 100 at the vigils. After the news that planning had been granted for a 3rd Frankfurt airport terminal, by the city of Frankfurt, there were far more people than usual at the vigil, with around 500, mobilised by the news. In 2009, the German government decided there should be

a new Terminal 3 in order to handle the expected passenger flow of 90 million per year by 2020, from around 58 million now. The 3rd terminal more flights and so more noise misery for the thousands who already find the over-flights unacceptable. Opponents want to sleep, which they say is a fundamental right that is destroyed by aircraft noise – and it is unacceptable for people to be rudely woken from their sleep at 5am. Also that no longer being able to sit in the garden when the weather is good is "a monstrosity". "We do not want to live like this." Opponents hope the decision can be reversed, when there is a proper study of the surface transport infrastructure required for a new terminal. Fraport wants to start building in 2015. 20.8.2014 <http://www.airportwatch.org.uk/?p=22649>

Warren Buffett says airline shares are still risky investments – only £2.49 airline profit per passenger

Warren Buffett is an extremely rich American investor whose opinions on investment are widely well regarded. He has commented that airlines are too risky an investment for the ordinary investor. At the 2013 AGM of his company, Berkshire Hathaway he said: "Investors have poured their money into airlines for 100 years with terrible resultsIt's been a death trap for investors." Making a profit in the airline industry is notoriously difficult. Sustaining profitability is even harder. IATA says the global airline industry in 2013 had a 1.8% profit margin. That means globally airlines made a profit on average of just \$4.13 (£2.49) for each passenger they carry. Strange industry; so much environmental harm, so much fuel burned, for so little profit. 26.8.2014 <http://www.airportwatch.org.uk/?p=22701>

US conservation groups to sue EPA over delays in finding aviation emissions an endangerment to health

US conservation groups have filed a notice of intent to sue the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) over its perceived failure and unreasonable delay in addressing aviation's growing emissions. The dispute goes back over 6 years to when the groups first petitioned EPA to carry out a mandatory duty under the Clean Air Act to determine whether aircraft emissions cause or contribute to air pollution "that may reasonably be anticipated to endanger public health or welfare". The mandate was upheld in a court ruling in July 2011, and in 2012 EPA acknowledged its obligation to conduct an endangerment finding and indicated it would begin work. The move was supported by European group, T&E. 22.8.2014 <http://www.airportwatch.org.uk/?p=22692>

Global bird culls by airports, to deter bird strike. Hundreds of thousands gassed, shot & poisoned

The issue of bird strikes for planes is an emotive one. Some collisions do little damage to planes, but hitting a large bird can disable an engine, or worse. While birds and planes co-exist, some strikes are inevitable. Rose Bridger has been looking into this subject for years. She gives details about the New York situation, many other examples. Airports should not be built in or near important bird habitats and migratory flightpaths. <http://www.airportwatch.org.uk/?p=22669>

Useful Info

- For large amounts of up-to-date news on airports and aviation, see AirportWatch's news pages www.airportwatch.org.uk/?page_id=148
- For daily transport news in the UK - Transportinfo at transportinfo.org.uk
- News and expert analysis on the AEF website at www.aef.org.uk and on Twitter @The_AEF
- Updates from HACAN at www.hacan.org.uk and from GACC at www.gacc.org.uk/latest-news
- Follow AirportWatch on Twitter @AirportWatch and Facebook on.fb.me/UoSKE

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