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Government will not provide a formal response to Airports Commission runway recommendation until the end of the year

The Financial Times reported it had been informed by a Whitehall source that Ministers will not provide a formal response to the Airports Commission's recommendation on a runway till about "before Christmas." It seems there would just be an initial cursory acceptance of the report (expected in late June?) by senior ministers. It had been widely anticipated for sometime that the DfT would have to do at least 6 months work, considering the Commission's verdict, before a final decision could be made. The Commission has left many gaps in its analysis, with many questions remaining unanswered.

The FT reports that: "Civil servants say they need to start work on any proposed legislation & prepare for legal challenges that are considered almost inevitable." The decision for the Airports Commission has not been an easy one, because there are overwhelming arguments against a new runway at either Gatwick or Heathrow. The Cabinet faces division on the issue of Heathrow, with George Osborne in favour and other senior members deeply opposed. The pro-runway lobby has been complaining vociferously that a runway decision must be made quickly. Labour's Mary Creagh has accused David Cameron of "unforgivable delay" on the issue, and putting party stability "ahead of the national interest."



The reality is that there is no political consensus on where to build another runway, due to the huge complications that would be caused by the addition of a runway at either Heathrow or Gatwick. The obstacles are almost insurmountable. The work of the Airports Commission contains many gaps, but it has illustrated just how huge the problems are – for any of the 3 short listed options. 10.6.2015
<http://www.airportwatch.org.uk/?p=26585>

Election result, anti-runway MPs around Heathrow and Gatwick, and Cabinet split make either runway hard to push through



Boris Johnson said in his acceptance speech, after being elected MP for Uxbridge and South Ruislip, that he would join John McDonnell and "lie down with you in front of those bulldozers and stop the building, stop the construction of that 3rd runway." John McDonnell, re-elected as the MP for the neighbouring constituency of Hayes & Harlington, had said in his speech that he expected the MP for Uxbridge to follow the commitment of his predecessor, John Randall, "and join with me in lying down in front of those bulldozers if they come." This determination will not make it easy to get a new

Heathrow runway. There are many other Conservative MPs such as Zac Goldsmith, Justine Greening and “big beasts” in the Party such as Philip Hammond and Theresa Villiers (maybe Theresa May too) who are against a runway. There would be troublesome and potentially embarrassing opposition to any runway plans. Labour MPs Andy Slaughter, newly elected MPs Ruth Cadbury and Rupa Huq all oppose a runway.

Though Vince Cable lost his seat, he is replaced by Conservative Tania Mathias, who is strongly against a runway. Senior Lib Dems, Vince and Ed Davey, who opposed a Heathrow runway, will be missed

At Gatwick, all eleven MPs elected for the constituencies around the airport are opposed to a 2nd runway. Most significant is the result from the marginal seat of Crawley (where a high proportion of the residents are employed directly or indirectly at the airport) – a dramatic win for the Conservative anti-runway candidate, Henry Smith, but defeat for the pro-runway Labour candidate, Chris Oxlade (the vote was 22,829 against 16,303). The solid bloc of anti-runway MPs will make it difficult for the new Government to push through a new Gatwick runway without the support of some minor Parties. And the Lib Dems, UKIP and the Greens all oppose the runway.

The Conservatives may find it hard to get a Heathrow runway through, and the blanket local political opposition makes another runway at Gatwick look increasingly doubtful too.

Fears Cameron may opt for ‘political stitch-up’ on Gatwick runway, just to avoid Cabinet rift on Heathrow

Speculation grows that the extent of the environmental damage at Gatwick might be lower than at Heathrow. The reality is that the environmental problems of a Gatwick runway are so great that by any reasonable assessment, it could not be built. Numerous well founded arguments against Gatwick should effectively rule out a runway. Now many senior Tories are personally opposed to a Heathrow runway, because their constituents would not tolerate the noise and pollution a new Heathrow runway would bring. So there are fears the Conservative government might try to go for Gatwick, in order to avoid internal splits within the Cabinet.

A group of 9 senior Conservative MPs, who represent constituencies around Gatwick, has warned David Cameron that he must avoid a “political stitch-up” on the runway decision. They do not believe a runway at Gatwick is in the national interest. Crispin Blunt, who chairs the MP group, told the Tory chief whip, Mark Harper, this week that cabinet ministers opposed to a third runway at Heathrow airport should “recuse” themselves [ie. not take part in a decision, due to danger of a potential conflict of interest or lack of impartiality] when the government considers the Airports Commission’s findings. The decision by the government must be taken in an impartial manner

Avoiding a Cabinet rift is surely not a sufficient, nor an acceptable, justification for inflicting irreversible damage on the surroundings of Gatwick. A runway there would mean devastating change to large areas of Sussex and Surrey, with air pollution, intolerable pressure on surface transport, intolerable pressure on social infrastructure, an intolerable noise burden over a wide area including Kent, and huge cost to the taxpayer (not to mention raised CO2 emissions).

24.5.2015 <http://www.airportwatch.org.uk/?p=26512>

Airports Commission ultra-brief air quality consultation on air quality – just 3 weeks starting the day after the election

The Airports Commission ran a highly technical consultation for just 3 weeks, as soon as the election was over. But the 200 pages of technical detail was almost impossible for a non-expert to comment on, especially in all of 14 working days. The Commission had acknowledged in its November 2014 consultation documents that more work was needed on air quality. As air quality has important impacts on health, the issue is of great public concern. Many criticised the consultation, and asked for more time. Sir Howard Davies starts work at RBS, joining the Board at the end of June, so the Commission needs to get its recommendation out fast. Now the Teddington Action Group have applied for judicial review of

the consultation, and the way it was handled. More details below. Parts of the Heathrow area regularly breach air quality limits. Though Gatwick has less of an air quality problem, expanding it to the size Heathrow is now would risk breaching air quality limits - and the Commission should not recommend a development that would mean NO2 limits would be broken. The health impacts of air pollution are increasingly being recognised, and the judgement by the Supreme Court at the end of April, that the UK must work faster to meet EU air limits, has been important. <http://www.airportwatch.org.uk/?p=26129>



Adding a runway could only have the effect of increasing the amount of air pollution, due to substantially more road traffic movements. All the runway schemes have the problem that emissions from diesel powered vehicles have not reduced as much as had been hoped in recent years. Models of future air pollution have to make a range of assumptions, such as layout of roads, use of vehicles within the airport, proportion of passengers travelling to and from the airport by rail, and future improvements in vehicle emissions. All these are highly speculative.

Though the consultation was deeply flawed, many organisations succeeded in writing detailed responses. Several other organisations made the point that air quality is a key problem for all three runway proposals.

Many critics asked why the Commission is estimating pollution levels in 2030, long before either runway would be at full capacity. They also criticised the Commission for “gambling” on road vehicles producing fewer emissions in future, or on speculative low emissions zones or congestion zones, which may not be practical or realistic.

Speaking on behalf of the cross-party 2M Group, which represents 20 Councils, the leader of Hillingdon Council (Ray Puddifoot), the leader of Richmond Council (Lord True) and cabinet member for environmental services at Windsor & Maidenhead (Carwyn Cox) complained to the Commission about the consultation. They say it is “not credible or realistic” to imagine Heathrow could vastly increase flights, passenger numbers and its freight operation, but with no extra traffic on local roads, or more pollution.

The response by the AEF (Aviation Environment Federation) was one of the most extensive and technical. Some responses, including GACC’s, are here: <http://www.airportwatch.org.uk/?p=26484>

Clean Air in London respond to Commission consultation – both Heathrow or Gatwick runway would breach air pollution laws



Clean Air in London (CAL) has made its response to the Airports Commission’s air pollution consultation making 2 key points:

- that either runway at Heathrow would cause aggravated breaches of the NO2 annual limit value, in 2030 (and perhaps other timescales) and therefore be unlawful;
- and that a runway at Gatwick would not be consistent with sustainable development, as it would worsen air quality.

The Airports Commission expects the Heathrow north-west runway scheme would mean worse air quality, (in terms of annual mean NO2 concentrations) at about 47,000 properties, for the Heathrow Hub extended northern runway it would be 39,000 properties.

For the Gatwick runway it would mean worse air quality for about 21,000 properties, and allowing this would not be consistent with the duty on Member States under Directive 2008/50/EC to maintain air quality levels below the limit values. Under this Directive, NO2 limit values must not be exceeded once attained. Where air quality is ‘good’, Article 12 of the directive applies i.e. **Member States shall not only maintain the levels below the limit values but also “endeavour to preserve the best ambient air quality compatible with sustainable development”.** 24.5.2015

<http://www.airportwatch.org.uk/?p=26363>

Teddington Action Group prepare to sue Airports Commission over lack of fair consultation on air quality

The Airports Commission and the Department of Transport have been notified by Neil Spurrier and Teddington Action Group (TAG) of their intent to apply for a Judicial Review of the Commission's work. TAG is a group of residents affected by environmental nuisance in terms of emissions and noise from Heathrow flights. They have taken advice from leading counsel, and allege that the Airports Commission's 3 week highly technical consultation on air quality, in May, was rushed and insufficiently publicised. Therefore they (and many others) did not have a fair chance to respond.

TAG say the lack of proper engagement by the Commission in relation to the latest air quality consultation is unacceptable and local people should be consulted in a meaningful way on an issue that directly impacts their health and well-being. The 3 week consultation was far shorter than the Cabinet Office guidelines which recommend three months for controversial or technical consultations. TAG also questions the continuation of Sir Howard Davies in the role of chair of the Commission due to potential conflicts of interest, as he soon moves to RBS. 15.6.2015 <http://www.airportwatch.org.uk/?p=26613>

Angry residents serve ASBO on Heathrow in flight path noise protest



Residents from a raft of communities to the west of London have served Heathrow with an ASBO (anti social behaviour order) in protest at the increase in aircraft noise generated by new flight paths implemented for Heathrow by their partner NATS.

Members of a new grouping, CAIAN (Communities Against Increased Aircraft Noise <http://caian.co.uk>) took their mock ASBO to Heathrow, to draw attention to the serious impact recent flight pattern changes are having on people across Surrey, Berkshire, and parts of west London.

CAIAN represents local action groups that have joined forces to challenge new and altered arrival and departure routes imposed by Heathrow and NATS, without warning or consultation. The mock ASBO accuses Heathrow of "breaches of common decency", specifically for running an airport "with general disregard for neighbours and the environment, that allows excessive noise for 17+ hours a day, and which contributes to high local air pollution".

CAIAN has a range of demands, including a moratorium on new runways until noise and pollution from the existing two are properly addressed. They will keep up the pressure, to get proper accountability in the aviation sector. There is widespread fury and outrage that PBN routes are being determined by airline profitability rather than any consideration for communities being

overflowed, who are suffering the consequences. 15.6.2015 <http://www.airportwatch.org.uk/?p=26599>

Aviation Environment Federation short briefing for decision-makers on environmental challenges of a new runway

The Airports Commission will soon publish its final recommendations on a new runway in the South East. The Aviation Environment Federation has produced a short, easy to read summary briefing, about the environmental challenges of adding a runway. They are calling for cross-party support for proposals aiming to protect human health and ensure that airport expansion is permitted only once a framework of environmental limits is in place. These limits relate to aircraft noise, air pollution and carbon emissions.

AEF also question whether the economic case for a runway stacks up. They say while there is significant pressure to make a swift decision on airport capacity the analysis published so far by the Airports

Commission contains evidence gaps. Until these gaps are addressed, it will not be possible to reach a robust view on the Commission's recommendations. Transparent decision-making by government will be paramount.

AEF is calling for a full debate once all evidence is produced. They are asking MPs to ensure the government does not make any runway decision until all the evidence has been gathered, a balanced picture of costs and benefits is provided and all environmental tests have been met. 4.6.2015
<http://www.aef.org.uk/uploads/MP-Airport-Expansion-Briefing.pdf>

Protesters stage silent air pollution demonstration at Heathrow Terminal 5

Around 50 campaigners staged a silent protest against air pollution in Heathrow Terminal 5. The protesters wore face masks and t-shirts to make their point that the high air pollution levels in the Heathrow area should rule out its plans for a 3rd runway. The protest was just days after the Airports Commission announced its air pollution consultation, and a fortnight after the Supreme Court ordered the UK Government to produce plans by the end of the year on how it intends to tackle pollution across the country.



The protesters at Terminal 5 included local people whose homes are threatened by a 3rd runway, activists based at Transition Heathrow and residents whose lives are disturbed by aircraft noise. Air pollution already affects local communities badly.

It will not be possible for Heathrow to guarantee that, with a 3rd runway and an extra quarter of a million planes each year and associated road vehicle journeys, air pollution levels could be reduced so they meet the EU legal limits. 10.5.2015 <http://www.airportwatch.org.uk/?p=26215>

Ruth Cadbury MP says Heathrow low emission zone would be 'unenforceable'



The new Labour MP for Brentford & Isleworth, Ruth Cadbury, says banning all but greenest vehicles from roads around Heathrow would have a "serious impact" on the local economy. Heathrow has suggested that a Low Emissions Zone (LEZ) around the airport might be introduced, or even an Ultra Low Emissions Zone (ULEZ) in order to try and keep emissions low enough that they could add another runway. A LEZ (not a ULEZ) has been operation in London, since 2008. It restricts the most polluting heavy diesel vehicles driving in the capital. A ULEZ, by contrast, means all but the lowest emission vehicles are excluded.

Ruth Cadbury says that to be effective, a ULEZ around Heathrow "would have to be so enormous it would have a serious impact on the economy of the Thames Valley area and would be virtually unenforceable." Ruth believed the impact of non-ULEZ planned public transport improvements on reducing harmful emissions was "not going to be very significant". She questioned whether a ULEZ scheme, which would require Transport for London's approval, could ever happen 11.6.2015 <http://www.airportwatch.org.uk/?p=26593>

Data on air pollution challenged by group of MPs representing areas around Gatwick

Questions about the robustness and impact of Gatwick's proposals have been raised by the Gatwick Coordination Group (GCG) of MPs, which now includes all 11 of the local long-standing and newly elected MPs around Gatwick. Particular concerns were raised about air quality, and Gatwick's own emissions modelling, which the GCG described as "inadequate" for failing to capture the impact on the new transport and housing provision in the local area, if a 2nd runway got the go ahead.

The report by Jacobs for the Airports Commission suggests that the impact of an expanded Gatwick would be considerably worse than assessments by Gatwick airport. NOx and particulate matter (PM10 and PM2.5), are anticipated to be 50% higher than the initial estimates of emissions suggested by Gatwick. Jacobs' assessment confirms that Gatwick expansion would cause significant deterioration of air quality for over 51,000 people; officially put "at risk" the health of at least 151 people; and have the highest % increase in NOx emissions (28% up) out of the 3 runway options. It would result in higher mean NO2 concentrations for about 21,000 properties. Chair of the GCG, Crispin Blunt MP, said: "...Gatwick's plan would ruin thousands of lives and push local services and infrastructure beyond their limits. There is no economic or practical case for Gatwick to become the same size as Heathrow."

GACC's analysis shows the Commission's estimates of future road traffic are only about half of what would be created by an airport larger than Heathrow today. GACC expects there could be around 100,000 extra cars per day in the Gatwick area. There could also be a ten-fold increase in freight and commercial vehicles – all adding to air pollution.

28.5.2015 <http://www.airportwatch.org.uk/?p=26412>

Retired Gatwick GP warns of health impact of Gatwick runway, especially on those vulnerable to asthma and respiratory illness

A retired GP, who worked in Langley Green for nearly 40 years, believes a 2nd Gatwick runway would lead to a 'disastrous' increase in Crawley's air pollution. He feels that increased pollution from planes and vehicle traffic would worsen high levels of respiratory illnesses in neighbourhoods near the airport. He says this would lead to 'considerable' increases in air pollution and noise in Crawley, a decrease in the standard of living and a fall in townspeople's health within 15 years of the runway and associated infrastructure being built. People living in Langley Green, Ifield and Crawley's new neighbourhood, Forge Wood, would be worst affected.

Over his time as a GP he had seen quite a substantial rise in the number of respiratory illnesses, particularly asthma, especially in children. He commented: "the last thing you would want to do is make that worse" and that the airport's effect on the increasing rate of lung-related conditions across the area played on his mind during his medical career.

He said in Crawley almost 10% of his patients were from South Asian origin, a group that is known to have a higher than average incidence of asthma and greater than average need for emergency admission to hospital for asthma. But little thought seems to have been given to their welfare. He questioned the provision of extra medical facilities that would be needed if there was a new runway. Facilities are already stretched. Gatwick will not pay for more. 24.5.2015 <http://www.airportwatch.org.uk/?p=26374>

The Airports Commission has not specifically looked at health, other than some mentions under other sections. It has not been required to carry out a full health impact assessment of the runway proposals (and has been criticised by Hillingdon Borough Council for not doing so – January 2015 <http://www.airportwatch.org.uk/?p=24887>). It has therefore not looked at the impact of a runway on respiratory disease like asthma, and has not looked at different impacts on different sections of the population.

Gatwick, Heathrow and London City Airport campaigns come together to oppose airspace change – joint letter to Patrick McLoughlin

Over the past year or more, changes to flight paths and airspace are being introduced in the UK, and these have caused considerable anger and upset among the many communities – and tens of thousands of people – now affected. Many new groups sprang up in response to the greatly increased levels of aircraft noise people were being exposed to.

Now these flight path groups at Gatwick, Heathrow and London City airports have joined forces and got together, to show the DfT, the Government, the CAA and NATS the anger of residents across the UK to these airspace changes. On 1st June they submitted a joint letter to the Secretary of State for Transport,

Patrick McLoughlin, demanding that Government policy should be changed to minimise the impact of aircraft noise on residents.

They also demand that the right of people to health, well-being and family life should be prioritised by Ministers over the drive of airlines, airports and aviation industry for greater profits. They are asking that Government should instigate legislation that governs and controls NATS' usage of airspace, and that the CAA gives true consideration to residents who are affected. That is not the current situation.

<http://www.airportwatch.org.uk/?p=26449>



A reasonably encouraging response was received on 16.6.2015 from the Aviation Minister, Robert Goodwill, which can be seen here. <http://tinyurl.com/Robert-Goodwill>

Richard Deakin, CEO of NATS resigns after many criticisms of NATS' work

In mid-May Richard Deakin, the CEO of NATS, resigned, with immediate effect. The managing director of operations, Martin Rolfe, has taken over instead but the board is looking for a successor among internal and external (possibly overseas) candidates. NATS said Richard Deakin was leaving by mutual consent as the company was embarking on a new regulatory period and preparing to implement the single European sky programme, SESAR, which will see closer integration of air traffic control services.

NATS has received fierce criticism recently due to changes it has made to UK airspace, its failure to



consult properly, and its inability to deal with upset and angry residents. The fiasco at Heathrow in March, when NATS apparently did not tell the airport it had made changes to flight paths, got it some very bad publicity. <http://www.airportwatch.org.uk/?p=25576> Last year, after a computer failure at Swanwick, Vince Cable accused NATS of "skimping on investment." But Richard Deakin did help block plans for a Thames estuary airport, saying it was in the "very worst spot" for air traffic.

The situation of inadequate airspace consultation, that created deep anger in over flown communities, has also caused stresses within the CAA. <http://www.airportwatch.org.uk/2015/05/26335/>

Residents in Colnbrook with Poyle parish will demand local referendum on Heathrow runway

A meeting of Colnbrook with Poyle Parish has been called for June 16th by residents who intend to invoke a clause in the 1972 Local Government Act. This allows them to trigger a referendum - this one would be on a Heathrow runway. (Either of the Heathrow runway plans would mean effectively the end of Colnbrook - one going slightly north of it, and the other slightly south).

Residents agree that a Colnbrook runway and the Slough International Freight Exchange (SIFE) could completely transform the parish over the next few years. They are angry that neither Colnbrook Parish Council nor Slough Borough Council have asked them for their views – yet both have presumed to make policy decisions with potentially enormous consequences for the future of the village ... and those who live in it; hence the meeting. The first item on the agenda is whether or not to call for a Local Referendum on the Heathrow issue.

Colnbrook with Poyle Parish Council dismissed a call for a local referendum at a Parish Council meeting on November 4th. SIFE will also be discussed, to see if there is support for resurrecting the stop SIFE campaign in view of the imminent SIFE appeal. 9.6.2015 <http://www.airportwatch.org.uk/?p=26570>

Heathrow Villages ready to submit proposal for Neighbourhood Plan to counter threat from Heathrow

Residents of three Heathrow villages - Sipson, Harmondsworth and Harlington –are working on a Neighbourhood Plan in a community-led effort to shape the future – if a Heathrow runway is rejected. They hope that will be the Commission’s decision by the end of June. They feel the future of the Heathrow Villages should be defined by the communities living there and what they feel is important.

The residents started work on the plan in November 2014, with a 21-member Forum, when they obtained £7,000 in Government funding from the Community Development Foundation. After piloting its questionnaire at Grow Heathrow’s 5th Birthday in March and conducting extensive consultation with the community the Forum originally agreed that it should be governed by 6 priorities – ‘housing’, ‘transport’, ‘enterprise’, ‘community spaces’, ‘green spaces’ and ‘heritage’. ‘Health and wellbeing’ has now been added. Each will underpin the principles to be embodied in the Plan.

The area suffers from the proximity of Heathrow, and years of blight - through runway uncertainty. The Forum has enlisted the help of postgraduate students on the planning course at University College London. At present, the villages of Cranford and Longford are not included, in order to keep the focus on a small enough area. 3.6.2015 <http://www.airportwatch.org.uk/?p=26482>

EasyJet’s Carolyn McCall again says there’s no economic case for Gatwick runway

Carolyn McCall, the CEO of EasyJet – the largest airline using Gatwick airport – has again said that there is no “economic reason” to build a 2nd runway at Gatwick. She believes it does not need to expand, because of a lack of demand from passengers. She would prefer a runway at Heathrow, as EasyJet and other airlines are “queuing up to get in”. They could make more profit there.

Though the airlines want a new Heathrow runway, it is both physically, geographically, environmentally and politically very, very difficult indeed. Gatwick is also geographically and environmentally very, very difficult. For Gatwick to build a new runway, the cost would have to be paid by the airlines, which means flights costing more for passengers. As the budget airlines make thin profits (perhaps £7 per passenger after tax <http://tinyurl.com/easyjet-7>), adding on an extra £30 + to a return trip <http://tinyurl.com/Gatwick-unwrapped> is utterly contrary to the low cost airline business plan. On dirt cheap flights, £30 extra is enough to matter.

Robert Lea in the Times:
easyJet can’t get into Europe’s premier airport because it is full, but it ever so much wants a Heathrow base for its city breaks, hen parties and Med sunspots. If that ever becomes a reality, then we will all have been sold the most outrageous lie.

Even though easyJet is currently Gatwick’s biggest customer, Ms McCall said it had “never proved it can really be the kind of airport that Heathrow is.” Heathrow slot pairs can cost £25 million, but EasyJet got their Gatwick pairs for about £1 million. 8.6.2015 <http://www.airportwatch.org.uk/?p=26528>

Residents say Belfast City Airport’s plans to treble flights will cause intolerable and unacceptable noise level



Residents affected by aircraft noise from George Best Belfast City Airport say the noise will be “intolerable” and unacceptable. Under the plans, considered at a 4-day public inquiry starting on 18th May, the airport’s own figures show that the annual number of flights could rise from the current level of 14,000 per year to 43,000 if the proposals are implemented. Up to 18,000 residents could be affected at a noise level which the UK government says causes significant annoyance (57 dB Leq). The projected impact would be higher than the noise footprint of Gatwick and Stansted, were there are respectively around 3,700 and

1,900 people are affected at the same level. Local group, Belfast City Airport Watch, commissioned a survey that showed how much plane noise is already disrupting their lives. This showed of those living near the flight path 38% said plane noise was "very high" at their home. 20% said planes disrupted their sleep "very often" or "quite often" and 25% of parents with young children said their children's sleep was disrupted "very often" or "quite often." Belfast City Airport Watch said: "It's quite intolerable for the airport to heap further misery on residents in the pursuit of higher profits when we already have an international airport (Belfast International) sitting in a green field site with spare capacity just up the road." The date for the inspector's decision is not yet known.

18.5.2015 <http://www.airportwatch.org.uk/?p=26299>

London City Airport challenges Boris' decision to block its expansion plans, over 'noise ghetto' fears

Boris Johnson blocked London City Airport's expansion plans in late March, as he said it would create a "noise ghetto" for people living under the flight path. Now, as expected, London City Airport has appealed to the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, Greg Clark, against the



decision. On March 26th Boris ordered Newham council to reject the plans on the grounds of noise disturbance and because the airport was intended for business rather than leisure.

Under the plans, take-offs and landings were expected to increase from 70,000 a year to 111,000, with passenger numbers doubling to 6 million by 2023. The airport would also have been able to accommodate larger planes, (and be more profitable). This coupled with the airport's plans to use new

PBN technology to create a much narrower and concentrated flight corridor over Wanstead, Leytonstone and Leyton had prompted fears that noise could become an issue. The airport says it is appealing because of the jobs it creates, and its economic impact. The decision by Greg Clark could take 5 months.

20.5.2015 <http://www.airportwatch.org.uk/2015/05/26340/>

Brendon Sewill letter in the Times, correcting some claims by "Let Britain Fly"

In a letter to the Times, 19.5.2015, responding to lobbying by "Let Britain Fly," Brendon Sewill (Chairman of GACC) corrects some of their inaccuracies. Let Britain Fly put out an open letter, signed by some 100 business people, wanting the government to decide rapidly on building a new runway. They claim that the UK "have not built a new full-length runway in the southeast since 1945". In fact the Gatwick runway was built in 1956-58, and the runway at Stansted was revamped in the late 1980s.

They claim that most of London's airports will be full by 2030, but in fact, if the growth of air travel is constrained within climate change limits, Stansted (now under half full) is not forecast to be full until 2040. The letter also claims that we trade up to 20 times more with countries that we have a direct link to, but this obscures the fact that we develop air links to the countries with which we trade, not the other way round. The claim that Paris has 50% more flights to China than Heathrow is only correct if Hong Kong is excluded.

"The truth is that there has been massive resistance from those who value the English countryside, and each time the problem has evaporated because airlines have used larger aircraft, meaning that existing runways have been able to handle more passengers." <http://www.airportwatch.org.uk/?p=26317>

Studies show that at least 7 hours of sleep are needed, each night, by adults

Living under a flight path, along which aircraft fly at below - say 7,000 feet - is noisy. It is all the more noisy now that the aviation industry is introducing narrow, concentrated flight paths through PBN technology. These are replacing the older more dispersed routes, and planes can fly far more accurately than in the past. But if airports allow flights at night, or if the "night" period when flights are not allowed is short, this has consequences for people living near, or under, routes.



Studies carried out scientifically show adults need at least 7 hours of sleep, each night to be at their healthiest. It actually says between the ages of 18 and 64, people need between 7 and 9 hours sleep per night.

Children and teenagers need more. There are some people who need more than 7 hours per night, and some need less. It is not good enough to get less sleep one night, and more the next - the brain does not process the day's memories adequately. Studies show adverse effects of not getting enough sleep, which are not only related to concentration, speed of thinking or reacting

etc, but also medical effects. The concentrated flight paths, and airports allowed to have flights all night, are causing very real problems.

A study into noise and sleep by CAA in 2009 looked at the issue, and said a large and comprehensive study is needed, but it is "likely to be expensive." It has not been done. 6.6.2015

<http://www.airportwatch.org.uk/?p=26506>

Heathrow's N-W runway plan would destroy historic village of Harmondsworth

Heathrow's plan for a north west runway would mean the devastation of the medieval village of Harmondsworth. The airport boundary would come almost to the centre of the village, with everything south of that line demolished. It would level the ivy-covered brick walls of the Harmondsworth Hall guest house and two-thirds of the village's homes. A village that traces its history to the 6th century



would be damaged so badly that even what is left would be uninhabitable. People don't want financial compensation, they just don't want their village destroyed or the bulldozing of a historic village with buildings that go back 600 years which cannot be replaced. Even though St. Mary's Church, which traces its history to the mid-11th century and the 15th century Great Barn (dubbed the "Cathedral of Middlesex" by John Betjeman) would not be pulled down, they would be so close to the airport fence that the church would have no congregation, and the barn would be pounded by noise (not to mention kerosene fumes). Heathrow's Nigel Milton said he understands that "some people are very upset."

Neil Keveren, chairman of local campaign, SHE, said: "This is my home and if I am forced to leave here, who will it be for? Foreign investors. ...The message I would give to the world is that the British government can be bought." <http://www.airportwatch.org.uk/?p=26383>

Road noise combined with aircraft noise raises risk of laying down increased abdominal fat

Research indicates that living near a main road causes people to gain weight, with the risk of obesity doubling for homes that are also under a flight path and near a railway line. Researchers believe that the stress of traffic din may raise stress levels to the point where the body starts laying down more fat because it thinks it is heading for a time for crisis, when food may be scarce. The noise exposure may be a physiological stressor that raises the production of cortisol, which increases appetite. Normal traffic noise is around 45 decibels, but research indicates that for every 5 decibels above that, the average home-owner gains an extra 0.2cm on the waist measurement. "Traffic noise is a common and increasing environmental exposure, primarily due to ongoing urbanisation



and growth of the transport sector,” said lead author Dr Andrei Pyko, Karolinska Institute in Sweden.....Our results suggested associations with waist circumference primarily in the age group below 60 years.” Obesity around the waist is one of the most harmful types of fat, and has been linked to diseases like diabetes. Researchers at Imperial College also found that hospital admissions for stroke, heart and circulatory disease are higher in areas with high levels of aircraft noise. 26.5.2015 <http://www.airportwatch.org.uk/?p=26381>

Manchester Airport £1 billion plans to improve airport to compete better with Heathrow on long haul routes

The owners of Manchester Airport, MAG, plan to invest £1 billion over 10 years to upgrade Britain's 3rd largest airport and help it compete harder with Heathrow for passengers. While both Heathrow and Gatwick are hoping to be allowed to add another runway, Manchester has two runways already - the second barely used. It has been expanding its long-haul routes, giving passengers an alternative to travelling south to Heathrow, and it plans to add more such routes. Its CEO, Charlie Cornish said: "Over the next 10 years, the airport will continue to develop as a global gateway for the UK."

Even if a new runway in the south east is approved (a big IF) it would take at least 10 years to build and in that time other UK airports, such as Birmingham and Manchester will have the chance to add new flights to new destinations - some assisting business travel. The number of air passengers at Manchester rose last year by 6% and may rise by 5% in 2015-16 period. Manchester airport expansion fits in with George Osborne's hopes of improving road and rail links between northern English cities to create a conurbation with the scale and resources to compete with London. A new south east runway would, by contrast, just worsen the north-south divide. 2.6.2015 <http://www.airportwatch.org.uk/?p=26466>

NATS and Heathrow agree strategic business partnership – to make more money all round

In April 2015, NATS and Heathrow Airport entered a new strategic partnership, which NATS says signals "a fundamental change to the relationship between the airport and air traffic services provider." As part of the agreement, Heathrow and NATS will jointly create a long term business partnership with shared objectives aligned to what Heathrow is seeking to achieve over the coming years.(ie. it wants a 3rd runway).

The partnership mentions "specific incentivised targets in areas from delay performance and service resilience through to cutting aircraft noise." They hope their partnership will "realise benefits for airlines and help deliver a world class passenger experience for the travelling public." (ie. benefits for passengers, but for those being over-flown,only the least benefit they can get away with, in terms of noise.). NATS says: "We've moved from being an important supplier to true partners with aligned goals that allow us to share both the rewards of success and consequences of failure in a totally transparent and accountable way." Last year NATS lost the contract for the airspace below 4,000 feet at Gatwick to Deutsche Flugsicherung (DFS),starting in October 2015. And after the problems in March when NATS did not properly inform Heathrow of flight path changes, things can only improve ... 8.6.2015 <http://www.airportwatch.org.uk/?p=26524>

The city of Phoenix is suing the FAA due to noise from NextGen flight path changes

The City of Phoenix, Arizona, is suing the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) over flight path changes - part of NextGen - that have led to aircraft noise that's plaguing parts of the city. The Mayor said the city has tried to resolve the issue numerous times, but the FAA hasn't proposed any meaningful changes. The noise problem started in September 2014 when the FAA implemented the new flight paths.

City officials, the FAA and some airlines have met to try to work out a few improvements, but the FAA say that would take 6 - 12 months to do. Hence the lawsuit, as Phoenix city say the solutions don't do enough to make up for hundreds of millions of dollars spent on the city's noise mitigation efforts. The FAA has not been very helpful. A city spokesperson said: "The FAA's actions have caused the

community extreme discomfort, with many unable to sleep at night or pursue normal daily activities." It claims the FAA caused "a negative impact on the Phoenix community without proper due process, notification and consideration."

Phoenix plans to reach out to other US cities facing similar problems, to join in the lawsuit. Other cities troubled by noise due to NextGen changes are Chicago, New York, Los Angeles and Boston. 1.6.2015 <http://www.airportwatch.org.uk/?p=26560>

FAA plans major study of noise at US airports due to anger at introduction of "NextGen"

In the USA, the FAA - equivalent to the CAA in the UK - is now planning to study aircraft noise across the USA. The main aim is to defuse opposition to changes to flight paths, and save the aviation industry delays in implementing the new system. The FAA will begin polling communities around 20 airports within the next 2 - 3 months, and finish gathering data by the end of 2016. While some newer planes are marginally less noisy than older models, there are now more flights. The FAA has also been introducing "NextGen", which is the US equivalent of PBN or PR-NAV in the UK - meaning planes navigate accurately by satellite, rather than the old system. This allows narrower flight paths, and more intense noise for those overflowed. The aim of NextGen, and PBN is to save the airlines time and fuel, and therefore money. There has been intense opposition from communities now finding themselves newly overflowed. There is anger at the inadequate way in which aircraft noise is measured and averaged. The FAA will see if it needs to make changes to this. 9.6.2015 <http://www.airportwatch.org.uk/?p=26223>

While global carbon emissions continue their relentless rise, now well over 400 ppm, Boeing projects a demand for 38,050 new planes over the next 20 years

World Fleet of aircraft to double in size over the next 20 years, from 21,600 in 2014 to 43,560 in 2034.



<http://tinyurl.com/Boeing-forecasts>

Useful Links

- 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
- European **Transport & Environment (T&E)** <http://www.transportenvironment.org>
- Twitter @transenv**
- News and expert analysis on the **AEF** website at www.aef.org.uk and on **Twitter @The_AEF**
- **HACAN** www.hacan.org.uk **Twitter @HACAN1**
- and **GACC** www.gacc.org.uk/latest-news
- **Gatwick Obviously NOT (GON)** <http://www.gatwickobviouslynot.org>
- **Stop Heathrow Expansion (SHE)** <http://www.stopheathrowexpansion.co.uk>
- Taming Aviation petition to European Parliament. <http://www.tamingaviation.eu>
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