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From John Stewart, Chair of AirportWatch

Let Britain Fly, the pro-expansion lobby group, will feel it had a good **party conference** season. The two main political parties confirmed their desire to see a new runway (location to be announced after the next election). Its only setback was the failure of the Lib Dem leadership to persuade its membership to drop their policy of new net increase in runways and get behind a second runway at Gatwick. But I suspect many environmentalists are also more optimistic than they were in the summer. The big climate change demonstrations around the world in September have probably brought climate change back into a more central role in the aviation debate.

However, for many residents it is **flight paths** which, sometimes literally, continue to dominate their every waking (and sleeping) moment. Both Gatwick and Heathrow have learnt some hard lessons from their recent trials. Given the fact that new technology allows the aviation industry to make more efficient use of airspace, the flight path issue is not likely to go away. The challenge is to get flight paths which work not just for the industry but also for residents.

The party conference season has made it clearer where the different parties stand on airport expansion

Labour will not make an announcement before it sees the Davies Report, nor will it necessarily endorse the recommendations of the report. At its conference it did stress that it would make a swift decision to build a new runway in London and the South East.

The Conservatives have a similar position but were less keen to stress the need to make a swift decision.

The Liberal Democrats hit the headlines. The leadership of the party wanted to change their policy of no net increase in the number of runways. They remained firmly opposed to a 3rd Heathrow runway but wanted to open the door to support a 2nd Gatwick runway. However, the membership overwhelmingly rejected the proposal. It's unclear whether the leadership might try to revisit the subject.

The Greens oppose the building of any new runways.

UKIP is firmly and publicly opposed to a 3rd runway at Heathrow. It also is against an Estuary option. It favours re-opening Manston and using its large runway as the new runway for London and the South East.

LibDem conference voted against new runways in south east, keeping existing policy

The LibDem conference voted against an amendment, by Lorely Burt (Solihull) and Stephen Gilbert (St Austell and Newquay), to reverse Lib Dem policy of no new net runways. The amendment proposed continuing opposition to Heathrow, but backing Gatwick expansion (Gatwick helped with conference expenses, with free WiFi and the conference phone App - and lobbied relentlessly). The pro-runway amendment was supported by Nick Clegg, Danny Alexander, Vince Cable, Ed Davey and Susan Kramer. However, no cabinet minister spoke in favour of it during the debate. Ed Davey and others made rather poorly informed comments about aviation becoming "cleaner and quieter" in future, meaning a new runway could be built without breaching

environmental limits. They seemed unable to provide any hard evidence on how this remarkable feat might be achieved.

Earlier Vince Cable, the LibDem business secretary said expansion at Gatwick was "a preferable alternative" and "less problematic" than a third runway at Heathrow. His constituency of Twickenham is close to Heathrow, and badly overflowed, so not surprising that he has previously voiced his opposition to a new Heathrow runway.



There was an excellent and powerful speech by Duncan Brack (photo) against the change – well worth watching. YouTube <http://tinyurl.com/DuncanBrack> (at 3.25 mins - 6.50 mins.). Clegg appeared dismayed at the vote. However, in contrast, the membership saw sense, and understood the negative environmental impacts.

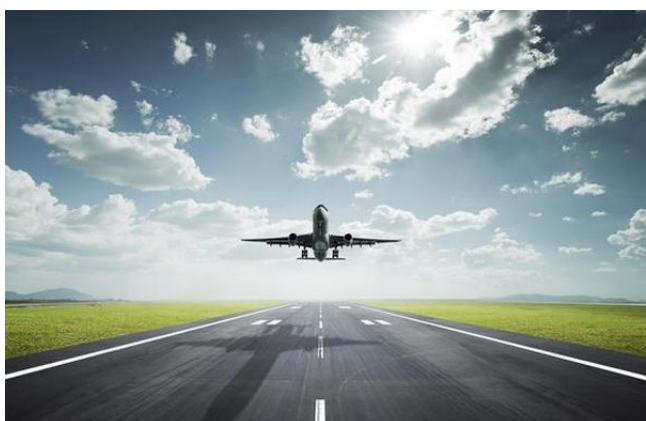
As well as Duncan Brack, Julian Huppert played a central role in defeating the amendment. Caroline Pidgeon spoke strongly against it, and tweeted that "softening on airports is bad for environment, for London and for the LibDems' credibility." 7.10.2014 <http://tinyurl.com/LibDem-runways>

It was only at the start of September that the LibDems launched their Pre-Manifesto 2014, containing an emphatic statement against any new runway at Heathrow, Gatwick or Stansted - and no estuary airport. Their policy: "Ensure our airport infrastructure meets the needs of a modern and open economy, without allowing emissions from aviation to undermine our goal of a zero-carbon Britain by 2050. We will carefully consider the conclusions of the Davies Review into runway capacity and develop a strategic airports policy for the whole of the UK in the light of those recommendations and advice from the Committee on Climate Change." And it continues.... 9.9.2014 <http://tinyurl.com/LD-Pre-Manifesto>

Comments on runway policy at Labour and Conservative conferences

At the Labour conference, Shadow Sec of State for Transport, Mary Creagh said, on aviation: "The next Labour Government will make a swift decision on airport expansion in the national interest." In his speech, Ed Balls, the Shadow Chancellor said there should be no more "dither and delay" on airport capacity, amid signals that Labour is no longer ruling out expansion at Heathrow. He said "Whatever the outcome of the Howard Davies review into airport capacity, we must resolve to finally make a decision on airport capacity in London and the South-East — expanding capacity while taking into account the environmental impactNo more kicking into the long-grass...".

In George Osborne's speech he said: "We will build the high speed rail, decide where to put a runway ..." and "Let's face it, even today this country has spent forty years failing to take a decision about building a new runway in the South East of England." (The reason for that is Britain built a large number of runways in World War 2, we remain supplied). While making the case for investment in new high and low carbon infrastructure he made no mention whatsoever of climate change, despite David Cameron last week telling the UN that he regards it as "one of the most serious threats facing our world."



NGOs set out policy proposals on UK aviation, with 6 tests, for all party manifestos

A number of the main environmental NGOs in the UK have together published their joint policy proposals for sustainable future aviation strategy for the UK. They welcome the increased recognition of the need to keep aviation expansion within UK carbon targets. However, there is concern that a new runway would represent locking into carbon-intensive

infrastructure at a time when the UK urgently needs to reduce emissions. It is critically important that climate change targets continue to be respected in the context of aviation expansion. A new south east runway would mean caps on expansion of regional airports, and tightening of carbon budgets for emissions elsewhere in the economy.

The NGO document sets out six key tests for a new runway, or airport expansion, relating to climate change, sustainability, society, and wildlife. The NGOs would oppose airport expansion or the construction of any new runways unless any future government ensures their six tests are passed, with the necessary policies. They are calling on all political parties to include meeting these tests in their election manifestos. 8.10.2014

<http://tinyurl.com/NGO-proposals>

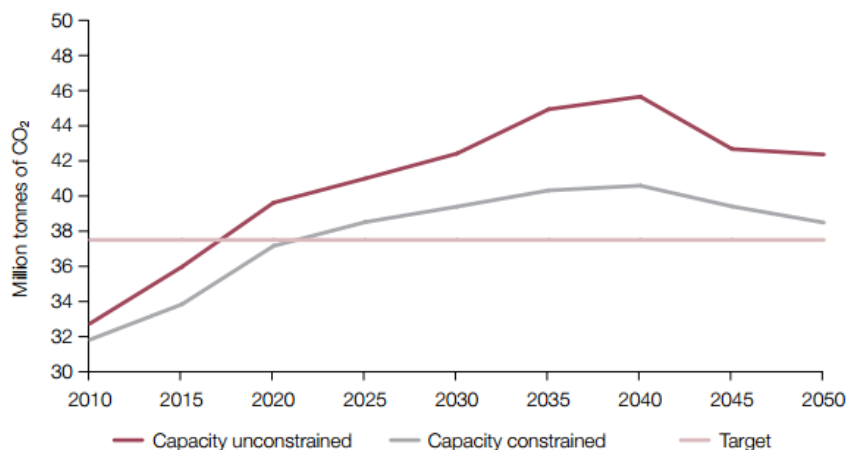
New AEF Policy Briefing setting out how a new south-east runway is not compatible with UK climate policy

The Aviation Environment Federation (AEF) is producing a series of policy briefings, to inform the airport expansion/runway debate. The question is still very much **whether** to build a new runway, not merely **where**.

AEF's new briefing "**Airport Expansion and Climate Change - Is a new runway compatible with climate policy?**" is a concise, easy to read, document setting out the facts very clearly.

A key point is that a new runway would have very significant climate implications that fall outside the remit of the Airports Commission to address. AEF explains how both the Committee on Climate Change and Airports Commission have stated that demand for flights in the UK will have to be restricted to prevent CO₂ emissions from the aviation sector overshooting the level consistent with the Climate Change Act.

Figure 5.4 Departing CO₂ forecasts without a carbon cap (carbon traded)



However, neither has identified how this can be achieved if a new runway is built, leaving a policy gap. That gap would result in the UK's climate targets being compromised. The options are to dramatically increase the cost of flying (by the UK acting alone), restrict capacity available at regional and other South East airports to below today's levels - or better and more acceptable - make optimum use of existing airport capacity. 8.10.2014

<http://tinyurl.com/Climate-briefing>

Figure 5.4 shows the CO₂ emissions forecasts before the carbon capping through pricing is applied. This shows that even on the basis of the new forecasts and with runway capacity remaining constrained, some additional measures would still be required to keep 2050 emissions to 2005 levels.

From Airports Commission Interim Report. Appendix 3. Dec 2013 <http://tinyurl.com/InterimReportAppendix3>
Even with constrained capacity, UK aviation emissions are well above the target of 37.5MtCO₂ per year.

Heathrow bows to extent of flight path fury by bringing end of trials forward to 12th November

On 28th August Heathrow started flight path trials, testing if flight paths could be concentrated, over flying slightly fewer people - but creating far more noise for those now under the narrow flight paths, used by more planes. As soon as the trials began people were upset, disturbed and annoyed at the noise misery that had been perpetrated upon them. Protests rapidly sprang up in the Ascot, Windlesham, Lightwater, Bagshot, Teddington, Twickenham and other areas.

Heathrow has been stunned by, and swamped by, the number of complaints, and has not been able to cope. Now, as a damage-limitation exercise, Heathrow has announced it will cut its trials short, ending on 12th

November, rather than the original end date of 26th January 2015. In addition, trials due to start on 28th October will be postponed till autumn 2015. This is good news for those who have been suffering. However, it is not a decision to stop growth in Heathrow flights - or noise. Cynics might say that these decisions are to ensure there is less protest about flight paths between now and the May 2015 election, and the Airports Commission decision on a new runway, expected after the election, next summer. 2.10.2014

<http://tinyurl.com/Trials-end-early>

Anger as Heathrow's flight path trials subject thousands to unacceptable noise levels

Heathrow is conducting trials of new flight paths, both to the west and to the east of the airport. Since the easterly trial started (28th July) and the westerly trial started (25th August) the airport has been swamped with complaints. The complaints line can no longer cope. For many people, there has been a sudden and unacceptable increase in noise. The changed, concentrated, routes have been blamed for the "unacceptable and intolerable" noise above a number of Surrey villages.

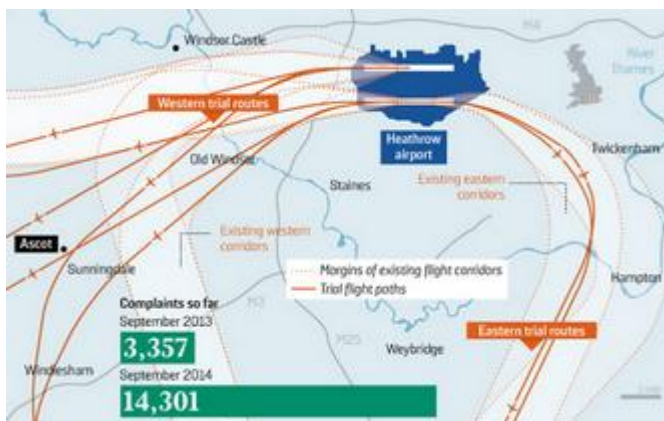
Some of the worse affected areas to the west are Englefield Green, Egham, Thorpe, Virginia Water, Windlesham, Bagshot, Lightwater, Sunninghill and Ascot.

Petitions to the airport have been set up in Ascot, Lightwater and now in Englefield Green, asking that the trials be stopped. People feel that even after the end of the trials that ended in June, the increased noise from them has continued. People living under the new, concentrated, routes are now subjected to more, louder, aircraft noise as late as 11.50pm and as early as 6am. The purpose of all this is to get more flights off Heathrow's runways, so the airport can be more profitable for its foreign owners.

Matt Gorman, the sustainability director of Heathrow airport, told people in the Bracknell and Ascot areas why they were not given notice of the flight path trials overhead. He said: "We didn't go as far as sending letters out to all the people that would be affected as **we did not feel people would notice any change.**" This is scarcely credible, unless Heathrow does not follow the news about rival Gatwick at all (more on Gatwick below).

Gatwick also decided not to give the public prior warning of their trial. At a Gatwick Consultative Committee meeting in January 2014, Gatwick's Head of Corporate Responsibility, said: "If people were aware of the trial it was possible that they would be more alert to changes and feel obliged to comment." That backfired spectacularly.

Another classic Heathrow "shooting self in foot" comment recently, from Nigel Milton, to a meeting in Stanwell on 15th September, when asked why past Heathrow promises were allowed to be broken said: "**The people who made those promises weren't in a position to make these promises.**" The comment had been by the then BAA chairman, Sir John Egan. So what does that tell people about any future undertakings by Heathrow. <http://tinyurl.com/didn-t-think-they-d-notice>



Heathrow: flight paths being tested are "not indicative of future flight paths." Really?

The flight path changes are part of a drive to overhaul the UK's airspace by 2020 and use more accurate precision navigation technology, with concentrated flight paths that make things easier for air traffic control, to get more planes into the same airspace. NATS wants this "for the UK to remain competitive." Now Heathrow's PR people say that the routes being tested "are not indicative of future flight paths". But that seems difficult to believe. Looking at maps produced by Heathrow earlier, for the Airports Commission, the routes there seem to be

remarkably similar to those on trial, over Ascot and nearby areas. The document says they are "indicative and subject to consultation." Heathrow has a problem and not only of credibility. <http://tinyurl.com/Indicative-flightpaths>

Over 1,000 attend packed Ascot protest meeting against Heathrow flight path trials

The meeting on 13th October clearly demonstrated to Heathrow just how angry and upset residents in the Ascot area at being subjected to a flight path trial, of a concentrated route. It seems Heathrow were left in no doubt whatsoever about the strength of the determination not to suffer the misery that a 3rd runway would bring. John Stewart tweeted: “@ascotflightpath sometimes the anger of the audience overcame coherency of argument but the meeting could turn out to be a game-changer.” When the audience were asked “Does this community want a 3rd runway” the residents shouted back “NO!”



SHE is Born

A new grassroots organisation has been launched. SHE (Stop Heathrow Expansion) represents the Heathrow villages and the surrounding areas that would be so devastated if a 3rd runway went ahead. It is a sister group to HACAN.



It will have a public launch in November but its local launch took place last week in Harmondsworth, the 11th century village that would be virtually be destroyed by a third runway. Local people, politicians and campaigners packed the church hall for the launch. They saw some of the videos that were submitted to the ‘No Ifs; No Buts’ competition held in Richmond Theatre in the summer (<http://www.no-ifs-no-buts.com/>) and also saw a very

moving film of an event held in Harmondsworth earlier this year to mark the death of the many men from the village who lost their lives in the First World War. <http://www.stopheathrowexpansion.co.uk/>

Some other news snippets on Heathrow:

Willie Walsh of BA: Heathrow expansion is a ‘lost cause’

Willie Walsh, chief executive of BA owner, IAG, has said again that there will not be a 3rd Heathrow runway, as it is too controversial. He also warned a Conservative or Labour-led government against choosing Gatwick for an extra runway, as the case for growing Gatwick is “significantly weaker” as it does not have Heathrow’s international attraction. That’s why this isn’t a business issue, an economic argument. It’s a political argument and the politics of expanding Heathrow are significantly more difficult than the politics of expanding Gatwick.” 3.10.2014 <http://www.airportwatch.org.uk/willie-walsh-of-ba-heathrow-expansion-is-a-lost-cause/>

British Airways adds more Heathrow leisure routes – Olbia, Kos, Corfu – to the existing list

Heathrow airport makes a lot of how important its flights to emerging economies are, and how limited its slots are for this. So it would be logical to imagine that spare slots would be used for just this sort of flight. But Heathrow will now be getting new BA flights to ... guess where? Olbia in Sardinia; Kos and Corfu in Greece and Split in Croatia from summer 2015. Other purely holiday destinations Heathrow offers in the Med are Mykonos and Santorini, Pisa and Porto, Ibiza, Nice, Tunis, Malta, Malaga Vital international business? 3.10.2014 <http://tinyurl.com/Heathrow-bucket-and-spade>

Heathrow lodges appeal with Planning Inspectorate over protection of Cranford against take-offs

Heathrow has lodged an appeal with the Planning Inspectorate over the London Borough of Hillingdon’s refusal, in March, to grant permission for taxiway infrastructure. If the government inspector approves the appeal, it would allow Heathrow to alternate the use of both its runways, regardless of wind direction – and take off to the east from the northern runway. This would give Windsor residents more respite, with up to 50% cut in the number of planes currently landing from the west. People can submit comments - by 19th November. 30.9.2014 <http://tinyurl.com/Ending-Cranford>

Gatwick admits defeat – postponing new flight paths in the face of vocal opposition

Gatwick is delaying the planned introduction of new departure flight paths, as a result of massive protest. The route to the south west, outlined in the recent consultation, caused an unprecedented level of anger and upset. The postponement will set an important precedent for similar new flight paths proposed at other airports.

A new procedure for arriving aircraft – the point-merge system – proposed by NATS has also been postponed, in the face of widespread concern expressed across East Sussex, West Sussex, and Kent. A new flight path recently introduced over Beare Green, Holmwood, Reigate and Redhill is currently under review by the CAA. But other new concentrated departure tracks - which have resulted in a wave of agonised complaints, and vocal new anti-noise groups, up to 20 miles around the airport - remain in position.



Brendon Sewill, chairman of the GACC **Gatwick's Big Enough** campaign, wants not only a postponement, but all new routes cancelled. It is thought that Gatwick may have ordered the postponement as they realise the protests were undermining their case for a new runway. A new runway, with twice as many aircraft as now, would be far worse than the present situation. Determined opposition will continue, for as long as it takes. 1.10.2014 <http://tinyurl.com/flightpath-postponement>

Residents and MPs of west Kent delighted about Gatwick flight path delay

People have been experiencing, and complaining vociferously about, an increase in night flights, plane noise and low-flying aircraft. The Gatwick noise complaint lines have been swamped, and people have not been given satisfactory responses by the airport. The extent of the anger has caused the creation of new local groups, which are working in conjunction with GACC, (**Gatwick Area Conservation Campaign**). These include the **High Weald Councils Aviation Action Group (HWCAAG)**, **Communities Against Gatwick Noise Emissions (CAGNE)** and **Gatwick Obviously Not.org (GON)**. All are very pleased at the postponement. However, though Gatwick is postponing their plans till next year, it is likely this is only in order to prevent further bad publicity during the Airports Commission consultation, starting soon, and leading up to the election.

Opponents of the 2nd runway say that if Gatwick are truly serious about "being a good neighbour they would publish what people really think to help the Commission decide." Gatwick said in a statement that they would "Reflect further on the feedback received during local consultations," and undertake bits of further work, including providing some respite periods. They also hope that "engaging" better with communities on new flight path options. But just talking to people about noise does not reduce it. What people want is less noise, not more "engagement" or talking about it. 1.10. 2014 <http://tinyurl.com/damage-limitation>

Residents and their MP in west Kent want Kent County Council to formally state their objection to a 2nd Gatwick runway

In 2012 Kent County Council produced a document called "Bold Steps for Aviation" in which it recommended to government the building of a 2nd runway at Gatwick (as well as high speed rail between Heathrow and Gatwick. This has infuriated many people in west Kent who are increasingly badly affected by Gatwick, and its aircraft noise in particular. Now KCC's councillor Matthew Balfour has said publicly that the support of KCC for a Gatwick 2nd runway is "history."

Sir John Stanley, Tonbridge and Malling MP, has sent a letter to Kent Council leader Paul Carter asking him to formally rescind the authority's support of the 2nd runway. He has not received a reply.

At a public meeting in Southborough, people were directed to the current document on the KCC website (**Facing the Aviation Challenge - August 2014**) that now states it currently has no preferred option. "KCC gives support in principle to expansion at either airport as the right solution to the UK's aviation needs" by 2030. Sir John Stanley MP does not feel that this new document is enough.

27.9.2014 <http://tinyurl.com/KCC-Gatwick-runway>

GACC confirms that Gatwick's Noise Action Plan is just a regurgitation of the old one, barely changed

The Gatwick Area Conservation Campaign, (GACC) has checked through the Noise Action Plan that the airport has put out, as a revised plan. The prospect of a better plan may have raised the hopes of thousands of people affected by aircraft noise that there would be some significant changes. But those hopes have been quickly dashed. The plan is little more than the Noise Action Plan which was published in November 2013 and, after a rushed consultation, submitted to the Government in February 2014. It is still dated Nov 2013.

Gatwick has added a few, small changes, which it says is in response to comments they received to their airspace consultation from Oct 2013 to Jan 2014. The few changes will do very little to actually reduce noise.

A significant failing of the Plan is that it was submitted to the Government before the introduction of new concentrated departure routes and before the recent consultations on departure and arrival routes, so there are now many more people with an interest than when it was written.

Many of the promised actions have already taken place – and people find them disappointing. The promised "respite" has not yet materialised. Contrary to what is said in the Noise Action Plan, Gatwick is encouraging airlines to fly more night flights. And so on.

The few changes include: increasing CDA landings (already doing that); more consultation with residents (in the vain hope this deflects opposition); "commission noise studies to gain an insight into the noise climate" (ongoing); request that the DfT explores ways to describe and measure aircraft noise more clearly to help people understand noise impacts; writing to the DfT requesting "research be undertaken to fully understand the effects of aircraft on human

health;" (by 2018) and "Commission public studies on noise impacts on particular areas." So not a lot of action by Gatwick itself. Or any action at all really. 26.9.2014 <http://tinyurl.com/regurgitated-noise-plan>

Come to the GACC Protest Meeting – Saturday 22nd November

On Saturday 22 November afternoon, GACC (Gatwick Area Conservation Campaign) will be holding a protest meeting in Crawley, about the new flight paths – and to express opposition to a new Gatwick runway.

Doors will open at 1.00 pm. The main meeting will be from 2.00 pm to 3.30 pm. It will be at the Apple Tree Centre, Ifield Avenue, Crawley RH11 0AF.

The large hall is adjacent to the Hindu temple, with ample parking space, in an easily accessible location. It also happens to be only 100 yards from the proposed new airport boundary, if a 2nd runway was ever built.

Four MPs, perhaps more, will be attending. The programme will be circulated later. There will be many interesting stands to visit, from a range of local organisations and the many new local groups that have emerged recently because of the flight path trials and changes. Tea and coffee will be available (free).

The (formal) GACC annual general meeting will take place from 4.00 to 4.15 pm.

Put it in your diary. Please tell your friends and neighbours. **This is your chance to have your voice heard– don't leave it to others! The more people who come, the stronger our protest.**



Details <http://www.gacc.org.uk/latest-news.php>

GACC assesses Gatwick's economic claims, and find them to be flimsy, at best

In May 2014 Gatwick submitted to the Airports Commission their case for building a new runway, but this document has not been published. In July Gatwick published a document “Connecting Britain to the Future. Faster” <http://tinyurl.com/Gatwick-Future-Faster> which was said to be a summary of their case. On examination, however, it appears to be a collection of assertions chosen for their publicity value but with virtually no supporting evidence.

That is particularly true for the claims that a new runway would create substantial economic benefits. GACC has assessed the claims made. Many are shaky, at best.

On the issue of the alleged benefit to the wider UK economy of £28 billion, from more trade, inward investment and inbound tourism, GACC points out that it is illogical to count the benefits of inbound tourism but not the cost of outbound. Official forecasts show that Gatwick in 2050 will handle around three outbound tourists for every one inbound. The main effect of building a new runway would be a net increase in tourist expenditure abroad, thus having a negative effect, not a positive benefit, for the UK economy.

One section is copied below:

Gatwick “Statement 3

Expansion of Gatwick will enable an additional 45 million passengers every year to travel, on business, holiday or visit friends or relatives. Oxera estimates the monetary value placed by these individuals on their ability to travel to be £51 billion. This figure also captures the increase in airline competition and a corresponding reduction in airfares.” [\[Ref given\]](#)

GACC says: “No details are given of the calculations by the consultants Oxera [\[Oxera are a firm of consultants often used by the aviation industry because they can be relied upon to produce the required conclusions.\]](#) but the following comments can be made:

- The extra 45 million passengers would not occur until Gatwick reaches full capacity of two runways, a good many years into the future;
- In normal economics the value placed by individuals on the ability to travel is measured by the price they pay, and is thus already included in the figure given by the Airports Commission: to include them again is double counting;
- The assumption that a new runway at Gatwick would increase competition and reduce fares is not valid: most competition is between airlines, not between airports. Moreover it ignores that fact that there will be ample competition from Stansted and Luton, so a new runway at Gatwick would make little difference;
- The need to pay the cost of building a new runway would mean an increase in Gatwick air fares, not a reduction.“

GACC says: “If Gatwick Airport Ltd were using this document as a basis for a contract they could be sued for misrepresentation.” And “If Gatwick were using their claims to sell shares, they could be sued for issuing a ‘fraudulent prospectus.’ ” <http://www.airportwatch.org.uk/?p=23178>

Prime Economics pulls to pieces the economic case for a 3rd Heathrow runway

Prime Economics, a group of independent economic thinkers, has taken a look at Heathrow’s claims about the economic case for a 3rd runway. They are not impressed. While Heathrow (see its latest advert) says: “If we want Britain’s economy to keep growing, we need to grow Heathrow”, the reality is very different.

Prime Economics says: “Among the dodgy economic claims by Heathrow Airport for the 3rd runway:

- *It will bring economic benefits of £100bn*
- *It will bring 120,000 new jobs*
- *Every month the problem goes unresolved is costing the British economy £1.25bn through lost trade*

The evidence for each of these is very thin and hypothetical – like money, created out of thin air. The link between trade and airport capacity is at best indirect, and certainly opaque. At a macroeconomic level, the impact is simply invisible.”

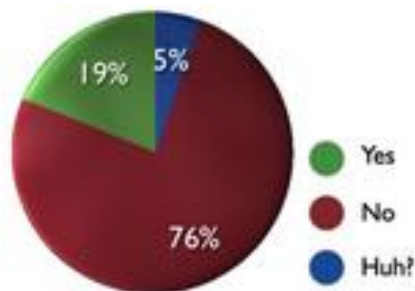
They say “Economies depend on many factors, and hub capacity is one of the least significant, at least once you

reach a decent threshold of scale.” They say, of the economic benefits of £100 billion claim (over what period, Heathrow adverts don’t say) that would be around 6% of UK GDP – a big change if ever achieved over a single year (the chance of which is zero). “But since there is no evidence of overall economic national economic gain from new hubs, please maintain due scepticism.”

Prime Economics pick to pieces the £1.25 billion figure; also the idea that the UK needs flights to every destination in every country; and the hub competition between EU countries. “The current debate assumes exponential growth both of our economies and of our travel into the indefinite future. This will not happen ... Airports ...are not the main drivers of economic success nor of national well-being.”

Well worth reading. 5.9.2014 <http://tinyurl.com/Prime-Economics>

3 more dubious airport surveys, which unsurprisingly, show the desired result



Gatwick commissioned 3 surveys, by YouGov, which it interprets as rising support for its runway One was of 1,009 people living near Gatwick, another of 1,008 people living near Heathrow, and then 1,037 people living in Greater London, the "Omnibus" survey. As with all these surveys, we are not told the exact structure of the questions, or if there was leading text. There are also, of course, no options for anyone to say No to any new runway, so the surveys are of limited value.

The main question was: "If there was a straight choice between expanding Gatwick or Heathrow, with whichever airport didn't expand staying the same size as it is today, which would you chose?" [It is an oddly worded question, as both Heathrow and Gatwick can expand, and are expanding, their number of passengers.].

The responses were mixed, and showed very little. Gatwick is interpreting these as huge support for its runway. Heathrow says its figures are entirely different. The reality indicates that polls, with an intended outcome, can prove almost anything. 18.9.2014 <http://tinyurl.com/Gatwick-polls>

The BackHeathrow lobby group, funded largely by the airport, has also done a survey, this time by post to various areas near Heathrow. An entertaining blog by a resident of Twickenham, who got one of these things through the door, colourfully described it as being of the “do you support expansion of Heathrow or the boiling of puppies” variety.

The survey consisted of highly leading questions. It tries to give the impression that Heathrow is likely to close if it does not build a 3rd runway, which was never a realistic threat.

BackHeathrow’s survey aims to instil fear of losing their jobs into people who work at the airport, or in connected jobs. The blog comments: “In an age when information is so easily disseminated (and checked), organisations that think that it’s enough to gather false data to present their case are on very thin ice.” <http://tinyurl.com/puppy-boiling>

Then there was the survey commissioned by Heathrow from highly respected polling company, Ipsos Mori. Heathrow proudly proclaimed that no less than 58% of MPs backed a 3rd runway. That would have been impressive. With 650 MPs in the House of Commons, that would 390 MPs. That’s a lot. Really? Amazing!

But that is NOT the case at all. The Ipsos Mori survey only in fact interviewed 95 MPs These were, in theory, "interviewed to closely represent the profile of the House of Commons" - quite how is not explained. What the survey actually found was that just 55 MPs (58% of 95 MPs) – not 390 - said they backed a 3rd Heathrow runway. And when only these 55 MPs - not the whole 95 - were asked if they thought a 3rd Heathrow runway would get parliamentary approval, only 44 thought it was likely (of these only 18 thought it was very likely).

Taking such liberties with polling makes Heathrow look, frankly, a bit desperate. Their rather extravagantly claim that the poll "explodes the myth that Heathrow is politically undeliverable" looks frankly threadbare. So much for polls, seeking a particular answer. 10.9.2014 <http://tinyurl.com/55-MPs-not-390>

London City Airport asked to consult properly on flight path changes, and treat people fairly



London City Airport is proposing to concentrate flight paths, in the same way that other airports have been doing recently. This is how air traffic controllers, NATS and the CAA, want airspace to be used in future, in order to fit more aircraft into our already very crowded skies. There is a consultation on airspace changes, which started on 4th September, and ends on 27th November. However, City Airport decided not to give any prior notice to anyone about the changes, except their Consultative Committee.

It seems even local councils were not notified. Local community group, HACAN East, have now written an open letter to the airport, to complain. HACAN East says the

flight path proposals will have a profound effect – for the worse – on the lives of tens of thousands of Londoners. This is deeply inequitable. The airport makes out that the proposed changes are not significant as the planned flight paths are not noticeably different from the current routes. That is incorrect – there is now a concentrated line. This means fewer people in total are overflowed; but for those unlucky enough to live under the new concentrated route, the noise can be deeply unpleasant. Thousands living in Bow, Leytonstone, Wansted, Catford, Brixton and Vauxhall are very aware there is a significant change. 12.10.2014

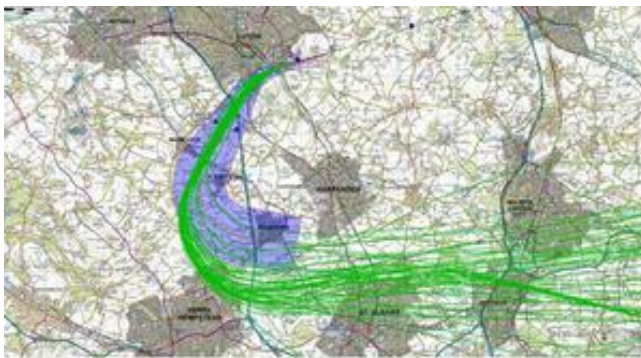
<http://tinyurl.com/London-City-unfair>

HACAN East, will shortly be holding a public meeting at which people can find out more, as the airport has neither leafleted nor arranged any public information sessions. There is a simple template letter people can send in, to express their views. Details at <http://tinyurl.com/London-City-letter>

Because the consultation does not make the details clear enough to ordinary residents, HACAN East has written to the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) to ask it to suspend it. People do not realise the details of what is proposed because, as with all airspace documents, it is relatively technical and difficult for non-experts to understand. The campaign urges the CAA to order that all stakeholders are fully consulted during this consultation or to suspend it and require a fresh consultation to take place. <http://tinyurl.com/City-CAA-letter>

Luton plans to change flight paths for departing aircraft submitted for CAA approval

Luton airport held a consultation on changing some of its flight paths, between March and June. The changes involve using precision navigation, RNAV, enabling aircraft to fly more precise routes. In effect this means the flight paths are concentrated, and the aircraft are all channelled down a specific track. The trial departure route is the one which heads out to the west and then turns left to navigate between Markyate and Flamstead, and left again to navigate between Hemel and St Albans to the south, and Redbourn and Harpenden to the north.



Previously, its planes had not made this second turn at all accurately. For people who do not live very close to that track, it's probably a better way to control wayward flights. But those who live underneath it may get all the flights thundering overhead. Luton has now submitted its proposals to the CAA for approval.

The Safety and Airspace Regulation Group (SARG) will analyse the consultation feedback and technical merits behind the proposal against the requirements. Assuming all

the necessary information has been provided, the SARG aim to provide a decision within 16 weeks. 12.10.2014

<http://tinyurl.com/luton-flightpaths>

Virgin scraps its unsuccessful, loss-making “Little Red” domestic services from 2015

Virgin Atlantic has announced plans to scrap its heavily loss-making domestic airline, Little Red, after just over 18 months. It has struggled to fill seats on its services linking Heathrow with Edinburgh, Aberdeen and Manchester, and finally admitted defeat after weeks of speculation. Virgin’s daily services to Manchester will end in March 2015, while the Scottish services will cease next September 2015.

Little Red, which was operated by Aer Lingus for Virgin on a “wet lease”, ie with the Irish airline’s planes and crew in Virgin colours, could never make money. It was started in March 2013 after competition authorities made BA relinquish Heathrow slots for domestic flying, in the wake of BA’s takeover of bmi. Its aim was to feed in passengers from the regions, to make Virgin's long haul Heathrow flights more profitable. However, instead most passengers were just on point-to-point flights. Richard Branson complains that the slots they had for Little Red were inadequate. Its load factor was around 30 - 35%, which was about the lowest in the whole industry. Virgin Atlantic has made losses for years, requiring cuts in flights to (business?) destinations to focus on the profitable tourist ones to North America. 6.10.2014 <http://tinyurl.com/Little-Red-Demise>

EU orders Germanwings, Ryanair and TUIfly to repay large sums for subsidies wrongly obtained

In February 2014 the European Commission adopted new guidelines on how Member States can financially support airports and airlines in line with EU state aid rules. The aim is to ensure fair competition, and avoid overcapacity and the duplication of unprofitable airports, or support for an airport that is too close to another. Aid is allowed if there is seen to be a genuine need for accessibility by air to a region, to help economic growth. Many low cost airlines have derived benefit from subsidies to airports, and now a number have to make repayments for money they should not have obtained.

The EU has confirmed that Germanwings must pay €1.2 million, Ryanair €500,000 and TUIfly €200,000 that they got from Germany’s Zweibruecken airport, in the form of lower fees. Zweibruecken is only 25 miles from Saarbruecken airport. Brussels Airlines separately faces an EU probe into €19 million that airlines at Belgium’s Zaventem airport received from the state to fund operating costs from 2014 to 2016. There are other cases. Belgium’s Charleroi airport must give back €6 million in aid. 4.10.2014 <http://tinyurl.com/Repaying-subsidies>

Airlines in the US have been flying slower to cut fuel bills

Higher oil prices have made US airlines introduce efficiencies to cut fuel consumption, including now flying more slowly. Most of the fuel economies which have been implemented in the last decade will not be undone, even if oil prices were to fall (partly due to the possible future costs of CO2 emissions). There is an optimal cruising speed for each aircraft based on altitude. Flying faster increases the amount of fuel burnt. Historically, commercial aircraft have flown on average about 8% faster than their optimal cruising speed. Getting the aircraft to its destination quicker to pick up another load of passengers and minimise crew cost was worth the extra fuel expense. There is a trade-off between fuel consumption and time. Between 2004 and 2011, the average ground speed of 7 major US airlines fell by 1.1%. More than anything else, however, airlines have focused on reducing excess weight. 30.9.2014 <http://www.airportwatch.org.uk/airlines-in-the-us-have-been-flying-slower-to-cut-fuel-bills/>

IAG to pay its first ever dividend & BA to return to profit (and pay tax?)

The parent group that owns British Airways, IAG, have said that they are now making profits and will give their first dividend, probably in November. This is their first dividend since they were created in 2011 through the merger of British Airways and Iberia. IAG has also bought bmi and Spanish budget carrier Vueling since its formation. Analysts believe shareholders will receive their first payment at the end of IAG’s 2015 financial year at the latest. The turnaround at Iberia, with the loss of some 4,500 jobs that sparked strikes and political outcry in Spain, has stemmed the losses. IAG posted a €96m pre-tax profit for the six months to June 30 this year, up from a €503m loss at the same time in 2013. IAG says it is on track to improve operating profit this

year by "at least" €500m, from €770m in 2013. British Airways' CEO, Willie Walsh said in August that BA had now returned to profit for the first time since 2007, the start of the financial crisis. BA has barely paid any UK corporation tax for years - it may pay round £61 million for the 2013 financial year. 28.9.2014 <http://tinyurl.com/IAG-dividend>

Manston site sold to developers for manufacturing and homes

Manston airport has been bought by developers, Trevor Cartner and Chris Musgrave who have done two other regeneration projects in the UK - the largest being in Billingham. They are part of joint venture company Wynyard Park Limited. They recently met former airport owner, Ann Gloag, and reached agreement to buy a majority interest in the Manston site. Future development will be aimed at providing space for a wide range of businesses, with a focus on attracting companies interested in advanced manufacturing, as well as the provision of housing, shops, schools and community facilities. They say it is too early to be specific about their plans, but they will be looking to comprehensively redevelop the whole site to create a mixed-use community.

The airport has closed, the equipment has been sold and it will not reopen. "We are aware that there were a number of job losses when the airport closed and a far greater number will replace these." They plan a 20-year £1bn redevelopment to "create more than 4,000 jobs". Roger Gale, Tory MP for Thanet North, said it sounded "remarkably like opportunist land-banking". 24.9.2014

<http://www.airportwatch.org.uk/manston-airport-site-sold-to-developers-for-manufacturing-and-homes/>

Thanet council is still to make a decision on whether to pursue compulsory purchase of the airport site. A report is due later this week.

Big protest in Queens, New York, against unacceptable level of aircraft noise from La Guardia & JFK airports

People living near La Guardia and JFK airports in New York have been protesting against the aircraft noise to which they are being subjected. On 14th September, the local community group, "QUEENS QUIET SKIES" organized a rally of 250 - 300 people against the plane noise, saying the residents are fed up with it. Residents say changes over the past few years have made backyards (=gardens) unusable and had a very negative effect on their neighbourhoods. They want less noise, with the acceptable noise level reduced to 55 decibels from the current 65-decibel day-night average sound level. This could be done by more dispersed flights. They also want better noise abatement programs.

People in Queens want the issue of aircraft noise tacked on a national level, and say the current noise standard, which has been in place since the 1970s, "is no longer a reliable measure of the true impact of aircraft noise." As in England and elsewhere the effect is that people can no longer enjoy sitting in the garden, enjoy an outdoor barbeque with friends - or even just the basic "luxury" of opening the windows on a hot day. One commented: "No one should be subjected to planes flying at low altitudes at one-minute intervals for 18 hours a day every day. Enough is enough." 23.9.2014 <http://tinyurl.com/New-York-protests>

Does Heathrow advert implying a small girl needs a 3rd runway, for her future, meet Advertising Standards?

In mid September, Heathrow put out full page advertisements for their 3rd runway- part of an on-going, and expensive, media campaign. However, they may have mis-judged the tone of this one. It features a small girl, with text making out that her future well-being will depend uponguess what?? a new Heathrow runway. The advert says the 3rd runway will deliver "... at least £100 billion of economic benefits [no timescale given] the length and breadth of the country. So, even if our little girl never leaves home, she'll still feel the benefit." [See above for Premier

Economics' critique of these claims]. There have been a large number of complaints about the ad to the Advertising Standards Authority, citing its rather dubious text, unsubstantiated claims, making use of a small child, to try to make a PR point. People have pointed out to the

Heathrow expansion.
It's time we heard from our most
important stakeholders.



ASA that what this little girl needs is a stable climate for her future, not accelerating carbon emissions. The ASA have now taken this matter up with Heathrow airport, to be dealt with under the ASA's formal investigations procedure. After various stages, including giving Heathrow the opportunity to send evidence to support their claims, the ASA's decision will be published on their website. The timescale is not yet known. <http://tinyurl.com/ASA-Heathrow-advert>

New paper on future UK aviation shows fiscal measures will be needed to limit CO2 emissions

In a recent article in "World Transport Policy and Practice", 4 authors write on the prospects of UK transport being zero carbon by 2050 - or how far it will fall short of this target. Compared to the carbon emissions target that the Committee on Climate Change recommends, of 37.5 MtCO₂ per year, by 2050, the paper estimates UK aviation carbon emissions as considerably higher, unless a range of measures are taken to ensure they do not grow. In their "Maximum Impact (MI) scenario", in which UK aviation emissions might possibly be prevented from rising, some 27% of the cut would need to be from fiscal measures (ie. tax and pricing); some 14% of the cut could come from aircraft technology (with perhaps a small amount of biofuel); 13% cut in the CO₂ emissions might be from better air traffic control; and 10% could come from constrained demand (ie. not building runways on a predict-and-provide basis). Even with all the Maximum Impact measures, UK aviation emissions could only - at the most optimistic - be reduced by 56% of their "business as usual" level (about 40% increase), by 2050. All UK surface transport has to be zero carbon, to enable growth in aviation and shipping. 21.9.2014 <http://tinyurl.com/Fiscal-measures>

In Brief:

UK/China agreement to raise number of return flights each is allowed

Flights between the UK and China are set to increase following an agreement allowing more passenger flights between the two countries. These are controlled, as for all countries, by bilateral agreements. The previous agreement, last updated in 2011, limited the passenger airlines of both countries to a maximum of 31 return services per week in each direction, serving up to 6 destinations in each country. The new deal will increase the weekly maximum available to both countries to 40 direct flights in each direction, and allow UK airlines to serve up to 3 more Chinese cities than previously. ie. 9. <http://tinyurl.com/UK-China-flights>

Mexico's plans for 6-runway airport revive resistance from neighbouring farmers

Mexico's President recently unveiled details for a new Mexico City airport, with 6 runways, that will quadruple existing capacity, from about 30 million to 120 million annual passengers, and potentially become Latin America's biggest transit airport. But a group of farmers living near the planned site is fiercely opposed to the project – and they have already taken down one airport project before. There are the usual claims, that we are used to in the UK, of huge economic benefits, thousands of jobs, and a fear that not building it will cost vast sums of moneyfamiliar? In 2001 farmers around the nearby town of Atenco protested fiercely against land expropriation, and the project was cancelled. Doubts remain about the legality of land sales, and farmers say they "will defend our land with our lives." 12.9.2014 <http://tinyurl.com/Mexico-protests>

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
- Excellent book "A Word in Your Ear" on the lobbying industry in the UK. by Tamasin Cave & Andy Rowell
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