

Page 1

- Sir Howard Davies speech gives provisional support for a new south east runway – but shows how borderline the decision would be
- Green NGOs tell Sir Howard Davies that allowing another runway jeopardises UK climate goals

Page 2

- From John Stewart, Chair of AirportWatch. “Honesty is the best policy”

Page 3

- Packed seminar confirms opposition to any new Gatwick runway
- GACC warns that new flight paths proposed by NATS and Gatwick airport could affect thousands around Gatwick
- Airspace consultation launched by NATS for Gatwick, London City, Southend & Biggin Hill

Page 4

- Put the “No New Runway” option back on the table, AEF tells Sir Howard Davies
- SSE tell Airports Commission robust evidence needed on financial viability of any new runway

Page 5

- UK and American studies both show aircraft noise may increase risk of heart disease
- SSE lodges papers at High Court alleging Airports Commission criteria “infected by apparent bias” due to Geoff Muirhead

Page 6

- London First getting businesses to fund campaign “Let Britain Fly” to press for airport expansion
- London First suggests an independent ombudsman is needed to deal with aircraft noise in London

Page 7

- “BackHeathrow” (paid for by airport, not a grass roots campaign) send biased scare-mongering survey to half a million
- Ferrovial sells Heathrow stake to UK pension fund, the Universities Superannuation Scheme
- Scotsman speculates that Heathrow Holdings may sell Glasgow, Aberdeen and Southampton
- Update from Luton on its planning application

Page 8

- CAA air passenger survey 2012 confirms low % of passengers on business, and high % of AB and C1 flying

Page 9

- Government to make no significant change to night flights regime at Heathrow, Gatwick and Stansted until Airports Commission report
- Public consultation on London City Airport planning applications extended to 18th December
- UK looks to increase number of UK – China flights through renewed bilateral agreement

Page 10

- Verdict on Heathrow runways Operational Freedoms trial – a ‘lot of pain for very little gain’
- Infratil sells Manston Airport for £1 (£350,000 with adjustments) to Ann Gloag
- Glasgow Prestwick Airport may be given to the Scottish Government for nothing

Page 11

- Durham Tees Valley Airport scraps mainstream holiday flights – now just links to Schiphol, Aberdeen and Jersey
- Manchester airport 28.5 ha car park in public safety zone given go-ahead, despite safety fears from residents
- Nobel laureates demand European Commission action to classify oil from tar sands as very high carbon

Page 12

- Ryanair issues 2nd profit warning in 2 months expecting a loss for 2nd half of 2013/4 – due to “weak demand”
- Greenwash (inaccurate) statement: “Less CO2 per passenger by air than by car” says Virgin
- Reports of compulsory purchase of land, displacement of people and destruction of agricultural land for airports in Kerala
- Useful Info

Sir Howard Davies speech gives provisional support for a new south east runway – but shows how borderline the decision would be

In a speech in central London on 7th October Sir Howard Davies set out what he described as the Airports Commission's "emerging thinking" after their first 11 months of work. He said it "it would be helpful at this stage to set out some of our early thinking on the issue of overall capacity." He said: "Our provisional view.... is that additional capacity will need to be provided, alongside an overall framework for managing emissions growth, if we are to deliver the best outcomes in both environmental and connectivity terms." Also that: "...our provisional conclusion from this analysis ...is that we will need some net additional runway capacity in the south east of England in the coming decades." He first went through 4 sets of very persuasive arguments against a new runway (less future demand for air travel than anticipated; future demand can be met by existing capacity; carbon emissions from growing aviation could breach UK climate commitments; regional airports could take the extra demand).



In the second half of his speech, he then gave explanations for each point, on why he believed the optimal solution would indeed be more runway capacity. He said, on the guidance from the CCC on aviation CO2 emissions needing to be restricted, that: "We are in the process of updating the Committee on Climate Change's analysis and will present our findings in our Interim Report". Comments on the speech were welcomed by the Commission until 31st October. <http://www.airportwatch.org.uk/?p=17752>

Green organisations tell Sir Howard Davies that allowing another runway jeopardises UK climate goals

OPEN LETTER TO THE AIRPORTS COMMISSION



Eight of the key environmental organisations in the UK have written an open letter to Sir Howard Davies, Chairman of the Airports Commission, to express their concern about the Commission's "emerging thinking" that more runway capacity is needed for the south east, as expressed in Sir Howard's speech on 7th October. They have serious concerns about how adding a new runway could be compatible with UK climate targets, and they call on the Commission to demonstrate how its recommendations will avoid gambling on our future ability to meet the UK climate target. The NGOs say the Committee on Climate

Change's analysis concluded that stabilising UK aviation's emissions at their 2005 level could translate to a maximum 60% growth in the number of passengers at UK airports.

They set out 4 key arguments why no new runway capacity is needed even if passenger numbers are permitted to grow by up to 60%. They also urge the Commission to retain a "no new runways" option in its deliberations as the best way of achieving the targets set in the UK Climate Change Act. The eight green NGOs which have signed the letter are: Aviation Environment Federation; Campaign for Better Transport; Friends of the Earth; Greenpeace. RSPB; Stop Climate Chaos; The Woodland Trust; WWF-UK.
<http://www.airportwatch.org.uk/?p=18183>

The text of the letter is at <http://tinyurl.com/o9wx5uw>

**From John Stewart, Chair of AirportWatch
"Honesty is the best policy"**

After its stunning reversal in 2010 when the current Government dropped plans for new runways at Heathrow, Stansted and Gatwick, the aviation industry – and Heathrow in particular – pledged to be honest in its dealings with the press and the public. There is a new openness about Heathrow Airport. And Gatwick, too, seems to have been transparent about its plans for a second runway.

But, in some other places, the old dishonesty is creeping back. The approach of BackHeathrow, the airport's problem child, leaves much to be desired. It correctly points out that Heathrow would close if an Estuary-type airport were to be built. But it also leaves the impression that Heathrow might close if a third runway was not built. It knows it has no evidence whatsoever for that. It is simply a scare story.

London First, the organisation which represents big business in London, has also got into the act. Its latest report, featured in this bulletin, calls for an independent noise regulator. That is interesting but then it goes on to imply the ACNUSA – a semi-independent body which operates in Paris – has resulted in residents around Charles de Gaulle Airport getting a better deal than those living around Heathrow. The sound insulation on offer might be slightly better, but I know from many years of speaking with Charles de Gaulle residents that they look with envy at both Heathrow's operational practices and its night flight regime. ACNUSA has been able to do nothing for them to improve these. I am left with the impression that London First has felt it needed to cobble something together to show it hadn't forgotten about residents as it renews its calls for expansion at Heathrow...and elsewhere.

National Air Traffic Control (NATS) has to watch it doesn't fall into the dishonesty trap when it considers its plans to re-jig the airspace, particularly over London and the South East. NATS intends to re-jig all the airspace by 2020. Its first proposals are for Gatwick and London City, currently out to consultation and featured in this bulletin. But it only intends to consult on the principles of re-jigging the airspace; not the new flight paths that might result. A big mistake. One look at the Gatwick map and it becomes clear that Brighton, currently virtually clear of planes, could be under the new flight paths. There would be uproar. The protests, now into their second year, that have taken place in Frankfurt since the 4th runway opened are essentially about new flight paths that were introduced to accommodate the new runway.

It is possible that some reordering of the airspace, allied to new technology which can guide the planes more precisely, could bring noise benefits for local residents. NATS should be bold enough to engage in open, constructive debate. Or they risk becoming the London First of the skies.

Packed seminar confirms opposition to any new Gatwick runway



A packed seminar organised jointly by CPRE Surrey, CPRE Sussex and GACC on 25th October examined the arguments for and against a new runway at Gatwick. Some 150 representatives of county councils, borough, district and parish councils, planning officers and other experts, the Wildlife Trusts, plus four local MPs and one Member of the European Parliament, crowded into the conference centre at the Stanhill Court Hotel. There was also support from national representatives from WWF, and the National Trust. The opening speech was made by Cabinet member, Rt Hon Francis Maude, who said that the voice of

opposition ‘needed to be heard with clarion certainty.’ Great concern was expressed about drawing more workers and passengers from around the country, climate change, increased noise, the impact of 40,000 extra houses, the pressure on schools, hospitals, local road and rail services. Also the recent unconventional decision by West Sussex council to support a new runway, on which the public had not been consulted. A resolution that “Those here would oppose any new runway at Gatwick airport” was passed with overwhelming support. <http://www.airportwatch.org.uk/?p=18133>

GACC warns that new flight paths proposed by NATS and Gatwick airport could affect thousands around Gatwick

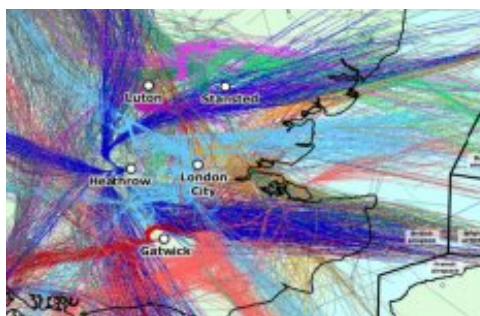
GACC (Gatwick Area Conservation Campaign) has reacted strongly to proposals to revamp many of the existing flight paths around Gatwick, which have been put forward for consultation jointly by NATS & Gatwick Airport Ltd. These plans, which are nothing to do with a 2nd runway, include new flight paths over areas which are at present peaceful – in order to increase the number of aircraft able to use the runway; more concentrated flight paths based on more accurate aircraft navigation, which will effectively make life hell for many people affected; a major reform of the pattern of aircraft queuing up to land, which will bring aircraft noise to many areas currently not affected; and the possibility of ‘respite’ by using two flight paths on alternate days.

The consultation includes nothing to show where the new flight paths might be, merely showing “swathes.” Instead it is couched in general terms, asking people to comment on broad concepts. There are no maps, and it is apparently intended that no maps will be produced until after the end of the consultation, and NATS and Gatwick do not intend to hold a second consultation. GACC is advising its members to study the new consultation and to express their views forcefully. 20.10.2013 <http://www.airportwatch.org.uk/?p=18020>



NATS overall consultation areas, for Gatwick to the south, and London City Airport, Biggin Hill and Southend airports, to the east.

<http://nats.aero/blog/2013/10/change-is-coming-the-london-airspace-consultation/>



Airspace consultation launched by NATS for Gatwick, London City, Southend & Biggin Hill airport areas

NATS and Gatwick Airport started a joint consultation on 16th October on proposed airspace changes over southern England. It is called the London Airspace Consultation (LAC) and it will run for 14 weeks, until January 21st, 2014. The

public can respond, though as GACC have commented (above) this is difficult as there is no specific detail on flight paths NATS says this is the first stage in a wider programme of proposed changes to deliver the UK's Future Airspace Strategy (FAS), which is being developed by the CAA. The intention is that the FAS will help airlines make efficiencies in fuel use, and perhaps reduce noise for those over-flown. New European legislation requires all member States, including the UK, to revise airspace and maximise the use of new technologies, to get noise and CO2 benefits. After this consultation, there will be another including London and Heathrow. NATS says: "Later stages will address proposals for airspace supporting other parts of the London airports network, to be complete by 2020." Local residents fear the real motive is to pack in more flights. If another south east runway was allowed, there would be a need for fresh consultations. 16.10.2013 <http://www.airportwatch.org.uk/?p=17934>

Put the "No New Runway" option back on the table, AEF tells Sir Howard Davies

Writing in the Huffington Post, James Lees (Research and Communications Officer, Aviation Environment Federation – AEF) says the Airports Commission is wrong in its preliminary conclusion – announced by Sir Howard Davies on 7th October – that a new runway is needed.



In his blog James goes through the list of strong arguments why no new runway capacity is needed. These include climate impacts. The CCC guidance suggests the number of air passengers could perhaps rise by 60% over 2005 levels, by 2050. However, this does not take any account of the non-CO2 impacts of air travel. Even allowing for 60% more passengers means the carbon emissions from UK aviation would rise to be a quarter of total UK emissions and require large carbon reductions from other sectors to meet the UK's 2050 target. And if a runway is built, how do we put the brakes on the aviation industry's growth? James concludes that Sir Howard is aware of all these arguments, but has made the wrong conclusion. "To show that he really is 'alive to the climate change problem,' Sir Howard should put the no new runway option back on the table." 17.10.2013 <http://www.airportwatch.org.uk/?p=17982>

The Gatwick Area Conservation Campaign (GACC) was equally not persuaded by the logic of Sir Howard's conclusion. Its Chairman, Brendon Sewill said: "That was not surprising – if he had said that no new runway was needed he would have done himself out of a job! What was significant was that he felt the need to answer the growing volume of opinion against any new runway. But his statement is bound to add to the worry of people around Gatwick, [and other possible new runway sites] and to the misery caused by blight." <http://www.gacc.org.uk/latest-news.php>

Stop Stansted Expansion commented that Sir Howard's arguments for more runway capacity in the south east are dangerously weak. They believe the UK as a whole already has more than enough runway capacity to meet DfT forecasts to 2050, and beyond. <http://www.stopstanstedexpansion.com/media.html>

SSE tell Airports Commission robust evidence will be needed on financial viability of any new runway

Submitting their comments on Sir Howard's "Emerging Thinking" speech of 7th October, Stop Stansted Expansion set out the arguments, on climate as well as capacity and demand grounds, against building any new runway capacity. They argue that the speech contained very little hard evidence to support the conclusion favouring a new runway. SSE question the financial viability of a new runway, as there is already so much spare runway capacity, and say people will expect to see robust evidence to demonstrate the Commission's grounds for its confidence that projects proposed have commercial viability.

SSE also says the current DfT demand forecasts are not nearly strong enough - or reliable enough - to support a business case for a new runway. They add: "... we would point out that if we are able to identify so many significant downside risks to the ATM demand forecasts (the key determinant of the need or

otherwise for additional runway capacity), then so also will investors be able to identify all these significant downside risks. Thus, the main obstacle to any new airport infrastructure in the south east may well turn out to be the well justified caution of investors rather than the effectiveness of campaigners or the procrastination of politicians." <http://www.airportwatch.org.uk/?p=18195>

The SSE submission is at <http://www.airportwatch.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/SSE-Submission-to-Airports-Commission-Response-to-Emerging-Thinking-F.pdf>

UK and American studies both show aircraft noise may increase risk of heart disease

People who live close to an airport and are exposed to constant loud aircraft noise may face an increased risk of cardiovascular disease, according to new studies from the UK and US. Aircraft noise is not merely an irritation, and doesn't just reduce people's quality of life. It also causes actual harm to health, especially for older people. This should be factored in to future planning decisions about new airports and runways.

The UK study by researchers at Imperial College and King's College in London - and published in the BMJ - looked at admissions and mortality rates for 3.6 million people living near Heathrow. It covered 12 London boroughs and 9 districts outside London where aircraft noise exceeds 50 decibels - about the volume of a normal conversation in a quiet room. The researchers made every effort to eliminate other factors that might have a relationship with stroke and heart disease, such as deprivation, South Asian ethnicity and smoking-related illness. It found that deaths from stroke, heart and circulatory disease are 20% higher in areas with high levels of aircraft noise than in places with the least noise. This new study confirms the findings of the 2008 "HYENA" study, also by Imperial College, which looked at people living near Heathrow and 5 other European airports.

The linked American study looked at over 6 million Americans over the age of 65 living around 89 US airports. It found that, on average, their risk went up 3.5% for every extra 10 decibels of noise they experienced. The research is clear that living with a lot of aircraft noise damages health, though this needs further work. The study indicates that health impacts should not be ignored, and they have costs.



Simon Calder wrote that while on 7th October, Sir Howard Davies gave a meticulous exposition of the factors concerning his commission, and its decision on new UK airport capacity. "He paid due regard to the concerns of local residents about noise and traffic. But 48 hours ago a correlation between airport proximity and the risk of heart attacks or strokes was not in the public domain. Now that it is, the spectrum of harm from airports has extended from nuisance to a serious public health threat." 9.10.2013

<http://www.airportwatch.org.uk/?p=17785>

Stop Stansted Expansion lodges papers at High Court alleging Airports Commission criteria "infected by apparent bias" due to Geoff Muirhead

Stop Stansted Expansion (SSE) lodged papers at the Royal Courts of Justice, on 15th October, alleging that the criteria being applied to decide on possible options for new runway sites in England are "infected by apparent bias". SSE want High Court judges to order the Government-appointed Airports Commission to delay the publication of any shortlist of options until the criteria have been re-determined.

SSE argue that there was apparent bias because Geoff Muirhead, a recently-resigned member of the Commission, had a conflict of interest. For almost a year, Mr Muirhead was allowed to play a pivotal role on the Commission, as key member



with aviation expertise. Mr Muirhead is a former chief executive of Manchester Airports Group (MAG), the owners of Stansted since February. He stepped down from the Commission on 20th September after SSE warned Transport Secretary Patrick McLoughlin they would take legal action if he stayed.

The High Court is being asked to order the Commission “to re-visit certain key decisions made by the Commission during the time that Mr Muirhead was involved”. SSE are asking the Court to order the Commission to re-determine the 'sift criteria' (in effect the selection criteria) for assessing airport expansion options - and to delay the publication of any shortlist of options until the ‘sift criteria’ have been re-determined. There could be a risk of bias in favour of Stansted. Brian Ross, from SSE, said: “With proposals on the table from MAG to make Stansted the world’s busiest airport with four runways handling up to 160 million passengers a year, there is far too much at stake to allow the issue of apparent bias to go unchallenged.” <http://www.airportwatch.org.uk/?p=17912>

London First getting businesses to fund campaign “Let Britain Fly” to press for airport expansion

Business group London First will put pressure on the main political parties to heed the Airports Commission's recommendations when published after the 2015 election. Some London businesses (including the City of London Corporation, Canary Wharf Group, Sir Robert McAlpine, the Berkeley Group, John Lewis and Segro) through “London First” are to fund a campaign for airport expansion. Their “Let Britain Fly” campaign will cost £250,000 and London First is seeking £25,000 each from businesses, trade unions and London boroughs. They say this will be used to fund academic studies and advertising, and their lobbying will not favour any particular airport. “London First” is an aggressively pro-growth lobby organisation, whose stated mission is to “make London the best city in the world in which to do business.” 11.10.2013 <http://www.airportwatch.org.uk/?p=2653>

London First suggests an independent ombudsman is needed to deal with aircraft noise in London

In the last month before the Airports Commission delivers its interim report, there has been a lot of publicity about schemes and plans to try and square the circle of more flights inevitably meaning more noise those those under flight paths. “London First” supports expanding London airport capacity, especially at Heathrow. It has now produced a short report called "More Flights, Less Noise" which recommends that, in order to get more flights over London, there should be a noise pollution tsar, to protect people living under flight paths. They say an independent noise ombudsman, with a range of powers including the ability to fine an airline that persistently broke noise pollution limits, would address a “basic lack of trust and transparency” between those pressing the economic case for airport expansion and local communities. In terms of practical reality for a community, being well informed about aircraft noise is no substitute for reducing it.

London First claim a fines scheme running in Paris since 2000 has been successful – though it is known that, in practice, residents round Charles de Gaulle airport believe residents near Heathrow get a better deal than they do. London First’s hopes of there being less aircraft noise, even with more planes, stems from slight improvements by modern planes on aircraft noise. However, in reality the improvements are very small and these are more than outweighed if there are more flights. Due to the logarithmic scale on which aircraft noise is measured, a seemingly huge reduction in sound energy such as “50% quieter” translates, in reality, to an almost imperceptible difference of 3 decibels. An increase of 3 dB is a doubling of sound level. This capitalises, unfairly, on the poor mathematical understanding of most people.

7.11.2013 <http://www.airportwatch.org.uk/?p=18271>



Indicating logarithmic scale

“BackHeathrow” (paid for by airport – not a grass roots campaign) send biased scare-mongering survey to half a million



A lobbying group - called BackHeathrow - funded by Heathrow Airport is to distribute a survey to half a million homes, to try and get some favourable views on a new Heathrow runway. They are using fear as a tactic, to get local people worried that they might lose their jobs if the airport was not allowed to expand. There is, of course, no prospect of Heathrow being closed - the BackHeathrow tactic is irresponsible and ill-advised.

John McDonnell, the MP for Hayes and Harlington, bordering Heathrow to the north and under threat from a northern runway, said it was just another front organisation funded by the airport and another cynical spurious public relations exercise. John Stewart, chairman of HACAN, said BackHeathrow claims it is a grass roots campaign but no grass roots campaign has the sort of funding to send out half a million surveys. This is astoturfing - not a real citizens' initiative. BackHeathrow survey results must be treated with great scepticism, when/if they come out. Survey has zero academic rigour and is so badly worded & biased as to be valueless with questions are so loaded they'd almost make you laugh. 18.10.2013

<http://www.airportwatch.org.uk/?p=18000>

Ferrovial sells Heathrow stake to UK pension fund – the Universities Superannuation Scheme – for £392m

Spanish infrastructure giant Ferrovial has further reduced its stake in Heathrow after agreeing to sell 8.65% of the airports group to UK pension fund, the Universities Superannuation Scheme (USS), for £392m. The USS is one of the UK's largest pension funds and is the scheme for universities and other higher education institutions in the UK. The deal, which values Heathrow at £4.5 billion, (plus the extra value of some £10 billion in debts) is the 4th time Ferrovial has trimmed its holding in Heathrow (or BAA as it was) in 2 years. It reduces Ferrovial's stake to 25%, down from 62% when it bought BAA in 2006 in a £10.3 billion deal. Heathrow Airport Holdings has, since 2006, had to sell Edinburgh, Gatwick and Stansted, but still owns Aberdeen, Glasgow and Southampton airports. Ferrovial will remain the largest shareholder in Heathrow following the deal. USS will hold the 7th biggest stake behind China Investment Corporation which bought 10% of Heathrow in October 2012. <http://www.airportwatch.org.uk/?p=18065>

Scotsman speculates that Heathrow Holdings may sell Glasgow, Aberdeen and Southampton airport to raise cash for Heathrow runway

The Scotsman speculates that Heathrow Holdings Ltd (aka BAA) is considering selling Aberdeen, Glasgow and Southampton airports, for a figure in the range of £1 billion, so it can focus more on Heathrow and getting a third runway if it could get approval to build another. It is speculated that Glasgow might sell for £600 million, and Aberdeen + Southampton might go for £450 - 500 million for the two. The potential prices for the airports will depend on passenger numbers. Some 80 – 90% Heathrow Holdings' business comes from Heathrow. Ferrovial is thought to be considering a deal to buy out the other shareholders in the 3 regional airports. Analysts believe the 3 airports are marketable.

<http://www.airportwatch.org.uk/?p=18209>

Update from Luton on its planning application

We're fast approaching the first anniversary of the airport operator's planning application, which has so far failed to be presented formally to any organisation legally competent to determine it. During this "phony war" period the ownership of the operating concession changed hands, it having been purchased by a consortium consisting of the previous minority shareholder AENA (a Spanish company which operates a number of airports and is also the Spanish equivalent of NATS), together with the French-based insurance company AXA.

Recent small signs indicate that the new owners are getting a bit restive and have starting "pre-qualification" enquiries with contractors who might become involved in the construction works.

There's been much “wrestling beneath the blankets”, of course, only some of which we "usual suspects" have seen, but there is an interesting but crucial conundrum still to be solved: namely, just which is the organisation legally competent to determine the planning application? From almost our first sight of the proposals, we believed the proposals deliberately concealed the passenger throughput which could be achieved if it were implemented, so as to enable the airport owner (Luton Borough Council) to determine it. But the 2008 Planning Act is very clear in asking “is the proposal capable of increasing the capacity of the airport by more than 10Mppa?” and, if that's the case, the proposal becomes a Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project (NSIP), which should be determined by the Planning Inspectorate, which process involves a public examination of its details. And those examinations are extremely searching.....and very public in terms of rights to speak in objection.



Luton Borough Council were sufficiently concerned about our "it's an NSIP" responses that it commissioned two independent consultant reports about the airport's passenger capacity, essentially showing capacity "now" and "with the expansion". The 2nd report shows there are entirely feasible circumstances in which the added capacity would exceed the 10Mppa tipping-point: it rather pointedly includes a chapter showing how, by suitable Section 106 agreements, throughput might be limited.

But the 2008 Planning Act is silent on the subject of what amounts to building bigger but limiting use of the available capacity: and properly so, since such agreements are relatively easily overturned. It just asks the simple question “is the proposal capable of increasing the capacity of the airport by more than 10Mppa?” It's also, as the airport's own Design Brief told the world in 2002, impossible to implement a limit on passenger throughput.

And history shows us that Luton will grow to fill whatever capacity exists: its last planning application was to grow from 3Mppa to 5Mppa - and in 2008 nearly 11Mppa passed through the airport. We're insisting that the application goes straight to the Planning Inspectorate, by-passing the local authority owner altogether, and that it gets a proper examination-in-public.

Michael Nidd, LLATVCC, Luton

CAA air passenger survey 2012 confirms low % of passengers on business, and high % of AB and C1 flying

The CAA Air Passenger Survey for 2012 has been published. It covered Birmingham, Bristol, Cardiff, East Midlands, Exeter, Gatwick, Heathrow, London City, Luton, Manchester and Stansted Airports. (Each year it covers a slightly different selection). Over 210,000 departing passengers were questioned. Some of the interesting findings from the survey were: Heathrow had 37% connecting passengers; London City airport had the highest proportion on business, at 54% (down from 63% in 2010); Heathrow had 32.4% on business; Gatwick 17.5%; Manchester 23.9 %; Stansted 15%; Luton 16.1%; Birmingham 22.5% business.

	International business	International leisure	Domestic business	Domestic leisure	Total business	Total leisure
2012 11 airports studied	18.2%	72.1%	3.9%	5.8%	22.1%	77.9%

The survey also looked at the socio-economic group of passengers. Around 45% of the UK population are classed by polling organisations at C2,D+E; 29% as C1; 27% as A/B (so 56% are A/B+C1). For London airports, the A/B+C1 group fly a disproportionate amount. <http://www.airportwatch.org.uk/?p=18253>

Table below shows leisure passengers in top socio-economic groups at the 11 airports studied:

	Gatwick	Heathrow	London City	Luton	Stansted	B'ham	Bristol	Cardiff	East Midlands	Exeter	Manchester
2012 A/B+C1	74.0%	80.1%	85.4%	71.1%	70.7%	67.0%	64.7%	47.8%	56.6%	68.6%	56.6%

Government to make no significant change to night flights regime at Heathrow, Gatwick and Stansted until Airports Commission report

In January 2013 the DfT put out the first part of its consultation on the night flight regime at the UK's 3 designated airports, Heathrow, Gatwick and Stansted. The DfT said then that the 2nd consultation would be published later this year, to include specific proposals for the new regime, such as the number of permitted night flights - informed by the evidence from the first consultation. The DfT has now published this 2nd stage, but instead of any specific measures, it proposes no significant change to the night flight regime at Heathrow until 2017. It says it does not want to pre-empt the findings of the Airports Commission which is due to publish its final report in summer 2015. The current night flight regime for the 3 airports ends in October 2014. Normally a new regime is put in place to cover the next 5 - 6 years. This time the Government has decided in effect to roll-over the existing regime until 2017. The only change for Heathrow is a proposal "to extend the operational ban on the noisiest types of aircraft to include an extra half hour, the 23.00-23.30 period. 11.11.2013 <http://www.airportwatch.org.uk/?p=18310>

Details of the consultation:

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/256237/night-flying.pdf

Public consultation on London City Airport planning applications extended to 18th December

London City Airport applied back in July for expansion. While the application does not propose to increase the number of flights, it crucially changes the split between scheduled jets and jet centre movements leading to a change in the 2010 baseline public safety zone. The application is to demolish some buildings and structures, with additional infrastructure, passenger facilities and a new hotel as well as upgrading 4 aircraft stands, and adding 7 new aircraft parking stands. It would also mean extension and modification of the existing airfield, including the creation of an extended taxi lane.

The public consultation deadline had been 28th October, but Newham Council has had to extend it till 18th December 2013. The application is mainly online, and the council planning website had been "down" during some of the time. The planning application was presented in such an impenetrable manner on the Newham website that it was effectively impossible for ordinary people to understand what was proposed. Now Newham says that : "Due to the number of responses to the London City Airport planning consultation, including many who have asked for extra time to submit a response, we have decided to extend the deadline.... We will shortly be publicising the extended consultation deadline including writing to more than 25,000 homes in the local area."

There are real fears of more noise from the airport, and loss of building space due to the enlarged public safety zones. London City Airport campaigners have managed to locate the key information, from among the hundreds of documents, and produced a simple response email which anyone can (adapt and) use. <http://www.airportwatch.org.uk/?p=18100> Local campaigners said the impacts of the airport's expansion will affect the local area for generations to come, so it is important that local residents have the opportunity to get their voices heard. 30.10.2013 <http://www.airportwatch.org.uk/?p=18148>

UK looks to increase number of UK – China flights through renewed bilateral agreement

UK Transport minister Patrick McLoughlin has agreed to start negotiations with China in early 2014 to increase the number of flights allowed between the two countries. This would need an updated bilateral agreement with China. At present each country has a "bilateral agreement" with each other country - the aim of which was initially to prevent airlines of rich countries dominating those of poor countries, in providing air links. Currently the bilateral agreement between the UK and China, which was signed in 2004, limits each country's airlines to a total of 31 return flights per week between 6 destinations in both

the UK and China. Patrick McLoughlin hopes that increasing this number of flights would be good "for trade, tourism and forging new partnerships, strengthening the links between our two countries." The DfT said more flights could increase the amount that visiting Chinese nationals spend in the UK, which was around £300 million in 2012. The DfT also hopes this could "benefit the increasing number of UK companies who regularly travel to China." <http://www.airportwatch.org.uk/?p=18146>

Verdict on Heathrow runways Operational Freedoms trial – a ‘lot of pain for very little gain’

Heathrow Airport has produced its report on the ‘Operational Freedoms’ trials, which were in two phases – the 1st from November 2011 to February 2012 and the 2nd phase ran from July 2012 to February 2013. Their aim was to look at new operating procedures at “to reduce delay, improve punctuality and increase resilience whilst maintaining a balance with impacts on local communities.” The verdict by the CAA was that the tests using runways more intensively had been “inconclusive”. John Stewart, Chair of HACAN commented that: “It appears that these trials brought little benefit to the airport. But they did deprive residents of their much-valued half-day’s break from the noise. To bring them back would be a lot of pain for very little gain.”

The two sets of failed to show clear-cut benefits and the CAA said: “It is extremely difficult to reach any strong conclusions on the benefit or otherwise of the trial.” There had been a surge in complaints during the tests, as people had planes landing during the half-day periods that used to be plane-free. One of the “operational freedoms” trialled was to use the southern runway for use by Airbus A380s, which create problems with increased wake turbulence, slowing down departures behind it. Heathrow also wants some traffic from Terminal 4, which is located to the south of the airport, to use the southern runway more often – out of turn. The report says there were up to six A380 “proactive” (ie. non-standard runway) arrivals on any given day. However, the report implies there was no evidence to suggest that proactive tests led to a reduction in stackholding. “This does not therefore confirm the expected positive effect of the freedom to manage to the arrival stream around A380 arrivals.”

New aviation minister Robert Goodwill has asked the Airports Commission to make a recommendation on the operational freedoms in its interim report in December. <http://www.airportwatch.org.uk/?p=18071>

Infratil sells Manston Airport for £1 (£350,000 with adjustments) to Ann Gloag

New Zealand company, Infratil, agreed to sell Manston Airport to Lothian Shelf (710) Limited, an entity wholly owned by Ann Gloag, a co-founder of Stagecoach with her brother Brian Souter. It was sold for cash consideration of £1, plus an adjustment for working capital variances and cash injected by Infratil between 14 October 2013 and transaction completion (which is expected to be around £350,000). Infratil tried to look on the positive side, saying "Infratil Limited is very pleased to have found an acquiror with a vision for Manston Airport's future development," and "this sale will result in a more focused portfolio and improve our future cash flow position." Sale completion will probably be on 29th November. Infratil bought Manston for £17 million in 2005. 14.11.2013 <http://www.airportwatch.org.uk/?p=17913>

Glasgow Prestwick Airport may be given to the Scottish Government for nothing

The owners of Prestwick, Infratil, have suggested they may give away the unprofitable airport for nothing. The Scottish government has announced it is negotiating to buy it, and hopes to conclude detailed negotiations by 20 November - saying it was the "only realistic alternative to closure". Prestwick was put up for sale last March after heavy annual losses. Several investors expressed interest but no offers were made. In May 2013, Infratil announced that it had written down the value of both airports to £11m. Infratil has agreed to ensure the airport is kept fully open and operational during the negotiation process. In 2012 Prestwick only had around 1 million passengers. <http://www.airportwatch.org.uk/?p=17848>

Durham Tees Valley Airport scraps mainstream holiday flights – now just links to Schiphol, Aberdeen and Jersey

Durham Tees Valley Airport has decided, after a review of its business, to axe its holiday flights in order to concentrate on business travel. The struggling airport will continue passenger flights to Amsterdam, Aberdeen and Jersey only - but all holiday charters will end next summer. Scheduled daily passenger flights to Schiphol (Amsterdam) - operated by KLM - and Eastern Airways' flights to Aberdeen will continue as normal, and Flybe link to Jersey. But the airport will be "streamlining operations and moving away from all mainstream holiday charter programmes". The terminal will undergo changes, making the operational area smaller. Investment in the new layout will make it more suited to customers on scheduled flights with "new retail offerings and business services". They are trying to keep some aviation use for the airport and will have their master plan for public consultation from mid-November. Back in February, they announced the airport was to become a centre for the storage and dismantling of unused planes, and recycling parts. They have also applied twice, and failed twice, to get Regional Growth Fund money. <http://www.airportwatch.org.uk/?p=18158>

Manchester airport 28.5 ha car park in public safety zone given go-ahead, despite safety fears from residents

Plans for a 'gigantic' 9,000-space car park under Manchester Airport's flight path have been approved – by Manchester City Council - despite claims it is an accident 'waiting to happen'. The airport says it needs the long-stay facility, near the Moss Nook area of



Wythenshawe, to replace a 3,000-space car park being lost to part of the Airport City development. The airport claims it would cut traffic and pollution. But the plans will mean building in the airport's 'public safety zone' – the area around the end of a busy runway that is usually left undeveloped to protect people from planes. The risk of a plane crashing, on landing or take-off, is highest there. This has very much upset local people. Residents and ward councillors fear any future plane crash on a car

park would cause a massive explosion because of the presence of thousands of vehicle petrol tanks. Petitions containing more than 2,200 signatures were submitted opposing the move, along with 34 formal letters of objections, while local ward councillors had already voted against it last month. The car park will take up at least 28.5 hectares of green land, as an indirect consequence of the Airport City Development. <http://www.airportwatch.org.uk/?p=18087>

Nobel laureates demand European Commission action to classify oil from tar sands as very high carbon

Twenty-one Nobel winners, many of whom have won Nobel Peace Prizes, have urged the EU to immediately implement the Fuel Quality Directive (FQD) which would label tar sands as higher carbon ("dirtier") than other fuels. The Nobel laureates say the extraction of unconventional fuels – such as oil sands and oil shale – is having a particularly devastating impact on climate change. The powerful letter has attempted to restart the discussion about how tar sands and oil shale should be treated in the EU, a discussion that has been delayed for too long, following a massive lobbying campaign by Canada, the US and the global oil industry. Conventional oil has been given a value of 87.5g of CO₂ equivalent per megajoule. In comparison, tar sands oil has a value of 107g, oil shale 131g and coal-to-liquid 172g. The laureates quote IEA warnings that unconventional fuel sources are especially damaging to the environment and climate, and its calculation that two-thirds of known fossil-fuel reserves must be left in the ground 'to avoid catastrophic climate change'. The letter says the time for positive action is now and the EU can demonstrate clear and unambiguous leadership on this. <http://www.airportwatch.org.uk/?p=18125>

Ryanair issues 2nd profit warning in 2 months expecting a loss for 2nd half of 2013/4 – due to “weak demand”

Ryanair has issued its 2nd profit warning in 2 months. It expects losses in the 2nd half of 2013-14 which is its first fall in profits for 5 years. It has recently cut fares, in an attempt to attract more passengers against increased competition, less demand and weak economic conditions. Ryanair is as determined as ever to keep on growing (for growth's sake). It aims to increase its passengers from 79.3m in 2012-13 to 110m in 2018-19. It now forecasts profit for the year to March 2014 as €500 to €520 million, while in September it predicted more like €70 million. Ryanair hopes low fares attract more passengers, who then spend more on other extras and services. 5.11.2013 <http://www.airportwatch.org.uk/?p=18246>

Greenwash (inaccurate) statement: “Less CO2 per passenger by air than by car” says Virgin

The aviation industry knows it provides an exceptionally high carbon way to travel, and is keen to find ways to try to disguise this fact. In reality, a passenger on a medium length flight (2,000 - 4,000 miles or so) in a modern plane is probably responsible for roughly the same amount of carbon as someone driving the same distance alone in a car that does an average around 48 miles per gallon (like at Toyota Yaris).

Saying that air travel per passenger is lower carbon than a car journey is missing the point for two important reasons: 1). Most people would think twice about driving 3,000 or 4,000 miles. And back. It is easy and quick (as well as much cheaper) by plane. So people make these trips more often, and are encouraged to travel more. 2). Figures do not take in to the non-CO2 impacts of aircraft emissions, which are likely to approximately double the climate impact. So now Virgin are trying to make out that flying is lower carbon than driving. This is disingenuous nonsense. As WWF-UK point out, Virgin is increasing its number of passengers, and getting people to fly more often, as fast as it can, so raising the overall emissions. Don't be hoodwinked by the greenwash <http://www.airportwatch.org.uk/?p=18031>

Reports of compulsory purchase of land, displacement of people and destruction of agricultural land for airports in Kerala

The Indian government is keen to increase the flow of tourists into Kerala. Though there are two large airports which serve the area, there is pressure to build more. One of the sites under threat of an airport is Anakkara. There is considerable opposition. The airport would take well over 500 acres, much of which now grows paddy, as well as pepper, coffee and cardamom cultivation areas. There is an Anti-Airport Agitation Council that is fighting the plans with a Save Anakkara Blog and Anti-Anakkara Airport on Facebook, explaining reasons for their opposition. <http://www.airportwatch.org.uk/?p=18179>

There is also information from Mangalore, where it appears villagers were persuaded some years ago to sell their land cheaply for the airport. They got little for it, and were moved to other land nearby at a place called Adyapady. A local newspaper says local people have “have been facing many problems due to the Airport Authority” which they say has been negligent. <http://www.airportwatch.org.uk/?p=17830>

Useful Info

- For large amounts of up-to-date news on airports and aviation, see AirportWatch's news pages http://www.airportwatch.org.uk/?page_id=148
- Watch plane movements in real time over the UK FlightRadar <http://www.flightradar24.com>
- Follow updates from the Airports Commission <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/airports-commission>
- For daily transport news in the UK-Transportinfo at <http://transportinfo.org.uk>
- News and expert analysis on the AEF website at <http://www.aef.org.uk>
- Follow AirportWatch on Twitter @AirportWatch and Facebook <http://on.fb.me/UoSkEx>

Bulletin compiled by Sarah Clayton - with thanks to many people for their help. 12.11.2013

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