

# TAKE OFF

The journal of HACAN

July 2019



## ‘IT’S THE SCALE OF IT THAT HITS YOU’

**Heathrow launches its biggest-ever consultation into one of the largest and most complex construction projects in Europe**

### HACAN Comment

#### **A 3<sup>rd</sup> Runway Not Inevitable**

Although the third runway may appear closer than ever before, it is not a certainty. Indeed, the release of the latest plans seems to have woken up people to the sheer scale of its impact. This is so much more than the building of a new runway. It is one of Europe’s biggest construction projects, taking place on the edge of Britain’s capital city. Homes will be demolished, schools relocated, roads re-routed, the M25 realigned, the cost to the public purse uncertain and, of course, more than 700 extra planes a day. Moreover, Heathrow has still to navigate its plans through a Planning Inquiry at a time when there is growing awareness about climate change and uncertainty whether a new Conservative Prime Minister or any incoming Labour Government would continue to back the project. Both candidates to be Prime Minister, as well as the Labour Party, have made pledges to increase spending, with a particular emphasis on investment in the North. Heathrow will finance the new runway itself, but it remains unclear how much public money will be required for the road and rail infrastructure. HACAN will continue to oppose the new runway whilst fighting to get the best deal for our members if it goes ahead. The next year will be critical.



This is the statutory consultation which Heathrow is required to carry out for the third runway as part of the Development Consent Order (DCO) process. The airport will submit its final proposals to a Planning Inquiry which is expected to start in the middle of 2020 and run for a maximum of 9 months. The Inquiry inspectors will then make a recommendation to the Secretary of State for Transport who will take the final decision on whether or not to give the go-ahead (probably late 2021). If given the green light, Heathrow hope to open the third runway in 2026.

#### **HACAN AGM**

We’ll be discussing all matters Heathrow at our AGM on **2<sup>nd</sup> October**, 7pm, Duke St Baptist Church, Duke St, TW9 1DH, very close to Richmond Station

# A NEW RUNWAY WHICH WILL IMPACT ALL OUR LIVES

## Where are the Flight Paths?

This is often the first question we are asked. You'll recall from our last newsletter that the changes to airspace which Heathrow is making (alongside all airports in the SE) are not part of this DCO process but form part of a separate process laid down by the CAA. It is easy to work out where the final approach to the new runway will be but, beyond that, the exact flight paths will remain unknown until Heathrow consults on them in 2021/22. Clearly it would have been much more meaningful if more was known about the flight paths at this stage.

## Responding to the Consultation

We can respond in a number of ways: online using the feedback form on Heathrow's website <https://aec.heathrowconsultation.com/>; complete a feedback form, available at the events; email Heathrow at [feedback@heathrowconsultation.com](mailto:feedback@heathrowconsultation.com); or write to Freepost LHR AIRPORT EXPANSION CONSULTATION. **Note:** We are not required to use the online form.

- **HACAN will put our response on our website in early August to give you some guidance.**
- **In the meantime we have produced an 8-page briefing to help you navigate the consultation.**

It is on our website: [www.hacan.org.uk](http://www.hacan.org.uk)  
<https://hacan.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/Heathrow-Statutory-Consultation-HACAN-Briefing.pdf>

## Heathrow proposes to build:

- **A new runway** (partly over the M25, a section of which will need to be moved).
- **New terminal facilities**
- **Two giant car-parks** – They are intended mainly to replace the current car parking facilities.
- **New freight facilities** to cater for a predicted doubling of air freight

Heathrow will also need to **re-route** a number of **rivers** and **local roads**

**The new facilities will be phased in** so there will be some construction taking place for many years after the intended opening date of the new runway in 2026.

# RADICAL NOISE PROPOSALS

## The Noise Envelope is the Key

The noise envelope provides the framework within which Heathrow will be allowed to grow incrementally but only if it adheres to agreed noise limits. Growth will not be permitted if the noise limits are breached. The consultation document describes the envelope thus: *"Heathrow's noise envelope is a set of legally-binding and enforceable limits and controls to manage noise in the future whilst enabling growth."* The purpose of the envelope is to allow growth but give communities reassurance about noise.

## Big changes to runway alternation patterns

At present planes landing over West London switch runways at 3pm in order to give people in the area a half day's break from the noise. These are the only communities which get a planned break. Heathrow's 'airspace change' consultation earlier this year proposed a significant increase in the number of areas which would get respite. That is not part of this consultation. Those airspace change proposals are being refined and will be subject of a further consultation in 2022 when all the proposed detailed flight paths will be revealed. What this consultation concentrates on are the areas which are or will be under the final approach paths to the three runways (both east and west of the airport).

## The big change is that Heathrow proposes coordinating the day and night-time respite periods

### Proposed Daytime Alternation

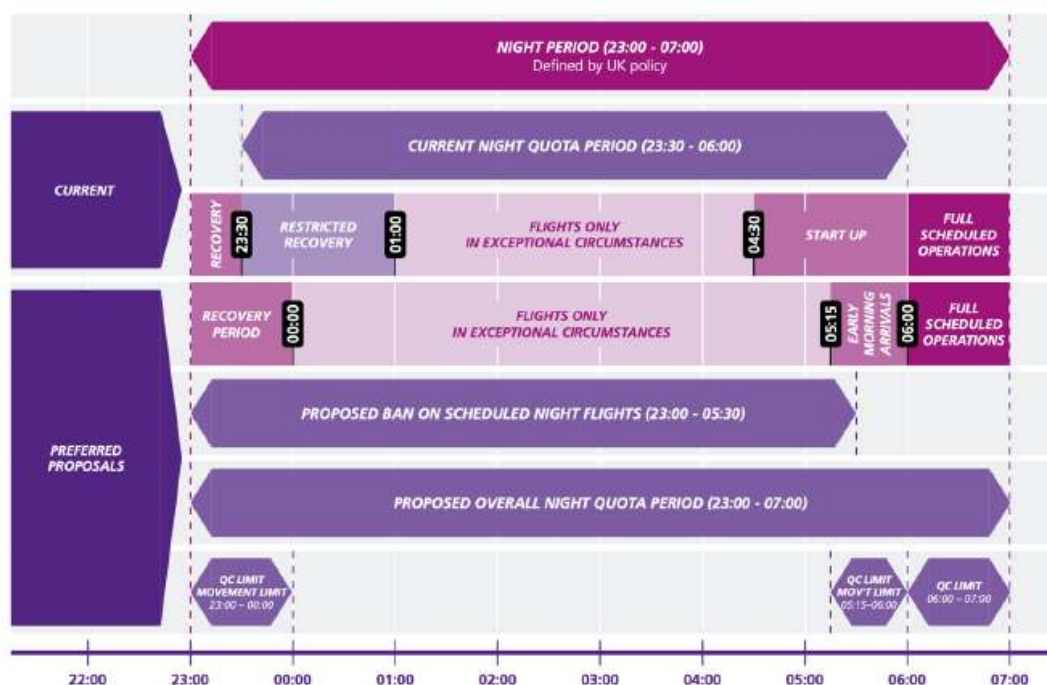
In essence, each community will be guaranteed at least a third of the day without planes. This includes areas very close to the airport like Cranford, Poyle and Hatton Cross. The proposed pattern has been designed in such a way to ensure that, even if the wind changes and these places start to get departures, that third of the day respite is still guaranteed.

### Proposed Night-time Alternation

Heathrow is proposing to tie in respite during the night with the daytime respite periods in order to give communities longer breaks from the planes. The National Policy Statement – the legally-binding document which Parliament approved last year – requires Heathrow to provide people with 6.5 hours free of planes at some period between 11pm and 7am. Heathrow is proposing just to use one runway each night to operate flights before 6am. The runway used would be rotated. By coordinating the night respite period on any one night with the daytime respite for that flight path, Heathrow intends to extend the total period of respite people experience. So for example, if on a particular night, planes were scheduled to land before 6am, the respite pattern would be designed to ensure you got no flights the previous evening. It would mean a total of just over 10 hours without flights before they started in the early morning. By linking day and night respite periods Heathrow say every community can expect at least 7 hours respite between 10pm and 7am every night. It would also enable Heathrow to prioritise evening, early morning and night respite periods – the times people said in response to an earlier consultation they most valued a noise break.

**The night respite proposals outlined above are an improvement on the current night-time arrangements but there is concern how Heathrow is defining ‘night’ in the diagram below.**

Figure 4.9: Preferred Proposals for Future Night Flight Operations



There are legitimate questions to be asked whether this amounts to a 6.5 hour period without flights as laid out in the National Policy Statement. Most of us would accept that there is a need to allow for flights in exceptional circumstances but may question whether the hour long ‘recovery period’ should be part of the 6.5 hour period without flights. There will be no *scheduled* flights during that period but should there be any flights at all? It is, however, worth repeating that most nights communities will not be getting flights before 6am because of the rotation of runways.

**HACAN would like to hear your views on these noise proposals to inform our response to the consultation. Feel free to email us: [johnstewart2@btconnect.com](mailto:johnstewart2@btconnect.com)**

**The consultation also asks for views on its proposals on a wide range of other matters:**

- Mitigation and Compensation
- Surface Access
- Air Pollution
- Climate Change
- Directional Preference

Generally aircraft need to land and take-off into the wind. However, this is less important if there is a slight wind. At present Heathrow operates what is known as 'westerly preference'. This means that when a west wind is blowing, planes continue to land from the east until the wind reaches about 5 knots. Heathrow is proposing to move to 'managed preference'. This will permit Heathrow more flexibility when either west or east wind is less than 5 knots – about 20% of the time. That flexibility will allow it to guarantee periods of respite each day to areas close to the airport like Cranford, Poyle and Hatton Cross whatever the direction of the wind. It will also allow it to give communities some breaks from the noise during long, unbroken periods of easterly or westerly winds that can go on for weeks or sometimes months at a time.

## NEWS IN BRIEF

A number of the applicants in the **legal case** where they unsuccessfully challenged the National Policy Statement on which the third runway decision was based are asking for the right to appeal. The judges are expected to rule on the request over the next month or so.

**London City** published its draft Master Plan at the end of June. It proposes to double flight numbers from their current level, remove weekend respite, increase early morning and late evening flights... and offer the communities impacted virtually nothing in return. It wants to lift the current annual cap of 111,000 a year to 151,000 by 2035. After looking at the responses to its consultation, it will publish its final Master Plan. It would need to put in a planning application if it decided to pursue its proposals. Meanwhile London City has been asked to review its controversial concentrated flight paths so as to coordinate its flight paths with the airspace changes all airports in the South East are making.

**More details on the London City consultation:** <https://www.londoncityairport.com/corporate/consultation>

**HACAN** has produced a report arguing for a series of measures to improve the noise climate for residents in advance of the airspace changes due in 2025/26:

<https://hacan.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/04/NoiseRelief.pdf>

## Join Us!

If you are not a member already, join us! **For just £15 a year**, you can receive regular information from us, join in our campaigns. For details check out our website [www.hacan.org.uk](http://www.hacan.org.uk), call us on 020 8876 0455 or email us at [jdm.stewart@virgin.net](mailto:jdm.stewart@virgin.net)

Can members who pay by **Standing Order** note that the amount needs to be changed from £13 to £15 in accordance with the rise in membership.

You can follow HACAN on **Twitter**: @hacan1; HACAN East is: @hacaneast. Also check out our **blog** on our home page on the website. HACAN has a **Facebook group**: the latest news and where you can write your thoughts and comments and exchange information with other members:

<http://www.facebook.com/groups/147698088661614> And a **Facebook page**: <https://www.facebook.com/hacanpage/>

If you want **national aviation news**, reports and briefings, check out [www.airportwatch.org.uk](http://www.airportwatch.org.uk)

To track **flight paths** on screen check out Webtrak on <http://webtrak.bksv.com/lhr>

### Sign up to Update!

**It keeps you up-to-date with events and activities**

The next six months will be packed with campaigning activity. We are only able to send out 2/3 issues of this newsletter each year as postage is high (the more of you who are able to take online copies the better: let us know if you want to switch). So the way to keep abreast of events is to check our website which is updated on a regular basis and to sign up to Update. Many of you already have.

Update is emailed out usually every fortnight. It lets you know what is planned and how you can get involved. **Email** [jdm.stewart@virgin.net](mailto:jdm.stewart@virgin.net) **to be put on the update list.**