

Subject: Heathrow Airport Expansion

Report to: Environment Committee

Report of: Executive Director of Secretariat

Date: 16 March 2017

This report will be considered in public

1. Summary

- 1.1 This paper sets out background information for the discussion with invited guests on Heathrow Airport expansion.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 **That the Committee notes the report as background to putting questions to invited guests about the Heathrow Airport expansion and its environmental impacts.**
- 2.2 **That the Committee delegates authority to the Chair, Leonie Cooper AM, in consultation with party Group Lead Members to agree a response to the Government consultation on the draft Airports National Policy Statement.**

3. Background

- 3.1 On 2 February 2017, the Government published for consultation a draft Airports National Policy Statement (NPS), taking forward its decision to support the construction of a third runway at Heathrow Airport.¹ The Environment Committee has previously concluded that expansion at Heathrow Airport will have significant implications in terms of noise and air pollution.

4. Issues for Consideration

- 4.1 The main environmental impacts of Heathrow Airport expansion include noise, local toxic air pollution, and emissions of greenhouse gases. The Environment Committee has previously made a number of publications setting out these impacts, set out overleaf:

¹ <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/heathrow-expansion-draft-airports-national-policy-statement> (note that the main document at this page is the consultation document; the full draft National Policy Statement and other supporting documents are available by following links from this page).

- 2015 – response to Airports Commission consultation paper on air pollution;²
- 2013 – letter to Airports Commission calling for an independent noise regulator;³
- 2013 – response to Airports Commission issues paper on noise;⁴
- 2013 – response to Government consultation on night flight regulation;⁵
- 2012 – response to Government consultation on aviation policy, emphasising issues with carbon emissions, and with noise and air pollution, especially around Heathrow;⁶
- 2012 – *Plane Speaking* report on air and noise pollution around a growing Heathrow airport;⁷
- 2010 – *Flights of Fancy* report on environmental conditions surrounding proposed expansion of Heathrow;⁸ and
- 2008 – response to Government consultation on adding capacity at Heathrow, focusing on environmental safeguards.⁹

4.2 The Government’s proposals contain material addressed at these issues.

4.3 On air pollution, the Government states that that permission for the third runway will depend on meeting air pollution limits. Heathrow Airport’s scheme includes plans for improved public transport links and an ultra-low emissions zone for all airport vehicles by 2025.

4.4 On noise pollution, mitigation measures have been announced including a night flight ban, legally-binding noise targets, and noise insulation for local residents.

4.5 The Government also says that Heathrow Airport expansion can be accomplished within the United Kingdom’s overall climate change mitigation and carbon emission goals.

4.6 Following this consultation, Parliament will vote on the NPS during winter 2017/18, after which Heathrow Airport will consult on planning application and submit it to the Planning Inspectorate. The Planning Inspectorate will then advise the Government of their decision, and the Secretary of State for Transport will make a final decision before construction begins.

4.7 The Committee has invited the following guests:

- Matt Gorman, Director of Sustainability and Environment, Heathrow Airport;
- Andrew Chen, Emissions Strategy Manager, Heathrow Airport;
- Simon Birkett, Director, Clean Air in London;

² <https://www.london.gov.uk/about-us/about-us/london-assembly/london-assembly-publications/airports-commission-response>

³ <https://www.london.gov.uk/about-us/about-us/london-assembly/london-assembly-publications/letter-airports-commission-about-independent>

⁴ <https://www.london.gov.uk/about-us/about-us/london-assembly/london-assembly-publications/letter-airports-commission-response-their>

⁵ <https://www.london.gov.uk/about-us/london-assembly/london-assembly-publications/london-assembly-night-flights-consultation>

⁶ <https://www.london.gov.uk/about-us/about-us/london-assembly/london-assembly-publications/aviation-policy-framework-consultation>

⁷ <https://www.london.gov.uk/about-us/london-assembly/london-assembly-publications/plane-speaking>

⁸ <https://www.london.gov.uk/about-us/about-us/london-assembly/london-assembly-publications/flights-fancy-can-expanded-heathrow-meet-its>

⁹ <https://www.london.gov.uk/about-us/about-us/london-assembly/london-assembly-publications/response-governments-consultation-adding>

- John Stewart, Chair, HACAN Clearskies; and
- Jenny Bates, London Campaigner, Friends of the Earth.

5. Legal Implications

5.1 The Committee has the power to do what is recommended in the report.

6. Financial Implications

6.1 There are no financial implications to the GLA arising from this report.

List of appendices to this report:

None.

Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985
List of Background Papers: None
Contact Officer: Ian Williamson, Scrutiny Manager Telephone: 020 7983 6541 E-mail: scrutiny@london.gov.uk